

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الإفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

CAERT, B.P 141 Bureau Poste El-Mohammadia Alger, Algérie, Tel +213 21 52 01 10 Fax +213 21 52 03 78
Email : admin@caert.org.dz

ACSRT / CAERT

African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism

Terrorism

Bi-weekly Press Review

16 - 31 July 2015

Review no. 97



Press Review 16—31 July 2015

Table of Contents

	Pages
Terrorism in Africa	
- Feature: ISIS moves into Africa	4
- 87 Percent of Network Islamic Terror Stories Skip Threats of Ramadan Violence	11
Algeria	
- l'expérience algérienne exposée à Madrid	15
Côte d'Ivoire	
- Hamed Bakayoko : « La Côte d'Ivoire n'est plus un pays en crise »	20
Egypt	
- Analysis: Turkish footprints in the Sinai sands	24
Libya	
- Mysteries of Libyan Abduction	27
Nigeria	
- Boko Haram resurgence deepens humanitarian crisis in Niger	29
- Nigeria committed to good governance and fighting terror	32
- Pourquoi la multiplication des attaques de Boko Haram témoigne en fait de son affaiblissement	35
Somalia	
- Is It Over? Terrorism In East Africa – Analysis	38
- Somalia: Somali-Based Pirates Down but Not Out	42
Tunisia	
- Tunisia's Terrorism Problem Goes Beyond Islamic State – Analysis	45
- Tunisie : la loi antiterroriste remet la peine de mort au goût du jour	50
International Organizations	
UN	
- SOMMET DE L'ONU SUR LE TERRORISME : De la nécessaire définition du mot terrorisme	52
Terrorism in the World	
France	
Face à la radicalisation, des solutions européennes	54

Iran

- ANALYSIS: The Iran nuclear deal and its discontents 56
- Deal Reached, U.S.-Iranian Relations May Be Tougher Hurdle 61

Iraq

- Daech : Un an de prétendu califat 63

Syria

- Re-configuring the Middle East: IS and Changing Demographics 68

United Kingdom

- Terror's long story continues 71
- Cameron's anti-terror plan requires social revolution 73

USA

- REPORT: 1/4 OF TERROR SUSPECTS INFLUENCED BY AL-QAEDA'S AL-AWLAKI, NOT ISIS 76
- Foreign Analysis: Security will top agenda on Obama visit to Kenya 78

Yemen

- News Analysis: Yemeni crisis mirrors regional unrest in Middle East 81

Terrorism in Africa

Feature: ISIS moves into Africa

29 July 2015

At the beginning of 2015, an estimated 31,000 fighters in the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, or ISIS, had tightened their grip over a vast swath of land. Thousands of those fighters were African. And as ISIS tries to expand into new territory, African fighters have begun to return to their home countries. They are bringing their extremism with them.

ISIS, also known as ISIL, began in 1999 in Iraq, founded by the now-deceased Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a militant Islamist from Jordan. In 2004, the group pledged allegiance to al-Qaida. Its current iteration began in 2010, when Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi assumed command. In February 2014, al-Qaida cut ties with the group due to disputes over doctrine and tactics.

Al-Qaida reportedly was particularly troubled by ISIS' interpretation of takfir, which is when a Muslim declares another Muslim to be a heretic. ISIS has used this as justification for killing other Muslims in regions it controls.

The two groups have slightly different philosophies. Al-Qaida sees itself as a band of avengers, trying to spread its agenda through violence. ISIS has used equally violent tactics but is also more interested in governance, trying to establish ISIS-administered regions and cities.

Life in areas controlled by ISIS is brutal. ISIS forbids alcohol, tobacco, secular music and the rights of women. Muslims and non-Muslims alike have been routinely murdered, crucified, beaten and whipped. In early 2015, ISIS soldiers put a Jordanian pilot in a cage and burned him alive. At its core, ISIS, like Nigeria's Boko Haram, appears to reject all things Western.

Under al-Baghdadi's leadership, ISIS has become indisputably the wealthiest terrorist group in the world. South African journalist Simon Allison, in a policy brief for the Institute for Security Studies, said that ISIS gets its wealth from oil fields, looted banks and tax collections in the regions it controls. At one point in 2014, ISIS assets were confirmed at \$2 billion.

The Guardian reported that ISIS also has made money by smuggling raw materials pillaged in Syria as well as priceless antiquities from archaeological sites. In one instance, ISIS made \$36 million on antiquities taken from a single dig site. Some of them were up to 8,000 years old.

WORLD AMBITIONS

The group's ambition knows no limits. On June 29, 2014, ISIS proclaimed itself a worldwide caliphate with al-Baghdadi as its leader. ISIS says it is now the final authority on Islam and claims absolute authority over all Muslims worldwide.

To accomplish this, al-Baghdadi's extremists use the modern tools of propaganda, including videos and social media. They represent a sharp departure from the long online sermons of al-Qaida leaders.

"Videos put forward by the ISIS tend to be filled with rank-and-file members whom potential recruits find much more relatable than al-Qaida's videos full of leadership figures giving speeches," said a December 2014 report from the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point. "This 'relatability,' paired with slick production techniques and military successes on the ground, appeals to a new generation of recruits for the ISIS."

Shiraz Maher, a senior fellow at Kings College London, said ISIS has moved beyond the traditional password-protected websites extremists have used in the past.

"Web forums are less important these days, giving way to platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram," Maher wrote in The Guardian. "In this respect, ISIS has harnessed the power of these platforms better than any other jihadist movement today. Online, it has created a brand, spread a seductive narrative, and employed powerful iconography. This strategy has been responsible for inspiring thousands of men from all over the world to join the group."

With al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and other extremist groups already established in Africa, parts of the continent are already primed for ISIS to spread its ideology. If ISIS does advance on the continent, it will almost assuredly be with the cooperation of some of these groups. In fact, some have already pledged their support.

Of particular concern are the parts of Africa that are lacking in government services, such as northeast Nigeria, where the police and military have been unable to curtail the operations of Boko Haram. Somalia, with its recent history of al-Shabaab occupation, also could be a possible target for ISIS. Egypt and Libya already have ISIS strongholds.

Allison said the biggest danger for African countries — particularly Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia — is the "potential impact of thousands of well-trained, battle-hardened fighters choosing to return, or being ordered home after stints with [ISIS] or other jihadist groups in Syria."

ISIS IN AFRICA

These are some of the African nations dealing with ISIS fighters:

ALGERIA: In September 2014, the Soldiers of the Caliphate, also known as Jund al-Khilafa, pledged their allegiance to ISIS. The group, an offshoot of AQIM, accused it of deviating from the “true path.” Members vowed absolute obedience to ISIS, and two weeks later they beheaded a French citizen in retaliation for France participating in airstrikes on ISIS in Iraq.

Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium Editorial Director Veryan Khan told New York magazine that the beheading was particularly significant in that it was done “on the Islamic State’s behalf.”

EGYPT: ISIS set up operations in Egypt’s northern Sinai Peninsula in mid-2014, attacking Egyptian Soldiers, police officers and civilians. An ISIS video indicated that the group had set up military checkpoints in Egypt near the Mediterranean, along a main road linking Al-Arish with the Palestinian city of Rajah. In the video, ISIS said it would attack Egyptian Soldiers and “spies for the Jews.” In mid-December 2014, ISIS released a video showing it killing three Egyptian Soldiers in a drive-by shooting.

The Egyptian faction of ISIS calls itself Wilayat Sinai (Sinai Province). The New York Times said the faction is composed mainly of an existing group called Ansar Beit al-Maqdis, which has about 1,000 militants. The group, formed during the Egyptian revolution in 2011, was regarded as the most dangerous extremist organization in Egypt. It pledged allegiance to ISIS in November 2014, hoping for resources and weapons to overthrow the leadership-in-turmoil in Cairo.

Before aligning with ISIS, the group was already a significant force. Voice of America reported that the group had “grown increasingly proficient in carrying out attacks” and had become more sophisticated in selecting targets based on their strategic value. It stepped up its attacks after the July 2013 ouster of President Mohamed Morsi by the Egyptian military. Early attacks were confined to the Sinai Peninsula, but it has expanded its range of operations to include Cairo.

In January 2015, Egyptian officials arrested nine men who were trying to enter Egypt from Libya. The Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Rai reported that the men were on a mission to kill government ministers, media personalities and businessmen. The nine were from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Egypt.

LIBYA: The country has been unstable since the overthrow of Moammar Gadhafi in 2011. Vast numbers of the weapons stockpiled throughout the country have since been pillaged and sold on the black market. Libya itself has become a training ground for extremist fighters.

A new group calling itself the Islamic Youth Shura Council took over the coastal Libyan city of Derna in April 2014. The group initially allied itself with al-Qaida but

switched its allegiance to ISIS in June 2014. In a statement, the group said, "It is incumbent on us to support this oppressed Islamic State that is taken as an enemy by those near and those far, among the infidels or the hypocrites, or those with dead souls alike."

Although the group's absolute control of an entire city of more than 80,000 is disturbing, it should not come as a complete surprise. CNN International reported that the city contributed 800 fighters to the ISIS invasion of Iraq. The network also reported that the city was home to a large number of fighters in the Syrian civil war. Those returning fighters led the siege of the city, The Washington Times reported. The group took control of government buildings, security vehicles and local landmarks. They were using a football stadium for public executions.

"ISIS pose a serious threat in Libya," former Libyan extremist Noman Benotman told CNN. "They are well on the way to creating an Islamic emirate in eastern Libya. Most of the local population in Derna are opposed to the takeover by the Islamic State, but, with the complete absence of any central government presence, they are not in a position to do much for now."

One of the group's most brutal and high-profile atrocities took place in Libya in February 2015 when ISIS militants beheaded 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians. ISIS released a video of the killings, which the Egyptian government and the Coptic Church confirmed as authentic.

MOROCCO: In January 2015, Morocco announced that it had dismantled an Islamist militant cell sending fighters to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS. Reuters reported that the fighters were under instructions to attack their homeland when they returned.

The cell had been active in the city of Meknes and the towns of El-Hajeb and El-Hoceima in the Northern Rif mountains, Moroccan officials said. One official said the government thinks that nearly 2,000 Moroccans have fought alongside ISIS in Syria and Iraq.

Social media videos of armed Moroccan ISIS fighters vowing to overthrow the Moroccan government have been circulating in the country.

NIGERIA: Although there have been no reports of ISIS movements in Nigeria, observers have seen its influence in the tactics and rhetoric of Boko Haram rebels in the northeast.

"There are no direct operational contacts," said J. Peter Pham, head of the Africa Center at the Atlantic Council, in December 2014. "But it is quite clear that Boko Haram is paying attention to [ISIS,] and [ISIS] is paying attention to Boko Haram."

In March, Boko Haram formally pledged allegiance to ISIS and al-Baghdadi endorsed the alliance calling Boko Haram “our jihadi brothers.”

African specialist Jacob Zeen of the Jamestown Foundation told Agence France-Presse that Boko Haram initially had received backing from AQIM, but, “It has more recently begun to model its ideological and military doctrine after the Islamic State and, in turn, has started to receive recognition from the Islamic State.”

Pham said Boko Haram has begun promoting itself in the same way ISIS has.

“They use heavy equipment, they parade with tanks taken from the Nigerian army flying the black flag, like they saw on ISIS videos,” he said. “ISIS presents a compelling model. Al-Qaida is the brand of yesterday.”

ISIS, in turn, has been influenced by Boko Haram. When ISIS took Yazidi hostages in Iraq in 2014, it cited Boko Haram’s infamous kidnapping of 276 girls in Chibok, Nigeria. As of early 2015, Boko Haram was adopting another ISIS tactic — in addition to its raids, it was beginning to hold territory.

TUNISIA: Tunisia, a secular country, is widely viewed as a model for democratic reform after the Arab Spring revolutions. But that could be changing. The Guardian estimated that there have been more Tunisians among foreign extremists fighting in Syria and Iraq than from any other country.

Tunisia estimates that at least 2,400 of its citizens have become combatants in Syria since 2011, and that as of early 2015, about 400 have returned. “In Douar Hicher, a poor district at the edge of Tunis, it is common knowledge that 40 or 50 young men have left to fight and perhaps a dozen have been killed,” the newspaper reported.

Two Tunisian militants who murdered secular politicians in 2013 said in December 2014 that they had since joined ISIS. “We are going to come back and kill several of you,” one of the militants said in a video. “You will not have a quiet life until Tunisia implements Islamic law.”

KEEPING THE RULE OF LAW

ISIS hopes to plant its flag in Africa. Aaron Y. Zelin, writing for The Washington Institute, said that the ISIS-based occupation of Derna could be a model for “future acquisition of territory by the Islamic State beyond its base in Iraq and Syria.”

“This model would also diverge sharply from how al-Qaida had done business in the past, namely, relying primarily on autonomous local franchise organizations,” he wrote.

In confronting ISIS, experts agree on one point: Military intervention will undoubtedly be necessary, but a heavy hand won't work. The Institute for Security Studies said its research indicates that stopping any extremist groups requires adherence to the rule of law and a criminal justice-based approach within a country's own legal framework. Other organizations concur.

"Too often, in the name of counterterrorism, security forces forget that human rights violations such as detainee abuse, denial of fair trial guarantees, extrajudicial killings and unlawful renditions create instability by undermining the rule of law and alienating affected populations," the New York-based Open Society Justice Initiative wrote. Such tactics, the initiative said, "do little to reduce terrorism violence," and "may well make the situation worse."

ISIS Leader Shrouded in Secrecy

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is the undisputed leader of ISIS. But beyond that, remarkably little is known about him.

He claims to be a direct descendant of the prophet Muhammad. For the most part, he is a mystery. Even the elements of his childhood are widely disputed.

He does not allow photographs or videos of him. He maintains a low profile and is said to wear a mask when meeting with prisoners.

Al-Baghdadi joined a small armed group in eastern Iraq after the American invasion. In 2005, he was captured and sent to Bucca prison camp in southern Iraq. There, he is believed to have met and trained with al-Qaida fighters. Over the course of his time in prison, he consolidated his power.

In 2010, after the deaths of two of the leaders of al-Qaida in Iraq, al-Baghdadi took charge. At that time, the Sunni rebellion was foundering. The civil war in Syria changed everything. The sudden lack of authority in large areas of Syria opened the door for the growth there of al-Qaida.

In June 2013, he rejected al-Qaida and its leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri.

"ISIS' rise at the expense of Zawahiri's movement signals that a new, more dangerous hybrid based on state development by wrecking everything in its path is emerging from the Syrian terrorist incubator," wrote Theodore Karasik of the Institute for Near East and Gulf Military Analysis. "Ultimately, ISIS seeks to create an Islamic state from where they would launch a global holy war. Perhaps that war is now beginning as Baghdadi's ISIS eclipses Zawahiri's al-Qaida."

Al-Zawahiri, some observers said, is now seen as ineffective, compared to his ISIS

rival.

“For the last 10 years or more, [al-Zawahiri] has been holed up in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area and hasn’t really done very much more than issue a few statements and videos,” Richard Barrett, a former counterterrorism chief at Britain’s foreign intelligence service, told Agence France-Presse. “Whereas Baghdadi has done an amazing amount — he has captured cities, he has mobilized huge amounts of people, he is killing ruthlessly throughout Iraq and Syria.”

<http://www.defenceweb.co.za/>

87 Percent of Network Islamic Terror Stories Skip Threats of Ramadan Violence

22 July 2015

Acts of terror marked the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. Terrorists cut a bloody path from Tennessee to Tunisia -- one that commanded much of the broadcast network's attention. Only newscasts often ignored the religious timing of the threats by Muslim terrorists.

The Islamic terrorist group ISIS, which declared a Middle East "caliphate" a year ago on June 29, 2014, strongly encouraged violence during the Muslim holy month. Reuters and *The Telegraph* (UK) reported on June 23, that an ISIS spokesman called for Muslims to make Ramadan "a month of calamity for the infidels." The "infidels" include non-Muslims and westerners, but also Shiite Muslims and those ISIS called "apostate Muslims." Al-Shabaab, another Islamic extremist group, threatened Kenya's non-Muslims even before Ramadan began, [All Africa](#) reported.

The increased "threat" of terror and violence from groups like ISIS, arrests, as well as actual bombings and massacres dominated network stories during the Islamic month of Ramadan, which stretched from June 17 to July 17. However, 87 percent (61 of 70) of the network evening news stories in that time failed to mention the specific threats of Islamic extremist violence pegged to the holiday. A majority even failed to say anything that would indicate the religion of Islamic terrorists, even though their calls to "jihad" are entrenched in their religious perspective.

On June 26, Islamic extremists bombed a Shiite mosque in Kuwait, killed more than 30 people at a Tunisian beach resort. That same day, another Muslim man beheaded his boss in France and tried to blow up an American-owned factory. ISIS later took responsibility for the Tunisian massacre and the Kuwait bombing.

The ISIS call for other Muslims to join them in violence during Ramadan was not reported on a CBS or NBC evening news show until after the Kuwaiti, French and Tunisian attacks had happened. Although it reported on terror threats, ABC didn't mention the Ramadan-specific threat once on *World News*.

ABC was also the network least likely to identify the religious connection/motivation for terrorism by ISIS or any other terror groups. Any identifying word indicating the religion of terrorists or potential Islamic terrorists appeared in fewer than 17 percent (4 of 24) of ABC's *World News* stories during the month. That included stories focused on threats, attacks or policies related to terrorist acts by Islamic extremists (or possible extremists like the Chattanooga shooter).

On June 27, *World News Tonight* aired a follow up story on Tunisia, France and Kuwait. The only reference to Islam in that story referred to the religion of victims in Kuwait, where ISIS supporters bombed a Shiite mosque. Immediately after that sto-

ry, there was a news brief about the increased terror threat in the U.S.

In that brief, anchor Cecilia Vega said those international attacks were “a reminder of the threat of global terrorism.” Notice, she said “global terrorism,” not “Islamic extremism” or “Islamic terrorism.”

Why Violence During Ramadan?

Although many Muslims say this kind of extremism does not represent them or their religion, ISIS, Boko Haram and other Islamic terror groups disagree. The news media have a responsibility to admit such groups claim their violence is religiously motivated.

Islamic extremists groups openly target other sects of Muslims and non-Muslim groups like Christians, who are often forced to flee, convert to Islam or die. That’s exactly why some of those groups encouraged attacking their enemies during Ramadan.

