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Terrorism in Africa

Politique, sécurité en vedette à l'UA

12 juin 2015

Le 25e sommet de l'Union africaine (UA) en Afrique du Sud pourrait permettre de mettre en lumière le nombre croissant de dirigeants africains qui tentent de s'accrocher au pouvoir en multipliant les mandats.

De nombreuses organisations de la société civile se font le relais des demandes des opinions publiques naissantes sur le continent, qui s'opposent à cette situation.



AU Chairperson

En outre, Jacob Zuma et le vice-président ghanéen Kwesi Amissah Arthur ont affirmé lors du forum économique mondial africain la semaine dernière que la question du renouvellement des mandats présidentiels devrait être au menu du sommet de l'UA.

Le sommet ayant débuté par une réunion des ministres, sera suivi par la rencontre des chefs d'Etat ce week-end.

Au sommaire

Le principal objectif est d'aborder en profondeur les mesures à prendre concernant le terrorisme et la sécurité, la lutte contre la pauvreté et la gouvernance dans les pays en conflit comme au Burundi, au Nigeria et en Libye.

Mais après une vague d'attaques contre les étrangers en Afrique du Sud, les présidents africains seront inévitablement soucieux d'évoquer le phénomène de xénophobie et l'intolérance qui y est associée.

Huis clos sur le Burundi

La présidente de la commission de l'UA s'est opposée à un troisième mandat de Pierre Nkurunziza et une réunion à huis clos doit se tenir ce week-end sur le Burundi.

Selon David Zoumenou, chercheur à l'institut sur les études pour la sécurité à Pretoria, la charte de l'UA sur la



gouvernance condamne toute manœuvre pour se maintenir au pouvoir en dehors du cadre constitutionnel, même si, bien souvent, elle n'est pas respectée.

L'Union africaine est présidée depuis le début de l'année par le président zimbabwéen, Robert Mugabe, 91 ans, au pouvoir depuis 35 ans.

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

Good governance is Africa's best weapon against terror

JUNE 04 2015



Picture: AFP PHOTO/FABRICE COFFRINI

VIOLENCE, terror and organised crime are the prominent new agenda items at the World Economic Forum (WEF) on Africa in Cape Town this week.

Conflict and state fragility are main-stream in talk about African development these days. They featured in Davos earlier this year and economics, as the forum's *raison d'être*, is merging with security and politics as never before.

Business used to consider human security only when it hit the bottom line. But companies and investors are now encouraged to see themselves as part of society and to think more intelligently and responsibly about how violence affects development, stability and prosperity.

In the World Economic Forum 2015 global risk analysis, interstate conflict scored highly on likelihood and risk. Failure of national governance was third on the risk scale but not even in the top 10 for effect. The situation is different in Africa, where failure of governance is the biggest risk and the challenge is one of conflict and violence within countries, not between them.

Intra-state conflict-related deaths have been rising since 2010. They are caused mostly by non-state actors who, funded by transnational organised crime, are exploiting local grievances to undermine democracy and peace. Terror groups have also capitalised on economic weakness, governance deficits and lack of effective

services to recruit from marginalised populations.

The drivers of this intrastate violence include young populations, high unemployment, lack of equal opportunities, urbanisation, poverty, inequality, too many guns and governments stuck between autocracy and democracy.

Some say Africa is the new frontier in the global war on terror. The headline acts are Boko Haram and al-Shabaab, which between them killed 8,000 people last year. But that is a sideshow compared with the millions of deaths from poor governance and unequal development.

And many African governments' response to terror makes matters worse — they hype the war on terror as a convenient shield for their own illegitimate machinations. Their robust language, bravado and inappropriate military and extrajudicial responses make terror worse when what is needed is a holistic response, based on the rule of law, and an understanding of what causes extremism.

We must urgently learn the lessons of the disastrous global war on terror that followed the 9/11 attacks on the US. We must not exaggerate the threat or sacrifice human rights on the altar of counterterrorism and state security. Vicious and populist short-term responses to terror risk reinforcing the conditions that created the threats, contributing further to conflict and bad governance, distorting development aid and fuelling corruption. Unlawful responses to terror destroy trust in government, undermine the social contract and radicalise young people. Reliance on military force gives terrorists an undeserved badge of honour as being somehow engaged in a justifiable war.

We can't shoot our way out of this problem. We won't silence extremists' guns by rolling out bigger guns of our own. This approach might win some powerful international allies, and votes, in the short term. But it's not right and it's not working.

Instead, those who commit acts of terror should be treated as criminals and brought to trial. But getting it right requires better regional and international co-operation and sharing of intelligence, and programmes to counter extremism based on an understanding of what causes terror.

The most important driver of conflict in Africa is weak and unconsolidated governance. Bad governance doesn't just undermine development, it also drives violence. In Nigeria, for example, the government helped to create Boko Haram through its lack of an inclusive growth strategy.

The crisis of governance and African leaders' poor management of their countries was to be addressed by the ambitious African Peer Review Mechanism launched in 2003 by African heads of state who had never before held each other to account.

Leaders who signed up were to be evaluated by their peers on their political, economic, social and corporate performance. Of the African Union's 54 members, 35 signed up and 17 have been reviewed and given plans of action. Yet they are rarely

implemented and the scheme is flagging.

Good governance requires political will but the private sector has a vital role to play too, by adhering to good investment practices, not dodging tax and not paying bribes. Business must be an activist partner in Africa's development, not a rent-seeking neutral that turns a blind eye to the excesses of host governments.

The second big threat to Africa is highly organised transnational crime, which erodes institutions and state legitimacy by subverting the rule of law, fuelling corruption and buying influence that allows criminals to control the political marketplace. Transnational organised crime is at the intersection of law, politics, power and sovereignty. That makes it a determining factor in economic development. We'd be fools not to take it more seriously.

Organised crime threatens Africa's stability and growth potential with a particularly devastating effect in fragile states. Even in Africa's two biggest economies, Nigeria and SA, we have seen how criminals infiltrate and undermine the entire criminal justice system.

Closely linked to the success of crime and failure of governance is the loss generated by illicit financial flows out of Africa. An astounding \$529bn left the continent illicitly in the 10 years to 2012. Sustainable growth is impossible under these conditions, while curbing illicit flows would significantly boost tax collection in developing countries.

One of the WEF's final sessions this week is on "silencing the gun", part of a "solemn declaration" made by the African Union on its 50th anniversary last year, with a target to "end all wars in Africa by 2020".

It's a noble ambition but an unrealistic dream considering Africa's political and development trajectory. Violence will be a feature of Africa's future for many years.

The road to democracy is inherently violent. Tension and conflict can be expected to escalate as Africans aspire to and achieve greater freedom, accountability and democracy. But, in the long term, improved development prospects and more equal economic growth will lead to greater stability and less violence and less fertile ground for terrorism and organised crime. Laws need to be expanded to cover nonstate actors, and terrorists need to be engaged politically and not just militarily.

International co-operation is required to deny physical safe havens to terrorists, to close fiscal and legal gaps, to strengthen border controls, and to improve intelligence and criminal justice co-operation. We should not be distracted by catchy political statements or limit our efforts to extremism and terror. Violence in Africa is much more complex and multifaceted than this.

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

The relationship between terrorism and economic growth: New research

June 3, 2015

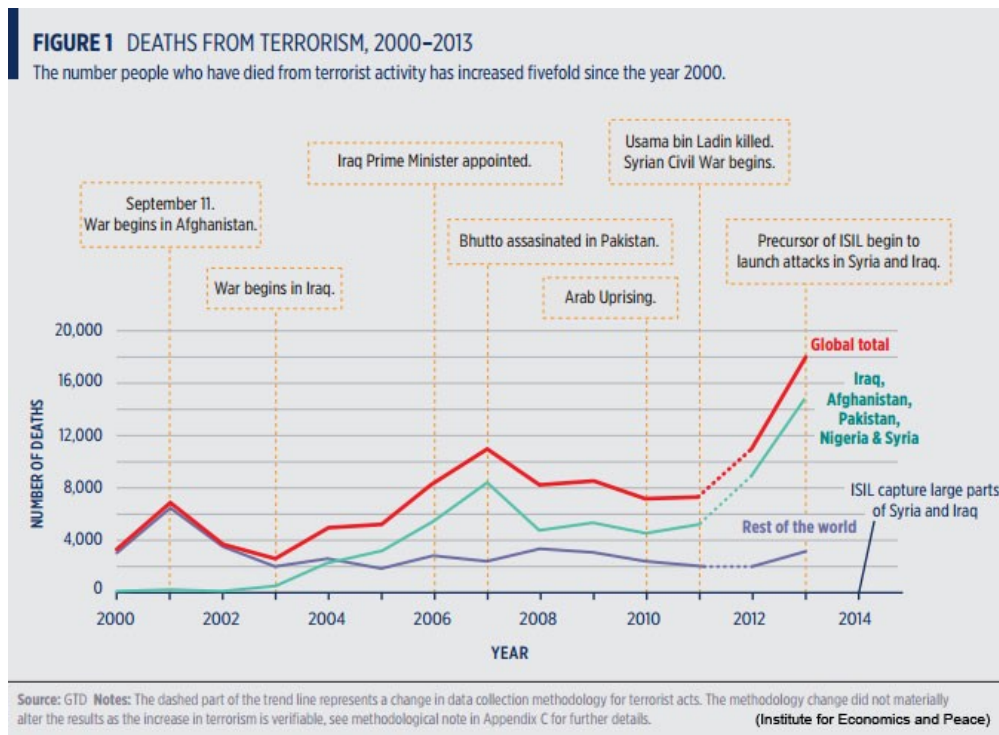


The estimated number of deaths from terrorism worldwide rose from 3,361 in 2000 to 17,958 in 2013, according to a 2014 analysis by the Institute for Economics and Peace. Largely because of deteriorating conditions in Syria, that figure rose about 60% between 2012 and 2013 alone. Some 80% of all deaths in 2013 took place in five countries — Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria and Syria — and the majority of incidents claimed were attributed to just four groups: The Islamic State (ISIS or ISIL), Boko Haram, the Taliban and al-Qaeda. However, 87 countries saw at least one terrorist incident in 2013.

Commentators have frequently speculated about the nature and characteristics of terrorism, including the role of technology and social media in perpetrating terrorist acts. Since the 9/11 attacks, there has been a great deal of discussion about the root causes of terrorist violence, but fewer rigorous empirical assessments have been attempted.

In terms of the link between economic growth and terrorism, the existing evidence is inconclusive: Some authors claim there is a positive link; others suggest there is an inverse association; and some have found no statistically significant relationship. Some of the latest evidence in this debate comes from a 2015 study published in *Oxford Economic Papers*, “Economic Growth and Terrorism: Domestic, International and Suicide,” which is based on a cross-national, time-series data analysis of

127 countries for 1970-2007. The information for economic growth, as annual percentage growth in GDP per capita in 2005, was obtained from the World Bank's World Development Indicator 2013. Data measuring terrorism violence is from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). The author, Seung-Whan Choi of the University of Illinois, Chicago, also controls for a number of variables, such as income inequality, democracy, state failure, population and a variable designating Post-Cold War conditions.



This study provides new and interesting insights for two reasons. First, the author introduces a distinction between agricultural and industrial economic growth, as opposed to a single economic output indicator. Choi notes that “only some forms of economic growth are associated with terrorist activity, and even then, they only correlate with particular forms of terrorist attacks.” Second, the study measures the impact of economic growth on three expressions of terrorism, as opposed to a single, homogeneous indicator of terrorist violence. Importantly, previous studies focus on one modality of terrorism, “under the implicit assumption that terrorist groups will use the same conventional attack tactics despite the continuously enhanced security environment.” The author distinguishes between *international terrorism* — involving at least two different nationals — *domestic terrorism* — wherein the victims and perpetrators are from the venue country — and *suicide attacks*, when a terrorist purposefully dies in the process of carrying out his or her mission.

The study's findings include:

Higher industrial economic growth is associated with lower levels of international and domestic terrorist violence: “It appears that if industrial growth increases by 1%, the percent change in the incidence rate of domestic terrorism is a 1% decrease while holding the other variables constant; for the incidence rate of international terrorism, there is a 1% decrease.” Growth in the agricultural sector, by contrast, does not rise to statistical significance and may have “no bearing on terrorist behavior.”

Conversely, a higher level of industrial economic growth is associated with higher levels of suicide attacks. Specifically, “If a country were to increase its industrial growth by 1%, its relative change in the expected number of suicide terrorism would be expected to increase by 2%, while holding all other variables in the model constant.”

Among the control variables, Income Inequality, Democracy, and Post-Cold War were not statistically related across the two models designed. On the other hand, “the coefficients of State Failure and Population achieve significance with a positive sign regardless of the type of terrorism.”

Although the assumption has been that fast and steady growth would provide more opportunities for potential terrorists and their would-be sympathizers to participate in the economy, and thereby reduce terrorist activity, the study’s data do not support that notion: “The findings are not all optimistic because a well-functioning market economy based on quick-paced but steady economic growth is not necessarily a cure-all solution for growing terrorist threats.” Further, the study’s analysis does not support the idea that social cleavages – specifically, an expanding gap between the rich and the poor and the resulting grievances of economic losers – necessarily increases terrorist activity.

The data does, however, support the theory of “hard targets,” which predicts that “as states become richer and better able to defend targets, suicide attacks are used more often.”

The study has a number of policy implications, the author notes: “Overall, the results of this study demonstrate that economic growth is not a cure-all solution for terrorism because in some instances it may breed more terrorism. Nevertheless, healthy economic conditions are certainly beneficial to the war on terrorism because the majority of suicide attacks occur in only a few countries.”

Related research: The 2014 report from the Institute for Economics and Peace corroborates these general conclusions, finding that “there is no systematic link to poverty measures, nor to several broader economic development factors such as the Human Development Index or its subcomponents such as mean years of schooling, or life expectancy. Similarly economic indicators such as year to year GDP growth do not correlate.” Further, a 2013 study published in *Journal of Peace*

Research, “Causality between Terrorism and Economic Growth,” examines how terrorism can affect economic growth. The study finds, among other things, that “for the post–Cold War era, terrorism is found to be detrimental to growth for African and Islamic countries with low levels of political openness, high levels of political instability, and strong terrorist activity.”

Keywords: terrorism, violence, economy, growth, security

- See more at: <http://journalistsresource.org/>

Burundi Crisis Key Issue For African Union Summit – Analysis

1 June 2015



African Union logo.

A few weeks ago, forces loyal to President Pierre Nkurunziza stymied a coup d'état in Burundi. A few months earlier, last October to be precise, the exact opposite occurred when an army officer in Burkina Faso, Lt Col. Isaac Zida, dislodged in a bloodless coup d'état West Africa's former strong-man and president of that country, Blaise Compaoré.

Following suspension from the African Union (AU) and pressure from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Zida has morphed into civilian form as Prime Minister, with Burkina Faso returning to 'civilian rule' a month later.

Burundi for its part is in the throes of heightened political uncertainty with legislative and presidential elections in June 2015 remaining more than doubtful. After a bloody civil war and a peace process that ushered the country into a democratic state-building exercise from 2004, Burundi is now on the verge of full-scale conflict. These developments are worrying after the considerable investments in peace and post-conflict-reconstruction made by the United Nations, the Nordic countries and South Africa over the past 15 years.



Burundi

But such political crises – and the violence that accompanies them – can be averted by the international community. What is more, the AU is well positioned to deal with these new forms of tension and violence.

The events in Burundi and Burkina Faso have one disturbing element in common: attempts by sitting heads of states to extend their stay in power by amending constitutions (or re-interpreting them). Similarly, in Togo although the crisis did not escalate, Faure Eyadema's election to a third term as president in April this year illustrated the palpable tensions that accompany a longer stay in power. This ought to be a source of concern for the AU. If the mooted constitutional amendments in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Benin and the Republic of Congo are factored into the political horizon, instability becomes a real but unattractive eventuality in these countries.

What is to be done to stem the tide of constitutional amendments and stays in office beyond two terms? The causal effects between constitutional amendments and extended stays in power on the one hand, and political tensions and instability on the other is becoming widespread. More worryingly, these are now undermining neighbouring countries, increasing the potential for regional insecurity. This should be of concern to Regional Economic Communities (RECs) where peace and state building are in their infancy after years of war, bad governance and political instability.

With overwhelming evidence suggesting an upward trend in tensions in these countries, it is urgent for the AU to open up the discussion on term extensions and the threat they pose to fragile state-building and democratic governance in Africa. The still vivid events in Burundi, and the initiative in Dar es Salam by the EAC plus South Africa in averting a full-scale crisis, provides a framework to cascade this pressing issue to the June 2015 AU Summit agenda in South Africa.

After all, the twin worries of war and instability, which at this point ought to be collectively shared by virtue of their devastating effects, should create the space for summit to seriously consider a debate that locates this issue in the preventive diplomacy arsenal of the AU. It should be emphasised that seeking to deal with crises that emanate from extended stays in office is a misguided effort that deflects

attention from what RECs and the AU should really be focusing on at this point – development.

One of the key pillars of the AU preventive diplomacy is to avert war and conflict before it rears its ugly head. It is not sufficient to share the burden of conflict mediation, as the EAC plus South Africa is doing on Burundi, without getting to the root cause of the problem – constitutional amendments and extended stays in power. These should be discouraged in Africa where democratic institutions are still on shaky ground.

In what is the strongest rebuttal of this trend, President Jacob Zuma at the Peace and Security Council (PSC) in January this year raised concerns about what he termed ‘a worrying trend of constitutional amendments aimed at extending the mandates of incumbent Heads of State and Government which has led to a number of tensions on the continent’. With such a strong statement from a key consolidating democracy, the summit will not be starting on a blank page.

To ignore this trend is no longer an option, and the AU and South Africa can pursue one or two of three options.

