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Terrorism in Africa

Burundi

Burundi: Crisis Triggers Regional Refugee Influx

15 May 2015



Major-General Godefroid Niyombare, who announced a coup in Burundi.

The failed coup attempt in Burundi has done little to calm fears of a new civil war. UNHCR says more than 100,000 people have now fled the country as a result of political turmoil.

Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza may have thwarted an attempt to topple him, but analysts say the very fact that there was an attempted coup does not augur well for the tiny East African country.

Ben Shepherd, an expert on Africa's Great Lakes region at Chatham House in London, told DW he sees tough times ahead. "I think there is risk of repression by loyalists and the party-linked youth militia against those areas and communities that were seen to be allies or celebrating the coup," Shepherd said.

According to the Burundian army, 12 rebel soldiers were killed by troops loyal to the President on Thursday (14.05.2015), as the mutineers sought to take over control of state radio.

Fears of a divided military

Many Burundian observers fear a rift between the military could plunge the country into a civil war. The military in Burundi has a long history of deep involvement in politics. It was formerly dominated by the Tutsi, but since the ending of the 2005 civil conflict, it has undergone a remarkable transformation which includes the integration of Hutu rebels that had spent decades fighting the Tutsi-dominated military.

The country's defense forces had vowed to remain neutral in the midst of a political and constitutional dispute.

Major General Niyombare, who led the failed coup, has reportedly been arrested

However, Wednesday's coup attempt led by Major General Godefroid Niyombare, might change all that. Niyombare, who was sacked by President Nkurunziza as intelligence chief in February, said his intention of toppling Nkurunziza, was motivated by the president's refusal to drop his bid for a controversial third term.

According to Burundi's presidency, Niyombare was arrested along with several other top army officers on Friday after it emerged that he had failed to overthrow Nkurunziza. "Assuming this coup has failed, I think there is a big problem for Nkurunziza to manage unity in the military," Shepherd said.

The military is considered one of the success stories of post-conflict Burundi. President Nkurunziza's administration has gotten a lot of support, both in military equipment and training, for its decision to contribute troops in Somalia for the African Union led peacekeeping mission AMISOM. "Rebuilding that unity within the military will be an immediate and very difficult challenge."

Fleeing for safety

Before the coup attempt, thousands of Burundians were already fleeing the country. Mukarugamba Audiline and her four children from Burundi's Kirundo province fled to Rwanda when a group known as Imbonerakure - which loosely translates as "those who see far" - began intimidating her and attacking her neighbors.

"They kept telling us that we are from the opposition and we are not human beings," Mukarugamba told DW in an interview. She said the youths threatened them by saying they fell from the sky and "we are like weeds growing around banana stems which need to be uprooted."

Another refugee, Nyabenda Beatrice, also faced a similar experience. "They said that they dug holes to put us inside. A neighbor told us that, and we decided to flee to the bush, where we slept for three days before coming here."

The political stand-off could lead to further violence in Burundi

The Imbonerakure are the youth wing of Burundi's ruling party CNDD-FDD. With election fever at a high pitch, the youth were reportedly targeting local residents

who are not members of the party. They also intimidated those whom they perceived to be opposed to President Nkurunziza's bid for a third term in office.

Regional burden

Rwanda now hosts nearly 10,000 refugees from Burundi. Seraphine Mukantabana, Rwanda's minister of disaster management and refugee affairs, said they were being relocated from the transit centers to other camps away from the border. "We are required to relocate them farther away from the border as international protocol stipulates," Mukantabana said.

The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) says more than 100,000 people have now fled to neighboring countries. Joyce Mends-Cole, UNHCR's Representative in Tanzania said they were facing a difficult situation. "We have been using a German-made vessel which is more than 100 years old," Mends-Cole said.

Tens of thousands of refugees have fled Burundi to neighboring countries.

"Some of the people who have fled are the same ones we had repatriated," Mends-Cole said. She said they were working hard to provide for the basic needs of the refugees. "There is not enough portable water and latrines," Mends-Cole told DW in an interview.

The UN official said that unlike before, the overwhelming number of people seeking refuge has caused some tension among locals in Tanzania.

<http://www.dw.de/africa>

Burundi: Plusieurs morts dans de nouvelles violences à Bujumbura



Des gens qui protestent contre un troisième mandat du président Pierre Nkurunziza au Burundi.

Dans la capitale burundaise, de nouveaux affrontements se sont produits ce jeudi matin. Selon un bilan de la Croix-Rouge, il y aurait au moins trois morts.

Par ailleurs, une explosion a été signalée dans un quartier, foyer de la protestation. Elle a fait un mort et sept blessés, et a été suivie de heurts entre opposants et partisans du président sortant Pierre Nkurunziza.

La situation reste tendue dans plusieurs zones de la capitale notamment en raison du changement d'attitude des militaires.

L'armée, jusqu'ici acclamée pour sa neutralité, a pris ce matin des engins de chantier pour dégager les barricades dans le quartier de Musaga. « Ils prennent le parti de Nkurunziza », disent désormais les manifestants en colère.

Colère également à Cibitoke, dans le nord de la capitale. Deux attaques à la grenade dans un quartier pro-manifestants ont fait au moins un mort et sept blessés.

Ce sont les imbonerakure, la jeunesse du parti au pouvoir, qui ont tout de suite été accusés par les riverains. S'en est suivi des affrontements entre jeunes pro et anti-troisième mandat. La police est intervenue et un jeune manifestant a été griève-

ment blessé d'une balle dans la tête.

Pour le porte-parole du ministère de la Sécurité publique, toutes ces attaques sont du fait des manifestants et auraient visé des policiers.

Ce n'était pas l'avis de ces manifestants qui s'en sont alors pris aux militaires : « La police protège les imbonerakure et vous, vous ne faites rien », ont-ils lancé.

Ivres de rage, les manifestants ont commencé à tourner dans le quartier à la recherche de responsables, de jeunes du parti au pouvoir.

Et une foule s'est lancée à l'assaut d'une maison où se cachait, disaient-ils, l'un de ces imbonerakure. Un jeune qui a tenté par tous les moyens d'échapper aux pierres et aux coups de bâton en se réfugiant dans les caniveaux.

Les militaires sont intervenus en tirant en l'air. Un autre jeune qualifié d'imbonerakure a été battu et laissé pour mort dans un caniveau.

Les soldats semblaient dépasser ce matin alors que les manifestants s'attaquaient à la maison de ceux qu'ils accusaient d'être des imbonerakure.

A l'intérieur, ils ont trouvé des drapeaux du parti au pouvoir et une tenue militaire et des bottines. Preuve, selon eux, que les jeunes du parti au pouvoir se cachent aujourd'hui parmi les forces de sécurité.

Dans un autre quartier à Nyakabiga, un corps gît au milieu d'une avenue, le corps d'un jeune roué de coups qu'on a visiblement tenté de brûler par la suite. Dans ce quartier, les riverains refusent de parler.

L'UA demanderait le report de l'élection présidentielle

Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma s'est clairement prononcée en faveur d'un report des élections au Burundi, si l'on en croit le transcrit d'une interview accordée à la chaîne câblée chinoise CCTV. Selon Dlamini-Zuma, « le climat n'est pas propice à la tenue d'un scrutin.

On ne peut pas aller dans un pays, poursuit la présidente de la commission, rencontrer des réfugiés qui fuient, et dire que nous allons observer les élections ».

La chef de l'exécutif de l'UA s'est aussi prononcée contre un troisième mandat pour Pierre Nkurunziza. « Il y a différentes interprétations de la Constitution, mais parfois, il ne faut pas se limiter à une approche légaliste, ce qui est important ce ne sont pas les légalités c'est la paix au Burundi ».

Des propos qui lui sont attribués par la chaîne CCTV, l'entourage de Dlamini-Zuma n'a pas encore confirmé ces déclarations qui seraient un véritable désaveu pour le président sortant du Burundi, dont l'initiative est déjà dénoncée ailleurs et notamment à Washington.

Sans aller aussi loin, un diplomate de l'Union africaine joint par RFI a condamné fermement le recours aux tirs à balles réelles par la police sur les manifestants à Bujumbura, qualifiant aussi « d'inacceptable l'interdiction de manifestations dès lors qu'elles sont pacifiques ».

Selon cette même source, la situation actuelle, qui a déjà poussé 40 000 personnes à se réfugier à l'étranger, est tout aussi inacceptable et pose de lourds défis pour les pays voisins qui les accueillent.

L'Union africaine devrait dépêcher dans les quarante-huit heures des membres de son panel des sages à Bujumbura.

L'UA sera également représentée au sommet qu'organise la Communauté de l'Afrique de l'Est sur le Burundi qui se tiendra à Dar es Salam, le 13 mai.

<http://www.english.rfi.fr/africa>

Cameroon

Cameroon: Boko Haram Attacks Spark Education Crisis in Cameroon



Cameroon school children at a Catholic school (file photo).

By Monde Kingsley Nfor

Maroua, Cameroon — Tens of thousands of children in northern Cameroon, including many refugees from neighbouring Nigeria, are out of school because of cross-border attacks by Boko Haram.

"The government and aid agencies are grappling with a complex emergency situation," said Middjiyawa Bakari, governor of Cameroon's Far North Region.

"Getting enough classrooms, teachers and various forms of assistance to the internally displaced children and refugees remains critical," he said.

Those now deprived of education include almost half of 62,000 children who have been internally displaced because of attacks by the Nigerian insurgency, which have led to the closure of more than 120 schools since September.

Also out of school are children among 74,000 Nigerians who have fled to Cameroon since March.

According to the UN's agency for refugees (UNHCR), 60 percent of these new arrivals are children.

There have been at least 18 recorded attacks by Boko Haram in northern Cameroon since the beginning of the year. Almost 100,000 Cameroonians have fled

their homes, UNHCR says.

In the three most-affected localities of Logone and Chari, Mayo-Sava and Mayo-Tsanaga, which lie just across the border from northeastern Nigeria, where the Islamist rebel group is most active, 60 percent of schools have been abandoned, 30 percent are now occupied by displaced people, and 10 percent have been either destroyed or looted during attacks, according to a report published last month by UNHCR.

Additional burdens

In those places where schools remain open, authorities say they have been encouraging families and relatives to re-enrol the displaced children, so that they can continue the school year, but that challenges abound.

At the Maroua Doualare I public primary school, for example, where over 200 displaced children have enrolled, head teacher Moumine Aloa told IRIN: "These children have added to the existing challenges that we already face, as the displaced have more peculiar and urgent needs than the other students. Many come in with no books or report cards or placement tests. Their class performances are very poor," he said.

After being out of school for a number of months, children often need extra classes and sometimes psycho-social care to study well with other fellow students.

Another difficulty is that many of the families who fled have lost their sole means of livelihood and don't have money to afford school fees.

Others no longer have the proper documentation to enrol. UNHCR estimates that 59 percent of displaced Cameroonians have lost essential documents.

Around 38 percent of the displaced children have been separated from their families and are now living with relatives, who can't or don't send them to school.

Many displaced children have to work just to survive.

Fifteen-year-old Soulemanu Abba, for example, told IRIN that "it was easy for me to go school when I was in Fotocol [his village] because my parents and friends were present and we had enough money to support my education. But since I came here, I now have to work to afford food for myself."

Abba fled his home in October 2014 and now lives in Maroua where he works with his uncle selling gasoline.

It is a common story.

"I wish I could continue school because this is not a job I intended to support my life with," said Mouktar Ismaila, 17, who drives a motorcycle taxi. "Many of us are school dropouts, some fleeing Boko Haram and others don't just want school."

Headmaster Aloa lamented: "Many students are skipping school to become men and it is rather unfortunate that most of them are missing opportunities of a lifetime to complete school and become important people in their communities."

Education among refugees

In Minawao camp, the largest housing Nigerian refugees, there are only three primary schools with 21 classrooms to accommodate more than 6,600 primary school-aged children.

"Besides the fact that education is a basic human right for all children, it is especially important that refugee children receive schooling because it will create a sense of normalcy in them and will empower and expand their ability to turn their misfortune to opportunities," said Isaac Luka, a lawyer and refugee representative.

But with no place to go, an estimated 40 percent of primary and secondary school-aged children spend their days milling around the camp, trying to make a living, authorities there say.

"The schools are overcrowded," said Samuel Cameroun, an assistant camp manager. "In some classrooms there are over 200 children with two teachers who have to cope with children coming from very difficult environments. Aid agencies have been doing their bit by building classrooms, child-friendly environments and providing school supplies, but they are not enough given the growing needs."

The government recently sent an additional 17 teachers to the camp and recruited 34 new teachers from among the refugee population, but there are still 150 pupils for each teacher.

John Duige, 61, a Nigerian refugee and volunteer primary school teacher in Minawao camp, told IRIN: "I have an obligation to help these children... They must have the opportunity now to study in Cameroon."

It's a challenging job: most of the refugee children did not attend school in Nigeria and few speak or understand English. With children speaking dozens of different dialects, finding a common language to teach in is almost impossible.

UNHCR and UNICEF have set up child-friendly tents which are managed by local NGOs and provide the children with various games and supplemental educational exercises.

"Education is a priority for most aid agencies, but the children need much more than just education to forget the trauma and images of atrocities in their minds," Cameroun said. "They need more play areas, classrooms and psychosocial care through organised activities."

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

Chad

West Africa: Why We Can't Capture Shekau - Chadian President



Idris Derby, the president of Chad visited Nigeria's President-elect Muhammadu Buhari in Abuja.

By Abdullahi Umar. Bayo Oladeji, George Agba with , Agency Reports

Chadian President Idriss Deby has said that lack of synergy between Nigerian military and its Chadian counterpart is responsible for the continued disappearance of wanted Boko Haram leader, Abubakar Shekau, Hausa service of the BBC has reported.

Deby, who stated this after a closed door meeting with President Goodluck Jonathan in Abuja yesterday, said it was regrettable that the two armies, those of Nigeria and Chadian, are working separately in the field, adding that the war against Boko Haram had not yet been totally won because Chad and Nigeria were not working together.

"They are not undertaking joint operations. If they were operating joint operations, probably they would have achieved more results," he said.

Deby had, sometime in March, accused Nigeria of downplaying the threat of Boko Haram and failing to cooperate with the regional coalition battling the jihadists, saying there had been zero contact between the armies involved.

The republics of Chad, Cameroon and Niger joined forces since January to battle Boko Haram, whose insurgency has claimed over 12,000 lives since 2009.

The Chadian president at the time said he was baffled by the Nigerian government's lack of cooperation in the offensive.

"Two months after the start of this war, we have not had any direct contact with the Nigerian Army units on the ground," he had told a French weekly.

Deby, who earlier this year was quoted as saying he knew the whereabouts of Abubakar Shekau, has backtracked on his claim, insisting on keeping any possible knowledge of the location of the terrorist to himself.

"I cannot tell you today that I know where Shekau is hiding and even if I knew I won't tell you," Deby told journalists.

In his response to journalists yesterday, the Chadian president said it was important for him to come to discuss with his Nigerian counterpart as he leaves office to review "what we did together, what we achieved together in the fight against Boko Haram".

He further stated that Boko Haram had not been completely eradicated, but only weakened.

He recalled that when Chad had its own problems in the 70s and 80s, Nigeria assisted the country during those difficult times.

Deby added that he was also in Nigeria to congratulate Jonathan for his noble role in the success of the 2015 polls.

"On the 2015 general elections, I came principally to congratulate Mr President for the statesmanship he demonstrated during the elections. We all know that elections in Africa are always keenly contested but Mr President demonstrated a lot of statesmanship; he is a real democrat by conceding and congratulating the president-elect," he said.

"You all know that when Nigeria sneezes, the neighbouring countries catch cold. If Mr President had not taken that laudable initiative, you all know what would have happened now. Nigeria is still living in peace; that would not have happened but for that laudable initiative he took.

"So I came to congratulate him for leaving a legacy not only for Nigeria but for Africa as a whole. As you all know, we both work together to fight Boko Haram. I thought it was important that before Mr President leaves office, I will come for us to have an overview of what we did together, what we achieved together in the fight against Boko Haram."

Responding to questions on the multinational task force fighting in Lake Chad, he explained, "In the Lake Chad Basin, there are four countries, Cameroon, Nigeria, Chad and Niger, that are currently securing the area. The four countries have managed to form a multinational mixed force that will metamorphose to what is proba-

bly known as a Rapid Response Force that the African Union is trying to form for Africa."

Journalists bundled out of Aso Rock - for asking 'wrong question'

Meanwhile, the presidency yesterday walked out a journalist representing a foreign media from the presidential villa, Abuja.

Mallam Ubale Musa, the State House correspondent of German Radio, Deutsche Welle, was expelled from Aso Rock for asking visiting Chadian President Idriss Deby a question the president's men considered embarrassing.

Musa had asked Deby to explain the relationship between the multinational task force fighting in Lake Chad and the South African mercenaries fighting along with them, a question which the Chadian leader responded to by saying he had no information concerning mercenaries from South Africa.

Musa's accreditation tag was immediately withdrawn by security operatives attached to the presidential villa.

As soon as Deby and his entourage left the villa, Musa was picked up by security operatives who immediately drove him in a vehicle out of the forecourt of the president's office through the service chiefs' gate.

After pleading with the security operatives that his backpack containing his work tools was still inside the press briefing room often occupied by journalists, the security men drove him back and escorted him to retrieve his bag before finally taking him out of the villa again.

LEADERSHIP gathered that when State House reporters approached the special adviser to the president on media and publicity, Dr Reuben Abati, on the development, he simply assured them that the issue would be taken care of accordingly.

At the time of writing this report, however, nothing had been done to resolve the matter. Musa told our correspondent that his accreditation had not been returned.

Post-BokoHaram: Military Plans New Defence Strategy

The military authorities have been told to begin planning for how to earn and sustain credibility with the public as the war against terrorism gradually comes to an end.

This call was made by a panel set up to draft a new defence policy for the country with a view to making it relevant and responsive to present challenges.