On June 24, ISIS spokesman Abu Muhammad al-Adnani encouraged Muslims to “be keen to conquer” and be willing to suffer “martyrdom” by waging war against “infidels” during Ramadan. ISIS considers non-Muslims (especially Christians and Jews), Shiite Muslims and “apostate” Muslims to be infidels.

Adherents to Islam seek to do more for Allah during Ramadan, which means that radical Islamists who view violence as an integral part of their worship of Allah also step up their violence.

“The ISIS' Ramadan message specifically preaches that jihad is 10 times more obligatory during Ramadan and that those who die in jihad will be rewarded by Allah ten times as much as during the rest of the year,” national security analyst and adjunct professor of Homeland Security for the Clarion Project Ryan Mauro told [Fox News](#).

Al-Adnani had said specifically that, “Allah may increase the reward of a shahid [martyr] tenfold in Ramadan in comparison to other months,” [The Daily Mail \(UK\)](#) reported.

“Jihadists for a long time haven’t seen the month of Ramadan as a month of fasting, as a month of abstention, or reflection and prayer. Instead, they’ve interpreted it to be a month of war. A month of jihad,” Quilliam Foundation chairman Maajid Nawaz told [BBC News](#). “And they look back to a certain tradition within the medieval period of Islam and its early days, all the way back to the prophet Muhammad, in fact, and they and they and they draw out tradition where there were certain battles that took place in the month of Ramadan.”

Nawaz, a Muslim himself, considers the extremism of jihadist groups a perversion of Islam, but told the BBC it is just as much of a problem for people to say their actions have nothing to do with Islam as it is for “bigots” to say it has “everything to do with Islam.” He also criticized the “middle” for refusing to name the problem altogether.

"We cannot deny that they have something to do with the religion of Islam, my religion," Nawaz said. The Quilliam Foundation is a think tank based in the U.K. Its website says the organization is devoted to challenging extremism and promoting pluralism.

Sixty Percent of Stories Lack Explicit Religious Context or Identification

When it came to explicitly linking Islam to those who claim their acts of violence are religious, the media fell too often into the "middle" group Nawaz criticized on the BBC. Many stories simply failed to link Islam to the terrorism problem.

Much of the network evening news coverage of terror by Muslim extremist groups or suspected Islamic extremists during the month of Ramadan divorced the stories from any religious context. Sixty percent (42 out of 70 stories) of the reports failed to identify the religion of the terrorists or suspected terrorists at all.

During that time frame, Islamists carried out attacks in France, Kuwait, Egypt, Tunisia, Nigeria, Iraq and possibly the U.S. -- the FBI is still investigating the shooting of two U.S. military sites near Chattanooga, Tenn., by Mohammod Youssuf Abdulazeez, a young Muslim man. However, on July 20, ABCNews.com said Abdulazeez' diary was filled with suicidal thoughts and mentioned ["becoming a martyr."](#)

Another Islamic terror group, al-Shabaab in Somalia, increased its attacks ahead of Ramadan and threatened to attack neighboring Kenya during the holiday, promising to "give Kenyan non-believers a true taste of jihad in the next few days and weeks," [Breitbart](#) reported. The al-Shabaab threats were not mentioned at all by the network evening news shows during Ramadan.

Although the networks devoted many stories to attacks by ISIS, it's "supporters" and FBI arrests of potential ISIS sympathizers, the ISIS or ISIL acronym was not counted as a sufficient religious identifier since it required prior knowledge of the subject.

On July 2, *World News* reported on the "terror threat for the 4th of July weekend." Senior Justice Correspondent Pierre Thomas reported that "the threat from ISIS greater than ever." His story quoted Park Police Chief Robert MacLean who said ISIL was "radicalizing people" in the U.S. But the story did not explain ISIS does that through religious propaganda.

Stories about the Boston bomber were similarly vague.

For example, the only indication in CBS *Evening News* June 24 report about Boston bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev's religion was that he asked "Allah" for mercy at his sentencing hearing. But that was better than ABC's World News report, which gave no indication of Tsarnaev's ["extremist Islamic views"](#) that motivated him and his brother to shred people at the Boston Marathon with pressure cooker bombs in 2013.

The networks also failed to properly identify the Taliban, which is a "hardline Islamic" group, according to the [BBC](#). Under their rule, girls older than 10 were forbidden

to go to school, men were required to wear beards and women burkas. But all three networks failed to identify the Taliban as an Islamic extremist group when it reported the group's deadly car bombing of the Afghanistan Parliament on June 22. No lawmakers died, but 2 civilians were killed and dozens hurt in the blast.

The single network story about a Boko Haram rampage in Nigeria with a suicide bombing of a Christian church and the killing of [97 Muslims](#) gathered for evening Ramadan prayers by gunfire and suicide bombs was an exception. CBS did call Boko Haram an "extremist Islamic group" in its July 5 report.

However, Boko Haram also attacked a market, mosque and prayer ground of different cities in Nigeria at the end of Ramadan, The [Los Angeles Times](#) reported. The networks did not mention it on their July 17 broadcasts.

The day after Ramadan ended, [The Washington Post](#) reported that a July 17 ISIS attack on civilians in Iraq killed 130 or more people. They bombed a marketplace filled with people preparing for the end of Ramadan feast of Eid al-Fitr.

Methodology: MRC Culture watched evening news broadcasts and searched Nexis to find news reports from ABC, CBS and NBC evening news programming related to threats or attacks perpetrated by Islamic extremists or suspected of being committed by Islamic extremists. The time period for the search was Ramadan, June 17, 2015, through July 17, 2015. This also included stories about the FBI's many arrests of terror suspects within the U.S. around the Fourth of July holiday.

<http://newsbusters.org/blogs/>

Algeria

Lutte contre l'extrémisme violent et la déradicalisation : l'expérience algérienne exposée à Madrid

29 July 2015



Lutte contre l'extrémisme violent et la déradicalisation : l'expérience algérienne exposée à

MADRID - Le ministre des Affaires maghrébines, de l'Union africaine et de la Ligue des Etats arabes, Abdelkader Messahel, a exposé mardi à Madrid les grandes lignes de l'expérience algérienne dans le domaine de la lutte contre l'extrémisme violent et la déradicalisation.

M. Messahel a souligné, dans son intervention devant la réunion ministérielle spéciale du Comité de lutte contre le terrorisme des Nations unies sur le flux de combattants terroristes étrangers, que l'expérience algérienne était basée sur le maintien d'un haut niveau de mobilisation et de vigilance des forces armées et des services de sécurité dans leur mission institutionnelle de protection de l'ordre public et de la sécurité des personnes et des biens.

M. Messahel a présidé, à cette occasion, une importante délégation comprenant, le directeur général de la Sûreté nationale, le général major Abdelghani Hamel, ainsi que des représentants de plusieurs départements ministériels.

Il a exposé également les grandes lignes de la mise en œuvre d'une politique globale de déradicalisation combinant des mesures à la fois politiques, économiques, sociales, culturelles et religieuses, impliquant toutes les institutions et les citoyens et mettant à contribution d'importantes ressources de la nation.

Cette rencontre a été ainsi l'occasion pour M. Messahel de présenter les résultats de la dernière conférence d'Alger sur la lutte contre l'extrémisme violent et sur la déradicalisation, soulignant le consensus qui s'en est dégagé sur le besoin de privilégier des approches intégrées et la nécessité d'aller vers de politiques préventives à long terme.

Au cours de son intervention, M. Messahel a mis l'accent sur l'ampleur du phénomène des combattants étrangers et la nécessité pour la communauté internationale de prendre des mesures préventives au niveau national, bilatéral et multilatéral et sur les mécanismes opérationnels à mettre en place pour lutter contre ce fléau.

M. Messahel a réitéré la disponibilité de l'Algérie à poursuivre sa coopération et à partager son expérience avec ses partenaires étrangers.

Il a indiqué que la rencontre de Madrid était une occasion d'"affiner nos approches sécuritaires contre le défi terroriste et de passer en revue les moyens mis en œuvre au niveau national et international pour contrer les pratiques d'enrôlement de terroristes et lutter contre l'endoctrinement et la propagande des prédicateurs radicaux partisans de l'idéologie de l'exclusion et de la haine".

Il ajouté que la question épineuse des terroristes étrangers dans les différentes zones de combat, notamment au Sahel et dans la région du Moyen-Orient est, à juste titre, "une préoccupation sécuritaire de premier plan et une grave menace à la stabilité et à la sécurité de nos Etats et de nos régions respectifs".

"L'ampleur du phénomène des combattants étrangers, le nombre grandissant des recrues et la multiplication des pays de provenance ont pris, ces derniers mois, une ampleur sans précédent. Il s'agit pour nous de mettre en avant, pour mieux l'analyser, le discours à l'origine du ralliement des jeunes recrues dans les rangs des groupes terroristes", a-t-il souligné.

"Il est, en outre, question de préparer une riposte organisée pour contrer l'idéologie de l'exclusion et de l'exclusif et propager les valeurs de tolérance et de respect mutuel", a-t-il relevé.

Le ministre a ajouté qu'"il est de notre responsabilité de discréditer systématiquement les fondements conceptuels et les sources doctrinales qui sont à la base de l'extrémisme violent", précisant qu' il s'agit là de "renforcer les capacités de l'Etat pour faire échec aux tentatives des groupes terroristes d'en détruire les structures pour leur substituer un ordre obscurantiste et radical".

M. Messahel a rappelé que la conférence internationale sur l'extrémisme violent et sur la déradicalisation, tenue les 22 et 23 juillet à Alger, a été l'occasion pour les participants d'examiner les voies et moyens permettant de "mieux affiner les stratégies de lutte contre ce fléau".

Il a indiqué que la conférence a fait ressortir, par ailleurs, un consensus sur le besoin de "privilégier des approches intégrées et la nécessité d'aller vers des politiques préventives à long terme", ajoutant qu'à cet égard, les participants ont souligné, en particulier, "la gravité du problème et le besoin de mieux cerner ce phénomène et d'organiser la coopération internationale pour sa prise en charge effective".

Pour M. Messahel, la menace représentée par la présence de combattants terroristes étrangers dans les zones de combats "doit, dès lors, être perçue sous l'angle de la sécurité et de la stabilité du pays d'origine lui-même, de celui de transit, mais aussi sous le prisme de l'accroissement du risque de propagation des foyers de crises et de guerres asymétriques un peu partout dans le monde".

"L'expérience de l'Algérie en matière de déradicalisation et de prévention contre le flux de combattants terroristes étrangers et l'efficacité des résultats obtenus repose sur une stratégie cohérente et intégrée, ce qui a permis à mon pays d'obtenir des résultats significatifs dans ces domaines", a-t-il dit.

Il a ajouté que cette stratégie "nécessite le maintien d'un haut niveau de mobilisation et la vigilance des forces armées et des services de sécurité dans leur mission institutionnelle de protection de l'ordre public et de la sécurité des personnes et des biens".

Il a soutenu que la lutte contre le terrorisme et ses différentes expressions, dont l'extrémisme violent et les politiques de déradicalisation, "exige également la présence d'un Etat fort s'appuyant sur la force de la loi et capable de la faire respecter quelque soient les circonstances".

"Les bonnes pratiques issues des expériences nationales et les échanges fructueux à la fois sur les tenants de la propagande criminelle et sur les auteurs de l'apologie du terrorisme gagneraient à bénéficier à l'ensemble des Etats en vue de consolider notre riposte opérationnelle et tarir les sources de recrutement et de financement des réseaux terroristes à l'échelle globale", a-t-il indiqué.

Il a souligné que la lutte contre l'extrémisme violent "doit impérativement se faire aussi sur Internet et sur les réseaux sociaux, lesquels constituent, aujourd'hui, les supports de prédilection de la propagande terroriste et la meilleure Agence de recrutement des groupes terroristes".

"Il y a nécessité, dès lors, et même urgence de réunir un consensus international pour faire de l'Internet un instrument puissant au service du progrès de toute l'humanité et non plus un mécanisme destructeur au service de l'extrémisme et de la violence, alimentés parfois par des rivalités géopolitiques", a-t-il plaidé.

"Notre responsabilité commune nous impose de nous munir des outils les plus performants de prévention et de lutte contre l'idéologie de la violence et contre les méthodes subversives de recrutement qui ciblent en priorité la frange la plus fragile de notre jeunesse", a-t-il encore déclaré.

M. Messahel a relevé que c'est "dans cette optique que le Forum global de lutte contre le terrorisme a prouvé sa pertinence et son efficacité, notamment en proposant des variantes opérationnelles qui englobent, à la fois, les méthodes coordonnées de prévention et de lutte contre le discours de radicalisation et de la propagation des idées de légitimation du recours à la violence, mais aussi en promouvant les valeurs humaines universelles que prônent toutes les religions".

Il a ajouté que le défi de la criminalisation de l'acte terroriste que la résolution 1373 (2001) du Conseil de sécurité a étendu à l'ensemble de l'activité terroriste "devrait nous servir de référence lorsqu'il s'agit, comme proposé dans notre ordre du jour, de mettre à contribution d'abord le système judiciaire puis l'administration carcérale".

"C'est cette approche que mon pays a choisie en adoptant un programme de réinsertion sociale, de formation professionnelle adaptée en direction de nombreux égarés", a-t-il souligné, précisant que cette politique "a porté ses fruits".

L'expérience pionnière de l'Algérie

Il a ajouté que c'est dans ce cadre que l'expérience pionnière de l'Algérie dans le domaine de la déradicalisation trouvait toute sa signification.

"Cette stratégie prônée par le président de la République, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, a été couronnée de succès après la mise en œuvre des dispositions de la Charte sur la réconciliation nationale qui a donné une assise solide à la réinsertion sociale des terroristes repentis et ceux ayant purgé leur peine", a-t-il mentionné.

Il a estimé que cette mobilisation "a été concluante et le nombre réduit d'Algériens comptabilisés dans les rangs des combattants étrangers illustre le bien-fondé de cette approche".

M. Messahel a indiqué que les propositions qui sortiront "de nos délibérations gagneraient à être optimisées par le renforcement de la chaîne des échanges qui bénéficient à nos structures nationale en charge de la lutte contre le terrorisme, une banque de données et un suivi des activités de la criminalité dans toutes ses manifestations sont autant d'atouts à partager pour affiner nos méthodes de travail et rendre plus performants les outils mis en place pour éradiquer ce phénomène et tarir les sources de financement, multiples et nombreux qui profitent à la nébuleuse terroriste".

L'Algérie, a-t-il assuré, de par son expérience dans la lutte antiterroriste réitère son engagement à continuer à lutter contre ce fléau.

"Le gouvernement algérien, que je représente ici, est disposé à poursuivre sa coopération et à partager son expérience avec ses voisins pour faire échec aux visées des organisations terroristes et contribuer, par la même, à la stabilisation de notre région, à la sécurisation de ses espaces frontaliers, contribuant ainsi aux efforts de dé-

veloppement et de progrès auxquels aspirent tous nos peuples", a-t-il affirmé.

"Au-delà de son voisinage immédiat, l'Algérie poursuivra sa contribution à la consolidation et à la mise en oeuvre de la stratégie globale de lutte contre le terrorisme", a-t-il encore poursuivi.

<http://www.aps.dz/>

Hamed Bakayoko : « La Côte d'Ivoire n'est plus un pays en crise »

le 22 juillet 2015



Réconciliation nationale, désarmement, terrorisme... Sur tous les dossiers sensibles, le ministre de l'Intérieur défend son bilan. Son prochain défi : organiser une élection présidentielle irréprochable.

Nommé ministre de l'Intérieur en juin 2011, Hamed Bakayoko est, à 50 ans, une pièce maîtresse du système Ouattara. C'est lui qui a reçu le 22 juin les leaders de la Coalition nationale pour le changement (CNC). Dialogue avec l'opposition, [réforme de la Commission électorale indépendante](#) (CEI), réinsertion des ex-combattants, fronde des militaires, enlèvements d'enfants, [affaire des primes impayées de la Coupe d'Afrique des nations](#)... Rares sont les dossiers sensibles sur lesquels le ministre ne s'est pas penché ces derniers mois. Et le premier flic de Côte d'Ivoire peut se prévaloir d'un indice de sécurité en nette amélioration : selon l'ONU, celui-ci est passé de 3,8 en 2012 à 1,3 fin 2014.

Jeune Afrique : La Côte d'Ivoire est-elle prête pour une nouvelle échéance électorale ?

Hamed Bakayoko : Parfaitement. Tous les indicateurs sont au vert. Même si quelques contradictions persistent, le dialogue politique est aujourd'hui réel. Soutenu par un effort économique important, l'environnement est propice à l'organisation de ces élections, qui marqueront un tournant pour la Côte d'Ivoire.

Charles Konan Banny ? Il est dans son rôle de nouvel opposant... »

L'objectif du Rassemblement des houphouétistes pour la démocratie et la paix [RHDP] est-il de permettre la réélection d'Alassane Ouattara dès le premier tour ?

Tout à fait. Le président a entamé un travail très important. La Côte d'Ivoire est en chantier, mais le pays se redresse. Il faut maintenant consolider tout cela. Cette ré-

élection, avec la stabilité que représente le RHDP, doit donner plus de confiance aux investisseurs.

La CNC se présente contre lui. Comment percevez-vous sa création ?

Elle participe à la dynamique démocratique. Il n'y a aucun problème pour que ses membres s'expriment et agissent. Mais toutes leurs activités doivent se faire dans un cadre réglementaire sans perturber l'ordre public. La CNC est entièrement composée de cadres. Ils savent donc comment fonctionne l'État. Lorsqu'on veut organiser une manifestation, il y a un protocole à respecter.

Mais des jeunes du Rassemblement des républicains [RDR, au pouvoir] n'ont-ils pas manifesté sans autorisation le 20 juin ?

C'est faux. Toutes les manifestations, même un concert, sont soumises à l'autorisation des maires.

Dans nos colonnes, Charles Konan Banny a accusé le régime de bafouer les libertés publiques...

Il est dans son rôle de nouvel opposant...

Pourquoi Hubert Oulaye, Sébastien Dano Djédjé et Justin Koua, tous cadres du Front populaire ivoirien [FPI, opposition], ont-ils été arrêtés début mai ?

