

**BETWEEN
PROMISE AND PERIL:
AFRICAN SECURITY
IN THE 21st CENTURY**



INSTITUTE FOR AFRICAN STUDIES
OF THE RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

**BETWEEN PROMISE AND PERIL:
AFRICAN SECURITY
IN THE 21st CENTURY**



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Editors:

Dr. Sergey Kostelyanets

Prof. Hussein Solomon

Reviewers:

Dr. Svetlana Bokeriya

Dr. Timur Khairullin

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This book discusses the multitude of security perils Africa is currently facing, as well as contexts – geopolitical, regional, and national – that give rise to these threats. The escalating tensions between great powers make the scramble for the continent’s resources, markets, and political allegiances increasingly more tense and undisguised, while African countries struggle to maintain neutrality and defend their national interests under mounting foreign pressure. The global competition also facilitates the “hybridization” of warfare in Africa, which implies a growing role of unconventional tactics and non-state actors in the course of conflicts. In the meantime, insurgent and terrorist groups continue to take advantage of porous borders and weak security coordination among African nations to expand their spheres of influence in the Sahara-Sahel zone and beyond. More importantly, radicals feed on public grievances pertaining to corruption, state repression, factionalism, maladministration and bureaucratic inefficiency, poverty, inequality, marginalization, and state fragility in general to strengthen their ranks with new recruits. Nonetheless, authors of the volume argue that the future holds the promise of peace for the continent as its countries gradually increase solidarity, deepen political, economic and cultural integration, develop security coordination, and adopt more Afrocentric approaches toward state- and nation-building.

The present book is a result of a collaborative project between the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow, Russia) and the University of the Free State (Bloemfontein, South Africa).

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ФЕДЕРАЛЬНОЕ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ
БЮДЖЕТНОЕ УЧРЕЖДЕНИЕ НАУКИ
ИНСТИТУТ АФРИКИ
РОССИЙСКОЙ АКАДЕМИИ НАУК

**БЕЗОПАСНОСТЬ
АФРИКАНСКОГО КОНТИНЕНТА
В XXI ВЕКЕ:
НАДЕЖДЫ И ТРЕВОГИ**



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Ответственные редакторы:

кандидат политических наук С.В. Костелянец
профессор Х. Соломон

Рецензенты:

кандидат юридических наук С.А. Бокерия
кандидат политических наук Т.Р. Хайруллин

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Эта книга посвящена изучению угроз безопасности, с которыми в настоящее время сталкивается Африканский континент, а также контекстов – глобального, региональных и национальных, порождающих эти угрозы. Эскалация напряженности между великими державами делает борьбу за ресурсы Африки, ее рынки и оказание ей политической поддержки все более острой, в то время как многие африканские страны пытаются сохранить нейтралитет и защитить свои национальные интересы в условиях усиления внешнего давления. Глобальная конкуренция также способствует «гибридизации» войн, предполагающей возрастание в ходе конфликтов роли нетрадиционных тактик и негосударственных игроков. Одновременно повстанческие и террористические группировки продолжают пользоваться прозрачностью границ и слабой координацией между африканскими странами в сфере безопасности для расширения своих зон влияния в Сахаро-Сахельском регионе и за его пределами. При этом их экстремизм подпитывается такими драйверами общественного недовольства, как коррупция, политические репрессии, фракционность, ненадлежащее управление и неэффективность бюрократического аппарата, бедность, неравенство, маргинализация, а также хрупкость африканских государств в целом. Тем не менее авторы книги настаивают на том, что перспективы установления мира на континенте становятся более обнадеживающими благодаря постепенному укреплению солидарности между африканскими странами, упрочению политической, экономической и культурной интеграции, расширению координации в сфере безопасности и принятию афроцентричных подходов к государственному и национальному строительству.

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INTRODUCTION

Agenda 2063, which was adopted by the African Union (AU) in 2015, set the ambitious goal of “silencing the guns”, that is ending all wars and civil conflicts by 2020 (African Union, 2015). As of 2023, the AU has not been able to achieve this goal, and it is unlikely to do so in the foreseeable future. Moreover, in terms of the number of countries involved in armed conflicts of varying intensity, the African continent remains the undisputed world leader. Today, armed conflicts and other security challenges remain among the key obstacle to the political and socio-economic development and integration of African countries as they lead to millions of deaths, destruction of infrastructure, massive displacement of people, etc. While interstate conflicts on the continent have almost completely been supplanted by intrastate violence, many insurgent, terrorist, and religious extremist groups operate at the regional level, taking advantage of the transparency of borders between African countries and the deficit of security coordination among them (see, e.g., Segell et al, 2021). Transboundary displacement also remains a major cause of instability on a regional scale as it affects not only the country of origin, but also puts great stress on the recipient country, which may unwillingly be drawn into the conflict and also may have to reduce the standard of living of its own citizens to provide for refugees. In addition, the expansion of cross-border flows of refugees inevitably leads to an increase in violence and crime in the border areas (see, e.g., Kostelyanets, 2022).

Furthermore, insecurity and accompanying societal and political instability in parts of Africa facilitate deeper social stratification and

more rampant corruption, encourage capital flight and brain drain from the continent, and undermine efforts to reduce poverty and improve food security. The resulting “accumulation of fragility” is fraught with state failure, which is a central challenge to regional and international peace.

Meanwhile, the achievement of security in Africa has become increasingly more difficult under the influence of local and global factors. Since the 2000s, the nature of African wars has changed noticeably, with most violence now occurring not in the framework of warfare between major insurgent movements and regular government armies, as was the case in the 1960s–1990s, but among a myriad of non-state actors – tribal militias, criminal organizations, etc., which challenge state authority but have limited goals such as gaining access to local resources and border crossings; these armed groups may not necessarily aim at changing ruling regimes, but the overall level of violence may even be higher than before, just as the number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). In addition, the factionalization of armed political opposition movements, which is a noticeable trend in a number of African countries, makes it immensely more problematic to identify their motives, negotiate agreements, or target them militarily. In parallel, we have witnessed the rise of terrorist threat, which has become the primary security challenge in the Sahara-Sahel zone and some African countries beyond that volatile region. Africa’s Islamist groups, which are intrinsically homegrown, remain eager to deepen their links with international terrorist networks or even pledge allegiance to them. The resulting exchange of manpower, funding, expertise and training between global and local terrorist actors leads to the aggravation, expansion and perpetuation of conflicts on the continent.

A factor that has been undermining the global effort to support the achievement of peace and stability in Africa in recent years has been the growing rift between the West and Russia and, to a lesser extent, China. The increasingly tense geopolitical context distracts the attention of world powers from countering belligerent non-state actors toward counteracting each other or, worse, encourages them to support these extremist entities covertly to achieve own narrow interests at the expense of African nations. The global competition facilitates the proliferation of new military technologies on the continent, including drones and cyber weapons, and in general promotes the “hybridization”

of warfare in Africa, which entails an increasing role of unconventional tactics and non-state actors in the course of conflicts. As the continent seems set to expand the use of nuclear energy, the threat of nuclear terror has also become a subject of discussion.

Accordingly, the authors of the present volume attempted to identify and explore the most relevant external and internal sources and drivers of insecurity in contemporary Africa.

The contributors to the volume included scholars from the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow, Russia) – Dr. Tatyana S. Denisova, Dr. Sergey V. Kostelyanets, Dr. Natalia A. Zherlitsina, Dr. Eldar R. Salakhedinov and Mr. Oleg V. Shulga; from the University of the Free State (Bloemfontein, South Africa) – Prof. Hussein Solomon, Dr. Eben Coetzee, Dr. Albert Schoeman and Dr. Jude Cocodia; from the Independent University Banja Luka (Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina) – Dr. Zdravko Todorović, Dr. Dragana Popović, Dr. Dragisa Jurisic, and Dr. Predrag Obrenović; and from Stellenbosch University (Stellenbosch, South Africa) – Dr. Benjamin Mokoena.

There are three parts in the volume, broken into thirteen chapters. Part I *Africa's Security Landscape: International and Regional Outlook*, which consists of six chapters, points to the shifting geopolitical and regional contexts of Africa's insecurity. Chapter 1 by Dr. Zdravko Todorović is titled *The Geopolitical Context of Contemporary World Processes in the 21st Century – a Review of Africa*. The author argues passionately that Africa, or any other region, cannot be seen as immune from the current global geopolitical and economic context nor the machinations of the likes of the United States, the United Kingdom, and the World Economic Forum. This global context generates energy poverty, food insecurity, economic impoverishment and new forms of societal control through digital technologies, which unavoidably come to shape Africa's security landscape.

Dr. Darisa Jurisic in Chapter 2 *Africa – One Boat but Hundred Helmsmen* explores the nexus between the global and local in the area of security cooperation. Since 1960, more than 30 UN peacekeeping missions have been deployed across Africa. As of 2023, over 73 thousand UN troops are taking part in operations on the continent, which constitutes 84% of the total number of UN military personnel deployed on the planet. In addition, there function various EU and

NATO missions in support of the African Union. Besides, African countries and various external partners are actively developing bilateral security cooperation. However, there is little to show for such cooperation. Conflict remains endemic across the continent. Moreover, different external partners have competing agendas, which complicates the search for solutions. In conclusion, Dr. Jurisic stresses the importance of placing a greater emphasis on conflict prevention, which should entail economic development, strengthening state institutions, and better governance.

Dr. Sergey Kostelyanets devotes Chapter 3 to *The New Global Military Competition for Africa*. The author focuses on the phenomenon of the growing military presence of foreign powers in Africa, which reflects the intensifying scramble for the political and economic influence on the continent. After the end of the Cold War, it seemed for some time that Africa would no longer remain a pawn on the global geopolitical chessboard but strive to pursue its own agenda. The launch of the AU in 2002, the establishment of the African Standby Force in 2003, and the insistence of the AU on finding “African solutions to African problems” may have raised hopes for the minimization of foreign political and military influence on the continent. Yet since some years later, we have been witnessing rapid militarization by traditional and emerging external powers of Africa’s strategic regions, first and foremost of the Horn of Africa, but of other regions as well.

Prof. Hussein Solomon, meanwhile, focuses on the challenge of counter-insurgency in Africa. He notes in Chapter 4 *Getting Counter-Insurgency Right in Africa* that whilst terrorist incidents are decreasing in other regions, their number has increased on the African continent. Moreover, despite years of counter-insurgency training and equipment by the counterparts elsewhere, African armed forces have precious little to show for it in terms of battlefield gains. The chapter examines some of the hard lessons learned and what could be done to make counter-insurgency campaigns more effective in Africa.

Chapter 5 by Dr. Natalia A. Zherlitsina is concerned with *The Security Crisis in Burkina Faso*, which has been tormenting the country for the past decade. Like other states in the Sahel, Burkina Faso suffers from poverty, political instability, state weakness, ethnic divisions, and conflicts over access to resources. Jihadist groups such as the Islamic

State (IS)* and Ansar ul-Islam take advantage of these factors to gain a foothold in the region. Among the measures taken by the government of Burkina Faso to combat terrorism, military and non-military responses can be distinguished. Nevertheless, given the modest resources of the state, these measures may only partially solve the problem.

Dr. Tatyana S. Denisova in Chapter 6 writes on *Insurgencies in West and Central Africa: The Economic Warfare Dimension*. As the author argues, in the 2000s–2010s competition for access to the development of natural resources and their export, for control over trade and supply chains, over agricultural activities, etc. became the predominant drivers of insecurity on the continent. Insurgents would often not seek victory over the incumbent government, but strive to seize and establish control over a certain territory in order to exploit its natural and human resources, i.e., to form an “economy of war”, which in some cases, for example, in the Lake Chad Basin, has also been called the “economy of terrorism”. In the framework of such economic relations, militants engage in poaching, illegal taxation, extortion, etc., but may also replace the government as providers of certain services and facilitators of development. The ensuing economic model allows armed non-state actors to survive or even enrich themselves, and also leads to the depletion of the state treasury and the perpetuation of conflicts.

Part II *Africa’s New Perils: Beyond Conventional Warfare Threats* includes four chapters, which share the common thread of the emergence of non-traditional perils in Africa such as the proliferation of “hybrid” wars and the rising risk of nuclear incidents. In Chapter 7 *Hybrid War – Contemporary Conflict of the 21st Century*, Dr. Predrag Obrenović and Dr. Dragana Popović explain the history and essence of the concept of “hybrid war” in both Western and Eastern theory and practice, and analyze its positive and negative characteristics. As defined by Frank Hoffman, “hybrid war” involves the use of both conventional and unconventional offensive tactics, as well as of terrorist and criminal actions, within the same battlefield, in order to achieve one’s political goals. Acknowledging that “hybrid war” is not a new phenomenon, as asymmetric warfare in some form has been with us throughout history, the authors argue that globalization and techno-

* Here and hereafter: the Islamic State (IS) has been designated as a terrorist organization by the courts of the Russian Federation.

logical progress have enabled adversaries to apply increasingly sophisticated forms of asymmetric warfare, with its effects further magnified by public relations and mass media instruments, which has made the danger of such wars so prominent.

Chapter 8 *“Hybrid War” and “Hybrid Warfare”*: *Reality and Applicability for Africa* by Mr. Oleg Shulga continues the discussion on “hybrid war” both in the theoretical vein and by examining its peculiarities in the African context. The author poignantly notes that the novelty of the phenomenon of “hybrid war” lies in the fact that non-state actors and non-traditional means of warfare may no longer be considered auxiliary, as their impact has matched that of traditional elements of warfare. Economic, psychological, informational, and cybernetic means of warfare have become equal in importance with military strategies. The 2011 events in Libya, where a psychological campaign to demonize the Gaddafi government had started before the armed opposition and the Western coalition launched attacks on government facilities, are a case in point. As the author argues, such hybrid form of war may again be seen in Africa given the predatory goals of the West, which seeks to undermine Russian and other non-Western influence. African countries that seek to pursue an independent foreign policy and develop ties with Moscow, such as Egypt and Algeria, may become primary targets of hybrid attacks. The author also notes that the standard prelude to such attacks is accusations of “human rights violations” by the U.S.

In Chapter 9 *The Specter of Nuclear Terror in Africa: Another Look*, Dr. Eben Coetzee examines whether the threat of nuclear terror on the African continent may materialize. The author’s sobering conclusion is that the threat has increased substantially. Several factors contribute to this in Africa, including increased interest and reliance on nuclear energy, the proliferation of terrorism and concomitantly the rise of Islamist extremism, the growth in transnational organized crime with the attendant risk of the transfer of sensitive nuclear technologies and material, as well as lax safety and security measures at existing (Koeberg) and future nuclear power plants. Importantly, the author argues that to assess the risks properly these trends and challenges must be viewed through the lens of interests and motives of terrorist groups in going nuclear and of feasibility of various paths to the bomb, globally and in Africa.

Discussing the prospects of nuclear energy in Africa in Chapter 10 *Peaceful Atom for Africa? Energy Security and Geopolitics*, Dr. Eldar R. Salakhedinov frames it within the context of geopolitics and information warfare. The author indicates that Africa is experiencing acute energy shortages, which is having a deleterious impact on sustainable development, economic growth, employment prospects, and investment on the continent. Given the burgeoning population and the corresponding growth in demand for energy, energy consumption in Africa is expected to double by 2030. The author argues that one of the most effective solutions to the acute energy deficit in Africa is nuclear energy. Africa's nuclear market has attracted the attention of key global players in nuclear energy, including China, France, Japan, South Korea, the U.S., and Russia. However, the contestation over the African nuclear market has become not just economic, but also geopolitical. In light of the conflict in Ukraine, the U.S. has become especially resolved to counter Russian influence on the continent, including through developing the Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa Act. Nonetheless, direct sanctions against the Russian nuclear industry are unlikely to be introduced anytime soon. The CIS countries together with Africa produce over 70% of the global supply of uranium, whilst Russia controls approximately 35% of the world market for enriched uranium. Nuclear power plants in the U.S. and EU are critically dependent on enriched uranium supplies from Russia and Kazakhstan. For this reason, the author adds, Rosatom has been excluded from all American and European sanction packages.

The concluding Part III *Addressing Sources of Insecurity in Africa: Promise and Pitfalls* contains three chapters, which discuss the challenges of overcoming political instability, state fragility, and media bias. Dr. Albert Schoeman in Chapter 11 writes on *Hybrid Political Orders: A Post-Western Alternative to State-Building in Fragile States or a Hopeless Fantasy? The Case of Somaliland*. The author believes that the promise of peace for Africa might well lay in hybrid political orders as opposed to Western-style liberal democracies, which are unsuited for the realities of Africa's cultural, political and economic mosaic. It is further argued that the state-centric approach exemplified by Max Weber's definition of the state, which is endorsed by Western state-building efforts, has failed to provide an objective, counter-hegemonic, and emancipatory perspec-

tive on states labelled as weak, failed, or collapsed. Rather, hybrid political orders are seen as a complementary perspective that takes a post-Western state-building approach that is more suited to comprehending the realities of fragile states while also acknowledging the role of traditional authorities in the course of the hybrid state-building process. The latter process places people and politics at the grassroots level at the center of the polity, as the case of Somaliland illustrates. The independence of Somaliland from Somalia has not yet been recognized by the international community, yet it has succeeded in functioning as a state that has managed to ensure relative peace and stability within its territory amidst the violence, instability and turmoil in surrounding Somalia.

Turning to neighboring Kenya, Dr. Benjamin Mokoena in Chapter 12 discusses *State Fragility and Impediments to CIVE: The Case in Kenya*. State fragility is defined by the author as both underperformance and improper performance at the macro, meso and micro levels of the state and has intrinsic debilitating and conflict-generating properties that include endemic insecurity, weak institutions and poor governance and authority, including state terrorism and little regard for the rule of law. These properties drive Islamist violent extremism (IVE) and generate impediments to countering Islamist violent extremism (CIVE). The fragile context in Kenya demonstrates that added to the limited utility of force that is inherent to CIVE as a response to IVE, state fragility also generates particularly intractable impediments to CIVE, rendering CIVE ineffective and counter-productive, and hence the failure of CIVE. Dr. Mokoena's illuminating analysis points to the critical importance of the context in which the strategy for CIVE is being formulated.

Dr. Jude Cocodia in Chapter 13 *The International Media and Security in Africa: Doctored Reportage and Dire Outcomes* examines how international media manipulate our assumptions and how these drive our convictions and beliefs. When international media is put at the service of the parochial interests of states, distortions happen which do not reflect the realities on the ground. Drawing on the instability in South-Central Somalia, the chapter examines the role of the international media in the demonization of the Islamic Courts Union and the radicalization of its youth wing – Al Shabaab, which has been generating conflict for 30 years in strife-torn Somalia.

The author argues that it is up to the local and international public to be more discerning as to the politics of the global media and to challenge their hold on shaping national and regional trajectories based on falsehood.

The book's thirteen chapters thus discuss how global and regional contexts and trends act upon Africa's security and also examine various local sources of insecurity on the continent.