First, in order to send a strong signal, it would be even more opportune for President Jacob Zuma’s statement at the summit to echo his position at the PSC January meeting. South Africa has already argued against the trend. But what is required now is to build up support in a broader constituency.

The second option, which could prove far more problematic, is for the AU Commission Chairperson, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma to use her statement to draw the link between conflict and constitutional amendments in broad terms, including their impact on development and regional security.

The third option, which is less onerous, is for the AU Commission to channel a position paper through Early-Warning and preventive diplomacy instruments, which could be ready for the January 2016 Summit. This would require far more substantive consultations and discussions through existing instruments such as the PSC, the AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, and including the AU Constitutive Act.

Without doubt, strong sovereignty norms and the domestic framing of constitutional amendments provide the AU Commission and South Africa with little wiggle-room to convince their peers. But the political crisis in Burundi is one too many. After all, Aspiration 4 of the AU’s ‘Agenda 2063: The Future We Want’, whose implementation plan will be up for discussion at the June summit, seeks to silence the guns by 2020.

This is a noble precondition for the more pressing task of economic development. But it could prove elusive if the AU does not frame and proactively deal with consti-

tutional amendments for third and fourth terms as new forms generating instability, violence and regional insecurity.

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

Egypt

Le Hamas en contact avec l'Egypte pour lutter contre le terrorisme dans le Sinaï

Israël ne se lancera pas dans une opération à Gaza à cause des récents tirs de roquettes (général Turgeman)



DR "Frontière Gaza/Sinaï"

De hauts dirigeants du Hamas se trouvant à l'extérieur de la bande de Gaza ont accepté de coopérer avec les forces de sécurité égyptiennes afin de combattre le terrorisme dans le Sinaï, ont rapporté dimanche soir des sources du Hamas au site d'information égyptien Al-Youm al-Sabaa.

Ces mêmes sources ont indiqué que l'Egypte et le Hamas auraient eu des contacts à plusieurs reprises dans le but de trouver le moyen de lutter contre le terrorisme qui se propage du Sinaï à la bande de Gaza.

Le Hamas aurait accepté de fournir une liste de terroristes qui se sont infiltrés depuis Gaza dans le Sinaï par le biais de tunnels.

L'Egypte a imposé un blocus sur la bande côtière palestinienne début 2013, et a procédé à la destruction de tunnels de contrebande entre Gaza et le Sinaï.

Le point de passage de Rafah qui relie Gaza à l'Egypte a été fermé en octobre dernier, après que des attaques menées par des groupuscules islamistes ont tué plus de 30 agents de sécurité égyptiens dans le nord du Sinaï.

Le président Abdel Fattah al-Sissi avait par ailleurs décrété l'état d'urgence sur une partie de la région.



Ynet/Roi Idan "Eclats d'une roquette tirée par les terroristes de Gaza sur le territoire israélien le 4 juin 2015"

Israël ne réagira pas outre mesure aux tirs sporadiques de roquettes

Le commandant du Front sud de l'armée israélienne, le général Sami Turgeman, qui a rencontré dimanche les élus des localités frontalières de Gaza après les récents tirs de roquettes par le groupe salafiste "Brigade du cheikh Omar Hadid", a indiqué qu'Israël ne lancera pas d'opération militaire dans la bande côtière palestinienne.

L'organisation salafiste liée à l'Etat islamique considère le Hamas qui a pourtant combattu Israël pendant 50 jours durant l'été dernier, comme étant trop "modérée" à l'égard d'Israël et lui reproche de ne pas instaurer la charia (loi islamique) à Gaza.

Le général Turgeman a dit aux élus locaux qu' "il s'agit de tirs isolés par des terroristes à Gaza. ces roquettes explosent sur des terrains vagues et Tsahal riposte à chaque incident mais ne lancera pas d'opération dans la bande de Gaza à cause de ces roquettes. Tsahal répond proportionnellement en fonction des attaques". Même si Israël tient le Hamas pour responsable pour tout ce qui se passe à Gaza, Tugeman estime que l'organisation terroriste tente d'empêcher le tir de roquettes par les salafistes car il a intérêt pour le moment à ce que le calme perdure dans le secteur. C'est la raison pour laquelle le Hamas a procédé à des dizaines d'arrestations de salafistes.



Site IDF/Tsahal "Tunnel terroriste de Gaza vers Israël"

Poursuite de la construction des tunnels terroristes offensifs

Parallèlement, des habitants des localités frontalières de Gaza continuent de se plaindre d'entendre des bruits témoignant de la construction de tunnels et estiment que la prochaine confrontation ne devrait pas tarder, rapporte le quotidien israélien Maariv.

" Nous savions que ce scénario de tirs de missiles allait se répéter. Tous simplement parce que Tsahal n'a pas fait le boulot la dernière fois", affirme Eran Zomer qui habite le moshav (communauté agricole) Amioz du conseil régional Eshkol. Selon lui, il y a "beaucoup d'habitants du secteur qui se plaignent d'entendre des bruits de forage, nous n'avons donc pas été surpris qu'un haut responsable du Hamas indique qu'ils continuent à préparer des tunnels offensifs". Eliezer Auerbach, le président des habitants du Goush Katif, un bloc de 21 implantations du sud de la bande de Gaza démantelées en 2005, a confié au JPost que "les habitants des localités frontalières disent que les terroristes continuent de forer des tunnels et que les responsables du pays n'ont pas conscience de la situation". "Quiconque ayant un peu de jugeotte sait où se dirigent les camions chargés de ciment qui pénètre dans la bande de Gaza", a déclaré Auerbach.

The April 2015 Attack in Garissa by al Shabaab

June 12, 2015

Abstract

The article analyses the recent attack conducted by al Shabaab in Garissa, Kenya, by tying the current conflict back to the emergence of violence in Kenya's Northern Province under colonial rule. The author argues that the long-standing violation of the Somali community's basic needs has developed into a cycle of violence eventually leading to the current situation.

Introduction

The present essay focuses on the repetition and evolution of the cycle of violence in Kenya's Northern Frontier District. I argue that the repetition of human needs and rights' violations led to the development of violence within the very structure and culture of the different communities at stake—be they Kenyans, Somalis, Somali refugees or Kenyan Somalis.[\[1\]](#)

Firstly, I will focus on the history of the relationships between Kenya and Somalia, and the conflict over the Northern province. Secondly I will study the feelings of victimization, which may have developed amongst the Somali community, as a result of the long-standing violence. In my analysis, I will use the Basic Human Needs and Structural and Cultural Violence theories. I will lastly explain how such feelings translated into direct violence on the part of al Shabaab.

The evolution of violence around Kenya's Northern Province

While the Northern Frontier District was part of Italian Somaliland, Britain extended its control over the region at the turn of the century. According to Ogenga Otunnu, Professor at DePaul University College of LAS, it did so in order to "provide a buffer between Italian Somaliland and Ethiopia on the one side, and the East African railway and the white settlers in the highlands on the other".[\[2\]](#) Britain was also motivated by a desire to stop the Southward Somali expansion. Since the territory was constituted as a buffer zone, no serious attempt was made to foster political, social, and economic development. When Kenya gained its independence in 1963, Britain granted the administration of the Northern Frontier District to Kenyan nationalists, despite the fact that it was an almost all-Somali area. Several opposition parties emerged, and armed struggle progressively intensified. The Kenyan government declared a state of emergency. No efforts were made to integrate the Northern Frontier District's inhabitants, and in the 1970s, Kenya started to expel dissidents back to Somalia. Otunnu writes that "anyone partaking in any form of dissent in the region would be seen as an 'enemy' of the state. This reinforced the image of the inhabitants of the area as 'aliens', whose loyalty to Kenya was always questionable".[\[3\]](#)

Since then, there has been a repetition of violent events at the border. Such incidents provoked severe military retribution on the part of Kenya. Otunnu stresses the fact that, to incidents carried out by Somalis nationalists, “Kenya’s security forces reacted ... by using force totally out of proportion”.^[4] Attacks in the North Eastern Province were carried out on a regular basis, starting with the Garissa massacre perpetrated by Kenyan military against local hoodlums, which resulted in the death of approximately 3,000 ethnic Somali residents of Kenya.^[5]

Violence in Kenya’s Northern province happens while the situation in Somalia remains very unstable. According to Otunnu, “by 1989 the political situation in Somalia was leading to civil war, social disintegration and the collapse of the state”, as most Somalis were very unhappy at the highly corrupted government in the 1980s.^[6] The government collapsed in 1992, leading to a process of decentralization where power was assumed by local authorities. Although there have been transitional governments, the country has not recovered its stability nor unity until now.

In such a context, Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen emerged as a hard line faction of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) that took power over large parts of Somalia in 2006. When the ICU collapsed, al Shabaab remained and fought against the Ethiopian army at war in Somalia from 2006 to 2009. Valter Vilko, from Uppsala University, writes that the group “was widely seen as a defender of Somali interests against the Ethiopian invaders. The ICU had been able to bring order and security, which led many to hope that al Shabaab, regardless of means and ideology, could do the same”.^[7] At this time, most Somalis considered members of al Shabaab as freedom fighters rather than terrorists. The group however lost most of its support when it decided to continue fighting once the war was over. Since then, many moderate supporters have been scared by the group’s methods of fighting and its affiliation with al-Qaeda. Currently, al Shabaab justifies its fighting by the war declared on Somalia by the Kenyan government in 2011, since, as explained by Daniel Branch from the University of Warwick, “Nairobi invaded its neighbor to secure its eastern border and to create a buffer zone inside Somalia”.^[8] This echoed the reasoning Britain provided a century earlier to justify its invasion of the Northern Province. By extension, it brought back to life the trauma of colonial rule—and oppression—over Somali territory and unity.

As stated by Idil Lambo in his work for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “there were approximately 520,000 Somali refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya by the end of November 2011” as a result of the civil war.^[9] However, the Somali community has been very present in Kenya for a long time, with Nairobi becoming the hub of Somali economic activity. Such economic activity is mainly in the hands of Kenyan Somalis whose families have been living in Kenya for generations. Yet, and this has been the case already for several decades according to Otunnu, “the authorities have increased security sweeps and identity checks of Kenyans of Somali origin and Somalis living in Kenya. The arrival of the refugees is being used

as an opportunity to impose compulsory screening on all Kenyan-Somalis, in order to identify ‘illegal aliens’”.[\[10\]](#)

Building up feelings of victimization

Cultural and structural violence tie back to colonization, when Somalis did not have a voice in the decision-making process affecting their territory, communities and clans. Structural violence refers to the social structure and institutions that prevent people from fulfilling their basic human needs. Since it affects people differently depending on their social group, it is very closely connected to social injustice.[\[11\]](#) Cultural violence refers to the aspects of a culture used to justify discrimination and structural violence. It makes the two other forms of violence, namely direct and structural violence, look “right”.

By handing the Northern province to Kenyan nationalists, colonial powers handed the role of the oppressor to Kenya, who then clearly reinforced this oppressive role by using a level of violence that was not proportional, in an attempt to control the threat. The fight for self-determination became the fight against the Kenyan government. The constant opposition between the Somali community living at the border and the Kenyan government established a clear distinction between Kenyans and Kenyan Somalis,[\[12\]](#) leading to the establishment of cultural violence.

This last one was translated into structural violence, whereby the institutions in place discriminated against the Somali community by treating them with suspicion and violence, therefore drawing a clear line between the respect of Somalis’ and Kenyans’ human rights. As structural and cultural violence developed in the very core of society, direct violence emerged on a repetitive basis, raising suspicion and prejudices between the two communities. Johan Galtung, from John Perkins University, writes that “generally, a causal flow from cultural via structural to direct violence can be identified. The culture preaches, teaches, admonishes, eggs on, and dulls us into seeing exploitation and/or repression as normal and natural, or into not seeing them ... at all. Then come the eruptions, the efforts to use direct violence to get out of the structural iron cage, and counter-violence to keep the cage intact”.[\[13\]](#) The three types of violence mutually reinforce each other.

In this long history of grievances, Garissa stands as a symbol because of its geographic location and history. While it was part of the territory that belonged to Italian Somaliland and handed to Kenya when this last one became independent, it more recently was the place where the massacre of about 3,000 Kenyans of Somali origin happened. It symbolizes the violence of colonial powers, and then of the Kenyan government, over an idealized Somali unity. This made it easier for al Shabaab to spread its ideology, and Garissa county became a strategic base for the group’s recruitment and military operation. As stated by Paul Hidalgo, analyst

of politics in the Horn of Africa, “al Shabaab...controls two thirds of Garissa Country, which the group’s top operatives have declared as their preferred base of operations. This has proved to be a strategic location; it has allowed al Shabaab to target the half million Somali refugees sandwiched between Garissa and the Somalia border as potential recruits”.[\[14\]](#)

The violation of Basic Human Needs (BHN) is a constant in the relationship between the Kenyan and Somali communities. Galtung defines BHN as “irreducible and nonnegotiable essentials in human life”.[\[15\]](#) Abraham H. Maslow, from Columbia University, draws a hierarchy amongst the different types of BHN. Physiological needs, such as access to food and water, come first. The war and the situations in overcrowded refugee camps have prevented many Somali from access to such basic goods, depriving them from what they need to survive as human beings.

The need for safety comes second. The war in Somalia as well as the repeated attacks on the Somali community have clearly violated those needs. In Somalia, the Kenyan military appears as a constant threat since, according to Human Rights Watch, “foreign forces have committed grave abuses in South-central Somalia, including indiscriminately bombed and shelled populated areas”.[\[16\]](#)

The third category consists in the need for respect. As stated by Abraham H. Maslow, “all people in our society ... have a need or desire for a stable and firmly based, usually high evaluation of themselves, ... and for the esteem of others”.[\[17\]](#) There is however a strong belief among the Somali community that the local population perceives them as ‘the other’, ‘the Somali’. According to Idil Lambo, “this perception has aided in the construction of a socially distinct and separate group or community”.[\[18\]](#) Hence Somali refugees in Kenya will seek support within their own community, perceived as the only one able to bring them the respect and means to self-esteem needed.

Self-actualization needs come last. Their non-respect develops into feelings of frustration. Abraham H. Maslow defines them as “the tendency for [a person] to become actualized in what he is potentially”.[\[19\]](#) Many refugees talked of a “life in limbo”. And indeed, to Idil Lambo, “as a result of the lack of education and employment opportunities for Somali refugees in Eastleigh and Kenya in general, many lives have ... been put on hold since arriving in the country”.[\[20\]](#)

Such violation in turn entails an emergency response on the part of the community whose needs are violated. As pointed out by Daniel Branch, “since independence, a lack of public investment in health and education and inequalities in access to land have left many Muslims along the coast feeling alienated”.[\[21\]](#) The Kenyan government’s discrimination against Kenya’s Muslim population, which makes up around 10 percent of Kenya’s population, has clearly supported al Shabaab re-

cruitment efforts. Dehumanization of the other has therefore taken place on both sides of the line, helping al Shabaab in its attempts to appear as a unifying group for the Muslim community, over tribal rivalries.

With their basic human needs unmet, many Somali and Kenyan Muslims have been forced into their position as underdogs, developing feelings of helplessness as to moving up in the interaction system, defined by Galtung as “a multidimensional system of stratification, where those who have and those who have not, those who have more and those who have less, find, are given, or are forced into their positions”.[\[22\]](#) The lack of opportunities and respect leads to the frustration directed at the topdogs or power players, perceived to be Kenyans, and especially Christian Kenyans.

From feelings of victimization to aggression

During the war with Ethiopia in the 2000s, al Shabaab emerged as a leader for many members of the Somali community. By discriminating against its Somali and by extension Muslim population, the Kenyan government put many Muslim Somalis in the underdog position on several fronts (economically, socially, culturally). This created an opportunity for al Shabaab to build itself as a leader figure for many Somali refugees, Somalis, Kenyan Somalis and more generally Muslims who felt trapped in the underdog positions. Indeed, Paul Hidalgo writes that al Shabaab “has been able to depict the government as eager to inflict more suffering on the already disadvantaged”.[\[23\]](#)

Al Shabaab has therefore developed an ideology gravitating around the trauma and discrimination inflicted by the Kenyan government on its Somali population. The April attack in Garissa could therefore appear as a way for the group to call for indiscriminate retaliation from the Kenyan government and military against Somali community, leading to the violence of more basic human needs and rights. This in turn could reactivate many members of the Somali community’s memories, and rally some of them to al Shabaab’s ideology. Conducting the attack in the symbolic place of Garissa makes the link to the traumatic memory of the 1980s even more obvious.

As Galtung explains, aggression happens when the underdog (U) access a topdog (T) position. Indeed, “an element in a TU position will be constantly reminded of his objective state of disequilibrium by the differential treatment he is exposed to”. The gap between the underdog and the topdog positions lead to the development of an “unstable self-image”,[\[24\]](#) which then transforms into a desire to acquire a stable self-image by acquiring topdog positions on the other levels. To Galtung, “a complete underdog, UU, may not even dare to think in terms of TT as a reference group; the complete topdog will be beyond his imagination. The absolute deprivation of the UU may be higher, but the TU has relative deprivation built into his position. The destabilizing effect of this discrepancy will provide a mobility pressure,

and the thesis is then that if there are no open channels of mobility, rectification of the disequilibrium will be carried out by other means”.[\[25\]](#)

In Nairobi’s Eastleigh area, many Somali Kenyans have become very successful businessmen. Yet, while these members of the Somali community acquired a top-dog position regarding wealth, discrimination maintains them in underdog positions in other domains such as political and cultural power. Many of them have fueled al Shabaab with their wealth during the war against Ethiopia, in a desire to help the group fight for Somalis’ interests and re-equilibrate their underdog positions towards topdog ones. And indeed, according to Mitchell Sipus, specialist in conflict and postwar reconstruction, “it is well known throughout Eastleigh that al Shabaab utilize[d] incoming remittance flows to fund its operations in Somalia and has direct involvement with many of the businesses in Eastleigh”.[\[26\]](#) In recent years, the support for the group from the diaspora has decreased dramatically due mainly to the group affiliation with al-Qaeda. Nevertheless, this happens at the time when the group is already financially autonomous.