To do otherwise is to risk being labelled "occupation forces" in communities where they serve, and this could constitute a credibility problem.

Presenting the draft defence policy yesterday to the minister of defence, Lt.-Gen.

Aliyu Gusau; the chairman of the panel, Air Vice Marshal M.I. Muhammed Ndatsu Umaru (retd) listed some areas that need urgent attention.

He said the factors to be considered include, but not limited to, better readiness to protect the people no matter the cost, an all-encompassing professional education and training mechanism for all the services and a personnel recruitment system that accommodates only the best in the society.

According to him, due to lack of employment and the perceived good condition of service of the military, those seeking recruitment are attracted to the military even without the zeal to serve, adding that a professional military is key to national security and the pride of any democracy.

He argued that how the armed forces is managed also matters, as the committee observed that the issue of a big bureaucracy or civil service for supporting the armed forces without the understanding of military ethos is a big challenge under the prevailing conditions.

Speaking further, the chairman said civilian staff supporting the military must be well trained and familiar with appropriate military traditions and the imperatives of their employment.

AVM Umaru lamented that, for now, the nation had a huge gap to fill and recommended that the Ministry of Defence be reorganized in a professional manner that promotes a more collaborative working relationship between civilian and military professionals.

Also, he noted that the review of the national defence policy should be seen as a process that must be conducted periodically in line with changing security situation; hence the policy should be reviewed every five years.

The new draft defence policy also proposes that the military personnel in performance of their duties must be guided by policy, a product of politics; hence they must be aware of their ultimate responsibility to a political leader.

This expected ideal situation, the policy says, requires that the political leaders do not drag the military into politics as the dynamics of democratic control of the military is domiciled in the centres of power, Aso Villa and Ship House (Defence Headquarters).

Also, the military leaders must understand the set up and not miscalculate as the military leaders are the "precious jewel of the state" and in the understanding and conduct of their business, they must remain the "arbiter of the nation's destiny."

Umaru also stated that the first step to having strong armed forces is for the society to be based on the ethos of democratic governance, as a strong democracy breeds a strong military capable of defending it and projecting power beyond borders when necessary.

In his remark, the minister of defence, Gusau, who praised the work of the panel, observed that the dynamic nature of the environment, globalization, new and emerging threats to defence and sovereignty of nation states necessitated that such important document be reviewed periodically to accommodate new developments.

He said that the national defence policy, which was promulgated in 2006, had never been reviewed even though the nation had undergone a lot of transformation in terms of development, as well as facing new security challenges.

The minister added that there had also been new developments and challenges in the global environment that had direct impact on national defence and security, hence all these highlighted the need for the review of the national defence policy in order to bring it to terms with the new developments, emerging and anticipated threats and challenges.

He told the members of the panel that they had started a process which could not be completed before May 29 (when the current government leaves power), adding that as a non-partisan group of professionals, what they had produced would be handed over to the next administration for a continuation of the review process.

<http://www.leadership.ng/>

Congo-Kinshasa: La MONUSCO sur le pied de guerre !



Photo: un.org

LA MONUSCO condamne une attaque du M23 contre un de ses hélicoptères

Par La Pros.

*Le ton est martial à l'Etat-major de la force onusienne depuis l'attaque qui a coûté la vie à deux soldats de la paix tanzaniens et en a blessé une dizaine d'autres, mardi 6 mai, à Beni. Visage fermé, le général Santos, qui commande la Brigade d'Intervention de la Monusco, a promis d'éliminer les auteurs de l'embuscade mortelle contre ses hommes. Il a, immédiatement, reçu le soutien de la première puissance mondiale, les USA, dont l'Ambassadeur à Kinshasa a condamné dans les termes les plus fermes l'attaque à l'arme lourde contre le personnel onusien.

Tous les moyens technologiques et militaires à la disposition de la Monusco seront utilisés pour réduire les auteurs de l'attaque et les complices, prévient le général onusien.

Qui est à blâmer ?

L'identité des assaillants n'est, certes, pas connue avec précision. Mais, les premières enquêtes de la Monusco désignent les rebelles ougandais du groupe ADF. La force onusienne n'écarte pas la piste d'une complicité. Aussi, le commandant second de la Monusco, le général Jean Baillaud, a mis en garde tous les chefs de guerre et autres en collusion avec l'ADF, groupe criminel responsable de plusieurs crimes. Un jour ou l'autre, ils répondront de leur collaboration active ou passive

devant la justice.

Les réserves de Paluku

Le Gouverneur de la Province du Nord-Kivu, Julien Paluku, estime qu'il est prématuré de désigner les assaillants. Le mode opératoire le pousse à émettre des réserves. L'attaque contre le personnel onusien a eu lieu à l'arme lourde. Or, les ADF ont l'habitude de recourir à la machette contre la population civile. Julien Paluku pointe le Rwanda. En effet, il a dernièrement dénoncé une incursion de l'armée rwandaise sur le sol congolais. Le Gouverneur du Nord-Kivu n'a pas été pris au sérieux. Personne n'a bougé lors que la société civile a sonné l'alarme à la suite des incursions des éléments non autrement identifiés aux environs de Beni.

Une collaboration FARDC- Monusco

En attendant de voir la forme que va avoir la riposte de la Monusco, on se demande si une victoire sur les forces négatives est possible sans une étroite collaboration entre la force de l'ONU et les FARDC. Martin Kobler, patron de la Monusco, le souhaite vivement. Parce que la menace ne concerne pas que les casques-bleus. Kobler constate que les criminels attaquent sans distinction les FARDC, la population civile et les soldats de la paix. L'heure est donc venue pour rétablir, reprendre la pleine coopération avec les FARDC, dit le patron de la Monusco. Cette attaque surgit alors que le débat reste très engagé sur la présence onusienne en RDC. Une présence que l'on juge soit encombrante, soit utile, selon que l'on se trouve dans tel ou tel autre camp. Il se peut que la Monusco soit davantage renforcée. Il y a quelques années, après une attaque mortelle contre les casques-bleus en Ituri par des groupes armés, l'Union Européenne avait mis sur pied l'opération «Artémis» qui a permis d'anéantir les miliciens qui semaient la terreur dans cette partie du territoire.

<http://www.laprosperteonline.net/>

Egypt

Egypte: Le terrorisme n'est pas cantonné en Egypte, c'est un défi arabe et international

Le Premier ministre, Ibrahim Mahlab a affirmé, dans une interview accordée mardi à Jeune Afrique, que le terrorisme n'était pas cantonné en Egypte mais était un défi arabe et international.

L'Islam est une religion de paix et les groupes terroristes ne représentent aucunement l'Islam, a fait savoir M. Mahlab.

La lutte contre le terrorisme requiert une stratégie intégrale agissant, sur les plans économique et social, parallèlement au volet sécuritaire, a-t-il poursuivi.

Le premier ministre a passé en revue les projets envisagés pour construire l'Egypte moderne, entre autres celui du Canal de Suez et fait état de l'amélioration de la conjoncture économique et sécuritaire depuis l'accès au pouvoir du président Abdel Fattah El-Sissi.

M. Mahlab a également évoqué la vision de l'Egypte sur l'Afrique, son souci de récupérer son rôle dans le continent, et le rapprochement avec les gouvernements et les peuples africains.

"L'Egypte a contribué au développement de l'Afrique comme elle a contribué à sa libération. Les relations avec l'Afrique doivent être solides et fraternelles, ce continent étant l'avenir du monde", a-t-il repris, précisant qu'une section pour l'Afrique avait été créée au sein du cabinet.

M. Mahlab a expliqué que l'objectif de sa visite actuelle en France était de donner suite aux résultats réalisés par la visite à Paris de M. El-Sissi et par la Conférence de Charm El-Cheikh et d'inviter les sociétés françaises à investir en Egypte.

<http://www.sis.gov.eg/>

Ethiopia

ETHIOPIA HAS NO PLACE FOR TERRORISM, RELIGIOUS DIVISION

14 MAY 2015

OPINION

The Ethiopian has continued its effort to repatriate its citizens who are caught in the chaotic condition of Libya and exposed to the threat of ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria).

So far over 100 willing citizens had been transported back to Ethiopia through concerted efforts exerted by the government and its embassies in Egypt and Khartoum.

The government is exerting strenuous effort to transport all Ethiopian nationals back to their home land and alleviate their security problems (solely based on their own consent and interest to go back home).

The video purportedly released by ISIS had showed the beheading and gunning down of close to 30 Ethiopians at point blank range.

Following this horrible incident, international chroniclers disseminated heartbreaking news of murder committed on innocent Ethiopians in the Libyan desert.

The gratuitous attack had been condemned by all Ethiopians at home and the international community abroad, including European Union and United States of America.

As a bereaved family, Ethiopians all over the world took to the streets and severely condemned the gratuitous attack of ISIS. They unanimously called up on respective governments to step up effort and eradicate ISIS and all terrorist elements.

At home, millions of Ethiopians have expressed their spent anger on the deplorable acts of ISIS and called up on people and the government to strengthen their solidarity and fight out terrorism.

Soon after an event intended to comfort bereaved families was also organized at National Theatre. Participants said the event has been organized very well as far to commemorate Ethiopian victims of ISIS and beef up rally anti-terrorism sentiment among the greater public in Libya.

The event was organized by compassionate artists who said they have been immensely touched by the evil act of ISIS. Various artists, higher officials, and families of the victims were in attendance of the event, among others.

FDRE Foreign Affairs Minister Tewodros Adhanom had said that the murderous incident had deeply saddened him.

The killers had intently committed diabolical crime to incite religion-based war in Ethiopia, though unsuccessful as Ethiopian Muslims and Christians are tightly interwoven, inter-married and co-habiting peacefully since the emergence of Islam and the influx of the messengers of the Prophet from Mecca to Ethiopia.

The Minister said the savage killers do not represent any religion, let alone Islam that sings salaam(peace).

Were the murderers sane and rational to understand Quran, he said, they could have understand how Ethiopia received Muslim brothers and sisters and spared their life from the attack of Quarrysh, the then killer in Mecca during the time of the prophet.

He said nation can prevent such kinds of embarrassments by eradicating poverty and striving to change the living condition of citizens in a concerted manner. Citizens should also opt to work and thrive here in their home land as job opportunities are widening with time, following the successful economic growth of the country.

The Minister had lauded artists for organizing successful event in a short time and called on them to intensify effort to fight human trafficking as they did earlier. He noted the government will exert relentless effort to support the families of victims and root out the act of human trafficking on all corners of Ethiopia.

Currently a wide wave of Ethiopians across the country are pouring in to the streets and protesting the embarrassing and horrendous act of ISIS committed on innocent Ethiopians, who went to Libya in search of jobs.

The terrorist group has committed its inestimable and back-clenching atrocity against Ethiopian Christians. The group is widening its atrocities as it is waging act of butchery in various countries, for instance in Iraq, while struggling to scale up its horizon of devastation, beyond its attempt to establish seemingly self-professed caliphate state in Syria and Iraq(though unlikely). Earlier, the group has repeated its nefarious act in France, Bangladesh, neighboring Kenya, Egypt, Nigeria, Uganda, Cameroon, Pakistan and Indonesia, among others, and killed thousands.

The group in its satanic video has mentioned its defeat in Somalia in a war spear-headed by Ethiopia, though it shrewdly ascribed its malicious act to Christians and Christianity. The terrorist group is known to be media savvy for killing its victims in front of camera and terrorizing its audience.

It has killed Ethiopians in front of camera and posted it on a web. No surprise, the group has killed thousands of victims in a similar fashion, though the world turned blind eye to its real goal of turning Muslims against Christians and vice versa.

The video has showed the anger of terrorists for losing their battle in neighboring Somalia as an ally of Al-shabab.

It said "the blood of Muslims that was shed in the hands of Christians is not cheap (even though it did not specifically mention any state participating in peace-keeping mission in Somalia, besides, anyone can witness the fact that there happened no bloodshed in the name of Christianity and Muslim ever on earth.

After killings of the Coptic Christians last February, Egypt's military responded with airstrikes targeting the militant stronghold of Darna. It has not launched further strikes, though its president is trying to form a pan-Arab military force to respond to extremist threats in the region.

The Islamic State group, which grew out of al-Qaida's former Iraqi affiliate, now holds about a third of Iraq and Syria in its self-declared caliphate. It's called on Muslims across the world to join it. Its online videos and propaganda, including scenes of its mass killings and beheadings, have caught the attention of many extremists

Its influence has grown since it seized large areas of Iraq last summer. Insurgents in Egypt's strategic Sinai Peninsula also have pledged to the group, while another purported affiliate in Yemen claimed a series of suicide bombings in March that killed at least 137 people.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani had also blamed an affiliate in his country for an attack on a bank branch in the country's east that killed 35 people and wounded 125. An affiliate also operates in Pakistan.

"The Islamic State in Libya is still focused on this consolidation phase of announcing its presence through these very high-profile executions," said Frederic Wehrey, a senior associate for the Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "But they face some structural limits in terms of how much local support they can get because they haven't captured real revenue streams."

The attack has notoriously grown in a global scale. Similarly, it is to be remembered that not far from a month ago, the big brother of ISIS , Al-shabab, had committed murderous act in Garissa University of Kenya killing over 148 innocent students while they were busy studying their lessons. Kenyans remembered them as innocent victims of a terrorist attack that stunned a nation and left communities heart-broken.

How is ISIS enticing young people?

Those who are believed to have traveled to Syria to join ISIS had refocused attention on the Islamic extremist group's appeal to young people.

Children and young people feature in the terrorist group's propaganda, including a recent video showing boys in camouflage and ISIS bandanas learning hand-to-hand combat. The militants call them their "Cubs of the Caliphate."

Experts say ISIS has especially ramped up its efforts to lure young women, seen as potential brides for its fighters and gate ways to the territory under its brutal con-

trol in Syria and Iraq.

It runs a powerful propaganda machine on social media

"There's no question what we're combating with ISIL's propaganda machine is something we have not seen before," U.S. State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki told CNN. "It's something we need to do a lot more work on. We are seeing 90,000, I think, tweets a day that we're combating."

The militants have repeatedly promoted videos using high-level production techniques to celebrate their brutality. A short mash-up clip in September played like a trailer for an action movie, with slow-motion explosions and flames engulfing American troops.

UK surveillance chief Robert Hannigan has said ISIS and other extremist groups use platforms like Twitter, Face book and WhatsApp to reach their target audience in a language it understands. Their methods include exploiting popular hash tags to disseminate their message, he said.

ISIS also use its Western recruits to promote the cause to other people like them back home. And the extremist group is putting a particular focus on girls, analysts say.

"We're seeing young women from across Western countries both expressing their support for and migrating to Syria now in totally unprecedented numbers," said Sasha Havlicek, chief executive of the Institute for Strategic Dialogue. "And I would say this is the result really of an extremely sophisticated propaganda recruitment machinery that's targeting young women very specifically."

It promises good life

Analysts say that ISIS can appeal to young people's religious idealism and to a desire to escape the frustrations of life in the West.

"ISIS provides a utopian political project, the so-called caliphate, the centralized Islamic rule," Gerges said. "ISIS provides these deluded young men and women with an adventurous trip."

As a reward for allegiance, ISIS loyalists receive gifts from Allah including "a house with free electricity and water provided to you due to the Khilafah (the caliphate or state) and no rent included," according to Aqsa Mahmood, a British teenager who left Scotland to join ISIS in 2013.

"Sounds great, right?" writes Mahmood, who now appears to blog about life under ISIS rule and is believed to have communicated with one of the three British girls who recently left for Syria. Mahmood offers assurances to women who might be worried about roughing it: "You can find shampoos, soaps and other female necessities here, so do not stress if you think you will be experiencing some cavewoman

life here."

Western officials, though, say that ISIS is pushing a false narrative of what it's really like in its territory. People who heed its call "erroneously believe they are going out to help people," said Yasmin Qureshi, a British lawmaker. "And they don't think ISIS is doing anything wrong because they think ISIS is helping people in their sort of warped thinking."

It has a diffuse but efficient recruiting network

"It took so little time for the three young, innocent, vulnerable girls to leave from the heart of London and speed to the heart of Turkey - and probably they entered in areas controlled either by ISIS or other militant groups," said Gerges, referring to the British teenagers.

He stressed "the important presence of a person who basically serves as a middle-man or middle woman between young men and women in the West and ISIS militants in Iraq and Syria."

U.S. investigators studied the case of three teenage Colorado girls who tried to join ISIS last year to learn more about how the militant group recruits young people in the West.

The FBI found examples of Westerners already in the ISIS fold who were communicating directly with new recruits via social media.

Believed to be operating from Turkey, Syria and Iraq, the online recruiters helped provide how-to guide Westerners who are inclined to travel and join the ISIS fight, officials said.

But even after identifying them, officials couldn't see a clear path to arresting them. Most are thought to be out of reach of U.S. law enforcement.

It tries to seemingly outwit efforts of Western governments

Social media services may have been largely invented in the West, but ISIS is trying to outflank governments in how it uses the platforms.

Acase in point, currently, ISIS is luring, recruiting and blind-folding its young followers and potential victims using internet technology and social media like twitter and face book. The group is thought to be media savvy as it kills unfortunate captives in front of camera and post its drama of butchery (terrifying footages) on the web.

"We are way behind. They are far superior and advanced than we are when it comes to new media technologies," Maajid Nawaz, a former jihadi and author of "Radical: My Journey out of Islamist Terrorism," told CNN last year.

Similarly, British Prime Minister David Cameron has said the case of the three British girls highlights the need to fight ISIS on multiple fronts.

"It needs every school, every university, every college, every community to recognize they have a role to play, we all have a role to play in stopping people from having their minds poisoned by this appalling death cult," he said.

The U.S. government is trying to step up its efforts to counter ISIS propaganda by beefing up a small State Department agency to make it the heart of the fight against the militants' messaging.

"We're seeing their approaches continue to evolve," Psaki told CNN. "We need to continue to make sure ours are evolving and we're combating it in the most strategic way and using every interagency resource."