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Part I

AFRICA'S SECURITY LANDSCAPE: INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL OUTLOOK

Dr. Zdravko Todorović
Independent University Banja Luka,
Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Chapter 1

THE GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY WORLD PROCESSES IN THE 21ST CENTURY – A REVIEW OF AFRICA

Introduction

In the 2020s, our planet has reached a certain historical turning point that may determine future geopolitical relations in the world, including the African continent, for the rest of the 21st century. The global historical stage is witnessing the destruction of the capitalist order as such, the actualization of energy poverty wrapped in the shroud of green politics, the crystallization of the ideology of the modern neoliberal Western world, and the establishment of a multipolar world, with a certain geopolitical balance between the Eurasian powers of Russia and China and the collective West led by the Anglo-Saxon world.

After 600 years of development, since the 1970s, the world capitalist system has become gripped by the irreversible process of degradation, triggered by a deep structural crisis. Amid continuous systemic crises of capitalist society, the Western (Anglo-Saxon) elites of the United States of America and the United Kingdom contrived to preserve the foundations of their global domination and emerge even stronger and richer. The pace of history accelerated in 2019–2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic (corona) facilitated the beginning of the transformation of the world into a planet-wide concentration camp – a totally controlled and manipulated space filled with fear.

The purpose of the above is to pause if not redirect the current vector of history, slowing down the epochal retreat of the world capitalist system and creating a global illusion that the new imagined world has emerged on the ruins of the overnight deconstructed previous

order, that humanity has found itself at the zero point of history, thus preserving the contemporary global social and class pyramid's power and ability to reproduce. Through totalitarian surveillance and manipulation and systemically managed fear humanity must be prepared for the upcoming configuration of the global (non-)historical order, in which the ruling pyramidal social-class structure will be not only preserved and restored, but will also radicalize in its intention to establish corporate-technological fascism, post-humanist digital dictatorship and neo-feudal order.

The key driver of the geopolitical realignment in the world in the 21st century is continuous energy crisis, which will accompany the Fourth Technological (Industrial) Revolution at the global level, but also affect the regional and global positioning of individual countries and entire continents, such as the Balkans or the African continent. In other words, Europe and the rest of the world face decades of energy poverty unless states – main subjects of international relations – properly and timely respond to the energy and geopolitical challenges that are set in front of them.

The idea of a liberal international order anchored by economic globalization and the Internet, governed by liberal democracies and free market capitalism, seems to be collapsing. There is a dramatic change in the very kind of power and in the ways in which it changes and acts. The world, including the African continent, has found itself in the era that comes after the post-Cold War era, at a time when there is no formal war but neither is there peace. A new multipolar world is being framed, just as a geopolitical and geoeconomic balance in which the key role will be played by Eurasian powers, above all Russia and China. The dynamics of the aforementioned world processes will greatly affect pivotal processes on the African continent.

Corona capitalism – the road to corporate-technological fascism

The world trends discussed above are best understood in the context of contemporary world processes that have started after the Cold War, more precisely after the demolition of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and which have never stopped, but only continued their historical course, whether on the surface or at the structural level of dialectical materia-

lism. Two significant events that took place at the beginning of the postmodern era – the aggressive attack of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999 and the still unexplained terrorist attacks on New York’s World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, after which a series of wars in the world has continued uninterrupted, became harbingers of the new imagined order (Griffin, 2004).

For the first time in the entire known world history, a kind of travesty of the world emerged, when the global system of states accepted a new, ideologically imposed idea of themselves, advanced through a biotechnological and biopolitical program of biological pathogen management and the consecutive global war against a deadly epidemic of an unknown virus. The immediate result of this war against the general epidemic has been the collapse of the previous world economy, seven million deaths that the World Health Organization claims to have taken place as a result of the COVID-19 infection, hundreds of millions of lost jobs, immeasurable loss of material resources, and a redistribution of power and wealth on the planet. The strike force of this long-planned war that led to the travesty of the world order is represented by the global alliance of corrupt conglomerates of financial, pharmaceutical, IT and high-tech corporations and the military-industrial and media complex, which constitute the inner core of the overall power structure of the capitalist system and the global neoliberal order.

Strategists of neoliberalism knew that after 500 years of development the capitalist system would be fraught with incurable defects. They searched for new strategies and policies that would enable the preservation of the inner core of the global neoliberal order and mitigate the dramatic negative consequences of the collapse of the current world order, that is, the global capitalist system as we know it. Preparations for the world war against the COVID-19 pandemic began twenty years earlier, which is evidenced by the holding of two military exercises to combat a bioterrorist attack on the United States in 2001 and 2005. The first exercise was called Dark Winter and was held at the Andrews Air Force Base near Washington, D.C., on June 22–23, 2001; the second one was carried out under the name of Atlantic Storm at the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on January 14, 2005. The main organizer in both cases was the Johns Hopkins Center for Health

Security, a research institution that has been studying biological and chemical warfare since 1998 (CHS, 2005).

These biopolitical projects, accompanied with millions of deaths as a result of the pandemic, and the corresponding shaping of the future of the world notwithstanding, there existed alternative views on the deepening crisis of the world capitalist system and the neoliberal order of corporate dystopia. For instance, K. Hedges in his work *Neoliberalism's Dark Path to Fascism* warns that neoliberalism and corporate dystopia will inevitably evolve into overt fascism (corporate-technological fascism). Many critical works on neoliberalism, which have been published in the world since the 1970s, reiterate this (“Тематски зборник,” 2018). Another confirmation that these are objective assessments of world trends is a speech by Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, which she gave at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., in 2018. As an alternative for the coming age of instability and the rebellion of the oppressed and marginalized majority of the world's population, Lagarde suggests to employ digital technology as a transhumanist substitute for the dangerous interpersonal relations and social communications (“Age of Ingenuity,” 2018). In 2019, Joseph Stiglitz predicted the end of neoliberalism and the rebirth of history (Stiglitz, 2015), completely contrary to the teachings of Francis Fukuyama, one of the main intellectual ideologues of neoliberalism in the Western world.

Notably, research carried out at the Wuhan Institute of Virology is a joint program of the United States and China, funded by Americans, and involves the most influential American researchers (“The Fauci,” 2020). Sino-American cooperation, American funding, and the participation of American researchers and institutes in this research are the main reason that there is no definite answer to the question of whether the first case of infection with the COVID-19 virus took place in Wuhan.

The global anti-pandemic war, which made possible the deconstruction of the global neoliberal order, exposed the deep structural crisis of the world capitalist system. Corona capitalism has become an instrument of the corporate oligarchy, which intends to build a corporate dystopian order by the means of the radical polarization of global (and local) society, to achieve complete domination over a

divided world. This project entails social, class, racial, health, educational, cultural and geopolitical fragmentation and polarization of the world and every local community. Such polarization would open a door for the transformation of the world and every local society into an undisguised and codified corporate-technological fascist one. In such a world, the governing ideology would be an institutionalized cancel culture – a contemporary variant of the old institution of *damnatio memoriae*, the condemnation of memory – equipped with modern sophisticated instruments of propaganda, censorship, isolation, manipulation, removal from public view and deception. Indeed, cancel culture develops according to the configuration, hierarchy and properties of its host society.

The World Economic Forum and the geopolitical agenda of the Great Reset

The concept of the Great Reset was unveiled at the 2020 World Economic Forum. The 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development, which incorporated sustainable solutions for climate change, inequality and poverty, was supplemented with solutions found in the course of fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, among them a “reset” of the labor market and new ways of doing business, in particular the widespread introduction of teleworking from home and retraining of the labor force in line with changing economic situation. At the 50th annual meeting of the World Economic Forum, Klaus Schwab, one of the creators of the concept of the Great Reset, outlined its three basic elements, which entail the emergence of the so-called “share economy”, more sustainable development through “green” public infrastructure projects and technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and the fusion of automation and robotization in modern industry with new technologies and network solutions.

The popularization of the concept of the Great Reset continued in the 2020 book *COVID-19: The Great Reset* by C. Schwab and T. Malleret. The book does not analyze the specific ways of the proposed general reset, but instead provides a theoretical elaboration of sustainability by considering current crisis processes, above all pandemics. The book consists of three parts, which analyze the three levels of the reset. The first part refers to the “macro reset” that has

already taken place under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic during the first half of 2020 in the areas of economy, society, geopolitics, technology and environment. The second part of the book focuses on the “micro reset”, providing an analysis of the consequences of the COVID-19 lockdown for individual companies, economic branches, industrial systems, and their facility to withstand crisis shocks, adapt or collapse. The third part of the book is about the reset on the individual level and its possible consequences (Schwab & Mallet, 2020).

Publicly, the concept of the Great Reset provoked different reactions, ranging from affirmative to extremely negative ones. Key Western media outlets such as the New York Times, the Guardian, and the BBC wholeheartedly supported the Great Reset agenda, and liberal-minded intellectuals got involved in its operationalization. Intellectuals of an illiberal ideological profile of Western provenance exposed the concept of the Great Reset to criticism, calling things by their true names, that is, that the World Economic Forum, with the help of the COVID-19 virus and the Great Reset, was working to make the rich even richer and the poor even poorer. Eurasianists saw the Great Reset as a new globalist project that involves the establishment of control over public consciousness on a global level via the proliferation of cancel culture and private censorship by media networks controlled by globalists, transition to a green economy and rejection of previous industrial structure, replacement of the workforce with cyborgs and global application of advanced artificial intelligence (Дугин, 2021).

Post-industrial models of the Fourth Industrial Revolution – deindustrialization (destruction of industry and the cessation of its development) and decarbonization (giving up resource extraction or paying huge fees for carbon emissions) are being imposed on developing countries, while ecologically sustainable production is suggested for the developed world. According to this scenario, carbon taxes will further burden developing countries and, crucially, stop their development. If developing countries want to develop a post-industrial economy, they are forced to buy clean technologies from Western companies for large sums of money (which they do not possess), thus falling into debt slavery. Those who are not able to pay carbon tax or buy permits to emit it will not be allowed to burn fossil fuels. Whoever does not burn fossil fuels for the needs of the population and the economy, will have

to import expensive energy from renewable sources. This creates the condition of energy poverty. In the framework of this post-industrial model of development, which may be referred to as the Great Reset concept, developing countries will be particularly affected and are likely to return to the state of colonial subjugation.

The geopolitical agenda of the Great Reset advocates a “world government” made up of unelected experts, technocrats and business magnates drawn from supranational forums and global international organizations. Governments of sovereign states are subordinated to them and limited in their own decision-making. This global government should replace the unipolar order under the domination of the United States, but should prevent the construction of an essentially multipolar order. The construction of supranational structures of groups of states with common values and interests is propagated, but these values are Western, postmodern and postliberal, i.e., globalist. The concept is similar to the idea of a “Great Concert” – a system of international relations from previous eras, an informal and institutionalized form of cooperation between major world powers. According to the geopolitical agenda of the Great Reset, the “Great Concert” of the 21st century should represent a more flexible form of cooperation than existing international organizations, with the aim of eliminating the possibility of a veto in the existing international system of relations, primarily at the United Nations.

The foreign policy agenda of the new U.S. administration of Joe Biden is completely in line with the concept of the Great Reset. The U.S. foreign policy is currently based on the assumptions that global interests are above national interests, that structures of the World Government and its supranational structures (political and economic) should be strengthened, NATO should be expanded, and democratic changes in the world should be deepened (which in practice means deterioration of relations with those key powers in the world that oppose globalism and seek their own paths of independent development).

The concept of the Great Reset essentially represents the reanimation of globalism – a peculiar ideology of postmodern capitalism – with certain modifications adapted to the current times. The project of the Great Reset – the modification of global strategy of the Western world and its re-projection on the rest of the world – is actually a consequence

of failure and concealment of the fact that this modernist project is in irreversible stagnation.

Energy security and green agenda

The most usable form of energy is electricity, which is obtained from several sources, i.e., renewable and non-renewable energy sources that are used in the production of electricity. Energy experts, financiers that authored the 2008 financial crisis (banks and investment funds), as well as experts in ecology, all are promoting the Green Agenda – the idea that the future of world energy lies with greater use of renewable and economically clean forms of energy sources (“Šta sadrži,” 2021). For intensification of the use of renewable energy sources, there is no greater problem than the relatively higher profitability of the exploitation of fossil fuels. Another fact of energy trends in the current economic reality is that underdeveloped countries in the course of their own industrialization tend to increase their energy consumption, with the supply emerging mainly from non-renewable sources.

The development of energy in the world in the future is influenced by several global factors:

- population growth,
- deficiencies in the effectiveness of the economy,
- ecological factor,
- differences in the development of countries.

The aforementioned factors influence the functioning of the world economy and its future development. Most of the world, excluding the West, is dissatisfied with the existing world economic order and does not want it to continue to function on the existing unequal basis. The majority of countries in the world are not in favor of maintaining the existing level of industrial development, but want industrial development based on equality, in which all countries of the world (African, Asian, Latin American, Balkan) would be included (Ђајић, 2011). Unfair economic relations in the world demand industrial development – industrialization, which requires increasing amounts of all forms of energy, especially electricity.

The global demand for electricity in the world by 2040, according to predictions of world energy experts, will increase by 24%. The structure of the demand for primary energy in the world in 2015–

2040 will change as follows: the share of oil and coal will decrease from 60% in 2015 to 52% in 2040. The demand for primary energy produced from oil is expected to increase by 18% by 2040, although it is expected to decrease in relative amounts during that period.

Analyses made by energy experts note that the demand for renewable energy sources will increase by 35% in 2015–2040, which will increase their share in the demand for primary energy to 15%. In this period, the largest increase is expected in the demand for nuclear energy and gas, which should increase their share in the total demand for primary energy to over 30%. Energy analyses predict a strong role for gas in the future, while the share of coal in the world energy market will fall to 34%. Production growth will be achieved with the help of power generation that uses gas and nuclear energy as fuel.

The key issue of contemporary international relations is energy security, the correlation of the available quantities of the world's energy reserves and their consumption. Energy security cannot be understood only as an attempt by an individual country to achieve self-sufficiency in energy supply. Rather, energy represents a strategic dimension in overall world relations. According to the definition of the World Energy Council, energy security includes “the state of availability of energy in the quantity and quality necessary for existing economic conditions” (Energy Strategy Institute, 2001). Geopolitical scientists and energy experts advocate the point of view that the energy transport infrastructure, as well as the strengthening of ties and relations in the producer-consumer relationship, is an irreplaceable condition for achieving energy security.

The continuous energy crisis represents the essence of contemporary geopolitical realignments in the world and will probably do so throughout the 21st century, which will characterize the Fourth Industrial Revolution at the global level, but will also affect the regional and global positioning of individual countries, regions and entire continents. Both Europe and the rest of the world are threatened by energy poverty, which will last for many decades, and countries that do not properly and timely respond to energy and geopolitical challenges in the coming decades will be particularly affected.

The European Union and Europe in general possess no responsible energy policy; the reason is that European countries do not conduct an independent energy policy, but there is a kind of chaos in the European

energy market. The characteristics of irresponsible energy policy of the EU are as follows:

- the transition to alternative energy sources is insufficient;
- policy to an extent is guided by speculations on the problem of climate change;
- energy problems are underestimated;
- investment in extractive branches of the industry is reduced intentionally;
- most decisions are unbalanced.

The EU has only completed the first phase of the green transition, and if we look at the 2021 and 2022 prices on electricity and gas, its energy policy has been a fiasco. According to the Production Gap Report of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and analyses by numerous experts from universities and academic institutes, the production of fossil fuels in the world will record growth for at least another twenty years. According to Russian official analyses, the share of oil and gas in the world's energy mix will fall from 85 to 65–70%, but not to 20–30% as predicted by some Western experts. The analyses of Russian energy experts correspond to analyses by OPEC and the Saudi oil company Aramco, which came out with estimates that oil and gas would dominate the world in 2050. These analyses argue that natural gas will begin to see significant growth between 2035 and 2045, while oil demand is expected to stabilize (“Rusija: nafta i gas,” 2021).

The global conflict between the Western bloc – NATO led by the United States – and the majority of countries in the world, led by Russia and China is unfolding in the world. The goal of the Western power centers is to maintain their dominant position in the world, i.e., for the developed Western countries (and their governing elites) to become even richer even after the collapse of neoliberal capitalism, while countries and peoples which do not belong to Western civilization sink into even deeper poverty. The new ideology of large Western multinational corporations is represented by the Green Agenda, by which Western countries that have already completed their industrial development with the help of coal, oil and cheap electricity are now preventing underdeveloped countries from using these energy sources for their own development. Those who in the 19th and 20th centuries polluted the planet with carbon dioxide during their own industrial development, are now presenting the Green Agenda, which

stipulates that there has been sufficient industrial development and that this fossil-fuel driven development is not allowed for other, non-Western countries. Developed Western countries that have used up their own natural energy resources and emptied mines, have developed new green technologies that are extremely expensive and are trying to force other countries in the world – non-Western ones – to purchase and use them to produce expensive electricity.

Green parties that are promoting the Green Agenda in the EU simultaneously are forging a more political and less ecological dimension of green politics (Sloat, 2020). The Green Party of Germany comes out of the classic “green politics”, which concerns economy and energy. They stand for projects and ideas of liberal democracy and human rights, neoliberal ideas and values of capitalism, which grew on the foundations of the victory of large Western capital over the traditional system of socially established states in the 20th century. Reimagining the sovereignty of states and peoples in the globalized world of the 21st century by constructing a multipolar world order may be a solution, which especially is relevant for countries that do not belong to Western civilization and which are particularly exposed to various types of pressure from Western capital.

Building a multipolar world order

In the theory of international relations, the concept of power as a prerequisite for the realization of political goals is defined by various interpretations, starting from the fact that “politics is fundamentally determined by the search for power” (Симић, 1999, p. 225) and to the point that “power represents the prospect of implementing one’s will within the framework of social relations despite resistance, regardless of what these prospects are based on” (Симић, 1999, p. 224). The essence of power relations is the imposition of will. In international relations, the power of states is manifested by traditional factors of power (population, size and peculiarities of the territory, economy, army, culture) and factors of “soft power” contained in the national will, diplomacy, and support that the government of a country has among its people. When traditional factors of power are taken into account, the most important indicator of a country’s power is its total gross domestic product, which reflects the number of inhabitants and

the technological-production level of the national economy. The total gross domestic product of each country essentially determines potential military power as its most concise expression.

The newly emerging world of the 21st century does not herald a return to old concepts, when the power of states was based on the control of the land or the sea, but rather focuses on the control and development of the flows of energy, people, goods, money, data and the routes through which these flows travel. New geopolitical maps created by great powers are being formed, i.e., maps of the control of the aforementioned flows – a kind of terrain of power that prevents other competing powers from realizing their goals. The world is crisscrossed by networks through which great powers exert influence in the international arena; the key areas of application of influence by great powers (and other states) are economy, technology, climate change agenda, population, military, healthcare and culture. Along with military potential and the size of the population, the most important factors of confrontation between the great powers are economy and technology.