Disequilibrium then easily spreads from a few individuals or a group into a wider population. Following Galtung: “disequilibrium at one level can lead to disequilibrium at another level: a highly disequilibrated individual may become the leader of a completely underdog group and led into disequilibrium by giving it power, property or education”.[\[27\]](#) Due to its wealth, al Shabaab is able to provide opportunities to young members of the Somali community who are unemployed and don’t see any pacific way of ending oppression by the ones they perceive as the topdogs. As stated by Mitchell Sipus, “the success of al Shabaab has become understood as the opportunity for any man to rise above the traditional restraints of tribalism and a means to take up new opportunities for a population tired of the violence of war and the frustrations of displacement”.[\[28\]](#)

Conclusion

With an ideology and a leader capable of disseminating the ideology into the wider population, the power of the group is able to increase, providing it with the means to carry out attacks like the one in Garissa on April 2, 2015. The cycle of violence is now escalating. Retaliatory violence in turns lead to more violence by the opposing side, while both feel victimized by the other one.

The situation stresses the necessity for change at a multidimensional level: more economic, political, social, and cultural inclusion is necessary for the conflict to be progressively defused. However, because of the trauma and prejudices both parties have against the other, retaliatory violence is almost always implemented as an answer to any attack. This, in turn, reinforces the conflict, adding to the long list of grievances felt by the communities involved.

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Libya

ANALYSIS: Libya peace talks resume but can UN secure a deal?

Analysts argue that negotiations hinge on facts on the ground and whether the Zintanis and Misrata can reach a controversial deal



Libya Dawn fighters stake out rival positions (AFP)

The latest round of UN-sponsored Libya peace talks kicked off Wednesday, with the UN special envoy hoping to secure a last-ditch deal before the start of Ramadan.

Bernardino Leon has been talking tough ahead of the negotiations, taking place in Algiers, and expected to resume again for a final round of talks in Morocco on 7 June.

At the opening of the peace talks on Wednesday Leon said that “the country is really at its limit” and argued that not reaching an agreement was “not an option”. This followed on from comments made Tuesday when he stressed that there was now “an opportunity” because some 75 percent of groups were “supporting a political solution”. Unnamed UN officials also told Reuters that the various groups had already agreed on [80 percent](#) of the accord points.

However, optimism about the talks has generally been low, with analysts sceptical

that a deal can be reached before the start of Ramadan on 17 June – the UN deadline. Events on the ground have also been threatening to unravel any progress at the negotiating table, with the Islamic State (IS) group gaining ground and die-hard factions in both the Tobruk and the Tripoli camps determined to secure a military victory.

Negotiated settlement

In order to bridge the deep divisions between the two camps, the latest UN-backed draft, expected to be released shortly, will have to offer both sides enough of a stake in the running of the country.

The last draft, submitted back in April, was accepted with some amendments by Tobruk but rejected outright by Tripoli, which called on Leon to resign and accused him of playing favourites.

According to Mattia Toaldo, a policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, the new draft will be a “balancing act” but the divisions between the two sides remain vast with Tobruk continuing to have “very high” expectations of what it will get.

“The sticking points are the institutional issue which [in the old draft] would see the new unity government answer only to the House of Representatives [HoR] in Tobruk – which to [Tripoli] sounds like they would be relinquishing all powers,” Toaldo told Middle East Eye.

“There is also an issue of who should be the commander in chief – the new PM or the presidential council which would be a wider format that would include some ministers. However, this is something which leads to a further sticking point - that of General [Khalifa] Haftar’s future.”

Haftar first returned to the spotlight in March last year when he launched his so-called Operation Dignity and vowed to root out Islamists and extremists from Libya. He initially began targeting factions like Ansar al-Sharia, but soon expanded his operation to include even more moderate groups like the Misratans.

While Haftar vowed to stay out of politics, he openly backed the Tobruk-based HoR after it was elected last June, and in March he was voted in as commander of the armed force by the HoR.

“Libya Dawn thinks he is the devil,” said security and policy analyst Wolfgang Puztai.

With hatred running deep, Puztai argues that it is unlikely that Tripoli will sign any deal allowing Haftar to hold onto control, with the HoR conversely likely to insist on Haftar having a continued role.

“For the HoR and in particular the federalists and the army, he [Haftar] is the only guy who can unite and lead them,” said Puztai. “In March, there was an almost

unanimous vote in his favour [at the HoR]. Those who did not vote did not participate in the discussions.”

“It is not realistic that the HoR would abandon him in exchange [for a peace deal]. For the time being Haftar gets Egypt support and he is the one who makes the deals with the Egyptians. The support from the Arab world goes straight to Haftar, not through the HoR. Even the tribes [in the east] are loyal to him.”

There are several factors at play, however, that could tilt the scales in favour of a deal in coming weeks and months even if the 17 June deadline comes and goes.

Shifting allegiances

“There is a lot of war weariness among the population,” said Richard Northern, a former British Ambassador to Libya and director of the RN4 Consultancy.

“We are seeing growing division between municipal authorities – who are more in touch with local opinion and much more likely to compromise and get some kind of working arrangement – and some of the militias in the [Tripoli-based] GNC [General National Congress] and the national politicians.”

“Leon is trying to exploit this with municipal council talks ... This might generate momentum. For now government players are saying that something might happen and crucially they are not as pessimistic as some of the press.”

Also, while Tobruk remains loyal to Haftar, it is possible to see some small cracks emerging. Pusztai thinks that representatives from the capital and the Tripolitania region surrounding the capital would be more likely to agree to a deal without Haftar, although he stresses that they remain a very small faction within Tobruk as most have fled.

Misrata, meanwhile, has been busy penning a string of ceasefires with local tribes, such as the al-Maqarbas in Wadi al-Shatti, helping them to cement their position.

A similar deal could now be on the table with the rival Zintani militias, which would significantly alter the balance of power.

The two groups were a major driving force during the revolution to oust former leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 but soon turned their guns on one another. The Misratans eventually pushed the Zintanis out of Tripoli last summer but since then there has been relative calm, and, according to analysts, serious negotiations about a truce are underway.

“Both the Zintanis and the Misratans have realised that they cannot win the war in Tripolitania,” said Pusztai.

“Misrata thought that they could, but since the rise of IS, they too have realised they do not have the forces to defeat Zintanis, so they are looking for a new strategy.”

The Zintanis, on the other hand, have had strained relations with the Haftar camp in the east and have been left isolated in western Libya, he explained.

While they could still wait it out to see if the tide turns decisively in Haftar's favour, most analysts think that this is unrealistic with neither side likely to gain the upper hand.

Instead, much will depend on IS and internal Misratan politics.

"Whether they [Misrata] are willing to accept a ceasefire in Tripolitania will depend on what they are about to do with the Islamic State and what steps IS will take next," said Pusztai.

"The problem for Misrata is that the fighting around Sirte was more or less only done by the 166 Brigade. Whatever was being discussed in terms of support for them [came to nothing] and there was no support at all on the ground," he said in reference to Misrata's pullback from IS-dominated Sirte [last week](#).

According to Pusztai, the Misratans are internally split between those who want to side with IS to fight Haftar and those who want to pen some kind of national deal that would see Misratan and Libya Shield forces more actively fighting, rather than simply containing IS.

There have been some indications that the pro-deal camp could be winning out despite the 166's withdrawal. Last month, more than [40 military](#) brigades allied to Misrata held talks with Haftar's camp in the east, calling for dialogue.

"Misrata also has a new and quite dynamic mayor who has held meetings with the UAE," Toaldo said, in reference to the UAE leaders who are deemed to be big supporters of Haftar and accused of funnelling weapons and aircraft to his cause.

If IS chooses to try and branch out south and attack Misrata, this could also tilt the internal balance and force everyone to rally against IS, Pusztai argued.

However, if IS chooses to branch out and attack oil ports to the east, it could swing the tide against Haftar as he is forced to pull more forces from elsewhere to fight back IS, making Tripoli and the Misratans believe that they might be able to win the upper hand.

"It is quite worrying. IS were small and isolated but that they are now growing and expanding their areas of operations largely because the ability of the existing militias to fight them has been limited," said Northern.

"I don't think they [Misrata] see IS as a major threat yet but they are being naïve. IS will keep expanding as long as it doesn't meet powerful resistance."

Foreign meddling

The other key factor at play is the level of support from foreign powers. Arms smugglers in Turkey and Qatar have curtailed their shipments to the Misratans

while the UAE and Egypt have been rumoured to have kept up [their support](#) to Haftar. This could soon change.

“They dynamics in the Gulf are shifting. Saudi Arabia has a different position now [under King Salman] than it had under the previous king [Abdullah] although it remains to be seen whether this will push Egypt to compromise on Libya,” said Toaldo.

But even if Riyadh does not force Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi’s hand, there are signs that suggest Haftar could fall out of favour.

“Despite their help, Derna is being used as a base for many Egyptian groups [as well as IS] and Haftar has not been able to seal off Derna for Egypt,” said Pusztai.

“It is getting more likely that Egypt will conduct a limited operation in Derna – whether aerial bombardment or a limited ground incursion,” he added, while stressing that such an operation would need tacit US approval.

For now, however, there will be more of the same.

“Hostilities on the ground will continue much as now – inconclusive,” said Northern. “Neither side will be able to defeat the other but the tribal elders will continue to push for a bigger role and will try to get an agreement of some kind.”

In the meantime, the UN and Europe should keep up the negotiation efforts to make sure there “is a framework in place when all the sides decide to come to the table. We cannot risk losing the progress made and starting from scratch again,” warned Pusztai.

-See more at: <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/analysis-libya-peace-talks-resume-can-leon-secure-deal-266352719#sthash.cd1l0ifn.dpuf>

Mali

Mali : Dégringolade de la puissance française: Le nord du Mali, le dernier baroud d'honneur ?

12 juin 2015



La puissance française se rétrécit chaque année comme une peau de chagrin. Quatrième puissance économique il y a 10 ans, elle dispute la 5eme place à la fédération de Russie. Son hégémonie est sérieusement menacée par les BRICS, à savoir la Russie, l'Inde, le Brésil et l'Afrique du Sud. Sa seule chasse gardée reste ses anciennes colonies d'Afrique.

On n'a pas besoin d'écouter "Archives d'Afrique" sur RFI pour déduire que la France joue un grand rôle dans la déstabilisation du continent noir. On a coutume de dire que la démocratie est un vent de l'est. Que c'est ce vent qui a soufflé sur l'Afrique. Il n'en n'est rien. Lassés des promesses jamais tenues de la France, certains régimes francophones ont voulu tourner dos à la patrie colonisatrice pour regarder vers l'Asie où des pays se sont développés de façon spectaculaire. Face à cette tentative Paris a décidé pour maintenir sa domination sur ses anciennes colonies au sommet de la Baule. IL s'agissait tout simplement de conditionner son aide financière à l'instauration du multipartisme intégral. Très rapidement des chefs d'Etat, à l'instar du président malien le général Moussa Traoré trouve cette décision comme une atteinte à la souveraineté des Etats africains. Et, pour manifester son désaccord le président Moussa Traoré lâchera cette phrase à l'endroit de François Mitterrand : « la démocratie n'est pas une camisole de force que l'on porte à qui l'on veut, quand on veut ». Pour le chef de l'Etat malien la démocratie

risque de remettre en cause le système social traditionnel. Pour lui, l'on doit donner du temps aux pays africains à s'adapter aux normes de la démocratie à la française.

Pourtant à l'époque des hommes politiques français comme Chirac ont partagé cette opinion en disant que : « la démocratie est un luxe pour les Africains ». Ce qui va irriter le pouvoir socialiste en France c'est les propos belliqueux de « Sebetou- Bala », qui va annoncer dans la foulée que le Mali va désormais à l'école japonaise. La suite est connue de tous.

Dans d'autres régions du continent, l'avènement de cette démocratie à l'occidentale va montrer ses limites et entraîner des tensions dans les pays bi ethnique comme le Rwanda et le Burundi. Où la minorité sachant bien qu'elle n'aura jamais le pouvoir par les urnes va déclencher des guerres sanglantes, le cas du Rwanda donnera lieu à un véritable génocide. Même avec la démocratie naissante certains hommes d'Etats démocratiquement élus ne seront pas épargnés par la fureur de Paris. Le premier président du Congo Brazzaville démocratiquement élu, Pascal Lissouba apprendra tôt à ses dépens. Tout simplement, par ce que face au pourcentage trop élevé de l'entreprise française TOTAL dans les gisements d'hydrocarbures du Congo, il décide à défaut de pouvoir convaincre l'entreprise hexagonale de négocier avec la Chine l'exploitation de certains blocs. Le gouvernement français ne peut accepter cela. L'Elysée dresse une première fois le maire de Brazzaville Bernard Kolela contre le président.

Et durant l'année 1994, il y aura des combats entre les deux leaders politiques la crise passe vite car ce n'était qu'un avertissement. Voyant que Pascal ne change pas, la France crée une nouvelle fois une atmosphère de guerre civile, profitant de la fin du mandat de Pascal Lissouba. Durant plusieurs jours des combats opposent dans les rues de Brazzaville plusieurs milices proches du pouvoir et les milices cobras de l'actuelle président du Congo, Sassou Nguesso ce dernier prend le dessus grâce au soutien de l'Angola qui sur insistance de TOTAL envoie ses MIGS bombardés les positions des milices de Pasacal Lissouba.

Le cas le plus flagrant fut l'agression contre le frère Muhamar Kadhafi guide de la grande Jamahiriya Arabe Libyenne socialiste et populaire. Ce dernier longtemps considéré comme le parrain du terrorisme international, car accusé d'être derrière les attentats de la compagnie UTA au dessus du Ténéré au Niger et de celle de la PANAM au dessus de Lockerbie en Ecosse décide de se repentir et désormais de s'occuper du continent africain. Initiateur du sommet de Syrte I et II, pour la création de l'UA, ses actions gênent de plus en plus l'occident, particulièrement la France.

En effet, les occidentaux ne lui pardonneront jamais pour avoir emprisonné des infirmières bulgares accusées de transmettre le virus du sida à des enfants libyens. L'ire des occidentaux a atteint son comble quand le colonel Kadhafi a décidé de s'impliquer pour le lancement d'un satellite purement africain dans

l'espace pour un coût de plus de 500 millions de dollars.

Mais la goutte d'eau qui va déborder le vase intervient selon Jean Paul Pougallas un chercheur camerounais, quand Kadhafi décide de créer le fonds monétaire africain (FMA) et d'y injecter environ 50 millions de dollars. Pour la France qui dirige le FMI le comble est atteint .Prétextant que le guide veut exterminer les populations de Benghazi la France pousse les USA et la Grande Bretagne à soutenir un projet de résolution et trompe la Chine et la Russie en leurs faisant croire qu'il s'agit de créer une zone d'exclusion autour de Benghazi. Après 6 mois de combat le guide tombe.

En déclenchant l'opération Harmattan contre la Libye le message de Sarkozy était clair, dissuader les Etats africains à tenter une quelconque volonté d'indépendance. La France a profité de la guerre en Libye pour renverser le président Amadou Toumani Touré qui n'a pas caché sa sympathie pour le guide. Débute la crise malienne et ses corollaires jihado-islamiste. Pour tester ses avions Rafales (pour séduire les qatarites), les français feront des frappes aériennes afin d'arrêter la progression des terroristes, au nom d'une force dénommée "Serval" (un animal inconnu).

La réussite de l'opération sera saluée par tout un peuple et par ricochet le monde entier. Mais les français resteront, signeront un accord de défense avec le Mali, installeront des bases dans toutes les zones stratégiques du nord du Mali (cinq à Tessalit), changeront le nom de leur opération en Barkahane (une dune), lieront allégeance avec les groupes rebelles touareg (MNLA) et s'attèlent de nos jours à piller toutes les ressources minières et autres.

En somme, tout laisse croire que le nord du Mali constitue un nouveau trésor pour l'Hexagone de donner un nouveau souffle à sa puissance économique, en dégringolade depuis belle lurette. Le sait-on ?

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Nigeria

Nigeria: "What's My Own in Boko Haram?"

OPINION

This is the first ever full length (233 pages) book study of Boko Haram. If only for this reason it needs to be noticed. But it is a worthy introduction to his subject. For those who are familiar with the phenomenon of Boko Haram, there are two major issues to understand: the first is Boko Haram and all its antecedent movements in Northern Nigeria; and second there is the management of Boko Haram under the presidency of Dr. Goodluck Jonathan from 2010 to 2015. As usual in these matters, it is the second issue that baffles understanding and confuses analysis. If Boko Haram is seen as "an awful symptom of severe poverty, neglect and the absence of faith in government in Northern Nigeria" (107) you would think that the recommendation of the government white paper that came out of the panel set up in 2013 headed by then Interior Minister Abba Moro that "the federal and state governments should immediately address the issue of unemployment in the face of the large number of jobless youths in the northeast zone" would have done the job. But if Boko Haram was seen as "a conspiracy by the northern political elite" to make Nigeria ungovernable for a southern president from the Niger Delta then we are faced with a never-never situation. Unfortunately for Nigeria Boko Haram is both.

On a personal note, my academic work makes me a member of the taarabiyya - the arabised ones of Africa, without being Muslim. Twice in my academic career I had possibilities of going to teach and do research in Northern Nigeria. The first time was to have been in Zaria in 1976 and the second time would have been in Maiduguri in 1988. Both times the process was aborted. If as a non-Muslim teacher of Arabic I was catching 'molest' in Southern Yorubaland, my home ground, what welcome could I expect in the foreign countries of the Northern Hausa/Fulani/Kanuri? All the same the fate of Islam and of Arabic in Africa would always be important in my academic life. Hence my own in Boko Haram.