But she acknowledged that the United States still has a lot to do. "We're really going to pick it up now," Psaki said. "We have new people in charge of the office. And we will see what happens over the coming months."

How is history of Muslims and peaceful co-existence in Ethiopia like?

In the case of Ethiopia, like many other countries in the world, Islam was introduced to Ethiopia peacefully. It has always been one of those religions which the Ethiopian faithful accept by his/her own consent. All say Islam advocates peace (salaam).

The link between Islam and Ethiopia is older than 1400 years. Islam was introduced to and exercised in Ethiopia way before Mecca and Medina became popular Holy cities. Even some say Islamization happens in Ethiopia before the emergence of the Hegira (the occasion when Mohammed left Mecca to go to Medina in AD 622 and the start of Islamic era).

Historian, LaVerle Berry in his 1991 article entitled 'Ethiopia and the Early Islamic Period' wrote "the first Muslims in Ethiopia were refugees from Mecca, persecuted by the new leading tribe, the reactionary and revengeful Quraysh that could not accept other ideas and believers of that time."

The King in Ethiopia, known by the name Ashama ibn Abjar and King Nejash, paid homage to the new comers. He permitted them to live and worship their god in Nejash, which is located at northern Tigray province (currently, Nejash is among the historical centers of Islam in Ethiopia and parts of East Africa as well).

Not only did the King accept the refugees of Mecca with opened arms, he was also the first to allow them to creed and spread their faith in his Empire. King Nejash did not treat them as fugitives and extradite them to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from where they ran away in fear of persecutions.

Several Islamic historians have also asserted that the Last Prophet of Islam, Prophet Mohammed lost his mother during his childhood. Hence, he was breastfed and brought up by an Ethiopian Step Mother, endearingly known as Um Aymen. In ad-

dition, the first Muezzin (man who calls to prayers) was Bilal who was an Ethiopian.

Furthermore, the 4th sacred town of Muslims that has 82 mosques is Harer town which is found in Ethiopia.

These all remarkable ties have made Ethiopia to be inseparably related to Islam as part of its religion. Over all, this great history has witnessed Ethiopia as the safe haven and ideal refuge of Muslims since long ago. Some even say Muslims all over the globe are indebted to Ethiopia.

This deep rooted historical relation has persuaded millions of Muslims to revere Ethiopia and consider it as a second home land to their religion.

As part of notable history of Ethiopia, friendliness and tolerance between Muslims and Christians have started since the arrival of followers of the Prophet. Some countries mention Ethiopia as a beacon of tolerance and friendliness, and even they advise countries plagued by religious conflict to learn valuable lessons of tolerance from Ethiopia.

However, though unsuccessful, ISIS has tried to mar the very fact of inseparable and tightly inter-woven culture of peaceful-co-existence of Muslims and Christians in Ethiopia. Irrationally and mindlessly, it has ascribed the massacre of 30 innocent Ethiopians to Christians shedding the blood of Muslims.

In the contrary, the country has become the epitome of tolerance and peaceful co-existence. For instance, UNESCO has recognized the town of Harer as a town of peace and tolerance as it embraces many mosques and churches that harmoniously serve the purposes of their believers (we could also take Saint Raguel Church and the Grand Anwar Mosque in Merccato area where both believers are being served in a small area that adjoins both religious institutions, the faithful rushing and jostling on same narrow alleys).

Furthermore, the coming into power of EPRDF in 1991 has enabled Ethiopian Muslims to freely exercise their religion.

This has resulted in positive relations between Muslims, Christians and the government. Hence, significant numbers of Ethiopian Muslims consider the current government as the keeper of their faith taking in to account the very fact that Muslims were denied of religious equality and freedom and could not freely worship their faith during the previous regimes.

It has been two decades since Ethiopia has endorsed a Constitution with the consent of its people. The various Articles enshrined in the Constitution have stipulated crucial elements of religious freedom and secularity. Article 27, for instance, states that "everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

This right shall include the freedom to hold or adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and the freedom, either individually or in community with others, and in

public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching."

This freedom of religion is one of those important pillars enshrined in the Constitution. It states that believers and religious institutions can worship their God without any restriction and interference from any other body. Currently, there is no state religion in Ethiopia and secularity has become the corner stone of the country since the endorsement of the Constitution. The Supreme Law has answered indispensable questions of religious freedom that were suppressed by the defunct regimes of Derg and Imperial Haile-Silassie.

What is real intention of terrorism, ISIS?

Though there is no inclusive definition and comprehensive agreement, terrorism is an ideology (particularly in politics or religion) considered to be inconsistent with existing norms and traditions. Terrorist position usually constitutes a threat to society, government, and mainstream morality, etc. errorists violate common moral standards of individuals or groups and advocate replacement of religion-based tyranny on the place of secular democracy and modern life (they assume such things as slippery slope to decadence, cursed by Allah and devilish in nature).

They have many ironic qualities such as need to define themselves by naming and shaming their "enemies" and desperate need of admiration from their clan for what they "do". They favor censorship of their "enemies". Besides, they use intimidation and manipulation to spread their own assertions and claims. They often claim that God is on their side of an issue and they use religion as an excuse for acts of violence.

Commonly, their terrible act is built on one "reality" which focuses on imposing unpalatable terror and extremist teaching on others.

Most importantly, it is agreed that terrorism is unacceptable bulldozing committed by mentally-blinded individuals (ostrich mentalities) who enforce on or sometimes bluff their way through others intended to materialize their evil goals of carnage and obtain acceptance.

Terrorists want to advocate their own "idea" in the name of Islam(though the teachings of Islam are solely based on salaam) and they do not think twice to pull a trigger and exterminate human beings without any discrimination to race, color, age and religion.

Terrorists are trying to disguise themselves in peaceful Muslim believers and misquote various articles the way it serves their purpose of summary executions of civilians (despite prohibition of murder and other criminal acts in Islamic doctrine).

As witnessed at an international level, terrorism and violence is unscrupulously imposing economic, social and political problems on people and countries. According-

ly, no matter how much countries are spending to boost their peace and stability, the threat emanating from terrorism and its ensuing devastation is proliferating at an international level.

The atrocity committed by terrorists is used to butchering innocent civilians including old men, women and children. A case in point, it could be mentioned that terrorists like ISIS, alQaeda, Al Shebab, Bokoharam and Taliban, among other branches of terrorist cells, are killing lives indiscriminately and destroying properties in various countries.

Nevertheless, the world is strengthening its solidarity more than ever in the face of gratuitous attacks. It has been strongly fighting against terrorism and terrorists, especially since the large scale attack laid on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

Since then, the international community is intensifying its struggle. The fight against the agents of destruction is getting very much tougher year after year. i.e terrorists are elusive as they regularly adapt themselves to time and technology.

Terrorists try to exploit and manipulate some naive believers and lure them in to precarious condition (of destruction). Some sheiks and erudite of Islam religion said that individuals fell prone to the snare of terrorists due to lack of thoroughly understanding of Koran and the teachings of Islam that focuses on peace and tolerance.

Presently, ISIS is trying to expand their base using inadvertent youth and adults, though surreptitiously. These sects, that have their own fundamental differences in their teachings of Islamic faith, have even called for an all out expansion of their teaching only and overwhelming other religions. Particularly, these sects are using their manipulative and exploitive skills to lure vulnerable boys and girls and employ them as agents of their hidden agenda.

Using their predatory skill to prey on the youth, these hardliner sects are attempting to erode invaluable Ethiopian assets and worthy past experiences.

They are preaching hate and sowing seeds of hatred by inciting individuals to act against tolerance and peace of believers; their ultimate goal is erasing the culture of peaceful co-existence from Ethiopia. To this end, they are struggling to create enmity between Muslims themselves, Christians and others. Had they been successful, they were and are teaching the hegemony and existence of their teaching and their followers only.

Tangibly, these zero-sum game players are trying to instigate violence across the globe. They are also trying hard to weaken the moral fiber of people related to tolerance.

In this regard, they are releasing ghastly(ghoulish) images of terror on the web and are spreading malicious rumors and gossips about religions, individuals and the

government as well (were it not for the awareness of people to discredit these kinds of negative propaganda).

Terrorists flagrantly deviate from the peaceful-co existence and tradition of tolerance in Ethiopia. Their illegal activity had showed that cruelty of assassins has reached its nadir. Some say, this malicious act is the manifestation of despair (some call the group, desperado terrorists and mindless vandals).

The way forward in the fight against ISIS, terrorism

The government and people cannot sit by as these anti-people and subversive groups try to undermine national security using Islam as a disguise to advance their hidden agenda of terror and destabilization.

The government said the country will benefit only when there are peaceful relations with all religious institutions. This internal peace and equanimity enables to participate millions of believers in various development endeavors. This in turn could speed up development by intensifying the current poverty alleviation effort of the country.

It firmly states that ensuring rule of law is the final solution to all problems. Cognizant of this very fact, the government has expressed commitment to curb anti-people movements before they impose clear and present danger. It said the people of Ethiopia are tightly interlaced and Ethiopia has no room for ISIS's religion-based division, and cannot be a bolt hole to desperado terrorists.

Terrorism could by no means enhance peace and stability except churning out turmoil and indescribable ordeal. Taking this crucial issue in to consideration, the government has called up on the greater public and religious institutions to step up effort and weed out acts of terrorism and strengthen prevalence of peace in Ethiopia

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201505151973.html>

Africa: Fear of Radicalized Africa

2 May 2015



From left: President of the Amhara Regional State Gedu Andargachew, former President of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn of Ethiopia, President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, and President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda while planting trees at the Tana Forum Park in Bahir Dar.

Africa's problems - for decades - were focused on post-colonial political, economic and social predicaments that were marred by civil wars and economic stagnation.

Now another major threat is gaining traction. More specifically, the rise in of religious extremism in Africa has elevated attention to the evolving security concern. Understanding of this security challenge from the perspective of secularism, which is countered by fundamentalism, was of utter significance during a high-level security forum held in Bahir Dar, reports Solomon Goshu.

It is around four in the afternoon; a handful of sitting and former heads of state together with eminent scholars and society leaders in Africa are exiting the convention center in the Blue Nile (Avanti) Resort in Bahir Dar, the capital of the Amhara Regional State. The bunch is just concluding a two-day high-level forum, held on 18th and 19th of April in city of Bahir Dar near Lake Tana, source of the Blue Nile River, a major tributary to the Nile. However, the group knew little of what that afternoon had in store for them. They had no idea that they would learn

about one of the most horrific crimes committed on some 30 Ethiopian and Eritrean migrants in Libya.

A group in Libya that is affiliated with the infamous Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) released a video that Sunday afternoon showing the brutal murder of young Ethiopians and Eritreans on two locations. Participants of the forum were on the way to the airport port to depart to their respective destinations when a sudden confusion and disbelief struck them; the death of two dozen people on the hands of yet again another religious extremist group in Africa. Since the forum ended formally, the participants dealt with the news in small groups and gatherings. But the shock can most certainly be seen from their faces. It was easy to see that the news stroke a core among the participants.

However, rather ironic is the 4th Tana High-Level Forum on Security was actually focused on the very issue of religious extremism and faith politicization in the continent. "We are at crossroads" all heads of state lauded at the forum. And that danger was coming from religious fundamentalism and radicalization. What is so sad was that what they have feared and what they were trying to avert was creeping up on them.

African continent in general is mostly associated with negative narratives such as poverty, bad governance, corruption, abuse of human rights, election-related controversies, and lack of basic services. These problems are not yet eradicated. However, in recent times, the number of success stories from all corners is coming in many shapes.

When the continent seems to be determined to change its image once and for all a rather unexpected issue is becoming a big obstacle - politicization of faith. Considering the fact that politicized faith has grown to become a critical concern for peace and security in Africa, the 2015 Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa selected its theme to be "Secularism and Politicized Faith".

"At a time when Africa has begun to slowly cast off its image as the Dark Continent through policies that have started to achieve rapid economic growth; at a time when questions of good governance are being addressed in earnest; many parts of Africa are also going through a series of crises that are the result of the blurred boundary line between legitimate exercise of religious freedom and a propensity to politicize faith in a manner that has rendered secular political order vulnerable," says the Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn in his opening speech to the Forum on April 18, 2015.

The Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa aims to promote dialogue as a fundamental and durable means to resolving conflict. Every year, invited heads of state, academics and practitioners are invited to Bahir Dar to discuss a theme chosen for its relevance and implications for peace and security across the continent. Strengthening Africa's voice on the global security agenda is the common thread

and overall objective of the Forum.

The first Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa, under the theme "Managing Diversity and State Fragility", took place on 14th -15th April 2012 in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia. The chosen themes of the subsequent editions of the Forum focused on the Problem of Organized Crime in Africa (April 2013), and the Impacts of Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) on Peace and Security in Africa (April 2014).

On the most recent edition, heads of state and governments, eminent African personalities, civil society leaders, policymakers and representatives of various stakeholders have addressed the separation of religion and politics as well as the neutrality of the state in dealing with faith-related issues.

The Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Hailemariam Desalegn, was accompanied by other leaders from African countries. Presidents Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Paul Kagame of Rwanda, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita of Mali and Abdiweli Mohamed Ali of Puntland were also among those in attendance. Somalia's Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, South Sudan's Deputy Prime Minister, Chad's Minister of Foreign Affairs Moussa Faki Mahamat were also participants in the Forum. Former Presidents of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo, Botswana Festus Mogae, and Tanzania Benjamin Mkapa were also among the participants.

Politicized faith, secularism and security

The debate about the thin line that exists between political systems and religious institutions is an old one. Experts argue that secularism maintains that religious and political motives are distinct from each other; that the national political sphere should predominantly be driven by genuinely political, i.e. non-religious agendas; and that, therefore, religion is more of a private issue.

On the opposite side, fundamentalism challenges this and maintains that religious motives and political motives overlap, or the two are essentially the same. Religion should guide public affairs, or may even be seen as the only basis of legitimate rule.

When the political order is secularism and when faith enters the political arena, the argument of politicized faith comes into the scene; and in such cases political motives are not put forward as such, but wear the coat of a religious awakening, the experts argue. The different trajectories of secularism at country level are strongly influenced by the media and by global politics. The fundamentalist challenge to the state or to civil rights is sometimes married to violence, leading to the escalation and entrenchment of conflicts.

In Africa, the manipulation of religious teachings to meet political ends, address grievances, recruit disenchanted youth that disrupt societal harmony or widen existing tensions is on the rise as seen in Central African Republic, Egypt, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Sudan, scholars observed.

Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chairperson of the Tana Forum Board, in his "The 2015 State of Peace and Security in Africa" address maintains that religion - and expressions of faith - is creating difficult fault-lines, tensions and insecurity in different parts of the continent. For Obasanjo, politicized faith becomes a source of security threat when individuals and groups want to impose their faith by fiat or force.

Even if such kinds of tendencies are becoming a common incident in Africa in the last few years, some contend that the common space for state and religion is not yet explored appropriately. Haile Menkerios, UN Under Secretary-General, Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union and Special Representative to the African Union said that as much as religion needs the protection of the state the state has always used religion consistently throughout as the most important basis for culture, custom, morale, and values in society. That needs to be maintained to avoid tension and conflict. Thomas Silberhorn, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Germany Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, said: "We need a dialogue between nations and religions nationwide including space for constructive criticism."

Another point the participants emphasize is the fact that secularism is not necessarily hostile to religion. They indicate that in fact that it was over-zealous religious leaders, both in Islam and Christianity, who have spearheaded the debate for keeping political authority out of religious issues and hence the emergence of the concept secularism or separation of religion and state.

However, a number of factors contribute to making secularism a contentious issue at a later stage. Among these, a complete rejection of religion attracts the attention of the participants. In many instances, secularism has been championed by some philosophers and political actors who were hostile to religion and were often openly atheistic. This meant that in many instances, the advocacy of secularism was formulated in a language that was unacceptable to religious constituencies. These tendencies were opposed by Hailemariam in equal magnitude to that of militant groups.

Few participants indicated that leaders in politics are not operating in a different scene than leaders of religions. Rather they assert that in the majority of instances, both of them share similar members. "All these leaders have responsibility not just to manage, lead, and properly direct their distinct groups. There is no such an environment where we find either politics or religion alone. Aspects of one also exist in the other. The key question here is how do they co-exist?" Kagame said.

Hailemariam stated: "Many people think that secularism means a religion free society. As we are spiritual animals, this is not possible." Similarly, Obasanjo argues that strict secularism might just be mere wishful thinking because there is no society where there is a clear separation between religion and politics.

While lots of speakers agreed on the significance of the state to guarantee citizens' protection and freedom, not all did on what should be the place of religion. As for Rached al-Ghannouchi, President of Nhadah movement in Tunisia, it is up to the public to choose secularism or religion-based political governance. He said, "politics and faith can be in harmony". The condition for this, according to al-Ghannouchi, is that it is decided by elections and elections alone.

State responsibilities

Every state has a responsibility to protect, respect and fulfill its citizens' rights. Africans states are finding it difficult to discharge these responsibilities for different reasons. The reason that comes to one's mind first is the issue of diversity. Museveni argues that diversity in Africa is mis-defined. "People speak as if Africans are so different. Yet if you ask our linguists they will tell that there are only four groups in Africa. Unlike China and Europe people emphasize on differences in Africa," he said.

To the opposite, one of the regular attendants of the Tana Forum, Rwanda's President Paul Kagame provides the intricate ways of managing diversity as a main source of danger posed by politicization of faith in Africa. "We Africans are many things. We are multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and so on. In our society there are many levels and players, and aspects. They are different from one another. How do we benefit, organize and direct the wealth of so many things in this diversity? It comes to the issue of governance, leadership and politics," he said.

Hailemariam points out that the state responsibility to protect the country from militant groups will benefit the government, the citizens, and the state. "Terrorist networks are killing thousands in the name of religious orthodoxy. In many cases they are also rendering states ungovernable. This is not individual countries' problem only anymore hence the need for our collective effort to address," he says.