[Les faits qui leur sont reprochés](#) n'ont rien à voir avec leurs activités politiques. Oulaye est accusé de complicité dans l'assassinat des Casques bleus de l'ONU en 2012. Justin Koua est poursuivi pour troubles à l'ordre public et pour avoir tenu des propos insurrectionnels. Il ne faut pas confondre faire de la politique librement et porter atteinte aux institutions. Les hommes politiques ne doivent pas franchir les limites. Nous avons déjà payé trop cher leurs erreurs.

La CNC a fait des recommandations, notamment sur la CEI. Allez-vous en tenir compte ?

Chaque parti peut avoir ses revendications, mais l'État et le gouvernement font ce qu'ils peuvent. La CEI a fait l'objet d'un long processus de discussion avec tous les partis. À quatre mois de l'élection, on ne peut pas la remettre en cause sans mettre en danger tout le processus. Or il est primordial que la Côte d'Ivoire soit capable d'organiser ce scrutin aux dates prévues.

Pourquoi avoir reconduit Youssouf Bakayoko à la tête de la CEI alors qu'il n'est pas soutenu par une partie de l'opinion publique ?

Il a été élu par la commission. Il a prouvé qu'il était un homme d'expérience et intègre. S'il n'avait pas eu le courage de donner les vrais résultats, je pense que ce pays aurait vécu une crise plus grave.

Après celle du 10 juin, une deuxième attaque a eu lieu à la frontière avec le Mali, le 27 juin. La Côte d'Ivoire pourrait-elle être menacée par le terrorisme ?

Nous sommes très vigilants. Il y a une vraie menace sous-régionale que nous prenons au sérieux. Il faut anticiper. Nos forces sont montées en puissance dans la zone et nous travaillons beaucoup avec les pays amis afin de mettre en place une bonne synergie entre nos services de renseignements.

Est-ce vrai que certaines mosquées wahhabites ont été mises sous surveillance ?

Je ne confirme pas cette information, mais nous sommes particulièrement prudents. L'islam pratiqué en Côte d'Ivoire est très modéré. Selon moi, il n'y a pas de risque d'une montée extrémiste à l'intérieur du pays.

La situation se normalise dans des conditions que je trouve très satisfaisantes »

Pourquoi le désarmement a-t-il mieux fonctionné en Côte d'Ivoire que dans d'autres pays aux dynamiques identiques ?

Il y a d'abord un engagement important du président de la République, qui a lui-même présidé chaque semaine le Conseil national de sécurité. Des moyens conséquents ont été mis à disposition de [l'Autorité pour le désarmement, la démobilisation et la réinsertion](#) [ADDR]. Il reste bien sûr un résidu d'ex-combattants qui doit encore être pris en charge mais il était très important que le programme de l'ADDR prenne fin pour montrer que la Côte d'Ivoire n'est plus un pays postcrise.

Les milliers d'anciens combattants armés qui restent introuvables ne représentent-ils pas une menace ?

Il n'y a pas d'ex-combattants armés mais un groupe de jeunes qui espéraient avoir une place dans la garde républicaine. Nous leur avons fait comprendre que le président s'y était opposé. Tous les sites qu'ils occupaient à Abidjan ont été libérés. D'ailleurs, il n'y avait pas tant d'armes que ça. Dans une cité universitaire où 200 jeunes étaient regroupés, seules quatre armes ont été retrouvées et déposées par la suite. La situation se normalise dans des conditions que je trouve très satisfaisantes.

Les experts de l'ONU estiment pourtant que le nombre d'armes en circulation est inquiétant...

C'est un rapport qui date d'un an. Depuis, la situation a évolué. Il est vrai que ça et là les experts ont signalé des armes mais elles ont été récupérées. L'état-major est engagé dans une opération de marquage pour savoir exactement à qui elles sont attribuées.

Si la sécurité est en nette amélioration, la criminalité urbaine demeure, comme le montre le phénomène des Microbes...

Les Microbes sont avant tout des enfants traumatisés par la guerre. Nous avons créé des centres de resocialisation où ils sont traités. Le retour de la Banque africaine de

développement est la preuve que la sécurité en Côte d'Ivoire s'est fortement améliorée, et nous entendons la consolider.

La Direction de la surveillance du territoire permet de lutter contre l'insécurité. Au sein de l'opposition, certains dénoncent des cas de torture. Que leur répondez-vous ?

Je n'ai pas connaissance de cas de torture en Côte d'Ivoire. Ceux qui l'affirment ont-ils des preuves ? Nous avons en tout cas donné des instructions fermes à nos collaborateurs pour qu'ils travaillent au maintien de l'ordre dans le respect le plus strict de la loi et des standards internationaux.

Êtes-vous partisan d'une réunification du RDR et du PDCI ?

Tout ce qui rassemble renforce. C'est un gage de stabilité pour demain. Toutes les ambitions personnelles doivent s'incliner devant le rassemblement des houphouëtistes.

<http://www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/>

Egypt

Analysis: Turkish footprints in the Sinai sands

Is Turkey actively involved in supporting the Islamist insurgency against Sisi, as Egyptian officials allege?

CAIRO. Even as its diplomats extend an invitation to Ankara to join the August 6 inauguration ceremonies for the New Suez Canal, Egyptian officials are moving from vague accusations of foreign support for the Islamic State insurgency in the Sinai to more specific allegations of Turkish aid to the IS-linked Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis.

Egypt's security establishment is convinced that the weaponry and tactical capabilities displayed in last week's attack on one of its patrol boats, and Ansar's deadly two-day siege of the Sinai town of Sheikh Zuweid, point to assistance extending beyond the diffuse network of supplies and personnel deployed by Islamic State from Libya through to Syria and Iraq.

Hamas-run Gaza media outlets were the first to release images of the July 16 attack on the patrol boat and the Egyptian navy's rescue effort.



AFP/Said Khatib "A picture shows smoke billowing from an Egyptian naval vessel on the maritime border between Egypt and the Palestinian Gaza Strip, off the coast of Rafah in southern Gaza, on July 16, 2015."

"We are facing intelligence bodies that chose the timing, prepared the attack and the elements that executed it, seeking to confront the Egyptian state and military," Major General Hisham El-Halaby told the semi-official daily *Al Ahram* after the attack earlier this month at Sheikh Zuweid.

El-Halaby, who teaches at the National Defense College, added that the Sinai-based

Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis has demonstrated access to anti-aircraft and C4 explosives seemingly not available to Islamist militants who have staged operations in other parts of Egypt.

Just a week after the fiercest battle at Sheikh Zuweid, which required Cairo to deploy F-16 fighter jets and dispatch troops from east of the Canal Zone, Egyptian military sources claimed they had captured Turkish intelligence officers working alongside the Islamic State in Sinai.

The *Egypt Daily* news website provided the names of eight alleged foreign detainees, which included four Turkish nationals identified as Ismail Aly Bal, a colonel in Ankara's National Intelligence Organization and Coordinator of Battlefield Operations, as well as operatives Diaa El Din Mehmet Gado, Bakoush Al Hussaini Youzmi, and Abd Allah Al Turki.

While Turkey's Foreign Ministry condemned the attacks in Sheikh Zuweid and Turkey's former president Abdullah Gul has urged his successor Recep Tayyip Erdogan to pursue a "more realistic" policy toward Egyptian leader Abdel Fatah Al-Sisi, Cairo is livid about Ankara's partnership with the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas in Gaza, and links elements of those organizations to the IS Sinai group.

Pro-forma condemnations of violence notwithstanding, Istanbul has become a base for Brotherhood and Hamas military planning- and political communications. Amr Darrag, co-founder of the dissolved Freedom and Justice Party, works out of the Turkish metropolis as does Saleh Arouri, a senior coordinator for the Hamas military wing. Islamist broadcasters *Al-Sharq*, *Egypt Now*, and *Rabba TV* are based in Ankara and Istanbul. Some Egyptian intelligence sources allege that Turkey has provided passports for IS fighters.

"Such arrangements took place in Turkey via leading figures of the international Muslim Brotherhood organization. They are all partners in the terrorist attacks," claimed Maj. Gen. Talaat Moussa, former head of Egypt's military intelligence in an interview with *Al Ahram*.

US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter is skipping both Ankara and Cairo on this week's post-nuclear deal tour of the Middle East, which focuses on calming fears in Israel, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

But Israel, like Egypt, has increasingly singled out Turkey as a supporter of Islamist militancy in the region, and Carter is likely to be presented with details of the activities organized in Istanbul by Hamas operative Salah Aruri who was accused last week by Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon of coordinating terrorism from a safe base in a NATO country.



"Turkish President Erdogan (R) and Hamas leader Haniyeh in 2012 photo"

Summarizing the accusations of Turkish meddling in the Sinai insurgency, Israeli Col. (ret.) Jacques Neriah wrote on the website of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs that this was the first time Turkey "would have ever engaged actively in efforts to destabilize and even topple the Sisi regime..."

Last week Egypt completed the dredging for the second lane of the Suez Canal, a project financed by millions of individual Egyptian bond buyers demonstrating hope that President Sisi can reinvigorate the economy.

Cairo is waiting for a response from Ankara to its invitation to join Sisi as ships travel simultaneously in two directions along the canal for the first time in its history. If the invitation is declined, it will be safe to assume that Turkey stands with the forces intent on wrecking the party.

<http://www.i24news.tv/en/>

Libya

Mysteries of Libyan Abduction

21 July 2015

Bandits or secular militants could be responsible. Italians among the few westerners still active in Libya. And Italians pay ransoms

Who abducted the four Italians? Why? Most observers reckon the likeliest scenario is a kidnapping to demand a ransom. The situation is aggravated, inflated and most of all complicated by the fact that Libya is still a deeply divided country, torn by largely tribal internal struggles. The conflict has nothing to do with Islam or holy war yet these two factors can take on immense importance in the overall confusion. “The bandits sometimes find it useful to give themselves a patina of ideology. It can instil terror. Or to give themselves a halo of sanctity they really don’t deserve at all”, says Marco Vignali, one of the most prominent of the many Italian businessmen operating in Libya for years and forced recently to return to Italy by the deteriorating situation.

The reasons why Italians have been abducted again seem self-evident. Italians are among the few westerners active in Libya in a structured, albeit very low-profile, fashion. ENI and Italian support companies like Bonatti are unrivalled in terms of turnover and workers employed. And Italians pay ransoms, unlike the Americans or the British, who generally make things much more difficult. The third reason is even more important. Italy has a historic relationship with Libya that predates the 1911 invasion. It is no coincidence that Libyans look to Italy every time there is a crisis. “Italians are just Libyans who can swim”, joked the young revolutionaries who took to the streets against Gheddafi in February 2011. At the time, the colonel’s own loyalists in Tripoli were looking - with equal fervency - to the Berlusconi government to discourage NATO intervention. “Rome cannot betray us like London and Paris”, they shouted.

This preamble is to make the point that the kidnapping of the four Italians - like others in over last few years - should be set in the context of local politics, despite primary motives that are probably criminal. Let’s be clear about this - Libya no longer exists. The country has shattered into myriad distinct units that wage constant war on each other for supremacy. For the sake of simplicity, we journalists sum it up by saying that since last year, Libya has been split between secular forces loyal to the Tobruk parliament and Tripoli-linked Islamists. But the reality is much more varied, nuanced and beyond control. So it is hardly surprising that the two main actors accuse each other of responsibility for the kidnapping.

Yesterday, even the notoriously Islamist Qatar-based Al Jazeera TV channel reflected this controversy when it reported that the Italians could be in the hands of Jesh al Qabali [Army of the Tribes]. These local militias comprise Berbers from the moun-

tains and merchants from Zuara, the port near the Mellitah compound where the four Italians were heading from the Tunisian border. Why? To put pressure on Italy in the run-up to the possible formation of a government of national unity brokered by the UN special representative, Bernardino León. It's one theory among many but perhaps it serves more to complicate matters than to explain them.

Recently, Italy has been more favourable than usual to the Tobruk government, which in turn has close links with the Berber militia in Zintan. The problem is that Zuara and Zintan have been at each other's throats for at least two years. And, as the Wall Street Journal has pointed out, ENI and its associated companies have pragmatically reached individual agreements to ensure the safety of installations and staff. The reasoning is straightforward. You pay the chieftains of tribes like the Amazigh and in return they send men to work and act as guards. If the plant closes, the tribes suffer too. It wouldn't be surprising if the region's chieftains were already at work to identify the abductors.

Over all this looms the spectre of Islamic State (IS). For more than a year, IS cut-throats have steadily been gaining control of ever-larger swaths of the country. They started in the deserts of Cyrenaica and Derna, where they were recently driven out by pro-Al Qaeda militants, and then they entered Sirte. IS controls 60% of Benghazi and is eyeing up the outlying districts of Tripoli. The biggest risk is that IS might try to buy the Italian hostages from their captors. One more reason to act fast. Chaos favours the terrorists and weakens hope of a national unity government. The abductors know this and will use it to ramp up their demands.

<http://www.corriere.it/>

Nigeria

Boko Haram resurgence deepens humanitarian crisis in Niger

22 Jul 2015



An aerial view shows houses outside the town of Diffa, March 21, 2015. Picture taken March 21, 2015. REUTERS/Joe Penney

DIFFA, Niger, July 22 (Reuters)- A wave of attacks by Islamist insurgents Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria and the islands of Lake Chad has forced tens of thousands across the border to Niger's arid southeastern region of Diffa, worsening a dire humanitarian situation.

An estimated 150,000 people have fled to Diffa in the past two years, according to aid agencies, increasing by one-third the population of the remote region that is largely dependent on aid and suffers from perennial food shortages.

In recent weeks, Boko Haram insurgents have stepped up suicide attacks and raids on villages in Nigeria and surrounding countries in reprisal for an offensive by regional governments against them this year.

The flood of refugees comes as a state of emergency declared by Niger to tackle the insurgency has brought Diffa's economy to a standstill, stifling revenues from fishing and the trade in peppers, and leaving the population vulnerable.

"We fled all night. I was very scared and I'm still scared. We left everything behind," said Lagari Fogo, a Nigeria refugee at a camp in Gagamari, who said Boko Haram

attacked his village 11 days ago.

In the makeshift camps, some people drape plastic sheeting over thorny bushes to shelter from the relentless glare of the sun. Their meagre belongings, often no more than a few blankets and some pots and pans, are gathered around them.

"We are suffering. We are suffering and it is not over," said Adam Abdoulaye, 35, a father of seven, as he collected a food package from the World Food Programme.

Abdoulaye said commercial activity in the town of Diffa, the regional capital, had been curtailed by the state of emergency and persistent Boko Haram attacks.

"The food situation in Diffa has always been that of chronic shortage," said Michel Hulaïs, head of the World Food Programme (WFP) in Diffa, stood before a stash of supplies. "But since the start of recent events that have affected security, this situation has increasingly deteriorated."

GIVEN JUST THREE DAYS TO FLEE

Bamgoye de Dala said he had just three days to pack a few belongings and flee his village of Lelewa on the Lake Chad with his six children after Niger's government ordered them to leave.

He said he had to abandon his animals and all other belongings they could not carry on the 20 km (12 miles) trek.

"Because of Boko Haram, the government asked us to leave. They told us they were at war with them and so we had to abandon the island," said the 50-year old father, sitting under the shade of an awning.

Niger has said that it asked inhabitants to evacuate the islands for their own safety and that it has worked with humanitarian agencies to ensure access to aid.

By the start of this year, Boko Haram's six-year-old campaign to carve an Islamic emirate from northeastern Nigeria had claimed an area the size of Switzerland, killing thousands of people.

A regional offensive by Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon drove back Boko Haram fighters. In recent weeks, however, the group has killed hundreds of people in attacks, allowing them to retake some towns that were seized, including Damasak, a few kilometres outside Diffa.

Diffa governor Yacouba Soumana Gao said, however, Niger's security forces had felt an improvement in cooperation since the elections of Nigerian President Mahamadou Buhari in March. He said authorities were easing a restriction on trade in pep-

pers to help the local economy.

"They (Boko Haram) knows their days are numbered, and that's why they are in the process of conducting suicide-bombing operations," he said. (Reporting by; Writing by Bate Felix; Editing by Daniel Flynn)

<http://www.trust.org/item/20150722145042-6vaz5/>

Nigeria committed to good governance and fighting terror

20 July 2015



In this May 29, 2015 file photo, Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari, salutes his supporters during his Inauguration in Abuja, Nigeria. (Sunday Alamba/AP)

By Muhammadu Buhari July 20

Muhammadu Buhari is president of Nigeria.

This month, the world moved a step closer to the defeat of Boko Haram, the jihadist group that has terrorized hundreds of thousands in the northern states of Nigeria. In one of my first acts since taking office as president six weeks ago, I have [replaced the heads of Nigeria's army, navy and air force](#). Our new military leadership has not been chosen because of their familiarity with those in government, as was too often the case in the past, but on their track records and qualifications alone.

These new military leaders will be based in Borno State in northern Nigeria, where the headquarters of the armed services has been relocated. This shift of resources and command directly to the front line, in addition to the replacement of the head of the State Security Service, Nigeria's intelligence organization, and a new emphasis on working in partnership with our neighbors, has equipped us to take the fight directly to Boko Haram.

Already we are beginning to see a degrading of Boko Haram's capabilities as a fighting force. In recent weeks, it appears to have shifted away from confronting the military directly to an increase in attacks on civilian areas, as we saw only last week

when an elderly woman and 10-year-old girl [blew themselves up](#) at a Muslim prayer gathering in northeastern Nigeria. We should not be confused by this change, hateful as it is: It does not mean that Boko Haram is succeeding in its aims — it shows that it is losing.

While we work to defeat the terrorists, I ask the people of Nigeria and the world for resolve and fortitude. The campaign we will wage will not be easy; it may not be swift. We should expect stages of success and also moments when it may appear that our advances have been checked. But no one should have any doubt as to the strength of our collective will or my commitment to rid this nation of terror and bring back peace and normalcy to all affected areas.

Similarly, my determination should not be underestimated in other matters. This includes instilling good governance and tackling the scourge of corruption that has held Nigeria back for too long.

As I meet [with President Obama today](#) — the first time a president of the United States will encounter a Nigerian counterpart following the peaceful transfer of power in a contested election in our history — I will be discussing my plans for critical reforms. So, too, will I discuss why the formation of my administration is taking time and, crucially, why it must. Already there are voices saying these changes are taking too long — even though only six weeks have passed since my inauguration. I hear such calls, but this task cannot and should not be rushed.