Mike Smith's book divides into two unequal parts - the distant past background of the double conquest of Northern Nigeria, first by Uthman dan Fodio and then by Frederick Lugard. The first conquest led to the creation of the Sokoto Caliphate while the second led to the creation of the British Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. The link between the two conquests is the amalgamation of the southern protectorate and the northern protectorate in January 1914 leading to the creation of Nigeria. British colonial policy made the south open to the Christian missionary's rampant activities while the northern protectorate was protected from any Christian missionary activity. As in all religious enclaves, Christian and Islamic, movements and sects arise criticising the orthodoxy of each faith. Added to this for the northern muslim clerics was the general criticism of modern education as purely westernisation. All Islamic protest movements that have evolved in Northern Nigeria

have been against westernisation, including Boko Haram. This background material takes the greater part of the book.

The second part of the book deals with the activities of Boko Haram since 2009 until 2015. There are descriptions of the bombing of the UN offices in Abuja in January 2012. In fact the book starts with this. Then there is a detailed description of the uprising of the followers of Muhammad Yusuf against the Nigerian police and army, leading to his death. There are other descriptions of Boko Haram atrocities including the kidnapping of the Chibok girls. These descriptions make grim reading. There are mentions of individuals in the government of Borno State, including the former governor Ali Modu Sheriff and his commissioner for religious affairs. The involvement in and sponsorship of Boko Haram activities need far more detailed research and evaluation than provided so far in this book.

On the matter of the leadership and membership of Boko Haram, Mike Smith does not seem to know more than is generally available in the media. Shekau succeeds Yusuf and the members are initially political thugs abandoned by their politician bosses, as well as unemployed youths and the ever present almajiris. The fate of Muhammad Yusuf's father-in-law, Baba Fugu Mohammad and brother-in-law, Baba-kura Fugu needs to be further investigated. There is need for more information here.

Mike Smith deals with the relationship of Yusuf with the more erudite and better educated Northern muslim clerics, particularly in their attempt to set Yusuf right in terms of his mis-interpretation of the Qur'an. These men include Sheikh Muhammad Awwal Adam Albani, Ja'far Mahmud Adam and Abubakar Gumi.

Mike Smith also touches on the issue of the financing of the activities of Boko Haram. These are the robbing of local banks in the north eastern states. There is also the mention of Bin Laden and a charity based in London. Again more needs to be done in this area to understand the spread and depth of Boko Haram, especially in terms of Niger, Chad and Cameroon. Boko Haram: Inside Nigeria's Unholy War by Mike Smith indicates that academics need to take this menace more seriously.

Kole Omotoso writes from Akure.

This is a review of Boko Haram: Inside Nigeria's Unholy War by Mike Smith of Agence France-Presse.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201506101212.html>

For children born of war, what future?

12 June 2015

Sexual violence in conflict has attracted increasing attention, but with the majority of responses focused on short-term needs, children born through war remain largely ignored.



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In recent weeks, more than [700 women and children](#) have been rescued from Boko Haram by the Nigerian Army. Reports suggest that at least [214 of them are visibly pregnant](#). While agencies like the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) provide much-needed emergency medical and psychosocial support, little effective analysis exists on the long-term needs and challenges of these children born of war and their mothers.

Unfortunately, the experience of women and children abducted by Boko Haram is not unique to the emergent situation in northern Nigeria. Nearly 2,000 miles away from Boko Haram's stronghold in the Sambisa Forest in northern Nigeria, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) traverses the jungles of central Africa with hundreds of captive men, women and children. Known for using similar tactics of abduction and forced marriage as Boko Haram, the rebel group has survived for more than two decades despite numerous political and military attempts to expel it.

Meanwhile, communities in neighboring northern Uganda, the original theater of the LRA, have experienced relative peace and security for nearly a decade, yet a multitude of economic and social consequences of the conflict still remain. One such issue has risen to prominence as of late, with some leaders going so far as to call it a 'time bomb': what will become of all of these children born of war? Thou-

sands of such children exist on the margins, fathered through sexual violence by not only the LRA, but also government forces and a multitude of other state and non-state armed actors. As these children enter into early adulthood, with many now in their teens and twenties, increasing questions (and conflicts) of identity and belonging have emerged, prompting calls for targeted programs and policies to address their plight.

While the prevalence of sexual violence in conflict has received increasingly greater recognition in public, policy and academic circles around the world, the majority of the resultant reports and responses focus on short-term needs and largely [ignore children born of sexual violence](#).

Last month, the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) conducted an assessment in northern Uganda to understand the needs and challenges of incorporating children born of war into reparations and development policies. Our findings, which will be produced in a report later this year, reveal long-term needs and challenges of children born of war that (re)integration programs and policies have largely ignored and overlooked. When the initial rush of attention and humanitarian aid wanes, it is important to keep in mind the longer term consequences of conflict on the children born of war and plan interventions accordingly.

Prioritizing the unique needs of children

There is a need for special programs for children born of war. Often times, programs focus exclusively on their mothers, as the immediate survivors of conflict sexual violence. While mothers undoubtedly have a need for such support, the needs of their children may differ and it cannot be assumed that programs designed for the women will trickle down to the children. In societies where one's identity derives from paternal lineage, children with unknown or untraceable fathers can face considerable hardship living with maternal relatives. Increasingly, peer-support groups have been a popular strategy in northern Uganda to provide psychosocial support to female survivors of conflict sexual violence. No such groups exist for the children, in part because of a lack of prioritization by non-governmental organizations and donors, and because of the challenges and sensitivities involved in identifying and mobilizing them. *While mothers undoubtedly have a need for such support, the needs of their children may differ and it cannot be assumed that programs designed for the women will trickle down to the children.*

Further, the programs for women survivors who bore children need additional support to recognize their status as mothers. For example, in northern Uganda, where persons returning from the rebels were awarded reinsertion packages of basic household items by the government, there were no additional allowances for those with children born in captivity. This trend continues today, with many governmental and non-governmental programs recognizing formerly-abducted persons as a special category for assistance, but not children born of war.

Reintegration at the community level

Generally, (re)integration programs often overlook the communities within which children born of war live and focus on preparing the mother and child, while overlooking the needs of the community. The families and communities within which these children will live must be adequately prepared for their return.

As much as the children deserve special programs for the violations they suffered, their communities do too. In conflicts like those in northern Nigeria and Uganda, war has affected nearly everyone. Trauma and scarcity of resources, for instance, can contribute to the exacerbated stigmatization and rejection of children born of war. Formerly-abducted women and their children may only initially be welcomed into homes and communities due to the appeal of the resources from reintegration programs that they return with. Tensions and conflicts often emerge over time, however, especially as the resources dry up and children reach school-going age and require additional support for fees and school requirements. Other times, as experienced by some mothers in northern Uganda, their relatives initially welcomed the women but refused to accept their children, forcing the women to leave home and rent in urban centers where they experience relative anonymity.

Any programs or policies that support these children or their mothers must consider the social circumstances in which they live. Failing to view other relatives and community members as key stakeholders in any support they receive is likely to undermine any efforts. More than a one-off sensitization campaign, it is necessary to take the time to understand how the community perceives the returning mothers and their children born of war as well as the specific obstacles the children are likely to face (such as land access, stigma, and resentment) and together with the community devise strategies to overcome those obstacles. In northern Uganda many young mothers felt that receiving support to become productive and self-sufficient was the key to gaining respect in their community and overcoming stigma, rather than just psychosocial support.

The differentiated impacts of gender

Anticipating the nuances and gender differences among children born of war is a critical part of devising appropriate and responsive programs and policies. Even amongst children born of war under the same circumstances or within the same group of fathers, individual needs and circumstances may greatly differ. For instance, female and male children will face different challenges in societies in which females' families receive dowry when their daughter marries while males are expected to inherit land and other resources when they come of age. In northern Uganda, some families and clans have rejected male children born of war to a higher extent than females because they do not want to allocate land to them on which to settle when they come of age.

Ethnicity can also affect levels of acceptance and acknowledgement, as can the

identity of the father. In Uganda, children born of rape by government forces are largely invisible, due in part to the fact that the same government under which these atrocities were committed is still in power. Further, children whose parents are from different regions or ethnicities reportedly face greater stigma than children born of war to parents of the same ethnicity. This is especially severe if the father is believed to be from a group for which the conflict is blamed. Any interventions or responses to meet their needs must recognize these nuances and respond accordingly.

Focusing on the future

The ICTJ's assessment underscored the reality that the needs of children born of war shift over time and require long-term visioning and planning. The needs of children born of war are not the same when they are infants as when they are young adults. Their identity and needs constantly evolve over time as conflicts and circumstances shift over time. The interventions of UNFPA and other organizations providing support in northern Nigeria must evolve accordingly.

Whereas the pressing need today may be counseling for the mother and medical support for a safe delivery of the child, in the future, the need may be access to education, land, livelihoods, justice and redress. Not every organization may have a mandate to provide support this far into a post-conflict period, but the needs of children born of war shall remain.

Organizations involved in programming and policymaking must maintain a panoramic view of the reparative justice needs of children born of war while the lens is still fixed on the young women rescued from Boko Haram. Within this view, taking the time to extend any work involving children must also incorporate the receiving communities to ensure that the cycle of violence is not repeated through the next generation. It is important to recognize and plan for children born of war so that they can outgrow the negative consequences of the circumstances of their birth, and have the hope of a brighter future where they are treated with dignity and their rights are respected.

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/>

South Africa

Opinion: Why Are Threats to Civil Society Growing Around the World?

In this column, Mandeep Tiwana, a lawyer specialising in human rights and civil society issues and Head of Policy and Research at CIVICUS, the global civil society alliance, argues that in recent years there has been a perceptible rise in restrictions on civil space and suggests four key drivers: a global democratic deficit, a worldwide obsession with state security and countering of 'terrorism' by all actors except the state, rampant collusion by a handful of interconnected political and economic elites, and the disturbance caused by religious fundamentalist and evangelist groups seeking to upend the collective progress made by civil society in advancing the human rights discourse.

JOHANNESBURG, Jun 10 2015 (IPS) - Whistle-blowers like [Edward Snowden](#) and [Julian Assange](#) are hounded – not by autocratic but by democratic governments – for revealing the truth about grave human rights violations. Nobel peace prize winner, writer and political activist [Liu Xiaobo](#) is currently languishing in a Chinese prison while the killing of Egyptian protestor, poet and mother [Shaimaa al-Sabbagh](#), apparently by a masked policeman, in January this year continues to haunt us.

CIVICUS, the global civil society alliance, has documented serious abuses of civic freedoms in 96 countries in 2014 alone. The annual [report](#) of the international advocacy group, Human Rights Watch, laments that the once-heralded Arab Spring has given way almost everywhere to conflict and repression while Amnesty International's [Annual Report 2014/2015](#) calls it a devastating year for those seeking to stand up for human rights.

In recent years, there has been a perceptible rise in restrictions on civic space – the fundamental freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly. While the reasons for the eruption of repressive laws and attacks on dissenters vary, negative effects are being felt in both democracies and authoritarian states.

It is increasingly evident that the dangers to civic freedoms come not just from state apparatuses but also from powerful non-state actors including influential business entities and extremist groups subscribing to fundamentalist ideologies. This begs a deeper analysis into the extent and causes of this pervasive problem.

In several countries, laws continue to be drawn up to restrict civic freedoms. They include anti-terror laws that limit freedom of speech, public order laws that limit the right to protest peacefully, laws that stigmatise civil society groups through derogatory names such as 'foreign agents', laws that create bureaucratic hurdles to receive crucial funding from international philanthropic institutions as well as laws that prevent progressive civil society organisations from protecting the rights of marginalised minorities such as the LGBTI community.

In this situation, it is indeed possible to identify four key drivers of the pervasive assault on civic space. The first is the global democratic deficit. Freedom House, which documents the state of democratic rights around the world, has [reported](#) declines in civil liberties and political freedoms for the ninth consecutive year in 2015.

In too many countries, peaceful activists exposing corruption and rights violations are being stigmatised as ‘national security threats’, and subjected to politically motivated trials, arbitrary detentions and worse. There appears to be no let up in official censorship and repression of active citizens in authoritarian states like China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Vietnam.

“It is increasingly evident that the dangers to civic freedoms come not just from state apparatuses but also from powerful non-state actors including influential business entities and extremist groups subscribing to fundamentalist ideologies”

Freedom of assembly is virtually non-existent in such contexts, and activists are often forced to engage online. But when they do so, they are demonised as being agents of Western security agencies.

Ironically, excessive surveillance and/or hounding of whistle-blowers by countries such as Australia, France, the United Kingdom and United States – whose foreign policies are supposed to promote democratic rights – are contributing to a global climate where close monitoring of anyone suspected of harbouring dissenting views is becoming an accepted norm.

The second driver – and linked to the global democratic deficit – is the worldwide obsession with state security and countering of ‘terrorism’ by all actors except the state. The decline in civic space began after the attack on the World Trade Centre in September 2001 when several established democracies introduced a slew of counter-terror measures weakening human rights safeguards in the name of protecting national security.

The situation worsened after the Arab Spring uprisings of 2011 as authoritarian leaders witnessed the fall of long-standing dictators in Egypt and Tunisia following widespread citizen protests. The possibility of people’s power being able to overturn entrenched political systems has made authoritarian regimes extremely fearful of the free exercise of civic freedoms by citizens.

This has led to a severe push back against civil society by a number of repressive regimes in the Middle East and North Africa. Governments in Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have stepped up their efforts to prevent public demonstrations and the activities of human rights groups.

Similar reverberations have also been felt in sub-Saharan African countries with long-standing authoritarian leaders and totalitarian political parties. Thus repression of civic freedoms appears to have intensified in countries such as Angola, Bu-

rundi, Ethiopia, Gambia, Rwanda, Sudan, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

Activists and civil society groups in many countries in Central Asia and Eastern Europe where democracy remains fragile or non-existent such as Azerbaijan, Belarus, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are also feeling the heat following governments' reactions to scuttle demands for political reform.

In South-East Asia too, in countries such as Cambodia and Malaysia which have a history of repressive government and in Thailand where the military seized power through a recent coup, new 'security' measures continue to be implemented to restrict civic freedoms.

The third major driver of closing civic space is the rampant [collusion](#) and indeed capture of power and resources in most countries by a handful of interconnected political and economic elites.

Oxfam International [projects](#) that the richest one percent will own more wealth than 99 percent of the globe's population by 2016. Thus civil society groups exposing corruption and/or environmental degradation by politically well-connected businesses are extremely vulnerable to persecution due to the tight overlap and cosy relationships among elites.

With market fundamentalism and the neo-liberal economic discourse firmly entrenched in a number of democracies, labour, land and environmental rights activists are facing heightened challenges.

At least 29 environmental activists were [reported](#) murdered in Brazil in 2014. Canada's centre-right government has been closely monitoring and intimidating indigenous peoples' rights activists opposing large commercial projects in ecologically fragile areas. India's prime minister recently urged judges to be wary of "[five-star activists](#)" even as the efforts of Greenpeace India to protect forests from the activities of extractive industries have led it to be subjected to various forms of bureaucratic harassment including arbitrary freezing of its bank accounts.

The fourth and emerging threat to civic space comes from the disturbance caused by religious fundamentalist and evangelist groups seeking to upend the collective progress made by civil society in advancing the human rights discourse.

Failure of the international community to prevent violent conflict and address serious human rights abuses by states such as Israel and Syria is providing a fertile breeding ground for religious extremists whose ideology is deeply inimical to the existence of a vibrant and empowered civil society.

Besides, religious fundamentalists are able to operate more freely in conflicted and politically fragile environments whose number appears to be rising, thereby exacerbating the situation for civil society organisations and activists seeking to promote equality, peace and tolerance.

Current threats to civic space and civil society activities are a symptom of the highly charged and polarised state of international affairs. The solutions to the grave and interconnected economic, ecological and humanitarian crises currently facing humanity will eventually have to come from civil society through a reassertion of its own value even as political leaders continue to undermine collective efforts.

Beginning a series of conversations on [how to respond](#) to common threats at the national, regional and international levels is critical. Establishment of solidarity protocols within civil society could be an effective way to coalesce around both individual cases of harassment as well as systemic threats such as limiting legislation or policies.

Further, the international legal framework that protects civic space needs to be strengthened. The International Bill of Rights comprising the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) leaves scope for subjective interpretation of some aspects of civic freedoms.

It is perhaps time to examine the possibility of a comprehensive legally binding convention on civic space that better articulates the extent and scope of civic space, so essential to an empowered civil society. However, laws are only as good as the commitment of those charged with overseeing their implementation.

Importantly and urgently, to reverse the global onslaught on civic space and human rights, we need visionary political leadership willing to take risks and lead by example.

Over the last few years, analysts have noted with horror the steady dismantling of hard won gains on civic freedoms. Many thought things could get no worse. ... but they did.

It is time to start thinking seriously about stemming the tide before we reach the point of no return. Ending the persecution of Assange, Snowden and Liu Xiaobo could be a good start for preventing precious lives such as Shaimaa's from being lost.

Edited by [Phil Harris](#)

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Sudan

Compromising on the fate of Darfur's civilians

On June 30th of this month, the current authorization of the UN/African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) expires; it is not at all clear that it will be renewed by the Security Council, and if it is, the Khartoum regime will likely insist upon compromises in the nature of the force and its mandate. Several well-informed sources indicate that West Darfur is likely to be a point of compromise, with UNAMID withdrawing in all meaningful form from the region, leaving only a few hundred men in uniform. This is not nearly enough to provide security, escort relief convoys, or even report in a meaningful way on violence affecting civilians. And if calm relative to Central and North Darfur now, we only need recall the explosion of militia violence in early 2008 to understand that another such upsurge in military attacks would be completely beyond UNAMID's ability to respond.