The military dimension, dominated by the U.S., Russia, and China, remains an important arena of competition between the great powers but the economic one is gaining in importance. In the new geo-economic era, states for geopolitical reasons set the conditions for access to their markets and at the same time use instruments such as tariffs, quotas, and fines to limit access to certain international actors (Hackenbroich, 2021). The new geoeconomic era is characterized by placing the economy at the center of strategic plans. Trade agreements that are established between countries contribute to economic efficiency, but also connect countries to each other through their value systems and facilitate diversification from markets of those countries with which there are no geopolitical relations.

Geopolitics is significantly influenced by technology and technological changes, bringing those who succeed in science and technological engineering not only development and progress, but also endowing them with power to influence other actors of international relations. It is a fact that historically all technological revolutions have led to a critical asymmetry of power in the world and inequality in global social relations. Access to new technologies is a determinant of the sovereignty of states, the technological capability of great powers to

retain their own spheres of influence, and of the attraction of other states into their technological and civilizational systems. In the 21st century, on the threshold of the 2020s, there emerged complex disputes and tensions among major powers (above all the U.S., China and Russia) that concern the mastering of modern technologies: digital infrastructure (including 5G underwater cables), rare earths, key industries (artificial intelligence, semiconductors), the control of flow and storage of data, as well as the definition of standards for new technologies. At the base of the vertical division of the world lie technologies, from 5G to cloud computing, which contradicts what was believed in the past few decades: that technology would bring the world and countries closer together.

The foundation of state power and its capacity is determined by the size of population. A large population does not make a country a great power, but in the modern world it is impossible to maintain the status of a great power if one does not have a large population. Technology has reduced the need for human labor in numerous domains, but population – that is, human capital – is still an essential determinant of a state's industrial and military capabilities and its position in the international system of relations. Countries with a large population have a greater opportunity to increase their gross domestic product through internal trade and the specialization of industrial production.

Liberal international order represented by economic globalization and the Internet, which is governed by Western liberal democracies and free market capitalism, is irrevocably becoming a thing of the past (Brown & Carother, 2022). In the modern world, national and global processes of developing the foundations and principles of a new, fairer and safer world order are underway, which represents an alternative to the unipolar world order of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. A new era is beginning, a new phase of world history, and the construction of a multipolar order is unstoppable (Климентьев, 2022).

The African continent: a geopolitical analysis

The historical development of the African continent was interrupted by the Europeans at the very end of the 15th century, firstly, by conquering coastal areas of the African continent and developing slave trade and, secondly, by the rapid colonization of nearly all of Africa in

the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century. In the course of decolonization, the African continent became a geopolitically fragmented region divided into a large number of states. Today, the African continent consists of 54 countries. Unresolved border issues, religious and national divisions, and economic stagnation and poverty have made the African continent a ground for numerous interstate conflicts. Military interventions by Western colonial powers and contradictions among individual African states have hindered economic progress of African countries.

In terms of the natural-geographical specifics of the African continent, it is important to point out that 6.2% of the continent is arable land, while 64% of its surface belong to arid areas. On the other hand, more than 65% of Africa's total population live off agricultural activities. The African continent, with an area of 30.3 million km² and 1.4 billion inhabitants, is a continent with the uneven density of population (most of the population is concentrated in areas along rivers and on sea coasts), its economy is largely based on the exploitation of natural resources, and it is undergoing the processes of deagrarianization and urbanization (Коркоделовић, 2022).

Africa is characterized by polarized regional development, which further complicates the prospects of the continent's economic and social progress. On the African continent, there exist considerable differences in economic development between individual countries, but such differences also exist within African countries. The uneven development of the African continent is exacerbated by national and tribal divisions, unregulated migration, artificially drawn state borders (delineated by European colonizers), and all this leads to even greater poverty and misunderstanding of the world and modern global processes.

As a whole, the African continent possesses vast and diverse resources, but they are unevenly distributed and often controlled by big Western business. The main buyers of African natural resources are developed Western countries, which purchase these resources cheaply due to protectionism and price dumping. African countries, although politically independent from foreign trade partners, relate to former European colonial metropolises and, since more recent times, to the United States and Japan, on which they rely for capital, technological knowledge, and the widest range of information. Africa is home to

62% of the world's gold production, 77% – of diamonds, 17% – of copper ore and bauxite, 26% – of coal; in addition, there are large deposits of phosphorite, cobalt, tungsten, etc. Considerable oil and gas fields have been discovered in Nigeria, Angola, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, and on the continental shelf in the Gulf of Guinea, besides the long-discovered deposits of hydrocarbons in North Africa. Research conducted on land and in the coastal Atlantic belt indicates that oil reserves of West Africa are of better quality than those of the Near and Middle East and may also be larger than those of Iran, Iraq and Kuwait. The West African region potentially could produce 10 million barrels of oil per day, which exceeds Saudi Arabia's crude oil production.

Since the 1980s, geoeconomic and geopolitical processes have been burdened by deep economic recessions in industrialized countries, oil shocks, slow growth of world trade, protectionist barriers set up by developed Western countries, and fluctuating prices on primary products. These economic and political processes have had the greatest impact on developing countries, especially on the African continent, many of which have become burdened with large debts. In fact, African countries' debts are growing faster than their export earnings. The prospects of African countries and their regional integration blocs, as well as of developing countries in general, lie with large and powerful Eurasian economies (above all Russia, China, India), but also with ensuring equal and fair economic cooperation with Western economies.

Conclusion

In the 2020s, the global process of dividing the world into opposing economic and geopolitical blocs has accelerated, in particular due to the armed conflict in Ukraine. However, the contemporary world is not divided into two camps, as it may seem at the first glance. Rather, it is a conflict between the West and most of the rest of the world, which refuses to accept the Western-imposed rules-based order, which implies discriminatory trade and political relations for non-Western participants and rule changes introduced at the discretion of Western actors. The policy of double standards is now being replaced with unilateral actions, and while for Europeans this is justified by the quest for global democracy, the rest of the world gets no explanations but sanctions.

The African continent, ever more burdened by neocolonialism, mass poverty, religious and ethnic conflicts and the expansion of deserts in the Sahel, is an integral part of these global processes as a natural continuation of the Eurasian continent.

In this sense, the solutions and priorities for the African continent may be:

- the inclusion of the African continent in modern development trends;
- the involvement of Eurasian powers in the development and defense of the identity of African countries;
- the establishment of equal cooperation of African countries with non-African actors, in particular in the area of development cooperation;
- greater collaboration between various religions and humanitarian organizations in establishing peace on the African continent;
- the elimination of poverty,
- the intensification of efforts to combat desertification in the Sahel region.

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Chapter 2

AFRICA – ONE BOAT BUT HUNDRED HELMSMEN

Introduction

In his book *The Grand Chessboard*, Zbigniew Brzezinski argues that Africa does not hold an important place in the world (Brzezinski, 1997). However, from today's perspective the continent has already or will in the near future become a new geopolitical chessboard. The quest for new energy sources stands at the root of intensifying competition among developed countries from Europe, Asia, and North America. The deficit of gas and oil in Europe and North America, which has been observed since Russia started its special military operation in Ukraine, has prompted world powers to focus on Africa and its resources. In particular, new gas and oil fields in North Africa and the Mediterranean Sea may become of critical importance under these circumstances.

Africa is one of the largest continents of the planet, second only to Asia, and is home to approximately 17% of the world population. Besides 54 independent countries, Africa holds ten territories that still belong to former colonial powers – Spain, France, Portugal, and the United Kingdom. In terms of geography, the continent is usually divided into the regions of North, Central, South, East and West Africa (Marshall, 2016).

The continent is separated from the rest of the world by the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, with the only land connection to Asia at the Suez Peninsula, while sub-Saharan Africa is further isolated by the Sahara desert to its north. The development of oceangoing ships and navigation made Africa's coastal areas accessible to Asians and Europeans, but most of the interior of the continent remained mysterious until the beginning of the 20th century. Great non-navigable rivers, impassable mountain ranges

and huge distances, climate and diseases for centuries kept Africa safe from invasions. Colonizers who came to Africa could not travel too far inland, but they managed to establish stations on African shores that would become starting points for further exploration and trade. According to Tim Marshal (2016), for Africa, its resources were equally a curse and a blessing – a blessing in a sense of wealth and abundance and a curse in the sense that foreigners came to steal it.

Today, Africa is no longer as isolated, but news from Africa rarely appears on the front pages of newspapers or Internet sites in the Western world. Africa is not in the focus of journalists; reports about the continent are typically produced in few countries that have specific interests there. In the Balkans, mass media pays very limited attention even to such dramatic events as armed conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Somalia, Libya, etc.

Natural resources are the basic reason for most of the problems that African countries have faced. Cheap extraction and cheap labor are the two preconditions for extremely profitable business. On the other hand, various resources in different African countries may become objects of geopolitical games on the global scale. The African game of chess has many players and all of them are trying to shape the continent in accordance with their interests.

The present chapter will attempt to analyze foreign players' interests in Africa and highlight their willingness to achieve their political, economic, and geopolitical goals at any cost. The chapter shall discuss actors ranging from international missions and organizations to individual countries and demonstrate accordingly how Africa is becoming a new geopolitical chessboard.

International organizations in Africa

Africa is the continent with six United Nations (UN) missions out of twelve that are currently active in the world, including the largest four. These missions are present in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic, Mali, and South Sudan (Howard, 2022). Since 1960, more than thirty UN peacekeeping missions have been deployed to Africa. As of early 2023, more than 73 thousand troops were deployed to Africa in the framework of UN operations (“Where we operate,” 2023). In fact, as of 28 February 2023, appro-

ximately 84% of all UN mission personnel were located on the African continent (“Global Peacekeeping Data,” 2023; “Where we operate,” 2023). These include soldiers, officers, police, UN volunteers, international and local civil servants. Most of the already finished UN missions did not bring long-lasting peace and prosperity to Africans. Good examples are the failure of the UNOSOM humanitarian intervention led by the U.S. in Somalia in 1993 and the UN’s disastrous failure in averting the Rwandan genocide, which bred skepticism and damaged the credibility of the UN in Africa. In addition, there has been no progress in the DRC for a long time, and the UN mission in Mali is on the way to being closed.

It is important to note the absence of a permanent representation of Africa at the UN Security Council, which is the key decision-making table on the planet. The UN, however, is not the only organization that dispatches peacekeepers in Africa. There are also African Union and European Union (EU) peace missions. Since 2003, the AU has mandated a number of peace support operations, including the African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB), the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), as a means to manage conflicts on the continent. In more recent times, the AU has also authorized three operations aimed at resisting non-state armed groups, namely the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), Boko Haram, and various jihadist formations in the Sahel region. Correspondingly, these are the African Union Regional Task Force (AU-RTF), the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (FC-G5S) (Avezov et al., 2017).

Since the first missions and operations in the framework of the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) of the European Union were launched back in 2003, the EU has undertaken over 37 overseas operations, deploying civilian and military personnel in several countries in Europe, Africa, and Asia. There are 18 ongoing CSDP missions and operations, 11 of which are civilian and 7 – military. Close to 4 thousand European women and men are currently engaged on the ground in Europe’s neighborhoods – Africa, the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East (Avezov, et al., 2017). The seven military missions and operations on land and sea that the EU is currently conducting entail assistance with reforming and training

armed forces, fostering a safe and secure environment, fighting pirates or combating trafficking. In Africa as of January 2023, the EU operated six civilian missions (in the Central African Republic, Libya, Mali, Niger, Somalia, and the Sahel region), two military operations (IRINI in Libya and Atalanta in Somalia), and four military missions (in Mali, Mozambique, the Central African Republic, and Somalia) (“Where we operate,” 2023).

It is important to note that most of these countries house several missions. Good examples are Mali (MINUSMA, JFG5S, EU TM Mali, Taskforce Takuba), the Central African Republic (MINUSCA, EUTM RCA, MOUACA), Somalia (AMISOM, EUNAVFOR Somalia, EUTM Somalia), etc. Those are officially mandated missions from the UN, EU, and AU, but there are also various other IOs and NGOs that pursue their own goals in conflict zones. The vision for peacekeeping should be complementary and not contradictory, but in reality, these are parallel operations, where the UN and other entities operate in the same theater but under different command and with different goals, which often undermines their effectiveness.

Moreover, since 2005, NATO has also been cooperating with the AU in the framework of peacekeeping. The NATO-AU relationship started modestly when the AU requested logistics and airlift support for its mission in Sudan. Since June 2007, NATO has also been assisting the AU Mission in Somalia by providing airlift support for AU peacekeepers. In 2009–2016, NATO ran Operation Ocean Shield to contribute to counter-piracy activities off the Horn of Africa (“Cooperation,” 2022). This operation provided for NATO’s naval presence in a very important part of Africa and on a very important global trade route.

World powers in Africa

In addition to close relations with the UN, EU, and NATO, individual African states have already established or are exploring bilateral partnerships with such powers as the U.S., France, China, India, Japan, Russia, Turkey, etc.

According to Molly Phee, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, the U.S. has adopted new Africa approach, which entails the recognition “of the strategic value to the

United States of the political, economic, and cultural power of African countries and peoples” (Phee, 2021). There are four pillars that serve as the foundation of U.S. policy toward Africa:

- strengthening democratic institutions;
- supporting African economic growth and development;
- advancing peace and security;
- promoting opportunity and development (“U.S. Strategy,” 2012).

Importantly, U.S. policy focus has been shifting toward Sub-Saharan Africa. According to Antony Blinken, U.S. Secretary of State, “The United States firmly believes that it’s time to stop treating Africa as a subject of geopolitics – and start treating it as the major geopolitical player it has become” (“Blinken,” 2021). We may conclude that Washington considers Africa an increasingly important piece on the geopolitical chessboard.

When it comes to Russia’s relations with African countries, the starting point should be that Russia has never had an African colony. According to János Besenyő (2019), Russia’s primary goal in Africa is gaining political influence. This is achieved by obtaining control of natural resources and providing military support and intelligence. Yet, despite making massive inroads, the Russian Federation is still less influential than the U.S. or China on the continent. From the African point of view, Russia offers a strategic alternative to America’s global hegemony, China’s economic diplomacy, and the lingering influence of Africa’s former colonial masters. Supplies of military equipment remain a key factor in the relations between Russia and several African countries. In fact, almost half of Africa’s imports of military equipment (49%) come from Russia. These include heavy weapons (battle tanks, warships, fighter aircraft, and combat helicopters) and small arms (pistols and assault rifles, such as the new Kalashnikov AK-200 series rifle) (Thurston et al., 2022). However, Western sanctions that have been imposed on Russia over the past few years may have a detrimental effect on Moscow’s arms trade with Africa and also on the security of those countries that are purchasers of Russian weapons.

China is also a very important and influential player in Africa. The Economist’s special report from May 2022 provides the big picture of China’s role in Africa. In particular, Beijing is Africa’s largest trading partner, bilateral creditor, and a crucial source of infrastructure investment. Chinese firms account for an estimated one-eighth of the

continent's industrial output. Chinese-built digital infrastructure is critical to African communication platforms. Political, military, and security ties are also developing ("The Chinese-African relationship," 2022). Over the past couple of decades, Chinese banks have lent African governments billions of dollars for the construction of roads, ports, or airports, mostly to be built by Chinese state-owned enterprises. Some deals, as in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, linked repayment of loans to granting concessions for the exploration of natural resources. Characteristically, China does not pose any preconditions for economic cooperation. They do not blackmail African governments into accepting unfair terms of investment, and this may be a key difference between them and certain Western actors.

France as a former colonial power in Africa strives to remain a big player on the continent. The French have demonstrated their intentions in Libya, where they were prepared to destroy the whole country in order to satisfy their interests related to oil exploitation. Despite public statements, France still lingers to the legacy of French colonialism in Africa's francophone countries. France's historical legacy in Africa is complicated and checkered. It goes back to the invasion of Algiers in 1830, which marked the beginning of French colonization on the continent. Despite the formal independence of French colonies in West Africa, Central Africa, and Madagascar since the 1960s, France retained a sphere of influence in these regions after decolonization.

However, France's military legacy in parts of Africa, especially in West Africa, is controversial. The newest example is the 2022 withdrawal of the military mission Operation Barkhane from Mali. After nine years of fighting jihadists, Mali finds itself in the worst situation than ever. France still has 950 soldiers in Côte d'Ivoire, where this deployment, according to France's Ministry of Defense, "constitutes a major strategic, operational and logistical platform on the West African coastline, also known as a forward operating base". In Gabon, there is a French contingent of 350 soldiers, housed in Camp De Gaulle near Libreville airport. In Senegal, the French army has 350 men in Ouakam, at the military port of Dakar, and at the airport. As of 2022, there were also the headquarters of Operation Sabre near Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso, where 350 to 400 French special forces soldiers had been stationed since 2009 (Gormezano, 2022). They were withdrawn, however, in early 2023.

Seeing the above, a question arises: “Is colonialism a thing of the past, or it is the current situation in some African states?” Taking into consideration the situation in the field, it is quite clear that “big players” are shifting their focus toward Africa, and Africa is becoming an important front in the geopolitical contest. For African countries, this entails a very uncertain future.

Security challenges in Africa

It is possible also, at this point, to highlight some acute security challenges that African countries are facing: tribal disputes and religious conflicts, insurgencies, terrorism, organized crime, piracy, social conflicts, humanitarian problems, civil wars, uncontrolled migration, the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons, environmental degradation, famine, clean water shortage, etc. To deal with those problems Africa should do more in terms of conflict prevention, economic development, strengthening of state institutions and good governance, improvement of cooperation among African states and among tribes within states. There should be more dialogue and less violence. To achieve this, Africa requires not only financial support and humanitarian aid, but also advanced training for civil, police, and military personnel, strengthening of military capabilities and civilian capacity building, and, above all, a sincere analysis of real problems that African people are facing.

There are a lot of ethnic conflicts in Africa – in Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Angola, the DRC, Nigeria, Mali, to name a few. The roots of these conflicts are mostly historical, but the way European colonial countries drew borders on the continent makes them incredibly challenging when it comes to their resolution. The worst case of arbitrary borders is the DRC, which is a classic example of “many helmsmen and one boat” situation, given the number of various international actors involved in the Republic. Also, it is a classic example of how relations among African neighboring countries may develop: nine countries that surround the DRC all took part in its destabilization.

Africa’s challenges should be solved in the African way rather than the Western one. The communal identities and tribal identities of different nations in Africa should be recognized and accepted, not

ignored. European or other Western models of democracy cannot be applied in Africa without major adaptation. An attempt by the West to impose its own rules in Afghanistan should be a good example of wrongdoing. A similar scenario has been unfolding in Mali. However, the West has failed to impose its model of democracy on the Malian nation. The West should offer solutions that correspond more closely to the needs and traditions of local communities, also in the fields of governance and economic wellbeing.