When cabinet ministers are appointed in September, it will be some months after I took the oath of office. It is worth noting that Obama himself did not have his full Cabinet in place for several months after first taking office; the United States did not cease to function in the interim. In Nigeria's case, it would neither be prudent nor serve the interests of sound government to have made these appointments immediately on my elevation to the presidency; instead, Nigeria must first put new rules of conduct and good governance in place.

I cannot stress how important it is to ensure that this process is carried out correctly, just as it has been crucial to first install the correct leadership of the military and security services before we fully take the fight to Boko Haram.

There are too few examples in the history of Nigeria since independence where it can be said that good management and governance were instituted at a national level. This lack of a governance framework has allowed many of those in charge, devoid of any real checks and balances, to plunder. The fact that I now [seek Obama's assistance](#) in locating and returning \$150 billion in funds stolen in the past decade and held in foreign bank accounts on behalf of former, corrupt officials is testament to how badly Nigeria has been run. This way of conducting our affairs cannot continue.

Indeed, the failure of governance, it can be argued, has been as much a factor in Ni-

geria's inability thus far to defeat Boko Haram as have been issues with the military campaign itself.

So the path we must take is simple, even if it is not easy: First, instill rules and good governance; second, install officials who are experienced and capable of managing state agencies and ministries; and third, seek to recover funds stolen under previous regimes so that this money can be invested in Nigeria for the benefit of all of our citizens.

We seek the support and partnership of the United States in these tasks. The importance of the fight against terrorism and corruption in Nigeria, Africa's most powerful economy and largest populace, cannot be underestimated. Our allies can provide much-needed military training and intelligence as our soldiers take the war effort to Boko Haram. Similarly, we look to U.S. businesses as well as the Obama administration to help develop governance initiatives that can ensure that Nigeria's wealth benefits all its people, not just a few. By taking these steps, we will be positioned to benefit from increased investment — particularly in energy and electricity — from the United States.

I was elected on a platform of change. I know this is what the people of Nigeria desire more than anything else. I know they are impatient for action. I realize the world waits to see evidence that my administration will be different from all those that came before. Yet reforming my country after so many years of abuse cannot be achieved overnight. In our campaigns against both Boko Haram and corruption, we should remain steadfast and remember, as it is said: "Have patience. All things become difficult before they become easy."

<https://www.washingtonpost.com>

Pourquoi la multiplication des attaques de Boko Haram témoigne en fait de son affaiblissement

15 juillet 2015



Depuis le début du mois de juillet, les attentats sanglants commis par Boko Haram se multiplient au Nigeria. Mais les islamistes nigériens sont-ils vraiment plus actifs qu'avant ? Analyse chiffrée d'une année de terreur.

Entre le 1^{er} et le 3 juillet, les attaques attribuées à Boko Haram ont fait plus de 200 morts, dont [près de 150 en une seule journée](#). Cela représente l'un des plus lourds bilans enregistrés à l'actif du groupe terroriste depuis un an. Durant les deux premières semaines de juillet, les islamistes de Boko Haram ont fait plus de victimes que la moyenne des douze précédents mois. Soit au moins 338 selon notre compte réalisé à partir des estimations du gouvernement nigérian et de la Croix rouge. Et c'est sans compter les victimes de Boko Haram – qui a récemment étendu son offensive – au Tchad, au Niger et au Cameroun.

Le mois de juillet 2015 semble donc se diriger vers un record au Nigeria, alors que les mois d'avril (69 morts) et de mai (107 morts) ont été les moins meurtriers depuis novembre 2014. En effet, de novembre 2014 à mars 2015, les islamistes avaient fait entre 235 et 395 victimes par mois

« Après une accalmie de quelques mois avant l'[investiture du président Buhari](#), on assiste à une hausse des attaques meurtrières. On prévoit au moins un total d'une quarantaine d'attentats de Boko Haram en juillet au Nigeria et dans les pays voisins », prévient Martin Ewi, spécialiste des menaces transnationales à l'Institut d'études sur la sécurité (ISS) de Pretoria, en Afrique du Sud.

Nouvelle stratégie de Boko Haram

Que faut-il en conclure ? « Nous avons obligé Boko Haram à changer de stratégie », avançait récemment à [*Jeune Afrique* le ministre de l'Intérieur nigérien, Hassoumi Massaoudou](#). « Ils ne peuvent plus tenir de territoires et sont obligés de pratiquer une guerre asymétrique », estimait-il.

En effet, Boko Haram évite maintenant les confrontations face-à-face et privilégie plutôt les attentats-suicides, surtout [depuis son allégeance au groupe État islamique](#), a noté Martin Ewi. « Boko Haram est la stratégie du dernier recours parce que les attaques kamikazes causent la perte de nombreux soldats », analyse-t-il. Et de poursuivre : « Plusieurs indices nous confirment qu'ils sont très affaiblis malgré la hausse du nombre d'attaques ». Un moment propice pour intensifier les frappes contre le groupe terroriste, selon l'analyste.

L'entrée en scène de la coalition régionale menée par le Tchad au début de l'année a forcé Boko Haram à battre en retraite dans les mois qui ont suivi. « Mais plus une opération militaire est longue, moins elle est efficace. Et c'est aussi pourquoi Boko Haram réussit à multiplier les attaques depuis un mois », soutient le chercheur d'origine camerounaise.

L'élection de Buhari, un tournant ?

Si l'élection du nouveau président nigérien a incontestablement donné un souffle nouveau à la coopération régionale contre les jihadistes, elle ne peut être considérée comme un tournant durable. Malgré une baisse de la violence durant les mois d'avril et de mai, pour les populations du nord du Nigeria, le nombre d'attaques depuis le début de juillet démontre clairement que la terreur n'a pas faibli durablement.

Cependant, Boko Haram ne pourra pas continuer au rythme actuel. Avec des attaques presque quotidiennes au Nigeria, au Niger, au Tchad ou au Cameroun, le groupe terroriste « cherche à prouver qu'il peut combattre sur tous les fronts », dit Martin Ewi. « Mais pas pour longtemps », ajoute-t-il, car de cette façon, Boko Haram risque d'épuiser ses ressources.

Muhammadu Buhari à la Maison Blanche

Cependant, pour mettre fin définitivement au règne de terreur du groupe Boko Haram, le président nigérien aura besoin de soutien. C'est tout l'enjeu de sa [visite à la Maison Blanche prévue le 20 juillet 2015](#).

Selon Martin Ewi, l'invitation du président Barack Obama représente un signal clair que les Américains sont enfin prêts à s'engager concrètement dans la lutte contre Boko Haram. « Ils pourraient fournir un entraînement militaire aux soldats de la coalition et un soutien logistique », croit-il.

Pour préparer le terrain à une éventuelle deuxième phase de la lutte contre le groupe terroriste, Muhammadu Buhari a limogé lundi les chefs de l'armée de terre,

de l'air et de la marine. « Rien de surprenant », renchérit le chercheur de l'ISS. Il avait besoin de faire table rase et de placer des hommes de confiance pour ramener la sécurité dans son pays.

<http://www.jeuneafrique.com/>

Somalia

Is It Over? Terrorism In East Africa – Analysis

15 July 2015



UN Peacekeeping Mission. A Pakistani UNOSOM armed convoy making the rounds in Mogadishu, Somalia. Photo by Ctsnow, Wikipedia Commons.

FSI July 13, 2015 1, Analysis No Comments

Last March, Somali Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke flew to Qatar in a visit that was supposed to lobby for more foreign investments in his country. “Somalia is no longer equated with the negative aspects: piracy, terrorism. Now the country is ready for business,” he declared in an Al-Jazeera interview. “Somalia... has seen a steady decline in terrorism activities in the last few years. So I think Somalia is less vulnerable and the country is really moving out of this, gradually but surely.”

A month later, a widely reported attack by the Somalia-based Al-Shabaab on a Kenyan university near the Somali border killed 148 people, mostly students, the deadliest attack in Kenya since the 1998 bombing of the US embassy in the Kenyan capital Nairobi. Uhuru Kenyatta, the Kenyan president, immediately denounced the attack and promised swift retaliation with international backing. Then, around a week later, the group carried out another attack against Somalia’s Ministry of Higher Education in the center of the capital Mogadishu, killing at least ten people. Then on April 20, the group carried out yet another bombing in northeastern Somalia, killing many UN workers.

These are merely the latest in a lengthy string of increasingly gory attacks carried out by the Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen, more commonly known as al-Shabaab. The group is responsible for many terror attacks against the Somali central government and its African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) partners. Most prominently, some of these attacks include a raid against a hotel popular with government officials in late March of this year (the same hotel was also attacked previously in 2013), and the much publicized siege of an upscale mall in the Kenyan capital in 2013, which lasted days and left close to 70 people dead. Apart from Kenya, the group has also carried out numerous attacks in other nearby East African countries including Ethiopia and Uganda in retaliation for the latter's participation in AMISOM, transforming a previously Somali problem into a transnational terrorism issue.

The uptick in violence in East Africa, as well as in West and North Africa, comes amid today's rose-tinted African narrative of progress and rapid economic expansion popular among many Africa hacks. Together with a string of other setbacks – the most recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa, pervasive corruption, interethnic strife, and weak democratic institutions in many parts of the continent – global jihadism in East, West, and North Africa, has sobered many an optimistic outlook for the second-fastest growing region of the world.

A history of extremism

Al-Shabaab (Arabic for “The Youth”) emerged in 2003 as a militant youth wing of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), an alliance of Sharia courts which themselves were formed from the decades of chaos and instability in Somalia following the collapse of the last central government in 1991. After losing a lot of ground, including the capital Mogadishu and the lucrative port of Kismayo, to Western and AMISOM-backed government forces, Al-Shabaab today controls pockets of territory in the southern part of the country, quickly adapting the guerilla tactics and bombings prevalent among many radical jihadi groups.

Al-Shabaab funds its guerilla war through a variety of sources, including extensive racketeering and extortion, sympathetic and/or dummy charities, and donations from the Somali diaspora. There is also speculation that the terrorist group occasionally colludes with Somali pirates off the Horn of Africa, although this claim has yet to be corroborated. Before the liberation of Kismayo by government troops, the group had also controlled the charcoal and sugar trade there. Finally, there are suspicions that they also have foreign state sponsors, although these states deny the allegations.

It should be noted that in terms of its internal organization, the group is not monolithic and is rather decentralised. Just as in Somali society, Al-Shabaab's foot soldiers come from different local tribes with strong clan loyalties. Moreover, the leadership envisions a more transnational agenda by linking up with other jihadi groups around the world and eventually targeting the West, while the rank-and-file has a more na-

tionalist inclination to simply establish an Islamic Somali government.

Groundhog day

The origins and methods of Al-Shabaab sound a discomfortingly familiar narrative. Indeed, while the particular details and minutiae are different, radical jihadi groups share not just a universal distaste for all things American, but also form from conditions of poverty and alienation from mainstream society: without access to education and economic opportunity, many young people become disillusioned with their governments and become drawn to more radical means of social change.

Indeed, in recent years many jihadi groups have formed connections (as well as rivalries) with each other: Al-Shabaab has been an Al-Qaeda affiliate since 2012 while its West African counterpart Boko Haram had just recently pledged its allegiance to Islamic State (IS), Al-Qaeda's rival for brutality. Globalisation and the Internet age have made many issues borderless, and terrorism certainly weighs heavily on this list.

The Philippines, although half a world away, can learn much from the experiences of East Africa. Connections and networks between Southeast Asian terror groups, such as Abu Sayaff and the Malaysian Jemaah Islamiyah, are well known and can threaten the livelihoods of the people in the regions involved, as well as commerce and trade in the maritime routes in the Sulu Sea. Transnational terrorism destabilizes not only the Philippines but also the wider Southeast Asian region. In the same vein, Al-Shabaab's forays outside Somalia have threatened not only the country but also the regional and even global order; the country is adjacent to the Gulf of Aden which forms part of the critical Suez Canal international shipping route linking Europe and Asia.

Garissa and beyond

To be sure, Al-Shabaab has since suffered many setbacks thanks to pressure from AMISOM, US drone strikes, and the Somali army. As recent as April 24 of this year, Uganda, which has contributed a substantial number of troops to the peacekeeping effort, declared the group to be defeated.

However, the April 20 attack on Garissa University should serve as a wakeup call to complacent policymakers to take important steps in the battle against extremism. Right away this includes increasing local/national security measures. Freezing financial assets linked to Al-Shabaab can also severely hamper the latter's activities. Complementing these measures would be coordination at the regional and international level to combat global jihadism. Local and national religious leaders should also speak out against the use of violence to achieve political goals, and interreligious dialogue between faith community leaders should be encouraged.

But in the long-term, ultimately it is only through reducing poverty and providing access to both basic services and political participation from the marginalized sectors of society can a disillusioned population be dissuaded from the allure of violent upheaval. Making people have a stake in society by providing democratic participation ensures that they stick to peaceful and lawful activities to protect their rights.

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/>

Somalia: Somali-Based Pirates Down but Not Out

United Nations — While the economic cost of Somali piracy has fallen and considerable progress has been made in deterring pirate operations, the latest attacks on Iranian fishing vessels by Somali pirates in the Indian Ocean may be another signal that it is too early to cut back international counter-piracy efforts, according to a new report.

The report by Oceans Beyond Piracy (OBP), titled "[State of Maritime Piracy 2014](#)", underscores that due to restrictive reporting criteria, small-scale attacks on dhows and vessels are not always included in official piracy records.

"We still haven't addressed the root causes of piracy. There are still ungoverned spaces on the coastline. There is still unemployed youth that might be attracted to piracy." -- Maciej Popowski

"[This] may hide a development that the reduced cost is masking - namely that Somali pirates still possess the means and capability - and are waiting for opportunities to strike," it says.

Conditions conducive to the development of piracy in the first place, such as illegal fishing, poverty, political instability and a lack of economic opportunities, have not been properly addressed yet, according to the analysis.

As reported by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), a specialised division of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the number of pirate attacks has been steadily decreasing since Somali piracy peaked with 237 attacks in 2011. While the IMB had reported a total number of 75 attacks in 2012 and only 15 attacks in 2013, the number has fallen further to 12 attacks in 2014.

Even though the actual numbers of attacks, including on dhows and foreign fishing vessels, might be higher, a significant decline in piracy over the course of the past four to five years cannot be denied.

This is due to a variety of factors. Speaking to IPS, Oceans Beyond Piracy Program Director Jon Huggins highlighted in particular the efforts of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS), which have allowed practical solutions to be developed.

Created in January 2009 pursuant to U.N. Security Council Resolution 1851, the CGPCS is an ad hoc international forum bringing together countries, organisations and industry groups to provide support to international counter-piracy efforts in Somalia.

As explained in a report by the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) dedicated to lessons learnt from the CGPCS, the CGPCS is a highly unconventional if

not unique international governance mechanism due to its open architecture, informality and malleable structure. It was established outside the U.N. system to "ensure that it was as inclusive, apolitical, issue-driven, result-focused, efficient and flexible as possible."

"The setting up of the Contact Group reveals the limits of existing security institutions in tackling non-traditional threats which are neither state-based nor of a strictly military nature and that therefore require new forms of policy response."

Commenting on the practical solutions supported by the Contact Group, Jon Huggins identified a combination of four main mechanisms that were required to suppress piracy. He stressed that each of these mechanisms acting alone would not have proven successful.

Thus, as outlined by Huggins, one major reason for the decline in piracy was the military counter-piracy operations carried out by the international community, especially EU NAVFOR ATALANTA, beginning in 2008, and NATO Operation Ocean Shield, beginning in 2009.

However, as incidents of piracy kept going up, these operations were complemented by wide-ranging protection and self-defence measures and improved watch and awareness procedures adopted by the shipping industry. As recorded in the Economic Cost of Piracy report by OBP, these measures amounted to approximately five billion dollars in 2012, which represented around 85 percent of the total amount the international community spent on fighting piracy.

The measures adopted were part of a broader industry-generated mechanism named the "Best Management Practices (BMP) for Protection against Somalia Based Piracy."

Another major reason for the decrease in piracy, according to Huggins, was the "private maritime security" who enacted standards and procedures for the use of force by Privately Contracted Armed Security Personnel (PCASP) in the maritime domain.

A fourth factor was the steady enforcement of the rule of law through an expanded prison system, including regional prosecution centres in the Seychelles and Kenya and four new prisons in Somalia built under the UNODC Maritime Crime Programme (MCP).

Two weeks ago, the CGPCS convened for its 18th annual session at the United Nations in New York. Participants commended the immense progress over the course of the past four to five years as evidenced by the decline in pirate attacks, but also stressed the need for continued engagement as piracy networks remain intact and 26 persons are still being held hostage by Somali pirates.

"Piracy has been contained but not eradicated," Maciej Popowski, Deputy Secretary General for the External Action Service (EAS), said at a U.N. press briefing on the CGPCS 18th plenary meeting.

Therefore, he said, a major goal of the CGPCS gathering was to "look beyond the piracy itself" and deal with a whole range of important topics related to maritime security, such as illegal fishing, migration and smuggling of human beings.

Major economic, political and societal challenges persist in Somalia that might cause setbacks or provide a favourable breeding ground for piracy in the future. According to Jon Huggins, it is vital for the international community to "maintain a minimal effort to keep the suppression going" even though this might involve major financial expenses.

"At the height of piracy in Somalia in 2010, the international community spent seven billion dollars on counter-piracy measures. Last year we calculated 2.3 billion. This is the minimum that is required in order to stay - because we still haven't addressed the root causes of piracy. There are still ungoverned spaces on the coast line. There is still unemployed youth that might be attracted to piracy."

According to the United Nations Development Programme in Somalia (UNDP Somalia), 67 percent of Somalis aged 14-29 are unemployed. This is particularly worrisome given that over 70 percent of Somalia's population is under the age of 30. The school enrolment rate is 42 percent, of which only a third are girls.

Hence, extreme poverty and a lack of prospects for the future for the large majority of Somalis constitute persisting security challenges in the country in addition to the unstable political situation and weak governance structures.