In short, Darfur seems to have moved from being an international human rights cause célèbre to an inconvenient, if ghastly reality. How did this happen?

THAT WAS THEN

There was a time when Darfur, in western Sudan, galvanized an extraordinary coalition of activists in this country. The National Islamic Front/National Congress Party regime in Khartoum had begun in 2003 a genocidal counter-insurgency against the region's African tribal groups, perceived as the civilian base of support for rebel groups. So potent was the campaign to halt genocide in Darfur that it forced its way onto the national agenda. Both houses of Congress—in a unanimous, bipartisan vote of July 2004—declared that genocide was occurring in Darfur. Others followed suit, including then-Secretary of State Colin Powell, testifying to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in September 2004. His testimony was based on very substantial research along the Chad/Darfur border in August 2004. Human rights groups, genocide scholars, church and synagogue congregations, and legions of students made this remote and unknown region, in the very middle of Africa, a cause to be reckoned with.

As a presidential candidate Barack Obama saw the electoral possibilities of a strong stance on Darfur. He chided the Bush administration for what he saw as its excessive accommodation of Khartoum's ethnically-targeted destruction. He declared fulsomely, invoking Rwanda and Bosnia, that "the United States has a moral obligation anytime you see humanitarian catastrophes":

"When you see a genocide in Rwanda, Bosnia or in Darfur, that is a stain on all of us, a stain on our souls. We can't say 'never again' and then allow it to happen again, and as a president of the United States I don't intend to abandon people or turn a blind eye to slaughter." (video clip at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEd583-fA8M#t=15>)

And early in his presidency Obama again characterized Darfur as the site of

“genocide.” That was then. Seven years later we hear nothing of consequences from the administration about Darfur.

THIS IS NOW

Largely as a consequence of this loss of focus, today the Darfur genocide—the first genocide of the 21st century and the longest one in more than a century—is about to achieve another distinction. It will be the first genocide in which the victims are abandoned. The UNAMID force authorized in 2007 is on the verge of being gutted and ultimately eliminated altogether. In three weeks, unless the UN Security Council votes to re-authorize the force, it will be obliged to leave. This fact gives the Khartoum regime what it considers irresistible leverage in negotiations that are ongoing, with what still appear to be major disagreements between the UN and African Union on one side and Khartoum on the other.

The stakes are extraordinarily high. More than 3 million people have been internally displaced or turned into refugees in eastern Chad; almost 500,000 were displaced last year alone. Mortality estimates vary, but we must of necessity speak of several hundred thousands of deaths—perhaps half a million—from violence and its consequences, and all indications are that mortality rates are rising along with acute malnutrition. The victims continue to be overwhelmingly civilians from the African tribal groups that have been targeted for more than twelve years.

It seems perverse that génocidaires in Khartoum are being allowed to decide the fate of their victims in Darfur, but in fact they are insisting that an “exit strategy”—foolishly agreed to in principle by the UN Security Council last August—be executed as rapidly as possible. The force has already been cut by 10,000 and stands at approximately at 17,000 uniformed personnel. The regime wants another 15,000 gone this year.

Criticism of UNAMID is longstanding; indeed it preceded official deployment of the civilian-protection mission in January 2008. For the mission was set up to fail, largely because Khartoum was given excessive control over the deployment of personnel and equipment. This led to poor troop quality, with the regime rejecting many highly qualified peacekeeping contributions (such as a Swedish-Norwegian engineering battalion). Essential weaponry and aircraft were also denied. Despite a status-of-forces agreement that was supposed to give UNAMID unrestricted access, Khartoum has systematically obstructed, delayed or compromised countless protection and monitoring missions.

As badly as UNAMID has performed, however, it is all that allows international humanitarian organizations to remain in Darfur. If UNAMID withdraws, or is hopelessly compromised, these organizations may well be forced to end their work. To date, some 25 to 30 major international relief organizations have been expelled by Khartoum or withdrawn because of insecurity. This has occurred against a backdrop of extreme malnutrition in many locations, a desperate lack of clean water and sanitation, and a rapidly collapsing system for providing primary medical care.

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

At this very moment decisions are being made that will affect the lives and security of millions of people in Darfur, and yet we hear nothing of significance from the Obama administration about the urgency of preserving key elements of the force. Yes, a facile international chorus has declared "Darfur won't be abandoned," but there are reasons to be skeptical. Leading this chorus is the expedient Hervé Ladsous, head of UN peacekeeping operations, who not so long ago argued that a drawdown of UNAMID was justified by improved security conditions, even as violence has escalated for three years.

Moreover, a brute geopolitical fact defines current planning. UNAMID must be re-authorized before June 30. But Khartoum has veto-wielding friends on the Security Council in the form of China and Russia; they are likely to support the regime even in its most unreasonable demands. Russia is of particular concern, given President Vladimir Putin's general hostility to any Western initiative. In a revealing show of perverse solidarity, Russia sided with Khartoum in rejecting a recent report by Human Rights Watch that authoritatively documented the mass rape last fall of more than 220 girls and women by Khartoum's army troops in the town of Tabit. The evidence in the report is so overwhelming that the Russian denial of its findings suggests an unwillingness to look at Darfur's realities except through Khartoum's eyes.

Depending on the character of the newly authorized force—assuming one is authorized at all—humanitarian organizations may be forced to withdraw from what is already a terribly insecure environment, or at least parts of Darfur. The epidemic of sexual violence will continue to accelerate, with the Arab militias most responsible continuing to operate with total impunity. More than half Darfur's pre-war population of 6 million people are in need of assistance, and yet humanitarian capacity is shrinking. UN agencies such as the World Food Program cannot function without implementing partners, precisely the function that has been fulfilled by the organizations contemplating withdrawal. If they leave, the death toll could be catastrophic.

We need to hear President Obama's voice now; we need to hear the same moral passion on which he so effectively traded while campaigning in 2008—seven years ago. This will require foregoing the unseemly, finally disgraceful trade-off his administration has engaged in with the Khartoum regime: the U.S. offers the possibility of rapprochement, including lifting longstanding economic sanctions, in exchange for receiving putatively valuable counter-terrorism intelligence, and a possible listening post in Khartoum. The new embassy, costing hundreds of millions of dollars, has already been built but does not yet house the listening and intercept equipment that will make it so valuable, in addition to providing an actual presence in the middle of the region that seems destined to become the major battleground against radical Islam. The Obama administration intelligence community lusts for full access to the embassy.

The value of the counter-terrorism intelligence to date is dubious, and was chal-

lenged vigorously by former Senator Russ Feingold while he was chairman of the Africa subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a member of the Senate's Select Committee on Intelligence. Perhaps more telling are the leaked minutes of a meeting of senior military and security officials last August 31st: Defense Minister Abdel Rahim Mohamed Hussein is recorded as scoffing at what the U.S. actually gets in the way of intelligence, and the significance of what is deliberately being withheld about radical Islamist, terrorists, and the international Islamic movement.

This deal should never have been made (as candidate Obama declared when chiding the Bush administration) and must surely give way before moral importance of avoiding a deepening "stain on our souls," the inevitable consequence of leaving the people of Darfur completely at the mercy of Khartoum's regular and brutal militia forces.

The United States must take the lead and, with Britain and France, muscle-up politically in the Security Council; otherwise the fate of Darfur will be dictated by the very men who began the genocide 12 years ago. This would be unprecedented in the grim history of genocide.

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<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article55275>

Terrorism in the World

Rapid Increase In Number Of Foreign Fighters Recorded, New Global Action Plan Imminent

06/09/2015

At the end of 2014, 1,000 profiles of foreign fighters were recorded in INTERPOL's databases. That figure increased to 4,000 profiles just six months later, demonstrating a growing understanding by member countries of the importance of sharing information to counter this threat.

Addressing an INTERPOL working group meeting on foreign terrorist fighters in Barcelona, Secretary General Jürgen Stock applauded the progress made in recent months in exchanging data on foreign fighters, but said more information still needs to be shared via INTERPOL.

"While information is increasingly crossing borders, it is still doing so at a much slower pace than foreign terrorist fighters. A gap still exists between the number [of foreign fighters] we have identified, and those estimated to have reached conflict zones," Stock said.

The Head of INTERPOL pointed to a case from 2014 when a suspect was apprehended on his way to Syria, due to the decision of Belgium to issue an international alert through INTERPOL, and the actions taken by Lebanese officials on the ground based on this shared intelligence.

The three-day meeting in Spain which concluded on June 5 brought together approximately 150 counter-terrorism experts from 42 countries and three international organizations. The gathering enabled investigators to directly exchange best practices and information in relation to the global threat posed by travel to and from conflict zones in Syria, Iraq and, increasingly, Libya.

Attendants discussed gathering intelligence on foreign fighters from social media, identifying and disrupting travel facilitation networks, the involvement of returning foreign fighters in further criminal activity.

Foreign fighters returning to their own countries often play a role in the radicalization and recruitment of additional foreign fighters, or carry out further attacks on home soil.

Stock has addressed the United Nations several times on the issue of foreign fighters and the urgent need for a wider exchange of data, most recently during a high-

level UN Security Council ministerial briefing on foreign terrorist fighters at the end of May.

While it is obviously good news that information sharing is helping to counter this threat, the question – as with any other crime reporting statistic – is whether the numbers of foreign fighters recorded is increasing solely as a result of increased awareness and data sharing, or whether there are simply more foreign fighters. The truth likely rests somewhere in between.

During the ministerial briefing in May, the United Nations Security Council warned of growing recruitment by extremist groups, from more than 100 countries. The 15-member body expressed its grave concern at the increase of foreign fighters joining the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant/Sham (ISIL/ISIS), Al Qaeda and other groups, estimating that over 25,000 individuals have become foreign fighters.

Laws that criminalize recruiting, organizing, transporting or equipping foreign terrorist fighters are lacking in many countries and vital to stopping the flow of foreign fighters.

The UN Security Council has noted with concern that only 51 member states were reportedly using advance passenger information to address the scourge, and it urged all to support “evidence-based traveler risk assessment and screen procedures” without resorting to “profiling based on stereotypes founded on grounds of discrimination prohibited by international law.” The council also underscored a critical need for member states to strengthen border management.

There is also an overwhelming need for all countries to more effectively identify and work with relevant local community leaders to address radicalization. A great deal more must be done to prevent terrorists from exploiting communications technology to incite support for violence. The continued operation of “facilitation networks” requires countries to prosecute those who finance and enable terrorist acts.

The council has therefore recommended that the Counterterrorism Implementation Task Force Office, in close consultations with the Counterterrorism Directorate and other United Nations units, develop a priority plan for capacity-building and technical-assistance needs of most-affected countries.

On June 8, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon outlined elements of an action plan he will present later this year to reinforce good governance, which he sees as terrorism’s true deterrent.

“Missiles may kill terrorists. But I am convinced that good governance is what will kill terrorism,” Ban said in his remarks to a meeting on terrorism held during the

Summit of the Group of Seven leading industrialized nations (G7) in Munich, Germany.

“During the last 15 years, most counter-terrorism efforts have been reactive, focusing largely on military and security measures. This approach has often generated negative unintended consequences, further radicalizing disenfranchised communities,” he stated.

The UN Global Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, to be presented to the General Assembly later this year, will propose ways to address the causes of violent extremism, including intolerance, governance failures and political, economic and social marginalization. It will provide member states with concrete recommendations for action at the local, national, regional and global levels.

“Addressing violent extremism demands a proactive, ‘all-of-society’ approach that includes minorities, women and youth as partners,” said Ban, noting that the targeting of women bears special mention. “With every attack and encroachment by violent extremists, the first targets are the rights of women and girls.”

Governments also have a particular responsibility to address the aspirations of youth, especially in countries where youth represent an increasing majority of the population, he added.

“Youth are the group most prone to radicalization and violent extremism. Most foreign terrorist fighters are young males aged between 15 and 35,” the Secretary-General pointed out. “But young people are also part of the solution to preventing violent extremism. We all need to do a better job of engaging them.”

Acknowledging that security measures and “even military action” may be necessary at times, Ban insisted on the fact that counter-terrorism efforts that ignore the rule of law and violate fundamental rights “not only betray the values they seek to uphold, but can also end up further fueling violent extremism.”

<http://www.hstoday.us/briefings/>

Australia

L'Australie laissera-t-elle les lionceaux du Califat rentrer chez eux?

Que doit-on faire des enfants partis avec leurs familles rejoindre les rangs de l'Etat islamique?

D'après de nouveaux chiffres publiés la semaine dernière, 10.000 combattants de l'Etat islamique (EI) ont été tués - dont 15% des 20.000 recrues étrangères - depuis



que la coalition menée par les Etats-Unis a lancé sa campagne contre les djihadistes il y a neuf mois. Si beaucoup d'entre eux continuent de se battre pour l'EI, nombre d'autres préfèrent retourner dans leurs pays d'origine.

En plus d'avoir rejoint les rangs de l'Etat islamique en Irak et en Syrie, certains combattants étrangers ont intégré d'autres groupes extrémistes comme le Front al-Nosra, affilié à al-Qaïda, ou encore les milices chiite soutenues par l'Iran. Bien que la plupart d'entre eux soit originaires des pays d'Afrique du nord et du Golfe, on compte 4.000 combattants venus des pays occidentaux.

Ils sont désormais nombreux à assurer en avoir assez de la violence et vouloir rentrer chez eux. Et ils veulent rentrer chez eux avec leurs enfants.

I24news est allé à la rencontre de l'Ambassadeur australien en Israël, Dave Sharma, afin de discuter de la loi qui est actuellement débattue en Australie, après le Royaume-Uni, le Canada et les Etats-Unis, sur la possibilité de retirer la nationalité aux citoyens qui détiennent deux nationalités et qui sont partis combattre à l'étranger.



Anna Ahronheim "Australian ambassador to Israel Dave Sharma"

"La révocation de la citoyenneté ne serait applicable qu'aux personnes détenant une double nationalité puisque révoquer la citoyenneté de ceux qui n'en ont qu'une n'est pas conforme aux principes de la communauté internationale", a affirmé Sharma avant d'assurer à i24news que chaque citoyen de retour en Australie devra affronter "la pleine mesure de la loi".

Sharma a notamment expliqué qu'en plus des 30 Australiens qui sont déjà rentrés après avoir combattu dans les rangs de l'EI, 155 autres sont connus pour apporter leur soutien au groupe djihadiste.

En outre, l'ambassadeur australien a affirmé que son gouvernement n'avait pas la volonté de tenter de réhabiliter ceux qui ont combattu pour des groupes terroristes. "Même si l'Australie est un pays compatissant, le public australien a peu de sympathie pour ceux qui sont allés combattre aux côtés de l'EI en Syrie, et espère les voir payer pour leurs actes une fois rentrés", a-t-il encore déclaré.

Le Premier ministre australien, Tony Abbott, a de son côté affirmé qu'on ne devrait pas faire de différences entre les Australiens qui ont rejoint une armée hostile et ceux qui se sont engagés dans le terrorisme. "Les deux trahissent notre pays et ne méritent pas d'être des citoyens d'Australie", a martelé Abbott.

Bien que l'opinion publique australienne soit contre la clémence pour ceux qui rentrent chez eux, le fait que des enfants et des adolescents puissent retourner dans leur pays soulève un débat. Des familles entières - y compris occidentales - ont rejoint les rangs de l'Etat islamique. Des vidéos montrent des enfants, connus sous le

nom de "lionceaux du Califat" assis en classe, alors que d'autres sont filmés en train de menacer leur pays d'origine en s'entraînant au tir.



Twitter "Australian IS fighter Khaled Sharrouf and three of his sons"

Ceci représente un réel problème pour les gouvernements occidentaux qui n'ont jamais eu à affronter ce genre de cas dans les précédents conflits. Que doit-on faire de ces enfants partis avec leurs familles chez l'ennemi ?

La famille de l'Australien Khaled Sharrouf est un parfait exemple. Son fils âgé de 7 ans a fait les gros titres après qu'une photo de lui tenant la tête d'un homme décapité a fait le tour d'internet. Toute la famille Sharrouf, mis à part le père, affirme aujourd'hui en avoir assez de se battre et souhaite rentrer à la maison.

Zaynab, la fille de Sharrouf était âgée de 13 ans lorsqu'elle est arrivée en Syrie. D'après un dernier rapport publié par l'Institut pour le dialogue stratégique (un think tank londonien, NDLR), Zaynab ressemblait à toutes les autres jeunes filles occidentales de son âge avant d'arriver à Raqqa, la "capitale" de-facto de l'Etat islamique. Mais peu après son arrivée, elle a commencé à publier ses opinions radicales dans les réseaux sociaux, sans pour autant appeler à une attaque sur le sol occidental.

Un autre enfant, qui fut par la suite identifié comme étant le neveu de Mohamed Merah, a été vu dans une vidéo diffusée par l'EI en mars dernier en train de célébrer l'exécution de Mohammed Said Ismail Musallam, un résident palestinien de Jérusalem-est, exécuté par le groupe djihadiste.



Screenshot "Muhammad Said Ismail Musallam, accused by IS of being an Israeli spy, executed by a child fighter"

Dans la plupart des pays occidentaux, l'appartenance à une organisation terroriste est une infraction criminelle, tout comme voyager dans des zones de conflit et prendre part aux combats. De la même manière, dans une majorité de pays occidentaux, les enfants de moins de 14 ans ne sont pas reconnus responsables de leurs actes criminels. Toutefois, ceux qui ont été endoctrinés par les radicaux de l'Etat islamique posent un problème. Est-ce qu'un enfant tel que celui qui a été vu en train de procéder à une exécution ou tenant la tête d'un homme décapité peut-il être réinséré dans la société? Ne devrait-t-il pas payer les conséquences de ses actes?

