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Table of Contents

Pages

Terrorism in Africa

- Analysis: North Africa, Opportunity for ISIS
- Immigration and Terrorism

4
7

Algeria

- Revue Questions internationales : L'Algérie, puissance régionale, pilier au Maghreb et influente en Afrique

9

Kenya

- Do not ignore women in war on terrorism
- Kenya: Report Reveals Al-Shabaab Returnees Do Not Trust Amnesty

12
15

Libya

- Comment expliquer l'enlèvement de deux Italiens et d'un Canadien ?
- Le rapport accablant sur l'expédition franco-britannique
- Why we must never surrender to terrorism
- Libya's Terrorist Descent: Causes and Solutions

16
19
21
23

Nigeria

- À Maroua, on vit dans la peur des kamikazes de Boko Haram
- Opinion: Boko Haram's new video shows the end of the sect
- Boko Haram Rages in Nigeria, but the World's Eyes Are Elsewhere

31
34
38

International Organizations

UN

- Terror and security through UN eyes

44

Terrorism in the World

- Le chemin de la radicalisation

47

Afghanistan

- A Long Way From Anywhere – Analysis

49

Belgium

- Les attentats de Bruxelles, six mois après: comment les terroristes choisissent leur avocat

56

Canada

- Canada Can Do More to Fight Money Laundering, Terror Financing

58

India	
- After Uri strike, India must impose measured costs on terror exporters	60
Spain	
- iihadists Target Spain	63
Turkey	
- Erdogan/ Il n'est pas juste de lutter contre une organisation terroriste tout en soutenant une autre	67
USA	
- Will US-Russia Deal On Syria Hold? – Analysis	69
- America's terrorism dilemma	72
Yemen	
- An Al Qaeda Martyr's Enduring Pitch	74

Terrorism in Africa

Analysis: North Africa, Opportunity for ISIS

September 19, 2016 - 9:05 PM

Studying ISIS' operations outside of Iraq and Syria, one may conclude that the terrorist group's next bastion will be in the North African region, most likely in Libya



(AhlulBayt News Agency) - Regarding increased ISIS' defeats in Syria and Iraq and the fact that in the not too distant future bases of the terrorist group are going to be in their most vulnerable position since 2014, a question arises that has ISIS any plan to relocate into another place in the Islamic world?

Activities of ISIS terrorists indicate that they have their eyes on somewhere. Studying ISIS' operations outside of Iraq and Syria, one may conclude that the terrorist group's next bastion will be in the North African region, most likely in Libya.

ISIS measures show that its current infiltration rate and gains in Libya are quite similar to those of the terrorist group in the beginnings of the Iraqi and Syrian crises.

After the fall of Muammar Gaddafi, the dead Libyan dictator, there have been endless internal conflicts and wars in Libya. Currently, there are two governments ruling over different parts of the country. One of these governments is Secular and the other is Islamic. Due to this discord, the Libyan military is also in a bad situation.

Aside from the military vulnerability of Libya, there are other factors that make this country suitable in ISIS' eyes. Libya's significant reserves of energy (such as the oil reserves in northern regions of this country, which could be a good substitute for the lost regions of Iraq and Syria), short sea lane to Europe, being close to unstable African countries such as Egypt, Tunisia and Sudan, are all reasons for Libya to be a platform for ISIS, especially since ISIS terrorists are currently losing their strategic

bases in Iraq and Syria.

Over the past few weeks and after the heavy defeat of ISIS in Fallujah, News about mass transit of commanders and prominent clerics that are affiliated with ISIS to Sirte have been heard. Sirte is ISIS' base in north of Libya.

The question that the international community and especially Europe should answer to is: Is it possible to prevent ISIS from spreading in North Africa? In other words, is the scenario of defeating ISIS terrorists in Iraq repeatable in Africa?

To answer this question, one must look at the causes and factors of the defeat of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, and then examine the possibility of implementing the same factors in North Africa.

Role of the Foreign Players in Suppressing ISIS

During the positioning and establishment of ISIS in Libya Europe's security, particularly its southern coast, has been declining. European intelligence services understand this situation better than any other organization, because they are currently involved in containing terrorist cells active in their countries. On this basis, if ISIS' presence in Libya continues to increase, it is expected that Europe take serious measures in dealing with this Takfiri and terrorist group.

Attempts will be taken by Europe to cut off and control the regional support that ISIS receives. Also, NATO's military presence and wide aerial attacks in form of a European coalition will be probable in the future. Thus, it can be speculated that transregional countries will take a stance towards the Libyan crisis that is similar to the stance and activities of US and some European countries towards Iraq and Syria.

National Unity

Over the past few weeks, international and regional players have made efforts to establish and support the national unity government in Libya. These efforts are indicative of international concern for Libya's lack of a central and powerful government.

However, the persistence of numerous and political and military conflicts among different groups in the country, will definitely help the establishment and growth of a group like ISIS in Libya.

The efforts of the international community and especially Europe in removing obstacles that are present in the way of the formation of a national unity government in this country. These efforts include sanctions against the Libyan Security Council, regional powers' secret and public support of establishing a form of a proxy war in Libya, and the tensions between the Secular and Islamic governments.

It seems that in the near future, a national unity government will be formed in Libya, with direct support of Western countries. But it is very unlikely that the formation of such government would be able to solve the fundamental issues and problems that are present among different groups and parties in Libya. With the arrival of ISIS commanders and a considerable number of terrorists to Sirte, the power of ISIS in Libya is constantly increasing.

The formation of a national unity in Libya in order to fight the ISIS terrorists is quite difficult and seems unlikely, but it is not completely impossible.

Resistance

Undoubtedly, if ISIS' operations in Libya keep intensifying, it is very likely that the three abovementioned factors will come true, with similarities and differences to what went on in Syria and Iraq.

But what makes a major difference in the fight against terrorist threats between Eastern Muslim world (especially in Iraq and Syria) and the Western Muslim world (especially Libya) is the lack of the most important factor in combating terrorism, which is resistance.

The North African countries generally lack the concept of popular resistance. Even ancient religious structure such as al-Azhar lack the general public's support, due to their extremely conservative positions and historical alignment with dictatorial powers. Even if such structure existed, the North African region lacks operational infrastructure needed to make use of it.

In Iraq and Syria, the potential capabilities of Islamic resistance have been activated through Resistance Axis, led by Iran, and have been manifested in different organizations, such as Popular Mobilization Forces in Iraq, and Hezbollah in Lebanon. However, it is a completely different story in North Africa. The countries in this region either completely lack the infrastructure that is needed for Resistance, or like Egypt, with a very traditional and classic military and security structure, does not have the power needed to deal with modern security threats such as ISIS. In fact, despite a substantial position in the country, the Egyptian army has been unable to establish full security in Sinai. This further shows the role and importance of resistance in providing security.

Therefore, due to the lack of Resistance, North Africa, areas surrounding it such as the eastern and central parts of Africa, and even the southern shores of Europe are exposed to ISIS threat. Also, the situation of these regions is ambiguous, and the future of these areas will depend on the decision of Western powers and their allies.

<http://en.abna24.com/cultural/archive/2016/09/19/780119/story.html>

Immigration and Terrorism

SEPTEMBER 13, 2016 1:04PM

Cato published a paper of mine today entitled “[Terrorism and Immigration: A Risk Analysis](#).” I began this paper shortly after the San Bernardino terrorist attack in December last year when it became clear that few had attempted a terrorism risk analysis of immigration in general, let alone focusing on individual visa categories. There were few studies on the immigration status of terrorists and the vast majority of them were qualitative rather than quantitative. Inspired by the brilliant work of [John Mueller](#) and [Mark Stewart](#), I decided to make my own.

From 1975 through the end of 2015, 154 foreign-born terrorists murdered 3024 people on U.S. soil. During that same time period, over 1.14 billion foreigners entered the United States legally or illegally. About 7.4 million foreigners entered the United States for each one who ended up being a terrorist. Startlingly, 98.6 percent of those 3024 victims were murdered on 9/11 (I did not count the terrorists as victims, obviously). However, not every terrorist is successful. Only 40 of those 154 foreign-born terrorists actually ended up killing anyone on U.S. soil.

Immigrants frequently enter the United States on one visa and adjust their status to another. Many tourists and other non-immigrants frequently enter legally and then fall out of status and become illegal immigrants. I focused on the visas foreigners used to enter the United States because applications for that visa are when security screenings are initially performed.

Table 1, copied from my paper, shows the chance of being killed in a terrorist attack on U.S. soil by foreigners by visa category. Only three people have been killed on U.S. soil in terrorist attacks caused by refugees – which is a one in 3.64 *billion* chance a year of dying in an attack by a refugee. If future refugees are 100 times as likely to kill Americans at past ones, all else being equal, then the chance of being killed in an attack caused by them will be one in 36 million a year. That’s a level of risk we can live with.

I chose to begin my analysis in 1975 for three main reasons. First, I wanted to make sure to include many refugees because of the current public fear over Syrians. The waves of Cubans and Vietnamese refugees during the 1970s provided a large pool of people in that category. Second, I had to go back to the late 1970s to find refugees who actually killed people on U.S. soil in terrorist attacks. Although some refugees since then have attempted terrorist attacks, none has successfully killed anyone. Third, I wanted to see if there was a different result before and after the modern refugee screening system was created in 1980. The timing of that immigration reform coincides with the end of successful refugee terrorist attacks but the small sample of three victims prior to 1980 and none afterwards speaks volumes.

Table 1

Chance of Dying in an Attack by a Foreign-Born Terrorist, 1975–2015

Visa Category	Terrorism Deaths per Visa Category	Chance of Being Killed	Percent Chance of Being Killed
All	3,024	1 in 3,609,709	0.00003
Tourist	2,834	1 in 3,851,715	0.00003
Student	158.5	1 in 68,869,156	0.000002
Fiancé(e) visa (K-1)	14	1 in 779,697,234	0.0000001
Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR)	8	1 in 1,364,470,160	0.00000007
Asylum	4	1 in 2,728,940,320	0.00000004
Refugee	3	1 in 3,638,587,094	0.00000003
Illegal	1	1 in 10,915,761,281	0.00000001
Unknown	1.5	1 in 7,277,174,187	0.00000001
Visa Waiver Program (VWP)	0	Zero	0.00000000

Source: “*Immigration and Terrorism: A Risk Analysis.*”

In any project of this size, many findings and facts get left on the editing floor. Here are some:

The chance of being murdered by a non-terrorist is one in 14,275 a year compared to one in 3,609,709 a year for all foreign-born terrorist attacks.

The chance of being murdered on U.S. soil by any terrorist, native or foreigner, was one in 3.2 million a year.

The chance of being murdered in a terrorist attack on U.S. soil, committed by a foreigner *after 9/11* was one in 177.1 million a year.

For every successful foreign-born terrorist who actually killed somebody on U.S. soil in an attack, over 28 million foreigners entered the United States.

9/11 is a tremendous outlier in terms of deadliness – about an order of magnitude deadlier than the second-deadliest terror attack in world history. Excluding 9/11 from this analysis helps us understand what most terrorist attacks in the past and the future are going to be like. Doing that reveals that 91 percent of the deaths caused by all terrorists on U.S. soil, native or foreign-born, were committed by natives or those with unknown nationalities (usually because their identities were never uncovered) while 9 percent were committed by foreigners.

<http://www.cato.org/blog/immigration-terrorism>

Algeria

Revue Questions internationales : L'Algérie, puissance régionale, pilier au Maghreb et influente en Afrique

L'Algérie est devenue une puissance régionale de « premier plan » dans l'espace méditerranéen, un « pilier » du Maghreb et « influente » en Afrique, a affirmé la publication Questions internationales dans son numéro de septembre-octobre.

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L'Algérie est devenue une puissance régionale de « premier plan » dans l'espace méditerranéen, un « pilier » du Maghreb et « influente » en Afrique, a affirmé la publication Questions internationales dans son numéro de septembre-octobre. Ce dossier de la Documentation française, qui dépend des structures du Premier ministre français, se propose de dépasser, « sans les ignorer », les approches historiques, mémorielles ou polémiques pour considérer l'Algérie dans son environnement contemporain. « Plus d'un demi-siècle après l'indépendance, l'Algérie est devenue une puissance régionale de premier plan, pilier du Maghreb et influente dans l'ensemble de l'Afrique. Elle est aussi une puissance méditerranéenne et ses liens avec l'Europe sont nombreux », a précisé un éditorial introduisant le périodique de 134 pages, intitulé « L'Algérie, puissance régionale ». Pour l'éditorialiste de Questions internationales, l'Algérie « c'est aussi un pays qui doit surmonter les difficultés économiques récurrentes et absorber une démographie dynamique », relevant que sur le plan international, « elle s'oriente vers la recherche de grands partenariats économiques auprès de la Chine, des Etats-Unis et de la Russie ». Dans son environnement international, l'Algérie, a ajouté le périodique, « se trouve au cœur de plusieurs cercles, celui du Maghreb, celui du Sahel, celui du monde arabe et celui de l'Europe », soulignant qu'elle est devenue un « pôle de stabilité » pour le Sahel, un « acteur influent » en Afrique et un « partenaire important » du monde arabe. Avec l'Europe, ses liens

de « pilier » du Maghreb sont « plus sociétaux qu'interétatiques, même si les échanges économiques sont importants », estime-t-il, soutenant que « la susceptibilité à l'égard de la France continue à orienter l'Algérie vers la recherche des partenariats alternatifs, que ce soit auprès de la Chine, des Etats-Unis, de la Russie, voire d'autres pays européens ». Plusieurs thèmes sont proposés par dossier touchant l'histoire et le poids du passé, l'évolution politique du pays et les défis économiques, en passant par les principes de la politique étrangère et de sécurité et par un regard sur la relation algéro-française. Les signataires de ces analyses sont, entre autres, les historiens français Pierre Vermeren et Gilbert Meynier, le professeur en sciences politiques Thomas Serres, le directeur et co-fondateur de l'Institut de recherche stratégique de l'Ecole militaire (IRSEM) le professeur Frédéric Charillon et le chercheur français d'origine algérienne Nedjib Sidi Moussa. Le numéro spécial de la Documentation française propose également un entretien avec l'ancien diplomate et spécialiste du monde arabe, Denis Bauchard, sur le thème « L'Algérie entre défis internes et périls extérieurs ». Pour sa part, l'auteur de l'ouvrage Histoire juridique des interdits cinématographiques en France (1909-2001), paru en 2007, Albert Montagne, propose un article sur « la censure de la guerre d'Algérie dans le cinéma français ».

Même étant sous une menace extérieure, l'Algérie est un « pôle de stabilité » dans sa région

Même étant sous une menace extérieure « diffuse et difficile à maîtriser », l'Algérie apparaît comme un « pôle de stabilité » dans sa région, a estimé le professeur Serge Sur, spécialiste du droit et relations internationales. « Dans une région marquée par une instabilité croissante, le pays (l'Algérie) apparaît comme un pôle de stabilité, tout en restant sous une menace extérieure diffuse et difficile à maîtriser », a écrit cet universitaire dans sa contribution au numéro spéciale (septembre-octobre) de Questions internationales, intitulé « L'Algérie, puissance régionale ». Pour lui, l'Algérie, qui est animée par une « permanente volonté » d'indépendance diplomatique et stratégique, est devenue une « puissance régionale » de « premier plan », mais elle est « toujours sous pression », soulignant dans une analyse intitulée « Un souvenir, un regret » que c'est le « plus grand » pays d'Afrique, la seconde population arabe après l'Egypte et un « verrou » contre le terrorisme. « Mais son immensité, ses frontières ouvertes sur les voisins (...) - Tunisie, Libye, Niger, Mali, Mauritanie, Maroc et la République arabe sahraouie démocratique (...) - sont autant de défis sécuritaires pour le pays », a-t-il relevé, indiquant en parallèle que l'Algérie « dispose de la deuxième armée du continent, avec ses composantes terrestres, aériennes et maritimes ». « Le lien entre politique de défense et politique étrangère servie par un réseau diplomatique de qualité est puissant, le souci de cohérence constant, ce qui est un signe parmi d'autres du poids de l'armée dans le pays », a expliqué ce professeur des relations internationales, mettant en relief que l'Algérie est « enserrée » par des menaces terroristes provenant de l'extérieur de ses frontières. « L'Algérie est en effet enserrée par des menaces terroristes, qu'elles proviennent de la Tunisie, de la Mauritanie, des pays du Sahel subsaharien, Al-Qaïda au Maghreb islamique (AQMI) et Daech qui s'implante en Libye », a-t-il estimé, notant que la circulation autour, voire à l'intérieur des frontières, la prolifération dans ses espaces des armes, la faiblesse des Etats voisins, « toutes ces données créent une tension permanente dans l'environnement immédiat du pays ». Dans ces conditions, a-t-il poursuivi, de par sa position géopolitique, de par sa politique sécuritaire et son poids militaire, l'Algérie apparaît comme

un partenaire « indispensable » et « précieux » dans la lutte antiterroriste. Par ailleurs, sur le plan des relations algéro-françaises, l'auteur qui a estimé que « même tendues », elles demeurent des « relations de famille », regrettant cependant qu'elles « n'aient pas pu être normalisées, devenir apaisées et confiantes » et que la France « n'ait pas réussi avec l'Algérie le type de réconciliation mise en œuvre avec l'Allemagne ». « Voici quelques années, le projet d'un traité d'amitié entre les deux pays a malheureusement échoué. Formulons le vœu qu'un jour des hommes ou femmes d'Etat sachent sur le métier remettre cet ouvrage », a-t-il conclu. Aps

<http://www.elmoudjahid.com/fr/actualites/99543>

Do not ignore women in war on terrorism

SEPTEMBER 15 2016



Three women accused of harbouring terrorists who attacked Mombasa's Central Police Station leave the Mombasa Law Courts on September 14, 2016. PHOTO | LABAN WALLOGA | NATION MEDIA GROUP

In Summary

Media reports of the Sunday Mombasa incident show that one of the attackers had previously been arrested by the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit.