Moreover, there are fears of new threats emerging as a result of the enmeshment of pirate groups with jihadist networks. As reported by Foreign Policy, young Somali pirates in Hargeisa and Bosaso are detained in the same prisons as members of the al-Shabab militant group.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201507211028.html>

Tunisia

Tunisia's Terrorism Problem Goes Beyond Islamic State – Analysis

19 July 2015



There has been a tendency lately to blame all terrorism in North Africa and the Middle East on Islamic State, ignoring socio-economic phenomena at the local level. IS has become a convenient catch-all explanation, just as al-Qaida was in the first decade of the 2000s. The recent attacks that left tens of British tourists killed in Sousse, Tunisia last June 26 is but the latest episode. In fact, by ignoring Tunisia's internal conditions, little is accomplished in containing the problem of terrorism inspired by radical Islam. The focus on al-Qaida and IS or any other such group is useful in generating headlines, and helps to construct the monster in the style of a 007 movie villain. The problem is that Islam serves more as the tool of discontent than the goal, even if the respective leaders of al-Qaida and IS profess the goal of Islamizing society. Islamic State has such a goal clearly stated in its name. But the anger, the conditions that prompt young men, and women, to join such groups are borne locally and often the violence to which they sometimes resort is a form of imitation, even as it speaks of local challenges.

The attack in Sousse "will only do further damage to an industry that had not yet fully recovered from the events of 2011." The Sousse shooting, the second major attack in months, has dealt a heavy blow to confidence, which will discourage capital inflows as it will tourism. Cancellations are coming faster than tour operators can process and the tourism sector appears to be heading for a total collapse. The problem is that Tunisia, which has been in economic crisis for years, desperately needs capital and the cancellations are only going to make terror and violence more likely. The United Kingdom, Finland, Denmark and Ireland have advised their citizens not to travel to Tunisia. And on top of that, even Tunisian tourists with weekend reserva-

tions have canceled. This shows the extent of panic and fear prevailing in Tunisia, crushing tourism, which has already suffered in recent years the effects of post-revolution political instability.

There have been suggestions that the terror attacks in Sousse and against the Bardo museum last March, allegedly claimed by Islamic State – or at least inspired by it – were somehow a response to Tunisia’s successful democratic transition. Doubtless, IS as much as any other group or individual devoted to the propagation of a harsh ideology finds an enemy in democracy, but it also finds fuel in instability. Just as was the case for oil and gas before the collapse of the Qadhafi regime, Libya has also served as the main exporter of instability to its neighbors, democratic or otherwise, serving as a source for weapons that have crossed its borders to find combatants in Niger, Mali, Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia. Tunisians have also filled the ranks of IS and other fighters in the Syrian war more than any other nationality by percentage of population. Tunisia is therefore very vulnerable and the attack that killed almost 40 tourists in Sousse has the same goal as the one against the Bardo museum in Tunis: to destroy the tourism sector and the Tunisian economy.

Tourism accounts for at least 6% of Tunisia’s GDP and the terrorists have ensured that rather than devote more resources to economic growth, Tunisia will now have to divert them to security in order to confront the threat. Sousse had recently benefited from a plan to improve security, to ensure a trouble-free tourist season. The hotel that was targeted by the killers happened to be one of the most frequented by Western tourists, who were already less evident along Tunisia’s shores, as the Bardo attack has already prompted a drastic drop in foreign visitors compared to a year ago. Tunisia has almost an impossible challenge ahead in attracting visitors and their valuable foreign currency. The European economic crisis has hurt investment in Tunisia and this was one of the main causes of the so-called ‘spring’ of 2011. Secular protests failed to bring in change, also because the EU was unable or unwilling to intervene to help stimulate the nascent democracy in the North African country with an economic lifeline.

Islamic State in Tunisia

As for IS, there is no doubt that Tunisia represents an ideal target. It is one of the most secular Arab countries, close to Europe geographically and culturally. But just how much of a threat is Islamic State in Tunisia? Does IS, borne out of the flawed social reintegration under the Shiite-dominated government in Baghdad after a disastrous US war, finding fertile ground in the Syrian civil war, really have a solid grasp in North Africa? Even if Islamic State is spreading, it professes a particular ideology, and understanding local conditions and socio-economic mechanisms can only add to understand it. Ultimately, such an approach will make efforts to fight IS more effective. So far, the West’s main, and apparently only, response has been to fight IS militarily, either by deploying and facilitating attacks against its positions and through tougher legislation aimed at increasing security at the expense of personal liberty

and privacy. This approach has an obvious flaw. It is not possible to challenge an ideology with guns, rather you must eradicate the social roots that lie beneath its rise.

One of Tunisia's highest ranking military officers, retired Chief of Staff General Rashid Ammar, said that Islamic State did not perpetrate the attack at the Imperial Marhaba hotel in Sousse. The general, no friend of Islamic radicals, told a Tunisian newspaper that one of the perpetrators, who was captured alive, revealed a much more local radicalization and organization process. Islamic State has devoted much attention to Tunisia, attracting many fighters to Syria, without actually having deep roots in the country. Kairouan in Tunisia's interior, not far from Sidi Bouzeid, where the self-immolation of a disgruntled street vendor sparked the revolt that has come to be known as the Arab Spring, is the main focus of radicalization in Tunisia. Accordingly, Tunisia's Prime Minister Habib Essid has ordered the closure of 80 mosques that have been spreading radical ideas, inspiring some to stage attacks against soft targets. The collapse of Libya and the porosity of its borders has contributed to the problem, as weapons have proliferated freely and easily since 2011. The presence of a democratic civil society and inclusive institutions remains the best antidote to the spread of religious extremism but Tunisia cannot prevent or combat the phenomenon of jihadism alone.

There is a need for cooperation between Europe and Tunisia; not on Islamic State, but rather on how both sides of the Mediterranean should coordinate on issues such as economy, immigration, and terrorism by virtue of their historical and geographical proximity. Tunisia must also attract foreign investment while creating the conditions to attract investments by domestic entrepreneurs to help spread wealth and offer young people hope for a better future. The situation is made more complex because of social media, which fueled the protests that brought down the government of Ben Ali in January 2011, allowing young people to see what life is like in other countries, raising their expectations. Their government, however, cannot provide answers and give them the prospects they seek. IS has managed to attract some of these recruits with the promise of money – Islamic State is a money-making organization it should be remembered – while anger finds its outlet in violence at the local level. Tunisia, bordered to the east by Libya, has not been sufficiently helped by EU countries, the very same which were partners during the Ben Ali period and friends during the difficult transition to democracy. If Europe wants more security, it must help Tunisia to recover from the economic crisis and the EU must commit to include projects that concern Tunisia in its plans to boost investment in the country. But, of course, the EU is going through its own existential crisis with the issue of Greece and austerity.

The importance of distinguishing Islamic State attacks from others became evident after a bombing in Cairo against the Italian consulate. After proclamations of Islamic State's responsibility, a more careful analysis showed that the explosive used was identical to that used to kill Egyptian chief prosecutor Hisham Barakat in Cairo on

June 29. The target was not Italy and the perpetrators were more than likely aiming for Judge Ahmed al Fuddaly, another prosecutor who has focused on the banned Muslim Brotherhood. The attribution of responsibility for attacks in Middle East and North Africa is a risky exercise because of the confusion created as terrorist organizations like IS take ownership of actions by individuals or isolated groups and vice versa. Islamic radicalism or not, the facts count. Many outlawed Muslim Brotherhood members in Egypt have found refuge and help in Libya, taking up a more combative Islam there than that practiced by the Brotherhood in Egypt. The ground was and is conducive to the repressed Islamists in Cairo, who are eager to avenge their comrades killed or imprisoned, and ready to practice a violent jihadism. A similar process is also taking place for Tunisia. Surely, terrorism arises from a distorted interpretation of the Koran, but, in Tunisia, the drop in tourism, by 3.2% last year, has caused unemployment to rise to some 31 percent. Foreign investments decreased by 5% in 2014.

The main perpetrator of the Sousse attack followed a predictable path to radicalization. Seif Rezgui, was like any of the hundreds of students that go to Kairouan, and despite claims of IS involvement, it is safer to suggest that it was an IS-inspired bombing. And this is an important distinction because, the efforts to blame attacks on IS somehow shifts responsibility for the violence elsewhere while ignoring the very domestic radicalization process. For Tunisia to resolve the problem and restore tourism and confidence it must tackle the actual causes of terror. Yes, Rezgui is said to have chatted about al-Qaeda and then Islamic State — he even wrote that on his Facebook page; however, the role of Kairouan, an ancient Islamic center and home to the oldest mosque in North Africa, 60km from Sousse, has a symbolic resonance for radical groups. The city offers students opportunities to study and work, drawing thousands from Tunisia's impoverished and marginalized interior such as the 23-year-old Rezgui, himself who came from the town of Gaffour. Most of the thousands who come to the city move to its crowded outskirts, where dozens of mosques deemed by the government "outside state control" have been suspected for spreading radical ideology — long before IS or even al-Qaida.

In response to the Sousse attack, the government in Tunis has shut down 80 unregistered mosques around the country, out of an estimated 300. But analysts say the move will anger non-radical Islamists and is probably irrelevant, given that militants are more likely to network through the internet and via personal relationships. Ultimately, IS and the mosque help to radicalize ideas that stem from wider social problems such as unemployment and discrimination against those from poorer regions and those with darker skin. Islamists feed on these divisions. Tunisia's poor neighborhoods have served as the supply line for the jihadis. Moreover, just as students in the 1970s in Egypt when the Muslim Brotherhood was gaining strength — eventually staging the murder of President Sadat — many students complain they cannot challenge a well-funded and powerful Islamist student union, of which they say Rezgui was a member. The group offers poorer students money for housing, food and even

mobile phone credit. Islamists can spread their ideology along with their bread, just as the Brotherhood has done and just as many narcotics traffickers do in Latin America to win support from villagers. Before IS was on everybody's lips and keyboards, in 2012, Salafist flags were being waved in Tunisia and especially in Kairouan. Some jihadis have made it to Sousse and some mosques have been raided by authorities. It doesn't matter which mosques are closed, more will be found. The government and the West cannot hope to challenge Islamists, IS or otherwise, with drones and targeting mosques. They must challenge them in the social fabric, using the same socio-economic tactics.

The path to Islamist militancy is more complicated than that of developing radical views. Rezgui's case shows how the line between what is considered normal youth behavior and radicalism become blurred. Rezgui was using drugs, which is forbidden in Islam. He has posted on social media about his love for the Real Madrid soccer team and break dancing while also writing on his Facebook picture: "If being a mujahid [holy warrior] is a crime, then I am a criminal." Locals said Rezgui worked in Sousse as an entertainment organizer, perhaps sowing the seeds of envy and possibly lust from observing the lives of foreign tourists, who could enjoy the best of his country, dressed provocatively and flashing money around. Another problem is how Ennahda's rise was handled in the aftermath of the 2011 revolt. Many secular Tunisians have attributed the Muslim Brotherhood's affiliated party for the rise of radicalism. Ennahda actually won the first election after authoritarian ruler Ben Ali was overthrown in 2011 but they secularists ignored it and there was no dialogue between the two very entrenched sides.

To avoid 'infection,' Tunis plans to build a wall along the border, but this solution is merely a band-aid that cannot prevent local radicalization unless more structural solutions are adopted. Tunisia's government, formed by liberals and moderate Islamists, has already adopted additional security measures to restore confidence but European fears, such as the British government's advice to its citizens to avoid Tunisia as a destination, will not help either. Hundreds of arrests, fundamentalist mosques closed, emigration prohibited to young people suspected of wanting to achieve the caliphate in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, these efforts will continue but they remain a mere patch-up job.

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/>

Tunisie : la loi antiterroriste remet la peine de mort au goût du jour

le 24/07/2015 à 18:17



Trois articles d'un texte antiterroriste actuellement débattu au parlement prévoient des sanctions pouvant aller jusqu'à la peine de mort, alors qu'un moratoire en avait suspendu l'application depuis 1991.

Après 24 ans de moratoire, la Tunisie pourrait reprendre le chemin des exécutions. Dans le cadre de sa nouvelle loi «antiterrorisme», le parlement [tunisien](#) a adopté jeudi trois articles prévoyant des sanctions pouvant aller jusqu'à la peine de mort à l'encontre des terroristes. Après une série d'attaques particulièrement sanglantes ces derniers mois, au [musée du Bardo](#) et sur [la plage de Sousse](#), l'Assemblée des représentants du peuple a commencé ce mercredi l'examen des 139 articles d'un projet de loi visant à renforcer la sécurité du pays, mais aussi la répression contre les actes terroristes.

Plusieurs ONG ont déjà pointé les flous du texte. Dans [une lettre envoyée début juillet](#) aux députés, [Human Rights Watch](#) et [Amnesty international](#) s'inquiétaient aux côtés d'autres organismes du «risque de répression de certains actes qui ne sont pas véritablement de nature terroriste. En effet, de simples manifestations pacifiques accompagnées de certains troubles pourraient être qualifiés d'actes de terrorisme.» La précédente loi en vigueur, adoptée en 2003 sous [le régime de Ben Ali](#), avait déjà permis la répression de l'opposition et notamment l'interdiction du parti islamiste [Ennahdha](#).

Jeudi, ce sont trois articles controversés, les 26, 27 et 28 qui ont été adoptés. Le

premier indique: «Est puni de mort quiconque commet sciemment un meurtre contre une personne jouissant d'une protection internationale.» Les deux autres prévoient la même peine dans le cadre d'une prise d'otage, d'une séquestration meurtrière, d'un crime terroriste ou d'un viol. Pourtant, un moratoire adopté en 1991 a suspendu l'application de la peine capitale, quand bien même celle-ci figure toujours dans la législation.

«Il y a eu un réflexe de peur et de crainte»

Abda Kéfi, président de la commission de la législation générale, a indiqué au [Huffington Post Maghreb](#) qu'en dépit du nombre d'abolitionnistes présents au sein de la commission chargée d'examiner la loi, les textes étaient finalement passés car, concernant la peine capitale, c'est la constitution elle-même qu'il faudrait réviser: «S'il y a la peine de mort contre les crimes terroristes, c'est parce qu'elle existe aussi dans toute la législation ; on ne peut pas enlever la peine de mort pour un crime terroriste et ne pas l'enlever pour les autres crimes. Pour abolir la peine de mort, il faut l'abolir en général.» Sana Mersni, rapporteure de la commission, a précisé à l'AFP que les opposants avaient mis en avant le caractère non-dissuasif de la mesure «pour des terroristes cherchant à mourir pour aller au paradis.»

«Après les attaques de l'État Islamique, il y a eu un réflexe de peur et de crainte. La loi de 2003 ne prévoyait pas la peine de mort. Désormais, l'opinion public soutient une loi antiterrorisme plus répressive, et qui puisse être adoptée rapidement», analyse Amna Guellali, directrice du bureau tunisien de Human Rights Watch. «Le risque c'est une tentation de retour aux exécutions quel que soit le crime. Cela dépendra de la situation politique et sécuritaire du pays», poursuit cette spécialiste de l'Afrique du nord. Anne Denis, responsable de la commission abolition de la peine de mort pour Amnesty International, rejoint ces craintes. Elle cite l'exemple pakistanais: «Après [le massacre de Peshawar](#), le Pakistan qui était sous moratoire a recommencé à exécuter, y compris des prisonniers de droit commun.»

Depuis son indépendance en 1956, la Tunisie a procédé à 135 exécutions, pour l'essentiel sous les trente ans de présidence d'Habib Bourguiba (1957-1987). Si la peine de mort n'a jamais été officiellement abolie, en 1991 la Tunisie a voté une résolution des Nations unies pour sa suspension. Des condamnations sont toujours prononcées, mais la peine se transforme en prison à vie.

<http://www.lefigaro.fr/>

International Organizations

UN

SOMMET DE L'ONU SUR LE TERRORISME : De la nécessaire définition du mot terrorisme

29 Juillet 2015

L'Organisation des Nations unies veut aller en guerre contre le terrorisme. Pour ce faire, elle envisage un sommet mondial sur le phénomène. Quoi de plus normal pour une structure qui se veut avant-gardiste de la sécurité sur notre planète ! Ce n'est pas la première fois qu'une rencontre au niveau international se tient sur le terrorisme, mais l'actualité et l'évolution des événements rendent pertinente cette nouvelle initiative. En effet, il n'est pas de semaine qui ne soit marquée par un acte terroriste dans le monde. Ces actes frappent aveuglément des innocents qui, le plus souvent, ont le malheur de se trouver au mauvais endroit au mauvais moment. A l'heure où les mouvements terroristes, Etat Islamique, Bokam Haram, Al-Qaïda, Shebabs, Abou Sayyaf, Jemmah Ismayah et Talibans, pour ne citer que ceux-là, sèment quotidiennement la terreur dans différentes zones de la planète et menacent la survie des Etats, il est de l'intérêt de toutes les nations de lutter contre ce fléau. Le triste constat est que toutes les stratégies de lutte contre le terrorisme semblent vouées à l'échec, vu les « succès » macabres des terroristes. Les échecs ou encore l'impuissance face aux actions terroristes, peuvent s'expliquer de plusieurs manières, mais il y a des constantes sur lesquelles l'ONU et ses membres gagneraient à s'attarder, si tant est qu'il y ait une volonté

réelle de mettre fin au terrorisme.

Mais encore faut-il qu'on s'entende sur les acceptions des mots « *terroriste* » et « *terrorisme* ». Qui est terroriste, qui ne l'est pas ? Doit-on qualifier de terroriste un jeune Gazaoui nourri au biberon de la haine et de la rancœur contre *Tsahal* (l'armée israélienne), qui fait sauter une bombe ou qui lance des pierres pour revendiquer son droit à un Etat palestinien ? Est-ce du terrorisme quand des communautés totalement oubliées du monde sabotent un *pipeline* dans le Delta du Niger, pour protester contre les répartitions inégales des ressources pétrolières auxquelles elles n'ont pratiquement pas droit ? Quid du terrorisme d'Etat ?

Les incohérences et les incongruités des pays occidentaux sont légion dans le monde

C'est clair, il urge que l'on apporte des précisions aux termes et des nuances aux concepts pour contrecarrer les amalgames attentatoires aux droits citoyens des peuples et des nations. Et que dire du contenu que les satrapes du continent africain

mettent dans la notion de terroriste ?

