AFRICAN UNION
الاتحاد الإفريقي

UNION AFRICAINE
UNIÃO AFRICANA

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

ACSRT / CAERT

African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism

Terrorism

Bi-weekly Press Review

1 - 15 October 2015

Review no. 101

ACSRT / CAERT
African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism

Press Review
1-15 October 2015

Table of Contents

African Union

The African Union strongly condemns the Boko Haram terrorist attacks in Chad and Cameroon

Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, condemns in the strongest terms the barbaric attacks perpetrated by the Boko Haram terrorist group against innocent civilians in a market and in a refugee camp in the village of Baga Sola, Western Chad, and in the village of Kangaleri, in the far north region of Cameroon, on 10 and 11 October 2015, respectively. These attacks killed fifty people and wounded many others.

The Chairperson of the Commission expresses the AU's condolences to the families of the victims and wishes speedy recovery to the wounded. She reiterates the AU's solidarity with the Governments and peoples of Chad and Cameroon, as well as of the two other countries affected by the activities of the Boko Haram terrorist group, namely Niger and Nigeria.

The Chairperson of the Commission reaffirms the AU's commitment to continue working with the countries of the Lake Chad Basin Commission – LCBC (Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria), as well as with Benin, towards the full operationalization of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) mandated to combat the Boko Haram terrorist group. She appeals to the larger international community to enhance its support to the countries of the region, in order to neutralize the Boko Haram terrorist group.

L'Union africaine condamne fermement les attaques perpétrées par le groupe terroriste Boko Haram au Tchad et au Cameroun

Addis Abéba, le 12 octobre 2015 : La Présidente de la Commission de l'Union africaine (UA), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, condamne dans les termes les plus énergiques les attaques barbares perpétrées par le groupe terroriste Boko Haram contre des civils innocents dans un marché et un camp de réfugiés situés dans le village de Baga Sola, à l'ouest du Tchad, et dans le village de Kangaleri, dans l'extrême nord du Cameroun, respectivement les 10 et 11 octobre 2015. Ces attaques ont fait 50 morts et blessé plusieurs autres.

La Présidente de la Commission exprime les condoléances de l'UA aux familles des victimes et souhaite prompt rétablissement aux blessés. Elle réitère la solidarité de l'UA avec les peuples et les Gouvernements du Tchad et du Cameroun, ainsi que des deux autres pays touchés par les activités du groupe terroriste Boko Haram, à savoir le Niger et le Nigéria.

La Présidente de la Commission renouvelle l'engagement de l'UA à continuer à œuvrer avec les pays de la Commission du Bassin du Lac Tchad — CBLT (Cameroun, Niger, Nigéria et Tchad), ainsi qu'avec le Bénin, en vue de l'opérationnalisation intégrale de la Force multinationale mixte (FMM) chargée de lutter contre le groupe terroriste Boko Haram. Elle lance un appel à la communauté internationale pour qu'elle renforce son appui aux pays de la région, afin de neutraliser le groupe terroriste Boko Haram.

How much is opium for people? Publicist's polemic notes

Oct 10 , 2015

How much is opium for people? If anyone remembers, the fictional character Bender asked the priest Foydor this question, who was engaged in the search for treasures not belonging to him with an inappropriate energy for a priest. Watching the tragic events that are taking place in the Arab world, where instead of the democracy and rule of law promised by the West, chaos, destruction, mass violence and murder hold sway, it is the right time to ask the same question: "How much is that opium for the people?" And why do the people of Iraq, Syria, Libya have to pay such a high price for the ghostly alluring deception called the 'Arab Spring'?

Today, it would seem, everything has already been said about the redistribution of energy resources and about the battle for a new world order in which the US will unilaterally rule the world with the tacit approval of the leaders of the European countries, and about the dire results of this policy, reminiscent of the prologue of the upcoming World War III.

I as a journalist am interested in the psychological aspect of this problem. You know, what is interesting, the strikes have been applied first of all ar those countries, which were headed by leaders, strong personalities firmly handling the reins of government. The leader Muammar Gaddafi, President of Iraq Saddam Hussein, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak were outstanding statesmen, whatever the attitude towards them was. From the perspective of European democracy, their methods of

governance were tough, sometimes cruel, and the period of them being in power was too long. However, they knew their people, understood their psychology and had a clear vision of how to maintain stability in such a volatile region.

A nation without a strong leader can easily be converted into a crowd, and a country without a leader is easy to immerse into a situation of controlled chaos. All this is well known to the people who possessed the sophisticated political techniques and thought up the script of 'Arab Spring'. That is why they began their 'crusade' against the Arab countries to overthrow idols. What the Western hirelings have done to the legitimate presidents of Iraq, Egypt and Libya is a shameful page in the history of these countries. Lets remember what the bloody campaign of the Bolsheviks against its own people started with: from the murder of the royal family, including women and children. Do you know why? Because after all this, everything was made possible, because it was the moral threshold beyond which society, if it wants to remain civilized, should not move. In Iraq and Libya, this threshold has been crossed. The societies have been plunged into lawlessness after the barbaric executions and trampling of their legitimate rulers.

The results of these actions for the West itself are well-known. Today, the countries of Europe, being concerned with an unprecedented influx of refugees, are reaping the benefits of their own policies.

Unfortunately, the well-known paradox of Hegel says that history teaches that it teaches nothing. For many months, Europe and the United States have been trying to overthrow Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad by every means. The Syrian opposition has been funded well to perform this, a civil war that split the country and made refugees of almost 4 million people has been provoked to achieve this goal. As for the motives of the stubborn resistance to the regime of Bashar al-Assad, as well as regarding to his personality, different points of view can be expressed. However, the fact is that, after his voluntary or forced departure, Syria will cease to exist as an independent state and will be plunged into complete and permanent chaos, perhaps no one is in doubt about this. Everyone has the examples of Afghanistan, Egypt, Libya and Iraq. Therefore, I personally have taken the news that Russia has decided to fight in Syria with sympathy, its air force on the side of the legitimate government. Moreover, in contrast to Europe and to arrogant and infantile overseas powers, the Russians know how to fight. So there can be no doubt about the success of the Syrian operations...

But this is so, by the way. In this situation I am concerned about another circumstance that our suffering and yet still full of grace post-Soviet region for some time now has also become the object of political experiments and unprecedented political pressure.

We started with Georgia in 2003. Well, its leader was quite weak, despite his high-profile political regalia. Eduard Shevardnadze was the first who fell under the on-

slaught of the ‘Rose Revolution’. Subsequently, in 2006 there was the ‘Tulip Revolution’ in Kyrgyzstan. The scientist-intellectual, Askar Akayev, was also unable to resist attempts to usurp power, and left the country. Since then, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan have plunged into a state of permanent political conflicts, crises and disagreements. I wouldn't say that people in both cases did not get anything. Even Victor Hugo said that "if poverty leads to revolution, revolution definitely leads to poverty."

Then the Western political scientists turned their attention to Belarus, with its vast open spaces, hard-working people, strong industrial and agricultural potential. But here's the rub, they found a spit on a stone. The head of the country was Lukashenko the ‘Dad’, a true leader, who towered over his people. The West used the full range of methods to influence the 'Dad', abundantly watered mud in the media, sanctions were imposed, the country was excommunicated from the Council of the European Parliamentary Assembly. Nothing helped. Lukashenko was successfully re-elected for a new and a new term, but the country also stubbornly did not want to turn from the road of political stability and economic development. Today, the West has realized that it is impossible to beat the 'Dad', and it graciously said that it is ready to lift the sanctions against Belarus.

After that they turned to Ukraine, where there was no strong leader. The export of the revolution succeeded very quickly, but people will have to disentangle the consequences for decades to come ...

Now it is time for Azerbaijan. It would seem that the West is itching Azerbaijan, a country with a predominantly Shiite population, though being secular, tolerant, not seen among the world's debtors, is not begging for loans with outstretched hand in the European financial dressing room, plus a country almost single-handedly carrying transcontinental energy and communication projects, which Europe needs. It strongly supports the EU in the fight against terrorism, extremism and organized crime. And it holds the Global Humanitarian Forum, engaged with a major charity in Europe, holds a Europe-wide celebration for the athletes of the continent, watches the stability in the region, although, frankly, the patience of the Azerbaijani people, who have lost 20% of their territory, is coming to its limit.

Nevertheless, the Western strategists have launched a real information war without rules against Azerbaijan, and the anti-Azerbaijani lobbyists punctually accept insulting our country's resolutions, even agreeing to the possibility of adopting certain sanctions.

And here once again the problem of a strong leader who enjoys the unconditional support of his people comes to the fore. This leader is able to speak loudly about the national interests of the state, it does not allow to interfere in the internal affairs of the country, and at the crucial moment can say the word ‘no’. And our 'sworn friends' in the West are very disappointed: because so much money is spent on grants, with such diligence ‘agents of influence’ have been grown, the fifth column has been almost ready. But, then their plans for the next export of revolution were

disrupted. And 'agents of influence' have been neutralized, and the fifth column has been identified and the pumping channels of the grants have been blocked. Is it impossible to stay away from aggression and critics of Azerbaijan in this case? And there is a very convenient excuse, the arrest and subsequent conviction of several so-called human rights defenders (who, however, they were protecting is on their conscience). Under the slogan of 'human rights' there are so many things you can write off. Even a military invasion. Even a coup. After all, almost everything works. And then everything is broken off. It's a shame! ...

Despite the irony, the rather harsh reaction of Ilham Aliyev and his team to the anti-Azerbaijani resolution of the European Parliament is quite justified, as well as the decision to suspend the membership of the Milli Majlis in the PA 'Euronest'. The time for diplomatic niceties and misunderstandings, controversy and sluggish imitation of political dialogue has gone. The time has come to call a spade a spade.

Our interlocutors in the European institutions have simply stopped listening to us or understanding us, and the dialogue has become a mentoring monologue with sharply critical notes. Of course, Azerbaijan will never reconcile with the tone. President Ilham Aliyev has repeatedly emphasized in his speeches that it is impossible to talk with us from a position of strength, they cannot dictate their terms to us. We are standing for a constructive political dialogue of equals.

There is another important point: we do not want our fates and the fates of our children to be decided by someone else. Therefore, in the current difficult situation, the Azerbaijani voters stand behind their president. Because people understand that this is not an issue of power and opposition, it is, if you want, a national issue. The tragic events in the Middle East, Georgia, Ukraine became a good lesson for us ...

Many in the country are aware that to support the president, his efforts, his foreign policy means to protect the future of their children, the very existence of the independent Azerbaijani state.

On November 1st the next parliamentary elections will be held. Currently, the pre-election campaign has started. I am sure that the elections will be held in a democratic atmosphere, and the people will really elect the most worthy people as their representatives in the highest legislative body of the country. And it will be a clear message to our detractors.

http://vestnikkavkaza.net/

Algeria

Dead or alive? Fate of 'uncatchable' extremist who held Canadians hostage unknown

Oct. 09, 2015

Four months after a U.S. air strike that aimed to kill the alleged kidnapper of two Canadian diplomats, the United States says it still doesn't know whether its target is dead or alive.

Mokhtar Belmokhtar, a one-eyed extremist with links to al-Qaeda, was the leader of an Islamist militia that held the Canadian diplomats hostage in the remote desert of northern Mali for 130 days. He also masterminded a hostage-taking attack at an Algerian gas plant in 2013 in which two Canadian hostage-takers were among dozens of people killed.

The RCMP issued an arrest warrant for Mr. Belmokhtar after the kidnapping of Canadian diplomats Robert Fowler and Louis Guay in 2008, and the United States put a $5-million (U.S.) bounty on his head, but the Pentagon decided not to wait for the unlikely prospect of an arrest. On June 13, it sent two F-15 fighter jets on a mission to kill him.

The jets launched multiple 500-pound bombs on a target in eastern Libya, seeking to assassinate Mr. Belmokhtar, who was believed to be attending a high-level meeting of Libyan jihadists. But today U.S. officials say they aren't sure whether the kidnapper lived or died.

"The United States had essentially carried out a strike in which he was the target, but I'm not in a position at this point to confirm the results of that action," White House press secretary Josh Earnest told reporters in Washington this week in response to questions about Mr. Belmokhtar's fate.

Previous reports in the past few months were only "speculating" on the terrorist's death, Mr. Earnest added.

Mr. Belmokhtar, a former Algerian soldier who became a *jihadi* in Afghanistan and North Africa, was nicknamed "The Uncatchable" because of his frequent escapes. His death has been announced several times in the past few years, yet he always seemed to survive. He has also been sentenced to death or life imprisonment in absentia in trials, yet was never captured.

Other accounts called him "Mr. Marlboro" because of the vast smuggling ring that he operated in the Sahara, trafficking in cigarettes, drugs, diamonds and humans. He reportedly pocketed $1-million in ransom money after the Canadian diplomats were freed and made even bigger profits from other kidnappings of Westerners.

This week, a flurry of reports suggested again that he was dead. The reports, originating at an Algerian television station, were based on an audio message released on social media last weekend by an al-Qaeda spokesman, Hassan Abderraouf, which made a brief reference to Mr. Belmokhtar's death.

But analysts are expressing skepticism about those reports, noting that the message seemed to be recorded in June – before the issuance of a subsequent denial by al-Qaeda officials in North Africa who insisted that he was still alive. Analysts have suggested that the June message might have been based only on rumours. If anything, they say, the message showed that al-Qaeda's leaders in the Middle East are often confused about faraway events in Africa.

Moreover, the Libyan branch of another Islamist militant group, Islamic State, posted photos of Mr. Belmokhtar in August and called him a "wanted man" and an "apostate" for his links to rival Islamist organizations.

If he was already dead, analysts asked, why would Islamic State declare him a "wanted man"? The announcement in August suggested instead that he is still alive, they said.

Mr. Fowler told The Globe and Mail that he did not want to comment on the latest claims. But in earlier interviews, he recalled Mr. Belmokhtar as a one-eyed, bearded zealot with a scarred face who led a band of extremists in an attempt to impose a strict Islamic regime across much of North Africa and West Africa.

"He's not a big man, he's not a strong man, but he was absolutely the undisputed leader," Mr. Fowler said.

“They hate states. It’s all about God’s dominion on Earth. They don’t want a country. They want the world.”

http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/fate-of-islamist-militia-leader-who-held-canadians-hostage-in-mali-unknown/article26739822/

Algeria: Is Belmokhtar Dead or Still Alive? Yes… No…

No day passes without the circulation of contradictory information alleging that the most wanted Algerian terrorist, Mokhtar Belmokhtar, is still alive or that he was killed few months ago. This week, in the space of just few days, these conflicting information resurfaced again.

A top Al-Qaeda fighter said in an audio recording dating back to July and released recently that the Algerian leader of al Mourabitoune, an Al-Qaeda-affiliate armed group in West Africa, was still alive and that claims he had been killed in June in an American airstrike in Libya are mere propaganda.

Immediately afterwards, Algerian based Ennahar TV channel reported that the terrorist, Mokhtar Belmokhtar, has been killed citing the same Al-Qaeda fighter, said to be the group's spokesman, Hassan Abderraouf.

The Algerian terrorist has been a key figure of terrorism in the Sahel and one of the most deadly attacks led by his group was the 2013 attack on the In Amenas gas plant in the Algerian Sahara desert that left 38 people dead.

Belmokhtar's death has been reported several times over the years but no clear cut evidence ever came to confirm or rebut the allegation.

The latest claims that he had been killed in the US airstrike carried out in Libya were refuted. Chad had also claimed that he was killed in an anti-terrorism operation in Mali two years ago. The news was not verified on the ground.

In August, the Islamic State group posted photographs of Mokhtar Belmokhtar as a

wanted man by the IS which describes him as an apostate.

The posting made analysts believe that if the terrorist is wanted by the IS group, this means that he is still alive.

Today, the same doubts surround al-Qaeda's recorded audio message released during the weekend announcing the terrorist's death without giving any hints as to the circumstances of his killing.

Born in northern Algeria, Belmokhtar travelled to Afghanistan in 1991 to join jihadists fighting against the pro-Soviet government before returning to Algeria and ending up head of the al-Qaeda branch in the region.

Announcements of his group pledging allegiance to the newly established Islamic State group was quickly refuted. Belmokthar is also notorious for his involvement in cigarettes smuggling in the Sahara Desert with his trademark one eye face after losing the left while handling explosives.

The death of the $5 million worth terrorist, as evaluated by the US for information leading to his capture, would be a big blow to the group

http://northafricapost.com/

Libya

The Gun Smuggler's Lament

In 2011, Osama Kubbar ran Qatari-supplied arms to Libyan rebels battling the Qaddafi regime. Today, he is watching from afar as his country is torn apart by two warring governments and a web of rival militias. This is the story of a failed revolution and the people it engulfed.

Osama Kubbar in Istanbul, Turkey, April 2015. (Mathias Depardson)

Perched in a seaside villa in eastern Tunisia, Osama Kubbar had anxiously waited for days for the final news about his guns. It was May 2011, five months into the Arab Spring, and Kubbar, a Libyan smuggler, was remotely tracking the slow movements across the southern Mediterranean of a fishing vessel he'd arranged to transport 600 Belgian FN rifles, 10 machine guns, 200 grenades, 100 bulletproof vests, and 200 kegs for packing explosives. The boat was bound from Benghazi for his hometown, the coastal city of Zawiya, some 370 nautical miles away, where beleaguered rebels were battling the mightier forces of longtime Libyan strongman Muammar al-Qaddafi. Guns, Kubbar hoped, might help shift the tide in the fighters' favor.

The voyage, now in its third week, had been arduous. Through frequent satellite-phone calls, Kubbar learned from the crew when the boat's engine broke down in the Gulf of Sidra, necessitating a several-day maintenance detour to Misrata two-thirds of the way through the trip. Once waterborne again, the vessel avoided lurking catastrophe. Not only can spring weather on the Mediterranean be fierce, but

Qaddafi's henchmen were scanning the sea for rebel aid and threatening to sink any ship that approached land.

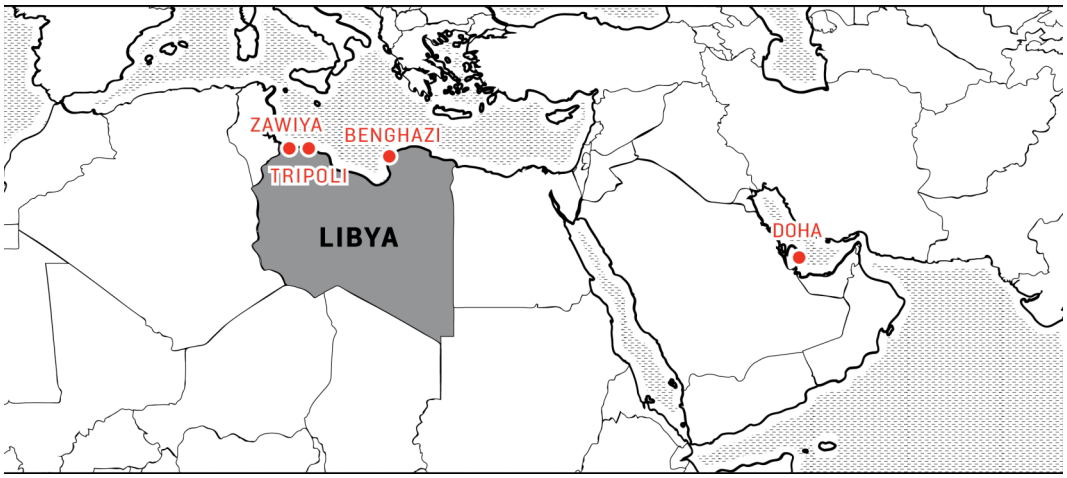
The moment of reckoning had finally arrived: After several days hovering near Zawiya's shore, waiting for an opportune time, the crew on board told Kubbar that docking wasn't an option. "The boat came close, about five kilometers from shore," Kubbar recalls, "and the guys said, 'We cannot go further.'"