Sharma a déclaré à i24news que l'âge de la responsabilité criminelle variait de pays en pays, et même s'il n'y a toujours pas de débat concernant la criminalité des

adolescents comme Sharrouf, il y en aura surement un dans l'avenir. Mais évidemment, l'Australie "peaufinera la loi afin que personne ne soit arrêté à son insu".

Le Premier ministre Abbott a suggéré que les mineurs rapatriés qui n'ont pas été vus en train de commettre des actes violents devaient être traités comme les enfants de criminels ordinaires, déclarant à la presse australienne: "il y a des criminels qui vont en prison tout le temps, les enfants de ces criminels spécifiques doivent être traités de la même manière que les enfants des criminels ordinaires".

Le ministre australien Peter Dutton a aussi affirmé que le gouvernement saura "adopter une approche pragmatique en ce qui concerne les enfants, et en particulier les nourrissons" pour la révocation de leur citoyenneté en accord avec la loi.

Mais les gouvernements occidentaux, y compris celui de l'Australie, ont peu de chance d'affronter ce genre de questions, puisque la majorité des enfants occidentaux de l'EI ne retourneront pas dans leurs pays d'origine. Au contraire, ils sont les plus vulnérables et risquent fort de perdre leur vie dans le conflit qui les entoure en Syrie ou en Irak.

<http://www.i24news.tv/fr/actu/international/moyen-orient/74009-150607-l-australie-laissera-t-elle-les-lionceaux-du-califat-rentre-chez-eux>

L'Etat Islamique a la « meilleure attaque cyber » de tous les groupes terroristes

Sécurité : « Il y a un nouveau groupe d'assaillants qui arrive en ce moment. Et ces gars-là sont différents » avertit Mikko Hypponen, responsable de la recherche chez F-Secure. Le point également sur les ransomware.

05 Juin 2015

« ISIS [aussi connu sous le nom d'État islamique] est arrivé très rapidement sur le devant de la scène, mais il a déjà sans doute la meilleure capacité de cyber offensive de tous les mouvements extrémistes, et il en est encore à ses débuts » a déclaré Mikko Hypponen, responsable de la recherche chez F-Secure dans son discours d'ouverture de la Conférence AusCERT (Australie) consacrée à la sécurité informatique.

« Nous avons pas encore vu de réel dommage physique réalisé par un groupe extrémiste (ndlr. avec une cyber attaque), et il va probablement se passer un certain temps jusqu'à ce que nous voyons. Mais ces gars-là sont les premiers qui ont des hackers les ayant rejoint installés en occident ».

Et de citer l'exemple du hacker, Abu Hussain Al Britani, un citoyen britannique pisté par F-Secure pour des activités de hacking classiques depuis trois ans. L'éditeur a perdu sa trace il y a deux ans, avant de le retrouver l'été dernier en Syrie. Al Britani a été éjecté de Twitter une vingtaine de fois, mais twitte à nouveau depuis cette semaine.

« Il a été hors ligne pendant environ 6 mois, mais il est de nouveau sur Internet depuis deux jours, avec sa femme. Ils sont tous deux citoyens britanniques. Il est impliqué dans les attaques contre le Commandement central américain au cours desquelles les adresses postales privées de généraux américains ont été publiés en ligne » mentionne Mikka Hypponen. « Oui, ceci est encore loin des attaques physiques. Mais les mouvements et les groupes comme ISIS sont les seuls attaquants qui seraient prêt à réaliser des attaques sans but précis, pour atteindre des objectifs indéfinis » explique t-il.

« Par exemple, chercher à pénétrer aux systèmes automatisés des usines occidentales, pour en modifier le fonctionnement de manière aléatoire. Cela pourrait représenter une attaque qui a du sens pour eux seul, et pour personne d'autre. Voilà pourquoi je m'inquiète de la présence des mouvements extrémistes dans le domaine de la cybercriminalité. »



Compte Twitter supposé de Abu Hussain Al Britani (Source : capture d'écran par Stilgherrian)

Toujours plus de ransomware

Autre tendance décryptée par Mikka Hypponen en matière de cyber sécurité : la location et la vente d'outils d'attaque. Mikko Hypponen a pris l'exemple de CTB-Locker, un ransomware de type cryptolocker, qui fonctionne sur un modèle d'affiliation. Les créateurs du ransomware ne réalisent pas d'attaques eux même, mais vendent le ransomware comme un kit prêt à l'emploi.

« Ces différents cryptolocker ont été un de nos principaux soucis, tout comme pour les autres entreprises de sécurité informatique, ces 5 dernières années. Et je suppose que l'une des raisons pour lesquelles ramsonware, les cryptolocker ou les scam ont explosé est le Bitcoin. Le Bitcoin créé un moyen facile de déplacer de l'argent sans être détecté ».

Intelligent ? Non, exploitable

Mikko Hypponen également a montré un cheval de Troie de type scam implanté sur une smart TV. Le logiciel mentionnait que l'utilisateur n'avait pas payé son abonnement. « Laissez-moi vous livrer un secret. Chaque fois que vous entendez le mot« intelligent » (ndlr 'smart') associé à quelque chose, ce que vous devriez vraiment comprendre, c'est « exploitable ». Une télévision intelligente ? Une télévision

exploitable (ndlr. par un attaquant). Un smartphone ? Un téléphone exploitable. Une voiture intelligente ? Une voiture exploitable. Voilà comment ça marche ».

Dans le même temps, Mikko Hypponen rejette la plupart des scénarios de piratage de l'internet des objets, comme celui de piratage du système de freinage d'une voiture intelligente pour tuer le pilote. « Cela n'arrivera pas. Il est beaucoup plus probable que quelqu'un pirate votre voiture pour la voler, car il y a de l'argent à se faire. Ou bien il est possible que quelqu'un verrouille votre voiture avec un ransomware. Vous pourriez payer 100 \$ pour démarrer la voiture. »

News Analysis: IS expansion haunts Iraq as sectarian strife raging

10-06-2015

BAGHDAD, June 10 (Xinhua) -- It has been one hell of a year since the so-called Islamic State (IS) militant group, an [al-Qaida](#) offshoot, captured [Iraq](#)'s key northern city of Mosul and later seized swathes of territories in the Sunni dominated provinces.

IS expansion unleashed waves of hundreds of thousands of displaced civilians and threatened to split up the country which originally was suffering from deep rupture by the poor governance of the Iraqi government led by the former Shiite prime minister Nuri al-Maliki.

In September Iraq elected Haider al-Abadi to form an inclusive government, but the man, who was supposed to deal with difficult tasks to prepare the country to battle the extremist militants, apparently, was not successful enough so far.

"A whole year passed since the fall of Mosul and the Iraqi forces are still not capable of recapturing the city. Abadi's measures of social reforms and rebuilding professional security forces were not effective and not enough," Sabah al-Sheikh, a professor of politics with Baghdad University, told Xinhua.

For more than a dozen years after the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, the Iraqi army and police were repeatedly accused of lacking professionalism because of being largely formed by merger of Shiite militias, and after the IS blitzkrieg in June the then prime minister Nuri al-Maliki made things worse when he merged more [Iranian](#)-trained Shiite militias and dozens of thousands of Shiite volunteers in the security forces, turning the Iraqi forces to be part of the militias who took the command in the military operations.

The Shiite militias, also known as Hashd Shaabi, or Popular Mobilization, are seen as lacking discipline, easily lose control of freed lands after battlefields and lacking proper military training.

The Sunnis are worried that if the Shiite militias seize their towns after defeating IS militants, there might be possible burning and looting to their homes by the Shiite militias based on sectarian and revenge motives.

"Abadi's measures to prepare Iraqis for big battle against IS were so slow and setbacks continued until we witnessed the fall of Ramadi last month," al-Sheikh said.

"It was crucial to bring Sunni tribal fighters, who are the land owners, to battlefield but the efforts to bring them were hampered by the embattled political parties, when they failed to enact a law to form the national guard from tribal Sunni fighters in order to join the Shiite-dominated security forces," he said.

The national guard law was supposed to be a necessary message of reassurance to the Sunni community, under which the Sunni provinces can form their own troops from local residents under the command of the federal security ministries so they can participate in defeating the IS from their hometowns without the need for direct intervention of government troops and feared Shiite militias. But the Shiites are worried that such law could encourage split up of the country.

"The residents in some Sunni towns and villages seized by the IS militants have been caught between two fires; if they leave their homes they will face unknown future of displacement, poverty and humiliation. If they stay at homes they will live under bombardment and maybe be targeted by the Shiite militias and security forces when they drive the militants out of the towns and villages," he said.

Meanwhile, fighting IS requires a rather powerful economy to finance the war machine. Yet Iraq is fast losing more money when its traditional key revenues sources are withering, and no new supplements have emerged.

"Abadi was supposed to pursue an effective anti-corruption measures to retrieve the waste of billions of dollars from the pockets of the corrupt officials and generals, but nine months since he took office as Iraq's premier, he apparently faced tough and complicated anti-corruption mission from influential corrupts, including from his own party," al-Sheikh said.

In most cases, the corrupt officials are well protected by some powerful and leading political parties, and are connected to networks of local and international companies and organizations.

For his part, Ahmed al-Kraiym, head of Salahudin provincial council, told Xinhua that the prevail of IS group in Mosul, Anbar and other areas is attributed to long term of differences and divisions among Iraq's main communities -- mainly the Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds -- which have been deepening, reflecting the failure of the political process to curb the power struggle among the country's factions that erupted after the U.S.- led invasion in 2003.

"Daash (IS group) extension in Iraq is part of long-standing sectarian and ethnic polarization in the Iraqi society, which created an appropriate breeding ground of violence and extremism in the country," al-Kraiym said.

"The degree of trust among the leaders of the Iraqi factions is almost zero. Such situation creates one of the most dysfunctional states in the history of Iraq," al-Kraiym added.

Any reform efforts would not be easy in a country like Iraq, which has been under pressure of mounting political, social and economic crises, which threaten to disintegrate the country.

"If political situation continue with not effective efforts of national reconciliation,

then no future for Iraq as a state, and Daash would be stronger," al-Kraiym warned.

"I call on all political parties and politicians to work together to take brave decisions to reform the political process and to work as a single team in order to bring about stability to save Iraq and its people," al-Kraiym said.

So far, Iraqi security forces, Hashd Shaabi militias backed by U.S-led coalition airstrikes managed to take over the main IS redoubts in Diyala province and some of areas in Iraq's northern central province of Salahudin, including its capital Tikrit, but the IS group hit back on May 17 and seized Anbar provincial capital city of Ramadi.

Ramadi fall worsened the already deteriorated situation of refugees in the country, after hundreds of thousands of people fled their homes and resorted to Baghdad and the semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan. The large number of displaced citizens are added to more people displaced earlier from their homes in the provinces of Nineveh, Salahudin, Diyala and parts of Kirkuk.

According to UN figures, at least 2.7 million Iraqis have been displaced since January 2014, including 400,000 from Anbar province, making the Iraq crisis one of the most complex humanitarian emergencies in the world today.

The displacement of such numbers of people is embarrassing for Abadi's government and could lead to a further division inside his cabinet, as the painful situations of the displaced families and the lack of assistance offered by the government pushed some of the Sunni politicians and officials to criticize his Shiite-led government.

The failure in Ramadi pushed Abadi, during his presence at the G7 conference in [Germany](#), to call for further support from the international community to Iraq in its war against the IS group, which he said "a menace not only threatening Iraq, but region and the whole world as well."

Kadhim al-Shimmari, a member of Iraqi parliament said in a statement that "lack of a clear vision of the government toward national reconciliation since 2006 was the main reason for the reluctance of the international community in supporting Iraq during the current crisis of IS expansion."

"The national reconciliation and building a modern state on the basis of competence -- not on bases of religion, sect or parties -- is the right standard for a state of institutions," al-Shimmari said.

"Otherwise, we have no hope for the future, even if we defeat Daash, there would other Daash with different names," al-Shimmari concluded.

Iraq has been witnessing some of the worst violence in years. Terrorism and violence have killed at least 12,282 civilians and wounded 23,126 others in 2014, mak-

ing it the deadliest year since the sectarian violence in the 2006-2007 period, according to a recent UN report.

<http://news.xinhuanet.com/>

Tackling terrorism requires genuinely collective approach

June 06, 2015



The so-called Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL) is advancing in Iraq and Syria. Its groups are settling in some regions of Libya; there are problems in Lebanon; and there is even evidence of an ISIS presence in Afghanistan.

In parallel, other terrorist groups are stepping up their actions, including al-Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula.

Meanwhile, the US-led coalition continues delivering air strikes, but it seems like these actions have not yet had an impact on IS' ability to further expand its cross-border "*caliphate*".

In the context of the fight against IS, Western governments continue saying that they don't regard the Syrian regime as a legitimate partner. But it was only a year ago that the Syrian government was viewed as an absolutely legitimate partner in the efforts to remove and liquidate chemical weapons. Surely, terrorism is a no less a serious threat than chemical weapons. So, what is a bigger threat: the personality of the Syrian president, or IS and the like?

Instead, our Western partners believe that aiding moderate opposition groups will help counteract the Islamic State, Jabhat al-Nusra and other terrorist organizations. As if there hasn't been any recent experience showing that the majority of the so-called moderate oppositionists, who receive assistance in the form of weapons,

funds and foreign instructors, are eventually “*bought by the highest bidder*” or defect to terrorists for ideological considerations.

At the same time, everyone understands and publicly admits that just airstrikes are not going to deliver on the task. There has to be another approach if we want to defeat terrorism. Russia has consistently been advocating that this will only be possible by uniting efforts of the international community on the basis of international law and in strict compliance with UNSC resolutions 2170, 2178 and 2199. We must not fight terrorism by focusing only on one country or another, disregarding what is happening in a nearby territory, but on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the situation.

The international community needs to elaborate a common concept that will not only address Syria or Iraq, but a wider region that is facing the threat of IS expansion and entrenchment. It should be remembered that many other terrorist organizations have pledged loyalty to IS and have announced the territories they control as part of the “*caliphate*”. These groups are expanding the sphere of their interests to Sub-Saharan Africa.

Russia has proposed to analyze these risks and challenges and formulate a streamlined international stance under the auspices of the UN Security Council, so as to prevent a repetition of the Libyan scenario, when this country was bombed in order to initiate a government change, in violation of the corresponding UN Security Council resolution and contrary to its embargo on arming the opposition. We should identify a common enemy, rather than change one’s attitude to governments depending on the current political situation.

The statements, views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of RT.

<http://rt.com/op-edge/265513-tackling-terrorism-collective-approach/>

Singapore

Countering The Narrative Of Terrorism: Role Of The Singaporean Community Crucial – Analysis

June 8, 2015



Singapore. Source: CIA World Factbook.

Singapore has been shaken by news that two teenagers have been lured by the ISIS narrative to engage in terrorist acts. The Singaporean community has an important role in meeting this challenge to national security.

By Nur Irfani Binte Sariپی, Nur Azlin Mohamed Yasin *

The recent detention of two Singaporean teenagers for being involved in terrorism-related activities is a matter of serious concern for all Singaporeans, for several reasons.

Firstly they are some of the youngest would be “jihadis” encountered thus far. Post-secondary student M Arifil Azim Putra Norja’i is 19 years old while the other unnamed individual is only 17 years old. Secondly, not only had Arifil desired to travel to Syria to join the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), he also planned to carry out attacks on public places and prominent leaders in Singapore and attempted to recruit others to join him. Thirdly, Arifil attempted to link up with ISIS by befriending people online who he thought could help him join the terrorist group.

Long-lasting threat

The threat posed by such young recruits to militancy is potentially long-lasting; should they succeed in going to the Middle East and joining ISIS they will become

battle hardened, and if they survive, become the nucleus of a group of Southeast Asians in the ISIS ranks. Upon their likely return to Singapore they will engage in terrorist acts, thereby extending the reach of ISIS to Southeast Asia.

However, the issue of very young people getting involved and taking an interest in terrorism, especially in ISIS, is not exclusive to Singapore. It is a trend seen in many countries, including Indonesia and Malaysia, with teenagers some as young as 14 years old, making attempts to travel to join ISIS. Many are drawn to the ISIS propaganda on the Internet and the social media.

In order to prevent terrorist groups from taking root in Singapore and radicalisation permeating into the community, the security authorities need the support of all segments of society. Family, friends, school, religious leaders and the community at large all have a role to play in countering radicalisation. The case of Arifil is illustrative. He was reported to the authorities by a member of the community who knew him and noticed the changes in Arifil's behaviour enabling further investigation to be done.

Friends and family members who are aware of similar behavioural changes in their circles can do likewise. They should realise that reporting their friends' suspicious behaviour is not "putting them in trouble" but helping them from causing greater harm or damage to the community.

On a broader level, there needs to be more community engagement programmes in schools and for the community to raise awareness of the dangers of radicalisation and the distorted and extremist ideology of ISIS and such groups. With early intervention, religious teachers can come forward to help vulnerable individuals from becoming even more radical in their understanding.

Islamic Religious Teachers

In Singapore, such counselling has been given by the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG), to citizens who have been influenced by radical ideology since 2003. Since its inception, RRG has provided religious counselling for members of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), self-radicalised individuals and also their family members. In its ongoing efforts to counter ISIS narratives and engaging the community, RRG has published two public educational pamphlets – The Syrian Conflict and The Fallacies of ISIS Islamic Caliphate – which can be found on RRG's Facebook page.

Singapore has also adopted a system of recognition of Islamic teachers and scholars called 'Asatizah Recognition Scheme', they are accredited to teach Islam to the public so that they are not religiously misled or become self-radicalised by materials found on the internet and extremist websites.

Countering Internet-savvy ISIS

Countering radical ideological narratives has to be done both online and offline. ISIS has exploited the Internet, especially the social media to disseminate their ideology and propaganda. There are 46000 Twitter accounts supporting ISIS globally and at least 1000 Facebook accounts of the same nature in Southeast Asia. To counter ISIS online, the community needs to work with the social media as well. For example, Facebook and Twitter have taken down accounts of ISIS members and supporters that post ISIS narratives. Shutting down of such accounts is necessary even though some analysts might protest that such a measure would cut off access to a trove of information about the extremist groups. Removing online support for ISIS ideology is one of the ways to carry out the uphill task of countering online extremism and radicalisation.