Participants also discussed that there is a real and immediate danger in the manner that external forces are reaching out to and becoming involved in the activities of faith-branded political groups in Africa. They explore that the need for preventive and precautionary measures to checkmate such external influences cannot be over-emphasized. ISIL attack on Ethiopians and Eritreans in Libya proves this threat. Similarly, there are recent violent groups with religious rhetoric and agendas, including violent groups in Egypt from the 1970s, Al Qaeda and its affiliates, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, etc.

Some are of the opinion that engaging these violent groups and representing them in the state structure will create a resolution as most of the questions are related with marginalization. However, this is not always true. For instance, Al-Shabaab members are predominantly youth groups, often consisting of bands of child soldiers, cut off from society and with no coherent political program or intellectual leadership. Ironically, as is evident from the recent Garisa University incident in

Kenya, youths from the wealthy family and the educated elites are attracted to these groups by their iconoclastic propaganda, and are then socialized into its violent ways.

"We should allow and encourage dialogue in our daily activities even in the most difficult issues. There has to be constitutional and legal order that allow tolerance, freedoms, and democratic practice. Because the legal order will identify what is acceptable to the society and what is not," President Kagame added. In Mali, the context is different. Despite a long Islamic and pacific history, the country is faced with violent extremist threats. "It is now time to have a dialogue and an intellectual effort to understand the current phenomenon," declared the president of Mali, Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta.

Marginalization and lack of representation

Some argue that state weakness or collapse gives potency to divisive religious mobilization that feeds conflict. According to experts' presentations and practitioners' analysis, the failure of the state to champion national cohesiveness was a major contributor to the crisis in Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, and Mali.

"Despite our best of efforts to put Africa on the path of sustainable development, peace and security, rising poverty and horizontal inequalities remain structural factors driving conflict and instability in our continent today," says Obasanjo. He also contends that dwindling access to subsidized socio-economic opportunities in Africa are causing tensions between state and society; the erosion of trust between citizens and governments; tensions between youth and the older generation; fracturing of social contract that should bind citizens and governments.

Obasanjo submits that unless Africa adequately responds to issues of poverty, democracy, corruption, irregular migration, transnational organized crimes soon, groups that are terrorizing Africa now have what it takes to expand into countries where they are not currently known to operate.

"To what extent is the threat of Boko Haram a reflection of failure of the state?" asked Mallam Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, Emir of Kano, a state in northern Nigeria. "Northeast Nigeria had long been the poorest region of the country. Those (terrorist) groups might use religious language, but their grievances are secular: education, health, jobs," he argued. According to him, without justifying Boko Haram, leaders need to understand the context in which these grievances arise and how to address it. "There is an explicit connection between underdevelopment and radicalization. At least in part, we are responsible in creating the circumstances and fertile grounds for the emergence of these radical groups," he says.

Real and practical efforts have to be made to mainstream such groups into decision-making processes, including those relating to conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as peace-building efforts, participants maintained.

Even if confrontation is the only option in some instances, the experts argue that where accommodated, they (groups) tend to play a constructive role. The programs of some of these groups remain tentative and experimental, since they only challenge the dominant status quo.

Rent-seekers game

Ethiopia's PM responded to the question who is using religion to advance its own goal and in what context is that somehow related with a few elites desire to collect rent at the expense of others? "Why do people politicize religion? They have political ambition to come to power using religion," he said. In similar vein, Uganda's President Museveni said that behind every identity there is interest. Thus religious groups as well have interest.

"There will decidedly be more questions than answers. But the discussion forum will have achieved its objective if by the end of our deliberations we manage to identify the nature of the major security challenges we face as a result of the politicization of faith and point modestly to how collectively we can tackle these challenges without compromising the ideals secularism is supposed to serve and without unduly interfering with the freedom of faith in the name of maintaining security," said the host country's PM while opening the forum. The two hundred and twenty (220) participants drawn from different parts of Africa and abroad respond in kind and ensured that the Forum was extremely interactive and free flow of ideas poured on the subject. They also prove that asking the right questions is the first step in finding the right answers.

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

If there is such a thing as a perfect storm ... how Ethiopia may act after Libya...

1 May 2015

If there is such a thing as a perfect storm, last week was one for Ethiopia. From senseless, but deadly attacks in South Africa to the crossfire in Yemen and the cap-sized vessel on the high seas of the Mediterranean, the news was all loss of lives of Ethiopians and other nationals from the Horn of Africa.

The pick of the national frustration was, all the same, from the news that a militant group affiliated to the Islamic State (IS) has slaughtered more than two dozen Ethiopians en route to Europe. The brutality presented in as graphic a manner as it gets revolted many here and abroad. The word of all these losses is no longer a mere disclosure of statistics; many have names and faces that are now recognised by their families and acquaintances here in the capital and elsewhere in the country.

Hence, the cry for action came from hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians in Addis Abeba and regional towns, as well as abroad. The one held at Mesqel Square pronounced in particular that many Ethiopians felt as if they had no government which could stand by them in their times of tragedy and vulnerability, gossip observed.

The call for action before rage and frustration turn to hopelessness, does not appear to have been misplaced on the administration of Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, gossip claims. Few ought to find it surprising that the administration should be pressured by the public rage to act quickly, according to gossip. Again, it would be obvious to see the administration sit down with its leaders of the intelligence community and top brass of the military weighing its options for responses, claims gossip.

It may have set out with the analysis to determine why Islamic militants affiliated to IS chose to commit the atrocious crime on unarmed Ethiopians and wanted to publicise it, according to gossip. The broad consensus appears to be that IS, which is designated as a terrorist group by 14 countries, is a group which declared itself as Caliphate and seeks the allegiance of Muslims worldwide. In the eyes of IS, failure to pay allegiance to the Caliphate condemns them to total annihilation. And there are no less than 34 groups from Sudan and Nigeria to Algeria and from Egypt, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines which have paid such allegiance to date.

The notable exception is Somalia's Al-Shabab, as much a militant group but whose allegiance is to Al-Qaeda, another Islamic militant group not known to have a cosy relationship with the IS. One theory behind the beheading of Ethiopians on the shores of Libya is perhaps an attempt by IS militants to impress the Al-Shabab so

that its leaders distance themselves from their Al-Qaeda affiliation and declare allegiance to the IS, claims gossip.

It will hardly be surprising then, to see the administration of Hailemariam, whose options to directly retaliate against the IS affiliates in Libya as Egypt did, are limited by geographic barriers, compelled to consider identifying other targets to strike, according to gossip. If that would be the case, gossip foresees, the two ideal places where Ethiopia has already deployed military assets, are of course Somalia and Sudan, claims gossip.

In both cases, there are targets of interest for Ethiopia, gossip claims. Destroying Al-Shabab forces in Somalia, both as symbolic significance and as an act of neutralisation before its possible allegiance to IS, could be the most logical consideration on the drawing board, claims gossip.

There is, however, a group in Sudan, al-I'tisam of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, which has already declared its affiliation to the IS. Ethiopia's military assets already presented in Sudan could also be taken to carry out offensive operations to avenge the blood of civilian Ethiopians caught up in an unfortunate situation, claims gossip.

<http://ethioexplorer.com/>

Mali

Mali: Timeline of the Crisis in Mali

A peace deal signed by all parties to the conflict in Mali has yet to materialize. The country has been in a crisis ever since rebels demanded the independence of northern Mali three years ago. DW summarizes key events.

It was supposed to be a grand ceremony to mark the end of years of crisis: Eight African presidents were invited to Bamako to witness Mali's President Ibrahim Bou-bacar Keita sign a peace accord with separatists from the north of the country on Friday (15.05.2015).

The Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA) had initialed the document ahead of the official signing ceremony, but the alliance has since demanded further negotiations. So there is still no end in sight to the crisis in the country, which started over three years ago.

January 17, 2012: Fighting breaks out in northern Mali between Tuareg rebels of the newly founded National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) and the military. Azawad is a name for northern Mali. The Islamist Ansar Dine group also takes up arms. Tens of thousands of Malians flee.

March 22, 2012: The military led by Captain Amadou Sanogo launches a coup against President Amadou Toumani Toure - about one month ahead of scheduled presidential elections.

Captain Sanogo's coup plunged Mali into chaos

Sanogo cites a lack of support for the military in the fight against the rebels in the north as the reason for the coup. The constitution is suspended.

March 30 - April 1, 2012: Tuareg rebels capture Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu, the major towns in northern Mali, thereby bringing about two-thirds of the country under their control. Within days, indications of a division in the rebel alliance become visible.

On April 6, the secular MNLA Tuareg rebels declare a new state, Azawad, which does not receive international recognition. The Islamist Ansar Dine rebels and their allies, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), are against an independent state. Instead, they want Sharia law to be established in the state of Mali. They soon get the upper hand and repeatedly commit atrocities in the name of Islamic law.

April 12, 2012: Interim President Dioncounda Traore is sworn in so that the country may have a leader after the coup.

April 24, 2012: Traore forms an interim government consisting of members of the military and technocrats.

May -July , 2012: Islamists destroy a mausoleum in Timbuktu, which was classified a UNESCO World Heritage site. In doing so, they launch an attack on northern Mali's moderate Islam. Further acts of destruction follow, robbing Timbuktu of valuable historical treasures. This further unsettles the international community and gives rise to the question of whether the destruction of the country's cultural heritage is a deliberate strategy of warfare.

December 2012: The UN Security Council authorized the deployment of peace-keepers by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The bloc had agreed in mid-November to deploy 3,300 soldiers as part of the AFISMA mission.

January 2013: Supported by troops sent by France, the former colonial power, the Malian army succeeds in driving the Islamists out of large swathes of northern Mali. The French Operation Serval is authorized retroactively by the UN Security Council.

April 2013: The EU starts a training mission in Mali, in which German soldiers also take part. On April 25, the UN Security Council authorizes the establishment of the MINUSMA stabilization mission for Mali, which is to take over from the West African AFISMA mission. The mission is to start in July.

June 18, 2013: Mediated by Burkina Faso, Mali's interim government and the Tuareg rebels sign a cease-fire agreement.

August 11, 2013: Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (aka IBK) is elected president by a clear majority in a run-off election and sworn in on September 4. Voter turnout is below 50 percent; many people are afraid to go to the polling stations. IBK's party also wins the parliamentary elections in December.

Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita has so far not succeeded in uniting the country

End of September 2013: The cease-fire agreement is buried as fighting between the rebels and government forces flares up again. Shortly afterwards, Malian and UN soldiers launch a major offensive.

May 22, 2014: At the end of May renewed fighting breaks out in northern Mali. The MNLA briefly retakes Kidal and many smaller towns in the region bordering Algeria and Niger, but the MNLA then signs a cease-fire agreement with the interim government in Bamako.

July 2014: Representatives of the Malian government and the rebels start peace negotiations in Algeria. The French Operation Serval becomes Operation Barkhane

(the name refers to a sickle-shaped dune), aimed at fighting Islamists in five countries of the Sahel region.

Mali's capital Bamako has suffered a string of attacks by Islamists.

March 2015: After five rounds of talks, the negotiations in Algiers lead to a peace agreement. But the Tuareg-led alliance taking part in the negotiations, the CMA, does not sign the deal, ostensibly because the groups involved want to consult their base. Only days later more people die in attacks.

May 13, 2015: After heavy fighting, representatives of the CMA initial a preliminary accord in Algier. But they demand further negotiations as a condition for their final signature.

<http://www.dw.de/africa>

Nigeria

Nigeria: Ethnic War Looms in PDP

2 May 2015



Oba of Lagos, Rilwan Akiolu.

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), may witness another round of internal squabble if stakeholders in the party in the South-East and South-South regions insist on actualising their dreams of taking over the party at the national level.

Following the failure of the ruling party to retain power at the federal level, losing to the opposition All Progressives Congress (APC), stakeholders in the party have been divided along geo-political lines, with the South-East and South-South uniting in a bid to take over the entire structure of the party.

The PDP at the last general elections, lost woefully in the northern part of the country, as well as parts of South West, where the APC swept almost all the votes.

The PDP also lost out in the states of the middle-belt where it had held sway in the past.

Following the loss, accusations have been raised against the members of the party's National Working Committee (NWC) who were accused of not working assiduously for the re-election bid of President Goodluck Jonathan.

Specific mention was made of the National Chairman of the party, Adamu Mu'azu who was accused of playing the ostrich in the last election.

With the PDP winning massively in the South-East and South-South, some important personalities in the party in the two regions have been making attempts at transmuting to automatic defacto leaders of the party.

In the bid at taking over the party, the South-East and South-South alliance led by Governor Godswill Akpabio of Akwa Ibom state have been making surreptitious moves at ousting Mu'azu and installing outgoing Governor of Cross River State, Liyel Imoke, in place of him.

According to dependable sources within the PDP, the South-East/South-South caucus is of the opinion that they need to take charge of the party at the centre because of the fact that the two zones will bear the burden of financing the party henceforth.

Aside from Taraba State, the PDP did not win any governorship seat in the northern part of the country while it is in total control of all states in South South, and four of the five South-East states.

While other stakeholders are giving supports to the move to bring power down to the South-East and South-South, indications have, however, emerged that the Akwa Ibom State Governor, Akpabio, has another agenda quite different from what others understood.

A competent source within the PDP told Saturday Independent that it has been uncovered that Akpabio is leading a movement similar to what Bola Ahmed Tinubu did in Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) where he was the defacto leader and major power behind the merger which culminated in the formation of the All Progressives Congress (APC), which has taken power from the PDP.

"It will take a fool to look at the move to remove the National Chairman of our party, Alhaji Adamu Mu'azu, from the point of electoral failure of the party alone. Some of us have read into the body language of Governor Godswill Akpabio and his unbridled quest to be in power at all cost.

"We have discovered that his ambition is to take charge of our party like Tinubu did in ACN before the merger and become the godfather just like Tinubu. But PDP is too big for any man to take absolute control just like Akpabio is trying to do.

"Don't forget that the PDP is a party brought to life with the sweat of some other persons from the northern part of this country and that fact cannot be wipe out just like that.

"We are waiting for his next move and will take appropriate action as time might dictate.

"We have said it a number of times, but they turned deaf ears to our voices. Mu'azu is not the cause of PDP electoral failure. It was a systemic problem, and must be

seen that way, dealt with that way, and sorted out appropriately.

"We must all come together to fashion out ways of resolving the challenges bedeviling our party and should stop this idea of looking for scapegoat where none existed," the source who crave anonymity said.

Speaking in like manner, Alhaji Gambo Lawan, PDP governorship candidate in Borno State in a telephone interview said that it will be wrong to lay the blame for the failure of the PDP at the feet of a single individual just as he called for peace within the party at this trying period, urging all members to come together and find a lasting solution to the problems of the party.

According to him, it will be an act of injustice to simply point out an individual and hold him or her responsible for the electoral failure of PDP but that all powerful individuals in the party have one blame or the other to take away as their contribution to the failure of the party.

He insisted that no one should under any guise terrorise the party's NWC members or harass them in any way until a stakeholders' meeting have been convened and all issues sorted out.

He noted that the attempt to rebuild the party must be holistic and must be done quickly to save the party unnecessary delay in its recovery efforts.

It would be recalled that the National Chairman had a tough time with the governors last Wednesday when an emergency meeting was convened to discuss the fate of the party.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201505030297.html>

Sénégal: «Boko Haram du problème nigerian à la menace régionale » - Dr Bakary Sambe dissèque le discours de Boko Haram

C'est à la Fondation Konrad Adenauer que le Dr Bakary Sambe présentait dans la matinée d'hier vendredi 8 mai, son ouvrage intitulé « Boko Haram Du problème nigérian à la menace régionale ».

Publié chez Timbuktu Editions au mois de mars dernier, le livre exploite surtout quelques sources documentaires produites par la cellule terroriste elle-même, histoire d'aller plus loin que l'habituel discours des médias occidentaux sur le sujet.

Si l'auteur s'est contenté d'un format concis de 125 pages, c'est par souci pédagogique. Bakary Sambe est spécialisé en relations internationales et enseignant-chercheur au Centre d'étude des religions (CER) de l'Université Gaston Berger de Saint-Louis (UGB).

Si l'ouvrage du Dr Bakary Sambe intitulé «Boko Haram Du problème nigérian à la menace régionale» ne ressemble pas vraiment aux précédentes publications sur le sujet, c'est sans doute parce que, explique l'auteur, son texte à lui va plus loin que le discours des médias occidentaux ou de «personnes peu spécialisées» sur ce mouvement terroriste.

C'est à la Fondation Konrad Adenauer qu'il présentait son livre, hier vendredi 8 mai, et l'enseignant-chercheur raconte que pour se lancer dans ses travaux, il a surtout commencé par éteindre la radio, et la télévision. Peut-être pour ne pas se laisser influencer, et surtout parce que ce n'était pas vraiment ce qu'il attendait de cette recherche.

L'objectif de Bakary Sambe, dans ce document qui compte 125 pages, ce n'était pas, comme il dit, de justifier quoi que ce soit.

Le chercheur explique d'ailleurs que l'essentiel de sa méthodologie, herméneutique, se résume à l'interprétation de textes écrits qui portent l'empreinte de certains membres de Boko Haram, ne serait-ce que pour entendre leurs propres discours sur la façon dont eux-mêmes se perçoivent, leurs enregistrements ou leurs sermons, et pas seulement quelques lointains échos rapportés.

Il y a d'abord ce texte signé de la main du défunt fondateur de Boko Haram, Mohamed Yusuf et intitulé «Ceci est notre dogme et notre méthode prédicative ».

Le chercheur cite encore la lettre ouverte envoyée par le même Mohamed Yusuf au gouvernement nigérian, et où il expliquait en gros toutes les motivations qu'il y avait derrière son djihad.

On retrouve aussi, toujours parmi les sources documentaires exploitées par Bakary

Sambe, cet écrit (« La vérité éclata »), publié sous un pseudonyme, et que l'on pourrait attribuer à un membre de la cellule terroriste nigériane.