Kubbar didn't waste any time. He called rebel contacts in Zawiya and told them where the boat was floating; they would have to try to get the guns themselves. So under the cover of darkness, fighters in small rubber boats pushed off from the sand, navigated rough waves, and met up with Kubbar's crew. Then, box by box, they carried the arms ashore.

"I swear to God," Kubbar says, "you can do a movie about this."

Three months and four more arms shipments later, Kubbar's short career as a gun-runner ended when the invigorated opposition officially seized Zawiya. Shortly afterward, Qaddafi was forced from power and killed. "The military was organized. The revolutionaries, it was chaos," Kubbar remembers. "And it worked to our advantage: If you cannot predict the rebels' moves, you cannot really counter them."

Kubbar cuts an unlikely figure for a former smuggler. Muscular and trim, with graying hair and thin-rimmed glasses, he was trained as an electrical engineer. A devout Muslim and vocal opponent of the Qaddafi government, he had been living in exile for more than 15 years when the Arab Spring began. Kubbar halted his day job and started moving weapons to help Libya's resistance movement—which included his own brother—finally break the yoke of dictatorship. And he was able to do it thanks to a formidable backer: Qatar, his adopted home.



The Persian Gulf emirate, eager to flex its muscles in the Middle East, was the first regional state to turn on the Qaddafi regime in 2011. Through the United Nations, the Arab League, and other channels, it publicly urged international action against

the dictatorship—a stance that earned it plaudits from humanitarians and foreign-policy hawks alike. Using its two Boeing C-17 cargo jets, among other means, to illicitly ship aid and arms to Libya, Qatar's operation nurtured an ecosystem of clerics, businessmen, ex-jihadis, and other middlemen—figures like Kubbar who quietly fed pockets of the revolution with money, guns, and other support. Once Qaddafi was gone, members of that network—many of them Islamists, long-preferred partners of Qatar across the Middle East—used their positions to jockey for power and influence. Kubbar, for one, says he rode his renown as Zawiya's weapons smuggler to seize property and build a small political career that lasted nearly two years.

Yet the promise of revolution was fleeting. By 2013, Libya had all but collapsed—not despite Doha's efforts and those of its opportunistic middlemen, but partly because of them. Supporting certain allies, at the expense of national reconciliation, helped drive dangerous political wedges. To be sure, Qatar was not alone. Other countries, most notably the United Arab Emirates, contributed to Libya's instability by building their own networks on the ground. But where Abu Dhabi also offered material and logistical assistance, Qatar was exceptional in the scale of its provision during the uprising. And while this investment might have paid off at the time, the question now is, to what end? Mieczyslaw Boduszynski, a former U.S. foreign service officer and current professor at Pomona College who has spent time in Libya, wrote in 2014, "[I]t is clear that Qatari engagement has contributed, at least indirectly, to further polarization within the Libyan political scene and to overall state weakness." (A spokesman for the Qatari government declined to answer questions or comment for this article.)

Growing up in Zawiya, Kubbar knew of Qaddafi's tyrannical politics, but it was only after moving to the capital to attend university in 1981 that he saw them firsthand.

Today, nearly five years since demonstrators began to agitate for Qaddafi's removal, Libya suffers from unpredictable violence. It is riven by lawless militias and two rival governments. The humanitarian toll of the conflict is dire. More than 200,000 Libyans are in need of food assistance, according to the World Food Programme. And "scores of those displaced during the 2011 Libyan revolution have been unable to return to their homes," the Brookings Institution reported in April, "while over a million more have been uprooted in the subsequent violence."

Some of Qatar's proxies have stayed in the chaos, still hoping to find fame, fortune, and power. Others have given up or been forced out, including Kubbar. He's back where he started: living in Doha, watching at a painful remove as the country of his birth splinters. Blending into a crowd of well-to-do expats while sipping a cappuccino one evening at the capital city's Ritz-Carlton, he boasts about his smuggling, calling it "the most courageous operation to my name." But his brow wrinkles when he talks about the present: Libya, Kubbar says in his ever-measured voice, "is really messed up."

The ability of outside actors like Qatar, much less a dissident-turned-smuggler-

turned-bureaucrat, to shape Libya's trajectory is rapidly diminishing. For 51-year-old Kubbar, however, the dream remains steadfast. "The path to the solution is still a long way away, but we should not be negative," he insists. "I have a strong belief that … the right people will be in charge."

In July 2011, Libyan government forces confiscated a cache of Qatari weapons and ammunition after intercepting boats carrying the arms. (Mahmud Turkia | AFP/Getty Images)

In 1969, when Kubbar was just 5 years old, a charismatic young military colonel unseated Libya's monarch, King Idris, in a coup. Promising sweeping political and economic reforms, Qaddafi's rule blended populist rhetoric with domineering authoritarianism. He used the country's massive oil revenues to fund free education and health care, but also to buy the loyalty of security forces, expand the army with recruits from sub-Saharan African allies, and increase his personal wealth. He was pitiless toward perceived opponents, imprisoning and torturing thousands in a network of detention facilities. Islamists who offered an alternative ideology to Qaddafi's socialist state were targeted as heretics.

LIBYA'S UPRISING AND UNDOING

February 17, 2011

Demonstrations erupt in Benghazi, Tripoli, and other cities as protesters heed social media calls for an Arab Spring-inspired Day of Rage.

March 17, 2011

After Muammar al-Qaddafi uses his air force to target unarmed demonstrators, the U.N. Security Council imposes a no-fly zone on Libya.

April 2011

The first shipments of Qatari-supplied arms arrive, flown in cargo jets into the eastern, rebel-held city of Benghazi.

August 20, 2011

Regime forces are ousted from the city of Zawiya, 30 miles west of Tripoli. A few days later, rebels aided by NATO airstrikes take control of the capital.

October 20, 2011

Opposition fighters capture and kill Qaddafi in his hometown of Sirte. The interim government, called the National Transitional Council (NTC), declares Libya liberated three days later.

July 7, 2012

Libya holds democratic elections for its new legislature, called the General National Congress (GNC), which replaces the NTC.

May 5, 2013

Under pressure from militias, the GNC passes a political-isolation law aimed at preventing former regime figures from holding public office.

May 2014

Renegade army general Khalifa Haftar launches Operation Dignity, a ground and air assault intended to oust Islamist and jihadi brigades from Benghazi and Tripoli.

June 25, 2014

Violence and low turnout mar national elections. Suffering a crushing loss at the polls, Islamists align under a loose coalition known as Libya Dawn and form a parallel government.

October 2014

A handful of militias pledge allegiance to the Islamic State. Within a few months, the terrorit group's ranks in Libya swell to as many as 3,000 fighters, according to the U.S. State Department.

Growing up in Zawiya, Kubbar knew of Qaddafi's tyrannical politics, but it was only after moving to the capital to attend university in 1981 that he saw them firsthand. There, he witnessed one of Qaddafi's so-called revolutionary committees—informal surveillance networks that monitored dissent—execute students who opposed the

regime by hanging them on campus.

Although he was horrified, turning political was too dangerous an option. That changed when he left Libya in 1986 to study for advanced engineering degrees at Queen's University in Ontario, Canada. Safely abroad, Kubbar became fascinated with the Muslim Brotherhood opposition so demonized by Qaddafi. He devoured any literature he could find about the organization—he says he later joined the Libyan chapter, banned at home but operating in exile—and participated in his university's Muslim Students Association. Sometimes, he delivered speeches at weekly prayer gatherings on campus, decrying Qaddafi's rule.

A few years after he moved to Canada, Kubbar says he learned that officials in Libya's intelligence service had visited his father in Zawiya, inquiring about Kubbar's activities. (Kubbar suspects that one of his classmates alerted the government to his dissent.) Then, in 1995, Kubbar's uncle was denied an exit visa to visit the United Kingdom. "He was rejected because of my name," Kubbar guesses. Estimating that he had landed on a blacklist, Kubbar decided he couldn't safely return to Libya.

For more than a decade, he worked for telecom companies in North America, before moving to Doha in 2009 for a job at Qatar University. He says the Libyans living in the city avoided one another—certainly in public—because they feared the Libyan Embassy was monitoring them. Yet a handful of Qaddafi dissidents knew one other, and when the Arab Spring erupted in Tunisia in December 2010, they disregarded potential dangers and started meeting in cafes. They shared videos of protests in Tunis and later Cairo, and they swapped stories about nascent demonstration attempts relayed by family members back home. "Egypt is the center of the Arab world. [That meant] the revolutions were starting to catch on," Kubbar says of that heady time. "We thought that we should start warming up for Libya."

On Feb. 17, 2011, protesters in dozens of Libyan cities heeded social media calls for a Day of Rage. In Benghazi, Tobruk, and even parts of Tripoli, demonstrators—led by youths and students—marched, destroyed regime icons, and burned garbage bins. Soldiers fired live ammunition at them. The uprising had begun.

Kubbar spent hours on Facebook and YouTube, following events. He says one video clip particularly seized his emotions. In it, a woman filming herself in Benghazi hysterically screams that the regime is coming to massacre her family. It "really pumped the blood in my veins," Kubbar says . He rang his brother, Ihab, who was still living in Zawiya. "Go to the streets and tell [the regime], 'It's never going to be peaceful until that lady who screamed in Benghazi sits quiet,'" Kubbar recalls beseeching.

In another conversation, Kubbar says Ihab held up the phone so that, even in Doha, Kubbar could hear the noise of crowds in Zawiya chanting, "The people want the fall of the regime." On Feb. 24, 2011, Qaddafi's forces killed at least 17 people and wounded another 150 in an attack on the restive city. Afterward, Ihab, then 36, joined neighborhood men who were taking up arms against the government.

Kubbar considered himself just as much a freedom fighter as his brother. “We were just standing up to Qaddafi, and we were naked,” he says of the rebels, who had very few arms and little ammunition at that point. (Ihab carried a hunting rifle that could fire two bullets.) “We had no support.”

That was soon to change.

Kubbar's brother, Ihab, was killed fighting in Libya in 2011. (Courtesy photo)

In late February, one of Kubbar’s Libyan acquaintances in Doha, a newspaper editor named Mahmoud Shammam, gathered together local dissidents. (In the interest of disclosure, Shammam previously edited a now-defunct Arabic edition of Foreign Policy.) A close friend of the ruling emir, Shammam had convinced the Qatari royal family to back supporters of the revolution: The family would pay for a new TV channel, Al Ahrar, devoted to the Libyan uprising and a makeshift office for opposition expats. “He [told us], ‘OK, I can get some support; let us rent a place where we can have an operations room,’” Kubbar says. The group secured an apartment in the Kempinski, a luxury high-rise building in Doha’s chic West Bay. Upstairs from one of the city’s best pastry shops, the Libyans set up computers and phone lines and brainstormed how they could abet the revolution. (The Kempinski’s management declined to comment, saying it does not “disclose any information about tenants or guests.”)

It was no coincidence that Qatar had agreed to help. Over the previous two decades, the small, gas-rich country had been expanding its global leverage aggressively. Qatar had built alliances with Western countries, including the United States, and had funded the world’s most watched Arabic-language network, Al Jazeera. But it

had also thrown financial and material support behind Islamic resistance movements across the Middle East, including Hamas, Hezbollah, and branches of the Muslim Brotherhood; the groups' organization, discipline, and geographic spread made them excellent conduits for Qatari influence. "Qatar was not identifying with the Muslim Brotherhood for any ideological reasons," says Salah Eddin Elzein, head of the Al Jazeera Center for Studies, a think-tank arm of the network; rather, he said, Qatar chose to align itself with rising forces. Lina Khatib, director of the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut, has written that Qatar savvily pursued an "open-door" foreign policy, "creating friends and avoiding enmities by appealing to all sides at once." Khalid bin Mohammed al-Attiyah, Qatar's foreign minister, told an audience at Princeton University in 2014 that during the uprisings, his country also felt a "moral duty" to help Arab brethren topple dictators.

Kubbar appreciated Doha's early patronage, but he wanted to be closer to the front lines. "I'm not going to be sitting here when my people die," he recalls thinking. So no sooner had the office at the Kempinski opened than Kubbar picked up and moved to Tunisia, from where he believed he could help deliver humanitarian aid—already much needed—to western Libya.

Leaving his wife and two children behind in Doha, Kubbar set out for Ben Gardane, a Tunisian city about 20 miles from the Libyan border. There, he says, he rented a villa with his own money and began to liaise with aid organizations, including a British Islamic charity called Wafa Relief, providing it with lists of goods that Libyan activists and rebels, with whom he was in contact, needed. "It was things like painkillers, and sometimes drugs for chronic conditions."

On March 7, after Kubbar had been in Tunisia for less than two weeks, he received a dreadful call from his sisters: Ihab had been shot in a firefight with government forces. Fellow rebels found him wounded and crumpled on a slope leading away from Zawiya's central square; the fighters managed to get him home, but he died soon after.

Kubbar's father told him not to come home. It was too dangerous, and he couldn't bear to lose another son. But the revolution was now more personal than ever. On a visit to Doha at the end of March, Kubbar spilled his frustrations to his friends. "There are lots of people doing humanitarian aid," he remembers complaining. What he needed to do, he said, was run weapons.

Just as Kubbar was losing patience, Qatar was also looking for more direct ways to back Libya's rebels. Qaddafi was using his air force to target civilians, a galling sight for regional leaders. So Doha launched a whirlwind diplomatic campaign to convince the Arab League and the U.N. Security Council to impose a no-fly zone. Other backers of the plan included the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. On March 17, the council approved Resolution 1973, authorizing the safe area and "all

necessary measures" to protect civilians. A week later, Qatar became the first Arab state to agree to patrol the zone.

Libyan rebel fighters react after gaining positions against regime forces in Zawiya in August 2011. (Florent Marcie | AFP/Getty Images)

Doha's leaders didn't stop there. They began to supply the rebellion with weapons, despite an arms embargo that the United Nations had also just placed on Libya. "For small states like Qatar," says Sergio Finardi, head of the consultancy TransArms, which has tracked several illicit Qatari-linked weapons shipments to Libya, its contribution could be "something covert in order to have a foot and play a role in this situation." (Other countries provided arms too, including the United Arab Emirates and France.) A U.N. panel of experts later found Qatar to be in violation of the embargo, but Doha stated in 2012 that its actions "were in full coordination with NATO and under its umbrella." In a statement provided to Foreign Policy, a spokesperson for NATO said "no country notified or coordinated national weapons deliveries with" the organization.

Qatar channeled many of its arms deliveries through two brothers: Ali and Ismael al-Sallabi, both Libyan Islamists with extensive connections inside the country. Ali al-Sallabi, an exiled cleric who had served time in Qaddafi's notorious Abu Salim prison, was a longtime resident of Doha and close with Qatar's political elite. Soon after rebels won their first significant victory, routing regime forces in Benghazi on March 20, 2011, Qatari jets began moving weapons and ammunition to Benina's airport, just outside the city. The Sallabis' network then parceled out materiel to rebels. (Despite widespread coverage of their involvement in gunrunning, Ali declined in an

interview for this article to confirm that he directly received weapons shipments from Qatar.)

In Kubbar's telling, fighters were having difficulty shipping weapons to western Libya, which was still firmly in Qaddafi's hands. Qatar's weapons handlers had no point person in Zawiya, Kubbar says, "no contact." Thus, in early April 2011, Kubbar reached out to Ali al-Sallabi. As Libyan expats in Doha, they were neither strangers nor friends, but Kubbar says, "People from the same movement trust each other." Once they were in touch, "everything moved so fast." Kubbar, still in Tunisia, says Sallabi connected him with men in Benghazi who could provide the arms; Kubbar identified a boat and crew; and the first arms were shipped by late April.

Not long after the weapons were unloaded in Zawiya, thanks to the rebels in rubber boats, hostilities there escalated. On the morning of June 11, opposition fighters, some of whom had been trained clandestinely by Qatari, French, and British forces in the nearby Nafusa Mountains, swarmed the city, but it took only 24 hours for Qaddafi's men to push back the advance. Fighting, bolstered by NATO airstrikes, continued throughout the summer, as did deliveries of Kubbar's arms—in all, there were three by sea and two by land, he says.

On a Saturday in early August 2011, during one of only three visits he made to his family in Doha during the uprising, a rebel in Zawiya called him to say that the opposition was preparing for the final assault on Kubbar's birthplace—and then moving on to Tripoli. "You have to come," Kubbar recalls the man saying. So Kubbar flew to Tunisia, and by Aug. 12, he had crossed by land to his hometown. He wanted to witness freedom firsthand. Videos from the time that he has since posted online show that he traded his Western clothing for Libya's traditional robe-like Bedouin dress and visited the families of martyrs. In one clip, with a sense of authority and religiosity he still exudes, Kubbar says, "May Allah grant victory for the rebels, repay them, hold and unite them, and win over this dictator."

Rebels finally took full control of Zawiya on Aug. 20. Three days later, Kubbar claims that his last batch of arms arrived in the city. According to his personal tally, it included 120 cases, each containing 1,500 Kalashnikov bullets; 15 rocket-propelled grenades and 200 munitions for them; and 10 machine guns with 60 boxes of ammunition. This time, his boat was able to dock, and Kubbar says he personally witnessed the distribution of arms to fighters.

Rebels took Tripoli within a matter of days. Transitional leaders didn't proclaim the country free until Oct. 23, 2011, when Qaddafi was found hiding in a drainpipe and was bludgeoned to death. By then, through the likes of men like the Sallabis and Kubbar, Qatar had poured at least 20,000 tons of weapons into Libya.

Libyan security personnel wave the new Libyan flag as they parade in the capital Tripoli on February 14, 2012. (Mahmud Turkia | AFP/Getty Images)

In the newly liberated Libya, power vacuums existed everywhere, as did self-proclaimed heroes of the revolution. Regime property was up for grabs, and Kubbar says he claimed an office in Zawiya for himself: a palatial hall once used by Qaddafi's army deputy chief of staff. "I was the only one who channeled weapons [to Zawiya]," he recalls with bravado, "so even the warlords, they were respecting me big time." Kubbar says he helped start and lead an NGO, the Revolutionary Youth Coalition of February 17, with the goal of restricting the political power of regime defectors. The group issued public statements and organized political meetings. Kubbar imagined his religious allies would be in power in Tripoli in no time; his mission complete, he'd then head home to Doha.

Qatar, meanwhile, also sought to maintain influence in Libya. An October 2011 Wall Street Journal article reported that Qatar's military chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Hamad bin Ali al-Attiyah, attended a meeting in Tripoli aimed at organizing Libya's militias. Doha also likely kept money flowing through various political proxies, such as Abdel Hakim Belhaj, a hardened rebel commander who had trained fighters during the uprising. "Qatar's strategy is sort of to keep these guys on retainer," explains Frederic Wehrey, of the Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "It's not massive support, but you keep the channels open."

Militia members have ballooned into the hundreds of thousands, up from just 17,000 at the height of the 2011 uprising.

Cracks quickly ran through Libya's political facade, however. During the uprising, Qatar's allies repeatedly clashed with the more secular defectors who dominated the National Transitional Council (NTC), the formal opposition body. The two camps had managed their tensions thanks to a common enemy. With Qaddafi gone, these factions began to attack one another in the media and in public statements. "We saw this explosion of the differences between the Islamists and the non-Islamists start to emerge," remembers Shammam, a secular NTC member. (Despite his early appreciation of Qatar's help, Shammam says he repeatedly warned Doha against sticking around after Qaddafi was gone.) Many religiously oriented freedom fighters, including some who had Qatar's backing, believed Libya should look something like Turkey, a democracy run by religious moderates. Ali al-Sallabi was a key architect of this vision. Regime defectors also saw a democracy, but one that wasn't so colored by religion.

With the political battleground firmly drawn, many of Libya's new government officials grew intolerant of Doha's ongoing aid to their rivals. "Qatar was among countries which have provided us with the greatest military, financial, and political support" in ousting Qaddafi, Libya's U.N. envoy, Mohammed Abdel Rahman Shalgam, told Reuters in November 2011. "We don't want them to spoil this great feat through meaningless acts of meddling."