The way how African countries do policing may be very different from the way the West does it. However, when the French use excessive police force against “yellow vests” they call it a way of democracy, but when they refer to South Africa’s suppression of “Zuma unrest” they call it undemocratic behavior. Hence dual standards have been applied.

The proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons is one of Africa’s major challenges, but the West has not been too helpful. In fact, the West sees Africa as a lucrative arms market and it does not have interest in building peace on the continent. The situation is similar with one in Ukraine, where the West is encouraging Ukrainians to fight because it wants to clear up arms depots and earn money for that. In the end, Ukraine will be paying for those weapons and ammunition for the next several generations. A good example is Serbia, which was paying France for its help in the First World War until 1974.

All in all, Africa faces very complex challenges, which are rooted in the past, present, and future. Dealing with these challenges will be very difficult as there are no quick and easy solutions for such a Gordian knot, if any at all. It remains to be seen if Africans manage to cut this knot.

Conclusion

A safe and secure environment is a key condition for successful development. However, if a country is developed and strong, it cannot be easily manipulated. When it comes to the West, the above statement determines the fundamentals of its approach to the African continent. Obviously, African countries find themselves under the great influence of various international organizations, world powers, and individual countries, which are not really interested in sustainable peace in the

continent, but which are more interested in using Africa's natural resources for own ends.

Accordingly, the core problem of Africa is the excess of external actors that are trying to help and the deficit of trust among them and among African states themselves. In our opinion, Africa does not need to be "saved", but Africa has to be left alone to solve its problems in its own way.

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Chapter 3

THE NEW GLOBAL MILITARY COMPETITION FOR AFRICA

Introduction

The new scramble for Africa is a reality. All leading powers of the planet are already participating in this race, which manifests itself not only in the intensification of economic and political competition, which may actually be benefiting African countries, but also in the expansion of foreign military presence, which often raises tensions on the continent. In fact, as of 2023 Russia is the only permanent member of the UN Security Council that does not have a permanent military base in Africa. Of the G20 member-states, eleven (not counting South Africa) have military facilities in Africa. The one country that is not a member of the G20 but has established military presence in Africa is the United Arab Emirates. The most noticeable increase in the military presence in Africa has taken place in the regions of the Horn of Africa and in the Sahel. In particular, active foreign military construction has been observed on the African coast of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

A rapid expansion of Western – primarily American and French – military involvement in Africa began in the early 2000s in the context – or under the guise of – the War on Terror, which was launched in the wake of September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. This expansion has involved dozens of new training programs, hundreds of joint exercises, and increased Western military presence on the ground. Anti-terrorist operations of the U.S. focused on the key strategic regions: the Sahara/Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and the Gulf of Guinea. The French counter-terrorism effort in Africa has mostly been limited to its former colonies in the Sahara/Sahel and the Gulf of Guinea. Nonetheless, despite all efforts, Western countries have not managed to contain the

spread of destabilization and terrorism throughout the continent, and in the Sahel in particular. The claim that the War on Terror and other foreign interventions have not just failed to reduce or contain terrorism in Africa or in the world at large but actually generated additional terrorism and instability seems to be more and more accurate. While the examples of Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq present immensely stronger cases, Africa is catching up quickly – in the Sahel and elsewhere.

In general, since the end of the Cold War and until the most recent events, practice has revealed that foreign military interventions have in fact deepened the existing problems and added new ones. It has become increasingly clear that the chances of establishing real and lasting peace and stability in Africa are decreasing just as foreign military presence on the continent is expanding. (The only reasonable exception being the UN peacekeeping missions, but interestingly enough most developed countries have drastically decreased their personnel contributions to such missions since the mid-1990s. Globally, the percentage of total UN peacekeeping troops contributed from Western countries plummeted from the peak of 73% in 1990 to under 6% in recent years). There is even statistical evidence that foreign military training programs increase the propensity for military coups (Savage & Caverley, 2017).

Such dismal results are most and foremost explained by the fact that counter-terrorist and even humanitarian motives for interventions are, as a rule, just a cover for pursuing own political and economic goals of intervening powers. Not much has changed since the Cold War and even colonial times. Besides, foreign militaries usually lack the knowledge of the real situation on the ground, of the domestic political, ethnic, religious, tribal and clan relations. Also, collateral damage for them is an expected and acceptable category, while the destruction of infrastructure in the course of an intervention may even entail future economic benefits for the foreign actor, who is typically interested in natural resources of the country and construction contracts rather than its industrial production capacity.

Despite the negative spillover effects of Western interventions, a number of non-Western countries have followed the suit and established military presence in Africa. China, Japan, India, Turkey and some of the countries of the Arabian Peninsula have publicly stated the need for their militaries to be stationed in Africa – in Djibouti, Eritrea,

Libya, Seychelles, Somalia and its breakaway region Somaliland, Sudan, etc.

Under the stated goals of fighting piracy and terrorism and providing humanitarian assistance, foreign militaries have implanted themselves on the continent, conducting military cooperation with a growing number of African countries. But no matter how often politicians reiterate these goals, the real actions speak for themselves. For instance, Japan announced the plan to expand its naval outpost in Djibouti shortly after China started the construction of its first base in Africa – also in Djibouti – officially to protect its maritime trade. Yet both of these moves came at a time when there hadn't been a proper pirate attack on a commercial vessel off the Horn of Africa in over two years. In another example, Turkey deployed troops to Libya to help defend Tripoli after the involvement of the United Arab Emirates in the offensive on the country's capital became a game-changer. What we have witnessed is the extension of the traditional rivalry between various world powers to Africa, which has become a critically important region for the emerging model of global development due to its rising resource, human and economic potential.

The U.S. military footprint in Africa

As has been mentioned, the ongoing competition for influence in Africa, in which all leading powers of the world are now participating to one extent or the other, is increasingly characterized by the growth of foreign military presence on the continent. Indeed, it may be the United States that opened the proverbial Pandora's Box. The most visible result of the War on Terror, launched by the U.S. after the events of September 11, 2001, has not been the eradication of international terrorists and not even a decline in the level of their activity, but a sharp increase in the number of American military facilities around the world, including in Africa. While formally there is just one U.S. military base in mainland Africa (the U.S. has a navy base on the island of Diego Garcia, which is also a geographic part of Africa) – in Djibouti – there also appeared at different times U.S. drone bases in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Somalia and several other countries of the continent. In addition, there are cooperative security and forward operating locations and various other U.S. military outposts in many

other African countries, including such strategically important ones as Kenya, Tunisia and Senegal. An important advantage of these outposts is their scalability: if necessary, these military facilities with little permanent staff can be quickly expanded and reinforced; they also enable personnel and supplies to move quickly across the continent.

In Africa, the U.S. follows two main strategies to strengthen and legitimize its presence on the continent even as the commitment of actual U.S. troops on the ground is kept at the minimum, which lowers human losses without hurting America's strategic goals. The first has been to involve America's allies in its overseas operations ("coalitions of the willing"), as was the case with the War on Terror, to which many countries committed troops. The second strategy has been to provide logistical and material support to own operations of allies ("leading from behind"). The examples of this include the support rendered to the French in Mali, to the Kenyans in Somalia, to the Saudis and Emiratis in Yemen, etc. These approaches notwithstanding, in 2017–2018, the number of U.S. uniformed troops in Africa reached over 6000 (and up to 7200 including support personnel and contractors) ("Statement," 2018; Allen et al., 2022) in staggering 46 locations (Turse, 2018). According to another report, at that time American military personnel was present in 50 of 54 African countries (Neuhaus, 2017).

Under President Donald Trump, Washington launched the policy of a gradual withdrawal of U.S. troops from Africa. As a result, in 2019–2020 new U.S. deployments to African countries were the smallest since 2002 and some locations were abandoned all together (Allen et al., 2022). Yet the policy was reversed under President Joe Biden, who came to power in January 2021. He, for instance, issued the order to reestablish American military presence in Somalia in May 2022 ("Somalia," 2022). It was also reported that U.S. special operations forces were active in 22 African countries in 2021, with 5 of them being new locations (Turse, 2022), – a clear indication of American military reinvolvement on the African continent.

The primary U.S. base in Djibouti has been in place since 2001, when the Americans took over Camp Lemonnier, a base previously abandoned by the French Foreign Legion. In 2013, Americans "borrowed" from the French a functioning facility – the Chabelley Airfield, located 9 km south-east of Camp Lemonier, which has been refitted as a base of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). The latter are

actively used in missions over the vast territory stretching from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Yemen. As of 2022, the American contingent in Djibouti numbered 4500 men (“Inside,” 2022) and is subordinate to the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), which became fully operational in 2008 and is headquartered in a suburb of Stuttgart in Germany. According to the lease agreement, which in 2014 was extended by 20 years, the U.S. pays \$63 million annually to the government of Djibouti (and additionally \$7 million per annum in development assistance) (Schmitt, 2014).

Another major U.S. deployment has taken place in Niger, where Washington since 2016 has been building a large air base for the Nigerien military. Reportedly, the base hosts 800 U.S. troops and a UAV squadron (“The Military Balance 2022,” 2022).

The mission of the U.S. Africa Command

While U.S. military presence in Africa is nearly ubiquitous, the main focus is placed on three key strategic regions: the Horn of Africa, the Sahara/Sahel region, and the Gulf of Guinea. AFRICOM, which is responsible for all U.S. military activity in the African countries with the only exception of Egypt, is officially tasked with conflict prevention and capacity building within the official “3Ds” approach of U.S. foreign policy (defense, diplomacy and development) (“Sidebar on The 3Ds,” 2010), and is thus positioned partly as a soft power instrument. However, AFRICOM is also widely believed to be entrusted with controlling Africa’s resource wealth and containing the influence of other powers. Some researchers went so far as to call AFRICOM the spearhead of U.S. “oil and terrorism policy” (Lubeck, 2007). The U.S. military itself frequently posed the creation of AFRICOM as a reaction to China’s “broadly based engagement in Africa” (Hofstedt, 2009, p. 79).

Matter of course, the official five Lines of Effort (LoEs) of AFRICOM say nothing of global competition. The LoEs include (1) developing security and stability in East Africa, (2) degrading violent extremist organizations in Sahel and Maghreb regions and containing instability in Libya, (3) containing and degrading Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa, (4) interdicting illegal activity in Gulf of Guinea and Central Africa, and (5) building peacekeeping and humanitarian

assistance capacity of African countries (“Statement,” 2018). However, there is no end in sight for any of these LoEs. Yet General Thomas Waldhauser, Commander of AFRICOM in 2016–2019, openly expressed his concerns with emergent Chinese military presence in Africa (Tadjdeh, 2017) and with Russian activities in the north of the continent (Browne, 2017), which was indicative of the gradual revival of Cold War thinking on part of the U.S. military in Africa – certainly in line with the general disquieting trends in Sino-American and U.S.-Russian relations. During D. Trump’s presidency, when the general shift in focus from counter-terrorism toward the containment of Russia and China predisposed Washington to seek a reduction in the number of troops in Africa (Gibbons-Neff & Schmitt, 2018), AFRICOM leadership made a great effort to position Pentagon’s assets on the continent as an indispensable instrument in maintaining America’s global influence vis-à-vis its international rivals. These efforts have apparently paid off. Under J. Biden, AFRICOM opened a new security office in Zambia in 2022 (“The return,” 2022), further highlighting the policy reversal with regard to Africa.

The French military in Africa: on the retreat

In 2001, France still far surpassed the U.S. in terms of military presence in Africa. However, since the late 1990s, France had been in process of reducing its overseas military forces due to budgetary concerns (Hansen, 2008). Washington’s emergent involvement in Africa, despite particular concerns that France was going to lose Africa to the U.S. (Zachary, 2011), gave Paris a chance to prop up its waning military reach on the continent. In fact, without the U.S. (also the U.K., but to a lesser extent), which provided strategic airlift and aerial refueling support to the French military intervention in Mali in 2013 (Operation Serval), the success of the operation would have been questionable.

The more recent build-up of French military presence in Africa used the Mali conflict of 2012–2013 as the main pretext. Launched in 2014 as the successor of Operation Serval, Operation Barkhane provided for the deployment of some 3500 French troops in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Mali and Niger (the G5 Sahel countries). One of the largest French overseas military bases came to be located in Gao (Mali) (1000

personnel). As French President Francois Hollande said, “the Barkhane force will allow for a rapid and efficient intervention in the event of a crisis in the region” (“Hollande,” 2014). It certainly seemed at the time that France did not prioritize developing an exit strategy, but rather planned for a long-term deployment in the region. By 2022, the number of French troops in the G5 Sahel countries reached 5000. However, the violent changes of power in Bamako in 2020 and 2021 brought to the helm leaders who responded to the strong public anti-French sentiment in Mali and accused Paris of failing to contain Islamists and causing more deaths among civilians than among insurgents in the course of its operations. On 9 November 2022, French President Emmanuel Makron announced that France was ending Operation Barkhane and would refocus on a closer cooperation with African countries to minimize its own military presence on the ground (“Macron,” 2022). In December 2022, last French troops also left the Central African Republic, where previously there had been about 160 military personnel (“CAR,” 2022; “The Military Balance 2022,” 2022).

After the pullout of 2500 troops from Mali, France has still retained about 3 thousand military personnel in the G5 countries of Burkina Faso (400 personnel), Chad (1500) and Niger (1000). Simultaneously, Paris maintains its major colonial-era military bases in Djibouti (1450 personnel), Ivory Coast (950), Gabon (350) and Senegal (350) (“The Military Balance 2022,” 2022). In February 2023, the French withdrew their troops from Burkina Faso, responding to the demand of the military government that had taken over in September 2022.

The French base in Djibouti, which in fact consists of separate naval, air force and army installations, remains a gem among France’s overseas military assets due to its strategic location near the bottleneck of the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, which is only 30 km wide at its narrowest point and connects the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea. When Djibouti gained independence from France in 1977, France retained the right to keep its troops in the country indefinitely. The sharp end of the French stick in Djibouti is 4 Dassault Mirage 2000 jet fighters, supported by attack and transport helicopters. The rent of the base costs France €30 million annually (Barluet, 2018).

Naturally, France’s military and political interests are mostly limited to francophone states – its former colonies, where French companies usually enjoy preferences in extracting uranium, gold, oil and other

natural resources. For France, which still largely relies on nuclear reactors for its electricity production, uranium mines of the Sahel are the key interest in the region. Most mines are located in Mali, Niger, Chad and Gabon. As was the case with Djibouti, upon gaining their independence most former French colonies signed bilateral treaties on military cooperation with France, and a good number of these treaties are still in force today. In the 1970s, these arrangements have been expanded to former Belgian colonies. France's influence is also supported by currency links and special relations between governing elites. However, what was called *Françafrique* – the system of special, exclusive relations between African countries and France – seems to be no longer a viable option for developing or even maintaining the current level of French influence on the continent. France's expansion in the Sahel region of Africa in 2013–2021 was notable for its multilateral nature, with the strong involvement of other European countries, the U.S. and even Canada, which allowed Paris to share financial and material burden of operations in Africa with its allies while maintaining its strategic posture, but now this strategy has faltered as more and more francophone countries of the continent choose to diversify their security partners away from their traditional reliance on France.

Other European militaries in Africa

The Global War on Terror that the U.S. declared in 2001 carried the official name of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). OEF came to incorporate a number of separate operations, one of them being Operation Enduring Freedom – Horn of Africa (OEF-HOA). As mentioned previously, a number of American allies joined the War on Terror. Its African component – OEF-HOA – came to involve France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Spain. OEF-HOA, which has been active for over 20 years, is operating mostly from Djibouti, which indeed has become a magnet for foreign military bases precisely since the start of the War on Terror.

Getting Germany on board with operations in Africa has been especially tricky as the country is traditionally averse to overseas deployments of troops. In 2002–2020, Germany maintained small military presence in Djibouti within the framework of OEF-HOA and

Operation Atalanta (the European Union's counter-piracy operation) ("Djibouti: Germany Redeploys," 2021). Berlin had no own bases in the African country and made use of French and U.S. facilities. A German Lockheed P-3 Orion maritime surveillance aircraft and 85 personnel were deployed to the Horn of Africa, but mostly tasked with anti-piracy patrols ("The Military Balance 2017," 2017).

In a separate development, in 2017 Germany opened a logistics air base in Niger's capital Niamey (Maiga, 2018), which marked the first time Germany possessed a military object in Africa since the Second World War and highlighted Berlin's mounting concerns with migration flows and instability in the Sahara/Sahel region, as well as its desire to penetrate the region economically in view of France's increasingly frequent setbacks in keeping out corporations from China and other emerging powers, which often offered more lucrative deals for Africa's resources. While Berlin linked the establishment of the base with the need to support Germany's growing troop contribution to the UN mission in Mali, the facility was also tasked with assisting France's Operation Barkhane. Amid the pullout of the French troops from Mali, Berlin announced that it would withdraw its own contingent (about 1100 personnel) from the country by 2024 ("Germany takes part," 2022). On the other hand, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in May 2022 also announced the plan to extend a German training mission in Niger, which was set to end later that year ("Olaf Scholz," 2022).

Spain, which joined OEF-HOA and Operation Atalanta in 2002, as of early 2023 still maintained its presence in the region, including the deployment of a Lockheed P-3 Orion maritime surveillance aircraft and a navy frigate ("Deployed Assets," n.d.).

Initially all U.S. allies that participated in OEF-HOA were quartered at French and U.S. facilities or hotels in Djibouti City. In 2012, the Italians set up their own military installation (dubbed National Military Support Base) in Djibouti, 1.5 km south of Camp Lemonnier, albeit small (up to 300 personnel), but housing a special operations unit and equipped with UAVs remotely controlled from the base of Amendola in Italy's Puglia region (Dinucci, 2013). Italy's move to establish military presence in the Horn of Africa may be viewed not only through the lens of its strategic partnership with the U.S., but also within the concept of the "enlarged Mediterranean" advanced by a number of officers of the Italian military, particularly admiral Giuseppe De Giorgi, Chief of

Italy's Naval Staff (2013–2016) until his retirement, who argued that “the Italian Navy not only had to safeguard Italy's borders in the Mediterranean... but address a wide variety of tasks in an ‘enlarged Mediterranean’ that stretched from Gibraltar to the Persian Gulf” (Hattendorf, 2013, p. 210). Italy pays for the base the yearly rent of approximately €30 million (Dinucci, 2013).

Notably, the United Kingdom has largely stayed out of the “race” for bases in Africa. While in the colonial era British military expanse in Africa was only rivaled by that of France, currently the British army has only one permanent facility on the continent – in Kenya, 200 km north of Nairobi, where the British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) is located. Up to 10,000 British personnel per year undergo exercises in the rugged terrain of this part of Kenya. In addition, the UK provides occasional logistical support to its allies in Africa (e.g., to France in the Sahel) and carries out training missions in a number of countries of the continent – Gabon, Malawi, Nigeria, Somalia, etc. (“The British Army,” 2018; “The Military Balance 2022,” 2022).