The women's potential in addressing terrorism is also often overlooked since such violence, including suicide bombings, has been traditionally perceived as the preserve of men.

The media's portrayal of terrorism in general and women's role in it in particular is important because of the role it plays in the social construction of reality that would influence both the public and policymakers when responding to female violent extremism in sub-Saharan Africa.

Even though women are increasingly involved in terrorism in Africa, it has become evident that their role is not well understood.

Their potential in addressing terrorism is also often overlooked since such violence, including suicide bombings, has been traditionally perceived as the preserve of men.

This perception is further reinforced by the mainstream media, which often represents women as bystanders or victims of terrorism. This fact ought to be critically analysed, considering the rise in female suicide bombers in West Africa and cases of women involvement in violent extremism in East Africa through marriage to terrorists, commonly referred to as jihadi/Al-Shabaab brides.

A frontline terrorist attack by three women was witnessed in Mombasa last Sunday, coinciding with the 15th anniversary of the September 11, 2001, Al Qaeda attacks on US targets.

A quick analysis of the media coverage of the attack draws a sharp similarity with the style of reporting in Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, where the narrative superficially emphasised the violent and ruthless nature of State machinery regarding law and order in the context of terrorism.

Since terrorism thrives on publicity, the media's moral obligation is to deny terrorists that privilege in order to set the agenda to counter violent extremism through a special way of reporting that could help the State, the international community, and ordinary citizens to understand and forestall women's role in violent extremism.

This calls for the utilisation of media approaches in a creative yet responsive public system of reward and punishment where female terrorism is exposed and judicial convictions well reported to discourage deviance.

PREVIOUSLY ARRESTED

The media's portrayal of terrorism in general and women's role in it in particular is important because of the role it plays in the social construction of reality that would influence both the public and policymakers when responding to female violent extremism in sub-Saharan Africa.

Media reports of the Sunday incident, for example, show that one of the attackers had previously been arrested by the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit.

However, she was released for lack of evidence. More such cases should be reported so that the public is aware of would-be terrorists among them.

The Mombasa incident reminds us of Kenya's vulnerability to terrorism. Part of the reason why Kenya is at risk is due to its moderately pro-Western policies that have seen the country at the frontline of the international war on terrorism and other socio-economic, political, and cultural factors.

Socio-economically, Kenya seems to have a complex mix of highly educated skilled workers vis-à-vis low employment opportunities and low salaries for the few who are employed.

Kenya's privileged status as the gateway to East and Central Africa, a regional beneficiary of the global political-economy, as far as the free market or globalisation is concerned, does not seem to have delivered any public goodies for its rising young population.

This situation is compounded by government policies that are only good on paper regarding the youth, affirmative action, and the central role that women should play in key leadership and governance positions.

This reality has made many women vulnerable, stretched the imagination of many youths to the point of deprivation, and consequently conceived socio-economic discontent and violence.

Dr Ogenga is a Southern Voices Network Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington DC, USA, and teaches in the Department of Communication, Journalism, and Media Studies, Rongo University College. ogengafredrick@gmail.com.

<https://www.youtube.com/>

Kenya: Report Reveals Al-Shabaab Returnees Do Not Trust Amnesty

By Kazungu Samuel

More than 500 youths from Kwale County have crossed to Somalia to join Al-Shabaab terrorists, a study has revealed.

Authorities suspect some of them have returned though they have not informed security agencies in line with the amnesty issued last year.

The report on analysis of the government amnesty on Al-Shabaab returnees, authored by Dr Hassan Mwakimako and Prof Halim Shauri from Pwani University, was released at Pekele Hotel in Kilifi Town on Tuesday.

Dr Mwakimako said many returnees feared presenting themselves to the police because there were no clear guidelines on how they would be treated.

"There is a big gap between the people and security agencies. Most families fear for the worst once their children surrender," he said. "We faced a similar problem during the study. Many people fear presenting a true picture of the situation on the ground."

SCANTY INFORMATION

Dr Mwakimako said the research, which started in April and is expected to be completed by the end of this month, concentrated on Kwale, Kilifi, Mombasa and Lamu counties.

"We released part of the report in Kwale. We shall do the same in Mombasa and Lamu before the final one is released," he said.

"We also could not get the actual figures for Mombasa and Kilifi counties because information was scanty. It is our hope that the final data will capture the situation as it is."

The report recommended a close working relationship between the national and county governments and the people in addressing violent extremism.

Kilifi County commissioner Joseph Keter said the government was reviewing the approach towards addressing the amnesty on returnees.

"Part of the plan is to have non-state actors on the forefront in the initial reception of returnees. Our aim is to widen the scope of the stakeholders in vetting, sensitisation, identification and profiling returnees," Mr Keter said.

Among those who attended the function were Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance, clerics from Kilifi Religious Network, civil society groups and residents.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201609210967.html>

Libya

Comment expliquer l'enlèvement de deux Italiens et d'un Canadien ?



Sur la pancarte : “Bienvenue à Ghat”, dans la région du Fezzan, à la frontière libano-algérienne, le 28 mai 2014. **REUTERS/Ahmed Jadallah**

Trois ressortissants occidentaux ont été enlevés dans la région de Ghat, dans le sud-ouest de la Libye : deux Italiens et un Canadien. La presse italienne s'interroge sur les auteurs potentiels de ce rapt, qui n'a pas encore été revendiqué.

hommes armés ont enlevé, le lundi 19 septembre au soir, trois ingénieurs qui circulaient sur la route dans la région de Ghat”, [rapporte The Libya Observer](#) en citant des sources de la municipalité de cette oasis saharienne située dans le sud-ouest du pays, à la frontière avec l'Algérie.

D'après plusieurs médias italiens, les trois personnes enlevées travaillaient dans la construction pour une société italienne, la Contratti Internazionali Costruzioni, qui s'occupe de la manutention de l'aéroport de Ghat. La Farnesina (le ministère des Affaires étrangères italien) et celui des Affaires étrangères libyen ont confirmé le kidnapping des deux Italiens. Il s'agit de Bruno Cacace, 56 ans, originaire du Piémont, et Danilo Calonego, 66 ans, de Vénétie. L'identité du Canadien, dont *The Libya Observer* précise simplement qu'il s'appellerait Franck, n'a pas été communiquée. Le Canada, pour l'heure, [n'a pas confirmé l'information de son enlèvement](#).



Copie d'écran. Picto sur la ville de Ghat, en Libye. Google maps.

Selon [La Repubblica](#), qui cite des sources libyennes, ce sont “des hommes masqués qui se trouvaient à bord d’un 4 x 4” qui ont assailli “les deux voitures dans lesquelles se trouvaient les ressortissants occidentaux”. Le chauffeur d’un des véhicules aurait été ligoté et laissé dans une zone déserte.

Le Fezzan, la région dans laquelle ce kidnapping a eu lieu, n’est pas considéré comme une zone à risques. Il est en principe sous l’administration du gouvernement d’accord national de Tripoli, reconnu par la communauté internationale, précise le quotidien italien.

Plusieurs pistes possibles

Mais le secteur du Ghat est fréquenté par des tribus rivales. “*Et les Occidentaux peuvent toujours devenir l’objet d’une revendication économique*”, analyse le quotidien. Le risque pourrait être pour les trois personnes séquestrées de tomber dans les mains de groupes terroristes.

Ces derniers mois, des analystes ont émis l’hypothèse que Daech est en train de construire des bases dans le Fezzan afin de réorganiser ses forces après les revers subis à Syrte.”

La zone pourrait aussi servir de “zone d’échange” pour Boko Haram, estime *La Repubblica*. La presse italienne évoque la possibilité d’un acte “politique”. Comme le rappelle [Il Corriere della Sera](#), l’Italie soutient le gouvernement de Faïez Sarraj, aux côtés de la France, des États-Unis et des Nations unies. Or Faïez Sarraj compte de nombreux détracteurs à l’intérieur et à l’extérieur du pays.

“L’Italie pourrait donc être devenue une cible.” “Cette piste est la plus inquiétante, estime le quotidien italien, car on ne peut pas exclure l’hypothèse d’une convergence avec un groupe fondamentaliste, voire un pacte conclu dans le but de lan-

cer un message à tous les Occidentaux présents dans le pays et considérés comme des 'envahisseurs'."

<http://www.courrierinternational.com/article/libye-comment-expliquer-lenlevement-de-deux-italiens-et-dun-canadien>

Libye : le rapport accablant sur l'expédition franco-britannique

Il y a cinq ans, l'intervention militaire des forces de l'OTAN – soutenues par quelques pays arabes – prenait fin en Libye. Le 15 septembre 2011, le président de la République française Nicolas Sarkozy et le Premier ministre britannique David Cameron – suivis de près par Bernard-Henri Levy -, débarquaient à Benghazi en libérateurs du peuple libyen... On connaît la suite : un pays qui a sombré dans le chaos, toujours sans gouvernement national, en quête de sécurité et stabilité politique, en proie à la division et aux tensions claniques et tribales. Une situation interne qui a des répercussions directes sur l'environnement régional, puisque l'éparpillement des armes de l'ex-armée loyaliste et l'ancrage de foyers djihadistes constituent autant de source de déstabilisation pour les voisins égyptiens, maghrébins et subsahariens. La situation actuelle est le fruit de l'intervention militaire de la coalition internationale. En ce sens, les Occidentaux portent une responsabilité historique – mais pas totale- dans la tragédie libyenne.

Ce jugement est directement tiré des conclusions du rapport parlementaire britannique rendu public le 14 septembre dernier. Que dit ce document officiel ? D'abord, que l'intervention militaire en Libye était fondée sur une mauvaise évaluation de la situation : David Cameron « a fondé l'intervention militaire britannique en Libye sur des suppositions erronées et une compréhension incomplète du pays ». En effet, les députés britanniques estiment que la menace contre les civils a été exagérée et que la rébellion comprenait une composante islamiste-djihadiste par trop sous-estimée : « [Le gouvernement britannique] n'a pas pu vérifier la menace réelle que le régime de Kadhafi faisait peser sur les civils ; il a pris au pied de la lettre, de manière sélective, certains éléments de la rhétorique de Mouammar Kadhafi [et de Bernard Henri-Lévy ?]; et il a échoué à identifier les factions islamistes radicales au sein de la rébellion ». La stratégie du Royaume-Uni dans ce dossier « fut fondée (...) sur une analyse partielle des preuves », insistent ces parlementaires. De plus, les députés accusent David Cameron d'avoir privilégié une stratégie coercitive et d'avoir ainsi négligé la voie diplomatique et politique en vue d'écarter Mouammar Kadhafi du pouvoir : « Un engagement politique aurait pu permettre de protéger la population, de changer et de réformer le régime à un coût moindre pour le Royaume-Uni et la Libye. Le Royaume-Uni n'aurait rien perdu en suivant ces pistes, au lieu de se focaliser exclusivement sur le changement de régime par des moyens militaires. »

Un tel dévoiement n'est pas le produit du hasard. La France et la Grande-Bretagne- soutenus en l'espèce par les Etats-Unis- ont une longue tradition en matière d'expédition militaire, en particulier sur les rives sud et est de la Méditerranée. L'épisode libyen s'inscrit aussi dans l'histoire de l'ingérence de ces anciens empires européens dans les affaires intérieures des pays arabes. Etait-elle pour autant illégale? L'intervention des puissances occidentales- sous l'égide de l'OTAN- se fondait sur la résolution 1973 du Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU, qui permettait le recours à la force par des frappes aériennes en vertu du principe de la « responsabilité à protéger des populations civiles ». Plus précisément, la résolution- adoptée en vertu de l'article 42 de la Charte des Nations Unies- décide non seulement l'instauration d'une zone d'exclusion aérienne- qui consiste à interdire tous vols dans l'espace aérien de la Libye, à l'exception des vols dont l'objectif est d'ordre humanitaire- mais « autorise les

Etats membres (...) à prendre toutes les mesures nécessaires (...) pour protéger les civils et les zones peuplées par des civils sous la menace d'attaques y compris Benghazi, tout en excluant une force étrangère d'occupation sous quelque forme que ce soit dans n'importe quelle partie du territoire libyen ». La résolution présentait une base juridique suffisamment large pour permettre des formes d'interventions avec des tirs au sol, mais sans déploiement au sol de forces terrestres (la résolution excluait en effet « toute force étrangère d'occupation »). Surtout, même si elle ne fixait ni calendrier des opérations, ni objectifs précis, le mandat onusien ne visait nullement le renversement du régime libyen. Or non seulement des attaques aériennes ou par missiles ont été menées au-delà des « lignes de front » ou zones de combat entre l'armée loyaliste et les rebelles, mais des opérations ont visé la personne même du colonel Kadhafi afin de faire tomber le pouvoir en place. En ne se limitant plus à la protection des civils, mais en cherchant la chute du régime, les puissances occidentales ont agi en dehors du cadre strict de la résolution de l'ONU et ont ainsi franchi les limites de la légalité internationale. L'opération destinée à protéger les civils s'est transformée en une opération de renversement de régime. Une stratégie qui fut d'ailleurs assumée par les principaux protagonistes : le primat de la puissance sur le droit transparaissait dans une tribune commune des principaux chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement de la coalition (Nicolas Sarkozy, Barack Obama et David Cameron), dans laquelle ils avaient explicitement demandé le départ de Mouammar Kadhafi, ce que la résolution de l'ONU n'exigeait/n'autorisait pas...

Derrière le renversement du régime, les motivations réelles qui ont animé le président français Nicolas Sarkozy ont été « révélées » par le rapport britannique. Soupçonné d'avoir bénéficié en 2007 de fonds libyens afin de financer sa campagne, il aurait pris la décision d'intervenir en Libye en 2011 dans le but, entre autres, d'accéder au pétrole libyen, d'accroître l'influence française en Afrique du Nord et... d'améliorer sa situation politique en France. Non seulement on est très loin des considérations humanitaires et droits-de-l'homme invoquées à l'époque- y compris par la voix du médiatique BHL-, mais l'intérêt du peuple libyen ne semble à aucun moment pris en compte. Seuls les intérêts nationaux et personnels (celui de N. Sarkozy) ont voix au chapitre.

Ce rapport parlementaire britannique intervient alors que Barack Obama a déjà reconnu que « cet épisode libyen a été la pire erreur de [s]on mandat ». En France, un tel questionnement politique est introuvable. La question semble taboue, notamment parce que la droite parlementaire comme la gauche socialiste avaient soutenu ensemble cette intervention. Cette responsabilité politique collective n'est pas de nature à faciliter l'examen de conscience ou du moins l'évaluation a posteriori d'une intervention militaire qui demeurera dans les annales. Reste le réflexe mimétique, qui laisse espérer que les assemblées parlementaires françaises se saisiront du dossier pour constituer une commission d'enquête... [L'Economiste maghrébin](#)

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OPINION AND ANALYSIS

Why we must never surrender to terrorism

Posted Thursday, September 22 2016 at 19:17

Three years after Westgate, I remain horrified by the cowardice and inhumanity of this attack on innocent people enjoying a day out.

My heart goes out again to all those who lost loved ones, and to those still living with the injuries they suffered that day. The scars for many will take a long time to heal.

Westgate was an attack on all of us. We lost six British nationals there, and we mourn them again on this anniversary.

That September I was based in London, as the person responsible for African affairs in our foreign ministry.

Like many others in our Government, I got into the office as soon as I could to help out – responding to calls from the public worried about loved ones, working with our High Commission in Nairobi as it assisted British nationals caught up in the attack, and considering how we could best support the Kenyan authorities in their response.

But one decision required no debate: that the UK would support our ally Kenya. As the siege unfolded, our Prime Minister and Cabinet were closely involved and regularly briefed.

British troops training in Central Kenya supported the Kenyan Defence Forces with provision of emergency equipment.

That's what close friends do, stand with each other in their hour of need. But more than that, there was an understanding that terrorism is a threat to the things we share.

We knew, then as now, that our security depends on each other's – so we must face this threat together.