As tensions heated up, Kubbar's NGO called for former regime figures to resign. In March 2012, Kubbar moved to Tripoli to run for Libya's new national legislature. According to his platform, posted on Facebook, Libya should be a "moderate Muslim state" with the Quran as "our constitution and the only source of legislation." He frequently appeared on Al Ahrar and Al Jazeera to promote his candidacy.

But disappointment followed. That July, in Libya's first democratic election since 1964, Kubbar lost his bid. Broadly speaking, Islamists fared worse than expected. The Muslim Brotherhood-aligned Justice and Construction Party won just 10 percent of the vote. (That said, the fact that the legislature included many seats reserved for "independents" meant that, by not standing as affiliates, other members were able to get into the body; a German think-tank analysis later determined that more than half of independents in the legislature actually had ties to a political party.) Most embarrassing for Qatar was the dismal performance of al-Watan (Homeland), a party formed by rebel commander Belhaj: It failed to win a single seat.

Kubbar was stunned—and bitter. "Leave, and take your council with you," he wrote in a Facebook diatribe against interim leader Mustafa Abdul Jalil, a former justice minister under Qaddafi. "I feel nauseous whenever I see your face or read a story about you. I swear to you that the country will not be worse than it is in your presence."

Excluded from office, Kubbar joined the self-proclaimed High Council of Libyan Revolutionaries, a national organization that, similar to his Zawiya NGO, promised to advocate on behalf of freedom fighters. (By this time, Kubbar had largely abandoned

his work with the Revolutionary Youth Coalition of February 17;

Before being counted, ballot boxes are stored at Tripoli's Mitiga airport in July 2012. (Mahmud Turkia | AFP/Getty Images)

the organization foundered less than a year after it was created.) As the High Council's first deputy, Kubbar fixated on the need to pass a proposed political-isolation law that would ban former regime figures from holding public office, including many former NTC leaders and two former prime ministers. The law was widely supported by the groups persecuted under Qaddafi, including tribal and Islamist figures, who hoped to secure further power in the new Libya. "I, Osama Kubbar, support all kinds of escalations," Kubbar shouted to a crowd gathered outside the legislature in December 2012. "We don't want this government."

As the vote over the bill approached the following May, several militias, including ones allied with the High Council, blockaded the Foreign Affairs and Justice ministries as a not-subtle threat to anyone who might consider voting against the bill. Under duress, just four legislators out of 200 dared to do so. Kubbar was thrilled: "It was a step forward," he said.

The morning after the law passed, Kubbar says he got a call from one of Zawiya's rebel leaders, a man named Mohammed, who had benefited from his weapons deliveries. Mohammed asked whether Kubbar, whom he called "Dr. Osama," could meet him at Tripoli's harbor just a few miles from the headquarters of the High Council of Libyan Revolutionaries. Kubbar went alone and found Mohammed standing near the water.

But just as Kubbar approached on foot, a Land Cruiser drove up and Mohammed pulled a gun. “Come here,” he said, gesturing to the vehicle, where a handful of passengers revealed their own weapons. “Who sent you to kidnap me?” Kubbar remembers asking. The men stayed silent, driving Kubbar to a cell in Tripoli where he says he was kept for two days.

Kubbar won’t discuss the specifics of his captivity, including why he was eventually let go. He believes, however, he was taken in retaliation for his stance on the political-isolation law.

The kidnapping was a wake-up call. Before then, there had been few consequences for Kubbar as he openly ridiculed political opponents and encouraged takedowns of many of Libya’s new leaders. Now, he realized, Libya had changed; new rivalries were emerging, even between onetime friends, and violence was a daily risk.

So Kubbar returned to Doha, where he began working as an advisor on regional strategy for the Qatari armed forces’ Strategic Studies Centre. (He still holds the post today.) Then, alongside others in the capital city who’d once hoped revolution would bring stability, he watched as conflict sank its teeth firmly into Libya.

Libya Dawn fighters fire shells during clashes with forces loyal to Libya's internationally recognized government in April 2015. (Mahmud Turkia | AFP/Getty Images)

In May 2014, forces loyal to former army general Khalifa Haftar launched Operation Dignity, a coordinated assault against Islamist and jihadi militias in Benghazi and Tripoli. The following month, Islamists lost in national polls marred by violence and low turnout. They refused to recognize the new government, however, and instead

joined several local armed groups in a loose alliance called Libya Dawn. The body declared itself in charge of the country and, by August, had retaken Tripoli from Haftar's men. Over the following months, the two sides raced toward civil war: In the last half of 2014, between 1,000 and 2,500 people, including many noncombatants, died as a result of aerial bombardments, ground attacks, and other violence.

Today, grim circumstances persist. Militia members have ballooned into the hundreds of thousands, up from just 17,000 at the height of the 2011 uprising, according to NATO figures. No political faction can hope to control them. And new extremists have begun to stake claims. In early 2015, the Islamic State announced its arrival in the coastal city of Derna. By March, the U.S. State Department estimated the group had between 1,000 and 3,000 fighters in Libya, enough to give it a dangerous springboard into the rest of North Africa.

Foreign powers have remained enmeshed in the conflict. Haftar's forces, for instance, have reportedly enjoyed air and material support from Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. Qatar, for its part, continued to support proxies until at least 2014, which likely included funneling weapons to Libya Dawn fighters, according to allegations in a 2015 U.N. report. Yet despite these efforts, Qatar has seen its clout shrink mightily as bedlam has descended on Libya. "Qatar is a curse word in Libya," says Jason Pack, president of the consultancy Libya-Analysis. "Even in Tripoli, they don't like the Qatari hand. [Qatar is] not somewhere you want to be associated with."

Many of Qatar's early beneficiaries are now only marginal players in the post-revolutionary game. Ali al-Sallabi moves between Istanbul and Doha, hosting conferences and meetings, but he says he has stepped back from politics. "There were mistakes," he says of the revolution, including a failure to prioritize reconciliation between defectors and Islamists. Meanwhile, Shammam has returned to his former life as a journalist, opening an independent online newspaper in Cairo. His regrets echo Sallabi's: "We could not really understand the difficulty of a transformation."

For his part, Kubbar says he traveled to Tripoli last December and January to meet with friends in Libya Dawn—"the guys," he calls them. The effect of the trip was deflating. "The freedom fighters," Kubbar says, a look of disgust crossing his face, "don't really have a vision and project for the country."

Kubbar's life in Doha is now built around offering commentary on Libya. He writes reports for the Qatari military, joins panel discussions, and still regularly speaks on Al Jazeera. He isn't fond of U.N.-brokered peace talks underway to end the crisis in his home country—they leave too many doors open for regime defectors—but he also acknowledges that a bad deal may be better than no deal at all. "So many people just want a solution," he says. "They have had enough of this chaos and need to build a country."

In another breath, however, he speaks of returning to Libya one day and rekindling the snuffed flame of revolution. "If you have never lived under oppression, you can't

understand," Kubbar says. "It's loyalty to this huge investment of bloodshed and martyrs and dignity.

"You cannot really turn your back on this and say, 'I'm going to walk away.'"

The author: Elizabeth Dickinson (@dickinsonbeth) a member of the Deca journalists cooperative, is a writer based in the Arabian Peninsula. A version of this article originally appeared in the September/October issue of FP.

http://foreignpolicy.com/

Mali

Changement climatique au Mali : L'autre menace

Le changement climatique affecte de plus en plus la production et la productivité agro-pastorale au Mali. Les populations manquent cruellement d'eau et sont touchées par l'insécurité alimentaire. Sans moyens d'y faire face, des jeunes quittent le milieu rural ou optent pour des activités criminelles comme le terrorisme. Pour mettre fin à l'extrême pauvreté, et promouvoir des sociétés résilientes, le Mali a non seulement besoin de développer les énergies renouvelables, mais aussi d'avoir accès plus facilement aux mécanismes internationaux de financement.

Sur le site de pâturage de Kabara, situé dans le Gourma à 9 kilomètres de la ville de Tombouctou, au nord du Mali, la sécheresse fait des ravages. Il n'y a ni herbes, ni mares, et les troupeaux meurent en grand nombre, sous les yeux impuissants des éleveurs. «J'avais deux-cents têtes, il ne reste qu'une vingtaine actuellement», déplore Hama Khalil, un éleveur rencontré à Kabara. Cela fait près de 7 ans que les éleveurs de la région vivent cette situation. Pourtant, le secteur de l'élevage participe à 11% du PIB national, selon le ministère du Développement rural.

L'agriculture, l'une des principales activités de la région de Tombouctou, est aussi touchée par cette sécheresse. «Avec cette crise, il n'y a plus de bœufs cette année pour labourer. On a perdu presque tous les animaux», regrette le cultivateur Ibrahim Maïga.

Ensablement du fleuve Niger

À Gao, le fleuve Niger traverse la région sur une superficie d'environ 400 kilomètres. Aujourd'hui, le fleuve est menacé par l'ensablement, ce qui affecte considérablement l'agriculture. Les quantités d'eau sont non seulement faibles, mais aussi mal réparties dans le temps et dans l'espace.

«Notre principal problème est le manque d'eau. Cela fait maintenant un mois que j'ai labouré mon champ. Malgré quelques pluies qui sont tombées, la terre est toujours sèche. Maintenant, nous sommes obligés d'arroser avec une motopompe», souligne le cultivateur Mohamadou Younoussa, à Gao. «Nous labourons en début d'hivernage, mais après cette période, on peut passer 4 à 6 mois sans rien faire, sauf si vous avez un jardin potager ou des bœufs à faire paître», ajoute-t-il.

Plus de 50.000 personnes touchées par la pénurie d'eau au nord

Selon les chiffres publiés par le Bureau de coordination des affaires humanitaires des Nations unies (OCHA), au Mali, en juillet dernier, environ 54 600 personnes, soit 7660 ménages, sont touchées par la pénurie d'eau, de même que de nombreux troupeaux, dans les régions de Gao et Tombouctou.

C'est également le cas, dans la région de Kidal, où des files d'attente se forment, chaque jour, devant les points d'eau. La profondeur des puits varie entre 30 et 70 mètres, voire plus. «On passe tout notre temps à courir derrière les camions citernes appartenant à des particuliers. L'eau coûte chère et le prix varie entre 500 et 10.000 francs CFA, les cuves de 10 barriques», s'indigne Tinahok Walet Didi, une habitante de la ville de Kidal.

La ville dispose de huit forages hydrauliques, qui fonctionnent grâce à l'appui du Comité international de la croix rouge (CICR). Depuis le début de l'année, l'organisation humanitaire fournit 18.000 litres de gasoil, tous les deux mois pour faire fonctionner les forages. En juin dernier, 54.000 litres de carburant ont été livrés pour un montant d'environ 38 millions de FCFA. «Malgré ces efforts, il arrive que Kidal soit confrontée à des problèmes d'accès à l'eau. Il y a les nappes qui tarissent, c'est le cas, en cette période de l'année», explique Ibrahim Tounkara, chef de la sous-délégation du CICR à Kidal.

Sécurité alimentaire et changement climatique

La pénurie d'eau n'est pas sans conséquence sur la population malienne estimée à 17 millions d'habitants. L'insécurité alimentaire touche environ 3,1 millions de personnes pendant la période de soudure qui va de juin à août, selon OCHA. Aujourd'hui, «410.000 personnes ont besoin d'aide immédiate et plus de 750.000 enfants sont menacés par la malnutrition aiguë», précise l'agence onusienne.

«La question de la sécurité alimentaire est indissociable de la problématique du dérèglement climatique. Elle relève également du développement durable et de l'efficacité de la lutte contre la pauvreté», a déclaré le Chef de l'Etat, Ibrahim Boubacar Kéita, président en exercice du Comité permanent inter-États de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel (CILSS), le 12 septembre dernier.

Adaptation au changement climatique

Pour ne pas dépendre uniquement de la pluie, le directeur régional de l'agriculture à Gao, M. Yacouba Touré, propose de mettre l'accent sur l'aménagement des périmètres irrigués, et la construction des canaux pour retenir l'eau.

Quant à la région de Kidal, le désensablement et la réhabilitation des barrages sont prévus par la Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations unies pour la stabilisation au Mali (MINUSMA). «C'est important pendant la saison des pluies, pour que les eaux puissent stagner et s'infiltrer pour régénérer la nappe phréatique», indique Christophe Sivillon, chef du Bureau de la mission onusienne à Kidal.

Le Mali dispose d'énormes ressources naturelles pour pouvoir s'adapter au changement climatique. Une volonté politique et un environnement paisible sont indispensables, pour implanter des panneaux solaires, fait remarquer Dr. Ibrahim Togola, spécialiste des énergies renouvelables. «Nous avons un potentiel énorme en énergie solaire, nous recevons à peu près 6 à 7kwh par mètre carré par jour. Nous avons

aussi un potentiel hydraulique énorme, un potentiel important de biomasse. Dans les parties nord et ouest du pays, il y a un potentiel considérable en énergie éolienne», analyse-t-il.

La crise sécuritaire que vit le Mali, depuis 2012, constitue également un obstacle à la mise en œuvre de certains projets. On peut citer, entre autres, l'Initiative Grande muraille verte pour le Sahara et le Sahel, pour lutter contre la désertification. Aujourd'hui, des forêts servent de camp d'entraînement et d'abris pour les terroristes, comme la forêt de Wagadou au centre du Mali.

Pour faire face au phénomène du changement climatique, des mécanismes internationaux de financement sont nécessaires pour appuyer les initiatives communautaires pour la résilience.

http://www.maliweb.net/

Tunisia

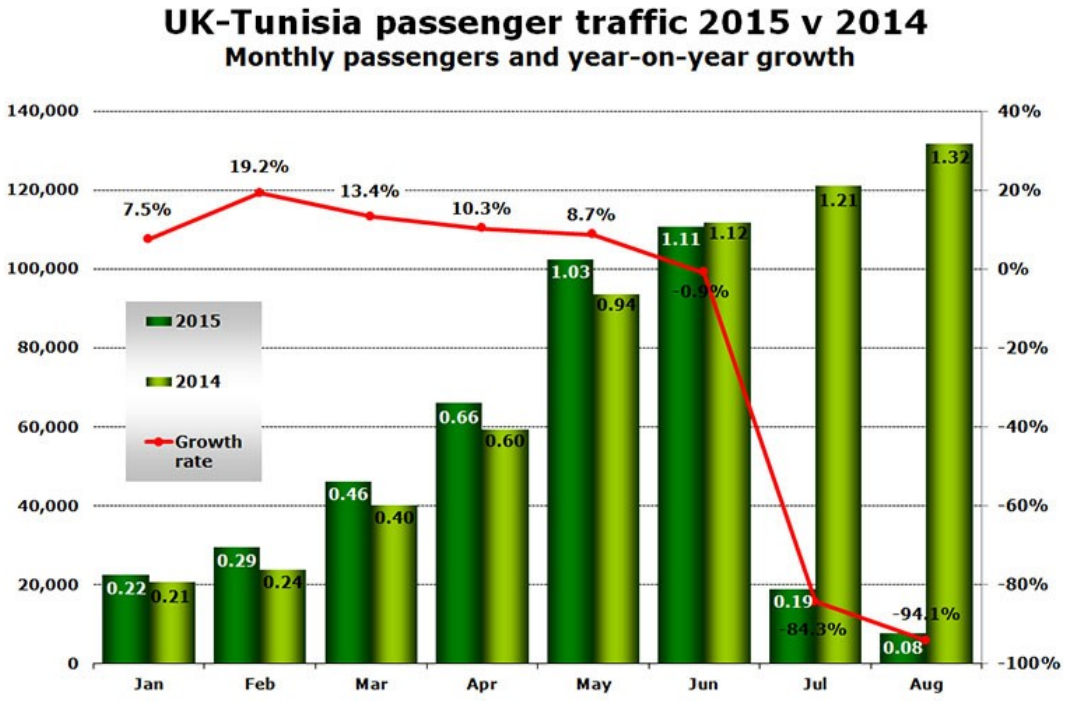
Tunisia tourism scares are resulting in major traffic declines between some of the key foreign visitor markets

7 Oct 2015

easyJet launched services to Monastir from London Stansted on 2 June. The seasonal service has so far carried 2,371 passengers according to the UK CAA. However, this route no longer operates due to the external issues occurring outside of the aviation market in Tunisia. In July, a month after the Sousse attack, easyJet only carried 13% of the traffic seen on the route from the month before.

Tunisia lies in North Africa, with Ras ben Sakka (which is situated in the country) being the most northern peak of the whole continent. For some time, tourism in Tunisia has been a major part of its growth and economic development. The World Travel & Tourism Council calculated that in 2013/2014, 15.2% of the Tunisian GDP was from the economy surrounding travel and tourism, with 7.3% of the overall GDP being directly from the travel and tourism industry. However, in 2015 the country has witnessed two violent terrorism attacks (Sousse in June, and the Bardo National Museum in March), which between them resulted in the total loss of 61 lives, including nationals from the UK and Germany, two of the largest foreign tourism markets from Tunisia. Individual terrorism attacks tend not to affect tourism numbers for a long time, such as visitor growth being seen in the UK and the US despite the 7/7 and 9/11 attacks. Nonetheless, with Tunisia witnessing two such attacks within a short space of time, the effects on foreign tourism has been significant, resulting in major declines at the country's key airports from the main tourism markets. So far in 2015, passenger traffic at Tunisia's Enfidha and Monastir airports is down 50% when compared to the same eight month time period of 2014, with August recording a

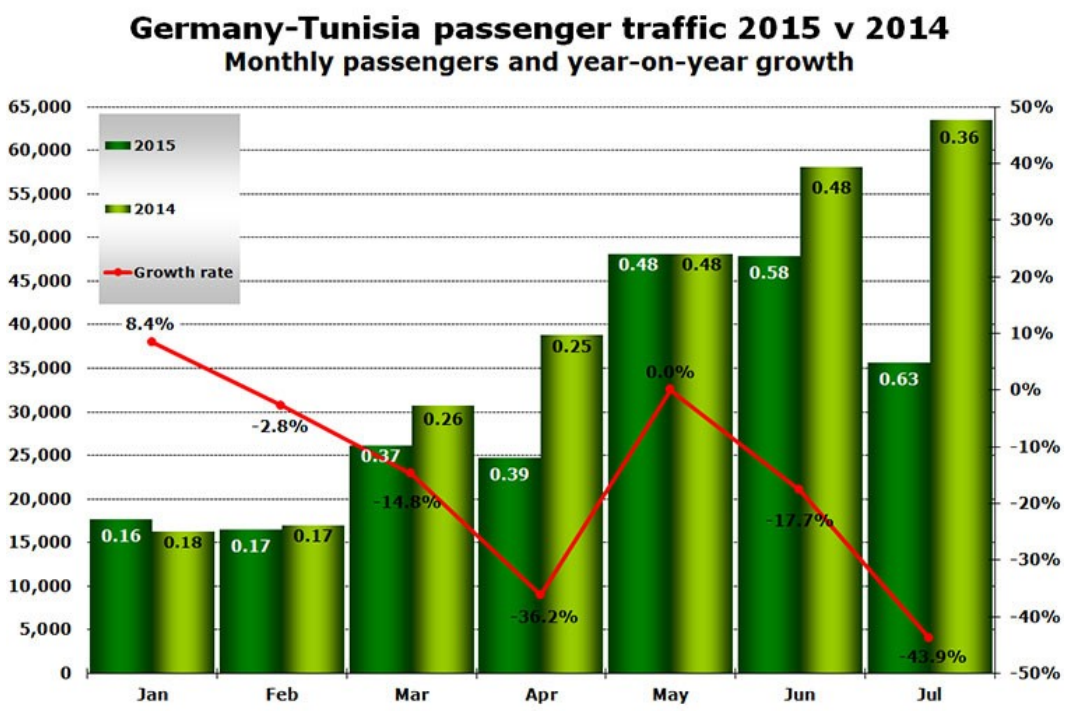
decline in overall passenger traffic of just over 80%. This shows the effects of the attacks on passenger traffic. To get a more detailed view, an analysis of the UK and German foreign markets has been carried out to see the real impact that these acts of terrorism have had on foreign visitors.