Military activities of China, India and Japan in Africa

Japan joined the War on Terror along with America's European allies. In 2011, Japan's Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) established their own base (180 personnel) right next to Camp Lemonnier – officially in response to piracy off the coast of Somalia. Since 2016, as the abating pirate threat ceased to provide a sufficient justification for the deployment, JSDF has refocused on rescuing Japanese citizens in Africa, and, later, – on countering growing Chinese influence in the region: the Japanese have leased additional territory to expand their base, which already costs them €30 million annually (Kubo, 2016). There have even been reports about frictions between China and Japan off the Djiboutian coast when Japanese frogmen approached a Chinese warship (Lo, 2017). In the region Japan is pursuing its own initiative – the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy, which in certain aspects is analogous (and rival) to China's Maritime Silk Road project and aims at improving connectivity between Asia and Africa. Yet for historical (and, sequentially, constitutional) reasons Japan is limited in its ability to project military power overseas, thus being forced to continue to rely largely on soft power mechanisms in fortifying its stance in Africa.

Indeed, American, French, Italian, and Japanese military bases being located within few kilometers of each other is no extraordinary circumstance as these nations are close allies. The inauguration of China's first overseas military base in Djibouti (approximately 10 km from the U.S. base) in the summer of 2017 marked an important geopolitical shift. It is estimated that the facility is capable of housing up to 10,000 personnel, and its large underground storage spaces are designed for storing fuel, munitions and equipment. According to various sources, the rent for China will range from \$20 to \$100 million per year. The lease agreement is for 10 years with the possibility of extension for another 10 years. According to official Chinese sources, the base will support China's missions including escorting, peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance in Africa and West Asia, secure Chinese maritime trade, and also facilitate overseas tasks such as protecting and evacuating Chinese living overseas, emergency rescue, and military cooperation with foreign countries ("China sets up," 2017). In addition, military presence in Djibouti undoubtedly complements China's growing weapons sales in Africa.

All in all, the construction of the base is intrinsically linked to the implementation of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road project, which has been endorsed by Chinese leader Xi Jinping since 2013, and which undoubtedly implies expansion of not only trade, but also of the presence of the Chinese navy in the world's oceans, which necessitates the establishment of new military facilities along the route and elsewhere on the planet. Indeed, China has supposedly considered constructing a military base in Pakistan (Gertz, 2018) and allegedly has even approached Vanuatu about building a military presence in the country (Wroe, 2018), which in combination with Chinese development of deep water ports in various countries in the Indo-Pacific gives new strength to the theory of the "string of pearls" – the alleged network of naval bases and dual-use ports that China might be constructing along the route between Mainland China and the Mediterranean Sea.

In all likelihood, China will take the fullest advantage of interweaving its soft power and hard power influence in Africa in general and in Djibouti in particular. Naturally, Chinese companies have increased their stakes in Djibouti's ports, which are connected to the Addis Ababa – Djibouti Railway, also operated by China. The importance of the ports

cannot be underestimated as Djibouti has practical monopoly over the international trade of landlocked Ethiopia – one of the fastest growing economies in Africa. Furthermore, in July 2018, Djibouti opened the first phase of \$3.5 billion free trade zone financed exclusively by Chinese corporations (“Djibouti Opens,” 2018). By 2022, the zone has attracted over 200 companies (“Djibouti International,” 2022). The People’s Republic also offered to mediate the border row between Djibouti and Eritrea, thus flexing its diplomatic muscles.

India is another rising power which is very much concerned with growing presence of foreign militaries, particularly China’s, on the shores of the Indian Ocean. While the main areas of contention between New Delhi and Beijing lie in Asia – in such states as Pakistan, Iran, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Myanmar, India has also become wary of military aspects of China’s penetration of Africa. The latest (2015) Indian Maritime Security Strategy “expands India’s maritime areas of interest southwards and westwards by bringing the southwest Indian Ocean and Red Sea within its primary area of interest, and the western coast of Africa, the Mediterranean Sea and other areas of interest within its secondary area of interest” (Mann, 2017, p. 4).

In 2007 India inaugurated its first military facility in Africa – a listening post in northern Madagascar, which is used to monitor ship movements and maritime communications. In 2018, after many delays (the plan of the Indian government to establish a military base on the Assumption Island in the Seychelles was first announced during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Indian Ocean tour in 2015), India finally signed an agreement with the Seychelles to introduce Indian military infrastructure to its territory (Bagchi, 2018). India currently operates a coastal radar system in the country. The third African country to house an Indian surveillance system became Mauritius. The negotiations between India and Mauritius about establishing Indian military presence on the island of Agalega began in the mid-2010s. By that time India had already financed the construction of a new airstrip and new jetty facilities on the island (“Agalega,” 2017). New Delhi’s priority project is the maintenance of a network of coastal radars in the Seychelles, the Maldives, Mauritius and several Asian countries, which would allow it to monitor maritime activities of its main rivals – China and Pakistan – and also enhance its counter-piracy capabilities.

Another path of India's maritime expansion has been to conclude logistics agreements with other powers that would provide its navy with access to their naval bases. India already has such agreements with the U.S. (2017, access to Diego Garcia base) and France (2018, Reunion and Djibouti bases) (Samanta, 2018). Reportedly, India has also held discussions with Japan about access to the latter's facilities in Djibouti (Biswas, 2021). In mainland Africa, Mozambique has become India's key partner and possibly closest military ally on the continent, with the Indian Navy making frequent port calls in the gas-rich nation. Overall, while India's efforts to construct its own arch of security in the Indian Ocean may not have been as visible as America's immoderate proliferation of military outposts in Africa, China's alleged "string of pearls" strategy, or France's operations in the Sahel, New Delhi has certainly been paying close attention to the military dimension of its relations with the continent.

Gulf militaries in Africa

In 2017, Saudi Arabia signed an agreement with Djibouti on establishing a military installation, laying the groundwork for a new base in the African Horn nation. For Riyadh, the apparent motivation for developing military infrastructure in this part of Africa was the strengthening of the naval blockade of the Houthis in Yemen and limiting Iranian influence in the countries of the region, which fell within its increasingly assertive anti-Iran foreign policy. Saudi Arabia could have also been planning to use its base in Djibouti as an intelligence outpost, monitoring maritime traffic near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. However, as of 2023, there is no sign that Riyadh has started the construction, which perhaps is due to an apparent stalemate in the Saudi-led intervention in Yemen's civil war.

Indeed, Djibouti maintains a number of advantages in the region, including its relative national stability and developed infrastructure, which make it so attractive for foreign militaries. Djibouti's two immediate neighbors – Eritrea and unrecognized Somaliland – have also been trying to capitalize on their geographical proximity to the "Gate of Tears" ("Bab el-Mandeb" in Arabic). The United Arab Emirates (UAE), which is a partner of Saudi Arabia in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and in the war in Yemen (Kostelyanets,

2016a, p. 30), has in fact been more active on the African continent than its more powerful neighbor. While the Saudis have shelved their only construction project, the Emiratis operated a large military base in Eritrea's Assab in 2015–2021. The facility included an airfield (the UAE deployed fighter planes, attack helicopters and drones to the base), naval docks and a motor pool that could accommodate at least an armored battalion (“The UAE Joins,” 2016). The base was poised to become one of the largest foreign military bases in Africa and, according to multiple reports, was set to cost the UAE \$500 million over the duration of the 30-year lease, but was dismantled just as Abu Dhabi decided to withdraw from the intervention in Yemen.

The Emiratis also considered another naval project – in the port of Berbera in Somaliland. In February 2017, the Parliament of Somaliland by a vast margin approved the construction of an Emirati base in the country. For Somaliland, which had proclaimed independence in 1991, the base could mean not just more employment or hard currency inflows, but also implied more concrete foreign support for its sovereignty. The economic benefit was also expected to be considerable: the 25-year framework agreement specified that the UAE would invest \$1 billion in infrastructure projects in the country (roads, dams, cargo airport, etc.) (“Somaliland, UAE sign,” 2017). However, in 2019 it was announced that all corresponding infrastructure would be converted to civilian use as Abu Dhabi reneged on the deal (“UAE cancels,” 2020).

Furthermore, in the mid-2010s, the UAE began to provide significant military support to the Libyan National Army (LNA), led by Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, which opposed the Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli. Since 2017, an Emirati air base has been operating in Libya, near the city of El Marj, from which unmanned aerial vehicles of the UAE Air Force have been supporting the LNA (“UN team,” 2018).

In recent years, the UAE has also significantly stepped up its diplomatic activity in the Sahel, seeking to strengthen its position against various Islamist groups in the region, including those supported by Turkey, Qatar or Iran. As part of this strategy, the Emirates provides support to the joint multinational anti-terrorist forces of the Sahel Five (the G5 Sahel Joint Force), which comprises military units from Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, and Niger. In 2019, the UAE donated

30 armored vehicles to Mali (“On the Delivery,” 2020). In the same year, rumors appeared about the creation of an Emirati military base in northern Niger (“The Emirates,” 2019), though this has never materialized. In early 2020, during the visit of the Mauritanian leader Mohamed Ould Ghazouani to Abu Dhabi, cooperation in the field of military activities and security was discussed, and the establishment of an Emirati military facility near the border with Algeria was mentioned in Mauritanian press (“Mauritania,” 2020). It seemed that these rumors were not groundless, although the discussions probably focused on granting rights to the UAE Special Forces to use these bases periodically.

The military aspect of Turkey’s Africa policy

Turkey jumped into the fray for the hard power influence in the Horn of Africa in 2017, when it opened its first military base in Africa – in Somalia’s capital, Mogadishu. The declared task of the Turkish contingent (about 200 personnel) is the training and support of the Somali army in its confrontation with terrorist groups (Hussein, 2017). It should be noted that Turkey has been strongly focused on the development of ties with Somalia for a number of years. The relations moved to a new level in 2011, when Recep Erdoğan (then Turkish Prime Minister) made a visit to Mogadishu. At the time Somalia was experiencing the worst famine in decades. Since then, Ankara has not only provided humanitarian assistance to the embattled country, but made considerable investment in Somali infrastructure (primarily in the capital, where it built roads, electrical networks, a large hospital and a new terminal of Aden Abdulle International Airport, formerly known as Mogadishu International Airport) (Kostelyanets, 2016b, p. 32). Currently Turkish companies run the only two strategically important infrastructure objects under control of the Federal Government of Somalia: the international airport and the port of Mogadishu (both since 2013). Turkey has also been financing army and police reforms in the country since 2010, when the parties signed a military cooperation agreement.

In another bold move, at the end of 2017, Turkey reached an agreement with Sudan on the construction of a dock to maintain civilian and military vessels on the Red Sea island of Suakin, which Ankara

simultaneously leased for 99 years. Considering that a Turkish military base had already been established in Qatar, the new base in Africa could have enabled Ankara to augment its power projection capability in the Eastern Indo-Pacific dramatically. However, the 2019 revolution in Sudan has disrupted this arrangement (Kostelyanets, 2021), so Turkish military presence in this country has not materialized.

While the estimates that by 2022 Turkey would have 60,000 troops stationed in its overseas bases in Africa and the Persian Gulf (“Turkey to deploy,” 2018) have proven to be vastly exaggerated, with the actual numbers being approximately 500 military personnel in Libya, 300 in Qatar and 200 in Somalia (“The Military Balance 2022,” 2022), Turkey has demonstrated that it is capable of ramping up its military presence quickly. Ankara’s turn to the south – in the direction of the territories of the former Ottoman Empire – may in part be a reaction to the European Union’s refusal to grant Turkey the status of an official candidate for EU membership, but the pursuit of security in the Western Mediterranean and the search for new markets for Turkish goods (including weapons) and investment opportunities clearly dominate the agenda.

Russia’s attempts to establish a military foothold in Africa

Over the past decade, Russia has repeatedly demonstrated its desire to resume military presence in Africa, which it conclusively forfeited in 1991 after the evacuation of the Soviet naval base on the Ethiopian (now Eritrean) island of Nokra on the Red Sea. In 2008–2011, Russia discussed the establishment of a Russian naval base on the Mediterranean with Libya’s Muammar Gaddafi, but the deal was still in the works when the Libyan revolution erupted. In 2012–2014, Russia probed opportunities for leasing a parcel of land to build a base in Djibouti, but reportedly the Americans managed to head off the arrangement (Jacobs, 2017).

Since 2016, Russia has received three offers for hosting a military base in Africa. Firstly, Khalifa Haftar, Commander of the Libyan National Army (LNA), has indicated his interest in hosting a Russian military base in the eastern part of Libya that is under his control. A Russian official confirmed that the field marshal had extended such an offer and that it was being considered in Moscow (“Saudi cleric,”

2018). Indeed, eastern coastal Libya (Cyrenaica) would be a perfect location for a naval base: located at the central part of the Mediterranean, it is also relatively far from major NATO bases, unlike the Russian naval base at Tartus in Syria, which is flanked by Turkey and British bases on Cyprus, and would more effectively support the permanent ship formation of the Russian Navy in the Mediterranean Sea. It would also buttress Russia's desire to renew the lucrative public infrastructure contracts concluded with Libya under Gaddafi. At present time, however, the obstacles to Russian military construction (and to major civil infrastructure projects as well) in Libya seem insurmountable. As of early 2023, the country is still divided between LNA, the UN-backed Government of National Unity in Tripoli, and other smaller armed actors; the UN arms embargo on Libya has been in place since 2011. Until the unity of the country is restored, Russia's permanent military presence in Cyrenaica would not only carry enormous security risks but would also be seen as illegitimate.

Secondly, in the summer of 2017, a parliamentary delegation of Somaliland visited Moscow and reported on their country's readiness to lease land to Russia that could be used for constructing a naval facility on the shores of the Gulf of Aden. The offered location – not far from Berbera in the present-day unrecognized state of Somaliland, where the USSR had a major naval base in 1974–1977 – is strategically equivalent to the coveted one in Djibouti, just about 50 km farther from the Bab el-Mandeb. Somaliland is also comparably stable, especially against the backdrop of the chaos in Somalia. On the other hand, the country seeks recognition of its independence and considers foreign military bases as an instrument to achieve this goal. It was for this reason that the Federal Government of Somalia called the agreement between the UAE and Somaliland on the construction of the port and naval base a “clear violation of international law” (“Somalia Reports,” 2018). It is unlikely that similar accusations would contribute to the advancement of Russia's influence in Somalia and other African countries, many of which face their own problems with separatism. Finally, the price of an “admission ticket” to the Horn country also matters: Somaliland's media even reported the amount of investment Hargeisa expected to receive from Moscow in exchange for the basing rights: \$250 million (“Russia offers,” 2018), which is a huge sum to invest in one of the poorest countries in Africa, over 60% of whose

GDP is linked to the trade in *qat* (a mild narcotic) (Elder, 2017). There is also no permanent presence of the Russian Navy in the Gulf of Aden, although Russian ships conduct occasional anti-piracy missions in the area. Combined, these factors substantially lessen the attractiveness of a base deal with Somaliland.

The third proposal came from Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir during his visit to Moscow in November 2017. Al-Bashir appealed to President Putin to protect Sudan from the aggressive actions of the U.S. and expressed his interest in discussing with Russia the establishment of a Russian base on the Red Sea, presumably in the city of Port Sudan. The Sudanese proposal in many aspects was more advantageous in comparison with the ones received from Libya and Somaliland. The linchpin, of course, is that Sudan is a recognized United Nations member state. Furthermore, Sudan occupies a strategic position at the crossroads of North and Tropical Africa and the Middle East. The latter also meant that a base in Sudan would not just serve Russian maritime interests, but would potentially provide Moscow with a “key” to the heart of the African continent (Kostelyanets & Okeke, 2018).

At the same time, for a number of objective reasons, the very idea of deploying Russian military in Sudan carried considerable risks. First, Khartoum’s foreign policy is volatile, and only states with very strong economic positions in Sudan – such as China – can be assured of long-term preservation of their position. The example of Iran is symptomatic: since 2008, the development of military-technical cooperation with Iran was considered the priority direction of foreign policy in Khartoum. With Iranian assistance, Sudan built the country’s largest military-industrial complex and two air bases. But in 2014, Saudi Arabia offered significant financial assistance to Sudan in exchange for downgrading relations with Iran, and Sudan accepted the offer. In January 2016, Khartoum even severed diplomatic relations with Teheran, following Riyadh’s decision to do so (Kostelyanets, 2016a, p. 32). The cancellation of the plan to establish a Turkish naval dock on the island of Suakin is also indicative.

Russia’s foray in Sudan would be viewed with suspicion not only in the West, but also by China (the largest foreign investor in Sudan, owns a major oil terminal in Port Sudan) and Saudi Arabia (Port Sudan is just about 300 km from Jeddah and Mecca). Just how much effort the West and these and other countries would be willing to put

into forestalling Russia in Sudan is incalculable, but the Sudanese government has traditionally exhibited the elasticity of its policies. Therefore, Russia would face a risk of another zigzag in Sudan's international priorities.

The ouster of al-Bashir in a military coup in April 2019 seemed to have derailed the Russian-Sudanese negotiation process, but in December 2020 the agreement on the establishment of a Russian naval logistics center in Port Sudan was finally signed ("Russia signs," 2020). As of spring 2023, however, the agreement was still on hold; Sudan's new authorities may have backtracked on their commitment to the deal either under Western pressure or due to internal political divisions, even though they continue discussing the issue with Moscow in a positive vein. Despite the setback, the establishment of Russia's naval presence in the Red Sea region or North Africa is likely to remain high on Moscow's agenda, reflecting its geostrategic and geoeconomic interests in the context of intensifying global tensions.

Conclusion

All in all, the growing military presence of foreign powers in Africa undermines the idea of "African solutions to African problems", once a compelling maxim of the African Union. The piracy off the Somali coast has collapsed, but the foreign bases in the region have remained to fend for other interests of corresponding non-African nations. Similarly, international terrorism may get driven back into the underground, but foreign military presence will remain to serve other purposes.

Arguably, a precondition for Africa's stable, long-term development is the minimization of foreign political and military influence on the continent. In view of the growing global competition for the resources of the continent, the main goal of the Africans should be to become the ones who set the rules of the game. And for that they need to strive for achieving fair and equal partnerships with the leading countries of the world, and while maintaining cooperation in military sphere, develop their own national, regional and continental security mechanisms. As Napoleon once said, "The people who don't want to feed their army will have to feed a foreign one". African countries should not continue making this mistake.