There is also a need for an online model to counter extremism and terrorism online. Such efforts should complement successful real-world engagements which are already taking place today. Participants should be moved to be the counter force and play their role to spread the message of peace. Not only would this create an effective dissemination of counter messages, it would also provide continuity in community engagement efforts on the ground.

Keeping Optimism

On a positive note, the announcement of the arrest and detention of the two teenagers by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) came with news that three former JI members who were under Detention Order (DO) had been released under Restriction Order (RO) and five individuals under the RO had their RO lifted. They had all been receptive and cooperative to rehabilitation.

While the fight against radicalism is not over, it is also not a lost cause. The two teenagers who have been detained can change and there is still room for them to become responsible Singaporeans with proper engagement, religious counselling and support from families.

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

Des armes bulgares pour les rebelles syriens

12 Juin 2015

Une explosion accidentelle dans le centre de la Bulgarie, qui a fait un mort, a révélé les circuits mis en place par le Pentagone pour armer les opposants au régime de Bachar el-Assad

Réputé fiable et simple d'utilisation, le lance-grenades de type RPG est, avec la Kalachnikov, certainement l'une des armes emblématiques des conflits qui, de l'Afrique au Moyen-Orient, ravagent le monde aujourd'hui. Pourtant, samedi dernier, les choses ne se sont pas du tout passées comme prévu sur le polygone d'Anevo, près de l'usine d'armement de Sopot, au centre de la Bulgarie. Un homme est mort dans l'explosion de la grenade; deux autres, qui ont été sérieusement blessés, ont été évacués vers un hôpital militaire en Allemagne – un traitement habituellement réservé aux GI envoyés en mission de combat à l'étranger. Car les trois hommes sont bien des ressortissants d'outre-Atlantique. Selon un premier communiqué de l'ambassade américaine à Sofia, ces personnes, employées par un sous-traitant du Pentagone, étaient en mission pour «tester» des armements en Bulgarie. Leurs deux accompagnateurs locaux, l'interprète et le chauffeur, n'ont subi que des blessures superficielles.

Mais l'écho de cette explosion ne s'est pas arrêté là. De nombreux parlementaires bulgares ont vigoureusement interpellé le gouvernement sur l'opacité entourant cet incident, certains n'hésitant pas à affirmer que ces armes pourraient finir entre les mains des terroristes djihadistes de l'Etat islamique.

«Opposants modérés»

Visiblement pris de court, le ministre de la Défense, Nikolaï Nentchev, a affirmé qu'il avait ordonné une enquête sur la «présence éventuelle d'armes bulgares» en Syrie. Mais cela n'a visiblement pas suffi. Face à la pression de l'opinion publique, l'ambassade américaine a fini par admettre mercredi que ces armes étaient bien destinées à la Syrie – mais aux «opposants modérés» du président Bachar el-Assad, et que l'entreprise en question, Purple Shovel, travaillait sous contrat avec le Pentagone pour «former et armer» les combattants de l'Armée syrienne libre.

Loin de calmer les esprits, ces révélations ont alimenté toutes sortes de spéculations. Selon l'expert en terrorisme Slavtcho Velkov, cette affaire a tous les paramètres des black ops (opérations clandestines) menées par les grandes agences de renseignement – telle la CIA. Il est vrai que ce n'est pas la première fois que des Américains s'intéressent aux stocks d'armes d'anciens pays de l'orbite soviétique: depuis les années 2000, le Pentagone fait régulièrement appel à des sous-traitants pour armer ses alliés en puisant dans cet arsenal souvent obsolète et mal sécurisé.

La démarche est largement facilitée dans des pays comme la Bulgarie (ou l'Albanie) où ces stocks d'armes ont été confiés à une myriade d'entreprises privées qui, officiellement, sont chargées de les «neutraliser». Mais les fréquents incidents dramatiques – une vingtaine en dix ans en Bulgarie, le dernier causant la mort de quinze personnes – laissent penser que les normes de sécurité sont loin d'être respectées. Et que la tentation de revendre ces munitions est bien plus grande. Ainsi des munitions périmées achetées pour une bouchée de pain en Bulgarie ou en Albanie se sont retrouvées dans les chargeurs de soldats de l'armée afghane et, certainement aujourd'hui, chez les acteurs des conflits syrien et irakien. A Anevo, la grenade en question, fabriquée en 1984, était officiellement la propriété de la société All Guns, basée à Sofia, ce qui a aussi permis au ministre Nikolaï Nentchev de dire que cette affaire concernait surtout «les relations entre une compagnie privée bulgare et le Département d'Etat américain».

<http://www.letemps.ch/>

United Kingdom

The MI5 spy in your mobile: How 7/7 London attack triggered new data-fed war on terror which led to capture of 21/7 bomb plotters which made ISIS vanish into encrypted web but makes your calls transparent to GCHQ spooks in 'Doughnut'

- **Four separate bombs brought carnage to the capital on July 7, 2005**
- **On July 21, it nearly happened again, raising chilling possibility of waves of home-grown suicide bombers**
- **GCHQ realised monitoring flow of communication was key to intelligence**
- **David Anderson QC has said GCHQ should retain the powers to carry out this sort of bulk collection data, but called for new laws to oversee its use**

13 June 2015

It was the moment spying in Britain changed for ever.

When, on the morning of July 7, 2005, people staggered out coughing and smoke-blackened from London Underground stations, the first reports suggested nothing more sinister than a power surge.

But within minutes, the roof of a bus was ripped off by an explosion in Tavistock Square, and the truth was horrifyingly clear. Four separate bombs had brought carnage to the capital. London was under terrorist attack.

At the headquarters of MI5, director general Eliza Manningham-Buller gathered her staff in the atrium and told them their worst fears had been realised.



Security: An aerial image of the British Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) in Cheltenham

In Cheltenham, GCHQ director Iain Lobban was stepping anxiously into the building after rushing back nearly 100 miles from London. Yet for the first few days, the authorities could only speculate, believing perhaps that a team had come into the country, planted their explosives and left. They were wrong, and forensic analysis soon showed the perpetrators were four British-born suicide bombers. No one had prepared for this – including the spies.

Then, two weeks later, it nearly happened again, raising the chilling possibility of waves of home-grown suicide bombers. The failed attack on July 21 – when only the detonators of four bombs aimed at commuters exploded and a fifth bomber escaped without triggering his device – raised another, altogether different problem: the culprits had escaped and might strike again.

It was time for the security services to respond, and so began a very modern man-hunt, the basis of the digital tracking that is at the root of so much controversy today.

It was only after 7/7 and 21/7 that GCHQ fully realised that monitoring the vast flood of communication that flows around the world was the key to intelligence. It led to a new digital phase of the war on terror – and the birth of techniques later exposed by whistleblower Edward Snowden, a computer specialist who worked for the US's National Security Agency (NSA).

Last week, David Anderson QC, the independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, said in an official report that GCHQ should retain the powers to carry out this sort of bulk collection data, but called for new laws to oversee its use.

The bulk interception of communications, its supporters say, has proved to be crucial in the war on terror. In the decade since 7/7, only one person has been killed by terrorism in the UK. But if the authorities have a better grasp on what our adversaries including Islamic State, Al Qaeda and hostile nations are doing, it comes at a price. And the price is this: the power of computers and data is changing what many people can find out about all of us.

If you journey beneath GCHQ's 'Doughnut' – the ring-shaped building



5Horror: A victim of the July 7 bombings when four separate bombs brought carnage to the capital in 2005

in Cheltenham that houses Britain's secret codebreakers and communication intelligence specialists – you find a cavernous computer hall, stretching to 100,000 sq ft.

The Doughnut is the descendant of Bletchley Park, where the great innovation in the Second World War had been the melding of human ingenuity with the power of modern technology to crack German codes such as Enigma.

That remains the model today. Above the computer hall, the mathematical heirs of Alan Turing face the same task of understanding a system and its weaknesses. 'My job is a combination of maths and computer programming and just being crafty at problem-solving,' one twentysomething mathematician explained.

GCHQ is packed with people who understand modern technology but the irony is that, until the 7/7 bombings, the organisation was bad at understanding the way the younger generation lived their lives, partly because no one was allowed internet access at work or to bring in a phone. But as the organisation became focused on finding home-grown suicide bombers, it realised it needed a system to investigate the richness of the trail people left in their digital lives, building a pattern of terrorist behaviour, and then asking a computer who else matched it.



Tracked: July 21 suspects Muktar Said Ibrahim (left) and Ramzi Mohammed are arrested on July 29, 2005

Britain's spy chiefs grilled by MPs on television for first time



This was done using the 'digital exhaust' – the unique fingerprint that all users of smartphones and the internet leave behind. Exploiting this resource required a new, powerful, top-secret capability employing data, telecoms and computing at GCHQ.

It was classified to the highest level and authorised by the Prime Minister, and remained secret until whistleblower Snowden unveiled the vast extent of British and US governmental cyber-spying.

He revealed that the secret intelligence allies could tap emails, monitor internet use and map the locations of mobiles of almost anyone. But the key to the new programmes was the ability to filter the vast mass of information about internet use. For instance, take a huge pile of data about internet traffic and ask who was communicating between Britain and Pakistan. That may reduce the online population to a few tens of thousands. But if you ask the computer again to find which of these people has also visited certain extremist websites, you are down to perhaps a few hundred. And who of those had social connections to known extremists? You are now down to a handful.

Much of this could be done by looking not at the content of their communications but the 'metadata', the information about the origin and destination of internet traffic, rather than the content.

Joint teams of GCHQ, MI5 and MI6 operatives now work together on terrorist targets and share leads – a move pioneered after 7/7.

Intelligence officials are adamant that what they built works. The building of this capability at GCHQ relied on two key developments. One was the legal authorisation to get hold of the data. The other was technology.

It was only in the year or so before 7/7 that systems became available to carry out this kind of 'data mining'. To perform this analysis, you need as much metadata as possible to be sure your target is in there and to make it easier to do the kind of pattern analysis that helps you understand what normal looks like and what makes a terrorist look different.

A system called Tempora was designed to slow down the flood of global data by storing information – an email address, a phone number or other search terms – and filter out unwanted traffic.

According to reports, GCHQ was running about 40,000 selectors and the NSA 31,000 across one data set, looking, perhaps, for emails from Russia to Ukraine that are encoded or calls to a specific number. This means that of the millions of communications passing through GCHQ each day, only a few thousand are examined by analysts who are presented with an index – like the results of a web search – from which they pick the relevant items.

Smartphones have aided the spy business enormously. In the past, placing a tracking device or a bug was risky. Now most people carry a multi-purpose device that can provide more details than just their location or what they are saying.

Analysts can build up a digital fingerprint of a target based on how they move online and what devices and identities they use. This can then be used to track them in real time without the need for a surveillance team.

The missing suspects from 21/7 had abandoned their old phones. Even so, they were hunted down through telephone records and the 'contact chaining' technique the US had begun using after 9/11 with its bulk collection programme of phone records. British investigators cross-referenced calls made by the suspects to known contacts in a hunt for groups of new numbers that were also contacting each other. Within 24 hours, they had worked out what phones the men were now using, meaning the bombers could be traced to within a few yards.

Two men, including Muktar Said Ibrahim, were arrested in West London on July 29. Another was held in Italy.

It was a notable success. Yet it required access to data on a scale never seen before in Britain.

Inside GCHQ: The home of Britain's spy network (Related)



Last week's report from David Anderson provided independent confirmation and phone data that GCHQ pioneered protecting the public against more

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IS has learned to adapt to this new world. On his first day at GCHQ, the new director, Robert Hannigan, warned that the terrorist group presented a new challenge in terms of its use of technology. Its younger generations of followers have become more skilled at encouraging violent jihad through more clandestine means, and at hiding their trail. He also claimed there was 'no doubt' that foreign fighters had learned from the Edward Snowden leaks. Now some IS members are said to use encryption software that is easily available from the internet and scrambles the contents of text and voice messages. It reduces the messages to gibberish which Western code-breakers struggle to crack. The spies say they have seen their targets shift away from using communications platforms they know the state can listen in to, and instead are choosing devices that are harder to trace.

If our smartphones are at the forefront of helping the authorities to keep us safe, there seems little doubt they are helping other forces too. Our phones can become spies – not just for intelligence agencies but also the companies that track us to find out what we are doing and sell us advertising. And the result is insight into our everyday lives on a scale that would once have seemed unimaginable. David Anderson has recommended greater legal safeguards over what the state can do with its new powers. But the private sector has fewer controls.

Computers and digital surveillance have transformed espionage, but they can be a double-edged sword.

They are used, for example, by MI6, the intelligence service that recruits agents, to help find its targets. MI6 might want to get into the Iranian nuclear programme and so may use computer databases to ask who has access to the programme,

what their links are to the outside world, who their friends are, and how they might be contacted.

Alerts could be set so if any of those targets are travelling out of the country, the spy service can be informed immediately. The technique of analysing 'digital exhaust' is also being used in counter-espionage – catching spies. The Russians are reported to be returning to typewriters in their embassies.

One of the biggest concerns that spies have about Snowden is not what has been revealed to the public, but the fear that because he is now in Moscow, the Russians may have been able to get hold of his treasure trove of secrets, only part of which has ever been disclosed. That would make it easier for them to evade British and American intelligence and to find Western spies.



Target: Our phones can become spies – not just for intelligence agencies but also the companies that sell us advertising

Once, a faked passport might have been enough to build a cover story for an MI6 officer travelling to meet agents. Now he or she might have to get through biometrics and database checks at the border. Furthermore, their fake identity will need to have a presence online, complete with a history. Judicious use of a search engine can be enough to show that someone is not who they say they are. When MI6 ran a test using Google to see how long an officer's cover could stand up against a suspicious foreign official, the answer was about a minute.

Intercept: The Secret History Of Computers And Spies, by Gordon Corera, is published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson on June 25 at £20 and available in ebook. Offer price £16 (20 per cent discount) until June 28. Order at www.mailbookshop.co.uk (p&p free on orders over £12).

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/>

Terrorisme: peut-on venir à bout de la menace de l'Etat islamique?

08-06-2015

Le désengagement américain du Proche et Moyen-Orient est une calamité ... mais, faute de maîtriser les nouvelles règles du jeu, les Etats-Unis ne peuvent aujourd'hui faire davantage.



Djihadistes de Daech à Mossoul (AP/SIPA)

RECEVOIR LES ALERTES

Il y a au moins quatre raisons pour que l'Amérique reste engagée au Moyen-Orient : les intérêts économiques qu'elle y possède ; la défense des valeurs auxquelles elle est attachée et que le chaos mettra inévitablement en danger ; le prix du pétrole toujours dépendant de la situation dans cette région, malgré le potentiel du gaz de schiste ; la prolifération nucléaire. La dernière livraison du très américanophile *The Economist*, prononce un réquisitoire contre Obama et sa politique d'"abandon" du Proche et Moyen-Orient. En se contentant de frappes aériennes contre Daech, en se cantonnant à la formation des forces irakiennes, sans intervention au sol ("*no boots on the ground*"), l'"humilité" de l'administration démocrate serait aussi dangereuse que l'"hubris" du républicain George W Bush.

Peut-être. Sauf que le président démocrate est probablement conscient aussi des limites actuelles de la stratégie américaine et de ses moyens. La déroute de l'Amérique en Afghanistan comme en Irak montre clairement que ses missionnaires bottés sont incapables, à eux seuls, de créer une nation ("*nation building*"). Mission impossible dans une région où apparaissent de nouvelles formes de guerre, d'adversaires et d'idéologies.

"La guerre contre la terreur claironnée depuis 2001 marque le pas parce qu'elle

place la lutte sur la plan militaire avant le plan idéologique. Or la 'terreur' n'est pas un territoire à conquérir mais une terre de perdition. Pour gagner aujourd'hui cette guerre, ce n'est pas tant des armes et des soldats qu'il faut mettre sur le terrain, mais des idées et des idéaux dans les médias", explique en écho l'islamologue Matthieu Guidère dans son passionnant essai sur "la nouvelle ère de la terreur" (*).

Plus de soft power

Thèse de ce spécialiste du monde musulman et du terrorisme qui a passé au crible les modes d'action du terrorisme de ses nouveaux acteurs radicalisés, de l'attentat du 11 septembre 2001 à la tuerie de *Charlie* : sous peine d'être contre-productive, la stratégie de l'Occident qui se propose d' "*éliminer*" Daech doit se calquer sur celle de ses adversaires. Proposer moins de "hard" et plus de "soft power". Conclusions de cet islamologue enseignant à l'université de Toulouse :

1/ il est temps de reconnaître que les terroristes (d'Al Qaïda, Boko Haram ou Daech) "possèdent une idéologie claire et structurée, un projet politique et un agenda territorial et que les idées pour lesquelles ils se battent séduisent un nombre croissant d'individus sur les cinq continents".

2/ La guerre qui fait rage de la Libye au Golfe persique en passant par l'Afrique subsaharienne n'est plus l'affrontement entre deux armées constituées qui se tiennent face à face sur un champ de bataille défini. A l'âge de l'information en continu, l'affrontement est avant tout médiatique. Avec comme champ privilégié, les cœurs et les esprits des habitants de la planète. "Les armées en présence ne sont pas celles que l'on croit, mais la masse des citoyens connectés derrière leurs écrans".

Conséquence : la victoire ne peut être que politique et non militaire car "du point de vue des terroristes gagner c'est marquer à jamais les esprits par une action spectaculaire qui s'inscrit au fond de l'imaginaire collectif comme une démonstration de force, un acte de victoire sur le mode de David contre Goliath".