Source: UK CAA Statistics 2015.

UK traffic per route on average down 86%

In 2015, the UK-Tunisia market is served by 21 routes, of which only five see services by scheduled carriers (London Gatwick and Manchester to Enfidha, London Stansted to Monastir, and Gatwick and London Heathrow to Tunis). This total is down from the 22 airport pairs served in 2014. Of the services connecting the two nations, three of which operated in 2015 but did not in 2014 are: Birmingham-Djerba, London Stansted-Monastir and Gatwick-Tunis. Of the four airports served in Tunisia from the UK, only Tunis has experienced passenger growth in the market, helped by the initiation of services to Gatwick. However, its connection to Heathrow, the only UK link from the facility in 2014, has seen passenger traffic nosedive by 35% based on UK CAA data. Before the terrorism attack of Sousse, the average traffic growth rate in the UK-Tunisia market was just shy of 12% per month. However since this event has taken place, passenger traffic has declined rapidly.



Source: Destatis 2015.

German traffic down 26% so far in 2015.

For the first seven months of 2015, overall passenger traffic between Germany and Tunisia is down 26%, with an average monthly decline of 15% based on data from Destatis. What is different with the German market when compared to the UK one is that traffic has been declining since February. Also, in 2014, traffic on this country pair witnessed five months when traffic also declined, three of them in summer season (May, June, July). After the Sousse attack in June 2015, the TUI Group sent six empty aircraft to Tunisia to help bring back German tourists, with the same also occurring for UK passengers.

This is not the first time that Tunisia has had to face these challenges. A terrorist attack in Djerba in April 2002, when 19 people were killed (including 14 German tourists), resulted in German air passenger numbers to Monastir falling by 35% in 2002 and a further 14% in 2003. However, by 2005 passenger numbers at Monastir had once again reached a new high, beating the previous record from 2001.

On 24 May, Jet2.com commenced services between Glasgow and Manchester to Enfidha in Tunisia. However, like the easyJet service between London Stansted and Monastir, neither of these two routes now operate, with Jet2.com no longer serving Tunisia.

http://www.anna.aero/

Tunisian Salafism: The Rise And Fall Of Ansar Al-Sharia – Analysis

October 9th, 2015

Tunisia's democratic evolution over the past four years has been flanked by the rise of jihadist formations, which in 2015 culminated in the terrorist attacks at Tunis' Bardo museum on 18 March and on the beach of Sousse on 26 June. The attacks have raised many questions about how radical jihadist ideology has been able to grow in a country hailed as the Arab world's only true democracy. What has enabled these groups to gain ground?

The biggest and most influential Jihadi-Salafi group since the 2011 revolution has been Ansar al-Sharia Tunisia ('Supporters of Islamic Law in Tunisia', AST). AST was quickly able to take advantage of both the country's new freedoms and its disillusioned revolutionary youth. AST's success did not last, however: after quickly establishing itself as one of Tunisia's most successful Salafist movements, the group is today outlawed, and its limited remaining support base is forced to operate underground. Yet, the 2015 terrorist attacks, both perpetuated by young Tunisians, suggest that youth radicalisation remains a challenge, which requires not only short-term security based counter-terrorism measures but also youth focused long-term policies that address the very grievances that AST was able to take advantage of.

THE SALAFIST SURGE

Salafism is a strict religious methodology aspiring to practice Islam in accordance with Prophet Muhammad and the first three generations of Muslims through *dawa* (missionary work), *hisba* (practices to enforce religious ethics, often through assaults) and *jihad* ('struggle', which to AST and other jihadist groups in-

cludes the use of warfare). Following years of strict control and repression of Islamist movements under the regime of Ben Ali, the 2011 revolution brought increased liberties but also less government control, allowing jihadi Salafi groups such as AST to grow freely and mainly without state interference.

AST's structure is clandestine and public information about its leadership is scarce. Saifallah Ben Hassine, better known as Abu Iyadh al-Tunisi, a veteran jihadist who co-founded the al-Qaeda linked Tunisian Islamic Combatant Group in Afghanistan 2000, was sentenced to 43 years in prison by a Tunisian court in 2003 under the Ben Ali regime's anti-terrorism laws. While in prison, Abu Iyadh laid the ground work for today's AST movement, by building its network from as early as 2006.1 Following the 2011 revolution, Abu Iyadh was among 300 jihadists who were pardoned and released with an amnesty. While some of these Islamists chose to join the political party Ennahda, others with more radical leanings rejected the new political system and sided with Abu Iyadh. On 15 May 2011, a Facebook page named Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia was published and an announcement was released about the group's first conference on 21 May, which about 5,000 people attended. As its goal, the Tunisian branch of Ansar al Sharia proclaimed to establish an Islamic caliphate and introduce Sharia law in Tunisia's nascent democracy.

Despite sharing the name Ansar al-Sharia with counterparts in Libya, Egypt and Yemen, AST says it acts independently. The movement supports the global agenda of al-Qaeda but claims to operate separately from the terrorist network; however its relationship to other al-Qaeda linked groups and the central command of the international terrorist network remains unclear. While rejecting the new political system, the group took advantage of democracy's new freedoms.

Benefitting from the increased civil liberties, the newly founded AST did not openly reject the revolution. Instead, Abu Iyadh thanked revolutionaries for freeing the jihadists from repression and prison and giving the jihadi movement a chance to prosper.

FILLING THE GAPS

AST's recruitment success is typically ascribed to a combination of factors, most notably filling the government's social services gap via humanitarian work – such as providing food, medicine and other necessities to people living in the country's marginalised areas. Thus, AST quickly gained ground among a part of the population sidelined by the state in areas suffering from high poverty and low-levels of education, most notably in the southern and interior parts of the country. The movement's appeal was also considerable in marginalized neighbourhoods of bigger cities such as Douar Hicher, a socially and economically deprived Tunis suburb and a key recruitment area for AST.2 The movement occupied public space in cafés and marketplaces there and arranged preaching tents on school yards. Charity work and a strong on the ground presence allowed AST to convincingly show people they were better at providing for their citizens than the state.

Besides gaining popularity among the country's disillusioned youth, the movement was also able, through a broad width of activities, to mobilise a wide range of Salafi sympathisers. AST was also more visible in the media than other groups, and more efficient in quickly increasing its influence in mosques. Shortly after Abu Iyadh's release, he visited mosques all over the country to preach and lecture. About 400 mosques quickly came under AST influence. In addition, influential Tunisian clerics such as Shaikh Khattab Idriss embraced the movement, giving the group legitimacy both domestically and internationally. By 2014, the group claimed it had attracted around 70,000 members – a considerable number in a country of 11 million inhabitants.3

SYRIA'S CALL

Proselytising at home, jihad abroad initially stood at the core of the movement. While Abu Iyadh and other AST members preached in Tunisia, they simultaneously encouraged followers to go overseas, especially to Syria to fight President Bashar al-Assad. AST's influence is likely to have contributed to the large number of Tunisian jihadists fighting in Syria. The country's number of foreign fighters was estimated in 2014 to be around 3,000.4 With this, Tunisia, the smallest country in the region, outnumbers most other countries in the region in absolute terms (in contrast, the figure from Saudi Arabia was estimated at about 2,500, with about 200 from Algeria).

The country's large number of jihadists is usually traced back to a number of underlying factors. These include AST's successful mobilisation with the group's heavy promotion of jihad in Syria; its control over mosques; the country's history of jihad to Afghanistan and Iraq dating back to the 1980s; and the ongoing conflict in neighbouring Libya, where the assailants of the Bardo and Sousse attacks are believed to have been trained; and the post-revolutionary Tunisian socio-economic environment. Another factor that is believed to have contributed to young people's vulnerability to Salafi ideology is related to identity: after years of religious oppression, religion could be practiced freely, but what influence would it have in contemporary Tunisian society? At the same time, Tunisia's public debates were dominated by polarising dichotomies, like religion versus secularism and conservatism versus modernism, which painted a black-and-white picture of Tunisia's future options with little room for nuance.

Following AST's initially heavy promotion of jihad to Syria, in February 2013 Abu Iyadh started advising Tunisians not to migrate to Syria or other jihadi battle grounds but to remain in the country and carry out charity work to increase the member base at home. Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) also told Tunisians, on 17 March 2013, to fight secularism on their ground rather than leave for jihad abroad, making an exception for fighters with so-called 'special skills' – a change of rhetoric that can be presumed to have been unpopular with more hardcore elements within the movement.

A SHIFT TOWARDS VIOLENCE

As the movement gained popularity, violence increased. There were reports of attacks on artists, teachers, civil society activists and journalists around the country. Educational institutions such as the Manouba University were under attack after the school decided to ban the wearing of the niqab (full veil), arguing it obstructed student's identification during exams.

The violence cumulated in an attack on the United States (US) embassy and the neighbouring American school on 14 September 2012, which led to the death of four people. An arrest warrant was issued for Abu Iyadh, who was reportedly present during the attack and presumed to be involved in its organisation, but he was never caught. Prior to the attack, AST had encouraged members through its social media channels to participate. Hassen Brik, head of AST's dawa committee, said that young AST supporters were involved in the attack, albeit without orders from the group's leadership.5 The attack marked AST's shift towards lethal violence, thereby taking confrontation with the Tunisian government to a new level.

After the attack on the US embassy, the relationship between AST and the Tunisian state, and in particular the then governing Ennahda party, grew ever more tense. Eventually, the year 2013 radically changed the operational conditions for the movement. The assassination of the leftist politician Chokri Belaid in February 2013 in Tunis by unknown assailants caused an outcry among Tunisians, pressuring the government to act. Two months later, the government banned AST's annual conference in Kairouan, due to be held on 19 May.

According to AST spokesman Seifeddine Rais, the meeting would have attracted 40,000 members, including internationally well-known jihadists coming from abroad. Leading up to the conference, Abu Iyadh reacted on Facebook: "The young people who showed bravery in defending Islam in Afghanistan, Chechnya, Iraq, Somalia and Syria will not hesitate to sacrifice themselves for their religion in the land of Kairouan… God knows that all those countries are not dearer to our hearts than our own motherland".6

On 25 July 2013 another opposition politician, Mohamed al-Brahimi, was assassinated, like Belaid, outside his Tunis home. Shortly thereafter, a militant ambush left eight soldiers brutally killed close to Chaambi Mountain, the mountain area bordering Algeria where Uqba Ibn Nafi, an AQIM affiliate network targeting the Tunisian security and state personnel, is believed to be operating. The accumulated violence plunged the country into political chaos.

LOSING GROUND

The Tunisian state claimed that AST was behind the two politician assassinations but the group never claimed responsibility for the killings. Most analysts agree that while the assassinations were unlikely ordered by the leadership of AST, some mem-

bers or supporters of the group may have been involved. Yet, in light of the two assassinations, on 27 August 2013, AST was designated a terrorist group by the Ennahda-led government.

The government crackdown on terrorism forced the organisation underground and many members were detained. The crackdown also brought an end to the movement's successful proselytising practices as the group was not prepared to operate clandestinely. After the crackdown many members are believed to either have left to Syria or Libya, while others are believed to have left the group all together. Abu Iyadh fled Tunisia, and his current whereabouts remain unclear. Rumours have circulated about his alleged death, including that he had been killed by American airstrikes, but these claims have not been substantiated with evidence. But the crackdown and Abu Iyadh's public retreat have largely signified the demise of the group. Even though AST still exists, it is believed to be largely inactive. Online conversations between current and former AST members who remained in Tunisia indicate a sense of lacking a leader.7

Significantly, the absence of Abu Iyadh and broader downfall of AST coincided with the rise of Islamic State (IS) and its groundbreaking social media propaganda across the world, thereby allowing IS to take advantage of the vacuum left by AST. AST sympathizers who decided to stay in Tunisia could turn to peaceful social activism, adhere to AQIM-linked Uqba Ibn Nafi (that operates in the mountainous border region near Algeria, targeting primarily the Tunisian security apparatus), or join the jihadists drawn to the more radical IS-agenda.

Those remaining loyal to Abu Iyadh were more likely to side with an al-Qaeda affiliate than IS, as the AST leader has/had close ties to high-level al-Qaeda members. Additionally, there has been information suggesting that members of Uqba Ibn Nafi have left the brigade to pledge allegiance to IS. Whether to remain loyal to AST or swear allegiance to IS has been discussed by AST members on online fora.8 The exact degree to which IS has been able to benefit from AST's institutional weakness by recruiting its members and sympathizers for its cause, however, remains unclear.

CONCLUSION

AST was essential for the establishment of a Tunisian post-revolutionary Jihadi-Salafi movement, thanks to its broad social engagement and clever outreach.

Similar to other Islamist movements across the region, by addressing youth grievances and remaining present on the ground, AST filled a vacuum left by the political elite in the early stages of the democratisation process, and offered an alternative to many young people who felt abandoned by the politicians and were disappointed with the revolution.

While the Tunisian government rightfully stepped up its security focused counter-terrorism measures, these containment efforts need to be flanked by appropriate

measures to address the root causes of why the country's youth has been prone to radical ideas. The Tunisian government should not ignore youth grievances (such as 33 per cent youth unemployment and the lack of opportunities provided by the state) while enforcing a security clampdown – including a state of emergency (which has only just been lifted) – that has given the country's security forces extended powers. All this, while simultaneously limiting citizens' rights – such as the right to public assembly, resulting in the disruption of peaceful demonstrations – risks contributing to the already large gap between the young and the state. It may prove counterproductive and spur yet another dichotomy, security versus personal liberty.

The terrorist designation forced AST to give up its open on-the-ground presence of charity and preaching. The crackdown meant that there was no longer a future for members primarily interested in these activities, leaving members with a more long-term vision and possibly more radical agenda to either continue organizing underground or leave Tunisia for Libya or Syria. As long as AST remains a designated terrorist organization by the Tunisian state, the organisation is unlikely to be able to return to the success it enjoyed shortly after the revolution, unless under a new leadership, appearance, and focus.

Nevertheless, the network built by Abu Iyadh needs to remain under scrutiny. Online conversations between AST-members and sympathizers suggest that Abu Iyadh lost influence with his disappearance. Young members who questioned his leadership have been increasingly confronted with and attracted to the powerful social media outreach apparatus of IS. The 2015 Bardo and Sousse attacks, for which IS claimed responsibility, signified a worrying surge in terrorist activity in the fragile democracy, targeting the country's foreign tourists and its heavily tourism-dependent economy. Regardless of the potential (but unconfirmed) connections between the Bardo and Sousse attacks and AST's network, the attacks show that despite AST's decreasing influence, Tunisian youth remain highly vulnerable to the appeal of extremism. Without flanking the immediate containment measures with appropriate measures to tackle root causes, it is possible that the crackdown on AST will have opened a vacuum that may prove to become IS's red carpet into Tunisia.

About the author:
*Christine Petré is an independent analyst based in Tunisia –
www.christinepetre.com @ChristinePetre

Source:
This article was published by FRIDE as Policy Brief 209 (PDF)

This Policy Brief belongs to the project 'Transitions and Geopolitics in the Arab World: links and implications for international actors', led by FRIDE and HIVOS. We acknowledge the generous support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway. For further information on this project, please contact: Kristina Kausch, FRIDE (kkausch@ fride.org).

Notes:

1. Zelin, Y. Aaron, 2013. Tunisia: Uncovering Ansar al-Sharia. http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/tunisia-uncovering-ansar-al-sharia
2. Based on the experience the author has from Douar Hicher.
3. The Salafist struggle, 2014. http://www.economist.com/blogs/pomegranate/2014/01/dispatch-tunisia
4. Barrett, Richard, 2014. Foreign Fighters in Syria http://soufangroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/TSG-Foreign-Fighters-in-Syria.pdf
5. Loveluck, Lovisa, 2012. Planting the seeds of Tunisia's Ansar al Sharia http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/09/27/planting-the-seeds-of-tunisias-ansar- al-sharia/
6. Torelli, Stefano Maria, 2013. A Portrait of Tunisia's Ansar al-Shari'a Leader Abu Iyad al-Tunisi: His Strategy on Jihad. Militant Leadership Monitor. http://www.academia.edu/4818151/A_Portrait_of_Tunisia_s_Ansar_al-_Shari_a_Leader_Abu_Iyad_al-Tunisi_His_Strategy_on_Jihad
7. Based on the author's interview with Tunisian security analyst Habib M. Sayah. 8. Ibid.

http://www.eurasiareview.com/09102015-tunisian-salafism-the-rise-and-fall-of-ansar-al-sharia-analysis/

Gafa contre Daech

LE 13/10 /2015

Face à une menace internationale et décentralisée comme Daech, on sait désormais que l'efficacité des armées conventionnelles est relative. Les groupes terroristes utilisent Internet et les services des Gafa (Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple) comme terrain d'opération et comme plate-forme de recrutement. Par exemple, les algorithmes de Facebook aident des djihadistes à cibler de potentielles recrues, comme le montre parfaitement Anne Erelle dans son témoignage « Dans la peau d'une djihadiste ».

Il est par conséquent cohérent de s'interroger sur le rôle que ces géants du Net pourraient avoir dans la lutte contre le terrorisme international. D'autant que ces mêmes acteurs ont prouvé, en une décennie seulement, qu'ils avaient la capacité de transformer de nombreux secteurs : infrastructures, culture, communication, marketing et, plus récemment, santé, transports, éducation… Pourquoi pas celui de la sécurité intérieure, voire extérieure ? Dotés de technologies de pointe, les Gafa ne seraient-ils pas la meilleure arme contre une menace comme Daech ? Cela leur permettrait de poursuivre leur mission de transformation du monde, et, évidemment, de préempter le marché de la cybersécurité, en disruptant l'ancien modèle des armées étatiques.

Un tel scénario est il réaliste ? D'après Guy-Philippe Goldstein (consultant expert en cybersécurité, auteur de « Babel Minute Zéro », Gallimard), c'est le risque d'une dégradation de leur image qui freine les Gafa aujourd'hui. En revanche, les start-up qui s'emparent du sujet fleurissent, à l'instar de l'américain Palantir, dont le but est d'analyser de grandes quantités de données pour *« aider les institutions à protéger la liberté »*, ou de l'israélien Satellogic, qui a pour ambition de déployer un réseau de nanosatellites civils, dont l'efficacité est comparable à celle des meilleurs dispositifs militaires.

Tout indique que, dans les prochaines années, de nombreuses entreprises « disrupteront » le modèle militaire traditionnel en facilitant l'accès à des outils de surveillance, d'analyse, de propagande et d'action, basés sur le Big Data, l'intelligence artificielle, la robotique, les drones, les nanotechnologies et les biotechnologies.

http://www.lesechos.fr/

Les réfugiés et la guerre, un double défi humanitaire

LE 13 OCTOBRE 2015

« Les **migrations** forcées au départ de la **Syrie** sont irréversibles »

Peter Maurer, président du Comité **international** de la **Croix-Rouge**

Lundi 5 octobre, à l'ambassade de Suisse

Sur le compte **Twitter** du Comité international de la Croix Rouge (CICR) , de récents messages indiquent les préoccupations de cette organisation créée en 1863 : « *Nous avons dû retirer tt notre personnel du comté de Leer, État de l'Unité, #SoudanDuSudsuite au pillage d'un complexe, assorti de menaces » ; « Le #CICR compte sur l'appui politique de la #France pour un meilleur respect du droit international humanitaire. #DIH » ; « RT @CICR_fr: La politisation de l'aide humanitaire menace gravement notre capacité de prêter assistance. @PMaurerICRC in @letempsow.ly/Tkunf*« …

« Notre activité est en hausse, c'est que le monde va mal »

Même s'il est à la page sur les réseaux sociaux, le CICR poursuit ses activités dans une relative discrétion. De la Colombie au Yémen, de la RD Congo à la Birmanie, il compte 14.000 collaborateurs œuvrant dans plus de 80 pays pour un budget de 1,5 milliard de francs suisses (1,37 milliards d'euros). « Notre activité est en hausse de 50% sur 3 ou 4 ans », signale Peter Maurer, son président. « Cela illustre que le monde va mal ».