Challenges

Terrorists attacked Westgate supposedly in retaliation for Kenya's role fighting Al-Shabaab in Somalia. That is a fight we share – one to root out extremism and build a better, more stable and more prosperous future for millions of Somalis. It matters to the UK as it matters to Kenya.

Both our countries know too that terrorism is not simply an external phenomenon. We each face those who seek to radicalise our youth, luring them to a perverse ideology and egging them on to often stupid and suicidal acts.

In both our countries we must find ways to undermine and defeat those networks,

and show even the most disenchanted of our young compatriots that there are far better futures available.

The UK and Kenya already enjoy an extensive programme of counter-terrorism co-operation – from training and capacity building to equipment, which keeps us both safer and more secure.

Kenya has made great strides in tackling terrorism since Westgate, and the UK's security co-operation with Kenya is closer today than ever before.

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Libya's Terrorist Descent: Causes and Solutions

September 27, 2016



Fighters from al Qaeda-backed Ansar al Sharia Libya operate a training camp in Benghazi.

Editor's note: Below is Thomas Joscelyn's testimony to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade on jihadist groups operating inside Libya, including the Islamic State and al Qaeda. If you wish to view the testimony with footnotes included, [download the PDF by clicking here](#).

Chairman Poe, Ranking Member Keating and members of the subcommittee, thank you for inviting me here today to discuss the turmoil in Libya. Obviously, the multi-sided conflict in Libya is complex, with various forces pulling the country in multiple directions. My testimony today focuses on the jihadist groups operating inside Libya, especially the Islamic State's arm and groups belonging to al Qaeda's network. I am going to emphasize five key points:

1. The Islamic State is on the verge of losing its safe haven in Sirte, Libya. The loss of Sirte would be a major blow to the so-called caliphate, as Abu Bakr al Baghdadi's organization has invested significant resources in this state-building project. From the Islamic State's perspective, Sirte was one of the most important cities under its control. This was true even though most of the city's citizens had fled the jihadists' occupation. By controlling Sirte, the Islamic State was able to portray its "caliphate" as having significant territory outside of Iraq and Syria. If Baghdadi's loyalists are cleared from Sirte in the coming weeks, then the U.S. and its allies

should trumpet the group's loss. During its rise to power, the Islamic State's motto was "remaining and expanding." This was a key part of the organization's marketing message. But in Libya, as in Iraq and Syria, it is no longer true.

2. Despite losing its grip on Sirte and the surrounding towns and villages, however, the Islamic State will retain a presence inside Libya. The group has cadres in Benghazi and elsewhere. The Islamic State's leaders likely evacuated some of their men from Sirte as the offensive on the city progressed. It is important to note that even though the Islamic State is on the verge of a significant defeat, the effort required a robust commitment by local Libyan ground forces, as well as more than 170 "precision" American airstrikes to date. As the Islamic State's men have been cleared block by block from Sirte, they have demonstrated that they continue to maintain a strong operational capacity, launching suicide bombings in neighborhoods they've lost and killing dozens of their Libyan enemies. The U.S. and its partners will have to make sure that they hold Sirte once it is cleared, as well as prevent the Islamic State from seizing significant terrain elsewhere.

3. The Islamic State's loss of Sirte will be viewed in jihadist circles as a vindication of al Qaeda's strategy. Al Qaeda's senior leaders, including Osama bin Laden and Ayman al Zawahiri, repeatedly warned that the premature declaration of an Islamic state harms the jihadists' cause. Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb's (AQIM) emir, Abdulmalek Droukdel, has made the same argument. Al Qaeda has consistently argued that a jihadist state cannot survive if the U.S. and its allies decide to intervene. This is exactly what happened in Sirte.

4. Some assume that, unlike the Islamic State, al Qaeda does not seek to control territory and build Islamic emirates (states). But this is an erroneous assumption. A wealth of evidence shows that this is, in fact, al Qaeda's primary goal. However, al Qaeda and the Islamic State have very different strategies for achieving this same end. AQIM and its allies briefly controlled much of Mali beginning in 2012. Documents recovered in Mali show that AQIM was laying the groundwork for an Islamic state. But Droukdel and his advisors concluded that their effort needed to be firmly rooted in the host society, so AQIM was willing to partner with tribes and organizations that did not share its ideology. AQIM is following a version of this same strategy inside Libya today and has been working to embed itself in various local groups and communities. The Islamic State's model for state-building is top-down authoritarian. In the view of Baghdadi and his key advisors, all Muslims must submit to the so-called caliphate's authority. Al Qaeda's follows a bottom-up plan, which means that the organization is seeking to spread the jihadist ideology, win popular support and embed itself within local societies. Al Qaeda and AQIM, which is openly loyal to Ayman al Zawahiri, are not close to achieving their goals in many areas. But the al Qaeda network remains deeper than many assume.

5. In addition to the assistance the U.S. military provides local forces, the U.S. government should work to expose al Qaeda's network inside Libya. Sun light is a key part of any plan to combat al Qaeda's clandestine strategy. Al Qaeda's senior leadership has dispatched operatives to Libya in the past. AQIM doesn't typically advertise its presence in Libya, but has clearly backed groups such as Ansar al Sharia in Libya and the Mujahideen Shura Council in Derna. Indeed, al Qaeda has worked under multiple brand names in Libya.

The importance of Sirte to the Islamic State

In May, the Islamic State's spokesman, Abu Muhammad al Adnani, revealed just how important Sirte is to the caliphate-building project. Adnani, who was subsequently killed in an airstrike in August, mentioned Sirte alongside Raqqa, Syria and Mosul, Iraq in a speech entitled, "That They Live By Proof." Raqqa and Mosul are the de facto capitals of the group's self-declared caliphate. By rhetorically elevating Sirte to the same status as these two cities, Adnani signaled just how significant the North African locale really was for the Islamic State's long-term plans.

Indeed, the Islamic State dispatched key figures to Libya to build a beachhead for the organization. In November 2015, for instance, the U.S. military conducted its first airstrike against an Islamic State leader in Libya. According to the Department of Defense, the bombing targeted Abu Nabil, also known as Wissam Najm Abd Zayd al Zubaydi, "an Iraqi national who was a longtime al Qaeda operative and the senior ISIL leader in Libya." Nabil "may have been the spokesman in the February 2015 Coptic Christian execution video," DOD noted, referring to a mass execution on Libya's shores that the Islamic State celebrated in one of its typically grotesque propaganda productions. Nabil was hardly the only senior Islamic State leader sent to Libya. The organization sent trained cadres of fighters from North Africa to Libya to help with its expansion plans, and also worked to recruit defectors from existing jihadist organizations, such as Ansar al Sharia.

The same month that Adnani delivered his speech on Mosul, Raqqa and Sirte (May 2015), Al Bunyan Al Marsoos ("Solid Structure") operations room began its offensive on the Islamic State's Libyan stronghold. Al Bunyan Al Marsoos draws fighters from militias based in Misrata and is allied with Libya's Government of National Accord (GNA). The assault quickly gained ground, but stalled by July. On August 1, the U.S. began to launch airstrikes in support of the operations room. As of September 25, according to U.S. Africa Command, there have been a total of 175 airstrikes as part of Operation Odyssey Lightning.

During testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on September 22, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter explained that he and other U.S. officials had "expressed concern that if left untended, Libya could be the next ISIL [Islamic State] headquarters, as ISIL's control over the city of Sirte was seen as their contingency plan for where they would go when they lost Raqqa and Mosul." However, because of the American airstrikes and the heavy load carried by local fighters, the Islamic State's safe haven had been "reduced to a single square kilometer" in "a single neighborhood," Carter said. A map produced by Al Bunyan Al Marsoos echoed this assessment.

Therefore, the Islamic State appears to be on the verge of a key loss. However, we should be mindful that the Islamic State's manpower has been drastically underestimated in the past. Given that much of Libya's south is remote and ungoverned, the Islamic State could find areas to regroup. Also, Baghdadi's men are fighting in Benghazi and elsewhere. In my view, their presence in Benghazi has been exaggerated, to a degree, but they clearly have cadres fighting on the ground inside the city today. The Islamic State may have also redeployed some of its forces to Benghazi and Derna as a result of the situation in Sirte. Earlier this year, the group was forced out of Derna by jihadists connected to al Qaeda's network. But it is possible that some fighters will return to Derna, or the city's outskirts, now that they no longer have a safe haven in Sirte.

Al Qaeda's long-term approach to state-building

Unlike the Islamic State, which advertises and even exaggerates its presence in some areas, al Qaeda is keen to avoid scrutiny. Al Qaeda has developed an entirely different strategy for operating in countries such as Libya. Al Qaeda sees jihadi state-building as a long-term endeavor that requires strategic patience. The Islamic State deliberately played off of this strategy to quickly grow in size, capitalizing on younger jihadis' and new recruits' impatience. In essence, the Islamic State marketed itself by asking a simple question: Why wait for al Qaeda's caliphate to come in the future, or maybe never, when you can come fight for the "caliphate" today?

The Islamic State's approach allowed it to mushroom in the short-term, but its long-term liabilities are now being exposed in Iraq, Syria and Libya. Al Qaeda knew all along that the Islamic State's caliphate claim would prove to be tenuous, and al Qaeda's strategy will now be vindicated in some jihadis' eyes. In this section, I am going to reference three key documents to illuminate al Qaeda's strategy. All three of them were produced by either AQIM or another part of al Qaeda.

An especially important document for understanding al Qaeda's thinking is a letter written by AQIM's emir, Abdulmalek Droukdel, to the shura council of Ansar Dine, which AQIM used as its local face. Although Droukdel's missive was written with Mali in mind, the lessons he outlined are equally applicable to Libya. Droukdel argued that "the great powers with hegemony over the international situation, despite their weakness and their retreat caused by military exhaustion and the financial crisis, still have many cards to play that enable them to prevent the creation of an Islamic state in Azawad ruled by the jihadis and Islamists."

That is, in Droukdel's view, Western powers could easily overrun a jihadi state ruled by al Qaeda and its partners. Even though AQIM and its allies seized much of Mali in 2012, Droukdel urged caution. "We must not go too far or take risks in our decisions or imagine that this project is a stable Islamic state," Droukdel wrote. Instead, the jihadis should view it as an "important golden opportunity to extend bridges to the various sectors and parts of Azawad society" in northern Mali, including Arabs, the Tuareg people, and other Africans. This would "end the situation of political and social and intellectual separation (or isolation) between the Mujahideen and these sectors, particularly the big tribes, and the main rebel movements with their various ideologies, and the elite of Azawad society, its clerics, its groupings, its individuals and its noble forces." Simply put, Droukdel was concerned with building broader popular support for the jihadists' agenda.

Droukdel wanted to make sure that the jihadists' attempt at governance had a local face, such that AQIM did not "monopolize the political and military stage" and was not "at the forefront." AQIM's chief argued that they should work closely with other parties, such as the Azawad Liberation Movement, to administer the new state. Sharia law should be implemented only gradually, in Droukdel's opinion, as the population was not accustomed to living under al Qaeda's Draconian penal code. (Al Qaeda's branches have adopted this same approach in Syria and Yemen.)

Should the emirate fall, which Droukdel thought was "very probable," then the jihadists would not bear the responsibility by themselves and would have at least planted a "good seed in this fertile soil...so that the tree will grow more quickly" in the future. "We look forward to seeing this tree as it will be: stable and magnifi-

cent,” Droukdel wrote. The AQIM chief mixed metaphors by also comparing the jihadist project in Mali to a “small newborn” who is “crawling on [his] knees, and has not yet stood on [his] two legs.”

Droukdel concluded that AQIM had “two missions” and combining them created a “true dilemma.” AQIM wanted to both preserve the “Azawad Islamic project,” meaning the effort to build an Islamist state, and also continue its “global jihadi project.” The latter is a reference to AQIM’s commitment to carrying out terrorist operations throughout the region. Droukdel and his advisors came up with two proposals. In the first scenario, AQIM would subordinate itself to the local ruler. AQIM would “be under the emirate of Ansar Dine” such that AQIM’s “emir would follow their emir” and AQIM’s “opinion would follow their opinion.” This would be the case for all “internal activity,” meaning “all activity connected to participating in bearing the responsibilities of the liberated areas.” But all “external activity” connected to the “global jihad...would be independent of them (Ansar Dine)” and AQIM “would ensure that none of that activity or its repercussions is attributed to them [Ansar Dine], as care must be taken over negative impacts on the project of the state.”

In Droukdel’s “second proposal,” some of al Qaeda’s mujahideen “would be set aside and put under the complete control of the emir of Ansar Dine to participate in bearing the burden of running the affairs of the liberated cities.” The remaining al Qaeda members would be “completely independent of Ansar Dine and its activity would be limited to jihadi action outside the region.”

AQIM never got the chance to fully implement either of one of the strategies Droukdel outlined in his memo. Just as Droukdel feared, the jihadists’ nascent state in Mali was quickly dismantled after France intervened in early 2013. But Droukdel’s memo illustrates just how different al Qaeda’s thinking is from the Islamic State’s. Whereas Abu Bakr al Baghdadi’s men have advertised their presence in the form of “provinces” of the so-called caliphate, al Qaeda’s loyalists have decided that it is foolish to declare Islamic emirates, or states, anywhere. In fact, Al Qaeda’s leaders often do not want outside observers to know that their organization is present at all.

There is ample evidence demonstrating that AQIM has followed this same strategy in Libya. In March, al Qaeda released the seventh issue of its Al Masra newsletter. The Arabic publication included an article featuring a senior AQIM leader known as Abu Abdul Ilah Ahmed. Ahmed discussed AQIM’s game plan for Libya at length, saying the group had the opportunity to establish an Islamic state in Libya, but decided such a move would be premature. Instead, Ahmed said, AQIM decided to back groups such as Ansar al Sharia, the Abu Salim Martyrs Brigade (ASMB) in Derna, and the faithful shura councils that were established in several Libyan cities. Ahmed stressed that Ansar al Sharia and ASMB have the same goals as AQIM, as they are all fighting to establish sharia in Libya. AQIM’s man added that it is the “duty” of all mujahideen to “unite,” but such an effort requires “time” and “sacrifices from all parties.”

An especially telling passage in Ahmed’s discussion focused on whether or not AQIM has an official arm in Libya. Ahmed portrayed AQIM as being one with the Libyan people in the fight against “America and its Crusader alliance,” adding that AQIM will back the Libyan people against the French, who are “violating the sanctity of Libya.” AQIM is not focused on collecting pledges of allegiance at this juncture, Ahmed pointed out, but is instead rallying the people against foreign

“aggression.” Ahmed framed AQIM’s war as part of a long jihadi tradition dating back to Omar al Mukhtar, who resisted Italian forces in Libya in the early part of the 20th Century. This is a consistent AQIM theme, as the group has portrayed its men as the “progeny of Omar al Mukhtar.”

Another key document is an analysis by a prolific jihadi writer known as Abdullah bin Mohammed, who has been identified as an al Qaeda member and strategist. Bin Mohammed has a large audience on social media, with more than 350,000 accounts following him (@strateeeegy) on Twitter. In early 2015, bin Mohammed published an article entitled, “Political Guerrilla Warfare,” in which he argued that jihadists needed to be more flexible in their dealings with other Islamist parties.

Bin Mohammed likened his ideas to the military strategy Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda’s other leaders devised for confronting the West. Bin Mohammed explained that Bin Laden realized al Qaeda could not defeat the U.S. and its allies in a straight fight, so al Qaeda relied on high-profile terrorist attacks and guerrilla warfare to confront its superior foes. “The military calculations proved to us that an open confrontation with a strong enemy like the U.S. is military suicide,” Bin Mohammed explained in an interview. “Therefore we had to go a different way in military confrontation, and in politics an open confrontation like declaring a state is also political suicide, as the West has the power to weaken us, pressure our societies and at the end uproot us as they did in Afghanistan and Iraq.” For these reasons, bin Mohammed explained, “we have to build a new strategy that can enhance our resilience.” Bin Mohammed emphasized bin Laden’s warning that prematurely declaring an Islamic state is tantamount to “political suicide,” as the jihadis’ enemies can easily overwhelm them.

Bin Mohammed pointed to the example of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), whose members have forged alliances with Islamist political parties in Libya. This made it difficult, if not impossible, for the West to thwart the former LIFG members’ political designs and also inoculated them from Western counterterrorism pressure. One summary of Bin Mohammed’s thesis noted that the LIFG’s men have built “solid alliances with other Islamic and revolutionary groups” and are “flexible toward the outside world.” Bin Mohammed claimed the LIFG had gone so far as to issue a “fatwa” allowing them “to participate in the democratic regime after they demanded that Sharia be a main source of legislation.” In the next step, “they will start working on building their Islamic regime.”