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Prof. Hussein Solomon
University of the Free State,
Bloemfontein, South Africa

Chapter 4

GETTING COUNTER-INSURGENCY RIGHT IN AFRICA

Introduction

Whilst the number of terrorist incidents is decreasing across other regions, this is not the case in Africa, where the malevolent tentacles of terrorism are etched deep across the African landscape. From Sahelian countries of West Africa to Somalia in the East, from Cabo Delgado in the South to Casablanca in the North, terrorist groups have proliferated. The 2022 Global Terrorism Index places Sub-Saharan Africa at the epicenter of terrorist incidents. While terrorism in the West has declined by 68%, Sub-Saharan Africa now accounts for 48% of all global terrorism-related deaths. Indeed, 4 out of the 10 countries with the largest numbers of such deaths are Niger, Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Burkina Faso (IEP, 2022). Counter-insurgency operations on the part of governments have largely resulted in failure. Even with the support of foreign troops, trainers and armaments, these military operations have failed (Barlow, 2021, pp. 121–147). The present chapter seeks to determine the reasons for this failure and to examine ways in which such failures can be overcome to allow for a more effective counter-insurgency strategy.

The failure of counter-insurgency and the false promise of negotiated settlements?

In the academic literature, there seems to be a growing consensus that counter-insurgency is failing. Given the nature of the conflict between insurgents and the state, some have argued that there were only two cases where a state has achieved success against insurgents: the Philippines in 1899–1902 and Malaysia in 1945–1963 (Deady,

2005; Watts et al., 2014). Because of this perceived failure of counter-insurgency, some have proposed dialogue and negotiated settlements with insurgents.

Jonathan Powell (2014), who served as the chief British negotiator on Northern Ireland between 1997 and 2007 and went on to mediate in conflicts around the world, believes that despite protestations from governments that they will never negotiate with terrorists, they almost always do. He writes, “My experience in Northern Ireland convinced me that no conflict – however bloody, ancient or difficult – is insoluble. With attention, patience, and above all political leadership, they can be solved, even if previous attempts at making peace have failed repeatedly” (Powell, 2014, p. 4). Such a position does not only reside within any supposed “peacenik” camp. Eliza Manningham-Butler, the former head of MI-5, had called on the government to speak to Al Qaeda*, whilst U.S. General David Petraeus admits that the American government had for too long delayed negotiating with those who had “American blood on their hands” (Powell, 2014, p. 2).

In light of the Doha negotiations between the Taliban** and the United States, there have been some who have been calling for negotiations with the likes of Al Shabaab and Boko Haram (Shire, 2021; Zenn & Fox, 2020). But can negotiations deliver in the African context? Whilst Powell raises important points and lessons from Northern Ireland, these may not be easily implementable in the African setting. Whilst Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness were indisputable leaders of the Northern Irish cause and could make painful decisions that their rank and file would adhere to, the same is simply not true of the various terror groups dotting the arid wastes of the Sahara. These groups are characterized by fragmentation, and it is difficult to know how much of sway an “emir” has over his rag tag forces spread across the vast terrain (Solomon, 2020, pp. 55–72). In other words, there is little possibility that should an agreement be reached, it will be honored given the lack of a centralized command and control system.

* Here and hereafter: Al Qaeda is designated as a terrorist organization by the courts of the Russian Federation.

** Here and hereafter: the Taliban is designated as a terrorist organization by the courts of the Russian Federation.

Moreover, negotiations with the Taliban were hardly a resounding success: even where the Taliban abided by certain agreements reached with the Americans, a more radical Islamic State Khorasan Province has emerged and is now active in every province in Afghanistan (Mir, 2021). To put it differently, as the Taliban moderated its position, more radical elements emerged to occupy those hardline positions. What this suggests is that the conflict dynamics in a country as a whole needs to deescalate before an exclusive focus on moderating the position of one particular group should be made. This is especially important in societies where radical ideologies are diffused across the general population.

There is another element that makes achieving compromise at national level more fraught in the African context. Whilst the Irish Republican Army (IRA) answered to no other body, the same cannot be said of the plethora of militant organizations. Whilst motivated by local grievances, these have increasingly become integrated into their parent bodies like Al Qaeda and the Islamic State. Even where internationalization of local franchises is less pronounced, regionalization in the form of the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara or the Al Qaeda-affiliated Jama'at Nusrat al Islam Wal Muslimin (JNIM) has continued apace (Solomon, 2021). This suggests that regions like the Sahel have seen the emergence of a conflict system where sources of insecurity are mutually reinforcing and difficult to disentangle. Under these conditions, negotiations are hardly likely to succeed.

Fixing counter-insurgency in Africa

Whilst it is undoubtedly true that groups like Boko Haram in West Africa and Al Shabaab in East Africa have confounded counter-insurgency efforts, we cannot extrapolate from these failures that all counter-insurgency operations are a failure.

Consider here the successes of counter-insurgency operations conducted by General Eeben Barlow and Executive Outcomes in their operations in Angola and Sierra Leone against the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels respectively (Barlow, 2018). In his epic *On War*, Carl von Clausewitz (1984) wrote about destroying the enemy's Centre of Gravity, where command and control lay. Whilst fine for conventional

battles, this is hardly applicable in the kind of asymmetrical conflict in Africa. Barlow, instead, speaks of a “trinity of gravity”. This “trinity of gravity” comprises the enemy force, its financing, and its support amongst the local population. Barlow convincingly argues that if two of the three elements are neutralized, the third pillar of the trinity will also collapse (Barlow, 2016, pp. 27–31).

We now turn to the specific challenges confronting counter-insurgency in Africa, and it starts with African militaries.

First, counter-insurgency fails when the wrong people are recruited and deployed. In Mali, under the Amadou Toure government, corruption became institutionalized – also in the armed forces. Recruitment into the armed forces required a relative at the level of a colonel or general (Solomon, 2015, p. 71). Skills sets or the necessary discipline did not seem to matter. Under the circumstances, should we be surprised that the Malian armed forces crumbled so spectacularly in 2012 at the beginning of the Tuareg/Islamist insurgency? In Nigeria, the same problem is apparent in the security services. Omede Apeh (2011, p. 98) captured the sorry state of the Nigerian security services by lamenting that “[s]tandards have fallen due to political partisanship. People now occupy sensitive positions in the security agencies not because of their ability to perform, but because they are either from one geographical location, simply wield some influence or know some people at the top who will nurture their career. The twin evil of godfatherism and favoritism has eaten deep into the entire gamut of the security agencies. Sycophancy rather than professionalism has been elevated as the most important criterion for career advancement”.

Second, counter-insurgency fails when the insurgents are not just out there but within your own ranks. In Somalia, for instance, UN monitors have repeatedly found evidence that shipments of arms for the Mogadishu government miraculously found itself into the hands of an Al Shabaab commander. In addition, there have been repeated incidents of Al Shabaab recruiting fighters from the government army (Solomon, 2015, p. 62). Nigeria’s former President Goodluck Jonathan acknowledged, too, that Boko Haram sympathizers were in the executive and legislative arms of government, within the judiciary and the army, police and intelligence services (“Goodluck Jonathan,” 2012). This, in turn, raises difficult questions. How does one fight Boko Haram when they are within your own ranks? Are intelligence-

gathering and ongoing security operations not compromised by the existence of these Trojan horse elements? Why would foreign agencies share intelligence on Boko Haram with Abuja if there is a strong likelihood that such intelligence may find its way into the hands of Boko Haram?

Third, counter-insurgency efforts fail when rank and file soldiers are not looked after. While Nigeria's armed forces are allocated \$6 billion from the annual budget, this hardly benefits the ordinary Nigerian soldier, whose monthly pay was suddenly halved to 20,000 Nigerian naira, or \$130, in July 2014. Ordinary soldiers have to go into battle against Boko Haram's rockets and mortar rounds in "soft" Hilux trucks, since the money for armored personnel carriers had inexplicably dried up. In addition, each soldier engaging in frontline duty is supposed to receive 1500 naira as a daily allowance, and food is to be provided. However, this allowance does not get to them and neither does the food. Under the circumstances, desertions increased from the army (Solomon, 2015, p. 91).

Another element of demoralization has come to the fore in 2019 and 2020 when Boko Haram and its splinter group – the Islamic State's West Africa Province – began to deliberately target military bases in Chad, Niger and Cameroon in an effort to cause mass casualties amongst the armed forces of these countries, thereby demoralizing them but also sending a clear message to civilians that the military is unable to protect you. Militants have in particular targeted soldiers in Boma, Lac province, in the Lake Chad area, since the area's strategic importance is highlighted by the fact that the borders of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria converge here. In the early morning of Monday, 23 March 2020, Boko Haram staged a seven-hour attack on Chadian soldiers on an island army base. 98 Chadian soldiers were killed, a further 41 were injured, 24 army vehicles, including armored trucks, were burnt, whilst arms and ammunitions were whisked away by Boko Haram in speedboats. In course of the seven-hour attack, reinforcements were dispatched from a nearby army base. These, however, were promptly ambushed by Boko Haram. The rescuers were soon in need of rescue themselves. This not only served to highlight the growing military sophistication of Boko Haram, in that they could also anticipate the military's next move and prepare for it, but it also resulted in huge dissatisfaction amongst the rank-and-file against their

superiors and political leadership's conduct of the war. Suffice to say that demoralization amongst Chadian soldiers worsened (African Union, 2020).

Fourth, counter-insurgency fails when locals view the armed forces not as their protectors but as a threat. For instance, Ugandan troops, which served in AMISOM, were accused of extorting bribes from hapless Somalis, whilst Nigeria's Joint Military Task Force in Borno State was accused of unlawful killings, dragnet arrests, and extortion and intimidation of terrorized residents. Similar tactics were pursued by the Task Force in the Kaleri Ngomari Custain area in Maiduguri on 9 July 2011. Twenty-five people were shot dead by security services, women and children were beaten, homes were burnt, and many more boys and men were reported missing (Amnesty International, 2011, p. 30). In the case of Somalia, Human Rights Watch has meticulously documented rape and sexual assault of Somali girls as young as 12 years old by AMISOM forces (Bader & Muscati, 2014). In both instances, Al Shabaab and Boko Haram exploited this in their propaganda and sought to recruit from aggrieved residents. Such excesses on the part of the security services can only contribute to the further alienation of citizens from the state – something no successful counter-insurgency campaign can allow to take root. A UN survey found that some government action was the tipping point when an individual joined an extremist organization. Among those interviewed, 71% said that the death or incarceration of a family member or friend prompted them to join (United Nations Development Programme, 2017, p. 5).

It is not only African armed forces that are responsible for such abuses. French forces in Mali have routinely been accused of targeting civilians in their counter-insurgency efforts. The indiscriminate targeting of civilians by French drones has turned public opinion against the French. An example of this callous disregard for civilian life occurred in the village of Bounti on 3 January 2021. A French drone opened fire on a wedding party, killing 19 civilians. Florence Parly, France's Minister of Defense, blithely claimed that, "The French armed forces targeted a terrorist group, which had been identified as such" (Prashad, 2021). A subsequent investigation conducted by the United Nations mission in Mali concluded that it was a wedding ceremony attended by approximately 100 people. On 5 March 2021, another

French drone attack killed three teenage children and injured two others whilst they were hunting for birds in the village of Talataye. Again, no contrition from the French. These incidents served to incense public opinion and were among the reasons why Bamako tore up all defense accords with Paris on 2 May 2022. With the ending of these accords, French forces were compelled to leave Mali and relocate their forces to Niger (Prashad, 2021). Once more, these incidents demonstrate that successful counter-insurgency is dependent upon the retention of the support of the population. When that population cannot distinguish between violence meted out by insurgents and violence meted out by state authorities, trust, legitimacy and credibility of state authorities are undermined. In such circumstances, counter-insurgencies fail.

Fifth, counter-insurgency fails when insurgents deploy superior tactics than those of the state. Let us consider Somalia, where you have AMISOM that was established in January 2007 to defeat Al Shabaab. It is 2022 and Al Shabaab remains undefeated. Why is this so? First, Al Shabaab, realizing that it cannot take on a superior conventional force such as AMISOM, has enthusiastically embraced asymmetric warfare, preferring guerrilla tactics to a full frontal and suicidal confrontation with the mission. While abandoning cities, Al Shabaab has divided its forces into groups of 15–20 fighters, who use improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to target AMISOM forces and disrupt their supply lines. In the light of this, the supposed defeat of Al Shabaab in places like Kismayo needs to be reexamined. Far from fighting for this lucrative port city, Al Shabaab chose not to fight at all – strategically withdrawing, thereby conserving its forces intact (Solomon, 2015, pp. 60–61).

The frustration AMISOM experiences was all too evident in an interview with Mr. Fred Ngoga, its public affairs officer, when he lamented that when faced with superior AMISOM forces, Al Shabaab fighters merely take off their group's attire and melt into their respective clan militias, which provide them with the necessary succor. Fearful of antagonizing clan elders, AMISOM proceeds further only to be harassed from its rear by these same Al Shabaab elements (Solomon, 2015, p. 61).

Conversely, we have witnessed how superior military tactics deployed by the private military company Specialized Tasks, Training, Equipment and Protection (STTEP), run at the time by General Barlow

in Nigeria in 2015, resulted in Boko Haram being defeated in every encounter. The elite task group of STTEP consisted of only 100 men. Further, they selected and trained a group of 100 Nigerian soldiers and integrated them into this unit, effectively becoming part of the Nigerian Army. STTEP also fed and paid those soldiers that were part of the unit, which became known as the 72 Mobile Strike Force (72 MSF). 72 MSF became the spearhead for the 7th Infantry Division. STTEP developed a strategy for the campaign, changing the existing Nigerian Army doctrine used by that unit and mentoring Nigerian soldiers in the field. Recognizing that the Nigerian armed forces were largely using conventional warfare tactics against Boko Haram that specialized in asymmetric warfare, STTEP adopted Boko Haram's own guerilla-style tactics with non-stop assaults, labeled "relentless pursuit". Using their own trackers from South Africa's bush wars in Namibia 30 years ago, STTEP's task team could tell in which direction the militants were heading, how fast they were going, and, from the load they were carrying, the kind of weapons they possibly had in their possession. Helicopters would then carry a STTEP strike force ahead of the militants. At the same time, gun crews on the helicopters were given "kill blocks" to the front and flanks of the strike force. Boko Haram was defeated in every one of these engagements with STTEP (Solomon, 2017, p. 7). Whilst comprising only 200 men, they demonstrated how counter-insurgency can be a success.

Sixth, counter-insurgency operations fail when they are not intelligence driven. More than 1500 years ago, the famous Chinese General Sun Tzu opined, "Know your enemy, know yourself and you fight a hundred battles without disaster..." (Clavell, 1981, p. 106). To put it another way, if one is forewarned of one's enemies capacities and intentions and also has a realistic appraisal of one's own capacities and constraints, one can realistically arrive at an effective counter-insurgency campaign. Unfortunately, intelligence is often what is lacking in many counter-insurgency campaigns in Africa.

Nigeria is a case in point. Political mandarins have failed to adequately arm their security services or provide sufficient funds to engage in long-term intelligence operations to penetrate Islamist organizations in the country. Nigeria's federal structure has also contributed to the poor coordination among the different security organizations (Solomon, 2015, p. 92). To compound matters, the skill

sets of those in the Nigerian intelligence community do not provide an adequate “fit” to the challenges posed by sects like Boko Haram. Indeed, most of those in the intelligence community seem to have a background in VIP protection – the protection of senior political officeholders – as opposed to intelligence proper (Adesoji, 2011, p. 114).

A consequence of the lack of skills and poor tradecraft exhibited was evident in December 2011 in the northern city of Kano, when security police were keeping the home of a suspected militant, Mohammed Aliyu, under surveillance. Arriving at his home, Aliyu immediately realized that he was being watched and called members of Boko Haram. Within minutes, they drove up in three vehicles and fatally shot three undercover police officers (Smith, 2011). Nigeria’s intelligence gathering capabilities are also hampered by the police’s inability to undertake scientific investigations. According to Amnesty International (2011), most police stations do not document their work because there is no data for fingerprints, no systematic forensic investigation methodology, only two forensic laboratory facilities, few trained forensic staff, and insufficient budgets for investigations. Under the circumstances, police tend to rely on confessions, which form 60% of all prosecutions (Amnesty International, 2011, p. 8). In terrorism cases, it means that despite the multitude of arrests of alleged Boko Haram members and sympathizers, it hardly impacts on the sect’s endurance and capacity to carry out fresh atrocities.

To compound matters still further, where some intelligence capacity exists within African states, this is abused by political elites who divert intelligence assets and resources against the legitimate opposition in order to cling on to power. Eeben Barlow (2021, p. 128), sagely notes: “The abuse of domestic intelligence services to target the populace to control, monitor and repress its own (law abiding) citizens is indicative of the misdirected use of critical state assets that advantages the anti-government forces on numerous fronts. The abuse is further compounded when political opposition members are targeted to neutralize their political ambitions, narratives and impact. This abuse, however, misdirects the intelligence services and gives anti-government forces an ‘own goal’ opportunity they can exploit almost unseen in the open.”

The question of intelligence sharing, meanwhile, is highlighted when local and international actors are involved in a counter-

insurgency operation as represented by the likes of AMISOM. Lieutenant-General Nakibus Lakara, AMISOM's Deputy Force Commander in-charge of Operations and Plans forthrightly stated, "Most often than not, situations where stakeholders or entities keep information to themselves, creates gaps. If you look at all the cases where there has been failure to stall or mitigate terrorist threats, it is because the entity kept information to themselves. It is necessary to create networks among key stakeholders in the intelligence community through liaison, through a common understanding of security, of the threat environment, including the human dimension" (AMISOM, 2019). AMISOM's Chief Military Intelligence Officer, Colonel David Obonyo, meanwhile succinctly observed, "To do that, to degrade the enemy, the information or intelligence that we share must be timely, accurate and actionable" (AMISOM, 2019).

Seventh, history and context matters. Counter-insurgency operations are so bogged down with here and now, they often suffer from being blindsided when Islamist insurgents whom they have defeated resurface in another form a few years later under a new banner with the same-old causes being championed. Consider here the precedents to Al Shabaab which go back several hundred years. In the 13th century, Haq ad-Din, Sultan of Ifat, in an effort to unite "Somalis" couched his aggression in Islamic terms – Muslim Somalis against the Abyssinian "infidels" (Lewis, 1980, p. 25). In similar vein, Imam Ahmed Ibrahim al-Ghazi (1506–1543) also used Islamic rhetoric to prosecute the war against Christian Abyssinia (Woodward, 2013, p. 19; Harper, 2012, p. xi). Four hundred years later, between 1900 and 1920, it was Sayyid Mohammed 'Abdille Hassan who led the Somalis against British, Italian and Ethiopian colonial powers and couched this war in Islamic terms (Woodward, 2013, p. 38; Lewis, 1980, p. 62). The legacy of Hassan and his vitriolic poetry against the British colonizers has been exploited by latter-day Islamists. Al Shabaab fighters often recite his poetry in public gatherings, replacing "British" with "American" (Harper, 2012, p. 7).

History also matters in Mali where the call for a separate homeland – Azawad – for the Tuaregs was articulated over centuries as Muslims Tuaregs watched their traditional lands being encroached upon by the Songhai Empire. In its more modern iteration, the call for Azawad can be traced to 28 December 1893 when French troops entered Timbuktu and claimed this desert down as a French possession.