L'auteur raconte aussi comment, en 2012, il séjournera à plusieurs reprises au Nigéria, « sur le terrain ». Bakary Sambe parle ainsi de sa rencontre avec des chercheurs nigériens, avec d'anciens membres de Boko Haram etc.

Si Boko Haram prend les armes, ce n'est pas pour rien. Le groupe se bat « pour l'application intégrale de la charia sur tout le territoire nigérian », mais surtout contre ce qu'il appelle un «Etat injuste» autrement dit un gouvernement qui ne s'encombrerait pas des principes de la charia ou qui finirait par oublier que «Dieu est seul juge et gouvernant».

Ce qui explique d'ailleurs toute la virulence dont fait preuve Boko Haram lorsqu'il s'en prend à l'«injuste» état nigérian, à lui comme à ses fonctionnaires et à ses infrastructures, à ses policiers comme à ses bâtiments.

Et si l'état nigérian est tout aussi «injuste», c'est encore à cause de ses écoles où les leçons n'ont rien à voir avec l'Islam, et où la mixité sexuelle n'a pas l'air de poser problème. « Boko Haram » ne signifie d'ailleurs pas autre chose que «l'éducation à l'occidentale est un péché».

Ce que dit encore Bakary Sambe, c'est que Boko Haram n'est même «pas vraiment lié à la religion», d'autant plus que ses actions ne font finalement que nuire à l'image de l'Islam. Dans le fond, c'est aussi l'expression du malaise et de la frustration de certains exclus du système, de certains marginaux.

Quand on s'intéresse au profil des membres de la cellule terroriste, explique le chercheur, ce sont surtout des personnes qui n'ont pas eu «la chance de fréquenter l'école publique», ou qui n'y sont tout simplement pas allées, «par conviction».

Dans cet ouvrage, Bakary Sambe consacre encore tout un chapitre au financement de Boko Haram : le racket, le vol que le mouvement considère surtout comme un «butin de guerre» arraché aux «impies», le soutien de certaines organisations internationales, les impôts forcés etc.

Sur cette question du financement, Bakary Sambe avoue que ses recherches ont été plutôt difficiles. Peut-être parce que comme il dit, «c'est le nerf de la guerre».

<http://www.sudonline.sn/>

South Africa

South Africa: Xenophobia Requires Root-Cause Critique and Strategic Resistance

OPINION

Mere 'be-nice' appeals and marches will not address the root causes of xenophobia in South Africa. Jacob Zuma's ANC government is at fault not only for neoliberal, pro-corporate, job-killing policies, but for tightening immigration regulations, compelling refugees to live under illegal informality. That requires resistance.

Political symbols in South Africa are here today, gone tomorrow, but oppressive political economy endures. At surface level, an explosion of anti-racist activism amongst the most enlightened South Africans - up-and-coming Black scholars trying to break various ceilings of residual apartheid power - is occurring at the same time as xenophobic implosion is wreaking havoc on the bottom socio-economic ranks.

In mid-March at the University of Cape Town (UCT), undergraduate politics student Chimani Maxwele threw a bucket of excrement onto the statue of colonial master-mind Cecil John Rhodes, catalysing a revolt against white-dominated power structures there and beyond.

Less than three weeks later, a revolt by the poorest urban South Africans in the country's two other major cities - Durban and Johannesburg - was aimed at a layer just as poor and oppressed: immigrants, mostly from elsewhere in Africa.

At least ten thousand people were displaced within days. With South Africa hosting an estimated five million foreign nationals living within its 53 million residents, terror has struck those with darker skins and the misfortune to live in the lowest-income areas: urban-peripheral shack settlements or near inner-city migrant labour hostels.

RHODES FALLS BUT HIS BORDERS KEEP RISING

The #RhodesMustFall campaign caught fire at UCT, the main site of South Africa's bourgeois class reproduction, with protesters demanding curriculum changes, racial equity in the professoriat and the resignation of university leadership.

They were quickly victorious against at least one telling symbol: a huge statue of Africa's most notorious English looter. The bronze Rhodes was removed from a central campus base within a month, carted off by university authorities to what will eventually be a lower-profile setting.

The campaign set the emergent 1% elites of UCT against the old 1% power structure. Historical recollections of Rhodes' diamond monopoly-making fortune surfaced, leaving bourgeois commentators and news organs like Business Day rattled.

Rhodes, after all, helped establish many early systems of exploitation - including migrant labour (and women's role in cheap labour provision), illogical African borders, dependency upon minerals extraction, land grabs, environmental destruction and the ultra-underdeveloped rural Bantustans - that persist today.

Indeed they are now often found in even more profitable and amplified forms (casualised labour, mining house prerogatives), fully endorsed by South Africa's current political and economic rulers no matter their skin hue.

However, the 99% versus the 99% in the shack settlements also frightened South Africa's top 1%, mainly because of the hard-hitting impact on the national 'brand', a source of repeat elite panic.

World public opinion is frowning on Pretoria, and, encouragingly, the rest of the continent has taken this long-overdue opportunity to channel myriad grievances against the regional hegemon.

Across Africa, broadcast and print media remind audiences of how the Zulu king Goodwill Zwelithini had set off the pogroms when on March 20 at a 'moral regeneration' rally, he referred to immigrants as 'lice' and 'ants': "you find their unsightly goods hanging all over our shops, they dirty our streets. We cannot even recognise which shop is which, there are foreigners everywhere... We ask foreign nationals to pack their belongings and go back to their countries."

Within ten days, that call had been taken up by Zulu loyalists in Durban, including the president's son, Edward Zuma (born in Swaziland), who claimed immigrants "are the reason why there are so many drugs in the country" (he was prosecuted for illegal tobacco importation and tax fraud last year). Backed by most politicians, Zwelithini went into denial, first, complaining of media misinterpretation, and claimed he meant no harm against legal immigrants.

Yet the mass meeting of 10,000 mainly male Zulu traditionalists he assembled at the main Durban stadium on April 20 reverberated with xenophobic chants and booing of ambassadors from Africa. Zwelithini told the gathering he wanted an end to violence. But to achieve that required much more: Zuma finally deployed the army in Durban and Johannesburg hotspots the next night, as the police were proving incompetent.

BACKLASH

The fakery behind the image of a 'Rainbow Nation' was unveiled, as happened in 2008 and 2010 when xenophobia also reached critical mass. But for many years prior, the rest of the continent already knew South African predators.

Grievances include exploitation by Johannesburg mining houses, retail chains, cell-phone businesses and breweries, and the difficulty of getting a visa to even visit South Africa, especially from Kenya and Nigeria, the two main Anglophone com-

peting powers on the continent. (Diplomatic-level tit-for-tat is one reason.)

Popular disgust across Africa at how little the South African state was doing to protect immigrants reverberated especially strongly where the refugees mainly hailed from: Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In many capital cities across Africa, the 99% lined up in marches, protests and boycotts against Africa's sub-imperialist 1%.

On more than a dozen occasions, the targets were South African High Commissions and the branch plants and shops which transfer profits back to Johannesburg corporations.

In some cases, like the South African shops that Walmart uses to penetrate Africa, the profits go further away still. In Mozambique's natural gas fields, more than 300 South African workers employed by the oil company Sasol had to flee home as local residents complained the firm didn't give jobs to locals.

Back in Durban and Johannesburg, immigrant resistance to lumpen-proletariat proto-fascism is uneven. In Durban, the city centre's Congolese, Nigerian and Zimbabwe immigrants attempted a non-violent march against xenophobia, which was viciously broken up by municipal police on April 8.

As a result, hundreds of immigrants armed themselves and briefly skirmished with police and xenophobic mobs in Durban's Point zone a few days later, just a few blocks from the city's world-class aquarium and water park.

Some even threatened urban guerrilla war. In Johannesburg's Hillbrow inner-city zone, the immigrants' geographic density was too intimidating for mobs from nearby (Zulu-dominated) migrant labour hostels to penetrate.

But in less concentrated sites in shack settlements, mainly in the Durban residential periphery, xenophobic attacks occurred repeatedly.

Even now, nearly a month later, it appears unsafe for most immigrants to return to homes and businesses. As a result of ongoing danger, more than 1000 have been voluntarily repatriated to neighbouring countries. There is nothing more tragic than witnessing the long-distance buses load up from refugee camps, choc-full of traumatised people who have lost everything.

SOUTH AFRICA'S 1% DON'T GET IT

Yet South Africa's state leaders repeatedly demonstrated they hadn't really internalised the crisis. On April 24, President Jacob Zuma claimed to immigrant groups, "South Africa's moral high ground still remains intact."

The same day, the secretary-general of the ruling African National Congress (ANC), Gwede Mantashe, repeated a controversial suggestion: "Refugee reception camps must be used to make sure that everyone who comes to South Africa is registered,

they should be screened and get vetted," though he admitted, "I know that the idea has been attacked viciously."

Also that day, Deputy Police Minister Maggie Sotyu revealed how stressed South Africa's elites had become, when she pleaded, "There are worse things happening in other countries but you will never see them in the media. The media is part of the community, so please, it must be biased when it comes to South Africa."

These remarks reflected the widespread public shaming of Zuma's government and its defensiveness. Indeed Zuma initially did very little to resolve or even properly band-aid the situation.

State-supported anti-xenophobia media adverts, marches, speeches and campaigning generally missed the point: the impoverished young men doing the attacking had little patience for sanctimonious preaching.

On the one hand, a few middle-class NGOs and religious faith leaders provided vital emergency charity aid to refugee camps; in combination with some labour leaders, their anti-xenophobia marches during April briefly reclaimed central city spaces.

On the other hand, the petit-bourgeois moralistic politicians and public commentators had no obvious way to get messages through to the lumpen-proletariat. One reason: an inability to analyse, much less address, the underlying conditions.

JOBS, HOUSING AND RETAIL COMPETITION

Immigrants from the rest of Africa and from Asia (especially Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and China) in search of work are typically young males with networks that give them entry to residential areas, sometimes to informal employment, and sometimes even to shop-keeping opportunities.

Because wives and children typically stay behind, the male migrants can at least temporarily accept much lower wages than local residents who usually must support larger families.

They also can save money by quadrupling up in small inner-city apartments or township shacks - often sleeping in shifts - which puts upward pressure on rental rates.

Unscrupulous employers or landlords increase their own power by threatening to tell authorities about the illegal immigrants, as a weapon of super-exploitation often used especially on farms to avoid wage payments.

Another structural cause of xenophobia is excessive township retail competition: "overtrading." This results from immigrants - especially from Somalia, Ethiopia, Pakistan and Bangladesh - using home-country syndicates to gain collective credit and bulk purchasing power from wholesalers. They then easily undercut the spaza shops run by local residents, and their operations have efficiently spread to nearly

every corner of South Africa.

Interneccine battles between petty capitalists soon move from price wars to physical intimidation, mostly against the immigrant shops. Scores of "service delivery protests" by communities against their municipal governments have turned into xenophobic looting sprees against immigrants.

These root causes can be solved only by redirecting state resources towards meeting needs (like housing) and creating jobs.

Corporate taxes could be raised and vast budgets shifted away from white elephant infrastructure projects: a \$30 billion coal export railroad, a new (unneeded) \$25 billion Durban port, \$100 billion for nuclear reactors and the like. Without a massive attack on inequality, the daily degradation of life for the 54% of South Africans who are below the poverty line will continue.

Zuma's ANC government is at fault not only for neoliberal, pro-corporate, job-killing policies, but for tightening immigration regulations the last few years, which compels refugees to live under illegal informality.

Zuma has continued his predecessors' sub-imperial policies in the region in order to secure contracts for favoured corporations, including his nephew's \$10 billion oil deal in the eastern DRC, not far from where 1600 SA army troops are deployed against rebel competitors.

Zuma also gives continual fraternal support to repressive regimes in the region such as Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, the Swazi tyrant monarch Mswati and the corrupt Congolese regime of Joseph Kabila. More refugees result.

WHAT PRESSURE CAN REVERSE THE ROOT CAUSES?

Mere 'be-nice' appeals and marches are not making any dent in the root causes of xenophobia or in state policies. What would be needed to change the Zuma government's approach? What power can activists leverage?

The most obvious factor in recent weeks was the reputational damage (including to tourism) that the government and big business are feeling. Apparently only such damage can compel Zuma to act.

As Bandile Mdlalose from the Community Justice Movement wrote in Pambazuka, the continent's main ezine, "We in Durban civil society should consider a boycott campaign."

With Durban the only candidate for the 2022 Commonwealth Games, she argued that one target should be a "Commonwealth decision, expected on September 2, to give the 2022 Games to our undeserving city." Durban authorities say they will also bid for the 2024 Olympic Games.

Protesters in many other countries are tackling South Africa at this level, so as to force the Pretoria regime to adopt more humane policies.

The question is whether, pitted against ANC politicians, local corporations and fast-rising Zulu ethnicism, a still-stunned layer of South African progressives can join the debate how best to shift from mere moralising towards standing up alongside African protesters.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201505050590.html>

Tunisia

Tunisie: Terrorisme - Découverte de fosses communes de terroristes au jebel Chaâmbi

61 corps identifiés ainsi que des grottes

Les opérations de ratissage menées entre 2014 et 2015 par les forces armées dans les montagnes où sont retranchés des groupes terroristes ont permis la découverte de 61 camps ainsi que des grottes et des caches dont le nombre est encore indéterminé.

Plusieurs caches utilisées par les terroristes lors de confrontations avec l'armée et les forces de sécurité ont été découvertes, a indiqué le porte-parole du ministère de la Défense nationale, Belhassen Oueslati, lors d'une conférence de presse organisée hier à l'Ecole supérieure de guerre Bortol Hayder.

Il a fait état également de la découverte d'autres caches secrètes utilisées par les terroristes pour y enterrer leurs morts, ces groupes ayant pour stratégie de masquer le nombre de victimes dans leurs rangs afin de pouvoir mobiliser de nouvelles recrues et de paraître en position de force.

Guerre fantôme

De telles pratiques s'inscrivent dans le cadre de ce qu'on appelle la « guerre fantôme », une tentative de semer le doute dans les rangs des forces armées et chez le peuple qui ne pourra pas de ce fait être sûr du succès des opérations de neutralisation des terroristes en l'absence de preuves tangibles, a-t-il expliqué.

Le lieutenant-colonel Belhassen Oueslati a ajouté que des fosses communes ont été découvertes au mont Chaâmbi, précisant qu'elles ne sont, probablement, pas les seules dans les zones montagneuses si l'on en croit les témoignages de terroristes arrêtés.

Peu de terroristes connaissent les lieux où sont enterrés les corps qui sont, généralement, contrôlés par l'émir du groupe en personne, a-t-il dit, ajoutant que d'habitude, ces fosses sont creusées non loin des camps des terroristes et sont construites avec les mêmes matériaux.

Selon Oueslati, les éléments terroristes sont retranchés dans les oueds et les pistes montagneuses et se déplacent souvent en groupes. Leurs tâches se répartissent entre protection, surveillance, défense et attaque.

« Nous sommes parfaitement prêts à affronter toute agression extérieure contre le territoire, notamment de la part de Daech ou autres », a souligné Oueslati.

Evoquant l'opération de Jebel Salloum qui a débuté il y a environ deux semaines, le porte-parole du ministère de la Défense a indiqué qu'elle est toujours en cours,

ajoutant qu'elle s'inscrit dans la continuité d'autres opérations réussies menées par la Garde nationale.

17 mines désamorçées

Il a rappelé que l'opération de Jebel Salloum a permis de découvrir et de désamorcer 17 mines, à l'exception d'une seule qui avait explosé. Elle a permis également d'encercler 18 terroristes dont dix ont été tués dans un bilan provisoire.

Concernant la mise en place d'un mur sur la frontière avec la Libye qui avait déclenché des protestations dans plusieurs villes au sud du pays, Belhassen Oueslati a répondu qu'il « s'agit de simples obstacles et que l'armée fera face à toute tentative d'enfreindre la loi et de se livrer à la contrebande, avec ou sans d'obstacles ».

Il a, par ailleurs, nié que le corps d'un militaire ait disparu et dont certaines parties avaient prétendu qu'il a été remis par erreur à une famille autre que la sienne.

Il est facile et simple, par les moyens scientifiques, de vérifier l'identité de la victime, a-t-il argumenté. Le porte-parole du ministère de la Défense a enfin attiré l'attention sur l'existence d'éléments qui soutiennent ces groupes terroristes et les aident à se déplacer en leur fournissant des informations sur le positionnement des forces sécuritaires et militaires, ce qui ne permettra pas d'éradiquer le terrorisme rapidement.

<http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/201505111021.html>

Tunisie: Au Cœur du Débat - Le rôle des médias et celui de l'Etat

En cette période faste de libre expression et de floraison de médias, suite à la Révolution du 14-Janvier, trop d'informations se présentent à nous, trop de prises de position, de chiffres, d'études, de rapports, de sondages... souvent difficiles à vérifier.

Prend-on la peine de vérifier?

Et ce qui inquiète, en cette phase délicate où le pays tente de panser ses plaies et retrouver ses marques, alors que le terrorisme jihadiste le traque et que la revendication sociale monte, c'est que nos médias n'ont ni le temps ni les moyens de soulever la véracité des «révélation spectaculaires» qu'on leur propose chaque jour que fait le Bon Dieu, et qui se vendent bien même quand il s'agit d'un faux.

Tout le secteur de l'énergie dans le collimateur

Un rapport officiel, suite à un audit englobant l'Etap, la Stir et la Steg, prétend révéler de flagrantes anomalies dans la gestion et la comptabilité du secteur tunisien des hydrocarbures. S'appuyant sur les chiffres de 2012, il met en cause l'ensemble du dispositif de l'exploitation des ressources pétrolières nationales, des achats et ventes des hydrocarbures par l'Etat, et des subventions servies en vue de compenser les prix de l'«énergie fossile» à la consommation.

«Mauvaise gestion» et «dépassements»

Le rapport pointe ainsi du doigt «la mauvaise gestion et les dépassements au sein des entreprises publiques chargées des hydrocarbures».