Some aspects of Bin Mohammed’s thesis proved to be especially controversial within al Qaeda circles. While some saw the wisdom in the strategy Bin Mohammed advocated, others (such as the pro-al Qaeda cleric Abu Qatada) think he went too far. Regardless, al Qaeda is following a version of Bin Mohammed’s plan in Libya, Syria and elsewhere. For instance, writing in *Al Monitor* in May 2015, Ali Hashem noted:

It is believed that Mohammed’s strategy of political guerrilla war has made its way to being adopted by some of al-Qaeda’s affiliated groups, primarily in Syria. Reports have suggested that the Syrian branch of al-Qaeda, Jabhat al-Nusra, might be moving toward a rebranding phase as a result of pressure exerted by allies in the region that want to legitimize the group so it can play a role in Syria’s future. The idea to create the Army of Conquest (Jaish al-Fatah), with all the Islamist groups fighting

under one banner legitimized by regional and international backers, might well have been influenced by Mohammed's theory.

This is exactly what happened more than one year later. As we reported at *The Long War Journal*, Al Nusrah Front co-founded the Jaysh al Fath (Jaish al-Fatah) alliance as a way to pool the resources of various rebel groups and to prevent al Qaeda's paramilitary army in Syria from being isolated from other factions. Then, in late July 2016, Nusra was rebranded as Jabhat Fath al Sham ("Conquest of the Levant Front") in an attempt to further embed al Qaeda within the Syrian insurgency and to stymie American counterterrorism efforts.

There are direct parallels to the situation in Libya, where al Qaeda has long sought to hide its hand.

Al Qaeda's clandestine presence in Libya

I have outlined al Qaeda's clandestine network in previous testimony and articles, drawing on U.S. and UN terrorism designations, an analysis authored by a Defense Department shop in 2012, primary source evidence produced by the jihadists themselves, as well as other evidence. I will not repeat all of that analysis here, but a brief update is necessary because the situation has evolved since I last testified. Three key facts are worth highlighting.

First, the al Qaeda-aligned groups have also sustained serious losses, especially in Benghazi. There, Ansar al Sharia and the Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council (BRSC), both of which are part of the al Qaeda network, had led the jihadists in fighting against General Khalifa al Haftar's forces. But this past summer, the jihadists reorganized themselves under the banner of the Benghazi Defense Brigades (BDB). Both Ansar al Sharia and the BRSC are clearly allied with, or part of, the BDB. This is yet another indication that al Qaeda-affiliated jihadists are using front groups and pooling their resources with other organizations inside Libya.

Second, Al Qaeda and affiliated jihadi groups in Libya are rallying around Sheikh Sadiq Al Gharyani, a senior religious figure who is sometimes described as "Libya's Mufti." In July, a statement attributed to Mokhtar Belmokhtar was released online. Belmokhtar heaped praise on Gharyani, saying he "practices what he preaches by exposing the truth in the face of falsehood and its adherents." Belmokhtar asked Allah to "strengthen" Gharyani and his followers such that they are a "fortress for sharia." The Mujahideen Shura Council in Derna (MSCD), which has its own al Qaeda links, views Gharyani as its spiritual figurehead. For instance, the MSCD co-signed a new charter for governing Derna in mid-August. The "charter," which was released on the MSCD's social media sites, referred to Gharyani as the "sole authoritative religious reference." The BDB itself is openly aligned with Gharyani. These moves should be viewed with suspicion, as it appears AQIM and its Libyan branches are endorsing a "local" face as the rightful governing authority, just as Droukdel advocated in the letter mentioned above.

Third, AQIM and affiliated groups are seeking to rally support against Western intervention in Libya. For example, Gharyani, AQIM, the BDB and others have strongly denounced France's presence in Benghazi and elsewhere in Libya. Special forces from at least four Western nations (US, UK, France, and Italy) are reportedly operating inside Libya currently. This makes it all the more important for the U.S. and its allies to expose al Qaeda's network inside the country.

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<http://www.longwarjournal.org/>

Nigeria

Nigeria: à Maroua, on vit dans la peur des kamikazes de Boko Haram

22 septembre 2016



Le doigt sur la détente, prêt à ouvrir le feu à tout moment, un policier observe les faits et gestes des passants lors de la grande prière à Maroua, chef-lieu de la région de l'Extrême-Nord du Cameroun, cible depuis 2015 d'attentats-suicides de Boko Haram.

Plus d'un an après les premières attaques kamikazes qui ont endeuillé Maroua en juillet 2015, les principales mesures sécuritaires prises alors restent en vigueur. Mais malgré la réduction de la fréquence des attaques, la population vit toujours dans la peur d'être surprise par une explosion.

Dans une rue du quartier commercial et résidentiel de Damayo, des fidèles sont assis sur des nattes près du lieu de culte. A côté, deux gendarmes, en faction devant un des plus grands hôtels de la ville, filtrent les entrées dans l'établissement.

Devant une agence de voyage de la ville, un agent de sécurité, Adama Léger, promène un détecteur de métaux autour des sacs des voyageurs qui patientent devant lui: « nous contrôlons les bagages afin que les gens n'entrent pas avec des bombes ».

Lundi est jour d'ouverture du marché à bétail de Maroua. A chacune des deux entrées du marché, un policier des équipes spéciales d'intervention rapide (Esir), unité d'élite de la police, veille.

« Nous sommes là pour sécuriser les lieux », assure l'un d'eux sous couvert d'anonymat. « Dispersez-vous », lance-t-il soudainement, s'adressant d'un ton ferme à des bergers qui échangent des civilités à l'entrée du marché. « Nous veillons à ce qu'il n'y ait pas d'attroupement à l'extérieur du marché », explique le policier.

– Vies bouleversées –

Les kamikazes du groupe islamiste nigérian Boko Haram visent généralement les lieux à forte concentration humaine. De sources sécuritaires, le marché au bétail est une cible privilégiée pour eux.

Le quartier populaire Pont-vert a déjà été la cible d'un attentat. Dans la soirée du 25 juillet 2015, une fillette s'était fait exploser, tuant au moins 20 personnes.

Dans cette zone où snacks, « circuits » de vente de bil-bil (bière locale à base de mil), « call-box » (cabine téléphonique de fortune) et autres comptoirs de vente de médicaments de la rue se mêlent aux maisons d'habitation, personne n'a oublié les attentats.

L'ambiance est pesante dans le quartier. « Nous avons peur d'autres kamikazes », concède Boukar Isma, vendeur de médicaments de la rue.

Assis derrière une caisse remplie de cartons de médicaments, ce rescapé de l'attaque se plaint de douleurs récurrentes au dos. Il a été touché par des éclats lors de l'attaque: « Il y a des fers dans mon corps », dit-il.

Installé près de lui, le vieux Siddi Founaboui se considère comme un miraculé. Il soulève sa chemise et montre deux cicatrices de blessures au ventre. « Je n'arrive pas à tenir debout longtemps (...) » « L'attentat a complètement bouleversé ma vie. Avant, je faisais de la maçonnerie, mais je ne peux plus le faire », souligne-t-il.

– Blessures et traumatismes –

Devant une auberge du quartier, un employé, Kidmo Dobé, a pris place sur un banc, arborant un polo sur lequel on peut lire: « hommage aux victimes de l'attentat du Pont-vert, 25 juillet 2015 ».

« C'est important de ne pas les oublier », réagit M. Dobé. Pour lui, « la guerre n'est pas finie » et la peur des gens est compréhensible. Ce gérant d'auberge constate que l'économie du quartier « tourne au ralenti ».

A la nuit tombée, la police vient régulièrement obliger commerces et snacks à fermer. Ailleurs dans la ville, si les virées nocturnes commencent à être tolérées, les fêtards traînent rarement dehors au-delà de 23H00 (22H00 GMT).

A Barmaré, une des deux zones visées par un double attentat-suicide le 22 juillet 2015, un des rescapés, Moustapha Sali, a vu sa vie basculer. Il a perdu son œil droit dans l'attaque et sa main gauche est partiellement paralysée.

Sur le lieu de l'attentat, deux arbres portent encore les traces des explosions. M. Sali, père de sept enfants, accepte de s'asseoir au pied de l'arbre où il se trouvait le jour de l'explosion: « Je ne m'assoie plus ici tout le temps comme avant. J'ai peur d'une nouvelle attaque. Ce n'est pas facile d'oublier ce qui s'est passé ».

Après quatre mois à l'hôpital, Moustapha Sali a regagné sa maison, mais il souffre aujourd'hui encore de « problèmes de nerfs ». Il ne bénéficie plus d'un suivi médical gratuit. Il a dû abandonner son métier de menuisier et ne survit que grâce à la générosité des proches.

« L'attentat a complètement changé ma vie. Avant, je faisais tout. Maintenant, je ne fais plus rien ».

<http://information.tv5monde.com/>

Opinion: Boko Haram's new video shows the end of the sect

September 18, 2016



by Usama Dandare

A video footage allegedly from Boko Haram fighters was uploaded on YouTube yesterday in which suspected Boko Haram terrorists threatened fire and brimstone against the Nigerian states, and jokingly threatened to abduct President Muhammadu Buhari in what looks like a new comedy series. Boko Haram are known for their explosives videos but this latest release seems too amateurish and looks more like a comedy show, it's nothing but a war propaganda to deter our combatants forces in their ongoing efforts to wrap up the already won battle against insurgency in the country. A closer analysis of the so-called video will prove that the whole clip is more or less a fraud:

First of all, I doubt if the video was covered on 12 Sept, 2016 as the narrator wanted us to believe. Eid prayers are normally performed outdoors in the open, contrary to what we saw in the footage where the suspected terrorists were shown praying Eid inside a mosque. The other two praying sessions were no doubt captured during Eid prayers but the date and time remains a matter of questions, however, the second prayer session seems to have been captured in the night as against the 1st & 3rd, which contradicts Islamic injunctions. So it's either they (Boko Haram) lacks the basic knowledge and understanding of Islamic tutelages or they may be playing with our collective psyche by rejuvenating an old video of a Friday and Eid prayers when things were going good for them.

Secondly, the entire video settings and atmosphere is also another factor to scrutinize. Taking a closer gaze, one may notice the background and surroundings in that video looks more like a village, and considering the fact that Boko Haram are cur-

rently not in control of any part of Nigeria's territory, one must wonder how Boko Haram managed to own such a village undetected in an environment heavily covered by airforce jets. Therefore, there're all possibilities that the video was taken either in Bama or Buni Yadi when the terrorists were in control of towns and villages.

My third observation is the large number of worshippers shown in the so-called video, looking tattered, malnourished and helpless as you can see in their faces. The large number of worshippers shown in the clip looks more of poor villagers than Boko Haram fighters, reason that vast majority of them were unarmed, and no real terrorist will be roaming about unarmed while fully knowing the military are after them and may jam anytime any moment. Looking at the crowd, one may notice that the worshipers were helpless and under control. As such, it's possible that the crowd shown in the video clip may be that of poor villagers whom were unluckily trapped in the then Boko Haram control territories.

At the end, the unnamed narrator vindicated my earlier statements, he said in Hausa and I quote: "kada wani yayi tunanin wannan tsohon video ne aka hada, sabon video ne da muka dauka yau ranar sallah shabiyu ga watan satumba na shekarar arna." meaning Nobody should think that this video is a collection of old videos being manipulated or rejuvenated, it's a real video and not a videoshop that we took today being Sallah day 12-Sept according to infidels calendar. This statement alone speaks volume about the genuinty of the video in question. As the hausa man will say "*me ya kawo rami idan babu rami?*" meaning what brought the issue of a hole when there is none? Or the common saying; "there is no smoke without fire". If truly the video wasn't manipulated, what prompted the narrator to bring in issues of manipulation?

Finally, the whole essence of this videoshopping was to ut fear into the minds of innocents citizens and show the world that Boko Haram are still as strong as they were before, in order to falsify government's claims of achieving huge success in the ongoing assault against Boko Haram. But whatever the case may be, it's clearly written in bold that Boko Haram has been demoralised and conquered by our gallant forces, the remaining incapacitated few are surely coming home roast any moment soon. The so-called video if nothing, has given Nigerians enough reasons to celebrate the end of Boko Haram and thank President Muhammadu Buhari and our gallant military forces for a job well done, they have achieved in just fifteen months what others failed to achieve in six years. Though the likes of Femi Fani-Kayode wouldn't be happy with this development but the video itself shows that we have indeed made significant progress in the war against insurgency, at least we are seeing for the first time a Boko Haram video without rocket propellers nor GPMGs not to mention of Armoured Personal Carriers, rather we saw some malnourished idiots with three to four AK-47 only. Indeed, our gallant officers and men of the Nigerian military are on the verge of wrapping victory in a war that once seemed unwinnable. Thank you Buhari! Thank you Burutai! #ThankASoldier

Op-ed pieces and contributions are the opinions of the writers only and do not represent the opinions of Y!/YNaija

<http://ynaija.com/opinion-boko-harams-new-video-shows-end-sect/>

‘Shekau Is Key To Getting Girls Back’, Elbagir Says

Internationally renowned journalist Nima Elbagir described the importance of the release of Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau’s latest video during a broadcast on CNN International this morning. Mrs. Elbagir described Mr. Shekau’s latest video as a mockery of the Nigerian government and military adding that “[Boko Haram leader] Shekau is very good at taunting” the authorities. It will be recalled that the Nigerian army, on several occasions, claims to have killed Mr. Shekau.

26 SEPTEMBER, 2016

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Mrs. Elbagir described Mr. Shekau’s latest video as a mockery of the Nigerian government and military adding that “[Boko Haram leader] Shekau is very good at taunting” the authorities. It will be recalled that the Nigerian army, on several occasions, claims to have killed Mr. Shekau.

She continued her analysis of the terrorist organization’s video saying, “coming out in spectacular fashion to show that the government is not in as much control as they think.”

The latest statements by the Nigerian army have been dismissive of Mr. Shekau saying that the video confirms that he suffers from mental illness.

According to Mrs. Elbagir’s analysis, there has been a growing rift in the Boko Haram organization with one part gravitating closer to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). However, “it is Shekau who has the [Chibok] girls.”

It will be recalled that more than 200 schoolgirls from Chibok, Borno State were abducted by Boko Haram spurring international condemnation of the Nigerian government of Goodluck Jonathan, and now current President Muhammadu Buhari, for not rescuing them.

In recent weeks activists under the umbrella of #BringBackOurGirls have ramped up pressure on the Nigerian government to act more decisively in their “rescue” efforts.

With this mounting pressure on the Nigerian government to rescue the remaining Chibok schoolgirls it has given Mr. Shekau greater bargaining power with authorities. “Shekau is the keystone to getting the girls back,” according to Mrs. Elbagir in her CNN International report.

President Buhari, during his meetings at the United National General Assembly in New York last week, stated that he welcomed assistance by the UN or other stakeholders in negotiations with Boko Haram for the rescue of the Chibok girls.



Abubakar Shekau leader of Boko HaramBBC

<http://saharareporters.com/>

Boko Haram Rages in Nigeria, but the World's Eyes Are Elsewhere

22 September 2016



Workers provided food for residents at a camp for displaced people in Maiduguri, Nigeria. With villagers from the countryside pouring in, the entire city has become a sprawling refugee camp. Credit Ashley Gilbertson for The New York Times

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria — The crisis spawned by Boko Haram has drawn hundreds of thousands of people to a relatively little-known city in [Nigeria](#) that has finally become safe enough for them to wait out an end to the awful, deadly war.

With villagers from the countryside pouring in, it is almost as though the entire city, Maiduguri, has become a sprawling refugee camp.