L'analyse des méthodes et des acteurs engagés dans ces nouveaux conflits étaye cette thèse.

Les acteurs ?

Oubliez les grands hommes de l'époque des nationalismes arabes, comme Nasser ou Saddam Hussein, promoteurs d'un état laïc. Incapables d'offrir une alternative idéologique crédible à leurs anciens alliés (qu'ils ont floué avec les accords Sykes-Picot enterrant le projet de création d'un grand Etat arabe indépendant), indifférents au sort de leurs anciennes "colonies", les pays occidentaux sont depuis l'échec du printemps arabe et de ses tentatives de réforme confortés à un monstre idéologique né de la jonction entre nationalisme et islamisme : l'islamo-nationalisme. Comme Al-Qaïda ou Daech, obsédé par le califat (création d'un Etat avec territoire et institutions..), les nouveaux leaders ne croient qu'aux théocraties où, comme dans République islamique d'Iran, le pouvoir religieux domine ou im-

prègne le pouvoir "politique". Sans séparation entre les affaires temporelles et spirituelles. Et pas de quartiers pour leurs adversaires civils ou militaires occidentaux (les "mécréants" et les "croisés"). Pas de pitié non plus pour les tenants d'une autre confession (chiites, houtites...) qui méritent d'autant moins miséricorde qu'ils sont apostats . "La révolte contre l'Occident s'accompagne d'une disqualification des valeurs démocratiques, incapables aux yeux des djihadistes de rétablir la justice entre les nations. Et d'une survalorisation des valeurs islamiques, ainsi que des pratiques traditionnelles d'une communauté mythifiée".

Les méthodes ?

On a beaucoup glosé sur les liens entre internet-terrorisme ("djihad électronique" avec recrutement en ligne, entraînement en réseau, cyber terrorisme). Mathieu Guidère montre comment sa propagande binaire, manichéenne, renforce le désir intégriste de pureté et de justice pour venger les "frères opprimés". Avec, in fine, le "martyrisme", cette doctrine qui s'appuie sur le culte du "martyr", perçu comme un individu exceptionnel car prêt à se sacrifier pour ses convictions. Il insiste aussi sur le potentiel de scénarisation de ce média via les vidéos diffusés par des virtuoses de la manipulation. Dictée par sa capacité à créer des images provoquant un impact médiatique et psychologique maximum, la mise en scène de la destruction des "cibles" doit développer un potentiel de violence et d'horreur : "semer la peur, susciter la psychose dans la société ciblée et instiller la paranoïa dans les institutions chargés de la lutte anti-terroriste". Avec "en prime", un effet de contagion.

Incidemment, Guidère révèle une autre "excellence" des nouveaux terroristes : leur maîtrise des explosifs. Le saoudien Ibrahim Al-Assiri, ingénieur chimiste et artificier en chef d'Aqpa aurait développé avec un chirurgien syrien un implant d'explosif liquide indétectable d'abord sur les animaux ensuite sur les humains. A l'heure actuelle, "on ne sait toujours pas où, quand, comment Aqpa va frapper avec cette nouvelle arme"...

Face à cette nouvelle ère de la terreur, que faire ?

Guidère cite les progrès de la prévention de la radicalisation. Autre piste, le développement du renseignement "culturel" . La déclaration d'intention étant, dans le djihad, constitutive de l'engagement, l'analyse des données du passé ou du présent des suspects - "linguistique prédictive" - tout comme celle des noms de guerre des membres d'Al-Qaïda, permettraient d'évaluer la probabilité d'un passage à l'acte.

Mais ne rêvons pas. L'évolution du terrorisme suivant les progrès d'Internet, la génération des radicaux apparue dans la foulée du Web 2.0 annonce probablement l'avènement de la prochaine génération accompagnant le Web 3.0. En clair, sans élaboration d'un contre-discours structuré ouvrant les perspectives d'un règlement politique, l'islamisme radical n'est pas prête d'être terrassée par la coalition anti-Daech conduite par les Etats-Unis.

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

Yemen

Yémen : la guerre actuelle n'est pas un conflit chiites / sunnites. C'est plus complexe

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LE PLUS. En septembre 2014, les Houthis sont entrés dans la capitale du Yémen, Sanaa et ont chassé le président Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi. Les premiers sont soutenus par l'Iran, le deuxième par l'Arabie saoudite. Une lecture rapide du conflit pourrait laisser penser qu'il s'agit d'un affrontement entre chiites et sunnites. Olivier Hanne, islamologue, nous explique que c'est loin d'être le cas.



Le Yémen est marqué par un conflit armé depuis janvier 2015 (A. HASSAN/AFP).

Tout le monde s'accorde pour voir dans la guerre débutée au Yémen en janvier 2015 un conflit opposant sunnites et chiites, d'où la nécessité d'empêcher ces derniers – censés être les plus dangereux radicaux de la planète – de prendre le pouvoir. L'analyse historique et géopolitique de la situation impose de nuancer ce tableau.

La population yéménite n'est pas chiite, mais zaydite

Le zaydisme est, à l'origine, une secte fondée par Zayd ibn Alî, membre de la parenté du Prophète, qui s'est séparée des chiites vers 740. Le groupe considère comme les chiites que le pouvoir califal – l'imâmât – doit aller à un descendant de Alî et de Fâtima, tout en défendant la nécessité d'un consensus autour de la désignation de l'imâm, théorie proche du sunnisme. Ils assurent surtout que le pouvoir légitime

doit être défendu par la force, voire pris par les armes et l'insurrection. Leur état d'esprit les poussait donc facilement dans les révoltes et l'organisation de coups de main.

La doctrine zaydite fut théorisée par Yahyâ ibn al-Husayn al-Hâdî qui devint émir du Yémen (897-911), et y implanta le zaydisme. Ce courant n'est donc pas réductible au chiisme "classique", c'est-à-dire duodécimain, majoritaire en Iran ; il serait plutôt une sorte d'intermédiaire théologique entre sunnisme et chiisme. En outre, cette doctrine n'est pas unique dans le pays, puisqu'elle ne représente qu'un tiers de la population, l'est et le sud sont sunnites de rite shâfiite, tandis que le sultanat d'Oman voisin est ibadite et l'Arabie Saoudite hanbalite, deux mouvements intégrés au sunnisme.

Les divisions dynastiques

Après l'islamisation, qui prit trois siècles, le Yémen se retrouva sous la domination de petites dynasties successives professant le zaydisme : les Yufirides (847-997), les Nadjâhides (1021-1156), les Suhayhides (1047-1138), les Zurayides (1080-1173).

Chacune était portée par un groupe tribal particulier et s'appuyait sur une région du sud de la péninsule. Leur unité était assurée par le zaydisme, de sorte que les Suhayhides, installés à Sanaa, prêtèrent allégeance aux Fâtimides du Caire, eux aussi chiites. Ils s'opposèrent violemment aux Nadhâhides qui dominaient la Tihâma.

Le système politique était contrôlé par les shérifs, c'est-à-dire des membres de la haute aristocratie et des chefs de clan qui mettaient en avant leurs origines mecquoises et leur proximité généalogique avec le Prophète.

Le chiisme partagé n'évitait nullement les conflits violents entre groupes tribaux, ainsi au XIIe siècle pour le contrôle de Sanaa.

La lutte pour l'indépendance

En 1173, les troupes de Saladin, notoirement sunnites, envahirent le Yémen, brisèrent les dynasties locales. Cette fragilisation des petits émirats chiites de la région facilita la domination des Rasûlides (1228-1454), considérée comme l'apogée du Yémen avant l'occupation ottomane à partir de 1516. Mais les Turcs n'exercèrent qu'un contrôle nominal et composèrent avec les imâms zaydites qui menèrent la résistance pendant un siècle.

En 1629, les zaydites prirent Sanaa, renversèrent les armées ottomanes et instaurèrent un système politique fondé sur l'imamat zaydite.

En confiant le gouvernement du pays à une succession d'imâms, les Yéménites ren-

forçaient la place et l'autorité du pouvoir religieux, sans pour autant empêcher les tentatives de coup d'Etat et les querelles entre prétendants à l'imamat.

Sous l'imâm al-Mutawakkil (1644-1676), le pays connut un nouvel essor en conquérant l'Hadramaout, mais la puissance ottomane, forte de son armement et profitant d'une vacance dans l'imamat, parvint à occuper à nouveau le Yémen en 1872. Les révoltes zaydites et la désignation d'imâms résistants ne purent rien faire contre l'hégémonie turque.

En 1918, la défaite ottomane rendit au Yémen son indépendance sous le contrôle de l'imâm Yahyâ, qui isola le pays et le maintint dans le sous-développement. Son assassinat en 1948 amena au pouvoir son fils, personnage violent et autoritaire, qui ne parvint jamais à s'imposer à Sanaa et dut s'effacer dans la cité de Taïz. À sa mort en 1962, l'armée, influencée par le nationalisme arabe et Nasser, prit le pouvoir et abolit l'imamat.

Les deux Yémen

Dès le XIXe siècle, le Yémen fut coupé en deux : au nord l'Etat-imamat, et au sud la colonie anglaise structurée autour du port d'Aden et conquise dès 1839.

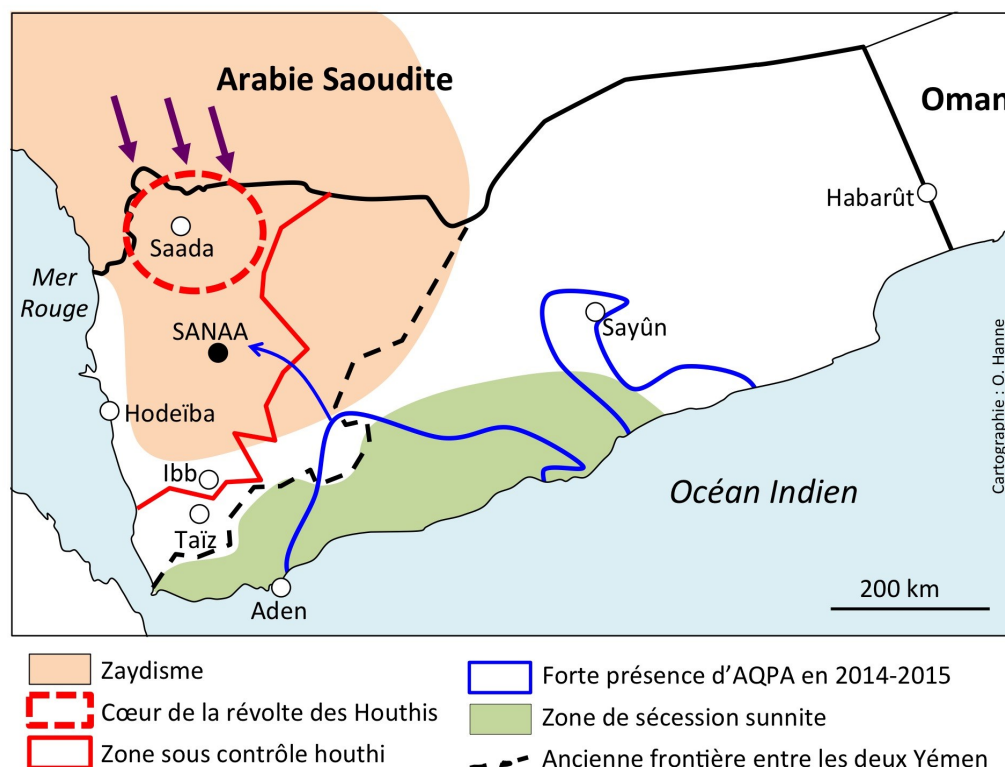
En 1962, la proclamation d'indépendance de la République Arabe du Yémen ne concernait que la partie Nord, laquelle entra aussitôt dans une période de guerre civile, marquée par les intrusions militaires de l'Egypte et de l'Arabie Saoudite. En 1978, Alî Abdallah Sâlih devint président de ce Yémen du Nord et garda le pouvoir jusqu'aux événements de 2011-2012.

Le Yémen du Sud, lui, quitta le giron de la Grande-Bretagne en 1967 et s'orienta progressivement vers un système marxiste proche de l'URSS. Pourtant, dans les deux pays, des campagnes populaires militaient pour la réunification, processus rendu possible par la chute du Mur, Moscou ne pouvant plus soutenir la partie Sud.

En mai 1990, les deux Yémen furent officiellement rassemblés, mais c'est le président Sâlih qui devint le chef d'Etat du pays réunifié, mettant ainsi aux commandes du Yémen toute l'oligarchie du nord. Dès lors, les tensions ne cessèrent d'être exacerbées et débouchèrent sur une nouvelle guerre civile en 1994.

Une fracture religieuse ?

Le conflit actuel ne peut être réduit à une fracture chiites / sunnites. Celle-ci existe bien sûr, mais le zaydisme est un courant du chiisme qui ne se réduit pas au groupe majoritaire duodécimain tel qu'il existe en Iran. Certaines tribus yéménites sont elles-mêmes partagées entre shafiisme et zaydisme, or l'appartenance tribale l'emporte bien souvent sur l'aspect confessionnel.



Les houthis, qui mènent la révolte au Yémen depuis 2014, représentent un tiers de la population, qui est d'abord sunnite shafite. La milice houthie fut fondée par Hussein al-Houthi, après l'indépendance du Nord en 1962, afin de garantir que la fin de l'imamat ne sonnerait pas celle du zaydisme et de l'ancienne culture tribale. Il fallait préserver la vénération des familles aristocratiques qui avaient donné les principaux imâms au pays.

Le président Sâlih dut longtemps composer avec la milice, mais l'influence diplomatique des États-Unis après le 11 septembre 2001 et la "guerre contre le terrorisme", à laquelle participait officiellement Sâlih, brisèrent l'unité de façade entre le gouvernement et les élites zaydites. Hussein al-Houthi fut même assassiné en 2004 à l'initiative de Sâlih.

Or, l'influence grandissante chez les sunnites yéménites du wahhabisme saoudien, des Frères musulmans et du salafisme d'Al-Qaïda remit en cause les équilibres religieux traditionnels. Les élites shafites et le sud du pays se rallièrent progressivement à l'islamisme mondial et à l'idéologie revancharde de Ben Laden, dont la famille était originaire du Yémen.

Le Yémen entre Houthis, Al-Qaïda et l'Arabie Saoudite

Alors que les zaydites dominaient politiquement le Yémen du Nord depuis mille ans, ils craignirent de perdre leur ascendant politique face au dynamisme d'al-Qaïda et de l'Arabie Saoudite voisine. Sâlih de son côté se savait menacé par les États-Unis qui voulaient démocratiser le régime à la faveur du Printemps arabe.

Oubliant les tensions récentes avec la milice houthie, Sâlih décida de la soutenir pour conserver le pouvoir face à Al-Qaïda et Washington. Mais il fut évincé en 2011 et remplacé par Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi, un sunnite favorable à l'Arabie Saoudite. C'était la victoire politique du projet américano-saoudien. Les shafites du Sud s'emparèrent donc du gouvernement à la place des zaydites. Aussitôt ceux-ci lancèrent une révolte qui leur permit de prendre Sanaa en mars 2015, la capitale se situant dans la zone zaydite.

Le pays se déchira. L'ancien Yémen du Nord passa entièrement sous contrôle des Houthis. Le gouvernement sunnite se rapprocha de Riyad. Mais les shafiites eux-mêmes virent d'un mauvais œil ces liens hétérodoxes au sein du sunnisme avec Riyad, dont la confession est hanbalite, et non shafiite. La soumission aux Saoudiens leur paraissait scandaleuse. Un courant sécessionniste donc se constitua dans le sud, désobéissant au gouvernement central.

La branche locale d'Al-Qaïda en profita pour prendre pieds dans la partie Sud, sous le nom d'Al-Qaïda dans la Péninsule arabique (AQPA). Les États-Unis, qui craignaient la présence d'AQPA, organisation contre laquelle ils multiplièrent les assassinats par drones, laissèrent faire les Houthis dans l'espoir qu'ils briseraient le jihadisme.

Mais l'année 2014 ayant vu le retour de l'Iran sur la scène internationale, les Américains identifièrent dans les Houthis une cinquième colonne chiite en Arabie, alors que les liens politiques et militaires entre zaydites et iraniens n'étaient nullement avérés. Ils changèrent brutalement leur fusil d'épaule pour soutenir les salafistes et autorisèrent Riyad à intervenir militairement au Yémen contre les Houthis.

Tous unis contre les Houthis

L'aspect confessionnel du conflit est donc réel mais beaucoup plus complexe que le manichéisme chiites / sunnites rabâché dans les médias.

Les deux camps en présence ont eu pourtant tout intérêt depuis un an à s'identifier progressivement à une confession reconnue de l'islam, les Houthis au chiisme duodécimain, les Yéménites du Sud au sunnisme hanbalite, les uns pour obtenir l'aide de l'Iran, les autres pour avoir celle de l'Arabie Saoudite, d'AQPA, voire de l'État islamique.

Mais si les médias iraniens se scandalisent du sort réservé aux Houthis, ils ne pour-

ront pas leur venir en aide en raison de l'éloignement de ce théâtre de guerre et parce que les houthis ne contrôlent aucun port où débarquer des armes. De l'autre côté, les médias de Daech ont pris fait et cause pour la guerre faite contre les Houthis, tout comme les Etats-Unis.

Sur le plan médiatique, les adversaires des Houthis ont tout fait pour les identifier à un chiisme révolutionnaire et violent, pour mieux les associer à l'Iran et au danger qu'il représente. Les acteurs de ce plan de communication sont les États-Unis et l'Arabie Saoudite. À la haine anti-iranienne s'est ajoutée chez ces derniers une sympathie naturelle pour les sécessionnistes radicalisés du Sud, proches du wahhabisme, voire d'AQPA. Riyad continue donc son jeu trouble de séduction des salafistes les plus dangereux de la planète.

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