Lundi 5 octobre, cet ancien diplomate suisse, qui fut en poste notamment dix ans à New York à la représentation helvétique aux Nations Unies, a brossé un tableau tragique de la situation humanitaire sur la planète. Devant une cinquantaine de diplomates, universitaires ou responsables d'associations, il s'est notamment inquiété de la durée de plus en plus longue des situations d'urgence provoquées par les

guerres.

« Le monde manque d'un leadership international »

« Nous sommes confrontés à plusieurs défis », commence Peter Maurer. « Le premier est la faiblesse des institutions multilatérales qui ont le plus grand mal à jouer leur rôle régulateur en cas de conflit. Le monde manque en outre d'un leadership international. Certes, on peut se féliciter du processus de paix en Colombie et de l'accord sur le nucléaire iranien. Mais ce sont des succès trop rares. Pendant ce temps, la guerre sévit en Syrie, en Libye, en Ukraine, dans la région du Lac Tchad… »

> Lire : « Colombie : la paix dans six mois », article paru sur le site de La Croix le 24 septembre 2015.

« Quand les gens vivent mieux, ils revendiquent plus »

« Second défi : l'écart s'accroit à l'intérieur de nombreux pays entre riches et pauvres, ce qui provoque des tensions », poursuit-il. « Les statistiques montrant une baisse globale de la pauvreté dans le monde s'expliquent largement par les progrès en Chine. Et puis, on pensait dans le passé qu'au fur et à mesure que les gens vivraient mieux, il y aurait moins de conflits internes. Or cela les conduit à revendiquer plus de droits face à des pouvoirs qui souvent ne bougent pas. D'où des conflits comme ceux que l'on a vu se répandre dans le sillage des printemps arabes ».

> Lire : « Recul historique de la pauvreté dans le monde », article paru sur le site de La Croix le 5 octobre 2015.

« Dans la région d'Alep, 35 groupes armés différents »

« Troisième défi : l'atomisation des acteurs sur les champs de bataille », ajoute le président du CICR. « Pendant longtemps, les conflits opposaient une armée structurée à un ou deux mouvements de libération. Aujourd'hui, dans les guerres du Moyen Orient ou du Lac Tchad, nous devons négocier avec trente ou cinquante formations armées sur des territoires limités. Ainsi, dans la région d'Alep, en Syrie, nous devons faire avec 35 groupes différents. Une telle complexité augmente considérablement le temps nécessaire pour déployer une opération humanitaire d'envergure. Même au sein de Daech, les groupes qui contrôlent Raqqa, Mossoul ou Deir Ez Zor ne sont pas les mêmes. Il y a bien sûr des connections mais aussi une grande autonomie entre eux ».

> Lire : « À Alep, des lignes de front multiples et indécises », article paru sur le site de La Croix le 7 juillet 2015.

« La désintégration du système de santé a des effets mortels »

« Les conflits se déroulent de plus en plus dans un cadre urbain, et non plus sur des champs de bataille, ce qui affecte les populations de façon beaucoup plus importante », complète-t-il. « À Alep, Homs, Lougansk,Maiduguri, les destructions ont

des effets secondaires et tertiaires dévastateurs et systémiques. Par exemple, en Syrie, depuis quatre ans, il n'y a pas de protection des hôpitaux, des médecins, des infirmières… La plupart d'entre eux sont donc partis et la population qui est restée ne meurent pas tant des effets directs d'une bombe ou d'un tir d'obus, mais des conséquences de la désintégration du système de santé qui fait que la plupart des soins ne sont plus fournis ».

« Les chiffres des déplacements de population sont ahurissants »

« De telles situations provoquent le départ des habitants », analyse Peter Maurer. « Les chiffres des déplacements de population sont ahurissants. En Syrie, la moitié de la population est déplacée : près de 8 millions d'habitants à l'intérieur du pays, plus de 3 millions à l'extérieur; 80% de la population est dépendante de l'action humanitaire. Idem autour du Lac Tchad, où on compte deux à trois millions de déplacés entre le nord du Nigeria, le Cameroun, le Tchad et le Niger. Ces populations étaient déjà pauvres avant le déclenchement des violences il y a 4 ans. Les conflits les appauvrissent encore plus ».

« Aucune possibilité de retour des réfugiés syriens »

« Ces mouvements de population ont un impact régional sur les pays voisins, et même global », poursuit-il. » Les migrations forcées au départ de la Syrie sont irréversibles. Il n'y a aucune possibilité de retour dans un avenir proche, vu les destructions. Les réfugiés vont rester là où ils sont, ou vont migrer encore plus loin. Sauf si on augmente fortement les moyens et la surface opérationnelle des grandes institutions humanitaires. Cela fait 4 ou 5 ans que les organisations humanitaires font chaque mois davantage que le mois précédent mais finalement, la situation est toujours pire pour la population car les effets de la guerre ne cessent de s'étendre ».

« Impartialité, neutralité, indépendance »

« Cela d'autant plus que les principes de l'action humanitaire sont contestés par les acteurs des conflits », s'inquiète l'ancien diplomate. « Le CICR est attaché aux notions d'impartialité, de neutralité, d'indépendance. Or beaucoup d'acteurs définissent de manière de plus en plus restrictive ce qui relève d'une action humanitaire légitime. Ils ne considèrent plus une action fondée sur les besoins d'une population en détresse comme un principe fondamental. Ils instrumentalisent ce secours, le rendent otage de pourparlers politiques ».

« Des populations coincées par la lutte antiterroriste »

« Bien des États affirment qu'il n'y a pas de besoins chez eux », indique-t-il. « Dans un contexte de regain du souverainisme, les gouvernements entendent définir eux-mêmes ce qu'est un besoin humanitaire et ce qui ne l'est pas. Or dans le cadre de la lutte antiterroriste, ils sont de plus en plus nombreux à penser qu'il est légitime de ne pas offrir un tel soutien à des populations qu'ils jugent inféodées à leurs adversaires et qu'ils ne considèrent donc pas comme des victimes. Pour nous, c'est délicat

car nous sommons ces États de respecter notre impartialité mais nous avons besoin d'eux pour mener sur le terrain une action neutre, impartiale et non politique ».

« On ne choisit pas les acteurs sur le terrain »

« D'autres difficultés sont posées par des mouvements comme Daech et Boko Haram », relève le président du CICR. « On ne choisit pas les acteurs sur le terrain! Daech se comporte bel et bien comme un État terroriste. Il nous empêche d'avoir un accès stable à des zones géographiques et à des populations importantes. Mais même avec eux, on essaie toujours de négocier l'accès, même si c'est pour de petits nombres et sur de petites surfaces ».

« Qui peut prédire comment va tourner Daech? »

« En fait, plus on est engagé dans le temps dans un conflit, plus on réussit à couvrir des surfaces importantes, même si c'est dans des conditions difficiles. Qui peut prédire comment va tourner Daech? Vont-ils évoluer comme les talibans en Afghanistan? On ne sait pas mais on essaie de creuser un espace humanitaire, peut-être insatisfaisant pour le moment, mais qui peut se révéler positif pour l'avenir ».

« Pour un nouveau consensus sur les principes de l'action humanitaire »

« En fait, il faudrait reconstituer un large consensus sur les principes de l'action humanitaire », plaide-t-il. « Nous avons besoin d'un débat éclairé sur les notions d'impartialité, de neutralité, d'indépendance. Deux échéances approchent qui nous permettrons de sensibiliser les États à ce sujet : la 32° conférence internationale de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge, qui se réunira à la fin de l'année à Genève; et le premier sommet mondial de l'humanitaire, prévu en mai 2016 à Istanbul. Ce seront deux moments importants pour rappeler, défendre et approfondir les principes du droit international humanitaire ».

« L'enjeu du financement »

« Un autre sujet important pour les acteurs de l'humanitaire est celui du financement », explique Peter Maurer. « On estime que seulement 15 % des dépenses de développement dans le Sud vont vers les zones de haute fragilité, tandis que 85% vont vers des pays moins difficiles, moins vulnérables. C'est un vrai enjeu politique ».

« Soixante ans que le CICR est au Yémen »

« C'est d'autant plus complexe que l'action humanitaire, qui était conçue au départ comme une action d'urgence, doit de plus en plus s'inscrire dans la durée », reconnait-il. « Cela fait 60 ans que le CICR est au Yémen, 40 ans en Afghanistan! Dans ces pays, il faut à la fois répondre à des situations d'urgence et travailler à stabiliser la société, ce qui signifie des actions de développement : création de structures de santé, formations agricoles, développement de systèmes d'adduction d'eau… Il faut gérer à la fois le court et le long terme et, parfois, arbitrer entre eux ».

« Une remise à plat des politiques de développement »

« Pendant ce temps, des États du Nord concentrent leurs actions de développement sur des États plus stables, en recherchant même parfois un retour sur investissement! », regrette-t-il. « C'est louable, bien sûr, mais il y a un risque d'incohérence au regard des besoins réels. Heureusement, on constate une prise de conscience ces derniers douze mois. En Europe, la crise des migrants n'y est pas pour rien. Des pays ont réalisé que des situations d'extrême fragilité étaient à l'origine de mouvements de population massifs. Cela conduit à une remise à plat des politiques de développement ».

« Au Moyen-Orient, un appauvrissement des États »

« Au Moyen-Orient, on constate un phénomène d'appauvrissement des États », pointe-t-il. « Le Liban, la Jordanie, ne sont pas des pays pauvres mais lorsque vous accueillez un million de réfugiés, tout devient pauvre à certains endroits. L'Allemagne va mobiliser dix milliards d'euros pour l'accueil des réfugiés, et des voix s'élèvent pour souligner que si cette somme avait été transférée dans les pays d'accueil d'origine, cela aurait eu un impact positif considérable ».

« Les réfugiés partent lorsque leur survie est menacée »

« De fait, mieux vaut agir en amont qu'en aval », insiste-t-il. « Il faut repenser les priorités en se persuadant bien que les gens confrontés à la violence d'une guerre veulent malgré tout rester dans leur pays, le plus longtemps possible. Ils ne partent que lorsque leur survie est menacée. Il faut donc les aider, là où ils sont, le plus efficacement possible ».

« Le monde regarde comment l'Europe agit envers les réfugiés »

« Les Européens doivent agir dans ce sens », conclut Peter Maurer, en réponse à une dernière question. « Et ils doivent être très vigilants sur le soin qu'ils apportent à l'accueil des réfugiés. Alors que tant de pays sur la planète sont confrontés à des mouvements de migrations puissants, le monde entier regarde comment l'Europe agit. Les Européens doivent aussi réaliser que seuls une minorité de migrants vont arriver chez eux. La majorité vont rester dans les pays voisins des crises, qui souffrent le plus ».

http://paris-international.blogs.la-croix.com/

Afghanistan

The Essential Lessons of Terrorists at the Table

October 7, 2015

The Afghan War has cost a trillion dollars and thousands of lives. The possibility of ending the bloodshed through negotiation deserves close attention.

This summer, hopes for a negotiated solution to the Afghan War rose only to be dashed. Pakistan's foreign ministry initially called the negotiations with the Taliban a "breakthrough." Afghan President Ashraf Ghani called the negotiations "the only way" to end the conflict. Even Mullah Omar, the Taliban's leader, seemed to make comments suggesting his support. Then the Taliban confirmed that Mullah Omar was actually dead and the process ground to a halt amidst disputes within the Taliban leadership.

With the Afghan War's cost totaling more than $1 trillion by some counts, and having taken the lives of more than 2,000 American service members in addition to those serving with other members of the international coalition and tens of thousands of Afghan civilians, the need for introspection regarding how the war came to be so costly is clear. The possibility of ending the bloodshed through negotiation deserves close attention.

In *Terrorists at the Table*, Jonathan Powell, the former chief negotiator for the Northern Ireland peace process and chief of staff to then British Prime Minister Tony Blair, argues that the war's costliness derived in large part from an aversion to negotiating with terrorists.

Powell begins his book by recounting the "stinging attacks by Republican lawmakers who claimed President Obama had abandoned the decades-old US policy 'we don't

negotiate with terrorists'" in May 2014, when Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, who was held captive by the Taliban after being captured in 2009, was released in exchange for five Taliban prisoners being held at a military prison in Guantánamo Bay.

Powell sees the attacks surrounding the incident as the product of a widespread aversion to negotiating with terrorists. As he notes: "Governments in all countries and of all political parties say they will never talk to terrorists." In a whirlwind review of the history of such sentiment, Powell takes the reader from Teddy Roosevelt's call for a crusade to eliminate terrorism after the 1901 assassination of President William McKinley to Ronald Reagan's 1985 statement that "America will never make concessions to terrorists."

The aversion was felt particularly strongly at the beginning of the Afghan War. Powell writes: "In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, President George W. Bush said, 'no nation can negotiate with terrorists, for there is no way to make peace with those whose only goal is death.' His vice president, Dick Cheney, put it more pithily, saying 'We don't negotiate with evil we defeat it.'"

In that early moment, the decision not to negotiate set the stage for the immense costs that would come over the next decade-plus. Powell writes: "The problem for the West is that we have left engaging with the Taliban terribly late — in retrospect, it was a mistake to have excluded them from the original Bonn talks on the future of the country in 2001-02." He quotes Gen. Nick Carter, the deputy commander of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, on the point, as saying, "back in 2002, the Taliban were on the run. I think that at that stage, if we had been prescient, we might have spotted that a final political solution to what we started in 2001, from our perspective, would have involved getting all Afghans to sit at the table and talk about their future."

Some analysts and practitioners have put forward an alternative explanation for how the Afghan War became so costly — blaming the failure to adopt a counterinsurgency strategy early enough and see it through. Daniel Green, a defense fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, points the finger at that failure writing that there was a "faith that the U.S. military and its civilian and uniformed leadership were committed to victory and that they would do all that was required to ensure the American homeland was protected" but instead that faith was betrayed and "hundreds of men and women frequently died implementing a strategy that was often flawed at best, lacked the right resources to prevail, and that embraced concepts of war ill-suited for the Afghan context."

In his memoir *Knife Fights*, Lt. Col. (ret.) John Nagl, who helped lay the groundwork for today's counterinsurgency doctrine, puts forward a similar explanation focused on the failure to implement and follow through on a counterinsurgency strategy. Nagl writes that Gen. David Petraeus "had the chance to practice counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, which had been starved of resources for many years by the over-

whelming demands of the debacle in Iraq. Counterinsurgency worked where it was resourced, particularly in southern Afghanistan."

Nagl rejects the analysis that lies behind Powell's attribution of the Afghan War's costliness to the refusal to include and negotiate with the Taliban, writing: "Because the Taliban […] could not be trusted to prevent Al Qaeda from using its territory to plan and execute future attacks, the Taliban also had to go and be replaced by a government that would pursue policies more supportive of U.S. interests." Instead he points the finger at "endemic corruption" and the limitations on confronting sanctuaries in Pakistan. For Nagl, "the question is not whether the classic counterinsurgency principles of clear, hold, and build work" but "whether the extraordinary investment of time, blood, and treasure required to make them work is worth making."

For Powell, there is much truth in analyses focused on the need for counterinsurgency. He calls the lessons that Petraeus (alongside Nagl) learned and institutionalized within the military "a useful advance" but adds "it is not enough," arguing that there must be "a third strand to [counterinsurgency] in addition to the security response and the 'hearts-and-minds' campaign, and that is talking to the armed groups."

Powell is skeptical about the effectiveness of using military force to defeat a terrorist group — even when utilized according to counterinsurgency theory. He cites Seth Jones and Martin Libicki's RAND study *How Terrorist Groups End*, which looked at 648 groups since 1968 and found that 43 percent end with transition to a political process, 40 percent end through policing, and only seven percent end in a military success. Powell writes that Jones and Libicki "were, correctly, trying to demonstrate that George W. Bush's 'war on terror' was not likely to succeed because military defeat of terrorism is very rare," but Powell cautions that Jones and Libicki as well as other authors have fallen into the "trap" of equating smaller groups like the German Baader Meinhof Gang, which could be defeated by policing, with larger groups "as if they are in some way comparable with the far more substantial Tamil Tigers, [African National Congress], or [the Irish Republican Army]."

Powell also points to Audrey Cronin's *How Terrorism Ends*, but notes that "again if you look at the detail, none of the categories except for negotiation seems to work in the end for significant terrorist movements" and furthermore that "some of the groups Cronin lists as having failed either negotiated peace, as the M-19 did in Colombia, or continue to exist … and all of the others are small groups with no real political support."

Powell warns of the risk of escalation that arises when a military pursuing a counterinsurgency strategy finds itself facing the resilience of entrenched terrorist groups and yet averse to negotiate. In such a circumstance, he writes, "military officials argue that if they are just given the resources and if the politicians stand back they will be able to finish the job." He points out: "This was the argument used in Afghanistan

when President Obama was persuaded to surge forces for one last effort against the Taliban in 2009."

Powell adds that "eventually the government realizes a purely security approach will not work and that the two sides have to talk." The question though is what costs, such as lives lost and money spent, are experienced in the meantime.

There is also the risk of chasing illusory examples of military success at the cost of democratic values. As Powell puts it, "it is politically much less difficult to take a firm security stand," and as a result, "when the armed group proves more resilient than anticipated, governments sometimes slip into extralegal measures."

For example, Powell criticizes the citation of the supposed defeat of the Shining Path in Peru as a successful implementation of a decapitation strategy noting first that the group's reliance on its leader was relatively unique, but also that "the methods used to repress Shining Path were extreme, with villages laid waste and frequent massacres by the army … These methods would not be available to a government in a Western democracy, and [Peruvian] President Fujimori now languishes in jail as the result." Finally, Powell notes: "Shining Path is still not over."

Terrorists at the Table is full of detailed discussions of how and when to negotiate and what makes some negotiations fail and others succeed drawing from a rich set of examples spanning the world from El Salvador to South Africa to Sri Lanka.

However, Powell's discussion of attempts at negotiation in Afghanistan or today's war on terror is less detailed. Without background knowledge or a broader interest in the subject area, it is too easy to come away from Powell's book with the impression that the United States made little to no attempt at negotiating with the Taliban.

But as a 2013 report by the New America Foundation and the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Violence chronicles, there were multiple efforts to negotiate with the Taliban after excluding them from post-invasion peace talks, but the efforts were often confused, lacked strategic planning, and also suffered from a lack of Taliban interest in potential settlements. The report's historical tracing of the attempts and look at the factors at play raises challenges for Powell's application of his argument to Afghanistan.

The biggest question is whether the Taliban are even capable of negotiating an end to the conflict. The report's authors warned: "While Mullah Omar might still guarantee a certain level of cohesiveness to the movement for the moment, this younger generation is potentially more radical; they do not share the irritation with Al Qaeda expressed by some of the older commanders, and are more sympathetic to an international jihadist agenda." The report also noted the "dizzying" array of local motivations at work in the insurgency, warning that "even should a negotiated settlement somehow emerge between Kabul and the Quetta Shura, it is far from certain that

the insurgency would cease." With American military officials increasingly worried about Taliban splinters that have aligned themselves with the Islamic State, the question of whether there is a sufficiently cohesive Taliban leadership with which to negotiate takes on greater relevance. The confirmation of Mullah Omar's death emphasizes these challenges.

Of course, Powell's book is not a history of the Afghan War, but a theoretical argument about why negotiation is necessary and how to do it. Even though the discussion of the specific case of Afghanistan is limited, Powell does lay out the broad theoretical aspects that make sense of the challenges including the need for a "mutually hurting stalemate" for negotiation to succeed as theorized by William Zartman of John Hopkins' School of Advanced International Studies, and a negotiating partner capable of implementing a deal.

One of the points Powell raises is the need to respect individuality amidst the enmity. We live in an era when much of the discussion of the war on terrorism occurs at the level of organizations and not individuals, with calls to confront the "Islamic State" or "al Qaeda." Some commentators discuss the subject in even more abstract terms like "radical Islam" or "Jihadism."