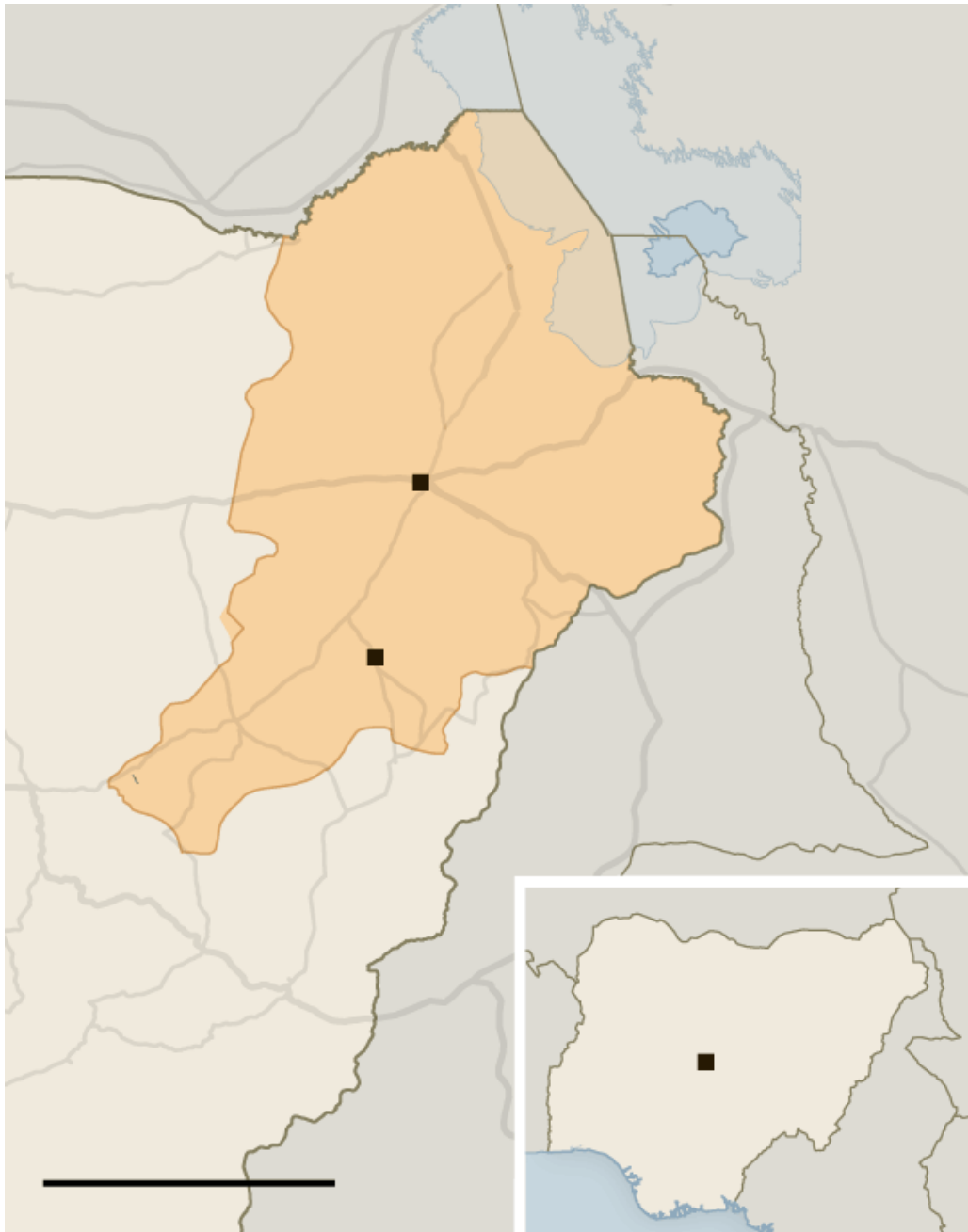
Tented government encampments dot the exurbs where people wait for bags of food to arrive. Once-quiet neighborhoods overflow with cardboard hovels filled with young children who are lucky to eat three meals a day.

Squatters live in old university buildings or crammed inside homes with relatives or kind strangers. Old men sit along busy streets asking for money. At the massive Monday Market, women sell handfuls of fruit or jewelry, hoping to earn enough to pay for a meal.

And those are the fortunate ones.

Other people are far from the city's center — and from help — in remote areas of Borno State that have only recently been wrested from Boko Haram control. The news from these areas is grim: Aid workers say many residents could die of starvation.

The Boko Haram crisis still rages, but it has not managed to sustain the level of global outrage that spiked when nearly 300 schoolgirls were kidnapped in 2014 in the village of Chibok, in Borno State's south.



NIGER
CHAD

Lake Chad

NIGERIA

Maiduguri

BORNO

STATE

Chibok

CAMEROON

Abuja

NIGERIA

100 Miles

By The New York Times

The seven-year-old conflict has produced nonstop new and horrible chapters. Burned villages. Beheadings. Rapes of women and young girls. Military corruption and [killings of innocents](#). [Child suicide bombers](#). Rescued victims, even infants, who are [jailed by the military](#) for weeks or months. And now a widespread [food and malnutrition crisis](#).



A Nigerian soldier at the ruins of the school in Chibok where Boko Haram militants kidnapped nearly 300 schoolgirls in 2014. CreditStefan Heunis/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

The horrors have been reported by The New York Times and other news outlets. Humanitarian assistance is on the ground, but the [United Nations](#) cannot raise even a quarter of the amount of money it says it needs to help combat the problems.

Despite the continuing tragedy, the world appears to have moved on to other terrible events. Television cameras capture emergency room doctors treating bloodied Syrian children wounded in bombings, and American mothers who have lost sons in shootings by police officers.

For the West, Boko Haram's victims are easy to overlook. The militants target some of the poorest people on the planet. In rural Borno State, proper emergency rooms do not exist to treat the injured. Here, mothers mourn sons who have either been killed by insurgents or, left with no other choice, have joined them.

Most of the victims live in such poverty that, even without the challenges of the insurgency, their lives would play out on the margins, scraping by for survival.

Last month, [Bono](#), the Irish musician and the lead singer of U2, came to Maiduguri hoping to retrain the international spotlight on Boko Haram-induced problems, which, by most measures, are on track to get worse.

This city in northeastern Nigeria was once the home of Boko Haram's founder, [Mohammed Yusuf](#), a dynamic imam whose teachings eventually spawned the Islamic extremist movement that has killed thousands and uprooted more than 2.6 million people from their homes across four countries. So far.

Bono, the Irish musician and the lead singer of U2, has been a leading voice in raising awareness of the victims of Boko Haram. Credit Shannon Stapleton/Reuters



In Maiduguri, Bono met with local government officials and toured encampments for people who had fled their villages as Boko Haram closed in. He visited with a group of young women and children who once lived among Boko Haram commanders.

"These girls were just an unexpectedly human face of the conflict," Bono said in a telephone interview after his trip. "When you think of Boko Haram, I just didn't think of that, or of the malnourished kids, which we saw at the camps."

This week, in meetings around the United Nations activities, Bono has been lobbying world leaders to increase aid for the victims of Boko Haram. Borno State serves as the backdrop in a video that will be released on Friday, in which he calls for longer-term economic policies to stem the appeal of terrorism.

Getting the world to focus on the Boko Haram crisis will not be easy.

Most people know of the group through its most [high-profile attack](#), on the schoolhouse at Chibok, where nearly 300 girls had gathered for exams in 2014. Militants set fire to the school and took off with the girls, only about 50 of whom managed to escape in the days after the attack.

The episode struck a global nerve. [Schoolboys who had been slaughtered](#) around the same time failed to register on the world's conscience. But after the taking of the

Chibok girls, a social media campaign went viral, with even [Michelle Obama photographed](#) holding a poster with the hashtag #BringBackOurGirls.

In the years since, most of the world's attention has been on another terrorist group, the Islamic State, and its attacks on Westerners in France, Belgium and elsewhere. Those acts have prompted vigils and rallies in cities around the world, as well as scorn and retaliation from world leaders.

The handful of campaigns to help Boko Haram's victims have largely faded. Even though Boko Haram has [pledged allegiance](#) to the Islamic State. Even though Boko Haram, by some measures, has been far [more deadly](#) than the Islamic State.



The daughter of a former Boko Haram commander's wife at a safe house in Maiduguri. The militant group has targeted people in some of the poorest areas on the planet. Credit Jane Hahn for The New York Times

About 200 of the Chibok schoolgirls are still being held captive — [one was found in May](#) wandering the forest, hungry and with a baby. But even that campaign has largely become a local one, drawing a few dozen activists to small gatherings in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, in hopes of pressuring President Muhammadu Buhari to find the girls.

Recently, Mr. Buhari released details of failed negotiations for the girls' release. On Wednesday, he requested that United Nations intermediaries help restart the talks.

But access to food and health care is also in jeopardy in areas where Boko Haram is active or has been recently. Mercy Corps said last month that an estimated 800,000 people are living in burned-out villages and unstructured camps in 15 locations

across Borno State — many far outside Maiduguri, with little or no food assistance, no operational markets and no way to make a living.

Bono's Nigeria tour is part of a global appeal by his group, the [Onecampaign](#), and the United Nations for more attention — and more money — to help the displaced throngs, and to help stop a growing malnutrition crisis in the region where about 3.8 million people are facing severe food insecurity. In Borno State alone, 49,000 children will die if they do not get treatment, according to a recent report from [Unicef](#). About 200,000 others suffer from severe acute malnutrition, the report said.

The United Nations office for the coordination of humanitarian affairs has said it needs \$739 million to care for the millions of people affected by Boko Haram in Nigeria, one of Africa's biggest economies, as well as in Cameroon, Chad and Niger. By mid-September, it had received only one-quarter of the total amount.

"There's so much strategic importance in Nigeria — that's why it's odd that there's not more focus on what's happening," Bono said.

"It's pathetic," he added. "If Nigeria fails, Africa fails. If Africa fails, Europe fails. If Europe fails, America is no longer America."

Follow Dionne Searcey on Twitter [@dionnesearcey](#)

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

International Organisations

UN

Terror and security through UN eyes



The evolution of UN thinking on countering terrorism is part of the development of building an international capacity to shut down extremist networks. (File

By Dr. Theodore Karasik Special to Al Arabiya English Monday, 19 September 2016

Text size [A](#) [A](#) [A](#)

The evolution of UN thinking on countering terrorism is part of the development of building an international capacity to shut down extremist networks. On Sept. 28, 2011, the UN Security Council (UNSC) **adopted** Resolution 1371. Under the enforcement provisions of the UN Charter, it prevents the financing of terrorism, criminalizes the collection of funds for such purposes, makes provisions for immediately freezing terrorist financial assets, and establishes a **Counter-Terrorism Committee** to oversee the resolution's implementation.

In the wake of 9/11, the UN focused on two core themes that defined how to counter terrorism at the time: preventing a catastrophic event, and targeting illicit crime. The attacks underlined the potential danger of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) falling into the hands of non-state actors. In 2004, the UNSC took its first formal decision on the danger of WMD proliferation, particularly to non-state actors.

Under the enforcement provisions of the UN Charter, the UNSC unanimously adopted **Resolution 1540**, obliging states to refrain from supporting non-state actors in the development, acquisition, manufacture, possession, transport, transfer or use of

WMD and their means of delivery. Subsequently, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the **International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism**, which was opened for signature in Sept. 2005.

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (**UNODC**) leads the international effort to combat drug trafficking and abuse, organized crime and international terrorism. It analyzes emerging trends in crime and justice, develops databases, issues global surveys, gathers and disseminates information, and undertakes country-specific needs assessments and early warning-measures, for example on the escalation of terrorism.

The UNGA has also concluded the **International Convention against the Taking of Hostages**; the **Convention on the Safety of UN and Associated Personnel**; the **International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings**; the **International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism**; and the **International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism**.

The UN launched a policy-driven aspect to fighting terrorism, five years after 9/11. In Sept. 2006, it adopted the **UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy**, outlining specific measures to address terrorism in all its aspects at the national, regional and international levels.

At the time, the UNGA endorsed the **Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF)**, which had been established by the secretary-general in 2005. The CTITF promotes coordination and coherence within the UN on counter-terrorism, and provides assistance to member states. The **UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)** provides capacity-building assistance to member states, and carries out counter-terrorism projects worldwide.

In 2016, the UN welcomed the **Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism**, on the occasion of reviewing the **UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy**. This strategy is evolving to include community-driven measures to prevent radicalization and promote de-radicalization. The UN sees itself as a useful player in the global counter-terrorism effort, while attempting to stay out of the immediate crossfire.

Challenges

However, it faces numerous challenges in translating its resolutions, conventions and programs into effective actions. Pundits say the UN lacks a clear vision. Another problem is defining terrorism. There are two camps in the UN: one thinks it should deal with the causes of terrorism, and another wants to focus on outlawing specific acts of terrorism. Fighting terrorism takes resources. As such, Saudi Arabia's \$100 million **donation** to the UNCCT is important.

The UN is strengthening its counter-terrorist agenda. Its ability to coordinate on WMD prevention and criminalize terrorist financing were important opening steps in the first five years after 9/11. Ten years later, its provision of resources needed for member states to adopt and enforce anti-terrorist legislation is the most significant UN anti-terror initiative to date.

The world body's list of ISIS- and Al Qaeda-affiliated organizations that require asset freezing is a positive model for member states. Countries that help freeze crimi-

nal assets help achieve progress on the ground. The UN will need to monitor and be deeply involved in fighting terror.

Last Update: Monday, 19 September 2016 KSA 13:10 - GMT 10:10

<http://english.alarabiya.net/>

Le chemin de la radicalisation

26 SEPT. 2016



Ulrike Meinhof en 1958. Une tête brillante. © Bettina Röhl / CC0 1.0

(KL) – « C'est la pensée uniformisée, la recherche d'une opinion commune à 'nous' qui remet en question la probité politique et humaine de tous ceux qui pensent différemment, qui rend l'opposition suspecte, tout en évitant la discussion de fond. Je crois qu'il faut résister partout où de telles structures de la pensée et de l'action s'imposent. La perte de la démocratie -qu'elle soit parlementaire ou extra-parlementaire- se fonde toujours sur la défaillance de l'opposition... [...] Actuellement, la mission de l'opposition ne consiste pas uniquement en la défense de ses position et en sa propre protection, mais en la stimulation de la pensée politique des 'indifférents'... », écrivait Ulrike Meinhof en août 1958. Et malgré le fait que ce texte a été écrit par une terroriste, plus de 50 ans plus tard, il est toujours d'actualité.

En regardant le paysage politique, que ce soit en France, en Allemagne, en Grande Bretagne ou en Europe, l'analyse d'Ulrike Meinhof est toujours aussi juste. Le monde politique se limite à diaboliser ceux qui pensent autrement, cherche à « fédérer » dans un « centre » politique qui n'existe pas et cela conduit directement à l'indifférence des masses, qui se traduit, entre autres, par un taux de participation aux élections diverses. La « qualité » du débat politique, la corruption, les scandales de toute sorte font le reste – les gens se désintéressent de la politique et la laissent entre les mains d'apparatchiks médiocres qui ne font que soutenir ce système décrit en 1958 par Ulrike Meinhof.

Il s'agit d'une spirale néfaste – car plus les citoyens décrochent de la « res publica », de la chose publique, plus ils abandonnent leur destin aux populistes, aux extrémistes, aux corrompus qui eux, ne se soucient guère des peuples, mais dans la plupart des cas, de leurs propres intérêts.

Mais que faire ? La voie empruntée par Ulrike Meinhof et ses amis, était une voie erronée. Une erreur monumentale, qui virait au criminel dès que la RAF s'est mise à tuer. Pourtant, au fond, Ulrike Meinhof, dotée d'une intelligence exceptionnelle, comme tous ses professeurs l'ont confirmé, avait raison dans son analyse. Il faut, pour sauver la démocratie, mobiliser les « indifférents », les intégrer dans un discours et débat politique qui les motive, il faut dessiner des objectifs et des perspectives que les « indifférents » puissent partager. Ce n'est pas par la violence, mais par des perspectives positives que l'on puisse arriver à changer le discours politique.

Ce sont les partis et les mouvements politiques qui devront changer d'attitude. Pour sauver la démocratie qui, à un moment où les populistes prennent le dessus avec des paroles qui mènent droit à un nouveau fascisme, il faut que les partis s'ouvrent, changent de têtes, cessent de nous présenter toujours et toujours les mêmes représentants d'un monde politique anachronique.

A l'aube d'une année marquée par des élections en France et en Allemagne, il est désolant de regarder la liste des candidats, autant à droite comme à gauche, autant en France qu'en Allemagne. Il suffit de suivre les débats politiques qui sont d'une bassesse incroyable et qui, depuis 1958, n'ont pas gagné en qualité. La conséquence, si ce discours ne change pas, sera la même que dans le dernier quart du siècle dernier – c'est l'extrémisme, la violence et le terrorisme qui marqueront la société de demain. La seule réponse valable à cette évolution sera une nouvelle Europe, une nouvelle génération d'hommes et de femmes politiques, de nouveaux objectifs pour une Europe sociale, humaniste et tournée vers les peuples au lieu de se limiter à œuvrer comme agent pour des marchés financiers corrompus.

L'exemple d'Ulrike Meinhof devait nous servir pour changer de cap. Autrement, nous risquons de revivre exactement les mêmes évolutions qu'à l'époque.

<https://blogs.mediapart.fr/>

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: A Long Way From Anywhere – Analysis



Taliban fighters in Afghanistan. Source: Wikipedia Commons.

SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

Afghanistan has been teetering at the edge of a precipice ever since the US-led invasion of the country in 2001. The situation has become further precarious, if such a thing is possible at all, after the current President Ashraf Ghani took over the reins of government two years back.

The embattled nation has been in a state of persistent turmoil for the past four decades, after the Soviet Union's invasion in 1979. For the first ten years after that invasion, the country was engulfed in a US-sponsored/supported proxy war, fought by several groups of Islamists, which lasted till the Soviet withdrawal in 1988-89. The Islamist groups that had successfully pushed the Soviet Union out almost immediately started to fight each other to grab power and form the government. The result was that the nation descended into further chaos and became unstable. A power vacuum was created in the centre with no group able to deliver any semblance of governance. Into this chaos stepped the Taliban with their version of puritanical Islam and the urge to take control of the nation.

The Taliban, an Arabic word meaning student, were mainly resident in the Islamic seminaries established on the Pakistan side of the Afghan-Pakistan border. Their encroachment into Afghanistan was gradual, done with the direct aid of the Pakistan Army. In 1996, the Taliban took control of the entire country, establishing and ruling the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan from then to 2001. During this period Osama bin Laden and his extremist group al Qaeda were allowed to establish themselves in the country, from where they master minded the attacks on the World Trade Centre

and the Pentagon in 2001. This led to the US-led NATO invasion of Afghanistan that, in collaboration with the Northern Alliance group dethroned the Taliban and pushed them out of the country. This was punishment for support and sanctuary that was provided to al Qaeda. The US installed a new government in Kabul and almost immediately the Taliban commenced a virulent insurgency that has continued ever since.