Un terme à la fois galvaudé et utilisé à des fins « *machiavéliques* ». De fait, les dictateurs en usent et en abusent pour mater et réprimer leurs opposants les moins dociles. Par des lois anti-terroristes fourre-tout, des dirigeants politiques essaient de mettre fin à l'expression d'opinions contraires, dans leur conduite des affaires. Bref, ceux qu'on aurait appelés hier des « *indépendantistes* » ou des « *nationalistes* », sont aujourd'hui taxés de « *terroristes* ». La lutte de l'*African National Congress* de Nelson Mandela pour l'égalité raciale en Afrique du Sud, aurait été taxée de terrorisme aujourd'hui. Le plan d'action mondial anti-terroriste, adopté en 2006 par les Nations unies, se fonde sur quatre axes : analyse des conditions propices à la propagation du terrorisme, prise de mesures pour renforcer les moyens dont disposent les Etats pour combattre le terrorisme, respect des droits de l'Homme et renforcement du rôle de l'ONU dans le domaine de la lutte anti-terroriste. Cette approche stratégique et opérationnelle qu'on dit commune aux Etats membres, prend-elle toute la mesure du problème ? Rien n'est moins sûr. Il faut, en tout cas, se convaincre d'une chose : le terrorisme se nourrit des injustices multiples et multiformes dans le monde. En plus, bien sûr, de l'ignorance et de la misère. Et l'on ne peut parler d'injustice sans évoquer la crise interminable entre Israël et la Palestine. La haine de l'Occident, le fort sentiment anti-américain en Palestine, en Iran et dans bien d'autres parties du monde, n'est pas étrangère à cette crise.

Au demeurant, au nom de quoi l'Etat hébreu peut-il refuser de respecter les nombreuses résolutions onusiennes prises à son encontre ? A quelle logique répond le droit d'Israël ou du Pakistan à disposer de la bombe atomique et le « *non possimus* » opposé à l'Iran ? Il faut voir la réalité en face : les incohérences et les incongruités des pays occidentaux sont légion dans le monde, et ce sont celles-là mêmes qui génèrent les sentiments profonds de haine.

Au nombre de ces injustices, figure aussi le droit de *veto* des cinq puissances. Au gré de leurs intérêts et de leurs humeurs, les cinq puissances disposant du droit de *veto* au Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU, en usent et en abusent sans tenir compte des frustrations, des injustices et des nombreuses violations des droits qui en découlent. Sur la base de leurs confrontations historiques, les Etats-Unis, la Russie, la France, la Grande Bretagne et la Chine s'opposent, souvent de façon mécanique, à des projets de résolutions qui s'attaquent à leurs propres injustices. Impuissantes face aux blocages, les victimes sont conduites à développer ce qui leur reste comme seule arme : la stratégie de résistance. Et dans un monde en proie au déni flagrant des droits des plus faibles, les extrémistes n'ont pas d'autre choix que de saisir toutes les opportunités qui s'offrent à eux, pour faire exploser leurs milliers de kilowatts de colère.

<http://lepays.bf/>

Terrorism in the World

France

Face à la radicalisation, des solutions européennes

LE 21/07 /2015

L'indignation planétaire suscitée par les attentats du 26 juin nous rappelle que le combat face à cette barbarie criminelle est universel. La concomitance des attentats dans l'Isère, à Sousse et dans une mosquée au Koweït nous l'a tristement prouvé.

Ne tombons pas dans le piège de Daech qui confessionnalise cette lutte pour radicaliser mortellement une partie de la population contre une autre. Ce n'est pas un modèle confessionnel qui veut s'imposer à nous. Ce sont des individus radicalisés par des barbares qui dévoient l'islam, en s'en servant comme une « cause ». Attentat après attentat, nous le vérifions hélas.

La France ne s'en sortira pas seule. L'Europe constitue une solution face au terrorisme et à la radicalisation. Aujourd'hui, trop souvent, nous avançons en rang dispersé, au détriment de notre sécurité et à la grande satisfaction des terroristes.

Au Parlement européen, j'ai été chargée d'un rapport sur la prévention de la radicalisation et du recrutement de citoyens européens par des organisations terroristes. Il y a, aujourd'hui, 4 actions prioritaires à mener :

1. Agir contre la radicalisation par Internet, véritable camp d'entraînement virtuel : des efforts ont été faits par les géants du Net pour retirer des contenus faisant l'apologie du terrorisme, mais trop lentement. Je propose que leur responsabilité pénale soit engagée en cas de manque de coopération rapide. Ils doivent également participer à développer un contre-discours, en agissant sur le référencement pour que ces messages puissent être promus.
2. Développer le renseignement pénitentiaire : un rapport récent a mis en lumière ses failles. A Fresnes, une expérimentation est menée depuis quelques mois : elle consiste en une mise à l'écart des détenus radicalisés, dans le but d'éviter l'imposition d'une contrainte radicale sur les autres détenus. Cette expérimentation doit être généralisée ! Le personnel pénitentiaire comme les aumôniers doivent bénéficier d'une formation adéquate afin qu'ils puissent détecter les comportements radicaux et connaître leur processus. Le renseignement ainsi recueilli serait mieux analysé et mieux utilisé pour prévenir la radicalisation, le passage à l'acte et découvrir d'éventuels réseaux organisés.
3. Assécher le financement du terrorisme : dans mon rapport, j'exhorte la Commission européenne, réticente pour l'instant, à proposer une législation pour mieux détecter les circuits de financement du terrorisme. Il faut aussi développer une rela-

tion plus étroite et plus franche, notamment avec les pays du Golfe. J'ai écrit à leurs dirigeants pour leur demander des comptes sur les mesures prises pour une meilleure transparence de leurs flux financiers extérieurs, notamment en Afrique subsaharienne et en Europe. Les Etats européens doivent d'ailleurs être responsabilisés en affichant une transparence dans leurs relations avec ces pays et sur les sommes venues de ces pays versées à des organisations et des associations.

4. Enfin, il y a un sujet d'intégration qui ne peut être éludé. Depuis trop longtemps nous avons cyniquement contribué à la ghettoïsation qui a conduit au communautarisme, qui s'est transformé en radicalisation, pour finir en barbarie ! En 1995, l'affaire Khaled Kelkal était la première alerte que nous avons sous-estimée !

Nous devons refonder l'instance représentative des musulmans de France. Que tous nos compatriotes musulmans puissent y être représentés, s'y retrouver sans devoir faire allégeance à un pays étranger. Revenons, également, à une interprétation apaisée et ouverte de notre principe fédérateur de laïcité. En faisant le contraire, en confessionnalisant les attaques barbares, on donne des armes aux individus radicalisés pour tenter de justifier l'injustifiable.

Dans ce combat, soyons de ceux qui proposent et agissent plutôt que de ceux qui divisent et aggravent la situation.

En savoir plus sur <http://www.lesechos.fr/>

Iran

ANALYSIS: The Iran nuclear deal and its discontents

July 19, 2015



BY: Hisham Melhem

For almost two years, the Islamic Republic of Iran, one of the oldest, most intractable countries in the world, found itself, negotiating secretly, dueling publicly and bargaining incessantly and cunningly with the six most powerful countries in the world, led by its arch-nemesis for more than three decades, the United States of America. It has emerged with an empowering nuclear deal legitimizing it as a threshold nuclear state and marking its return from the cold.

As one of those harsh critics of the theocratic regime in Tehran, who abhor its brutal suppression of the human rights, aspirations and tremendous potentials of a talented youthful population, I have to grudgingly admit that the Iranian negotiating team more than held its own, hence my use of the word 'cunningly' should be seen in a positive and not a pejorative context. As one who tries not to get swept away by the immediacy of events, even those billed as 'historic' and is always conscious of the long, complex and tumultuous history of the region I have to note that the nuclear deal came into fruition at a time when the dominant perception in the Middle East is that the United States is a declining power in the region and beyond; that the 'Arab world' is not only a house divided, but a house with no roof, and some of its rooms are literally in flames, with Iran poised to elevate its dual role as the arsonist and the fireman to new levels.

A river of ink ran through it

A river of ink was used to explain, judge, justify or denounce every word and punctuation in the text of the 'Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action' and its annexes. The maestro of the large chorus of supporters is President Obama, who conducted the orchestra in an unusually brash and even giddy style, particularly when he was playing to the American people and their representatives through the media. But the opponents of the deal inside the United States, as well as beyond the seas have more than one conductor and more than one chorus and different musical sheets.

The Republicans and the Israelis poured over the details of the technical aspects of the deal, crunched the numbers, spoke of 'core reactors', centrifuges, percentages of enriched uranium, breakout time, international inspections and their discontents with all the above. For the Arabs, particularly those who resent living in the shadow of Iran, the technical components of the deal were not their primary concern; they did not bother much with numbers, fuel cycles, heavy waters or plutonium and they certainly did not see the devil in the details of the annexes, but their heavy hearts saw the devil in the blunt regional ambitions and machinations of an assertive, even belligerent Iran, that has mastered the art of proxy wars by fighting Arabs with Arabs from Lebanon, to Syria, to Iraq and all the way to Yemen, and is still bent on becoming the regional hegemon.

The yea and the nay corners

There were serious arguments presented by the opponents and the supporters of the deal. The yea corner stressed that the deal will stop the production of heavy waters which eliminate Iran's ability to produce plutonium, it places a ceiling for a decade on the quantity (and quality) of the centrifuges Iran is allowed to operate under a relatively enhanced, but not full proof, inspection regime, and that Iran will limit enrichment of uranium to 3.7 percent and cap its low enriched uranium to 300 kilograms, an amount insufficient to quickly assemble a bomb, for 15 years. The nay corner, stresses the limitations on the inspection regime which gives Iran at least 24 days' advance notice before International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors can visit the nuclear facilities. The agreement will achieve Iran's main immediate objective which is sanction relief, and release up to \$150 billion that will enhance Iran's ability to do more mischief through its proxies in the region. It is possible that in order to compensate the hardliners, who would supposedly 'lose' if the agreement is implemented, that more resources will go their way to buy their acquiescence. The agreement puts short limits on Iran's ability to acquire ballistic missile technologies to eight years, and sales of conventional arms to Iran will be prohibited for only five years.

What is not in dispute are the facts that Iran will be a threshold nuclear nation even before the expiration of the 15 year duration of the agreement, that most of the physical infrastructure of the nuclear program will remain intact, and the scientific

knowledge will expand, and even if Iran remains in full compliance, the agreement gives it more nuclear capacity than it would need, if it is truly interested only in a strictly civilian program. The harsh reality is that while there are military options to degrade and to delay Iran's nuclear program, there is no military solution to this problem; and if Iran wants to develop a nuclear device 15 or 20 years from now it will be next to impossible to prevent it from doing so. If a backward country with limited resources like North Korea can built nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them and a poor country like Pakistan can assemble scores of nuclear warheads with delivery systems, then surely Iran can do so. In this context, a region-wide system of containment, robustly enhanced and supported by the United States, including an American protective nuclear umbrella, similar to the one the U.S. erected in Europe during the Cold War, can go a long way in satisfying the legitimate concerns of America's allies.

The allure of ancient cultures

The American-Iranian negotiations over the nuclear deal were a reminder of the contrasts between old and new powers. For an ancient culture like Iran that measures its history in millennia and centuries (almost 2500 years ago Persia was engaging the Greek city-states in battles that shaped Western Civilization) suspending a nuclear program for 10 or 15 years is barely a fleeting moment. Iran badly needs sanction relief to ensure the regime's survival, and a tiny interregnum in the life of an ancient civilization can barely be noticed. Every time American officials negotiate with representatives of old, non-democratic cultures, like Iran or China, they encounter the civilizational heft of these cultures.

The diplomats of these cultures don't operate like American diplomats do, that is according to 4 year cycles, or the myriad of domestic constraints from public opinion to congressional oversight, that are also measured in short attention spans. Secretary Kerry maybe very conscious of his legacy while negotiating with minister Zarif, and while Mr. Zarif may be interested in ensuring a legacy, his mandate is broader than that. These old cultures usually convey a sense of permanency, empowerment, endurance and patience. Their sense of time is very elastic, and they have a capacity to endure pain and absorb sacrifices. Their influence throughout history went way beyond their geographic boundaries. These old civilizations have their own allure and charm. See how Alexander the great was seduced by the allure of Persia. From the beginning of his presidency, PresidentObama looked at Iran, and saw the old Persia beckoning.

A president in search of a legacy

After almost six and half years of trying to shape events and influence outcomes in the Middle East,President Obama has very little to show for except the nuclear deal with Iran. From his first inaugural speech, the President wanted very much to reach out to Iran. President Obama would like his nuclear deal with Iran to be the Middle Eastern equivalent of President Richard Nixon's historic opening to China. Although the President says he is not betting on the agreement to change Iran's regional behavior or improve its abysmal human rights record, there is nonetheless ample

evidence (and wishful thinking) to the contrary. In their on- the- record and background briefings, administration officials talk about their hope that the agreement and its financial windfall will hasten Iran's reintegration into the global economy, by empowering the 'moderate' forces in the regime and the middle class and Iranian youth seeking to open up the country to the outside world. If Iran decides to partake in economic globalization, which is almost inevitable, it is likely to follow in China's footsteps. The regime will maintain political control through the alliance of the clerical establishment and the powers that be behind the Revolutionary guards, while gradually opening the country to the world and the very products that the Iranian middle class and youth are yearning for. But the opening to the world will remain as long as possible, limited to the economic domain solely.

Humming a similar tune

The agreement itself is a recognition of Iran's regional weight and influence, and represents an American (and European) shift in attitudes towards ending the old policy of isolating Iran. In April, the President said 'it is possible that if we sign this nuclear deal, we strengthen the hand of those more moderate forces inside Iran'. It is not an exaggeration to say that President Obama would like to see the next decade (assuming the agreement is complied with) as one of transformation in Iran. The President hinted at that when he said 'the deal offers an opportunity to move in a new direction. We should seize it'. Iran's chief negotiator, the ever smiling foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, was humming a similar tune before the end of the Vienna talks when he issued a YouTube message in English hoping that the nuclear deal could create 'new horizons to address important, common challenges'. Even the austere, unsmiling Ayatollah Ali Khamenei hinted in April, that Iran could entertain a different approach and cooperate on issues of mutual interests, of course with the usual caveats; 'if the other side gives up its usual diversionary tactics, this will become an experience for us that, very well, we can negotiate with them on other issues'.

The striking irony is that theocratic Iran, the country that sponsors major non-state actors such as Hezbollah and others that engage in violence and terror on its behalf in the region and beyond is projecting itself now as the bulwark against Islamist (Sunni) terrorism. Once again, the ever slick Zarif in an interview with CBS after the deal 'it is important for the people in the U.S. to look at the realities in the region. See who is supporting these very serious threats to our regional security and stability and who is defending the region against the threat of extremism, violence and sectarianism, and then they will see'. The emergence of the so-called 'Islamic State' (ISIS) as a common threat against the Iraqi regime, has helped to rehabilitate in practical terms, Iran's notorious al-Quds force and its leader Qassem Soleimani designated as a terrorist by the U.S. because of the American blood on his hands, who is very instrumental in establishing the sectarian Shiite militias as an effective fighting force against ISIS.

Arabs exposed

Iran is saddled now with a plethora of regional burdens, stretching from propping up a failing regime in Syria and a disintegrating state at the same time, a persistent challenge from ISIS in Iraq, and a new challenge in Yemen. These burdens have deprived Iran from its previous hollow claims that it is seeking the mantle of leadership of the Muslim world, and not simply acting as a regional Shiite power. Yet Iran remains the major outside and decisive player in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon, and to a lesser extent in Yemen. If anything, the nuclear deal which alarmed the main players in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, will likely lead to the intensification of the on-going civil wars with regional powers doubling down on their support for their proxies. There is no prospect whatsoever, in the foreseeable future for an entente between Tehran and Riyadh. The Arab states talk occasionally about creating an effective joint Arab force, but that force at best is a chimera. The hemorrhaging and the disintegration in Syria will continue, Iraq's sectarian and ethnic polarizations will continue to deepen, while Iran tighten its grip on it, and Yemen will experience more deprivation and despair and Lebanon will become more marginalized with Hezbollah, Iran's formidable proxy penetrating its brittle institutions and destroying what's left of its sovereignty.

Walid Jumblatt, a veteran Lebanese leader may have articulated what many Arabs feel about the nuclear deal with Iran at these painful and confusing times in the region when he said that the deal was reached 'over the ruins of the Arab world'. In a short commentary, Jumblatt added: 'It was concluded on the wreckage of the Arab world which has descended into chaos and darkness at a time when regional and international players content to watch Arab blood wasted as they seek only their interests'. Jumblatt linked the deal to the American invasion of Iraq and the war in Syria. Jumblatt's hyperbole aside, he is touching a raw nerve in what seems to be a fading Arab region. While we should not ignore the centrality of human agency in understanding (and ultimately solving) these conflicts, Jumblatt's observations bring into bold relief the depth of malaise, despair and alienation most Arabs feel while watching their world disintegrating.

<http://yalibnan.com/>

Deal Reached, U.S.-Iranian Relations May Be Tougher Hurdle

Americans clearly perceive Iran's potential development of nuclear weapons as a major threat to the U.S. President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry have positioned the proposed nuclear deal reached on Tuesday as the best way to neutralize that threat. This objective fits with American public opinion, although the particulars of the way in which the new deal reaches that objective will most likely continue to generate significant controversy.

Earlier this year, 77% of Americans said that the development of nuclear weapons by Iran is a critical threat to the vital interests of the U.S. in the next 10 years. That ranks just below the Islamic State group, or ISIS, and international terrorism at the top of a list of potential threats.

Some observers have lauded the agreement for potentially being able to "reshape relations between Iran and the West." Americans would no doubt agree with the need to accomplish that goal, given that their concerns about Iran run long and deep, although with some moderation in the last two years. Between 2006 and 2012, Iran topped the list when Gallup asked Americans to name the country's greatest enemy. Last year, Iran tied with North Korea in second place, behind China. This year, Iran's position on the greatest enemy list fell ever further, named as such by 9% of the public, coming in behind Russia, North Korea and China, and virtually tied with Iraq.

Iran remains one of Americans' least liked countries in the world, as it has since the 1979 revolution. Prior to that event, during which Iranian students ultimately held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days, Americans overall were more positive about the country. This year, 11% of Americans gave Iran a favorable rating, which is less positive than any other country except for the 9% favorable rating North Korea received. Eighty-four percent of Americans view Iran unfavorably.