Powell provides an antidote to this tendency, writing: "The fact you are negotiating with human beings who have feelings and emotions should be a central consideration in the way you approach the talks." At another point, he argues that "one of the key ways to build trust is to start treating the members of the armed group like human beings. They are subject to their own traumas, such as torture when captured, and life on the run is tough."

In one such example, South Africa's National Intelligence Service Director Niel Barnard arranged for Nelson Mandela's prison uniform to be replaced with other clothes during negotiations between Mandela and representatives of apartheid South Africa because "he considered respect essential."

Other examples point to the consequences of how individual identity changes over time. Powell explains that Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness joined the Irish Republican Army when they were young, but "by the mid-1980s they were well past fighting age and were beginning to see their nephews and nieces getting arrested or killed. Realizing that the conflict could go on forever, they took the first tentative steps towards ending it."

Powell also tells the story of how one individual, Colonel Karuna, who commanded the Tamil Tiger forces in the east of Sri Lanka, defected in 2004 after a meeting in Thailand opened "his eyes for the first time to the outside world," allowing his "liking for women and the good life" to overpower his loyalty. The defection of one key figure "disintegrated" the group's forces in eastern Sri Lanka and returned the military option to the Sri Lankan government's arsenal.

Powell's *Terrorists at the Table* is an essential contribution to the debate over what went wrong in Afghanistan as well as the debate over the future of counterinsurgency doctrine even though it would benefit from a deeper exploration of the Afghan War and the many factors beyond the aversion to negotiating that have restricted the success of existing negotiations to little more than the return of Sgt. Bergdahl. Ignoring the issues Powell raises will produce an incomplete picture of how and why thousands of Americans lost their lives in the longest war the United States has ever fought — and will have life or death consequences in future conflicts.

http://foreignpolicy.com/

Iraq

Le trésor de guerre de Daech s'élèverait à près de 2000 milliards d'euros

samedi 10 octobre à 19:31

Le groupe Etat islamique (EI) possède un trésor de guerre colossal. Une étude du Centre d'analyse du terrorisme (CAT), que révèle le magazine Challenge, l'EI disposerait d'un bas de laine de 2 200 milliards de dollars.

Soit 1 937 milliards d'euros, l'équivalent, à quelques milliards près, de la dette de la France.
Selon le think tank européen fondé en 2014, Daech a accumulé 200 milliards de plus en une année. Et ce n'est pas tant le pétrole qui fait désormais sa fortune, mais l'impôt. Selon les auteurs du rapport, Jean-Charles Brisard et Damien Martinez, cette hausse provient de l'emprise de plus en plus grande du mouvement fondamentaliste en Syrie. En faisant main basse, début septembre, sur les champs pétrolifères de Jazal, les jihadistes sont parvenus à la tête de 80% de la production pétrolière syrienne, contre moins de 10% de la production irakienne.
Et pourtant, selon ce rapport, la manne financière obtenue grâce au pétrole aurait presque été divisée par deux — un milliard de dollars en 2014, 600 millions de dollars en 2015 — du fait des bombardements de la coalition internationale qui complique le transport de l'or noir.

En un an, c'est l'impôt qui est devenu la première source de revenus pour Daech, passant de 360 millions de dollars à un milliard de dollars, selon le CAT. « Daech a de plus en plus recours aux taxes forcées et aux extorsions de fonds. Dans la province de Ninive (Irak) qui comprend Mossoul, l'EI ponctionne 50% du salaire des 60 000 fonctionnaires de la région. Cela génère entre 500 et 600 millions de dollars par an », explique Jean-Charles Brisard au magazine.

Selon les deux spécialistes du terrorisme, 5 à 10% des importations de coton en Turquie proviendraient aussi de champs contrôlés à près de 90 % par Daech dans le nord de la Syrie. Le groupe EI gagnerait aussi un peu d'argent en vendant du gaz, du blé, de la drogue. Les donations de ses partisans sont aussi une ressource. On sait enfin, depuis un rapport de l'ONU paru en août dernier, que les jihadistes pratiquent bel et bien le commerce d'esclaves de manière très organisée, avec une grille de tarification précise : les enfants de moins de 10 ans sont vendus 150 euros, les adolescentes environ 110 euros, les femmes entre 20 et 30 ans environ 70 euros. Ce qui démontre que ce n'est pas la force de travail qui fait la valeur, mais la possibilité de laver les cerveaux. Plus ils sont jeunes et malléables, plus ils coûtent cher.

Comment Daech vend-il ses marchandises ?

On se demande souvent comment une organisation terroriste parvient à vendre une ressource si scrutée qu'est le pétrole. Pour y parvenir, les islamistes s'appuieraient sur des réseaux criminels de contrebande kurdes, jordaniens et turcs. Dissimulé dans les exportations officielles, la provenance du pétrole de l'EI, une fois raffiné en Turquie, deviendrait impossible à distinguer.Selon le Centre d'analyse du terrorisme (CAT), le groupe EI contrôlerait aujourd'hui 130 banques, uniquement des établissements de dépôts réservés au marché intérieur. « Les paiements de l'EI se font grâce au système du Hawala, explique Jean-Charles Brisard. L'argent transite grâce à des réseaux de change. Une personne confie de l'argent à un agent qui se met en relation avec un autre agent proche du destinataire de la somme. C'est lui qui verse alors l'argent moyennant une commission ». Ce système financier basé sur des intermédiaires, serait apparu au VIIIe siècle sur les grandes routes d'échange, de la soie et des épices.

http://www.algerie360.com/

Les frappes russes en Syrie inquiètent

L'intervention de la Russie change la donne

9 octobre 2015

L'armée syrienne vient de lancer une vaste offensive terrestre, avec l'appui de l'aviation et de la marine russes, une semaine après le début de l'intervention militaire de Moscou. Ces opérations russes sont critiquées par les Occidentaux parce qu'elles viennent soutenir le régime de Bachar Al Assad et permettent à la Russie d'être présente dans la région.

Photo SPUTNIK. DMITRY VINOGRADOV

Les ministres de l'OTAN, par la voix du secrétaire général de l'Organisation du traité de l'Atlantique Nord, Jens Stoltenberg, ont indiqué qu'il y avait une « escalade inquiétante des activités militaires russes » en Syrie et sa région. Une situation inquiétante pour l'Otan, qui tente de maintenir sa présence dans la région.

Les Russes plus efficaces que l'alliance Atlantique

Munie d'un arsenal impressionnant, l'armée russe bombarde massivement les rebelles modérés, des groupes islamistes et djihadistes de Daech, dans le but de préparer une offensive terrestre des soldats du gouvernement Bachar Al Assad, selon

l'Agence France Presse.

Le ministre russe de la Défense, Sergueï Choïgou, a assuré devant la presse que 112 cibles avaient été touchées depuis le début de la campagne le 30 septembre. Ce chiffre se situe largement au-dessus des 50 frappes par semaine de la coalition menée par les États-Unis.

Une différence qui n'a pas échappé à Faysal Mikdad, vice-ministre syrien des Affaires étrangères. Ce dernier a indiqué à la télévision que « les frappes aériennes russes effectuées au cours de ces quelques derniers jours sont beaucoup plus performantes que les actions de la coalition réalisées depuis plus d'un an ».

Vassili Kachine, expert au Centre d'analyse de stratégie et de tactique, a expliqué à l'AFP que « la campagne américaine a des objectifs plus larges et ambitieux que la campagne russe mais les États-Unis ont énormément de problèmes à trouver un soutien armé » sur le terrain. Ce dernier a assuré que l'armée russe s'engage « uniquement pour soutenir une opération offensive de l'armée syrienne ».

Les ministres de l'OTAN inquiets

Réunis à Bruxelles jeudi 8 octobre, les ministres de l'OTAN ont évoqué conflit en Syrie et le rôle de Moscou dans ce conflit, bien qu'ils aient rappelé que l'alliance « n'est pas directement impliquée en Syrie ».

La présence de la Russie, soutenue par la Syrie et l'Iran, déplait aux Occidentaux qui craignent une présence plus accrue des Russes dans toute la zone méditerranéenne. D'ailleurs, le secrétaire général de l'OTAN, Jens Stoltenberg, a indiqué avoir « observé une escalade inquiétante des activités militaires russes. Nous allons analyser les derniers développements et leurs implications pour la sécurité de l'Alliance ».

Mais l'OTAN a déjà annoncé qu'elle se tenait prête à envoyer des troupes en Turquie, pour défendre ce territoire membre contre les possibles menaces pesant sur sa frontière sud. Mardi 6 octobre, deux avions de combat russes ont pénétré l'espace aérien de la Turquie, provoquant une vive réaction de Jens Stoltenberg.

Ne pouvant pas intervenir directement en Syrie et ne parvenant pas à convaincre les autorités russes de ne pas s'impliquer, l'OTAN va renforcer ses moyens de surveillance et de renseignement.

Le prochain sommet de l'organisation, qui se tiendra à Varsovie en 2016, portait sur la présence de la Russie dans les pays d'Europe centrale et orientale, qui aimerait que ce sommet désigne sans ambiguïté la Russie comme l'ennemi principal – voire unique, selon l'AFP.

L'armée syrienne lance son opération

De son côté, le chef d'état-major de l'armée syrienne, Ali Abdallah Ayoub, a indiqué qu' « après les frappes aériennes russes qui ont diminué la capacité de combat de

l'EI et des autres groupes terroristes, les forces armées syriennes ont gardé l'initiative militaire ».

Il a également annoncé que les forces armées syriennes avaient « commencé aujourd'hui (jeudi) une vaste offensive en vue d'écraser les groupes terroristes et libérer les régions et les localités qui ont souffert du terrorisme et de ses crimes ».

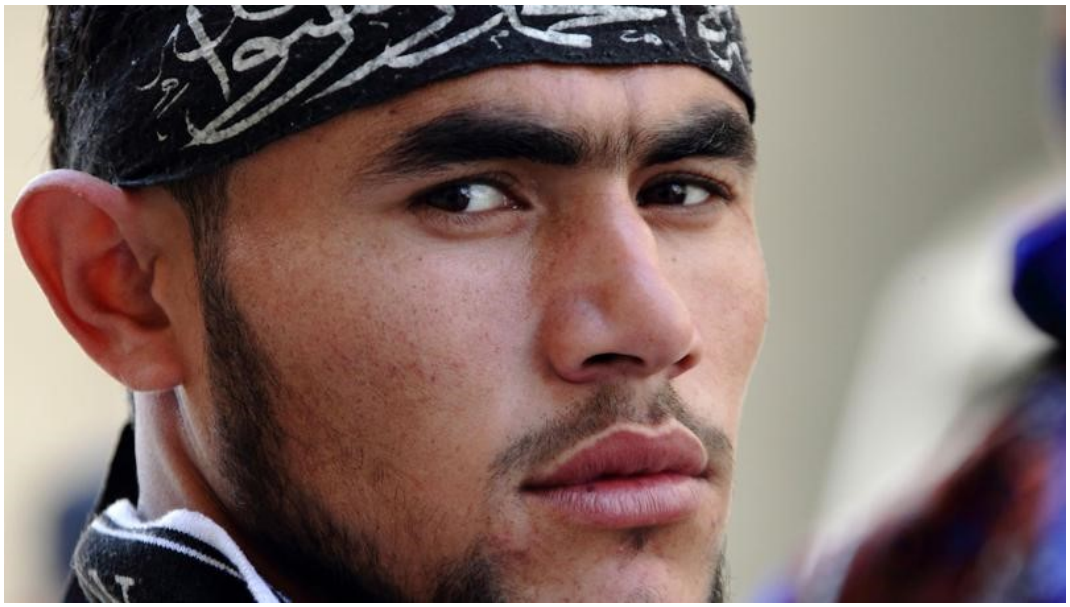
Redynamisés par les frappes russes, plusieurs médias ont indiqué que l'armée syrienne et ses alliés ont entamé une vaste opération terrestre dans le nord de la province de Hama aidée par l'aviation russe.

Lors d'une rencontre avec le ministre russe de la Défense, Sergueï Choïgou, retransmise à la télévision, le président Vladimir Poutine a indiqué que « les opérations de ce genre – antiterroristes – sont compliquées. Et bien sûr, il est encore tôt pour tirer des conclusions, mais ce qui a été fait jusque-là mérite une très bonne appréciation ». Ce dernier a assuré que l'intervention de son armée allait s'intensifier.

http://www.temoignages.re/international/moyen-orient-et-afrique-du-nord/les-frappes-russes-en-syrie-inquietent,84106.html

Syrie : qui se cache derrière les rebelles ?

Publié le 13/10/2015 à 19:25



FIGAROVOX/ENTRETIEN - Alain Rodier analyse les multiples formes d'opposition en Syrie, et le soutien qu'une partie des rebelles a reçu des Etats-Unis et de l'Europe.

LE FIGARO. - Le ministre de la Défense a répété sur Europe 1 ce 9 octobre que la Russie s'en prenait à «*80-90%*» à l'opposition syrienne et à consolider «*la sécurité de Bachar al-Assad*». Quels sont ceux qui composent cette opposition syrienne?

Alain RODIER. - Je déduis de ce que disent et répètent les autorités françaises que l'opposition intérieure est tout ce qui s'oppose au régime de Bachar el-Assad en dehors de Daech. De multiples coalitions remplissent ces conditions mais les plus puissantes sont composées de mouvements affiliés à Al-Qaida «canal historique» comme le Front al-Nosra ou qui dépendent plus ou moins secrètement de la nébuleuse comme le Ahrar al-Cham. Une de ces coalitions, l'«Armée de la conquête» menaçait directement Lattaquié et la côte méditerranéenne de la Syrie après s'être emparée de la province d'Idlib située au nord-ouest du pays (et frontalière à la Turquie, ce qui est pratique pour les ravitaillements en hommes et en matériels). Le régime syrien était menacé dans son existence même par cet état de faits. Le général Qassem Suleimani, le chef de la force Al-Qods des pasdarans qui dirige l' «aide» iranienne à Damas s'est rendu à Moscou en juillet pour expliquer la situation qui a été confirmé par les services de renseignement russes, le SVR et le GRU.

De multiples coalitions remplissent ces conditions mais les plus puissantes sont composées de mouvements affiliés à Al-Qaida «canal historique» comme le Front al-Nosra ou qui dépendent plus ou moins secrètement de la nébuleuse comme le Ahrar al-Cham.

Il est donc parfaitement vrai que Moscou dont le but est de préserver le pouvoir en place à Damas, a frappé beaucoup cette zone mais aussi Hama et Homs, deux villes situées plus au sud mais aussi particulièrement menacées. L'objectif de la Russie est donner de l'air aux forces syriennes pour qu'elles puissent reprendre du terrain avec l'appui au sol des pasdarans (la division «Sabrin» de la force Al-Qods des pasdaran aurait été déployée dans les régions de Hama et de Homs) et du Hezbollah libanais.

Il est exact de dire que les Russes frappent à 80% des mouvements autres que Daech. Il faut uniquement rajouter que la plupart dépendent d'Al-Qaida.

Il est donc tout à fait exact de dire que les Russes frappent à 80% des mouvements autres que Daech. Il faut uniquement rajouter que la plupart dépendent d'Al-Qaida, vous savez, cette organisation à la base des attentats du 11 septembre 2001, de 2014 à Madrid et de 2015 à Londres... Quand à l'ASL dans ces régions, elle est éparpillée suite à sa déconfiture causée par le Front Al-Nosra (certains de ses membres se trouvent encore dans la région d'Idlib et à Alep mais ils sont surtout présents dans le sud du pays où il ont conclu des alliances ponctuelles avec les salafistes-djihadistes). Moscou a demandé à Washington de lui désigner les rebelles «modérés». La réponse est en attente.

L'armée américaine a décidé, vendredi 9 octobre, de livrer désormais «des équipements et des armes» aux rebelles syriens. Contre qui ces derniers luttent-ils? Le régime de Bachar el-Assad, l'Etat islamique, le Front al-Nosra?

La première livraison de 50 tonnes de munitions serait destinée à une nouvelle coalition appelée les «Forces démocratiques syriennes» (FDS) qui regroupe les Unités de protection du peuple kurde (YPG/YPJ), le bras armé du parti de l'Union démocratique (PYD) proche du PKK, et des forces arabes et syriaques. Cette coalition n'est pas une nouveauté car ces mouvements se coordonnaient au sein d'un état-major commun (joint opération room) pour combattre Daech à Kobané puis à Tall Abyad, le poste frontière avec la Turquie qui contrôle une importante route rejoignant Raqqa, la «capitale» de État islamique. Je dois rappeler que ces forces ne se sont jamais opposées à celles de Bachar el-Assad, ce dernier ayant évacué les zones kurdes (le Rojava) en 2011 (pour être précis, il y a une unité kurde qui sert au sein du Front Islamique -FI-, une coalition sponsorisée officiellement par Riyad). Par contre, Ankara apprécie modérément cet appui américain, qui n'est pas le premier, aux Kurdes syriens proches du PKK... Pour moi, il est difficile de croire que cette coalition va s'engager plus au sud, hors du pays à majorité kurde. Par contre, elle peut jouer un rôle dans la région d'Alep dont certains quartiers sont à majorité kurde.

Comment expliquer la dislocation de l'Armée syrienne libre alors que celle-ci était soutenue et financée par les Etats-Unis et plusieurs pays européens dont la France? La France a-t-elle fait un pari risqué en misant sur la chute proche du régime d'Assad et en favorisant l'opposition syrienne à qui elle a livré des armes létales depuis 2012?

Tout les gouvernants, au premier rang desquels se trouvaient les Turcs, ont cru que le régime de Bachar el-Assad allait tomber en quelques mois à l'image de ce qui s'était passé en Egypte et en Tunisie. Ce fut une erreur d'analyse fondamentale puisque tel n'a pas été le cas. Ce ne sont pas tant les services de renseignement qui

n'ont pas fait leur travail mais le fait de «conseillers» qui n'ont pas voulu les croire.
L'ASL était un peu comparable à l'armée irakienne - en pire. Corruption, inorganisation, manque d'expérience et surtout de motivation pour se battre. Elle n'a pas perdu contre l'armée régulière mais contre les islamistes radicaux qui eux sont tout l'inverse.
En résumé, nous sommes en face d'un problèmes à multiples inconnues où les intérêts des partenaires sont divergents. Par contre, la menace reste claire: les mouvements salafistes-djihadistes que sont Al-Qaida «canal historique» et le Front al-Nosra. Pourvu qu'ils ne se réconcilient pas!

Par Eléonore de Vulpillières: *Spécialiste du terrorisme et de la criminalité organisée, ancien officier au sein des services de renseignement français, Alain Rodier est directeur de recherche au Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement (CF2R).*

Tajikistan

Central Asia and the ISIS Phantom

The region's leaders have been playing up the ISIS threat. How real is it?

October 02, 2015

On September 16, just after the CSTO summit held in Dushanbe, Tajik authorities arrested 13 active members of the Islamic Renaissance Party and removed the passports of other 50 members to prevent them from travelling abroad. The next day, the General Prosecutor`s Office released a statement explaining the arrests as an action to prevent new acts of terrorism and crimes of an extremist nature, accusing the party of being affiliated with the armed group led by General Abduhalim Nazarzoda and of involvement in aviolent attack on a police station and weapons depot that began on September 4. "Nazarzoda was acting on orders from the party, including the exiled party leader, Muhiddin Kabiri," says the General Prosecutor`s office.

The exiled leader of a recently banned Islamic Renaissance party in Tajikistan, Kabiri has rejected Tajik authorities' accusations that he ordered to Nazarzoda to instigate and lead the deadly mutiny in September. He insisted that neither he nor his party had anything to do with the incidents.

International human rights organizations have condemned the detention of opposition party members and demanded their immediate release. Amnesty International

warned that all are at risk of torture and unfair trial.

"These arrests represent a full-scale assault on dissent in Tajikistan," said Hugh Williamson, Europe and Central Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "Tajik authorities have the obligation to charge these men promptly with specific crimes or release them and to maintain the presumption of innocence. They cannot hold opposition activists on spurious claims of preventing future crimes."