Politically Influenced Policy Shifts

In the early days of the Taliban insurgency, the Afghan security forces were trained by Western military forces deployed in Afghanistan. However, the local Afghan forces were unable to gain the upper hand against the Taliban or even make appreciable progress against the insurgency. Realising the situation, the US changed their strategy, moving from a purely military solution to a political solution. Diplomacy was resorted to in an attempt to bring the Taliban participate in the political process and even bring them into the government. However, this initiative met with only limited progress since they were unable to meet the Taliban's demands for joining the government.

Further, the Taliban is reluctant to go against the wishes of the Pakistan Army since they have a symbiotic and close relationship. In addition, Pakistan has crafted its own itinerary to follow in this imbroglio.

The way forward in Afghanistan is almost completely dependent on US initiatives. The underlying factor in this is that for some intangible reason Pakistan brings to bear an unnaturally powerful influence on the US decisions. Whether the US tailors its initiatives to Pakistan's tune willingly or unwittingly is an opaque situation. On 9 June, President Obama granted expanded military authority to 9,800 US troops stationed in Afghanistan as part of the latest initiative to bring stability to the war-torn nation. Although he has pledged to reduce the number of US troops in Afghanistan by year-end, currently the forces in-country have been permitted to join the Afghan forces in the battlefield. What this initiative, militarily limited in nature, will achieve is not yet apparent.

The US is currently facing a two-fold challenge in Afghanistan. With the Presidential election looming in early November, any further troop deployments could become an electoral liability to the Democratic nominee, Hillary Clinton. Second, the cost of the war is starting to hurt the US as it never has before. This cost is counted not only in terms of the blood and treasure that have been expended in the actual fighting, but also in terms of the enormous outlay that has been done as a rebuilding fund for Afghanistan. Since 2001, \$ 113 billion has already been expended on rebuilding activities.

However, there is almost no progress to show for the spending of this huge amount since a major part of the resources has been squandered through corruption, waste and mismanagement. The dilemma is that the US knows that any troop withdrawal will neutralise the limited progress that has so far been made. The stark fact at the current juncture is that although the Afghan forces have won some battlefield victories, they have not been of sufficient strategic impact for the Taliban to stop fighting or to force them to consider negotiating. The reality is that

Taliban now controls or contests control of a larger territorial area than at any other time since the war began fifteen years ago. It is obvious that the US initiatives are not working.

The Pakistan Factor

The US-Pakistan-Afghanistan relationship is complex, to say the least, and definitely unpredictable. Unfortunately it has a direct impact on the progress or otherwise of the on-going Afghan War. The situation is a three-cornered unending pursuit of individual national interests. To start with, Afghanistan has never accepted the current de-facto border that it shares with Pakistan, which is based on the Durand Line. This line was an arbitrary internal administrative demarcation drawn when the entire area was ruled by the British crown. Further, this border is extremely porous since the mountainous regions are difficult to patrol. This insecure situation has been exploited by both Pakistan and the Taliban, one to provide assistance to the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan and the other to cross over to the safe havens that have been established on the Pakistan side of the border.

The US-Pakistan relations have had its share of difficulties, but nothing has been more of a sticking point and upset Pakistan more than the continued US drone strikes within Pakistan territory. The killing of Mullah Mansoor, the Taliban leader, in Baluchistan in a targeted drone strike disturbed whatever little equanimity that existed in the relationship. Currently there are over 1.5 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan. If they are forcibly expelled, Afghanistan will sink into further instability, perhaps reaching a point where recovery will not be possible. Pakistan uses this fact as a threat to leverage its position and influence US decision-making.

Even if Pakistan is reluctant to do so, it is being pressurised to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table. The primary influence that Pakistan has over the Taliban is that their safe havens are in Pakistan territory and theoretically can be shut down. Further, Pakistan's support for the Taliban is not as strong as it used to be in the past. This gradual erosion in what was once a very robust and close relationship has taken place because of the emergence and steady rise of the Pakistan Taliban insurgency. There is a changing military attitude towards the Afghan Taliban within the Pakistan Army. For these reasons the attempt to pressurise Pakistan to force the Taliban to negotiate seems to have failed. Currently Pakistan is in a state of strategic paralysis, obsessed with real and imaginary Indian interference in Baluchistan and India's initiatives in Afghanistan. Pakistan's external vision has been coloured by a number of mistaken and some factual beliefs regarding its national security priorities.

The cooling of Pakistan's ardour towards the Afghan Taliban is also the result of Chinese influence. China is fully opposed to Taliban control of Afghanistan, which it fears will lead to increased Islamic militancy in Central Asia that will inevitably spread to its own Xinjiang province. Considering Pakistan's economic and security reliance on China, these directives cannot be ignored. In these circumstances at least an outward show of decoupling with the Afghan Taliban can be expected from the Pakistan Army.

In the meantime, the Pakistan Army has also become disconcerted for two reasons. One, that even after three years of effort they have not been able to install a Paki-

stan-friendly, meaning Pakistan-controlled, government in Afghanistan. This has led to Pakistan resorting to its time honoured strategy of initiating proxy-wars, through orchestrating terrorist attacks and suicide bombings in the population centres of Afghanistan. Two, the US is re-evaluating Pakistan's usefulness in its Afghanistan policy and therefore Pakistan realises that the permissive window of opportunity for its interference in Afghanistan's domestic politics is rapidly closing. The US has now repeatedly warned Pakistan to stop support to terrorism and to shut down the safe havens in the Afghan-Pakistan border areas that it has so far turned a blind eye to. Even though it is being squeezed from both ends, by China and the US, Pakistan still harbours the ambition to establish proxy control over Afghanistan, akin to what it had in the early years of the Taliban regime.

India – Playing the Mandala Game

India has been contributing to bring stability to the war-torn country, spending billions of dollars in Afghanistan. It has built the Parliament House, restored the Presidential Palace and constructed dams and expressways. India legitimises its interest in the country and in-country activities to support stability in Afghanistan through evoking the long and historic civilisational and political ties between the two countries that predates the formation of Pakistan in 1947. What is left unsaid is the contemporary geo-strategic factors that provide an impetus for India to establish a foothold in Afghanistan in the pursuance of the ancient 'Mandala Theory' of Chanakya.

At an altruistic level, India may actually want to stabilise Afghanistan and assist in furthering its peace and prosperity. However, in order to achieve this, at the pragmatic operational level India will have to assume the initiative to neutralise Pakistan's efforts at destabilising Afghanistan. This could mean indirect confrontation with Pakistan's proxy warriors. India can face this challenge in one of two ways. The first will be commit its military forces, with the permission of the Afghanistan Government, to initially establish stable areas around population centres and then to spread the stability further into the more remote regional areas. This would involve concerted military action in conjunction with the US and NATO forces still in Afghanistan. Such an action would also be open-ended and will invariably lead to direct combat with the Taliban. Whether India has the national will to embark on this course of action is doubtful.

The second strategy, perhaps more palatable from an Indian perspective, would be to commence providing military training and hardware to the Afghan national forces. This will be a long-term initiative and will have to be continued till such times that the Indian training team itself feels that the Afghan forces are competent enough to defeat the Taliban in their own game. The primary aim of the military build-up should be to contain and then defeat Pakistan-inspired and supported aggression within Afghanistan. In this strategy, the probability of mission creep is very real. If India wants to and is willing to bring the Mandala Theory to its logical conclusion, it will have to initiate actions that may have to be supported and continued for a fairly long time. Unfortunately there are no short term solutions to the challenges that confront Afghanistan now. This may just be India's opportunity to come out of its self-imposed 'stand-apart' posture in terms of foreign policy and to assert its regional status. Again, whether India has the will and confidence to implement a long-term strategy in its foreign affairs, which could also involve mili-

tary actions, is unknown.

The Peace Process – On again, Off again

The Afghan Government and the Taliban were in tentative negotiations regarding the way forward when the drone-strike kill of Mullah Mansoor on 21 May ruptured all contacts. With this death the US-initiated negotiations for peace seems to have been shelved indefinitely. It is even possible that the US is mulling a return to the military-led strategy to decapitate the Taliban with the hope of fragmenting its cohesiveness. However, the death of Mullah Mansoor, if the strike was meant to divide the Taliban, does not seem to have achieved any such effect. At least outwardly, the Taliban remains united under the new leader, Maulavi Haibatullah Akhunda, a respected religious teacher who is more a titular head. The more active leadership is being provided by the deputy, Sirajuddin Haqqani, the leader of the formidable Haqqani network. In these circumstances, it is not an exaggeration to state that the peace process has collapsed.

In a further complication of an already vexed situation, the animosity between the current Afghan Government and Pakistan is increasing. The US-Afghan team believes that Pakistan was never serious about supporting the peace process. While Pakistan is of the opinion that the US is manoeuvring the peace process in such a manner for them to be able to take action within Pakistan territory. The distrust between the two is palpable. Analysing the events of the past two years, one is bound to realise that there were unrealistic expectations regarding the outcome of the peace process from all parties concerned.

It was unrealistic on the part of the US to believe that sufficient pressure could be brought to bear on Pakistan to force it to rein in the Taliban and bring them to the negotiating table. This basic factor, critical to the progress of the peace process, was premised on unrealistically optimistic beliefs. The US felt that they had sufficient leverage with Pakistan to exert the necessary pressure for that nation to reverse its long-term strategies. It has become obvious that the US did not have that kind of leverage. It is also obvious now that the amount of influence and control that the Pakistan Army has over the Afghan Taliban has been exaggerated.

If peace talks are to resume in any meaningful manner, there has to be a conscious realignment of positions by both the Afghan Government and the Taliban. In order for this to happen, the first step would be to establish informal links between the two through which talks as a precursor to formalised discussion can take place. Such an informal channel will be of great utility to establish the ‘never-cross’ red lines of both sides. The absence of an awareness of these sacrosanct lines very often leads to the breakdown of well-intentioned negotiations.

Contradictory Positions

Neither the Afghan Government nor the Taliban have clearly enunciated their respective positions for the peace process to move forward. It is therefore difficult to analyse the reasons for its failure. However, sifting through the reports from journalists who have managed to meet the leadership from both sides, taking into account some public statements and doing some reading between the lines, it is possible to understand the standpoint of the belligerents. The Afghan Government has

repeatedly asked the Taliban to accept the constitution and lay down their arms. In return they will be permitted to enter mainstream politics and also run for office.

Under these circumstances, it can be assumed that some sort of an amnesty will also be forthcoming. This offer has been accepted by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and his Hezb-i-Islamic party. In fact Hezb representatives are already sitting in parliament.

The Taliban views are very different. First, it views the Hezb's approach as surrender and for the Taliban 'surrender' is not an option. In fact the concept of surrender is not part of the DNA of any Afghan fighting group. The Taliban seems to be internally divided regarding the offer from the Afghan Government and the ensuing peace deal. There is one group who believe that military victory is possible and that the victory will lead to the restoration of the pre-2001 Islamic Emirate. On the other hand the second group accepts that total victory is not possible and that the demographic and societal changes since 2001 has been such that it will be impossible to recreate the pre-2001 situation. Therefore, the peace settlement is the only way for the Taliban to retain its influence at the national level and for Afghanistan to escape an endless war.

The division between the two groups and the influence of each on the decision-making fluctuate. Combined with this there is a willingness on both sides to fight a long-term war if that would improve their individual positions in the eventual negotiations. The Taliban's minimal conditions are the complete withdrawal of non-Afghan forces from the country; that they will not disarm; and that a new constitution must be drafted and then approved by a national assembly, the Loya Jirga. Their unwillingness to disarm is the first point of contention.

Conclusion

There is no denying the fact that the Taliban has successfully expanded its territorial control across several regions in Afghanistan. At the same time the Afghan National Security Forces remain under-resourced and semi-prepared to effectively counter the Taliban advances. The expanse of ungoverned and remote areas is expanding on a daily basis, providing a clear opportunity for the Islamic State and al Qaeda to reconstitute themselves without any hindrance. Afghanistan has all the ingredients to return to being an extremist sanctuary like what it was in its pre-2001 iteration.

Meantime, the Afghan National Unity Government (NUG), run by President Ashraf Ghani and CEO Abdullah Abdullah, Pashtun and Tajik leaders, is facing an existential political crisis. Unequal power sharing between the two leaders has led to a parting of ways, the 'unity' in the government's name remaining an empty word. The NUG was meant to last for a period of two years and was constituted on 21 September 2014 when it assumed political power. In these two years it was expected that it would enact reforms, bring in transparency and ensure better governance. None of this has happened. A constitutional Loya Jirga is to be held by September 2016 and electoral reforms enacted by October. Both of these are unlikely to happen. When the deadlines imposed by the original agreements fall due in another weeks' time, the power sharing agreement will itself collapse. In other words, the NUG will collapse.

In the face of an on-going war, the political developments will continue to be divided and random. No actionable policy can be formulated in this climate of divisive rhetoric. On the other hand, the battle lines are such that the war cannot be brought to a reliable conclusion in the existing conditions. Victory is now not defined in traditional terms. New definitions have emerged that does not have any connection to how victory was conceived even a few decades ago. In these circumstances and considering the rigidity of stance of the different players, both military and political, as well as the ethnic mix in the country, it seems that Afghanistan is not going anywhere in a hurry.

A country that has been at the receiving end of the application of lethal force by both the Super Powers of the world in the past half century seems to be frozen in time with no end to its strife in sight.

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Belgium

Les attentats de Bruxelles, six mois après: comment les terroristes choisissent leur avocat

Comment un avocat choisit-il de défendre des terroristes ou des présumés terroristes ? Comment sont-ils contactés ? Deux questions qui nous taraudent régulièrement



Me Xavier Carrette.

« Généralement dans ce genre de dossiers, il y a une affaire pénale en amont, dont on s'est occupé pour un suspect, ou bien celui d'un proche », nous explique l'avocat Me Xavier Carrette. Le pénaliste représente plusieurs suspects cités dans des dossiers « terrorisme », notamment Ibrahim Farisi, suspect dans le dossier des attentats de Bruxelles. « Ce sont rarement des avocats pro déo qui sont choisis. Je me suis occupé d'une affaire pour Ibrahim Farisi, dans le cadre d'un licenciement abusif il y a quelques années. C'est pour ça qu'il m'a recontacté », nous explique-t-il.

« En tant que pénaliste, si la thèse de défense du client ne contredit pas les éléments du dossier et qu'il ne tient pas un discours qui va contre nos propres principes, alors on accepte », nous dit l'avocat, avant de tempérer, « Quand il faut défendre le principal suspect, là c'est autre chose bien sûr, mais il faut se rappeler que l'avocat ne défend pas des idées », précise-t-il sa phrase.

Accepter ce type de dossier n'est jamais sans conséquence. La pression médiatique et celle de l'opinion publique l'accompagnent souvent, ce qui peut impacter le travail ainsi que les relations personnelles des avocats.

« Ce n'est pas le genre de dossier qui en ramène d'autres, car ils prennent énormément de temps. Mais on ne perd pas de clients à cause de ça, ils ne se disent pas qu'on défend les idées des prévenus. C'est surtout un problème de disponibilité », analyse M e Carrette. « Dans la sphère privée, ça suscite évidemment des discussions. C'est « dangereux » nous dit-on. À force de discussion, on finit par arriver à déconstruire cette image-là des suspects. Surtout que je me retrouve souvent avec des gars embarqués dans des histoires qui les dépassent mais aux conséquences énormes. Il y a un gros travail de défense, c'est ça qui est intéressant », conclut notre interlocuteur.

<http://www.sudinfo.be/>

Canada

Canada Can Do More to Fight Money Laundering, Terror Financing

Sep 15, 2016 8:00 am ET



ENLARGE

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

A review of Canada's efforts to fight money laundering and terrorism financing received good marks from the International Monetary Fund, though it said more improvement is needed in the country's legal framework and implementation of its programs.

The IMF report, released Thursday, was adopted by the Financial Action Task Force as Canada's fourth mutual evaluation. FATF is an intergovernmental organization that establishes standards and advocates for measures to combat money laundering, terrorism financing and other threats to the international financial system.

While Canadian authorities were credited with good understanding of the risks the country faces from money laundering and terrorism financing, the IMF report said the exclusion of legal counsels, legal firms and Quebec notaries from its oversight is a "significant loophole" and "raises serious concerns" since legal professionals are at high risk of misuse for money laundering or terrorist financing purposes. "That risk is not satisfactorily mitigated."

The report found Canada's anti-money laundering watchdog agency, the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada, or Fintrac, is limited by the country's constitution into the types of analysis it can conduct; for instance, Fintrac isn't permitted to request information from any reporting entity. While Fintrac cooperates "effectively" with other law enforcement agencies, the report found the constraints on the organization create a "gap" in the country's ability to fight these problems.