Agreement May Bring Relief to Many Iranians

In exchange for limiting its nuclear activities, the proposed nuclear deal would reportedly give Iran relief from the economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations, the U.S. and the European Union and allow the country to continue its nuclear program for peaceful purposes. The deal would help revive Iran's economy, which reportedly shrank up to 20% under the sanctions and has lost billions in oil revenue. With most Iranians in late 2014 saying these sanctions had hurt their livelihoods and more than half (56%) approving of Iran developing its own nuclear capabilities for non-military use, both of these aspects of the agreement are likely to find favor with the Iranian public.

While Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said Tuesday that the West and Iran could gradually eliminate distrust if the deal is implemented correctly, this is certain to take time. Iranians' concerns about the U.S. also run long and deep. In the past several years, Iranians' approval ratings of U.S. leadership have typically been among the lowest in the world, ranging from 12% to 15% between 2012 and 2014 as the public held the U.S. chiefly to blame for the sanctions against their country. Iranians'

low approval ratings were only supplanted in 2014 by Russia and other post-Soviet states after the crisis in Ukraine and Crimea.

Next Steps

Although the deal has been forged, it is far from done. Several steps remain, not the least of which, Obama must submit the agreement to Congress for review, and in Iran, the country's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, must endorse it. As the future of the deal remains in limbo, so does the future of relations between the West and Iran -- and by extension, Americans and Iranians.

<http://www.gallup.com/>

Iraq

Daech : Un an de prétendu califat

le 17 Juillet 2015



Le 29 juin 2015, le groupe Etat islamique (EI) fêtait le premier anniversaire de la proclamation de son «califat», un territoire situé à cheval entre l'Irak et la Syrie. Mais son action est bien plus vaste par des ralliements ou des copycats, des imitations.

L'action de Daech paraît se diversifier au fil des mois au-delà de son occupation territoriale de fait. En une année, les attaques de l'Etat islamique se sont diversifiées. En 2014, seulement six pays avaient été visés, selon l'Institut pour l'étude de la guerre américain (ISW) qui compile minutieusement les données. Les attaques ont visé en très grande majorité l'Irak (1.097 attaques, soit environ 88% du total), devant la Syrie (134), le Liban (23), la Turquie (4), l'Egypte (3) et Israël (1).

Le premier semestre de 2015 montre déjà une diversification géographique. Arabie Saoudite, Afghanistan, Egypte, l'EI a allongé sa liste de cibles. Les meilleures preuves restent les attentats à Sousse (Tunisie) et au Koweït, tout comme les nombreux attentats en Libye ou au Yémen. Il ne faut pas non plus oublier qu'Amedy Coulibaly, le tueur de l'Hyper Cacher de la porte de Vincennes, lors des attentats de janvier 2015 à Paris, a revendiqué dans une vidéo son appartenance au groupe Etat islamique. Même l'Australie a été touchée.

Certes, l'état islamique milite pour regrouper les musulmans partageant son radicalisme sur un territoire historique et cela reste sa priorité. Mais la globalisation paraît imposée par le recrutement mondial favorisée par les migrations des combattants étrangers.

«Les combattants étrangers sont dans une perspective beaucoup plus globalisante et peuvent faire pencher la balance vers une extension du conflit», estime Myriam Benraad, politologue spécialiste du Moyen-Orient et auteure de «Irak, la revanche de l'histoire: de l'occupation étrangère à l'Etat islamique» (éditions Vendémiaire). Boko Haram est une illustration de l'extension de Daech ou de son influence au-delà de son territoire arabo-musulman. Des membres présumés du groupe islamiste ont perpétré trois attaques dans le nord-est du Nigeria qui ont fait du mercredi 1er juillet la journée la plus sanglante depuis l'arrivée au pouvoir de Muhammadu Buhari. L'attaque du village de Kukawa, proche du lac Tchad, au cours de laquelle au moins 97 personnes ont été tuées, est de loin le pire carnage depuis l'investiture, le 29 mai, du président Buhari qui a érigé en priorité la lutte contre les insurgés affiliés au groupe Etat islamique (EI). Peu après, à une cinquantaine de kilomètres de là, dans le même Etat de Borno, des islamistes lançaient l'assaut sur deux villages voisins à la sortie de Monguno: 48 fidèles musulmans réunis pour la prière du soir ont été fusillés et les villages ont été entièrement rasés. Les musulmans ne sont pas plus épargnés que les catholiques.

En tout, plus de 400 personnes ont péri dans les violences attribuées à Boko Haram depuis un mois, selon un décompte de l'AFP. Le vice-président Yemi Osinbajo, en tournée dans cette région, a réaffirmé la détermination du président Buhari à «mettre fin à l'insurrection terroriste dans le nord-est».

Les attaques de Boko Haram et leur répression par les forces de sécurité ont fait plus de 15.000 morts depuis 2009 au Nigeria, pays le plus peuplé et première économie d'Afrique.

Une opération militaire régionale lancée en février par le Nigeria et les pays voisins, Tchad en tête, a permis au pouvoir nigérian de reprendre possession de la quasi-totalité des localités du nord-est contrôlées par le groupe armé. Mais les attentats n'ont pas cessé pour autant.

Cependant, le grand tour noir qui menace le Mali, l'Egypte, l'Algérie et la Tunisie, c'est bien la Libye. D'où l'intense effort diplomatique du Maroc, que la communauté internationale devrait soutenir plus activement, seule alternative à la guerre pour empêcher la contagion terroriste par le chaos étatique.

Douze personnes suspectées d'être liées à l'attentat de Sousse ont été arrêtées. Interpellées, elles sont suspectées d'être liées à l'attentat terroriste commis le

vendredi 26 juin contre l'hôtel Imperial Marhaba de Sousse qui a fait 38 morts, dont 30 Britanniques et 39 blessés. Elles sont soupçonnées de s'être entraînées en Libye avec les auteurs de l'attaque du Bardo en mars et avec Seifeddine Rezgui, l'auteur de l'attaque de Sousse. Les liens de celui-ci avec des extrémistes basés en Libye ayant été évoqués, l'enquête aurait en effet montré que Seifeddine Rezgui était en contact avec des terroristes en Libye et qu'il s'est probablement entraîné dans un camp libyen. Seifeddine Rezgui n'aurait d'ailleurs pas agi seul et avait au moins un complice, selon Mohamed Ali Laroui, le porte-parole du ministère de l'Intérieur tunisien.

La France, sous la présidence Sarkozy, porte une terrible responsabilité dans la situation actuelle. «L'orient le jour» a repris comme «Le Monde» les déclarations très claires d'un général français. Le commandant de la force française Barkhane au Sahel, le général Jean-Pierre Palasset, a estimé que la lutte contre le terrorisme impliquait d'agir partout où il se développe, y compris en Libye. «Elle ne doit pas se faire dans la demi-mesure. Soit on va partout où le terrorisme est et partout où il se développe (...), soit on n'est pas partout où il est et il survit», a relevé le général Palasset, lors d'une vidéo-conférence avec des journalistes à Paris depuis son quartier-général de N'Djamena.

«C'est une réponse très politique qui ne m'appartient pas». «L'efficacité veut que l'on lutte partout contre le terrorisme», a-t-il toutefois insisté. La question d'une intervention se pose particulièrement dans le sud de la Libye d'où part l'essentiel des flux logistiques en hommes et armes qui alimentent les groupes terroristes implantés au Sahel.

Tandis qu'au nord du pays le chaos règne, au gré des combats entre les groupes armés liés à Al-Qaïda et ceux qui ont rallié l'Etat islamique, les militaires français espèrent tenir un cordon sanitaire pour leurs partenaires africains. De nombreux groupes sont orphelins de chefs et doivent recomposer leur commandement sur fond de concurrence avec l'EI et de mimétisme dans la terreur et la violence. Le jour même où un attentat, promptement revendiqué par Al-Qaïda au Maghreb islamique (AQMI), a tué six Casques bleus burkinabés dans la région de Tombouctou, au Mali, le patron de «Barkhane» assure constater «une décomposition complète du paysage terroriste dans les cinq pays de la région: les principaux groupes sont orphelins de chefs et doivent recomposer leur commandement, sur fond de concurrence avec l'EI et de mimétisme dans la terreur et la violence». De nombreux cadres ont été éliminés par les forces spéciales ces derniers mois dont, à la mi-mai, le charismatique «Al-Targui», l'artisan du ralliement des Touaregs à Al-Qaïda, ainsi qu'Ibrahim Ag Inawalen, considéré comme le chef de la police religieuse du groupe Ansar Eddine.

«Au sud-Libye tout est à faire», a martelé le général Palasset. «C'est le pays incubateur du terrorisme» dans la région, a-t-il noté. La Libye sert aussi de plus en plus

de base arrière pour des attentats du groupe Etat islamique en Tunisie. L'armée française a installé une base près de la frontière libyenne à Madama, dans le nord du Niger, à partir de laquelle elle essaie de perturber les flux jihadistes vers le Mali et le Niger. «Elle sera complètement opérationnelle avec l'arrivée de nos hélicoptères à l'automne (...), mais nous menons déjà des opérations depuis le mois de décembre. On est sur un rythme d'une opération mensuelle», a précisé l'officier. Le commandant de Barkhane s'est montré plus confiant, malgré les derniers attentats, dans la lutte contre le groupe islamiste Boko Haram au Nigeria. «30 à 40% des forces de Boko Haram ont été détruites» grâce à l'intervention conjointe de plusieurs pays de la région (Tchad, Cameroun, Niger), a-t-il dit.

Reste à évoquer en Afrique la Somalie.

Les islamistes Chabab, de leur côté, sans s'identifier à Daech, mais menaçant la France et ses centres commerciaux, ont revendiqué une nouvelle attaque sur le sol somalien, mercredi 24 juin. La police a annoncé qu'au moins six personnes ont été tuées, dont quatre civils, à Mogadiscio, dans un attentat-suicide au véhicule piégé, ajoutant que le kamikaze visait un convoi de l'ambassade des Emirats Arabes Unis. Six autres personnes ont été blessées, certaines grièvement. Le représentant des Nations Unies en Somalie, Nick Kay, a condamné la «cruelle attaque terroriste contre les Emirats en Somalie» et indiqué avoir parlé à l'ambassadeur émirati, Mohamed Al-Osmani, qui est «heureusement indemne». Les Chabab considèrent le gouvernement des Emirats Arabes Unis comme étant «apostat».

Les insurgés islamistes somaliens intensifient traditionnellement leurs actions durant le mois de jeûne du Ramadan. Ils avaient déjà attaqué une base des services de renseignement somaliens à Mogadiscio, mais les assaillants avaient été abattus avant de faire des victimes.

Largement vaincus par la puissance de feu supérieure de la Force militaire de l'Union africaine (Amisom) qui épaula l'embryon d'armée somalienne, les Chabab ont été chassés depuis août 2011 de Mogadiscio, puis de la quasi-totalité de leurs bastions du sud et du centre de la Somalie. Ils contrôlent néanmoins toujours de larges zones rurales et ont abandonné le combat conventionnel pour les actions de guérilla et les attentats-suicides, notamment dans la capitale somalienne.

L'union de tous les islamistes radicaux n'est pas encore une réalité comme le prouvent d'autre part les difficultés de Daech à s'implanter en Afghanistan. Le groupe Etat Islamique serait cependant dans une «phase initiale d'exploration» en Afghanistan, d'après le Pentagone qui a décelé «quelques indications d'efforts de recrutement limité», selon un rapport.

«Quelques individus», auparavant affiliés à d'autres groupes, se sont rebaptisés «Province du Khorasan» dans le groupe Etat islamique, mais ce «changement de

marque» est «très probablement un effort» pour attirer attention médiatique, financement et recrutement, selon le Pentagone. Ce début d'émergence inquiète cependant la coalition internationale, les gouvernements afghans et pakistanais, mais aussi les talibans, note le rapport transmis. Le groupe Etat islamique «continuera probablement d'essayer d'augmenter sa présence en Afghanistan pendant l'année à venir et cherchera à rivaliser» avec les talibans et autres groupes insurgés du pays. L'analyse américaine souligne également que le mouvement taliban reste de son côté «résistant», «continuant de tenter de convaincre les Afghans que ses victoires temporaires sont des victoires stratégiques». De tous les groupes talibans, le réseau Haqqani «reste la plus grande menace» pour les forces américaines et afghanes et un «vecteur crucial» pour Al-Qaïda. Cette branche puissante des talibans «reste capable de planifier et de conduire des attaques», malgré les coups récemment portés par l'armée pakistanaise, note le Pentagone.

Les talibans ont mis en garde le chef de l'EI contre toute tentative d'implantation dans leur pays, après des accrochages dans l'est entre leurs hommes et des combattants se réclamant de l'EI. Ils ne veulent pas d'un islamisme arabe dans leur pays. Les rivalités entre les organisations radicales sont exacerbées par l'émergence de Daech et exploitées, bien sûr, par les services occidentaux pour provoquer des guerres entre les «frères ennemis». Une stratégie qui pourrait finalement être efficace un peu partout, plus que les bombardements de la coalition en Irak et en Syrie. Frappes ciblées et intoxications, un an après, plus que l'intervention au sol, voilà ce qui menace les terroristes de Daech.

Syria

Re-configuring the Middle East: IS and Changing Demographics

Synopsis

The Middle East's multiple conflicts, with Islamic State (IS) in the forefront, are altering the contours of the Middle East in more ways than one. After effectively redrawing the map of Iraq and Syria with the creation of an entity of its own, IS' impact in Kurdistan is likely to have far-reaching consequences for the region's demographics.

Commentary

THE SYRIAN civil war and Iraqi sectarian conflicts involving Islamic State (IS) have had far-reaching consequences for the demographics across the region. Once a relatively ethnically homogeneous autonomous region, Iraqi Kurdistan has seen its demography change radically as large numbers of Arab refugees pour into what was once an independent Kurdish state-in-waiting. The influx of refugees fleeing areas of Iraq controlled by IS and fighting across the country, has pitted the Iraqi military and Shia militias against the jihadists.

As a result, it is in Kurdistan where the impact of IS on borders and demographics is likely to have the most immediate and far-reaching consequences. That is all the more true given that neither Syria nor Iraq are likely to remain the nation states that they were since achieving independence.

Consequences for Kurdish independence

That has consequences for Kurdish aspirations for independence that peaked in the immediate wake of last year's sweep of northern Iraq in which IS captured Mosul, Iraq's second largest city. Initially, Massoud Barzani, the president of the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), responded to the IS blitzkrieg by seizing control of the disputed oil-rich city of Kirkuk and speeding up his timetable for a referendum in which the Kurds would vote on declaring independence.

However, with non-Kurdish refugees who are likely to stay for the foreseeable future, if not sprout roots, now accounting for almost a third of Iraqi Kurdistan's population of 5.2 million, prospects for independence have been significantly complicated. The stream of refugees is imposing a mixed complexion on what was once a region with an almost exclusively Kurdish identity. This unintended fallout of the refugee stream ironically fits IS' anti-nationalist vision of a pan-Islamic empire (caliphate).

The continuous military threat posed by IS has also forced Barzani to temper his as-

pirations. Ironically the reverse is happening in north-western Syria, where Arab Sunnis accuse Syrian Kurds, who have recently scored significant victories against IS, of cleansing areas they control in preparation of a future Syrian Kurdish state.

Multiple sensitivities

The refugee influx involves multiple sensitivities. Like in Jordan and Lebanon where refugees from Syria and Iraq have already changed demographic balances and are putting severe strains on the countries' service infrastructures, Arabs are competing on Kurdistan's job market at often far lower wages than the local Kurdish population had become accustomed to. Similarly, rents and real estate prices have skyrocketed limiting access to local Kurds who no longer can afford the hikes.

Potential social tensions that have already become visible in Lebanon and Syria could take on an extra dimension in Iraq where Kurds and Arabs have long co-existed uneasily. Kurds have not forgotten that Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein employed chemical weapons in his bid to subdue Kurds who were seeking autonomy. Immediately after Saddam's fall in 2003, Kurds forced the departure of Arabs who had settled in Kurdistan with Saddam's encouragement.

Signs of bubbling tension are becoming visible among a Kurdish population sympathetic to those fleeing discrimination, repression and violence because of their own history of suppression. Kurds are beginning to voice resentment that they are having to fight IS on the frontline to protect the Arabs seeking refuge in their midst.

The threat of social tensions is enhanced by IS' interest in stoking problems between Kurds and Arabs. A Kurdish student admitted responsibility in April for a car bomb that exploded near the US consulate in the KRG capital of Erbil.

Separatism on the rise

Analysts have praised Jordan and Lebanon for maintaining calm despite mounting tensions between Syrian refugees, who account for up to 25 percent of the population, and the local population despite regular flareups between them. Tensions are visible in Turkey too but with a population of 75 million, Turkey has less demographic and identity problems in absorbing the refugees.

The rise of IS has moreover not only created a puritan Islamist entity in the heart of the Middle East that is irredentist and expansionary in nature, it has also fuelled long-standing Kurdish nationalist aspirations and sparked separatist trends among many other groups.

Iraqi Sunnis are divided with scores fleeing to Kurdistan while others fearful of rising anti-Sunni Shia nationalism see IS as the lesser of two evils. Syrian president Bashar

al-Assad's Alawite minority may see a retreat to its heartland on the Syrian coast as the only way to escape the wrath of his opponents should he be unable to hold on to the capital Damascus. Separatist tendencies are also emerging in Iraq's relatively safe and oil-rich Shia south that is the economic engine for the government in Baghdad.

Across the Middle East, IS and violent conflict are changing realities on the ground and forcing multiple ethnic and religious groups to reconsider their options. In Kurdistan collapsing oil prices add to the cost of accommodating refugees and have altered what Patrick Osgood, the Kurdistan bureau chief for the Iraq Oil Report, calls "the mathematics of when the KRG can exit Iraq". Osgood notes that "the (demographic) numbers (now) weigh in favour of doing a deal within the federal system" of Iraq rather than opting for independence.

As noted by Fuad Hussein, Barzani's chief of staff: "You cannot sleep if ISIS is your neighbour. You will have many nightmares. The reality is now different. We are facing a threat ... the bubble has burst."

James M. Dorsey is a Senior Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University and co-director of the Institute of Fan Culture of the University of Wurzburg, Germany.