Ivar Dale, senior advisor and representative in Central Asia for the Norwegian Helsinki Committee, told *The Diplomat* that Tajik authorities are now destroying what little credibility they still had with the international community. "To outside observers, it's obvious that Rakhmon wants to close down the opposition. If he would allow journalists to freely investigate and report on what is happening, perhaps the situation would be different. But right now this looks like a rough take-down of the political opposition, and we also see connections to recent attacks on civil society. Tajik authorities should think long and hard on how they want their state to be perceived abroad. They're doing an extremely bad PR job right now."

Dale added that the Islamic threat has been an excuse for the Uzbek regime to silence opposition and civil society for years. "Tajikistan has held a somewhat lighter hand over these groups, but what we are seeing now is a total ban, even on ordinary opposition," he said.

According to Kyrgyzstan political scientist Tamerlan Ibraimov, the IPRT has not been extremist at all. "It could not have posed any security or political threats to Rahmon's regime. However, usually the authoritarian regimes fear any political opponents and try to eliminate them by any means. Rahmon has done the same, as he has seen the Islamic Opposition party as a potential political threat. The recent incidents in Tajikistan have demonstrated that repressive methods will lead to radicalization and armed resistance. The banning of IPRT has shown that political pressure only contributes to the increase of extremism in that society."

Last month, ISIS and its possible foothold in Central Asia dominated discussion at the CSTO summit held in Dushanbe. In a joint statement, the six member countries expressed concerns about a possible infiltration of ISIS militants from Afghanistan into Central Asian states, and possibly Russia too.

Russian president Putin and Central Asian leaders tried to show that they are seriously alarmed at the rising number of CSTO-member citizens fighting in Syria. They claim that ISIS has spread its wings far beyond Syria and Iraq, and has designs on CSTO countries.

Tajik president Emomali Rahmon, who declared that ISIS orchestrated the recent bloody attacks and claimed that organizers were acting under instructions from the

Islamic State, urged CSTO countries to take urgent action as "the specter of emergencies and security threats in the region is not diminishing, and could even grow." While the CSTO leaders were discussing this issue, Tajik authorities continued their manhunt for Nazarzoda. The general was killed a few days later by government forces.

An Exaggerated Threat

Central Asian leaders are well known for their poor records on human rights. Uzbek president Islam Karimov has built a reputation as one of the most brutal dictators in the world. Tajikistan's human rights record has meanwhile deteriorated with a crackdown on free media and the imprisoning of opposition leaders. According to Human Rights Watch report, the human rights situation worsened across the region in 2014, with people imprisoned on politically motivated charges, heavy restrictions imposed on the press and freedom of assembly, and continued impunity for torture.

This dismal trend can be linked to the tendency of Central Asian countries, especially Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, to exaggerate the threat of ISIS and other radical Islamic groups, using it as a tool to justify their crackdown on domestic opposition. Certainly, the last two years have seen the region become one of the hubs for ISIS recruitment, but this is being driven by issues such as unemployment and poverty.

How many Central Asians have in fact left their countries to join ISIS? Government security agencies offer their own estimates, but they cannot track those who leave through Turkey and Russia. Eric McGlinchey, an associate professor at George Mason University and author of *Chaos, Violence, Dynasty: Politics and Islam in Central Asia*, told *The Diplomat* that nobody has a good understanding of how many have joined ISIS. "We see different numbers from different sources, however none of them seems to be credible," he said.

A recent report from the International Crisis Group suggests that between 2,000 and 4,000 Central Asians have travelled to Syria to join ISIS. However, experts claim that the figure of 4,000 fighters is an exaggeration. Deirdre Tynan, the ICG's project director for Central Asia, admits that "nothing is exact, but 2,000 fighters is a more realistic figure for the region."

Official government numbers vary: Tajikistan claims that about 400 Tajik citizens fight for ISIS, Kyrgyzstan says 300-350, Kazakhstan 250, and Turkmenistan about 300. Ultimately, though, even the numbers given by Central Asian intelligence services are questionable. This is a point made by Dr. Pal Dunay, an analyst specializing in Russia and Central Asia: "Secret services (that do not necessarily know better) tacitly speak about much higher numbers. For example, in Kyrgyzstan the official communication speaks of 200-250, whereas the services cannot exclude numbers above 1,000."

Sirojiddin Tolibov, a journalist and expert from Uzbekistan based in Prague, said in an interview on August 28 that the number of Central Asians joining ISIS has grown, especially over the past two years. "Based on conversations with sources close to [ISIS] I believe that the number of Central Asians and Caucasians, including with their families, may reach up to 5,000." The problem is that neither Central Asian governments, nor UN agencies, nor scholars or experts can be sure. As John Heathershaw, a Central Asia expert at the University of Exeter, noted in an interview with *Foreign Policy* magazine, "the estimates and figures from Central Asian governments are all highly politicized and speculative. The simple truth is that no one has an accurate figure."

And then there is a recently released report by the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM), which says that ISIS is not interested in Central Asia and does not see the region as a potential candidate for expansion. According to the report, Central Asia is not a preeminent source of recruits for terrorist outfits, domestic or international. PISM's research compares Central Asian indicators with Western countries, stating that "Only 1 in 40,000 from Tajikistan have joined ISIS, while 1 in 23,800 from Belgium have. Keep in mind, there are far fewer Muslims in Belgium than Tajikistan, which is 90 percent Muslim and 85 percent Sunni."

Every Jihadist Has a Story

If we look at the stories of those Central Asians who have joined terrorist groups in Syria, there is no common profile and motivations vary greatly. According to Shairyrbek Juraev, a Bishkek-based Central Asian analyst, "the key driving factor are the failing public institutions (education, well-being, representation etc.), especially in the context of weak pre-existing social norms." According to Dunay, motivations vary significantly: money, adventure, radicalization through social media. However he argues that the main reason could simply be a lack of opportunity. "Some Central Asian societies do not offer any [opportunity], except for leaving. There is stalemate in the society, high unemployment. Some believe this could be the way out," he said.

However, not every new jihadist is coming from misery and poverty. Analyzing stories published in the media, speaking with villagers, and reading expert analyses, five different groups can be identified. The first group can be classified as social and political protesters. These are generally well-educated people who are not necessarily poor, and who have lived for many years with an unfulfilled desire for political and social change in their country. Frustrated and disappointed at the lack of change, they decide to fight in Syria in order to feel they are part of something significant, that they are protagonists in an idealistic fight for change. While some of them believe that they are fighting for justice against an oppressive regime, others believe that a secular political system has failed to provide them with a prosperous life, and that only an Islamic state can improve their lot.

The second group consists of people who have been persecuted, have escaped persecution, or are afraid of being persecuted. These people are a minority, accounting for perhaps only 10-15 percent of the total number of Central Asian fighters. According to Tolibov, for Muslims in Central Asia there are few or no political forums in which they can express their views. "Authorities in countries like Uzbekistan and Tajikistan do not tolerate any dissent at all. Territories controlled by ISIS [are] considered 'a safe haven' for those Central Asians who escaped persecution in their own countries. In areas controlled by [ISIS] they may feel relatively safe." According to estimates, more than 10,000 people have been imprisoned in Uzbekistan for holding beliefs different from those endorsed by the government.

The third group of people comprises those who are in search of a better life, and who have been lured by false promises of money and good jobs. Recruiters might promise anything from $5,000 to $30,000 a month, which is big money in this region – enough to buy a car, or even an apartment in Bishkek or in Tashkent. However, these promises invariably prove false, and the recruits discover the harsh realities of ISIS too late. There is also a significant tendency for Central Asian migrants in Russia to be targeted for recruitment. These migrants are often working in low paid jobs, or are even unemployed, living isolated lives in Russia. In this context some fall under the influence of Chechen recruiters in mosques and travel to Syria through Moscow, Grozniy or Turkey.

The fourth group is made up of people with religious backgrounds and a strong interest in Islam. Religious knowledge in Central Asian countries is generally quite low, which is why many people who practice Islam have been easy targets for recruiters, who convince them that ISIS will unite and save all Muslims. Some strive to obtain an advanced Islamic education and dream of studying abroad – many recruits are lured by the promise of a unique opportunity to study in Turkey. The RFE/RL Kyrgyz service broadcast several stories about people who left for Turkey believing they were going to enroll in prestigious madrasa or theology faculties, only to end up in Syria. Orozbek Moldaliev, head of the Kyrgyz Government's Religious Commission, told *The Diplomatt*hat Islamic education is weak in Central Asia, and people are joining ISIS out of their ignorance of Islam. Kadyr Malikov, an expert and theologist from Kyrgyzstan, argues that Central Asian countries must pay more attention to religious education. "We have to fight against jihadi groups with education, not with force," says Malikov.

The last group comprises girls and young women captured by false promises of love. They are usually targeted through social media, lured by an attractive profile picture and dreams of marriage. In reality, recruiters play with their hearts and destinies. Nurgul, who lived in Belovodsk in Kyrgyzstan with her 4-year-old daughter, was divorced and lived in her mother`s home. One day she showed her mother a photo of a Kazakh man living in Istanbul, who had declared his desire to marry her and accept her daughter. Her mother was delighted, and the groom bought a ticket for Nurgul

and her daughter. She left for Turkey and only after two months of silence did she eventually call her mother. The news was shocking: The nice groom from Kazakhstan did not exist, and she ended up in Syria.

Imaginary Threat?

The roots of the problem lie not in ISIS, nor in the Caucasian recruitment network that has been luring labor migrants in Russia. The problem lies in Central Asia itself. Central Asian leaders and their governments need to reconsider and resolve the domestic problems that are the main driving forces for recruitment.

Juraev, the Bishkek-based analyst, told *The Diplomat*, "It is the governments of Central Asia, first of all, who claim that Islamic radicalization is posing a real threat to the states of the region. Many forms of extremism tend to threaten the states and societies, but I believe the key threat in this region is the catastrophic quality of governance, which is creating an environment for various''radicalization,' be it of an ethnic, religious or political nature."

According to McGlinchey, some journalists and scholars have exaggerated the threat of ISIS. "We have to be honest and say that we do not have enough information to say one way or the other. We have very little evidence to make us concerned that ISIS is a major threat. Most Central Asians find little attractive [in] ISIS's message, as ISIS theology is different from [the] kind of Islam that Central Asians practice, which is [a] much more inclusive and open-minded Islam. Some people may be attracted by money, but it is short-term, as people become unhappy with the organization and tend to try to escape."

Alisher Ilkhamov, a research associate at the London School of Oriental and African Studies, says that the ISIS threat and Islamic radicalization are exaggerated by national governments in Central Asia. "What can fuel radicalization is mostly the suppression of dissent and government corruption that has reached [an] unprecedented level. People are getting tired of this system and lose faith that one day their lives will change for better. Corruption, dictatorship, nepotism, poverty have weakened the legitimacy of these ruling regimes in the eyes of the population," he said.

Instead of addressing internal problems and eliminating the rift between people and their government, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan have continued to crack down on local civil and Muslim organizations and movements. The fact that Tajikistan banned the quite moderate Islamic opposition party is only one example. According to Ilkhamov, this party, or at least its leadership, was not radical at all. "But the Tajik government has pushed them into corner, contribut[ing] to the radicalization of its ranks, as some members of IRP may decide now that they have been left with no choices but to confront the ruling regime with arms."

Cholpon Orozobekova is a Geneva-based journalist and analyst specializing in Central Asia.

http://thediplomat.com/

Turkey

How ISIS could gain from Turkish peace rally bombing

Monday, 12 October 2015

Thousands mourned the 95 victims of Turkey's deadliest attack in years as state inspectors tried Sunday to identify who sent suicide bombers to a rally promoting peace with Kurdish rebels.

The government said Kurdish rebels or ISIS militants were likely responsible, while mourners accused President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of fomenting violence to gain votes for the ruling party.

No one has claimed responsibility, but the attack bears similarities to a suicide bombing the government blames on ISIS that killed 33 Turkish and Kurdish peace activists near a town bordering Syria in July.

Police detained 14 suspected ISIS members Sunday in the central Turkish city of Konya, but it wasn't clear if they were related.

Some Turkish media declared that peace itself was under attack. The bombers struck hours before Kurdish rebels battling Turkish security forces followed through with plans to declare a unilateral cease-fire, to reduce tensions leading up to Nov. 1 elections.

Turkey's government rejected the declaration, saying the rebels must lay down arms for good and leave the country. Turkey's military meanwhile carried out more cross-border airstrikes against Kurdish shelters and positions in the Zap and Metina regions of Iraq.
While no one group has been ruled out in the bombings, government opponents blamed security forces for failing to protect the peace rally.

"The state which gets information about the bird that flies and every flap of its wing, was not able to prevent a massacre in the heart of Ankara," said Selahattin Demirtas, co-chairman of the pro-Kurdish People's Democracy Party.

On Sunday, police fired tear gas and scuffled with the mourners — some chanting "Murderer Erdogan!" — who tried to reach the blast site to lay carnations. A group of about 70 was eventually allowed to enter the cordoned off area.

More than 10,000 also gathered in Turkey's mostly Kurdish southeastern city of Diyarbakir, holding a moment of silence for the victims, including hundreds of wounded.

Thousands also demonstrated in Istanbul on Saturday, blaming the government.

Erdogan is hoping the ruling party regains its political majority, and critics accuse him of intensifying attacks on Kurds to rally nationalist votes. They worry the bombings could entice rogue Kurdish forces to attack, persuading Turks to seek security over peace.

ISIS, which is fighting Syrian Kurdish forces allied to Turkey's Kurdish rebels, could benefit the most from this, since a continued military offensive within Turkey would take pressure off the extremist group in Syria.

The Syrian government also has an interest in destabilizing Turkey, which has made no secret of its desire to see President Bashar Assad ousted.

Regardless of who may have planned the attack, it showed how deeply Turkey is being drawn into the chaos in Syria, with which it shares a 900 km-long border.

Turkey already hosts some 2.2 million refugees from Syria — more than any other nation — and extremists use Turkish territory to enter or exit the fray, increasing the threat of violence.

Turkey's skies also are vulnerable. Russia reportedly violated Turkish airspace last week while bombing anti-Assad rebels in Syria, and on Sunday, Syrian jets and surface-to-air missile systems locked radars on three Turkish F-16 jets patrolling the border, Turkey's military said.

Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who leads the pro-secular opposition party, blamed Turkey's support of opposition groups in Syria for the violence.

"That policy has brought terror to our country," Kilicdaroglu said Sunday. "Turkey needs to rapidly get out of the Middle Eastern quagmire."

Turkey agreed recently to more actively support the U.S.-led battle against ISIS, opening its bases to U.S. aircraft launching air strikes on the extremist group in Syria and carrying out a limited number of strikes on the group itself.

Relations between Kurds and Turks are already tense. Hundreds have died in Turkey in the last few months as a 2012 peace process was shattered.

Electoral gains by the People's Democracy Party in June deprived the ruling party, which Erdogan founded, of its parliamentary majority after a decade of single-party rule. The new election was called after the ruling party failed to strike a coalition deal.

Erdogan is seeking to extend the executive powers of his presidency, and while he denies it, opponents believe he has deliberately re-ignited the conflict with the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, to shore up his party's support. Erdogan has asserted that Kurdish rebels are a bigger threat to Turkey than ISIS.

Opinion polls indicate, meanwhile, that the ruling party is unlikely to regain a majority, again forcing it to build a governing coalition. Just how Saturday's bombings will affect all this remains to be seen.

http://english.alarabiya.net/

ANALYSIS: The biggest act of terror in Turkey's history

The attack has further escalated political tension in the country only 20 days before the parliamentary re-election. Polls show that a similar outcome to the June 7 election is likely, which could force a coalition government

An official inspects the blast scene in Ankara after a twin attack on Oct 10. AA photo

Two bombs that exploded among people gathering in front of the Ankara train station on Oct. 10 in the morning claimed the lives of at least 95 people, wounding 246 others, many of them heavily.

Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu has stated that the government suspected two suicide bombers committed the attack. The victims were about to attend a rally in Ankaraorganized by civil society groups in order to call for peace against the resumed clashes between the outlawedKurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the security forces, as Turkey heads for a key snap election on Nov. 1.

That was the biggest act of terror in Turkey's history, killing more than any former ones.

PM Davutoğlu announced a national mourning for three days, not only for those killed in the latest attack but also for police and military officers who have died in the recent wave of violence.

It is not yet clear who or which organization committed the violent attack, but Davutoğlu said it "could be the PKK or the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant [ISIL]."

However, it is clear that the blast has created a wave of shock in all layers of Turkish society. The country has been living in an atmosphere of clashes with ups and downs for decades but it has never been the stage of such an awful attack directly targeting civilians using their democratic rights.

Calling themselves "The Labor Platform," the associations that led the rally - including labor unions, civil servant unions, the bar association, the chambers for medical doctors, engineers, architects and others - applied to theAnkara Governor's Office weeks ago to get permission for the rally route.

Answering a question after the attack on whether he was thinking of resigning due to the lack of security measures, Turkish Interior Minister Selami Altınok said he did not think there was any problem with the measures, so he would keep his post.

Cancelling his election programs during the mourning period, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, the leader of the social democratic Republican People's Party (CHP), said he was ready to give all support necessary to the government to end terrorism. "Turkey doesn't deserve this," Kılıçdaroğlu said, adding that government's excessive "involvement in Middle Eastern affairs" was having terrible side effects.

Davutoğlu said he wanted to consult over the recent situation with Kılıçdaroğlu and Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) head Devlet Bahçeli, because they could draw a "bold line between themselves and acts of terror." However, he said he would not be consulting with Selahattin Demirtaş, the co-chairman of the Kurdish problem-focused Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), who slammed President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, PM Davutoğlu, and the government over the attack.

The attack has further escalated the political tension in Turkey only 20 days before a re-election of key importance. Polls show that the chances of a similar outcome to the June 7 elections, which could force a coalition government, are higher than chances of Davutoğlu's Justice and Development Party (AK Parti) regaining power in parliament. That would also mean that President Erdoğan's hopes of changing the country's regime into a presidential one would diminish further.
But right now Turkey must focus on finding those responsible for the biggest act of terror in its history.
October/10/2015

http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/

USA

Preventing the Next ISIL: An Evolving Global Approach to Terrorism

October 9, 2015

Thank you Dean Najam and to the Pardee School of Global Studies for inviting me with speak with you all.

Today, I would like to describe how the U.S. and our partners are addressing the global threat of violent extremism.

Violent extremists attack in theaters of war and where they control territory, but they also strike in peaceful places, far from areas under their control. Boston, of course, knows this threat firsthand. I was teaching at Harvard two years ago when terrorists targeted our cherished marathon. So many other cities have shared similar horror: Madrid, Aleppo, Oslo, Nairobi, Baghdad, Timbuktu to name just a few.

Like these other communities around the world, Boston has grappled with how best to counter the persistent threat of violent extremism emerging locally. The American approach has largely been to integrate traditional law enforcement approaches with new partnerships with at-risk communities.

These efforts face challenges and some controversy. It is difficult to balance security and freedom, to avoid the appearance of profiling while prioritizing effort, and to anticipate a threat that we know from empirical evidence can take root in individuals from any socio-economic, religious, ethnic, or national background.

Efforts to prevent violent extremism from emerging within the United States are the responsibility of domestic government agencies. But US foreign policy has come to appreciate the need for analogous efforts abroad. I'd like to talk a bit today about how the United States has evolved to define and embrace policies and programs that go beyond killing and capturing terrorists, to preventing the spread of violent extremism – to prevent the next ISIL.

During my tenure as Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, supporting this evolution has been one of my top priorities.

I'll begin by explaining why the evolution of violent extremism since 9/11 necessitated a broader approach – what we call Countering Violent Extremism, or CVE. I'll then clarify what CVE entails in our efforts abroad and describe our successes and challenges in translating this approach into our foreign policy.

After 9/11, the U.S. arrayed a range of counterterrorism tools to keep Americans safe: from airport security and intelligence collection, to military operations, and security assistance. These efforts prevented a catastrophic attack on the homeland

and degraded core al-Qa'ida leadership.