"The Canadian authorities have achieved some success in combating money laundering, notably when conducting law enforcement efforts with the support of Fintrac's analysis," the report said. "However, these efforts are not entirely in line with the money-laundering risks that Canada faces, and overall, the recovery of proceeds of crime appears to be relatively low."

The report found Canada's efforts to combat terrorism financing are in line with the country's risk profile, and found effective cooperation among governmental agencies in this area. The country was credited for working well with other nations in the fight against terrorist financing and, "albeit to a somewhat lesser extent, money laundering."

FATF also this week released an assessment of Austria's anti-money laundering and terrorism financing programs, saying while the country has created an effective system for investigating and prosecuting terrorist activities it "does not pursue money laundering and confiscation as a priority."

The country's Financial Market Authority understands the risks in the institutions it supervises and has good strategies but is hampered by a lack of adequate resources, especially for the supervision of higher-risk credit institutions, which the report said "limits the effective implementation of these strategies."

The report found shortcomings with Austria's financial intelligence unit, saying it only conducts "very basic operational analysis and does not conduct any strategic analysis to support the operational needs of competent authorities." The unit doesn't have the capability to cross-match suspicious transaction reports or analyze data to uncover trends and patterns and "does not conduct analysis of terrorist financing-related suspicious transactions," the report said.

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<http://blogs.wsj.com/>

India

After Uri strike, India must impose measured costs on terror exporters

Sep 19, 2016



An Indian Army helicopter flies over the site of a gunbattle between soldiers and militants inside an army brigade headquarters near the border with Pakistan, known as the Line of Control (LoC), in Uri. (AFP)

From Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Lahore Declaration to Manmohan Singh's peace-at-any-price doctrine and Narendra Modi's Lahore visit statement, India's readiness to trust Pakistan's anti-terrorism assurances draws attention to the adage: Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. India has been fooled repeatedly.

The bloody attack by Pakistan-backed terrorists on yet another military camp in Jammu and Kashmir, however, represents double shame for India. Coming after the dramatic terrorist storming of the Pathankot air base at the beginning of this year, the [attack on the army base at Uri](#) near the line of control with Pakistan highlights defence-related incompetence. If Modi wishes to send a clear message, he must begin at home by firing his bumbling defence minister and fixing the drift in his Pakistan policy.

For more than a quarter-century, India has been gripped by a vacillating leadership and a paralytic sense of indecision and despair over cross-border terrorism. India's own passivity and indecision have played no small part in fuelling Pakistan's proxy war by terror. The rogue Inter-Services Intelligence's "S" branch — tasked specifically with exporting terrorism to India and Afghanistan — operates through terrorist surrogates.

This year's series of terrorist attacks on Indian targets — from Jalalabad and Mazar-i-Sharif to Pampore and Uri — signals that the ISI terror masterminds, learning from the international outrage over their November 2008 strikes on civilians in Mumbai, are now concentrating their spectacular hits on symbols of the Indian state, including security forces. For example, as New Year's gift to India, the four-day terrorist siege of the Pathankot base coincided with a 25-hour gun and bomb attack on the Indian consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif.

The Uri attack is similarly intended to make India feel vulnerable and weak while seeking to minimise the risk of Indian retaliation. This attack, however, is likely to represent a turning point for India, especially given the number of soldiers killed. Indeed, the lesson for India from its restraint despite Pathankot is that all talk and no action invites more deadly terrorism, besides encouraging Pakistan to fuel unrest in the Kashmir Valley and “internationalise” the J&K issue.

For Modi in particular, the Uri attack constitutes a defining moment. He has completed half of his five-year term with his Pakistan policy in a mess.

Indeed, despite terrorists testing India's resolve from Herat to Gurdaspur and Udhampur after his election victory, Modi's response to the Pathankot siege underscored continuing strategic naïveté. Even before the siege ended, New Delhi supplied Islamabad communication intercepts and other evidence linking the attackers with their handlers in Pakistan. This was done in the hope that the terror masters will go after their terror proxies, despite India's bitter experience in the Mumbai case where it presented dossiers of evidence to Pakistan.



Army personnel inside the Army Brigade camp during the terror attack in Uri,

Jammu and Kashmir. (PTI Photo)

India later granted Pakistani investigators access to the Pathankot base. It was like treating arsonists as firefighters. Pakistan set up its investigation team not to bring the Pathankot masterminds to justice but to probe the operational deficiencies of the Pathankot strike and to ensure that the next proxy attack left no similar telltale signs of Pakistani involvement.

Today, India has little choice but to overhaul its strategy as both diplomacy and restraint have failed to stem Pakistan's relentless efforts to export terrorism and intermittently engage in border provocations. India must shed its focus on the last terror attack: For example, after Pathankot, India, forgetting Mumbai, asked Pakistan to act in that case. And after Uri, Pathankot could fade into the background. Consequently, Pakistan has still to deliver even in the 1993 'Bombay bombings' case.

India needs a comprehensive, proactive approach. The choice is not between persisting with a weak-kneed approach and risking an all-out war. This is a false, immoral choice that undermines the credibility of India's nuclear and conventional deterrence and encourages the enemy to sustain aggression. It is also a false argument that India has no choice but to keep battling Pakistan's unconventional war on its own territory. Seeking to combat cross-border terrorism as an internal law-and-order issue is self-injurious and self-defeating.

Make no mistake: India's response to the Pakistani strategy to inflict death by a thousand cuts should no longer be survival by a thousand bandages. Rather, India must impose calibrated costs to bolster deterrence and stem aggression. Why should India allow itself to be continually gored by a country that is much smaller than it demographically, economically and militarily and on the brink of becoming dysfunctional? Just because India shied away from imposing costs on the terror masters in Pakistan for their past attacks on Indian targets, from Mumbai to Kabul, is no reason for it to stay stuck in a hole.

To deter Pakistan's unconventional warfare, India's response must be spread across a spectrum of unconventional options that no nation will discuss in public. Nuclear weapons have no deterrence value in an unconventional war. If the Pakistani security establishment is to get the message that the benefits of peace outweigh hostilities, it should be made to bear most of the costs that India seeks to impose. India should employ asymmetric instruments to strike hard where the opponent doesn't expect to be hit. New Delhi should also be ready to downgrade diplomatic relations with Pakistan and mount pressure on its three benefactors, China, America and Saudi Arabia.

India's goal is narrow: to halt cross-border terrorist attacks. In keeping with the United Nations Charter, which recognises self-defence as an "inherent right" of every nation, India must impose measured and pointed costs on the terror exporters without displaying overt belligerence or brinkmanship.

(The writer is a geostrategist and author. Views expressed are personal)

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

Jihadists Target Spain

"The actions of your ancestors are the reason for our actions today."

September 27, 2016 at 5:00 am

- ✦ The Islamic State document said that since the establishment of the Spanish Inquisition in 1478, Spain "has done everything to destroy the Koran." It said that Spain tortured Muslims, including burning them alive. Therefore, according to the Islamic State, "Spain is a criminal state that usurps our land." The document calls on jihadists to "reconnoiter airline and train routes for attacks." It also calls on followers to "poison food and water" with insecticides.
- ✦ "We will kill any 'innocent' Spanish infidel we find in Muslim lands, and... whether we are European in origin or not, we will kill you in your cities and towns according to our plan." — Islamic State document, May 30, 2016.
- ✦ "We will recover al-Andalus, Allah willing. Oh dear Andalus! You thought we forgot about you. I swear by Allah we have never forgotten you. No Muslim can forget Córdoba, Toledo or Xàtiva. There are many faithful and sincere Muslims who swear they will return to al-Andalus." — Islamic State video, January 31, 2016.
- ✦ "Spain is the land of our forefathers and we are going to take it back with the power of Allah." — Islamic State video, January 7, 2016.

Islamic militants are stepping up a propaganda war against Spain. In recent months, Islamic State and other jihadist groups have produced a flurry of videos and documents calling on Muslims to reconquer al-Andalus.

Al-Andalus is the Arabic name given to those parts of Spain, Portugal and France occupied by Muslim conquerors (also known as the Moors) from 711 to 1492. Many Muslims believe that territories Muslims lost during the Christian Reconquest of Spain still belong to the realm of Islam. They claim that Islamic law gives them the right to re-establish Muslim rule there.

A recent Islamic State [document](#) includes a list of grievances against Spain for wrongs done to Muslims since the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa on July 16, 1212, when the Christian forces of King Alfonso VIII of Castile routed the Almohad Muslim rulers of the southern half of the Iberian Peninsula. More than 100,000 Muslims were killed in the battle, which was a key victory in the Catholic Monarchs' "Reconquista" of Spain.

The document said that since the establishment of the Spanish Inquisition in 1478, Spain "has done everything to destroy the Koran." It said that Spain tortured Muslims, including burning them alive. Therefore, according to the Islamic State, "Spain

is a criminal state that usurps our land." The document calls on jihadists to "reconnoiter airline and train routes for attacks." It also calls on followers to "poison food and water" with insecticides.

The document concludes: "The actions of your ancestors are the reason for our actions today."

On July 15, 2016, Islamic State [released](#) its first propaganda video with Spanish subtitles. The high quality of the Spanish translation, both in writing and in syntax, led some analysts to conclude that the translator's mother tongue is Spanish and that the subtitling may even have been done inside Spain.

On June 3, Islamic State [released](#) a video — "Month of Ramadan, Month of Conquest" — which mentions al-Andalus four times. Spain is the only non-Muslim country mentioned in the video.

On May 30, Islamic State [released](#) a two-page document in Spanish in which it issued threats directly against Spain. The document states:

"We will kill any 'innocent' Spanish infidel we find in Muslim lands, and if not we will reach your land. Our religion and our faith lives among you, and even though you do not know our names or what we look like and do not even know whether we are European in origin or not, we will kill you in your cities and towns according to our plan, in the same way that you are killing our families."

On January 31, Islamic State [released](#) a video in which one of its Spanish jihadists warned Spain that it would "pay a very heavy price" for expelling Muslims from al-Andalus. The eight-minute video included the following statement:

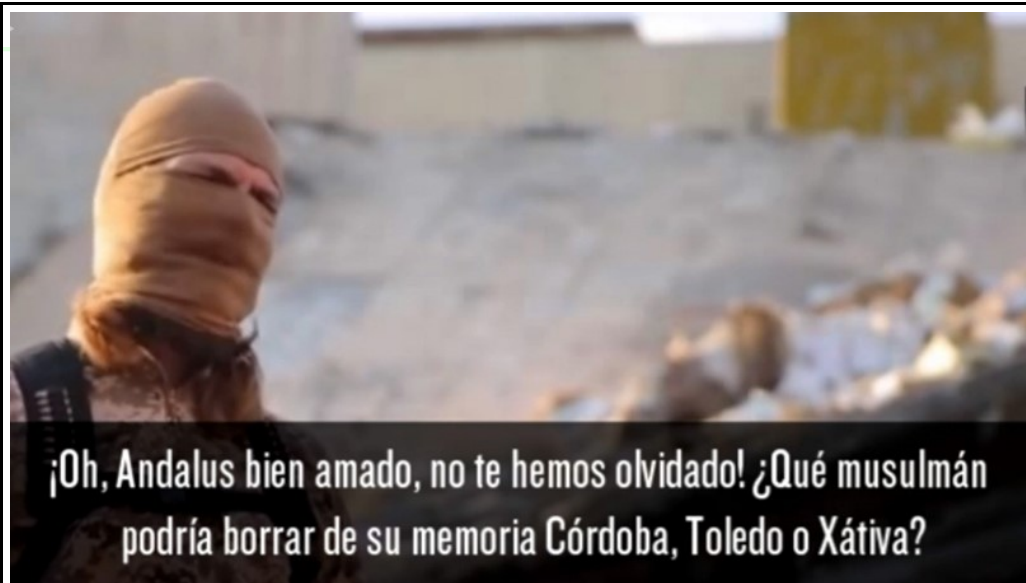
"I swear by Allah that you will pay a very heavy price and your demise will be very painful. We will recover al-Andalus, Allah willing. Oh dear Andalus! You thought we forgot about you. I swear by Allah we have never forgotten you. No Muslim can forget Córdoba, Toledo or Xàtiva. There are many faithful and sincere Muslims who swear they will return to al-Andalus."

On January 7, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, which is fighting Islamic State for hegemony of North Africa, [released](#) a video calling for jihadist attacks in Madrid as a strategy to help Muslims recover the Spanish North African exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla.

Another Islamic State video [vowed](#) to liberate al-Andalus from non-Muslims. A jihadist speaking in Spanish with a heavy North African accent said:

"I say to the entire world as a warning: We are living under the Islamic flag, the Islamic caliphate. We will die for it until we liberate those occupied lands, from Jakarta to Andalusia. And I declare: Spain is the land of our forefathers and we are going to take it back with the power of Allah."

Meanwhile, 33 jihadists were arrested in Spain in 17 different raids during the first nine months of 2016, [according](#) to the Spanish Interior Ministry.



An armed, masked Islamic State jihadist appears in a propaganda video, where he warns Spain that it would "pay a very heavy price" for expelling Muslims from al-Andalus hundreds of years ago. The Spanish subtitle above reads "Oh dear Andalus! You thought we forgot about you. I swear by Allah we have never forgotten you. No Muslim can forget Córdoba, Toledo or Xàtiva."

Most recently, two Spanish citizens of Moroccan origin — Karim El Idrissi Soussi, 27, and a second man identified as 18-year-old O.S.A.A — were arrested in Madrid on jihad terror charges. One of the detainees is a 27-year-old computer science student who watched jihadist propaganda videos in class and threatened to massacre his fellow students.

According to the Interior Ministry, Soussi tried to join the Islamic State but was detained by Turkish authorities while attempting to cross the border into Syria. He was deported and just recently returned to Spain.

The Interior Ministry said Soussi's penchant for radical Islam became evident in November 2015, when the secondary school where he was studying computer science held a moment of silence to honor the victims of the jihadist attacks in Paris. According to teachers and students, Soussi shouted slogans in support of the attacks which killed 130 people, including 89 at the Bataclan Theater.

On other occasions, Soussi publicly justified jihadist attacks by Islamic State, which he said was the ideal form of government for all Muslims. According to the Interior Ministry, Soussi visited a public library almost daily to connect to the internet and browse jihadist websites. He allegedly created fake profiles and posted jihadist material on social media sites. Soussi also criticized so-called moderate Muslims and expressed hope that someday Spain would become an Islamic emirate.

Soussi allegedly watched Islamic State propaganda videos during his computer science class and repeatedly threatened to bring weapons to school to kill his classmates.

The other jihadist, O.S.A.A., was arrested for the offenses of "glorifying jihadist terrorism" and "self-indoctrination for terrorist purposes." The Interior Ministry did not provide further details.

A total of 636 jihadists have been detained in the country since the March 2004 Madrid train bombings, in which nearly 200 people were killed and more than 2,000 injured.

A recent study by the Madrid-based Elcano Institute [found](#) that of the 150 jihadists arrested in Spain during the past four years, 124 (81.6%) were linked to Islamic State and 26 (18.4%) to al-Qaeda.

Of those linked to Islamic State, 45.3% were Spanish citizens, 41.1% were Moroccans and 13.6% had other nationalities. In terms of birth, 45.6% were born in Morocco and 39.1% were born in Spain. Only 15.3% were born in other countries.

In terms of immigration, 51.7% were first-generation immigrants, 42.2% were second- or third-generation immigrants, and 6.1% had no immigration background, which implies they are Spanish converts to Islam.

In terms of residency, 29.8% were arrested in Barcelona, 22.1% in Spain's North African exclave of Ceuta, and 15.3% in Madrid. The others were arrested in more than a dozen other localities across the country.

Islamic State has suffered setbacks on the battlefields of the Middle East, but the jihadist terror threat remains undiminished. In the [words](#) of Spanish terrorism analyst Florentino Portero: "Islamic State is answering military defeats with more terror."

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<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/9025/jihadists-target-spain>

Turkey

Erdogan/ Il n'est pas juste de lutter contre une organisation terroriste tout en soutenant une autre

"J'invite les agences de notation financière à être honnêtes"

23.09.2016 ~ 27.09.2016



Le président de la République Recep Tayyip Erdogan a affirmé qu'il n'était pas juste de lutter contre une organisation terroriste tout en soutenant une autre.

A New York où il se trouve à l'occasion de l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU, M. Erdogan a reçu le dirigeant de Bloomberg Michael Bloomberg et accordé une interview au rédacteur en chef de Bloomberg News John Micklethwait.

“ Les Etats-Unis et la Russie ne sont pas des pays qui se situent près de la Syrie. La situation est compliquée en Syrie. Les américains disent qu'ils détruiront Daesh avec le PYD alors que nous affirmons que ce sont des organisations terroristes. Est-il possible de détruire une organisation terroriste par le biais d'une autre? Vous leur livrez des armes et renforcez les menaces. Suite à l'attentat-suicide à Gaziantep, nous sommes entrés à Jarablus avec les opposants. Nous avançons vers Al-Bab. Il faut nettoyer cette région. Nos amis le comprennent ou pas” a dit M. Erdogan au sujet de la Syrie.