Nanyang Technological University

Block S4, Level B4, 50 Nanyang Avenue, Singapore 639798

Tel: +65 6790 6982 | Fax: +65 6794 0617 | www.rsis.edu.sg

United Kingdom

Terror's long story continues

July 15, 2015

As I See It Kevin Noa

"Among the Mad," the latest Maisie Dobbs novel I have been reading, puts terrorism into the plot right from the get-go. These novels, set in London after the Great War, tell of the career of a 30-something lady, psychologist, investigator, who always solves the crimes and mysteries of those who hire her. This one, published in 2009, immediately grabs the reader, especially with terror reaching the crescendo it has 15 years into this millennium.

However, this setting some 90 years ago has all the elements of fear from the shadows lurking in the unknown.

Terror has always come from two perspectives. One is the violent threats from those who prey on society who hide their identities in some way. With the Internet and social media, the threats that put everyone on alert, especially during holidays and celebrations, have grown in quantum leaps due to the age of technology.

Where instead of a hand-written note in "Among the Mad," delivered to law enforcement in 1925, now threats can reach all seven continents quickly with a few clicks of a mouse or tap of a stylist.

Then there are direct threats from groups or countries who proudly display the savagery they inflict.

But the motivational force of terror simply comes down to hate and the power each individual or group seeks to inflict on others from an unhappy life. Think about it: Would a person happy and satisfied with their lives, comfortable in their own skin, try to deliberately threaten and carry out acts of terror? I don't think so.

Poverty, prejudice and unemployment are great motivators that germinate anger that quickly grows like Jack's beanstalk. The years between the two world wars saw massive unemployment from economic collapse that led to staggering depression. That enabled Adolph Hitler's anger and racism to release a terror so vile it began a second world war and sent several more millions to their deaths. Thus the Paris Treaty that was signed in 1919 to end the war to end all wars, sure, lasted 10 years.

The two perspectives of terror and terrorism are now wreaking havoc all over the world, whether they are killing and sending countless people fleeing North Africa and the Middle East or they are a group of African American Christians practicing their faith, executed by a white racist young man. The barbaric terror in 2015 is getting two thumbs-up from Satan. And unfortunately, it's going to get worse before

it gets better. With summer now upon us, more precautions and alerts are broadcast in the waiting game that can strike anytime.

The unhappiness for various reasons that draw individuals, mostly young men, to various terror groups become very complex when trying to solve the problem of terrorism. Then, putting lives in danger, mostly military, but others too, keeps leaders stressed as to what to do. With the sophistication of communication, terrorism's playground bullies are all over the globe. How much the envelope will be pushed either by groups or individuals seeking to do harm keeps growing.

As I See It Kevin Noa

Terror has always played a role throughout history. Now, however, the evil terror seeks is taking more and more lives from the unhappy, mad and power-hungry individuals or groups who thrive on the violence and mayhem that keeps to many parts of the Earth living in utter fear.

☪☪☪

Kevin Noa of Merrimac is retired from the Lowell public schools.

<http://www.newburyportnews.com/>

Cameron's anti-terror plan requires social revolution

JUL 22, 2015, 5:00 AM SGT



British PM David Cameron looking at a computer with Ms Aysha Iqbal Patel (far left) and Ms Zahra Qadir during a workshop about ways to report suspicious online activity, at Ninestiles Academy in Birmingham, central England,

Fundamental changes in public housing, education needed if measures are to succeed

Britain's Muslim organisations have backed Prime Minister David Cameron's call to expose the brutality of terrorist organisations such as ISIS to prevent the radicalisation of young people.

But in a first warning of the troubles which lie ahead in implementing the government's proposed measures, organisations such as the Muslim Council of Britain, the country's biggest, have expressed fears that Mr Cameron's call to promote and "enforce" British values may instead fuel prejudice and suspicion.

Human rights pressure groups have also served notice that some of the measures will be met with stiff opposition.

Mr Cameron's five-year plan to combat radicalism that was outlined this week offered several notable proposals: Parents will be able to apply to have their children's passports confiscated if they fear they will travel to the Middle East to join a terrorist group; Britain's communications regulator will be given new powers to clamp down on media channels broadcasting "hate preachers and extremist content"; the government will try to allocate social housing in a way that prevents ethnic segregation, and "integrated" free schools will be set up in ethnically segregated areas.

Some of the measures can become reality quickly, and may not require new legislation. This is the case with the move to allow parents to ask for the confiscation of their children's passports. Britain's Home Secretary already has powers to cancel the passports of people suspected of volunteering for terrorism, and allowing parents to request the withdrawal of their children's passports is not such a revolutionary idea.

But overhauling housing arrangements in order to tackle ethnic segregation will require a revolution. The provision of social housing in Britain is a matter for the local authorities rather than the central government.

Furthermore, social housing is allocated on the basis of need, and places in the queue are bitterly fought over. Any attempt to change the mechanism of allocation to create a representative racial mix of residents will not only require a fundamental change in the law, but also risks running foul of Britain's national and European human rights obligations, both of which ban discrimination on the basis of race, skin colour or religion.

Besides, Britain's social housing estates are already ethnically mixed: Recently arrived refugees from Africa mingle with second-generation immigrants from South Asia.

The only intermixing which takes place less frequently is that between immigrants and white Britons, which is presumably what Mr Cameron wants to promote. Yet achieving that will require large-scale construction of social housing in order to reduce overall house prices; the biggest racial segregator in Britain is not race, but the lack of affordable housing.

Draconian new measures will also be required to promote integration in schools. Currently, many parents try to place their children in faith-based schools because these are assumed to offer better teaching than the state-funded sector.

The government now proposes to order these faith schools to allocate at least half of their places to children who may not belong to the school's religion.

But that's likely to embroil the authorities in years of fighting with various communities, and will not get around the problem of de facto racial segregation in schools, based on the catchment area of educational establishments.

Nevertheless, Mr Cameron's strategy did serve an important purpose: that of shift-

ing the anti-radicalisation emphasis from one which targets only the men of violence, to one which pushes for a broader integration of people and values as the only way of dealing with the terrorism phenomenon.

"Too often we have lacked the confidence to enforce our values, for fear of causing offence," Mr Cameron said. "We have to confront a tragic truth: That there are people born and raised in this country who don't really identify with Britain."

Legislation which he promises to introduce in October will make it an offence for individuals to peddle extremist views, even if no attack is planned. And the broadcasting regulator will get powers to take off air any network which does the same. Human rights groups such as Amnesty International are already warning that they will fight laws "which criminalise freedom of speech", as Ms Rachel Logan, its legal director, put it.

Opinion polls indicate that the broad British public supports such measures. Still, Mr Cameron admits that he is embarking on "a long battle of ideas". And one in which legal defeats for the government are likely to be more numerous than victories.

<http://www.straitstimes.com/>

USA

REPORT: 1/4 OF TERROR SUSPECTS INFLUENCED BY AL-QAEDA'S AL-AWLAKI, NOT ISIS



Nearly 25 percent of the terror suspects prosecuted in the U.S. since 2007 were influenced by Anwar al-Awlaki, the New Mexico-born cleric linked to al-Qaeda's Yemen-based affiliate, according to an analysis by the Fordham Law School's Center on National Security conducted at the request of [NBC News](#).

Although Al-Awlaki was killed by a U.S. drone in 2011, his rhetoric lives on the Internet.

At the request of NBC News, the Fordham center surveyed 287 jihadist cases since 2007, and after analyzing government documents and media reports found that 65 of them are linked to al-Awlaki or his rhetoric.

The gunman who killed four Marines and a Navy sailor in Chattanooga last Thursday, Mohammad Youssef Abdulazez, had reportedly [downloaded](#) audio recordings of the New Mexico-born jihadi cleric and had CDs of his speeches, according to information unveiled this week.

"The takeaway on Awlaki is that he is involved with a large swath of the terrorism cases that attracted public attention, including several aborted plots and several

high-profile sting operations,” Karen Greenberg, director of the Fordham center, told NBC News.

“Starting with al-Qaeda, he essentially schooled the next generation in how to take the message of violent jihad forward,” she also said, adding, “His influence is laced through these cases in a way that is more powerful in the aggregate than is readily apparent in individual cases and that has enabled his influence to last way beyond his death, which was four years ago.”

Al-Awlaki and three other suspected al-Qaeda leaders were [killed in Yemen](#) by Hell-fire missiles launched from a Predator drone. The al-Qaeda recruiter was born in New Mexico.

Since 2007, Greenberg noted, al-Awlaki’s presence in terrorism cases has been “constant.” In fact, his influence has grown after his demise, U.S. officials reportedly say.

“In his crafting of the jihadist message, he was the likely successor to bin Laden,” Greenberg told NBC News, referring to al-Awlaki. “In his understanding of the potential of social media, his vision of a new personalized form of jihad, and his understanding of the new generation, he provided the bridge from al-Qaeda to ISIS.”

“As such, his impact lasts in a powerful way,” she added.

<http://www.breitbart.com/>

Foreign Analysis: Security will top agenda on Obama visit to Kenya



Foreign Analysis: Security will top agenda on Obama visit to Kenya

24 July 2015

KENYA will be gripped with “Obama-mania” today as the US president flies into his ancestral homeland as part of a visit to Africa that will also include Ethiopia. An emotional and historic moment it will certainly be, but it will also serve as a sharp reminder of so much unfulfilled promise in terms of the Obama administration’s policies on Africa, but more of that in a moment.

Above all the US leader’s visit will be overshadowed by security concerns. Those concerns start with the president’s own safety during a stay in a country that is racked by Islamist inspired terror at the hands of al-Qaeda’s Africa affiliate the Somalia based al-Shabaab group. Given the massive security operation surrounding the Obama visit it’s unlikely that al-Shabaab will get anywhere near what for them would be a dream target.

That said, intelligence analysts over the last few days have flagged up the growing online “chatter” among al-Shabaab about the visit.

Some too have pointed to a Kenya Civil Aviation Authority bulletin announcing that national airspace will be closed for 50 minutes on arrival and 40 minutes on departure, unwittingly publicising the exact dates and timings of Mr Obama’s travel. Such details are usually kept secret but US officials have brushed off the leak with

national security house adviser Susan Rice saying it would “in no way affect our approach and plans”.

During his time in Kenya, Mr Obama’s security entourage will consist of his bespoke, bomb-proof limousine nicknamed “the beast” by secret service men. The beast is just one of as many as 60 vehicles specially flown into Kenya for the visit. Then there are the military helicopters that have arrived reportedly from a US Special Forces facility at Kenya’s coastal Manda Bay base, which serves as a launch pad for raids on al-Shabaab in Somalia.

In Nairobi all of this is highly visible of course, but what will not be seen are the activities taking place hundreds of miles away inside Somalia itself. Over the last week the US military has conducted nearly half a dozen air strikes there against al-Shabaab because US intelligence indicated an attack against Kenyan troops was imminent.

While the Pentagon is remaining schtum about these operations there seems little doubt their intention is to make sure al-Shabaab keep their heads down while Mr Obama is on Kenyan soil.

This is all well and good but it will not stop the group looking for more vulnerable targets to attack in a display of defiance inside Kenya itself.

What’s most likely is not an attack against a US government official such as the president, but an attack that happens while the president is there,” points out Seth Jones, director of the International Security and Defence Policy Centre at the RAND Corporation.

Like many analysts he believes that al-Shabaab would more likely do what they have done before going for soft targets such as the Westgate shopping mall that only reopened last week after the attack there in 2013 that killed at least 67 people. Working on the assumption that the Kenya visit goes off without a hitch Mr Obama will of course move on to Ethiopia. Again this underlines the close cooperation Washington has with these two Horn of Africa nations in the fight against Islamic inspired terror.

Earlier this month, some 3,000 Ethiopian soldiers, part of the African Union Mission in Somalia crossed into Somalia near Dolow. Bolstered by Somali National Army units this Ethiopian offensive continues against al-Shabaab and no doubt Mr Obama will express his heartfelt thanks to Ethiopian president Mulatu Teshome. Not everyone is happy about this relationship of course. Human rights groups have criticised Mr Obama’s trip to Ethiopia because of the country’s handling of political dissent.

This is a telling detail. For despite Mr Obama’s concerted efforts to increase US ties

with Africa his presidency's track record has been patchy when it comes to policy directed at the continent. Put in blunt terms his first term in office was especially poor with initiatives on health and clean energy quickly abandoned and food security efforts limping along. Mr Obama's second term however was much better. He should be applauded for a number of humanitarian initiatives. Among these was the US response to crises in Central African Republic and Burundi and supporting efforts to search for the Nigerian schoolgirls kidnapped by Islamist terror group, Boko Haram.

On other crucial humanitarian issues though Mr Obama's administration has been found wanting, notably over its slow response time to the Ebola outbreak. For the moment however it is counterterrorism that remains Washington's main preoccupation across Africa. Using its Africa Command based out of Stuttgart in Germany the Pentagon has focused on meeting the long-term challenges of violent extremism in places such as Mali, Somalia, DR Congo, and Nigeria. While Mr Obama's arrival in Kenya today will see him talk business with other leaders attending the Entrepreneurship Summit in Nairobi, it's a given that another agenda will see regional security and tackling Islamic extremism occupy much of the negotiations.

There is simply no getting away from it these days.

<http://www.heraldscotland.com/>

Yemen

News Analysis: Yemeni crisis mirrors regional unrest in Middle East

Jul 26, 2015

CAIRO, July 25 (Xinhua) -- The ongoing crisis in conflict-stricken Yemen is reflection of a regional unrest in the Middle East, especially after the forces of fleeing President Abd-Rabbo Mansour Hadi seized strategic southern city of Aden against Shiite Houthi fighters, said Egyptian experts.

Yemen has become more like a battlefield for regional and even international powers that seek more influence in the Middle East region through the ongoing conflict hitting the country, including the United States, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

U.S. INTERESTS

"Yemen has always been a place of interest for the United States, and former U.S. President Clinton said openly that Yemen is a matter of a national security for the United States," said Gehad Auda, professor of international relations at Helwan University.

The professor told Xinhua that Yemen is highly located due to its control of Bab al-Mandeb Strait that connects between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden as well as between the continents of Asia and Africa, "therefore it is a very critical area geopolitically and geostrategically."

Being responsible for guaranteeing the security of its Gulf allies, the United States must have helped with the seizure of Yemen at the hands of pro-Hadi forces to reassure Saudi Arabia and other Gulf partners about their national security, according to the expert.

SAUDI ARABIA VS IRAN

Unhappy with the recently-reached nuclear deal between Iran and six world powers led by the United States, Sunni Saudi Arabia is obviously concerned about greater influence of Shiite Iran in the region and about Iranian attempts to turn Yemen into a Shiite state, given that the Iran-backed Houthi fighters are Shiites.

Although the deal is expected to strengthen Iran's influence in the region, experts believe that it will take a few years until Iranian regional expansion can be strongly felt after the deal.

Yemen is considered the southern gate for oil-rich Saudi Arabia, so order in Yemen is a matter of national security for the kingdom in particular and for the whole Gulf region in general.

Thus, Saudi Arabia is currently leading an Arab coalition that has been launching air-strikes against the Houthi fighters in favor of Yemeni President Hadi, who fled and sought refuge in Riyadh.

SEIZURE OF ADEN

"Yemen has always been important to Saudi Arabia as it is regarded as a backyard for the kingdom," professor Auda told Xinhua, stressing that Saudi Arabia's help in pro-Hadi forces' control of Yemen marks "new balance" in the war-torn country.

The seizure of Yemen by Hadi's forces is seen as the light at the end of the tunnel for the return of the Yemeni regime after the retreat of the Houthi fighters in the vital city and the full control of Hadi's government in the southern strategic spot.

"Pro-Hadi forces are now in full control of Aden and other southern strategic areas, which shows decline of Houthi forces in strategic areas as a new reality," Tarek Fahmy, political science professor and expert at the National Center for Middle East Studies, told Xinhua.

He added that 90 percent of the government institutions have returned in Aden, including ministries and authorities, expressing his belief that the presence of the Houthi forces is getting weaker through the support of the Saudi-led Arab military coalition.

DIVISION SCENARIO

"The scenario of Yemen's division into south and north has been there since the beginning of the crisis, but this scenario does not satisfy Saudi Arabia as it will be a thorn in the back of the kingdom for which the Houthis represent the project of a Shiite Yemen," said Nourhan al-Sheikh, professor of political sciences at Cairo University.

She said that the division of Yemen could be a "de facto" development that might be later imposed on the ground, yet the Riyadh-led coalition would then treat the Houthis in the north as rebels that must be eliminated.

"Saudi Arabia is the most concerned Arab country about the Yemeni crisis," the professor told Xinhua, "so the kingdom would not accept Yemen's division and would always look at the Houthis as outlaws whose presence in the north is illegitimate."

TERROR EXPANSION

According to many experts, turmoil and terrorism are two faces of the same coin, as chaos is an ideal environment for the growth of extremist groups that would find easier ways for their finance and weapons in a turmoil-stricken country.

"Political vacancy is an ideal environment for extremist groups like the Islamic State and al-Qaida," the expert warned, noting that when the Yemeni regime returns and retains its strength, such groups always go back to their hiding places.

"The more a state's grasp is weak, the more extremist groups flourish and become stronger," professor Sheikh said, noting that al-Qaida militant group has been in Yemen for several years but disorder refreshed it, the same as happened in Syria, Iraq and Libya.

The professor said there is "hope" that such groups diminish when Hadi's regime fully returns and take over power, raiding extremists' hideouts, limiting their activities, preventing their source of finance and stopping their weapon provision.

http://www.shanghaidaily.com/article/article_xinhua.aspx?id=294207

Disclaimer of Liability and Endorsement

While the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) strives to make the information on this publication as timely and accurate as possible, the ACSRT makes no claims, promises, or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of its contents, and expressly disclaims liability for errors and omissions in its contents. No warranty of any kind, implied, expressed, or statutory, including but not limited to the warranties of non-infringement of third party rights, title, merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose or freedom from computer virus, is given with respect to the contents of this publication or its links to other Internet resources.

It should be noted that any opinions expressed are the responsibility of the authors and not of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), its publication board, its management or any funder or sponsor of the ACSRT, nor that of the African Union Commission (AUC),

Reference in this publication to any specific commercial product, process, or service, or the use of any trade, firm or corporation name is for the information and convenience of the public, and does not constitute endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the ACSRT and AUC.