Selon ce rapport, l'Etap, la Stir et la Steg seraient responsables d'un gonflement des dépenses de subvention.

Or ce rapport n'est pas un vulgaire brûlot destiné à taquiner ou à mettre en difficulté les pouvoirs publics, puisqu'il s'agit, selon l'agence de presse nationale (TAP), d'un travail commandité par le Contrôle général des finances et effectué en collaboration avec le Contrôle général des services publics (Cgps) et le Contrôle général des domaines de l'Etat et des affaires foncières (Cgdeaf).

Au profit de sociétés affichant des pertes

Parmi les révélations du rapport, le fait que «les dépenses de subvention ont atteint près de 4,9 milliards de dinars en 2012, dont 70% sous forme de subvention indirecte (non incluse dans le budget de l'Etat) au profit de sociétés affichant des pertes». Et de conclure que «le système actuel de subvention des hydrocarbures est financé à travers un croisement d'apports financiers de plusieurs intervenants».

Sachant que, bien plus grave, «les quantités de pétrole brut produites chaque année par chaque champ pétrolier, et les quantités de production citées par les rap-

ports annuels relatifs à la répartition de la production entre l'Etat et son partenaire stratégique» présenteraient des différences notoires. Des différences estimées par le rapport à plus de cent mille barils par an.

Tous les chiffres et mécanismes sont en cause

Mais ledit rapport ne s'arrête pas en si bon chemin, puisqu'il met tous les chiffres et mécanismes en cause, aussi bien dans la vente des hydrocarbures au nom de l'Etat («absence d'un manuel de procédures» et inexistence d'un guide de répartition des quantités de pétrole et de gaz entre l'Etat, l'Etap et la compagnie pétrolière partenaire stratégique) qu'au niveau de la compensation et de la comptabilité et des transactions financières des organismes audités.

Il se trouve justement, depuis quelques semaines, que certains associatifs «bien informés» et des politiciens se disant bien intentionnés se sont exprimés à corps et à cri dans le même sens que ce rapport, mettant en lambeau le dossier des hydrocarbures, à un moment où le cours du brut fléchissait et où les citoyens en attendaient une atténuation des prix.

Le rôle de veille de l'Etat

Il est bien évident que le réflexe professionnel et patriotique des médias face à un semblable rapport devrait conduire à des réserves méthodiques et à une vérification de fond, accompagnée d'une demande de renseignements auprès des instances gouvernementales actuelles. Car beaucoup de documents élaborés ces dernières années ont péché par trop de complaisance. Mais cela exige qu'en regard, la fonction de veille communicationnelle de l'Etat soit opérationnelle. Et d'abord, une «fonction communication» qui soit performante, donc préventive, analytique et réactive.

C'est seulement de cette manière que pourront être déjouées les manipulations et affirmées les vues et la version du gouvernement de la République, à propos de chaque «information». Spécialement celles qui peuvent déstabiliser l'opinion.

<http://www.lapresse.tn/>

Uganda: Al-Shabaab Already Defeated

10 MAY 2015

OPINION

Attacking malls, football fans, students shows they cannot even attack a well-guarded police station

The most atrocious, criminal, cowardly and monstrous attacks by Al-Shabaab against soft and innocent targets such as shoppers in a Shopping Mall, young students in a University or football fans watching the World Cup matches at the Rugby Club in Kampala may look very frightening to those that are not used to war or that are not well informed. However, those attacks, in fact, prove three things.

They prove that Al-Shabaab is sectarian which is obvious because it only targets Non-Moslems. Secondly, it proves that Al-Shabaab is bankrupt both morally and ideologically. Why attack non-combatants? Why not attack soldiers if you want to fight? Why attack only Non-Moslems? Thirdly, however, it also proves that Al-Shabaab is already defeated. Why do I say this?

I say this because it is that bankrupt Al-Shabaab that initiated attacks against the UPDF in the month of May in the year 2009 in Mogadishu. The UPDF had gone to Mogadishu, not to fight anybody, but, to stabilise the situation there and to guard the port and the airport. This was after the Somali factions had, in Djibouti, agreed to a shared government and after the American mistakes of manipulating the warlords had failed. We went there under the African Union Flag. You know that flag. It consists of the conspicuously huge map of Africa. Nobody that is not blind can mistake this for anything else.

What IGAD and AU wanted was negotiations to include anybody that had been left out of the Interim Government - especially the groups that had been in Eritrea. In any case, we were in just a small portion of Somalia, at the Port, at the airport and, later on, on the request of the Interim Somali Government, State House and Kilometre 4 (linking the different positions) was added. Even if the Al-Shabaab did not want to negotiate with the Interim Government for any obscure reason, it was not wise to attack the Ugandan and Burundian troops carrying the AU flag. Why do you attack the AU flag? Do you not belong to Africa? If you do not belong to Africa, where do you belong? In any case, big chunks of Somalia, including ports and airports, were under their control. They could build capacity there if they had any ambitions to do so.

However, intoxicated with their bankrupt ideology of Islamic chauvinism (arrogance and narrow-mindedness), they attacked our troops calling them "Kaffir", "Bakafiri" (primitive people that do not know God) just like the European Imperialists used to call us. Well, the "Kaffirs" taught those idiots that we know how to defend the African soil and the African flag. Our well trained and well-

disciplined Army smashed the fanatical attacks of these misled people. Especially in the Ramadhan of August 2010, we smashed the mass attacks of these confused people and advanced to Barawe, Marka, Juba Hotel, Bondhere, Florencia, Telebunka, Elhindi, Santa gate Shigare, Bakara Market, National Stadium, Mogadishu University, Dayinley, Afugoye, Kilometre 50, Elsaalini and Shalambot beyond our original positions of airport, seaport, Kilometre - 4 and State House. They, then, started sniping at our troops from the built up areas. We brought in the commandos that were experts in counter sniping. Between May 2011 and September 2011, at least, 320 Al-Shabaab fighters were killed by UPDF counter snipers. With other attacks and movements, the Al-Shabaab fled from Mogadishu on August 6, 2011. The manipulation of the young moslem youth by their cowardly and criminal leaders promising these unfortunate young people going to heaven (janah) by dying fighting the "Kaffirs" could no longer persuade these poor children to withstand the might of the UPDF. Although I have not bothered to follow the identities of these criminal leaders who send small children (young people in their teens or adolescence) to blow themselves up in futile but criminal suicide attacks, I, sometimes wonder about the moral standing of these leaders. If pre-mature going to heaven is such a good thing, why don't some of these leaders set an example for the young people by blowing themselves up instead of only sending these poor children to die?

After that Al-Shabaab was defeated in Baidoa, Afgooye, Marka, Beledweyne, Kismayu. Therefore, the Al-Shabaab is now attacking shopping malls, football fans, university Students etc. because they are already defeated. They cannot attack anything else - not even a well- guarded Police Station let alone a battalion of the AU forces.

Armed population option

In their bankruptcy and ignorance of war, they miscalculate that attacking soft targets will frighten the Africans and cause them to abandon the Somali People to these idiots. That will not happen. Indeed, while reading Ugandan newspapers of recent, although some commentators were worried, others like Bishop Godfrey Makumbi of West Buganda Diocese, Masaka hit the nail on the head when it comes to cowards who only attack soft targets (children and non-combatants).

In the Monitor newspaper of Wednesday April 22, 2015, Bishop Makumbi reminisced about the "Mchakamchaka" NRM programme of training militarily the whole population to defend itself against terrorists. There, the cowardly and criminal terrorist leaders have the answer from a pacifist Bishop, of all people.

I have not talked about the concept of the Armed Population in recent times in public. In 1980s, 1990s, when some actors were threatening to invade us; we had trained a Militia of two million men and women. All S6 leavers used to get military training. However, with increased Secondary School and University enrolment, the numbers became too big.

We, therefore, suspended that generalized mass training and, instead, concentrated on the areas that had insecurity at that time - Teso, Lango, Karamoja, the Rwenzori Region, etc. In Teso we had a militia (Local Defence Units - LDUs) of 8,000 known as the Arrow boys; in Lango we had another 8,000 and they were called Amuka, etc. Now that the Al-Shabaab can no longer either fight conventional or guerrilla battles against the AU force and they are only relying on terrorist attacks against the soft, innocent targets, we can harden the soft targets with the concept of the Armed Population, maybe, initially, in the threatened areas as defined by intelligence.

In order not to worry Bishop Godfrey Makumbi, we had not forgotten the concept of Mchakamchaka although some of the Western Agencies used to campaign against it. It involves a cost of feeding, clothing, equipping, transporting, training (the bullets), etc. Since we need that money for the roads (as you all can see the impact on that sector), the electricity etc., we had to scale down on the concept of the Armed People - Povo armada, as Frelimo used to call the strategy. However, it is there and it can be re-activated at any time. That is why we have Reserve Force Commanders in all the districts. That is their purpose. I have, actually, already given confidential instructions to the Armed forces (Police, UPDF, ISO, etc.) to re-activate that strategy as guided by intelligence. When the idiots in Mogadishu were calling us "Kaffir", they, probably (in their ignorance), did not know that the UPDF has got thousands of Moslems and that, under the NRM Revolution, we pour scorn and contempt (kuzimuula) sectarianism. It is the ideology of the traitors who hope to weaken the African People by that scheme of dividing us so as to dominate us (divide and rule).

The Somali People are part of the ancient Cushitic People of Africa. Some of these people live in Ethiopia, Sudan, Southern Egypt, East Africa, etc. Some of them are Moslems and others belong to other religions. What right do these sectarian elements have to seek to separate them from the other Cushitic Peoples and, indeed, from the other Africans? To hell, we direct the sectarianists.

The sectarian chauvinists are, first and foremost, the enemies of the Moslem People even before they become enemies of the generality of Africans. Why? Take a look at the map of East Africa, including the Horn of Africa. The Moslems live, mainly, near the Coast (Pwani). Even in the pre-colonial times, not to mention the present capitalist World, the Coast (Pwani) depended for prosperity on the Mainland (Bara) and vice-versa. The pre-colonial peoples of the Great Lakes depended for textiles (emyenda in Runyankore, engoye in Luganda), glass beads (enkwanzi), guns, etc. on the Coast, including Zanzibar. The coast depended on the hinterland for ivory, especially and, unfortunately, for slaves also (a responsibility of the Criminal Chiefs in many cases). In the modern times, by our Coastal People providing efficient services at the Sea Ports (Djibouti, Mogadishu, Kismayu, Mombasa, Tanga, Dar-es-Salaam, etc.), even if they did not do anything else (and there are many things they are better positioned to do e.g. manufacturing using im-

ported inputs), they would be very prosperous on account of the huge volumes of merchandise from and to the interior of the continent. Whose enemy are you when you interfere with this mutually beneficial arrangement? Certainly, the Non-Moslems would lose but so would the Moslems of both the Interior and the Coast. The whole of Africa would lose.

Not all Moslems are al- Shabaab

Finally, I want to also advise those who are shallow and superficial in their analysis even contrary to the facts. The criminals in Kenya have been killing non-Moslems and sparing Moslems. Does it mean that all Moslems support these criminals? Certainly not. How do I know this? There are 2.5 million Somali Moslems in Mogadishu who selected to stay with the AU force instead of going with the Al-Shabaab terrorists.

That is the same story in Baidoa, Kisimayu, Afgooye, Beledweyne, Marka, etc. How many Somalis are with the terrorists out of the total population of Somalis of 10.5 million? According to the 2002 census of Uganda, the Moslem population of Uganda was 12% of the whole population. How many joined the criminal Jamil Mukulu of the ADF? Very few. During the anti-Amin war, although Amin was pretending to use Islam while he was an alcohol drinker, I was always harboured in Kampala by my Moslem comrades -Kibazo Abbas, Zubairi Bakari, Kabala, Mayanja, Lubanga of Jinja etc., etc. Therefore, anybody who suspects all Moslems because a few Moslem criminals are involved in atrocities is wrong. It is like saying that since Joseph Kony of the Lord's Resistance Army was pretending to be a Christian in his crimes, we should suspect all Christians.

I wish to inform those that have a propensity to get confused, that the African populations are always symbiotic. When I was growing up in Ntungamo, I would see this symbiosis. We were cattle keepers in my family. We would exchange products with the cultivators (okucurika-barter trade). However, the few Moslems in the area would also provide a service which the non-Moslem Banyankore (cattle keepers and agriculturalists) were not doing at that time - running butcheries and eating houses (ebirabo). Bigyega, the butcher, was a Moslem, Kapaasi (son of Musa Kilwa), the hotel (ekirabo) owner, was a Moslem and the sons of Amisi Muganzi were the itinerant traders. Siyalo Kiyemba of Mbarara owned buses. Some of these trading and services providers were not only Moslems but also, originally, Baganda. They were providing services that were vital to the other Banyankore (mainly non-Moslem) but which the latter were not providing. Who was the loser in this partnership? Long live the partnership of the wealth creators and down with the parasites that cannot understand the dynamics of wealth creation.

As for the Security issue that we started with, be informed, again, that Al-Shabaab is already defeated. They can no longer attack the Army or even the Police, they cannot fight conventional warfare or guerrilla warfare and, being ideologically bankrupt, they go for terrorism (attacking soft targets). This is curable as already

Terrorism in the World

Australia

With jihadists among us, is IS more of a threat than communism was?



When Australians hear about Foreign Minister Julie Bishop's dire warnings and counter-terrorism raids, they could lose historical perspective on the threat posed by Islamic State. AAP/Mal Fairclough

True, it has been called, by some, a religion. But it is a religion of hatred; it derives from the darkest recesses of the human mind.

This is not Julie Bishop's recent assessment of the variety of Islam espoused by Islamic State (IS or [ISIS](#)), but rather Robert Menzies [describing communism](#) in 1951. With the threats of Nazism and Japanese imperialism defeated, Menzies tried to galvanise the nation against the newest perceived security threat - international communism - through [a referendum](#) that would ban Australia's Communist Party. The referendum failed.

Once the domestic threat was "reds under the beds"; today it is jihadists in our midst. [Counter-terrorism raids](#) in the suburbs, the latest [in Melbourne on Friday](#), and allegations of [imminent attacks](#) reinforce the sense of threat.

Like the contemporary threat of radical jihadist Islam, which was the topic of the foreign minister's recent speech to the Sydney Institute, communism was seen during the Cold War as both an external and internal threat. Communism, it was said, was externally driven by the Soviet Union and domestically sustained by a shadowy cadre of radicalised individuals who rejected the political status quo.

Not unlike contemporary concerns about the seemingly universalist aspirations of IS, communism's internationalist leanings were also viewed as a direct threat to liberalism's own claims to global ideological hegemony.

Yet for Julie Bishop, the Cold War balance of terror, with the hands of the Doomsday Clock locked at two minutes to midnight, was not as dangerous as the ragtag caliphate of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. This was, she declared:

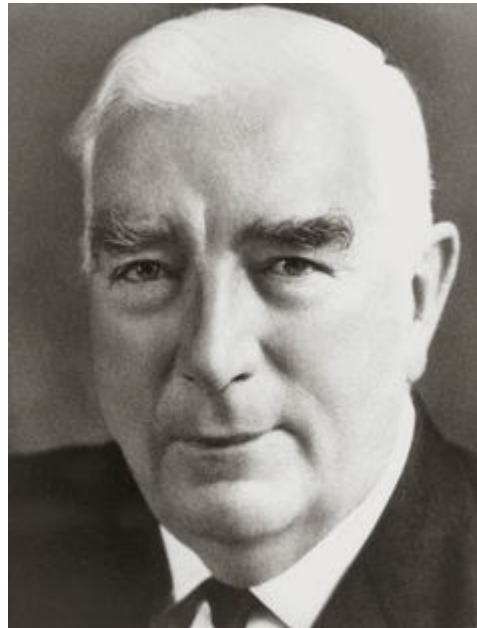
a pernicious force that could, if left unchecked, wield great global power that would threaten the very existence of nation states.

At its most literal level, this claim is unsustainable. The military planners of the West during the Cold War would have wept for joy if their strategic focus could have switched from the USSR, bristling with a nuclear arsenal, to a Middle Eastern insurgency struggling to hold a handful of cities in a region completely destabilised by earlier foreign incursions and civil war.

Is sovereign nations' future at risk?

But sheer military capacity was not really what Bishop was talking about. Her real concern is the threat that IS poses not to any particular nation, but to the very notion of national sovereignty.

In her speech, Bishop argued that the problem is not that IS is militarily more dangerous than the Soviet Union (it clearly is not). Rather, she argued that its transnational, seemingly de-territorialised nature poses a deeper threat to the entire state system.



Robert Menzies argued that the threat of fifth columnists within Australia justified a ban on the Communist Party. AAP



Now that's a threat: a US aircraft photographs a Soviet warship carrying nuclear weapons in a Cuban port, which triggered the 1962 Missile Crisis.

Following common usage, Bishop declared this system, based on the sanctity of the nation state's sovereignty within internationally recognised borders, to be "Westphalian", and hallowed by 400 years of history. By this she presumably meant Western history, given that the ceaselessly expanding global empires of Europe hardly deferred to indigenous notions of sovereignty prior to World War Two.

In fact, the current state system has very little to do with the substance of the treaties signed in Münster and Osnabrück in 1648. The principle of the sanctity of the nation state's sovereignty within its own borders is a thoroughly modern convention. It has developed for the most part for eminently sensible reasons.

Nonetheless, this principle has been more often honoured in the breach than in the observance. As anyone who has watched recent great power intervention in Iraq, Libya and Ukraine can attest, the principle of the sanctity of the sovereign state has already been placed under enormous strain – and not by IS.

Focusing not on the threat that some states pose to the sovereignty of other states, Bishop instead spoke at length about "malevolent non-state actors" operating under the rubric of "global terrorism". Notwithstanding the fact that IS really is malevolent and terrorist, on the finer point of whether it actually represents a

threat to the contemporary “Westphalian” system, Bishop’s analysis slightly misses the point.