En réponse à une question portant sur le candidat qu'il soutient pour la présidence américaine, M. Erdogan s'est exprimé en ces termes : “ Je respecte le choix du peuple américain. Je ne peux pas faire de déclaration de soutien. Nous ferons l'analyse après la présidentielle. J'ai travaillé 14 ans, il est hors de question que nos relations avec les Etats-Unis soient interrompues, la continuité est essentielle dans la politique”.

“Lorsqu’un journaliste américain est emprisonné aux Etats-Unis, je ne peux pas en accuser ce pays. C’est la justice qui décide. Pouvons-nous dire que les journalistes ne commettent pas de crime? Ils commettent également des crimes. S’ils soutiennent la tentative de coup d’Etat, ils paient le prix. Lorsque les politiciens commettent des crimes, ils paient le prix” a-t-il expliqué en réponse à ceux qui critique le processus juridique entamé contre ceux qui soutiennent le terrorisme en Turquie.

Soulignant la croissance économique en Turquie, M. Erdogan s’est exprimé en ces mots : “ Nous avons enregistré une croissance économique de 3,8%, un niveau en dessous de celui que nous avons visé, mais nous avons préservé la stabilité et la confiance. Cela fait 29 trimestres de suite que la croissance économique se poursuit. Si la livre turque garde sa valeur, la croissance économique sera permanente. Nous ne voyons pas ce taux de croissance dans les pays se disant “développés”. La Banque centrale de Turquie a des réserves 123 milliards de dollars. Nous espérons que cela augmentera. Les agences de notation financière font des déclarations politiques. Elles favorisent les pays détruits et ignorent les pays ayant une économie dynamique. Il ne faut pas que ces agences aient une prise de position politique. Je les invite à être honnêtes. Même si vous n’êtes pas honnêtes, l’économie turque est bien forte”.

<http://www.trt.net.tr/francais/ameriques/>

Will US-Russia Deal On Syria Hold? – Analysis



Russia's Vladimir Putin and United States' Barack Obama at the G20 Summit in Hangzhou. Photo Credit: Kremlin.ru

SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

The war in Syria is still raging after over five and half years since its outset. Several initiatives have been undertaken to try and end it – first through the Arab League, then Geneva I, Geneva II and the Vienna Process, where even a calendar of steps for bringing peace to Syria was laid out. Obviously, partisan efforts by Western countries and their Arab Gulf allies in the UN Security Council (UNSC) were defeated by Chinese and Russian vetoes.

Finally, in February 2016 the US, Russia and 19 other countries met in Munich, preceded by intensive negotiations between US Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, and an agreement for a ‘cessation of hostilities’ in Syria’s civil war was announced. On 26 February, the UNSC endorsed this initiative through Resolution 2268. Special Envoys Kofi Annan and Lahkdar Brahimi had toiled without success and resigned; Stefan de Mistura continues his efforts. Despite all this, the situation within Syria has continued to steadily worsen. Given the complex ground realities, a meaningful improvement is nowhere on the horizon, let alone being imminent.

After another round of marathon negotiations conducted secretly between Kerry and Lavrov, a new deal was announced on 09 September, to bring about a ceasefire with the deal coming into effect at 7:00 pm on 12 September. Kerry outlined the main features of the deal at the press conference while announcing the same.

An Overview of the Deal

The Syrian regime and the opposition will cease all attacks against each other including aerial bombardments and shall not attempt to gain additional territory at the expense of each other; both sides will agree to provide unimpeded and sustained humanitarian access to all besieged and hard-to-reach areas including, in particular, in and around Aleppo; non jihadist opposition groups are expected to sever connections with Fateh al Sham (earlier called Al Nusra Front – an al Qaeda outfit); after seven continuous days of adherence to the cessation of hostilities and increased humanitarian access to the besieged civilian populations, Russia and the US will begin working together to defeat Fateh al Sham and the Islamic State (IS) jihadist groups; after a “period of reduced violence” the US and Russia “will facilitate a political transition which is the only way to bring about a durable end to this war.”

Reception

The Syrian regime immediately accepted the deal; most opposition rebel groups have also accepted but less categorically and the most powerful, Ahrar al Sham, has rejected it. As of 18 September 2016, the ceasefire is largely holding and fighting has noticeably reduced but humanitarian supplies have not been getting through. However, with opposing sides in Syria increasingly accusing each other of violations and barbs being traded between Russia and the US, even at presidential levels, immediate short-term prospects of the deal working appear bleak.

The continuing deep distrust between the two protagonists of the deal, Washington and Moscow, was publicly articulated robustly by both US President Barack Obama and US Secretary of Defence Ashton Carter throughout the two weeks of the Kerry-Lavrov negotiations leading up to the announcement of the deal. Even Kerry's remarks at the press conference unveiling the deal were peppered with deep uncertainty if not scepticism – e.g. the repetitive use of phrases such as ‘if this happens’, ‘if those concerned implement the deal’, etc. An extremely clear reflection of the enormous difficulties ahead is the fact that the US has made it absolutely clear that the detailed text of the deal cannot be released because if the deal breaks down, the details will be hugely useful to Assad. These are not propitious omens for potential success.

This deal is believed to be very detailed in contrast to past efforts. However, there are no mechanisms to ensure implementation of even a single element of the deal and there are far too many loopholes that can easily be exploited by different parties to continue doing what they have been doing in the past.

Kerry had said that “if groups within the legitimate opposition want to retain their legitimacy, they need to distance themselves in every way possible from Nusra and Daesh.” This is perhaps the single most essential key to the deal working out because most rebel groups operate in very close proximity to Nusra fighters when not embedded together in rebel controlled areas. Opposition rebels will inevitably be hit whenever the Syrian regime attacks al Nusra fighters, as it will inevitably do as al Nusra is excluded from the ceasefire, and then the regime will be accused of violating terms of the deal. But who will ensure that this separation is brought about? Neither the US nor Russia can do so. Most of the more effective rebel groups are prox-

ies of Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey and though they have verbally welcomed the deal, do these countries have the ability or frankly, even any desire or intention, to bring about this separation?

Looking Ahead

Russia has given enough indications that it is not committed to keeping Assad in power beyond a transitional phase. If Russia can persuade Assad to refrain from attacking al Nusra for the next few weeks, progress to the next stage – US and Russia taking on Nusra and Daesh – could take place which is an essential prerequisite for the third stage: initiating a political transition. However, the opposition rebels are resolutely opposed to Assad's continuation for even a very limited period of transition. Will a hugely politically weakened Obama, now also in the last four months of his presidency, and with the US' influence in the region at a historic low, have the clout to persuade Saudi Arabia and its allies to persuade the rebels to accept Assad even for a short time? If Assad is excluded completely from transitional arrangements no progress on a solution is possible at all – Assad and Iran will ensure that notwithstanding Russian views.

Another significant uncertainty is as to whether the exceedingly disparate opposition can cobble together a meaningful representative entity to be a partner in any transitional authority? The obduracy and unalloyed attachment to zero-sum outcomes of all the very large number of players on the ground in Syria is a very serious impediment to a solution.

Furthermore, the deal does not say anything about the presence of foreign Shiite militias such as Hezbollah, which like al Qaeda and the IS, is considered a terrorist group by the US, and the Turkish Army having physically entered Syria to prevent the westward advance of Syrian Kurds, who are the US' most effective ally against Daesh. These issues have the potential to derail any forward movement.

The past six years have witnessed many unpredictable surprises thrown up in the Arab world and West Asia. Making predictions, always hazardous, has become more iffy now. The many negative elements outlined above and the even more numerous imponderables make it difficult to be even mildly optimistic of this new deal bringing an early end to the conflict in Syria. That said, it will be good for the world at large and for the people of Syria in particular if this prognostication is proved wrong.

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

America's terrorism dilemma



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The law passed by US legislators against states sponsoring terrorism was vetoed by Obama, who has cautioned that such a move would put Americans in the dock as well.

It is not surprising that the United States lawmakers passed the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA) in both the houses of Congress — the Senate and the House of Representatives. It was an open secret that the bill was for the families of the victims of September 11, 2001, terror attacks in New York and Washington, and that it was clearly aimed against Saudi Arabia. It was indeed a calculated political move because the legislation was mooted 15 years after the attack, and it was mooted in an election year. There was bipartisan support for the bill. President Barack Obama had to veto the bill, and the Congress is threatening to override the presidential veto by rejecting it through a two-thirds majority in each House. There are indications that some of the Senators and the Congressmen and Congresswomen are having second thoughts. This is rooted in the apprehension that US officials would become vulnerable targets for acts of omission and commission in foreign military engagements. This is exactly the point that Obama in his veto message to the Senate had highlighted.

It is being argued in some of Washington's political quarters that the 9/11 commission which was set up in the wake of the attacks found no evidence of the involvement of Saudi Arabia, though it is true that all of the 19 attackers on that day were Saudis. It does raise complicated questions of international law, and brings into question the basic concepts of the immunity of sovereign states. More than its commitment to the idea of immunity of sovereign states, the US political establishment seems to be keenly aware of the fact that many other states could hold the US government similarly responsible for causing distress to them, and they could through

similar legislation hold the US as responsible for acts of explicit aggression. Of course, it would be difficult for other states, or even for the US, to impose penalties against one another. This would only create confusion. Individuals can be made to stand in the dock. It would be difficult to apply the same rule to states. A state or a government can be made to pay indemnity but that would be possible only at the end of a war, when a defeated state or government can be forced to pay for its deeds.

It is interesting that the US, along with China, India and many others, do not recognise the International Criminal Court (ICC), where governments and their representatives could be prosecuted. It is true that in the case of the Lockerbie air crash, it was the Libyan intelligence officer, Abdelbasit el-Megrahi, who was given a life term in 2009 and he was released by the Scottish government on compassionate grounds in 2009 as he was suffering from prostate cancer. He died in 2012. Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi had accepted responsibility and paid compensation to the families of the victims. But he had maintained that he did not order the explosion on board Pan Am 103. In the case of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the US government had not identified the Saudi Arabian hand during its investigations. So the attempt by the US lawmakers to pass a law that would hold a sovereign state guilty appears to be nothing more than muscle-flexing. But it will be difficult for the US courts to assert authority over foreign governments, or order for compensation to be paid. It appears to be a political gamble because it has popular appeal.

<http://www.dnaindia.com/analysis/>

Yemen

An Al Qaeda Martyr's Enduring Pitch

SEPT. 17, 2016

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Hiding out from American drones in Yemen's badlands in March 2010, Al Qaeda's most persuasive English-language recruiter donned a camo jacket and addressed American and European Muslims.

"Today, with the war between Muslims and the West escalating," Anwar al-Awlaki said in the video, "you cannot count on the message of solidarity you may get from a civic group or a political party, or the word of support you hear from a kind neighbor or a nice co-worker. The West will eventually turn against its Muslim citizens."

It was an audacious pitch. No matter what you may think, the American-born Mr. Awlaki told Western Muslims, sooner or later your governments and fellow citizens will come after you. So you must join our violent cause.



Anwar al-Awlaki speaking in a video message posted on radical websites in 2010. Credit: Site Intelligence Group, via Associated Press

On Sept. 30, it will be five years since the C.I.A. drone strike in Yemen that killed Mr. Awlaki, the first United States citizen executed without trial on orders of a president since the Civil War. But the Hellfire missile that ended his life promoted him to martyrdom in the eyes of his fans, and his [influence](#) has turned up in terrorism case after terrorism case. His videos, forecasting a West in which Muslims would increasingly be denigrated, marginalized and threatened with expulsion or worse, have been viewed by hundreds of thousands.

For years those prognostications fell flat. But had he lived to see it, the last year might have given Mr. Awlaki a belated sense of vindication. In the United States, a major party presidential candidate proposed a “[total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States](#),” drawing raucous applause. Outspoken anti-Muslim politicians in Europe have won unprecedented support. In a tragicomic spectacle in France, [armed police officers surrounded a Muslim woman](#) in a bathing outfit designed for religious modesty, as if her garb posed some dire threat.

At rallies and on social media in many countries, anxious people cry that Muslims are the enemy, and the number of hate crimes aimed at them has ballooned. “This presidential election has redefined social norms in America,” Hazem Bata, the secretary general of the Islamic Society of North America, said at the group’s convention this month. “Things that were only said behind closed doors one year ago are now said out in the open, on TV, on radio, without any sense of embarrassment.”

The anti-Muslim language, of course, has grown in part from real tragedies. In San Bernardino, Calif., and Orlando, Fla., and in Paris, Brussels and Nice, France, a few people chose to obey Mr. Awlaki’s twisted command, later echoed by the Islamic State, that any Muslim in Europe or America has a duty to carry out attacks at home.

In the United States, jihadist killings in the 15 years since the Sept. 11 attacks remain a rounding error — fewer than 100 killed out of more than 220,000 homicides. But terrorism, a word with roots in the Latin for “to cause to tremble,” gets that name for a reason. By shooting up a nightclub or mowing down people with a truck, ostensibly in the name of Islam, attackers send the message that no one is safe — and that any Muslim may be a threat.

The resulting Islamophobia does the work of Al Qaeda and the Islamic State for them. Rather than draw the circle of opprobrium around a tiny number of violent fanatics, some worried Westerners draw it around the world’s 1.6 billion Muslims. Yet if all Muslims are smeared as potential enemies, some become more susceptible to the siren call of Mr. Awlaki and his fellow recruiters.

“Terrorism is a strategy of provocation,” said Bruce Hoffman, director of security studies at Georgetown University. “Al Qaeda and ISIS hope to provoke violence that will deepen the cleavages in our society and encourage the demonization of Muslims. When political leaders denigrate Muslims, terrorist groups can grab hold of that and make use of it.”

In his early career as an American imam, Mr. Awlaki rejected terrorist violence. As a preacher in a big mosque outside Washington, he condemned the Sept. 11

attacks. “We came here to build, not to destroy,” he told his congregation. “We are the bridge between America and one billion Muslims worldwide.”

Later, in the English-language Al Qaeda magazine he oversaw, Inspire, he blamed American policy for his disillusionment. “With the American invasion of Iraq and continued U.S. aggression against Muslims I could not reconcile between living in the U.S. and being a Muslim, and I eventually came to the conclusion that jihad against America is binding upon myself just as it is binding on every other able Muslim,” he wrote.

As I found while researching a [book](#) on Mr. Awlaki, that was not the whole story. In 2002, Mr. Awlaki, a married father of three, learned that the F.B.I. knew his biggest secret: that he regularly visited prostitutes in Washington hotels. Fearing ruin, he fled the United States and started down the path that ended with Al Qaeda in Yemen.

He soon stopped speaking of bridge building. By 2003, lecturing to young Muslim fans in London, he told them they should “never, ever trust the kuffar” — non-Muslims. In 2006, in 22 lectures on “The Hereafter,” he cited prophecies about a future apocalyptic battle between Muslims and all others. “Islam will rule the world,” he declared. “Kuffar will be stamped out.” For nonbelievers, he added, the choice will be “either Islam or death.”

Those lectures became favorites of both Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the younger of the two brothers who bombed the Boston Marathon in 2013, and Syed Farook, who along with his wife fatally shot 14 people in San Bernardino last year.

Mr. Awlaki’s jihadist cause requires a clash of civilizations — Western Muslims rejecting their neighbors to rally around a bloody, bigoted and backward version of Islam. So he hoped for Islamophobia run amok, driving fearful Muslims to support a global jihad. Yet despite eruptions of anti-Muslim passions here and there, Mr. Awlaki’s dire predictions seemed delusional.

When Donald J. Trump called for a ban on Muslims entering the United States, jihadists were gleeful. The Somali affiliate of Al Qaeda, Al Shabab, created a propaganda [video](#) combining Mr. Trump’s statement with Mr. Awlaki’s warnings about the West turning on Muslims. For a group trying to lure Somali-Americans to its ranks, any sign of hostility to Muslims in the United States was a boon.

But the harsh language heard at Trump rallies and on talk radio masks an unexpected trend, said Shibley Telhami, a political scientist at the University of Maryland.

From November to June, a period of terrorist attacks and denunciations of Islam, American views of Islam and Muslims actually [improved](#) slightly on average in polling overseen by Mr. Telhami — a mark, he said, of opposition to Mr. Trump. “Trump’s opponents have an interest in offering a counterargument, that Islam and Muslims are not the problem,” he said.

At the same time, Mr. Telhami said, “there’s a noisy minority that has become far more hostile to Islam and Muslims.” That has shaken American Muslims. “It’s a

frightening and unpredictable thing for Muslims who have a child in school or worry that they'll be embarrassed or even harmed on the street," he said.

Back in 2010, Mr. Awlaki told Western Muslims that "ominous clouds" were gathering and predicted that the United States would become "a land of religious discrimination and concentration camps." It was hyperbole. But it is worth remembering that for jihadists, it was also a fervent hope.

Scott Shane is a reporter for The New York Times and the author of ["Objective Troy: A Terrorist, a President, and the Rise of the Drone."](#)

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