The indigenous Tuaregs did not accept their subjugation lightly and resistance to French rule continued until 1917, when Tuareg chiefs reluctantly surrendered following a series of bloody defeats. These Tuaregs were eventually incorporated into the state of Mali, which achieved its independence from France in 1960 (Benjaminsen, 2008, p. 828). The Malian Tuaregs resented the fact that they were separated from their Tuareg kin in countries like Niger, Burkina Faso, Algeria, Libya and Mauritania (Keita, 1998, p. 105). In addition, the Tuaregs were never happy to be part of the Malian state as a result of their socio-economic and political marginalization. This is reflected in the fact that they have rebelled four times since independence: 1963–64, 1990–96, 2006–09 and since January 2012 (Lecocq, 2010, pp. 180, 220–221). Islamists have exploited legitimate Tuareg grievances in order to advance their malevolent agenda. What is clear is that a close relationship exists between terrorism and conflict. In 2019, for instance, 96% of all deaths resulting from terrorism occurred in countries already experiencing conflict (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2020, p. 2). Beyond the immediate demands of eroding the insurgents' fighting capability, there is a desperate need for governments, together with development agencies and international partners, to win the peace by reducing conflict dynamics, creating inclusive politics and fostering economic development amongst the most marginalized groups. If this is not done, violence will rear its ugly head once again.

Conclusion

Insurgents are undermining human security from West to East and Southern Africa. Africa's long-suffering citizens need peace and security and for this to happen those who threaten that peace and security need to be defeated. Whilst some have raised the promise of negotiations with insurgents as a means to end the carnage, this is a false promise, given the fragmentation endemic in militant groups, their mergers with international jihadist organizations, the existence of regional conflict systems and the diffusion of radical ideologies over a large segment of the population. Negotiations on their own hold more peril than promise to end insurgencies.

Whilst counter-insurgency has had its challenges on the African continent, there have been notable cases of success in Angola, Sierra

Leone and Nigeria. Identifying the reasons for failure and, conversely, what the ingredients of a successful counter-insurgency are, this chapter has identified the following seven ingredients of a successful counter-insurgency operation:

1. Recruiting the right people with the appropriate level of skills and integrity into the security services.
2. Preventing the penetration of the security apparatus by insurgents and their sympathizers.
3. Actively looking after the security forces, especially rank-and-file troops.
4. Armed forces need to use proportional rather than excessive force in their operations; they need to respect the human rights of the civilian population.
5. There is a great need for the constant upgrading of skills and education levels of the armed forces so that their military doctrine, strategy and tactics are superior to those of the insurgents.
6. Ensure that counter-intelligence operations are intelligence-driven.
7. Whilst the immediate focus is on degrading the insurgents' military capabilities, it is imperative that real grievances of the affected population are addressed, that good governance is practiced, and inclusive and responsive policies are created to prevent a resurgence of the insurgency.

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Chapter 5

THE SECURITY CRISIS IN BURKINA FASO*

Over the past decade, the international community has been following the situation in the Sahel with great attention. The complex nature of the crisis in this region only worsens over time, turning the territories of Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad into an ungovernable space dominated by the forces of transnational crime and global radicalism. For neighboring countries and Europe, this situation is fraught with increased political instability, reduced security and large-scale unregulated migration.

The epicenter of the current conflict lies in Mali, and, although the situation is not so difficult in other parts of the Sahel, all the states of the region suffer to some extent from instability and weak state capacity. On their own, none of them can adequately respond to the livelihood challenges that their populations currently face. The conflict in the Sahel is often portrayed as the result of the transnational spread of violent Salafi ideology coupled with transnational crime. While this has become an integral part of the Sahel's security problem, the conflict in the region is deeply rooted at the local level and not necessarily based on issues of religion or ideology. At the heart of local divisions are disagreements over access to natural resources, which are increasingly becoming irreconcilable as populations grow and climate change intensifies. Conflicts over land rights in the Sahel are not a new phenomenon, but their significance has only increased over time. Land is a vital resource that ensures survival at the present, as well as provides a guarantee for the future. Thus, if access to land or water is threatened, it must be protected, and that protection must be sought

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where it can be found – including from jihadist fighters if no other alternatives are available. Such conflicts may arise between neighboring communities or between communities with different land use preferences, such as between farmers and pastoralists. Public conflict over access to land and water is not new, but is now exacerbated by population growth, the effects of climate change, and the presence of armed jihadist groups that offer their services to resolve conflicts that a dysfunctional state is unable to cope with.

In addition to the conflict over resources, there are ethnic tensions in the Sahel. As arable land becomes scarcer due to the desertification of the Sahel, which is exacerbated by climate change, non-nomadic groups such as the Dogon compete with the nomadic Fulani for access to resources, creating a backdrop for tensions. As is usually the case in Africa, the roots of ethno-racial disagreements go back to the colonial period, when the Sahara-Sahelian pastoralists (Moors, Tuaregs, Fulani, Tubu, Zaghawa and others) along with their sedentary southern neighbors were put into one state characterized by artificial borders and political dominance of the latter. For example, in the central provinces of Mali, such as Mopti, armed jihadist groups attack leaders of the Dogon ethnic group (mostly settled farmers), whom they accuse of supporting the Malian state. The Dogon, in turn, form a militia for self-defense. These militias also attack civilians, most often Fulani, nomadic pastoralists whom the Dogon accuse of collaborating with the jihadists. The violence had been escalating for three years and reached a new peak in March 2019 when Dogon militants killed more than 160 Fulani, including women and children (Abbas, 2021, p. 137). Lacking state protection from such massacres, the Fulani turned to Islamist armed groups for protection from Dogon attacks. Some Fulani joined the jihadists, who were happy to exploit the tension to recruit new members. The intercommunal conflict in central Mali spilled over into neighboring Burkina Faso and southwestern Niger. Intercommunal violence and tensions over land in Mali spill over borders, which is reflected in clashes between Fulani and Mossi in Burkina Faso, and between Fulani, Tuareg and Daoussahak factions in western Niger. For example, on 2 January 2021, Islamist militants killed more than 100 civilians in Tillabéri, Niger, close to the border with Mali and Burkina Faso.

The humanitarian situation in the Sahel has worsened since the early 2020s, in part due to deteriorating security and a growing number of

attacks on civilians by jihadist groups, national security forces and international military contingents. From a humanitarian perspective, the region is in a state of emergency; ongoing conflicts, jihadist attacks, and governance failures all leave populations extremely vulnerable, also to starvation, and responding with internal and international displacement. There is an urgent need for humanitarian assistance in areas such as food security, health care, water and sanitation, shelter, education, protection and support for victims of gender-based violence. Nearly 7000 people died in attacks in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger during 2020 (Brachet, 2021). In Burkina Faso and Mali, local militias and national security forces have killed more civilians than Islamist armed groups. The security forces practice punitive operations against the civilian population, which they accuse of supporting the Islamists.

The security situation in the Sahel has only worsened in recent years. The African Center for Strategic Studies has documented an almost sevenfold increase in violence in the central Sahel since 2017, with a 44% increase in attacks in 2020 alone (Mixed Migration Centre, 2021, p. 16). In 2019, Burkina Faso suffered more jihadist attacks than any other country in the Sahel. Almost daily attacks by jihadist groups and local militias have forced hundreds of thousands of people from their homes and resulted in the closure of hundreds of health centers and schools across the country. The situation in Burkina Faso represents the fastest growing humanitarian crisis in the world: between 2018 and 2020, the number of displaced people in Burkina Faso increased more than tenfold to just over a million people. This increase is unprecedented and indicates a change in the level of violence in the region, which is intensifying as a result of a multifaceted crisis. Its origins lie in a complex set of factors, including poverty, inequality and the growing presence of violent extremist groups that have taken root in the country, in part as a result of the growing marginalization of certain population groups.

Burkina Faso is a poor landlocked country in the Sahel with limited natural resources and relatively weak state institutions. In 2022, its population was estimated at about 22.7 million, with an annual growth of 2.59%. Thus, the country, like its neighbors in the region, faces the challenge of feeding a growing population, which seems problematic given its weak economy, which depends on traditional agriculture that employs about 80% of the population. Cotton is the main cash crop,

while gold has recently come to dominate overall exports by far. However, the mining industry cannot provide a solution to the employment problem that Burkina Faso faces just like other countries in the Sahel. These sectors can help stimulate the economy, but the effect on employment will remain low.

The relative political stability in Burkina Faso, which characterized the country during the reign of Blaise Compaore (1987–2014), ended with the overthrow of the president and the subsequent disorganization of the military and security apparatus. In the situation of growing chaos, in which the Sahel has been since 2012 due to the uprising of the Tuaregs in northern Mali and the activities of the armed Islamist group *Ansar al-Din* and its allies, the spread of violence into the territory of Burkina Faso has become inevitable. For the presidency of Roch Marc Christian Kabore (2015–2022), the ability of the authorities to resist violence from jihadist groups proved to be a critical issue. His overthrow in January 2022 was the result of powerlessness in the face of radicals, growing poverty, and a health crisis, especially during the coronavirus pandemic. Another coup in September 2022 signified the depth of the challenges facing the country.

The attack of Islamist radicals on the Maghreb and the Sahel began in 2012, after the fall of the Gaddafi regime in Libya, which was overthrown that year as a result of a NATO military intervention. Post-revolutionary chaos and the war in Libya contributed to the destabilization of Mali and the Sahel, where jihadist fighters and weapons looted from Gaddafi's arsenals rushed unhindered. Since 2015, Burkina Faso has become the epicenter of terrorist activity of radical groups in West Africa. Several large international terrorist groups operate in the country, among which stand out the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), which is a branch of the Islamic State (ISIS), and Ansar ul-Islam (Defenders of Islam). ISGS in March 2019 became part of the Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP), forming ISWAP-Greater Sahara. This organization was led by Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahrawi until August 2021, when he was liquidated by the French military. Unlike the foreign ISIS, Ansar ul-Islam is a product of local socio-political and cultural realities. The organization was founded in 2016 by a religious preacher Ibrahim Malam Dikko, a native of the province of Soum in northern Burkina Faso on the border with Mali. Soum is that typical abandoned provincial territory where

the absence of the state is noticeable in all spheres, and it is not surprising that Dikko's socio-religious preaching found numerous followers here among the disadvantaged and disillusioned population. He called himself a "protector of the poor" and a "liberator" and promised that Ansar ul-Islam would take over some of the functions of the state.

Much of Dikko's success is based on a discourse that is both religious and political at the same time, justifying rebellion and violence against the state with a religious narrative while at the same time promising social emancipation and justice. He was the spokesman for the discontent of the silent majority of the population, who had neither political power nor religious authority. For some citizens of Burkina Faso, Ansar ul-Islam's support seemed to be more preferable than trust in the national government or its international partners. After the death of Ibrahim Malam Dikko in the summer of 2017, his brother continued to lead the organization.

Another "international" radical organization trying to take root in the Sahel is Al Qaeda, represented here by its affiliate Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)*. It was involved in at least two major attacks in Ouagadougou: on 15 January 2016 against the Cappuccino restaurant and the Splendid Hotel, and on 2 March 2018 against the French embassy and the Department of State (Eizenga, 2019). Islamist radicals of all varieties are based in the Sahel in the border region at the junction of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, called Liptako Gourma, taking advantage of its remoteness from the regional centers and attention of the authorities. The method of action used by extremists over the past years in terrorist attacks in Burkina Faso can be characterized as a choice of unconventional, asymmetric strategies and tactics of warfare. It is characteristic of violent extremist organizations that are incapable of waging conventional war against the national and international military forces fighting them, and includes acts of terrorism using a limited number of fighters or small mobile units, as well as suicide attacks. In 2021, terrorists killed more than 2000 civilians in Burkina Faso, and due to violence, about 1.5 million people left their homes and became refugees. More than half of the attacks were directed against

* Here and hereafter: AQIM is designated as a terrorist organization by the courts of the Russian Federation.

the defense and security forces – police, gendarmes, customs officers, and anti-terrorist units.

Terrorist attacks in Burkina Faso do not occur throughout the territory, but they are committed in areas in the north adjacent to Mali and Niger, where terrorist groups are based, in particular in the provinces of Oudalan and Soum, in the northern regions, and in the capital Ouagadougou. Thus, more than 40% of the attacks – approximately 91 of the more than 210 incidents recorded from April 2015 to December 2018 – were committed in the province of Soum, the cradle and main theater of operations of Ansar ul-Islam (Guichaoua & Héni, 2019). This may be due to the fact that the province of Soum is the birthplace or residence of most of the 247 people wanted by the Burkina Faso Ministry of Security for involvement in terrorist activities. After Soum, the province of Oudalan in the north, on the border between Mali and Niger, suffered the most, having experienced about 30 attacks.

High levels of extremism have created a widespread sense of insecurity in Burkina Faso, especially in the provinces of Oudalan and Soum. For security reasons, 895 teachers left the region between 2016 and 2018, resulting in the closure of 216 schools and leaving about 20,000 students without education (Thurston, 2019, pp. 31–33). Similarly, judges from the provincial capital of Soum, Djibo, unanimously decided to leave for Ouagadougou, close the local court, suspending their activities “until further notice”, believing that threats to their safety are becoming more and more real.

Another negative consequence of the growth of extremism in Burkina Faso was the further escalation of inter-ethnic confrontation. Due to the Fulani and Tuareg origins of some of the terrorist groups’ fighters, individuals belonging to the two ethnic groups or having similar physical characteristics are often stigmatized. The atmosphere of psychosis in society is seriously testing the social cohesion of the people of Burkina Faso, fueling distrust and divisions in communities that could still find a common language ten years ago. From this situation, no doubt, only jihadist groups benefit.

Rampant extremism in the country has further deepened the gap between the population and the authorities. Traditional challenges, such as corruption, economic crimes, abuse of political and judicial power, lack of public services and infrastructure, have been exacerbated in the

last decade by lawlessness and violence by military and security forces deployed in regions most affected by jihadist actions. Residents of Burkina Faso report disappearances, arbitrary arrests and even extrajudicial executions of their relatives by security forces who have accused or suspected the latter of being involved in terrorist activities or collusion with extremists. In 2018, the non-governmental organization Human Rights Watch published a report with a telling title *By Day We Fear the Army, By Night the Jihadists: Abuses By Armed Islamists and Security Forces in Burkina Faso* (Dufka, 2018). Residents of the terrorist-hit provinces of the Sahel feel caught between two fires: if they are suspected of collaborating with the authorities, they risk incurring retaliation from terrorist groups; if, on the other hand, they are suspected of supporting terrorists, they risk being arrested, imprisoned or even executed by the security forces. This situation is not conducive to building trust and cooperation between the civilian population and the country's authorities. Meanwhile, it is known that the fight against terrorism cannot be successful without effective military-civilian cooperation.

Another indicator of the weakness of the state – the failure of its security apparatus and the insecurity of the citizens of Burkina Faso – is the emergence of self-defense groups in the country. Such local security initiatives are carried out through the organization of associations, for example, *Kogleweogos*, operating on the Mossi plateau and in the Sahel, and *Dozos* in the west of the country. *Kogleweogos* emerged in response to a shortage of security forces: in Burkina Faso, there is one gendarme for every 1800 inhabitants, below the norm of one gendarme for every 400 inhabitants (Lazarides, 2019). The state police forces, in addition to personnel shortages, lack equipment and in many respects do not correspond to the level of modern threats. The *Dozos* association was organized on the basis of the old brotherhood of traditional hunters, which also exists in the north of Côte d'Ivoire, in Mali, and Guinea. *Kogleweogos* is legally recognized by the government of Burkina Faso and its members wear distinctive uniforms and a membership card. Both the government and the people recognize that the association has made a huge contribution to the security in Burkina Faso, especially in rural and suburban areas. Typically, members of the organization deal with issues such as theft of property, animals, and vehicles. But if there are terrorist attacks in the area under their jurisdiction, they also come

to the rescue. For instance, in May 2018, members of *Kogleweegos* detained four attackers who set fire to a school in the village of Bafina, as well as three of their alleged accomplices, and handed over the attackers to the gendarmerie. The effectiveness and confidence that *Kogleweegos* have won among the population is eloquently evidenced by the following testimony from two residents of a remote area of Ouagadougou: “People now trust *Kogleweegos* much more than police and gendarmes. If there is a theft or a problem, it is better to call *Kogleweegos*, because they will come soon, the thief will be arrested and punished, and the stolen goods will be returned.” For example, they were able to recover stolen bikes, motorcycles and even cars. If the stolen property is not claimed by the owner after a certain period of time, *Kogleweegos* hands it over to the police.

But as self-defense groups gain authority and strength, the risk increases that they themselves may become a threat to public security and social peace. This may become the case if they get out of the control of state authorities, as the examples of the Mai-Mai in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the self-defense forces in some Mexican localities demonstrate. The activities of *Kogleweegos* sometimes dangerously border on violating human rights (the presumption of innocence, the right of suspects to a fair trial, etc.) and entering into competition with the state security forces and even the local judges they challenge and who they apparently try to replace in some cases. Without state oversight and basic training to educate members about the basic laws of Burkina Faso and the rights of citizens, *Kogleweegos* and other similar organizations could themselves become a source of tensions in the country.

Among the measures taken by the government of Burkina Faso to combat terrorism, military and non-military responses can be distinguished. Like most governments in this situation, the government of Burkina Faso responded to the increased terrorist attacks on its territory with a vigorous show of military force, deploying more forces and equipment in the Sahel region, especially in the provinces of Soum and Oudalan. In accordance with the strategic plan of the government, in 2018–2022 a reform of the national armed forces took place. The authorities also stepped up military cooperation with neighboring Mali, Niger, and the French anti-terrorist contingent stationed in these two countries. Among the military operations carried out by the defense

forces of Burkina Faso alone or jointly are Operations Panga, Otaponu and Ndufu. For example, Operation Panga was carried out jointly with the military forces of Mali from 27 March to 10 April 2017 in order to identify and suppress the activities of terrorist groups in the Fero forest and along the more than 1000 km-long border that separates the two countries. More than 1300 troops, 200 pieces of equipment, 10 helicopters, Mirage 2000 bombers, and Reaper reconnaissance drones were involved in this operation, which led to the neutralization and capture of about ten terrorists, as well as dozens of suspects, which were handed over to the Burkina Faso authorities (Campana, 2018, p. 25).

Burkina Faso is contributing financially and militarily to the G5 Sahel, a joint military force created in February 2017 by Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Chad to better fight terrorism and transnational organized crime. Burkina Faso is also actively participating in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Sending professional military contingents to support these international organizations is a huge sacrifice for a country that itself has to face unprecedented security challenges caused by terror on its own soil.