Given that its first order of business has been to carve out a territorial state for which it seeks recognition, IS is hardly post-“Westphalian” in its outlook. ISIS may represent a geostrategic threat to stability in the Middle East and North Africa, but this threat is not necessarily a systemic one.

Islamic State needs failed states to survive

This is not to undervalue the nature of the challenge posed by IS. Although more Australians continue to be killed by bee stings, the danger posed by jihadists is very real in some countries. With IS in Syria, Iraq and Libya, now having been joined by [Boko Haram](#) in Nigeria, and with [al-Shabaab](#) in Somalia currently [shifting its allegiances from al-Qaeda](#) to the caliphate, IS certainly represents the most coherent militant Islamist movement in the Middle East and North Africa.

Looking at this list of nations, however, it becomes clear that the danger is most acute in states where central governments are at their weakest. In this sense, Bishop has mistaken cause for effect. Failed or weak states have offered space for Islamic State and other militant jihadis.

Islamic State is not, however, the reason these states have failed. Where the “Westphalian” state is strong, the Caliphate has no hold. It has recourse only to atrocities that, while terrifying and shocking, do not pose a systemic threat.

Interestingly, three of the states where IS is most entrenched, namely Iraq, Libya and Syria, were until recently firmly, indeed ruthlessly, controlled by (more or less) secular dictators: Saddam Hussein, Bashar al-Assad (still technically in office) and Muammar al-Gaddafi (ostensibly the most pious of the three). Often for good reason, all of them were unpopular with the Western great powers. Crucially, however, the erosion of the sovereignty of each of these by large powers has played a significant role in weakening the hold of the state over its territories.

This is hardly in keeping with the notion of “Westphalian” sovereignty to which



Islamic State, under the leadership of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, has only been able to gain a foothold in failed states.

Bishop appealed. When these states were strong, radical Islamists could not find a foothold. This is not for want of trying, as Hafez al-Assad's massacre of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria in 1982 demonstrates.

In concluding her speech, Bishop stressed the importance of tight security measures, which she sees as necessary to protect nation states from transnational jihadis. This might pay a minor dividend in apprehending radicalised individuals domestically.

In terms of Bishop's broader point about the international state system, however, it seems that the best way to protect nation states from ISIS or other forms of terrorism is by respecting the "Westphalian" principle of the sovereignty of nation states. In this way, unpalatable strong states might not be transformed into even more unpalatable failed states.

Interestingly, Bishop's speech offered a small sign that this message might be breaking through. Two small references showed that Australia has perhaps begun to understand that ignoring national sovereignty and pursuing "regime change" is not the most productive way to deal with non-liberal polities. Whereas a few short years ago all signs pointed to an impending Western invasion of Iran, Bishop approvingly referred twice to the insights she had garnered from Australia's apparent newest Middle Eastern ally, Iran. During the Cold War, such overtures might have been called détente.

<http://theconversation.com/>

Iraq

Who might lead ISIS if al-Baghdadi dies?

May 14, 2015



(CNN)For weeks, reports have been circulating that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the caliph of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), was seriously injured in an airstrike back in March.

On Wednesday, the Iraqi Ministry of Defense claimed his No. 2 was killed in a coalition airstrike, a claim the U.S. military has not confirmed.

Martin Chulov of the Guardian, who has good contacts in Iraq and among ISIS supporters, was the first to report that al-Baghdadi may have been injured in a strike on al-Baaj in northern Iraq. [Chulov reported last week](#) that al-Baghdadi "remains incapacitated due to suspected spinal damage and is being treated by two doctors who travel to his hideout from the group's stronghold of Mosul."

A U.S. official told CNN on Monday there is "no information" to indicate al-Baghdadi has been injured and, furthermore, there was recent intelligence indicating he "is a player" and is "absolutely participating" in the day-to-day running of ISIS.

The official said the United States had no information al-Baghdadi was at the location where the airstrike was said to have occurred in March.

Separately, Pentagon spokesman Col. Steven Warren said Monday the United States "has no reason to believe Abu Bakr Al Baghdadi has been injured in a coalition airstrike."

Then, on Thursday, ISIS released an online audio statement in which al-Baghdadi calls for recruits from around the world to "fight in his land or wherever that may be."

CNN Arabic speakers said the voice was consistent with al-Baghdadi's previous recordings and shows no signs of frailty.

Even so, the conflicting reports have spurred interest about other ISIS leaders who might emerge as al-Baghdadi's successor should he be incapacitated or die. ISIS has not publicly anointed a successor, but several senior figures could emerge as the next so-called "caliph."

Frontrunners

Abu Alaa al-Afri

One of them, if he is still alive, is a shadowy operative called Abu Alaa al-Afri, who analysts believe would be expected to take control of the day-to-day running from al-Baghdadi if he was incapacitated. On Tuesday, the Iraqi Defense Ministry claimed a coalition air strike had killed him in Tal Afar in northern Iraq.

The Defense Ministry did not say when he was killed. A senior Iraqi security official who did not want to be named discussing sensitive intelligence told CNN the strike happened Tuesday.

Iraqi authorities have in the past been criticized for making inaccurate claims that ISIS leaders have been killed or injured.

U.S. Central Command said it had "no information to corroborate" that ISIS's second-in-command had been killed in a Coalition airstrike.

Hisham al-Hashimi, an adviser to the Iraqi government, said al-Afri is the deputy leader of ISIS and also goes by the name Abd al-Rahman Mustafa al-Qaduli -- a name that was added to the U.S. Rewards for Justice list just last week. The U.S. State Department offered a \$7 million reward for information on him -- the highest for any ISIS leader apart from Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who is valued at \$10 million.

According to the U.S. Treasury Department, which designated him as a "specially designated global terrorist" exactly a year ago, the man known as al-Qaduli was born in Mosul in either 1957 or 1959.

CNN cannot independently confirm that al-Afri is one and the same as al-Qaduli, but the U.S. government has said that one of al-Qaduli's aliases is Abu Ala. According to the State Department, al-Qaduli joined al Qaeda in Iraq -- the predecessor group to ISIS -- in 2004 and served as the group's deputy leader and its commander in Mosul. In February 2006, he traveled to Pakistan on behalf of al Qaeda leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi to conduct an interview.

Al-Qaduli was captured in Iraq and jailed but released in 2012 and is said to have joined ISIS, spending part of 2012 in Syria, according to the U.S. Treasury.

Al-Afri is reputed to have a background as a physics teacher and to have been Osama bin Laden's favorite candidate for the top job after Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State in Iraq, as it was then called, was killed in a joint operation by U.S. and Iraqi forces north of Baghdad in 2010.

Analysts who track ISIS say al-Afri is from Tal Afar, a town held by ISIS in the north of Iraq and a crucial gateway for the transit of jihadis to and from Mosul. He is one of several ethnic Turkmens at the top of the ISIS hierarchy.

One theory for why he was passed over for the top job is that unlike Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi he was not from a family that could claim direct descent from the Prophet Mohammed.

Some analysts believe al-Afri has been maneuvering to lay claim to the top job.

Al-Afri delivered the sermon at Friday prayers in Mosul's al Zangi mosque last week, the same mosque Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi announced himself last July as the new "caliph," according to Hashimi.

According to an analyst in touch with jihadi sources in Syria and Iraq, al-Afri is attempting to repaint his family history to claim lineage to the Prophet Mohammed.

Some analysts believe al-Afri could only take-over in a caretaker role. Hashimi tells CNN that al-Afri could never take over as Caliph because he is neither Arab nor can credibly claim to be a descendant of the Prophet Mohammed.

Abdullah Alani

Hashimi believes the next "caliph" will almost certainly have to have the appropriate lineage to the Prophet Mohammed. One of the prominent ISIS senior officials who can credibly claim such a lineage is Abdullah Alani, 51, a veteran Jihadi who joined al Qaeda in Iraq in 2004.

"He's one of only two credible options as the next leader of ISIS. He's well known and respected by (al Qaeda leader Ayman) al-Zawahiri and all the top Islamic leaders," Hashimi told CNN.

However, al-Zawahiri's opinion may not count for much. Although formerly subordinated to al Qaeda, ISIS split from its parent organization in early 2014. Today, al Qaeda's Syrian franchise, Jabhat al-Nusra, has declared all-out war on ISIS and there is scant indication of a rapprochement between the two jihadi groups.

Sheikh Younis al-Mashhadani

According to Hashimi, the other credible candidate as the next leader of ISIS is Sheikh Younis al-Mashhadani, a 55-year-old born in Baghdad who joined al Qaeda in Iraq in 2006.

He says that like al-Baghdadi, al-Mashhadani can trace his descent from the Prophet Mohammed through the Qureshi lineage.

Another valuable attribute is that al-Mashhadani has a track record as a religious scholar. For ISIS, the "caliph" should be the supreme political and religious leader of all Sunni Muslims. Like al-Baghdadi, al-Mashhadani has a PhD in Islamic studies from Baghdad University, Hashimi said.

Another factor favoring Mashadani is that he is one of the key figures on the ISIS committee that will select the next "caliph."

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani

Another possible candidate to lead ISIS is its current spokesman, Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, a 38-year old Syrian veteran of the Iraqi insurgency. Al-Adnani is believed to be the most powerful Syrian in the group and one of the group's key leaders inside Syria.

It was al-Adnani who first declared the emergence of a "caliphate" last June. Since then, al-Baghdadi has recorded only one video speech and one audio speech, but al-Adnani has made several audio recordings.

In September, he declared it was the religious duty of ISIS supporters in the West to launch lone-wolf attacks. The recording was a game-changer. In the months that followed there were ISIS-inspired attacks in North America, Europe and Australia. Al-Adnani renewed his call for attacks this past January.

The U.S. Department of State designated al-Adnani as a "specially designated global terrorist" on August 18, 2014, and last week offered \$5 million for information on him. Al-Adnani joined al Qaeda in Iraq in the early days of the Iraq insurgency and fought in Anbar province. He was captured and spent time in custody in Iraq between 2005 and 2010, including, it is believed, at the U.S. detention facility, Camp Bucca.

According to analysts, two things may count against al-Adnani. One is that he is Syrian -- born in a village of near Aleppo -- whereas much of ISIS' top leadership is Iraqi. The other is his relative youth. It may also be too big a leap for him to be promoted from spokesman to leader. But if were to get the top job he would have instant name recognition among ISIS' supporters worldwide.

Other senior leaders

Abu Ali al-Anbari

Abu Ali al-Anbari is head of ISIS' Security Council and has substantial military experience, having been a senior intelligence officer in Saddam Hussein's army. Like al-Qaduli, he is from the northern Iraqi province of Nineveh.

Al-Anbari's role within ISIS became clearer after a raid last year on the home of another ISIS figure, Abu Abdul Rahman al-Bilawi, al-Baghdadi's military chief of staff for Iraqi territory. Memory sticks found during the raid, in which al-Bilawi, was killed, identified al-Anbari as directing military operations in Syria.

However, his previous experience in Saddam's military might make al-Anbari an unpopular choice among foreign fighters and more militant Salafists inside ISIS.

One problem with al-Anbari fronting ISIS would be his well-known background as an ex-Saddam Hussein military officer. Such, after all, would dilute the terror army's promulgated claim to be a purist Islamic organization rather than one composed heavily of former Iraqi Baathists. It may be that al-Anbari's role is better suited as kingmaker for the organization.

Abu Atheer al-Absi

As the head of ISIS media committee, Abu Atheer al-Absi is one of the five most powerful figures within ISIS, according to Hashimi. Little is known about al-Absi. According to Charles Lister, a fellow at the Brookings Institution in Doha, al-Absi served for a while as the ISIS "governor" of Aleppo.

Nima abd Naif al-Jubury

Nima abd Naif al-Jubury, or Abu Fatima al Jaheishi, is the current head of the ISIS military committee, according to Hashimi, one of the five top positions in ISIS. In February 2014, Saudi-owned news outlet al-Arabiya reported that al-Jubury had been in charge of ISIS operations in southern Iraq before relocating to the northern city of Kirkuk, which is now controlled by Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government. His whereabouts are not known.

Abdul Rahman al-Talabani

Abdul Rahman al-Talabani is the head of ISIS's religious committee, according to Hashimi, another of the top five. There is little information on him.

Abu Bakr al-Khatooni

Abu Bakr al-Khatooni, is the head of the ISIS Shura committee, the top leadership body of the organization, according to Hashimi.

Abu Omar al-Shishani

Abu Omar al-Shishani (real name: Tarkhan Batirashvili), a former member of an elite Georgian military unit, has a reputation as one of ISIS's most capable military commanders, and is believed to be responsible for some of its key territorial conquests in Syria.

He reportedly saw action during the 2008 Russo-Georgia war, but then left the military and spent time in jail for the illegal possession of weapons. He traveled to Syria in 2012 where he led a fighting brigade from the Caucasus before pledging allegiance to al-Baghdadi the following year.

According to Hashimi, al-Shishani is now ISIS's special brigade leader.

Last week, the United States Department offered \$5 million for information on him. In May 2013, ISIS appointed him the commander of operations in several provinces of northern Syria.

According to the State Department, he has been a member of the ISIS Shura Council and "previously oversaw an ISIS prison facility in al-Taqba where ISIS possibly held foreign hostages" and "worked closely" with ISIS's financial section. Al-Shishani is unlikely to ever assume the top job of ISIS because he is not an Arab and has no pedigree as an Islamic scholar.

Shishani's strategic prowess is celebrated in ISIS and has been since he oversaw the taking of Menagh Airbase in Aleppo from the regime of Syria's Bashar al-Assad in August 2013. Since then, however, many of the Caucasian and Central Asian jihadists who have fought alongside him have questioned his savvy and the sensationalized media coverage about him.

Shishani relies almost exclusively on "cannon fodder" -- or suicide bombers -- to take terrain, one jihadist known as Khalid, who is now affiliated with Jabhat al-Nusra, noted on a Russian jihadi forum last year. "Umar Shishani is a person who is absolutely useless in military terms," Khalid wrote.

Tariq Al-Harzi

Like al-Adnani, al-Harzi is not Iraqi, but was "one of the first foreign fighters" to join ISIS, according to the U.S. government. Al-Harzi is Tunisian and is believed to be in charge of the group's operations beyond Iraq and Syria -- operations that have become much more significant in recent months as ISIS has established a foothold in Libya and gained affiliates in Nigeria and Egypt among other places.

Al-Harzi has also been in charge of obtaining weapons from Libya, according to the U.S. State Department. He was added to the U.S. Designated Terrorist List in 2014 and has become known as the "emir of suicide bombers."

According to a jihadist profile of al-Harzi, he was freed from Abu Ghraib prison during an ISIS raid in July 2013. His younger brother was detained in Tunisia for a while

in connection with the murder of the U.S. ambassador in Libya, Christopher Stevens.

The fact that al-Harzi is Tunisian and lacks the religious authority of someone like al-Baghdadi makes him an unlikely choice as caliph, but he is by most accounts an important player in the organization. There is a \$3 million reward on offer from the U.S. State Department for information on al-Harzi, which led the ISIS-supporting Ifriqiyah Media to send him a message of congratulations last week.

Opaque leadership structure

All these men appear to be still active and involved in the ISIS hierarchy, even though only one of them -- al-Adnani -- is ever heard by the outside world.

But divining the leadership structure of such a secretive organization is extraordinarily difficult. And ISIS has lost several key figures in recent months. In December last year, CNN reported that according to a senior U.S. military official, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's deputy in Iraq, Haji Mutazz (aka Abu Muslim al Turkmani) was one of several prominent ISIS officials to have been killed in recent airstrikes.

At the time, then-Pentagon spokesman Rear Adm. John Kirby said that since mid-November "targeted coalition airstrikes successfully killed multiple senior and mid-level leaders" within ISIS.

The constant pressure on ISIS makes any reliable analysis of its leadership structure more difficult, but analysts have no doubt that such a structured organization has a succession plan -- and the machinery to put a new leader in place swiftly should al-Baghdadi die.

CNN's Barbara Starr contributed to this report.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2015/05/11/middleeast/isis-leadership/index.html>

Africa-Based Islamist Jihadi Groups Cannot Be Ignored In Fight Against Terrorism

05/06/2015

Although the United States continues to exert an aggressive counterterrorism campaign in the Middle East, the spread of Islamist ideology on the African continent has received comparatively little attention despite the numerous violent attacks perpetrated over the past several months.

Last week, the House Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Terrorism and Counterterrorism held a hearing to examine the terrorist threat from groups across Africa and assess what more must be done to protect the US homeland from attacks launched by these groups.

"In recent months, we have seen Africa-based Islamist terrorist groups perpetrate numerous acts of violence against innocent people," subcommittee chairman Peter King (R-NY) said. "As Islamist jihadi groups extend their influence in Africa, they are increasingly calling for more attacks on US and Western interests, including attacks on the US homeland. As we fight ISIS and Al Qaeda in Syria and Iraq, we cannot afford to ignore their allies and affiliates in Africa."

Last year, the kidnapping of 276 Nigerian schoolgirls by the Islamist extremist group Boko Haram sparked outrage worldwide and the "Bring Back Our Girls" campaign. Many of the girls were sold into slavery, prostitution, and forced marriages. Last week, news broke that the Nigerian military had rescued hundreds of girls from Boko Haram, but there is still no sign of the Chibok schoolgirls.

According to Amnesty International, at least 2,000 women and girls have been abducted by Boko Haram since the start of 2014, and many have been forced into sexual slavery and trained to fight. Commenting on the report, Salil Shetty, Amnesty International's Secretary General, said, "The evidence presented in this shocking report, one year after the horrific abduction of the Chibok girls, underlines the scale and depravity of Boko Haram's methods."

In February, *Homeland Security Today* reported that Boko Haram extended its reach with attacks in Chad, Cameroon and Niger. They also extended their reach in the virtual world with the establishment of their own Twitter feed in January, signaling that they have learned from other terrorist groups, such as the Islamic State (ISIS) and Al Qaeda, the importance of social media as a mechanism for spreading propaganda and recruiting followers.