Yet as the U.S. targeted al-Qa'ida, its remnants exploited local grievances about insecurity, unemployment, sectarianism, or marginalization -- and the general upheaval of the Arab Uprising -- to merge with militias, criminal networks, and insurgencies. In doing so, they created affiliates and inspired savage new groups like ISIL and Boko Haram.

The rise of these groups revealed that while traditional, "hard" approaches to counterterrorism remained critical for protecting us from immediate threats, they were ill-equipped at preventing future ones from emerging.

To do that, we needed a broader approach to better prevent people from turning to terror in the first place.

That begins with understanding what motivates individuals and communities to align with violent extremist groups. And here, as my colleague the terrorism expert Jessica Stern has written, there is no simple answer.

Their motives are complex, overlapping, and context-specific. To untangle them, I've found it useful to think about psychologist Abraham Maslow's famous hierarchy of needs. At the bottom are needs critical to physical survival, like food, shelter, and safety. Higher up are more abstract needs for love, belonging, and purpose.

This hierarchy helps explain why individuals with such varied backgrounds have aligned with violent extremist groups.

At the bottom, unmet needs like physical or economic security can act like "push" factors that make individuals or communities vulnerable to violent extremist recruitment. Even when lower-level needs are met, other conditions like socioeconomic and political marginalization can impact higher-order needs like identity and purpose. Further complicating the equation, these grievances can be either real or perceived, experienced directly, or witnessed from afar.

Violent extremist groups can also "pull" individuals and communities to their cause with radical ideologies that often exploit unmet, higher-levels needs concerning purpose or identity.

Each case of personal or community radicalization to violence results from a complex and context-specific interaction between these "push" and "pull" factors. This complexity necessitates a longer-term approach that is at once broader and more creative, but also more targeted and contextual.

CVE attempts to strike that balance in three important ways by expanding the "who, what, and where" of our counterterrorism approach.

Concerning "the what" – CVE is about addressing the "push" and "pull" dynamics that can fuel Violent Extremism. In doing so, CVE seeks to both reverse the growth

of active violent extremist groups and better prevent the next generation of threat.

The United States had long recognized the need to address the "pull" factors of ideology and recruitment methods. We had been working to counter the lies and propaganda violent extremists use to lure vulnerable individuals and forge alliances with local communities. That can mean monitoring web traffic or engaging proactively on social media to promote credible alternatives to violence.

In 2010, the U.S. created a consolidated Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications to contest extremist propaganda and misinformation across a range of digital environments. It helps empower credible voices outside government to counter terrorist lies and propaganda online. For example, the CSCC finds vulnerable individuals being targeted by violent extremist groups, trains them to use new communications and social media platforms, and equips them with effective counter-messages.

But addressing "push" factors was a different proposition. Essentially, it meant addressing the underlying grievances that terrorists exploit. President Obama explained that when "people – especially young people – feel entirely trapped in impoverished communities, where there is no order and no path for advancement, where there are no educational opportunities, where there are no ways to support families, and no escape from injustice and the humiliations of corruption – that feeds instability and disorder, and makes those communities ripe for extremist recruitment." This work often requires filling unmet human needs as described by Maslow's hierarchy, and these can range from providing security, to expanding economic options, to giving marginalized communities a greater stake in determining their political future.

The Department of State increasingly mobilizes its diverse resources and expertise to advance CVE goals. These range from human rights and democracy programs to strengthening civil society and advocating for marginalized communities, to law enforcement and criminal justice initiatives to promote community-oriented policing and reduce radicalization to violence in prisons, to international exchange activities that convene youth and women leaders from around the world to exchange CVE best practices. Programs that contribute to CVE goals include politically reintegrating communities in northern Mali, strengthening relations between youth and police in Zanzibar, and providing youth in Burkina Faso greater opportunities for civic engagement.

But obviously there are huge human needs that create fertile soil for extremist roots, and we have limited resources to address these potential drivers. Getting the "what" right therefore means investing in analysis. Empirical research can identify the most salient "push" and "pull" factors to effectively target our efforts. This is an area where the academy, as well as NGOs, can help. Evaluation can facilitate course corrections and improve program design. We need to better understand what inter-

ventions work – and therefore increase efforts to monitor, evaluate, and experiment.

State's Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations recently established a new unit to analyze the underlying drivers of violent extremism in different global contexts. This analysis feeds into a new initiative to design and implement CVE programming through an integrated and holistic process. Now, State is launching CVE pilot programs in Africa focused on the most at-risk communities and key drivers of radicalization to violence with carefully tailored, evidence-based approaches. This is where our new thinking on prevention is taking us.

We were slow to fund such efforts, and our investments in preventive work remains modest compared to US investments in hard security – so vital to respond to existing terrorist threats. But as we have watched violent extremism continue to spread globally, infecting new areas and shaping new generations of youth, we recognized the need to simultaneously engage in preventive work. Prevention is vital for helping our hard power tools become more successful. A key issue, which I'll discuss shortly, is *where* to target these efforts.

But first, let's turn to "the who."

CVE calls for an integrated and holistic approach to address the "push" and "pull" factors that can fuel violent extremism. While governments have a critical role in this work by ensuring security, respect for human rights, and the rule of law, they cannot effectively address these complex factors on their own.

A holistic CVE approach is only possible by empowering a broader set of actors, including civil society, business, religious leaders, women, youth, international bodies and former violent extremists. This is what we are calling a "whole of society" approach.

At the same time, an integrated CVE approach depends on coordination among these various stakeholders. That often requires building trust and repairing fraught relationships between the government and actors in civil society or marginalized communities, as well as safeguarding space for these actors to operate and peacefully express their views.

Additionally, to better facilitate access to and collaboration between these various actors in society, governments need to coordinate better within themselves by breaking down the silos of bureaucracy. Thus, CVE also requires a "whole of government" approach.

It also calls for a network of global partners, including regional and multilateral institutions like the Arab League, United Nations, World Bank, African Union, and World Economic Forum to reinforce the civilian-led components of this approach. Even with our considerable resources, the U.S. cannot and should not do this alone. Vio-

lent extremism is a collective threat to global security and requires a collective global response.

And finally, concerning "the where" – CVE calls for broadening our focus to upstream risks by supporting communities actively targeted by terrorist groups. These places are often on the periphery of conflict and terrorist operations and individuals there are highly vulnerable to large-scale radicalization and recruitment.

We've seen, for example, how al-Shabaab tries to exploit the socioeconomic marginalization of Somali youth living in Kenya. From its base of operations in Iraq and Syria, ISIL has targeted communities in surrounding countries like Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon for recruitment.

By broadening the focus to these at-risk but largely peaceful communities, CVE seeks to prevent the expansion of terrorist networks by proactively addressing the grievances they try and exploit.

CVE seeks to keep these most vulnerable communities on a path of stability and resilience by empowering partners to help them address unmet needs that violent extremists seek to exploit.

These elements came into global focus at the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism last February, where President Obama convened over 60 countries, 12 multilateral bodies, and representatives from civil society, business, and the faith community to emphasize a preventive global approach to violent extremism.

The Summit elevated CVE as an international priority and produced an ambitious action agenda with nine distinct pillars, from expanding research on the drivers of violent extremism, to developing inclusive national CVE strategies, empowering civil society, expanding economic and political opportunities for at-risk populations, and promoting human rights. Eight countries had regional summits to further develop CVE efforts, states, civil society networks, and international organizations rolled up their sleeves on implementation.

Through this process, a new global consensus and architecture to support prevention is emerging. I encourage you to learn more at cvesummit.org

For example, participants gathered again in September in New York to report progress and chart a way forward. By then, the global CVE movement had grown to 100 countries, 20 multilateral bodies, and over 120 civil society groups with much to report.

More than 70 Young leaders from around the world gathered at the first-ever Global Youth CVE Summit to issue their own agenda for engaging youth in the global CVE movement and showcase innovative tools for countering the appeal of violent extremism among their peers.

Local researchers from around the world launched a new learning platform to better share findings and deepen our understanding about the local drivers of violent extremism along with the best evidence-based approach to address them.

Mayors across the globe launched a new Strong Cities Network to identify and share community-level best practices for building social cohesion and resilience against violent extremism.

Just days ago, the U.N. Human Rights Council adopted a resolution emphasizing the importance of human rights and good governance for countering violent extremism. In the coming months, Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon is expected to present his plan of action to outline the U.N.'s role in preventing and countering violent extremism.

The World Bank has begun focusing the development community on how to address the social and economic marginalization that can drive violent extremism.

Within countries, a new CVE conversation has helped forge partnerships of mutual interest between civil society and governments, often for the first time. Many countries have developed or broadened national action plans for CVE.

While all of these developments are encouraging, we remain sober about the challenges ahead.

Terrorists take innocent lives every day. Governments face real challenges that require the use of military, intelligence and law enforcement tools. President Obama has been resolute in the fight against al-Qa'ida, and more recently in building a global coalition to fight Daesh or the Islamic State.

Yet at the same time, governments face challenges in avoiding counterproductive second-order effects of their counterterrorism actions. Failing to respect human rights and the rule of law in the name of security can backfire and fuel the lifecycle of terrorism. Examples include racial discrimination in law enforcement, killing civilians in the name of counterterrorism operations, or imposing excessive restrictions on civil society, political participation, and religious freedom in the name of security. At the White House Summit last February, Secretary-General Moon warned how "governments should not use the fight against terrorism and extremism as a pretext to attack one's critics. Extremists deliberately seek to incite such over-reactions, and we must not fall into those traps."

Counterproductive practices may not change quickly, and they will be most intractable where states feel most under siege. But the U.S. approach to CVE widens the aperture of what was once narrowly deemed counterterrorism, forging a broader set of partners and tools to help contain current violent extremists and prevent new extremist threats from emerging. By emphasizing the long term security benefits of holistic policies that address push factors, including governing with accountability under the rule of law, the preventive approach has fundamentally altered the frame-

work for evaluating and addressing violent extremism.

The morphing infection of violent extremism over this decade shows that we must embrace a long-term and holistic approach -- one that, if we return to Maslow's hierarchy of needs -- better aligns our counterterrorism response with promoting human rights and human needs.

In this sense, CVE is fundamentally positive and proactive: it empowers new states and actors, emphasizes preventive action, and advances our collective security while championing universal values. It seeks to build credible and compelling alternatives to terror for our most vulnerable communities.

As Secretary Kerry has said, "the rise of violent extremism is a challenge to the nation sate and the global rule of law. And the forces that contribute to it and the dangers that flow from it compel us to prepare and plan, to unite and insist that our collective future will be uncompromised by the primitive and paranoid ideas of terrorists, but instead it will be built by the universal values of decency and civility, and knowledge and reason and law. That is what we stand for. That is where we will stand."

Thank you and I look forward to the discussion.

http://www.state.gov/j/remarks/248075.htm

Yemen

Au Yémen, des crimes de guerre dans l'indifférence

13/10/2015

INFOGRAPHIE/VIDÉO - Amnesty International a dénoncé dans un rapport de multiples violations du droit international par la coalition menée par l'Arabie Saoudite. Dans ce pays en proie depuis six mois à un conflit complexe, c'est un désastre humanitaire qui se joue à huis clos.

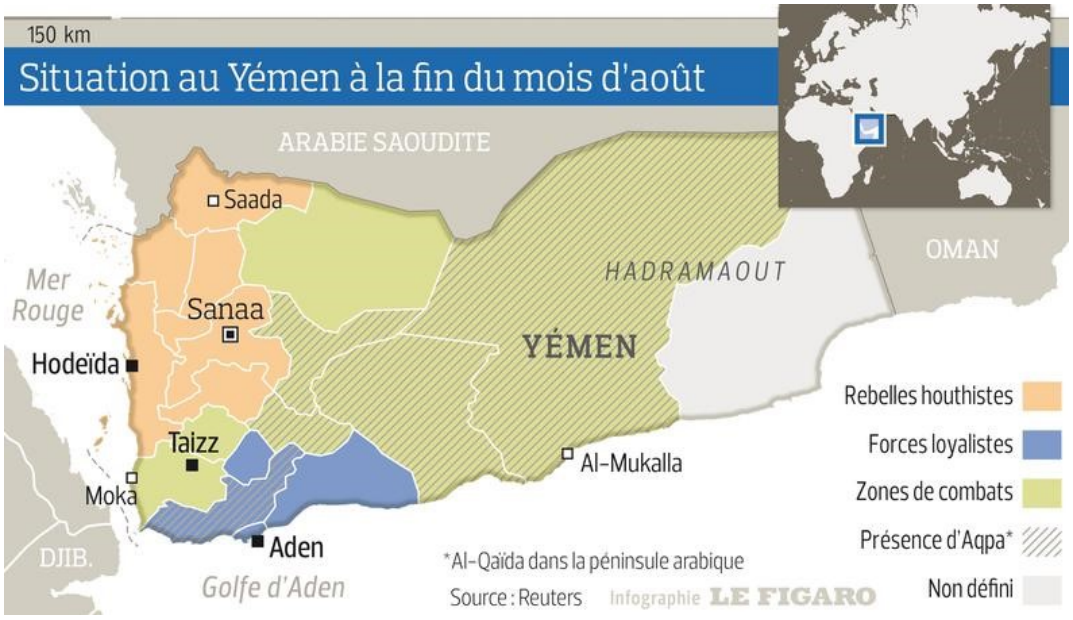
C'est la guerre oubliée. Celle qui échappe aux radars journalistiques, braqués vers la Syrie où s'étend l'ombre de l'État islamique. Pourtant, depuis six mois, les bombes pleuvent sur le Yémen. «Des bombes tombent du ciel jour et nuit»: c'est même le titre du rapport publié par Amnesty International le 7 octobre, qui dénonce des crimes de guerre commis par la coalition menée par l'Arabie saoudite.

Six mois de conflits

Ce pays de 27 millions d'habitants, le plus pauvre du monde arabe, n'a jamais été véritablement unifié, et Nord et Sud s'écharpent depuis plus de trente ans. Au Nord, la rébellion chiite des Houthis monte en puissance depuis 2004. Un conflit avant tout politique et économique qui s'habille d'un vernis confessionnel.

En mars 2015, à la demande du président du Yémen Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi, l'Arabie saoudite déclenche l'opération «Tempête décisive» pour contrer les rebelles Houthis qui progressent dans le pays et se sont emparés en janvier du palais présidentiel à Sanaa, la capitale. L'Arabie saoudite accuse les Houtis d'être aidés en sous-main par l'Iran chiite. Ce conflit entre sunnites et chiites, entre Nord et Sud, est complexifié par la présence d'acteurs terroristes: fief d'al-Qaïda depuis toujours, le Yé-

men a vu naître sur son sol une branche de l'État islamique, qui a revendiqué un attentat faisant plus de 30 morts à Sanaa le 17 juin dernier. C'est bien le problème lorsqu'on parle du Yémen: il faut une longue introduction pour expliquer même sommairement un conflit dont la complexité ferait passer l'enfer syrien pour un jeu de quilles.



Cliquez ici pour agrandir l'infographie

• 2000 civils tués, des armes interdites utilisées

En tout, **le conflit a fait près de 5000 morts dont 2000 civils parmi lesquels 400 enfants**. Il y a également 1.5 millions de déplacés à l'intérieur du pays. Ce sont les bombes de la coalition qui tuent le plus de civils. Dans son rapport, Amnesty dénonce **«le mépris flagrant pour la vie des civils dont fait preuve la coalition militaire conduite par l'Arabie saoudite»**. La coalition «Restaurer l'espoir» en marche depuis avril 2015 est composée également du Bahrein, du Qatar, des Émirats arabes unis et reçoit l'appui des Etats-Unis. Amnesty, qui a analysé plus précisemment 13 frappes de la coalition ayant eu lieu entre mai et juillet 2015, met en évidence plusieurs violations du droit international: désignation de villes à large densité de population comme cibles militaires, attaques disproportionnées et indiscriminées, usage d'armes bannies par la communauté internationale.

«Les raids aériens sont fréquents, et utilisent des armes interdites par la communauté internationale» comme les bombes à sous-munitions qui permettent de couvrir d'explosifs l'équivalent d'un terrain de football. **Certaines de ces armes auraient été fournies par les États-Unis**, indique Amnesty.

Amnesty demande **l'établissement d'une enquête internationale indépendante** pour

faire la lumière des violations par les parties du conflit. Car la résolution déposée par l'Arabie saoudite adoptée par l'ONU à Genève au début du mois d'octobre ne mentionne pas les exactions de la coalition. L'ONG demande également **la suspension des transferts d'armes à la coalition**. «Les États-Unis et les États qui exportent des armes à l'une des parties au conflit au Yémen sont tenus de veiller à ce que les transferts qu'ils autorisent ne facilitent pas de graves violations du droit international humanitaire.», a ainsi déclaré Donatella Rovera conseillère principale à Amnesty International pour les situations de crise, qui a conduit une mission d'établissement des faits au Yémen.

• Chaos humanitaire

«C'est la première fois en 10 ans de missions que je suis plongé dans un tel climat de violence. Même à Gaza, en Côté d'Ivoire, en Somalie ou en Centrafrique, je n'ai jamais vu pareille situation où le conflit ne s'arrête jamais. Les trêves ne sont jamais respectées plus de deux heures. Le quotidien est rythmé par les cris, les pleurs, le sang et les morts.» témoigne Thierry Goffeay, responsable MSF à Aden, sur France Inter.

Guillaume Binet est un des rares photographes à s'être rendu dans un pays hors des radars de l'actualité depuis des mois. Il raconte au *Figaro* un pays dévasté, en proie à une crise humanitaire sans précédents. «Dans les villes ravagées par les combats, la population est exangue et souffre de malnutrition. Le typhus et la rage sont réapparus. Il n'y a pas d'électricité, pas de téléphone. L'essence est vendue au marché noir, son prix a été multiplié par 400. Seules quelques voitures roulent encore.»

Selon Amnesty, **la moitié de la population serait en «insécurité alimentaire», et près de 15 millions de personnes n'auraient pas accès aux soins**. Dans le Nord, l'Arabie saoudite bloque les convois humanitaires.

• Le patrimoine de l'humanité en danger

Les destructions ne touchent pas seulement les civils, mais aussi le patrimoine mondial de l'humanité. Le monde entier s'indigne de la destruction de Palmyre par Daech, mais depuis six mois au Yémen, un patrimoine tout aussi extraordinaire est mis en péril par le conflit. Les Houthis ont pilonné Aden, al-Qaïda détruit les tombeaux soufis. La ville de Sanaa, vieille de 3000 ans et inscrite au patrimoine mondial de l'Unesco a été abimée.

Certains estiment que les destructions saoudiennes sont délibérées et systématiques et visent à éradiquer le patrimoine antéislamique. «Ce qui est troublant, explique-t-il, c'est que ce patrimoine est très visible et connu. Des destructions intentionnelles de la part des Saoudiens ne seraient pas surprenantes étant donné qu'ils détruisent leur propre patrimoine religieux» expliquait ainsi un archéologue anonyme sur *Slate*.

•Pourquoi tant d'indifférence?

Contrairement à la Syrie qui passionne les journalistes et fait régulièrement la une

de l'actualité, le conflit au Yémen est quasiment inexistant dans les médias. **«Le Yémen est très peu couvert par les médias. Personne ne connait le Yémen, très peu de journalistes y ont déjà été, contrairement à la Syrie**.» explique Nina Walch, responsable d'Amnesty, qui s'agace que la seule indignation médiatique ait eu lieu pour les destructions de patrimoine.

«Le silence médiatique vient sans doute de **la grande difficulté à expliquer un conflit extrêmement complexe,** voire incompréhensible, mais aussi du danger qu'il y a pour les journalistes à se rendre sur place.», analyse pour sa part Guillaume Binet. «Il n'y a quasiment aucun journaliste. On ne sait pas ce qui se passe, hormis à travers les chaînes arabes (al-Jazeera) qui ont un biais anti-chiite. La seule association humanitaire encore active sur place est MSF. Le CICR (Comité international de la Croix-Rouge) est parti après que deux de ses membres soient tués» explique Guillaume Binet.

http://www.emirates.com/

Disclaimer of Liability and Endorsement

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

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

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