The kidnapping of the Chibok schoolgirls is not the only incident of recent terrorist violence in Africa. Over Easter, Kenyans mourned the nearly 150 people killed in an attack by Al Shabaab gunmen on a university campus. In February, Somalia-based Al Shabaab released a video detailing the group's September 2013 attack on the

Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya, and called for Muslims living in the West to carry out similar attacks on Western shopping malls, including the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn., West Edmonton Mall in Canada and the Oxford Street shopping area in London.

In addition to Boko Haram, ISIS and Al Shabaab, King said there are splinter groups and smaller sympathetic jihadist organizations in almost every North African nation, indicating that Africa is clearly ripe ground for terrorist recruiting activities.

“As like-minded Islamist groups join forces and conquer new territory in Africa, it is time the leaders of the United States treat every source of terrorism as the sobering threat it is—whether that source is in Syria or Somalia, in Mosul or Mozambique, in Tikrit or Tunis,” said King.

Two rival jihadist models in Africa

Although ISIS often gets the headlines, Al Qaeda is an equally formidable force on the African continent, and there's little doubt both pose a threat to Western interests in Africa, according to Thomas Joscelyn, senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

Both groups are attempting to expand their international footprint—and they have been successful in recent months. Both Boko Haram and Ansar Bayt Al Maqdis have pledged allegiance to ISIS, which has helped ISIS gain footing in Africa. As part of its competition with ISIS, Al Qaeda has stepped up affiliation, establishing relationships with groups in the Caucasus, Tunisia and India.

In addition, the two groups have launched a number of successful high-profile attacks across the African continent in recent years. In February, ISIS released a propaganda video titled, “A Message Signed with Blood to the Nation of the Cross,” which showed the beheading of 21 Egyptian Copts by jihadists. And then in March, ISIS claimed responsibility for the massacre at the Bardo National Museum in Tunis, which killed 20 people, many of whom were foreign tourists.

In addition to being behind the attack on Garissa University College in Kenya, groups linked to Al Qaeda also carried out the September 11, 2012 attack on the US Mission and annex in Benghazi and the raid on the US Embassy in Tunis three days later.

Still, there are differences between the two organizations. ISIS wants the world to see its international footprint, using online tools and social media to call and claim responsibility for attacks, recruit followers, and spread propaganda. Al Qaeda, on the other hand, is more clandestine in nature and often masks the extent of its influence.

For example, in a report published in August 2012, “Al Qaeda in Libya: A Profile,” the Defense Department’s Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office concluded that Al Qaeda had a clandestine strategy for building up its presence inside Libya. Al Qaeda deliberately hides its presence in African countries, often using alter-

native names, such as Ansar al Sharia, to hide its designs.

Joscelyn says, “This simple tactic has led to some deep biases in the public reporting on jihadism in Africa and elsewhere. Namely, the extent of al Qaeda’s international network is consistently underestimated. And in some ways ISIS’ international presence has been overestimated.”

“This observation is not intended to downplay the seriousness of ISIS’ international expansion. ISIS’ “provinces” have grown dramatically in some key areas. But exposing al Qaeda’s clandestine strategy provides key context for understanding the unfolding story inside Africa,” Joscelyn added.

One of the dangers of ISIS’ expansion in Africa is the terrorist group’s efforts to not only gain local recruits, but to attract foreign fighters from around the world. For example, ISIS called for new recruits in West Africa when it announced its merger with Boko Haram.

“All Muslims, you should all come to your State, for we are calling on you to mobilize for jihad,” ISIS spokesman Abu Muhammad Al Adnani said in March. “We incite you and call upon you to immigrate for jihad and to immigrate to your brothers in West Africa.”

According to Joscelyn, ISIS has attracted at least one American recruit to wage jihad in Africa. The FBI has alleged that Specialist Hasan R. Edmonds, a member of the Army National Guard in Illinois, intended to join ISIS in North Africa.

“I am fine being in Egypt, Sham, or Libya to be honest akhi [brother],” Edmonds said, according to the FBI. “I just want to answer the call.”

Al Qaeda continues to pose a threat on the continent as well. Al Qaeda has two official, regional branches in Africa: Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Al Shabaab in Somalia. Senior Al Qaeda operatives within Al Shabaab’s ranks have planned attacks in the West. When one of these leaders, Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, was killed in 2011, authorities found plans for attacking London in Fazul’s possession.

There are also a number of other jihadist groups in Africa that are part of Al Qaeda’s international network including Ajnad Misr (Egypt), Ansar al Din (Mali), Ansar al Sharia Libya, Ansar al Sharia Tunisia (which has been inactive of late), Ansaru (Nigeria), Al Mourabitoun (North Africa and Mali) and the Uqba bin Nafi Brigade (Tunisia), and Al Muhajiroun (the “Emigrants of East Africa”).

However, with thousands of foreign fighters under its banner, the momentum is on ISIS’ side, according to Daniel Byman, director of research, Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution. ISIS’ mastery of social media has proven effective in mobilizing “lone wolves” to attack in the West and luring new recruits to Syria.

Just recently, *Homeland Security Today* reported that a United Nations report found the number of foreign fighters leaving their home nations to join extremist groups in Iraq, Syria and other nations has hit record levels, with estimates of over 25,000 foreign fighters coming from nearly 100 countries.

While Byman states that “Who will emerge triumphant is not clear,” he believes the “Islamic State’s rise risks Al Qaeda’s demise.” In turn, the US should exploit this split to weaken the movement and decrease the threat to the US at home and abroad.

“The United States and its allies should try to exploit the fight between ISIS and Al Qaeda and, ideally, diminish them both,” Byman said. “The infighting goes against what either organization claims to want, and it diminishes the appeal of jihad if volunteers believe they will be fighting the jihadist down the block rather than the Asad regime, Americans, Shi’a, or other enemies.”

Byman added, “The Islamic State’s self-proclaimed mission—establishing and expanding a caliphate—is also a vulnerability. If it fails at this mission by losing territory, its luster will diminish.”

Ultimately, however, questions regarding the rivalries and links between the terrorist organizations should not obfuscate the important reality that these Islamist jihadists are all fighting for the same goal: establishment of a global caliphate.

“While there are important differences between ISIS and Al Qaeda, and the two are at odds with one another in a variety of ways, they are both inherently anti-American and anti-Western,” Joscelyn said. “Thus, they constitute a threat to our interests everywhere their jihadists fight.”

Similarly, *Homeland Security Today* Editor In Chief Anthony Kimery has consistently reported that, “It doesn’t matter what a particular group calls itself, they’re all jihadists working toward the common goal of eliminating or subjugating Infidels and Apostates and imposing global sharia.”

US response to rising jihadist threat on the African continent

Time and time again, the US has made the mistake of underestimating the threat posed by Africa-based jihadists to US persons and interests at home and abroad, according to the testimony of Dr. J. Peter Pham, director of the Africa Center.

For example, the Subcommittee on Intelligence and Counterterrorism convened a hearing on Boko Haram in 2011 when the terrorist group was still obscure. Pham, who participated at that hearing, said other witnesses believed Boko Haram was simply a misunderstood social justice movement that should not be placed on the foreign terrorist organization list.

“There is a recurring trope that emerges time and again: terrorism in Africa generally gets short shrift and, when attention is focused on specific groups or situations that appear to be emerging challenges, the threat is either dismissed entirely or minimized—until tragedy strikes,” Pham said.

Since its establishment, US Africa Command's (USAFRICOM) military and counter-terrorism efforts have been hindered by lack of resources. Although the commanders of USAFRICOM have managed well with what they had, adequate resources will be essential to supporting intelligence in the region.

"Given the geopolitical, economic, and security stakes, the failure to invest more in institutions, personnel, training, and strategic focus is incredibly shortsighted," Pham said.

Byman agreed, stating efforts to diminish the appeal and strength of both Al Qaeda and ISIS through intelligence-gathering and the strengthening of local regimes must be "properly resourced and bureaucratically prioritized."

As the US deepens its relationship with Africa, an unwanted consequence will be an increased risk to the US homeland. With the strategic importance of the United States' relationship with Africa, the answer is not to curtail engagement, but rather to devote adequate resources to securing against threats originating in Africa.

"The administration and the Congress deserve credit for efforts over the last few years to shift the narrative on Africa towards a greater focus on the extraordinary opportunities on the continent," Pham said.

"However," Pham continued, "if this momentum is to be maintained and those opportunities grasped, the United States needs to redouble its own efforts and also work closely with its African partners to manage the challenges and overcome terrorism and other the threats to security which stand in the way to an incredibly promising future."

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

Yemen

Et si le Yémen implosait?



Le 20 avril, à Sanaa, après l'attaque d'une base de missiles Scud par les Saoudiens.

Depuis des semaines, l'Arabie saoudite mène des bombardements aériens dans un pays miné par les guerres intestines et le terrorisme. C'est la seule solution, estime Riyad, pour barrer la route au grand rival iranien. La seule et la pire?

Le Yémen est le pays le plus pauvre du monde arabe, mais son destin pourrait avoir des conséquences bien au-delà de ses frontières. Car son territoire occupe une position hautement stratégique sur le détroit de Bab el-Mandeb, point névralgique du commerce maritime mondial: c'est par là que transitent les navires entre l'océan Indien et la Méditerranée, via la mer Rouge et le canal de Suez. En 2013, près de 4 millions de barils de pétrole ont emprunté le détroit qui, à son point le plus étroit, mesure 33 kilomètres. A l'ouest, côté africain, Français et Américains possèdent des bases militaires à Djibouti; leurs radars surveillent le développement de la crise au Yémen, un pays montagneux de 25 millions d'âmes, où les affinités tribales sont changeantes et complexes.

Qui se souvient encore que ces terres étaient naguère l'"Arabie heureuse", supposée avoir abrité, sous l'Antiquité, le royaume de la reine de Saba? Aujourd'hui, le territoire est déchiré par des conflits multiples, où les luttes d'influence se mêlent aux querelles confessionnelles et aux actions antiterroristes. Il apparaît surtout comme un nouvel élément de l'échiquier dans la longue partie d'échecs géopolitique que se livrent, par acteurs interposés, l'Arabie saoudite et l'Iran. Les populations civiles en sont les premières victimes.

Installés dans le nord du pays, à proximité de l'Arabie saoudite, les houthistes ont

longtemps été un groupe d'insurgés connus des seuls spécialistes de la région. D'obédience zaydite, une variante du chiisme dont étaient issus les anciens rois du Yémen, ce sont pourtant eux qui, en septembre dernier, ont pris la capitale, Sanaa, et entourent désormais Aden, le grand port du Sud. Marginalisés pendant des années, ils ont prospéré sur un sentiment d'abandon des élites qu'ils accusent d'être corrompues. Désormais, fonctionnaires et ministres travaillent sous le contrôle inopiné de "comités révolutionnaires" houthistes. Dans un récent documentaire (1), la caméra suit l'un de ces justiciers autoproclamés, portant cravate et revolver: dans le bureau du vice-ministre des Finances, qu'il envahit sans prévenir, il tape du poing sur la table et exige plus de transparence dans l'utilisation des fonds...

Une chasse gardée pour les Saoudiens

Qui soutient ces curieux rebelles? Riyad accuse Téhéran de fournir aux houthistes armes et logistique, ce que dément le régime des mollahs. Gardienne de deux principaux lieux saints de l'islam sunnite, la monarchie saoudienne ne peut tolérer, après la perte de l'Irak, en 2003, l'avènement d'un nouvel Etat chiite soutenu par l'Iran. D'autant qu'il considère le voisin yéménite comme sa chasse gardée: "Depuis la fixation des frontières, qui entérine l'annexion de trois provinces méridionales par le traité de Taëf, en 1934, les autorités de Riyad estiment que le Yémen relève de la sécurité intérieure du royaume", souligne David Rigoulet-Roze, chercheur à l'Institut français d'analyse stratégique. La monarchie saoudienne entretient des relations complexes et ambiguës avec les multiples acteurs de la scène politique yéménite, rappelle Pierre Razoux, directeur de recherche et enseignant à Sciences po Paris: "Entre 1962 et 1970, par exemple, durant la guerre civile qui met fin à l'imamat millénaire zaydite, les Saoudiens appuient les houthistes chiites pour mieux contrer les milices et l'armée égyptienne nassériennes, présentes sur place. Ironie de l'histoire, Riyad et Le Caire sont aujourd'hui alliés contre ces houthistes!"

En 1990, après la fin de la guerre froide, le pays, divisé depuis le début du XXe siècle, unifie son territoire sous la férule du président Ali Abdallah Saleh. Une évolution initialement soutenue par Riyad. Vingt et un ans plus tard, dans la fièvre des "printemps arabes", les Saoudiens accompagnent sa chute du pouvoir, au profit de l'actuel chef de l'Etat, Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi, élu en 2012. Mais la contestation, alimentée par des différends régionaux, tribaux ou confessionnels, n'a jamais cessé. Et elle dégénère avec le soulèvement des houthistes, combattants chevronnés, à partir de 2013.

"Gouverner le Yémen, selon la formule de l'ex-président Saleh, c'est danser sur la tête des serpents." Un exercice pénible pour les intéressés et difficile à suivre pour les spectateurs! Preuve en est, le même Saleh est désormais un des alliés objectifs de ses ennemis d'hier, les houthistes, dans l'espoir que les rebelles faciliteront son retour au pouvoir. Chassé de son palais présidentiel en mars dernier, Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi s'est réfugié à Riyad.



Des houthistes manifestent contre l'intervention de Riyad. Ces insurgés contrôlent la capitale yéménite depuis septembre 2014.

Commencée le 26 mars, [la campagne aérienne](#), interrompue puis recommencée, n'a guère atteint ses objectifs. Sanaa, en particulier, reste entre les mains des rebelles houthistes. Les Saoudiens iront-ils jusqu'au bout de leur logique militaire en menant [une opération terrestre](#), lourde de menaces? Certains, à Riyad, en sont déjà convaincus. Dans un sens, cependant, l'essentiel a déjà eu lieu: l'Arabie saoudite est entrée en guerre. Et cela change tout.

L'allié américain placé devant le fait accompli

Car l'offensive de Riyad succède à une longue période de léthargie, due à la maladie de l'ancien roi Abdallah, durant la vague des "printemps arabes". Intrônisé en janvier, le [nouveau roi Salman](#) est épaulé par une jeune génération de princes ambitieux - dont Mohammed ben Nayef, le ministre de l'Intérieur, qui vient d'être promu, à 55 ans, prince héritier du royaume, et Mohammed ben Salman, âgé d'une trentaine d'années, nommé ministre de la Défense par son père. Tous sont déterminés à préserver le leadership régional saoudien, en contrant l'influence croissante du grand rival régional, l'Iran, qui soutient le régime de [Bachar el-Assad](#) en Syrie, les milices chiites qui se battent contre les djihadistes du groupe Etat islamique, en Irak, et contrôle le Hezbollah, au Liban.

Craignant d'être encerclé, Riyad a rassemblé sous sa bannière huit autres pays arabes sunnites, quitte à placer devant le fait accompli son allié historique américain. Washington soutient l'opération en fournissant renseignements et ravitail-

leurs en vol, mais les Saoudiens soupçonnent l'administration Obama de vouloir conclure à tout prix un accord avec Téhéran sur son programme nucléaire contesté. Sur le plan militaire, la monarchie saoudienne se sent pousser des ailes: pour la première fois, son armée a assumé le commandement d'une opération aérienne d'envergure, en coalition.

"Cela demande un bon niveau d'interopérabilité, remarque le général Jean-Patrick Gaviard, ancien chef des opérations de l'armée française. La coalition fonctionne comme un mini Otan des forces arabes. Cependant, leurs règles d'engagement sont moins strictes, d'où les centaines de victimes civiles."

image: http://static.lexpress.fr/medias_10414/w_640,c_fill,g_north/ana-3331_5332361.jpg



Le ministre des Affaires étrangères saoudien (au centre) accueille ses homologues des Emirats arabes unis (à gauche) et de Bahrein (à droite), le 30 avril.

Avec la fougue des nouveaux venus, les dirigeants saoudiens foncent-ils, tête baissée, dans un piège ? "Ce n'est pas exclu, suggère David Rigoulet-Roze. Une intervention était inévitable dès lors que les milices descendaient sur le port d'Aden, très éloigné de leur base du nord. Mais, après les bombardements, quelle est la vision stratégique de Riyad? Le régime semble confronté à une impasse, car les Saoudiens n'apparaissent pas en mesure de se lancer à la conquête du Yémen." Pierre Razoux est d'accord: "L'Iran a avancé son pion houthiste pour faire passer un mes-

sage à Riyad, accusé de subventionner indirectement les djihadistes du groupe Etat islamique en Syrie et en Irak. Le régime des mollahs veut pousser la monarchie à accepter une discussion plus large sur la situation régionale." Dès la fin du mois de mars, Téhéran a présenté à l'Organisation des Nations unies un plan visant à pacifier le Yémen, qui prévoit une trêve suivie de négociations entre toutes les parties, facilitées par des médiateurs extérieurs. Depuis peu, cependant, le ton monte: le général Mohammad Ali Jafari, chef des Gardiens de la révolution, l'unité d'élite de l'armée iranienne, accuse l'"Arabie saoudite traîtresse" de "marcher dans les pas d'Israël".

Comme l'Irak et la Syrie, avant lui, le Yémen est entraîné dans une polarisation confessionnelle nouvelle. Et ici aussi, dans l'attente d'une solution politique, les djihadistes profitent du chaos: une nouvelle unité qui se réclame du groupe Etat islamique a revendiqué un attentat, il y a peu, tandis qu'Al-Qaïda dans la péninsule Arabique, la franchise la plus dangereuse du groupe terroriste, a pris le contrôle de la ville portuaire de Moukalla, qui dispose d'un aéroport et d'un terminal pétrolier. Mais ceux-là ne sont pas visés par la campagne en cours... Ce qui ne manque d'intriguer sur le jeu saoudien. A long terme, pour Riyad, ils risquent de se révéler au moins aussi menaçants que les houthistes.

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