But a military approach that can resolve the terrorist crisis by changing the balance of power on the ground is clearly not sufficient, and the government of Burkina Faso has put forward a number of non-military initiatives aimed at preventing terrorist violence by addressing its root causes. For example, starting in 2017, the country's authorities launched the ambitious Emergency program for the Sahel, valued at 414.9 billion CFA francs (Deridder et al., 2020, p. 26). This three-year program was a comprehensive response to the terrorist threat and insecurity and entailed several dimensions. Its socio-economic component included measures aimed at combating poverty, increasing the resilience of the population, and improving access to basic social services in the Sahel region. It was also envisaged to strengthen local governments, as well as to raise the capacity of the defense and security forces through proper training and new equipment to effectively combat terrorist groups.

Examples of non-military responses are also international projects implemented in the Sahel by the U.S., France, and ECOWAS. For example, the \$24.9 million U.S. program Voices for Peace aims to combat extremist narratives, primarily through social media and public

radio stations, and to promote human rights, democracy, and peace. This project is implemented by the non-governmental organization Equal Access. France, through the Support for Cross-border Cooperation in the Sahel (ACTS) project, co-funded by other countries such as Canada, is working to improve security and governance in the Liptako Gourma region, which has been especially affected by terrorism.

Several initiatives are also being implemented at the sub-regional level. For example, the permanent secretariat of the G5 Sahel created a group on preventing radicalization and combating violent extremism (CELLRAD). It collects information to enable member countries to monitor trends in radicalization and violent extremism in their territories. Another sub-regional initiative that focuses more globally on conflict prevention in the region is the ECOWAS Early Warning mechanism.

The fight against terrorism in Burkina Faso has affected the legislative and judicial spheres: for example, as part of the fight against terrorism, a law adopted in December 2017 established a judicial center specializing in the suppression of terrorist acts, which includes judges, staff, and a judicial chamber. Similarly, a maximum-security prison was set up in Ouagadougou to detain suspected terrorists pending trial.

Given the correlation between the growth of extremism and the strengthening of interethnic contradictions in the region, the creation of the National Monitoring Committee for the Prevention and Settlement of Intercommunal Conflicts (ONAPREGECC) deserves special attention. Created in December 2015, this committee is designed to bring together various stakeholders from the public and private sectors who are involved in the prevention and resolution of intercommunal conflicts across the country. ONAPREGECC is responsible for collecting, analyzing and disseminating data on conflict in communities. To promote national reconciliation, the government has created a special structure – the High Council for Reconciliation and National Unity (HCRUN). It is charged with the difficult mission of conducting investigations to shed light on the economic and political high-profile crimes committed in Burkina Faso since independence in order to facilitate the work of justice and reconciliation needed to preserve peace and national unity. In 2017, the Higher Council for Social Dialogue (HCDS) was created. Under the chairmanship of Jean

Marc Palma, an experienced politician and scholar specializing in the political and social history of Burkina Faso, the HCDS is a tripartite body of 30 members representing employers, workers, and the government (Nebie et al., 2019, p. 619).

All of the above counter violent extremism projects, or development projects in general, have one significant nuance: results from them are difficult to obtain in a short time. This is due to the fact that in order to achieve results, it is necessary to resolve fundamental structural problems for the long term, which requires more effective interventions over a longer period of time and more resources. The Burkina Faso government faces complex challenges related to the multifaceted nature of the crisis in the Sahel: conflicts and chronic violence are accompanied by a humanitarian crisis caused by a combination of weak statehood and stalled development, and its consequences are the displacement of people and large-scale migration. Along with the fight against terrorism, Burkina Faso must solve the problems of governance, the fight against poverty, education, and the protection of the environment. These are titanic tasks to implement while the state possesses very limited resources, which if mobilized and invested in isolation are unlikely to have a significant and long-term impact.

As for the initiatives of European countries, such as the G5 Joint Force in the Sahel (FC-G5S), they focus on the security parameters and little on the development aspects of the region. Governments in the Sahel are increasingly coming to the conclusion that the European pledge to support the Sahel through support for the FC-G5S is actually intended to ensure European political stability by keeping terrorism and migratory flows away from Europe's borders, rather than reconciliation and development of the Sahel itself. It is not surprising that the recent military coups in Burkina Faso (January 2022 and September 2022) and Mali (May 2021) had a clearly expressed anti-Western orientation and were accompanied with demands for a change in foreign policy orientation and the withdrawal of French contingents from these countries. The leader of the military junta that seized power in Burkina Faso, Lieutenant Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba, said that "despite the efforts made so far to combat terrorism in Burkina Faso, the integrity of the country's territory is under threat". Damiba, author of the book *The West African Army and Terrorism: Uncertain Answers* (2021), in laying out his vision for combating radicalism in the Sahel

questioned the anti-terrorism strategies employed so far. In September 2022, he was ousted by Captain Ibrahim Traore, who also criticized his predecessor for failing to tackle Islamists.

Thus, the example of Burkina Faso shows that radicalism takes root in what can be described as an abandoned periphery, where there is not only a lack of security forces, but also a lack of state presence in the political and social sense. Such areas (in the case of Burkina Faso – the border area next to Mali and Niger) are in some way “outsourced” by the state, which admits its helplessness, to heads of local communities, their militias, and even smugglers. It is in such places that radical fighters find refuge, because here they can present their mobility, their protection services, and their role in the war economy as strategic assets for local partners, who often turn out to be ethnic communities in conflict with neighbors or the state.

In sum, the Sahel’s political elites are trying to break the cycle of violence and underdevelopment through both military and non-military responses. The first includes building up the capabilities of the defense and security forces and intelligence community to ensure the security of the population. The second is the development of mechanisms to prevent and resolve conflicts and tensions in ethnic communities, which are often exploited by terrorist groups. Improving public administration to make it capable of meeting basic social needs is also promising, especially in regions and among minority groups that complain of marginalization and are most vulnerable to violent extremism.

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Chapter 6

INSURGENCIES IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA: THE ECONOMIC WARFARE DIMENSION

Since gaining political independence, many African states, primarily in West and Central Africa, have experienced periods of acute political instability, resulting in civil wars and conflicts. In the 1990s and early 2020s, the number of conflicts decreased noticeably. However, alongside the usual causes and prerequisites for the emergence and expansion of conflicts, among which one could mention intertribal, interfaith, sociopolitical, and various other contradictions, competition for access to the development of natural resources and their exports, for control over trade and supply chains, over agricultural activities began to play a greater role. This was happening amid a crisis of public administration in African countries, which led to the inability or refusal of state institutions to effectively perform their fundamental function of providing services to the population. Furthermore, shifts in the global economy and the strengthening of the relationship between national and world markets contributed to the growth in the importance of economic factors of conflicts and established previously missing material opportunities for African rebels, especially for their leaders. In all fairness, it should be noted that the desire to gain access to mineral deposits and to sell them in foreign markets for the purpose of enrichment is not always the main motive of the participants of a conflict, but almost always the reason for its escalation and expansion. Indeed, one should not ignore the political aspect of the confrontation – the struggle for power, but economic and political motives are usually closely intertwined, since political power simplifies access to resources and their protection, and the availability of resources encourages and facilitates the acquisition of power and influence.

Some scholars believe that commercial and industrial companies, both foreign and national, which do not want to risk capital, by definition should have refrained from initiating or expanding their activities in war zones (Terwase et al., 2020, p. 8), but the cases of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR), Liberia and other countries point to the opposite: large-scale illegal mining of diamonds, gold, rare metals, ivory, rubber, timber, etc. became if not the main then a secondary activity of all participants in the conflict, along with actual warfare, but also smuggling, robbery, etc. Stakeholders in these operations included not only rebels, but also foreign mining and trading companies, individual businessmen and intermediaries, representatives of local political and business elites, officers and soldiers of regular armies, peacekeepers, mercenaries, traditional rulers, and so on. As a result, the goal of the participants in the conflict, primarily the rebels, was often not to suppress the enemy, but to seize and establish control over a certain territory in order to exploit its natural and human resources, i.e., an “economy of war” was formed, which in some cases, for example, in the Lake Chad Basin, where Boko Haram and the Islamic State’s West Africa Province (ISWAP) operate, has also been called the “economy of terrorism”.

Speaking of the countries of West and Central Africa, in the 1990s–2010s the “war economy” developed to the greatest extent in Liberia, Sierra Leone, the DRC, the CAR, and in countries of the Lake Chad Basin. The Liberian wars attracted the attention of the expert community precisely because of the economic motives of the participants in the conflict, primarily the leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) Charles Taylor, who during the years of the First Civil War (1989–1997) engaged in the export of rubber and timber from territories under his control, the development of iron ore deposits, and the re-export of drugs and other goods. Owing to his control of the areas where NPFL was deployed – the so-called “Taylorland”, Taylor annually earned up to \$30 million from the export of diamonds, about \$53 million from the export of timber, \$27 million from the export of rubber, more than \$40 million – from the export of iron ore, and \$1 million – from gold. In addition, he profited from the sale and transportation of cannabis grown in northern Liberia and exported through the Ivorian ports of Buchanan and San-Pedro (Marchés tropicaux, 1995).

Diamonds and marijuana from Liberia were transported abroad through specially created trade schemes that spanned Senegal and the Gambia, linking a secondary, though no less important aspect of the Liberian war – smuggling – with a low-profile conflict in the Senegalese province of Casamance: apparently, NPFL supplied arms to Casamance rebels in exchange for marijuana. Interestingly, the Gambia, which did not have diamond deposits, became the largest exporter of diamonds in the region.

In 1991–1992, 343 thousand cubic meters of timber were produced in Taylorland and exported to France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Greece, Portugal and Turkey. During the years of conflict, Liberia became the world's third largest supplier of timber to France (Lowenkopf, 1995).

All of Liberia's natural resources were exploited during the war by foreign entrepreneurs who collaborated with “warlords” and peacekeepers of the Economic Community of West Africa Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), whose contingents were sent first to Liberia and then to Sierra Leone to contain conflicts in these countries. For instance, in 1994–1995, 19 shipments of rubber were made, mainly to Malaysia and Singapore, through the seaport of Monrovia (“Freeport”), where ECOMOG was headquartered; peacekeepers collected taxes from “war barons” – suppliers of rubber, the export volume of which reached 1700 tons per month (Tapson, 1995).

Almost all Nigerian ECOMOG officers had business interests in Liberia, such as selling weapons to opposing armed groups, while soldiers sold ammunition that had been issued to them. Trade opportunities predetermined the concentration of peacekeepers in the capital, where military and other supplies were delivered. However, it was precisely business interests that also prompted ECOMOG soldiers to periodically “move out” to certain areas to establish contacts with leaders of armed groups.

As in Liberia, during the 1991–2002 war in neighboring Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels took control of mineral deposits, primarily diamonds, and used the proceeds from their illegal sale to purchase weapons, modern communications equipment and, indeed, for self-enrichment.

Perhaps, the DRC was affected by violence and the illegal exploitation of natural resources more than other African countries,

although the transformation of the latter into practically the main driver of conflicts in this country did not occur until after their emergence and escalation (Bøås, 2019, p. 8). Since the mid-1990s, the activities of rebel groups in the Congolese provinces of Ituri, North and South Kivu and in some other regions have acquired a “sustainable” character. Units of the armed forces stationed in these areas, local authorities, foreign companies and “rebels” – more accurate would be to call them “criminal syndicates” – are actively involved in the processes of “criminalization” of the economy and public life in general. As a result, there is taking place a transformation of public consciousness, values and attitudes of inhabitants of peripheral areas, for whom, as well as for the “parties to the conflict”, illegal activities, primarily smuggling, have become the main source of livelihood and enrichment.

The phenomenon of cross-border trade in the DRC can be viewed from several perspectives. First, there is trade carried on along the old trade routes that have existed for centuries, and the frontier communities never stopped this trade, never considered it illegal and never recognized artificially drawn borders, which, moreover, remain transparent.

Secondly, porous borders not only create an opportunity, but also encourage illegal cross-border trade (smuggling) in goods that are in high demand outside the territory of the state. When crossing Congolese borders, smugglers, who are often also fighters of armed groups, involve border guards, customs officers, government officials and military personnel in their activities. As a result, a smuggling chain is formed, which gets legalized *de facto* because illegal activities are carried out under the control of state bodies and national law enforcement agencies. Neighboring countries, in their turn, facilitate cross-border trade by protecting supply chains and establishing an environment conducive for smuggling. It may be said that inhabitants of border regions carry out informal regional integration.

Undoubtedly, the exploitation of natural resources and armed clashes has had a negative impact on the population: chronic food shortages were observed, diseases spread, families were divided, children were abducted and turned into soldiers, and thousands of women were raped by both militants and soldiers of the regular army. However, despite the high level of violence that has persisted for many years in the eastern regions of the DRC, there are noticeable differences in the interests and positions

of local communities. Some were regularly attacked by militants, while others not only protected themselves from violence, but also benefited from the development of an economy of war. For example, P. Kabamba (2013) pointed out that a Nande community in the city of Butembo (North Kivu province) during the war years built a new airport and hydroelectric power station, which was made possible due to large-scale gold smuggling to Southeast Asia and the Gulf.

The weak presence of the state in the northeastern regions of the DRC has led to the creation by local communities of their own mechanisms for survival and enrichment, involving, in particular, exemption from taxes to the state treasury and from formal employment, characterized by extremely low wages. Thus, local communities, which supposedly are the main victims of armed clashes and illegal exploitation of resources, have indirectly contributed to the escalation and expansion of both. In addition, in the absence of state control, against the backdrop of armed conflict and rampant banditry, cooperatives of individual miners, as well as mining companies, traders and intermediaries were forced to pay for the “security services” of militants, who received their share of income and became integral links in trade and production chains. Correspondingly, in these regions of the DRC, the anti-state system of social relations has reached a high level of development. It should also be noted that the emergence of new forms of government in the DRC occurred not only because of the “absence” of the state, but also due to the merging of “warlord” structures with state structures – similar to the merging of political elites with mafia groups in developed countries.

Thus, the formation of illegal trade and production schemes is not only a survival strategy, but also a way of resisting state dictatorship and improper leadership. To speak of “lawlessness” in relation to the situation in the northeastern regions of the DRC is a big stretch, since the country does not have laws that reflect modern realities, and the “illegal” exploitation of natural resources appears quite legal to millions of citizens who find themselves in a “gray zone” of legality. Moreover, the state itself, financially dependent on illegal activities in the periphery, actually legitimizes it, receiving income through legal and illegal channels. Thus, if we consider informal business as a manifestation of creative thought, then we can refuse to perceive the economy of war as a factor of economic instability.

As for the Central African Republic, throughout the years of the conflict that began in 2012 and continues to this day, armed groups, criminal gangs, corrupt elites and foreign companies have been actively exploiting the country's natural resources. Currently, there are about 15 more or less large armed groups in the CAR, and all of them are actively involved in illegal economic activities, and since the country is extremely rich in natural resources (oil, uranium, gold, diamonds, etc.), the economy of war also involves French, American, Chinese and other companies.

The main parties to the conflict and, accordingly, the key stakeholders in the formation of the economy of war were the predominantly Muslim Seleka organization created in the northeastern regions of the CAR (in 2013 it split into many groups that have the common name "ex-Seleka") and an association of predominantly Christian self-defense groups called the Anti-balaka, which emerged back in the 1990s years in the south of the country.

While the original aim of the Seleka in the conflict was to overthrow the government of François Bozize (2003–2013), and of the Anti-balaka – to resist the Islamists (because Christians became the main targets of violence), after the collapse of Seleka the political interests of the warring parties were replaced by economic ones. The "thirst for profit" was satisfied in various forms: by robbery, cattle theft, the establishment of roadblocks on roads and border crossings, where pedestrians and drivers of vehicles were "taxed", poaching (hunting elephants and other wild animals, selling tusks and meat), etc. However, the main source of income for both groups was control over the mining of diamonds and gold.

Prior to the conflict, the diamond industry was a significant contributor to the economy of the CAR. Revenues from the export of diamonds accounted for about 20% of budget revenues (Amnesty International, 2015, p. 2). Already in May 2013, two months after coming to power (on 24 March 2013) of the Seleka leader Michel Djotodia, the governing body of the Kimberley Process (an organization aimed at preventing the entry of "blood diamonds" into the market) imposed a ban on the export of Central African diamonds. As a result, in 2013–2014 the CAR lost \$24 million from smuggling gems through neighboring countries (Dukhan, 2016, p. 24). However, since the ban on the export of diamonds did not prevent diamond trade

within the CAR borders, throughout the conflict thousands of small miners continued – under the “protection” of armed groups – to mine and sell them to local and foreign dealers.

The smuggling of the CAR’s diamonds had been a serious problem even before the outbreak of the conflict, but it increased markedly since its inception. In 2013–2015, about 140 thousand carats were illegally exported from the CAR (Conciliation Resources, 2015). However, countries linked to the CAR by land and air usually did not become the final destination for smuggled diamonds, which, as a rule, acquired their real value only when they were sold in world trading centers, primarily in Belgium and the United Arab Emirates.

The Seleka profited heavily from the diamond trade. In some cases, militants seized mines, where they levied “taxes” on miners or demanded that they pay for “security services” (ICG, 2013). During the December 2012 offensive against Bangui, the Seleka took control of all diamond mines in the east and introduced a system of mining permits and illegal taxation. A noticeable increase in illegal diamond mining was observed on the territory of the Manovo-Gounda St. Floris National Park, where this activity had previously been prohibited. When in 2014 Seleka units began to be pushed back to the east by the Anti-balaka, many militants settled in those places and began, in addition to mining diamonds, to engage in poaching. Acting as dealers and miners, they simultaneously controlled the mines, supplied workers with food, and exported diamonds abroad (“Preliminary report,” 2014).

The Seleka also received large income from gold mining, mainly in the east of the country – in the prefecture of Ouaka, levying taxes on numerous miners in the amount of 5–10% of production. The group’s annual income from illegal taxation and issuance of permits at the Ndassima mine alone exceeded \$150,000 (“Report,” 2014).

Profits from diamond and gold mining and trading were one of the motives for the Seleka insurgency, illustrated by the fact that many field commanders preferred to remain in mining areas rather than go to Bangui even after they received appointments to the government during the rule of M. Djotodia (Kah, 2014). Unlike a number of other African conflicts, during which the proceeds from the sale of minerals and other illegal activities were mainly invested in the purchase of weapons to continue the struggle, in the case of the Seleka, they were mainly used for personal enrichment. It should be noted that certain parts of the

diamond and gold mining regions of the CAR are still under the control of “ex-Seleka” warlords.

In turn, for the Anti-balaka, the main source of income was the robbery of Muslims, although the organization was also involved in mining in the west of the country, where it received its share of the gold mined or fixed payments for the protection of mines. An important source of income for the fighters of the group was theft of cattle: the militants took entire herds from Muslim cattle breeders.

Some civilian pastoralists, both Muslim and Christian, “collaborated” with the Seleka by participating in raids. In response, robbed cattle owners joined the Anti-balaka to return their cattle and take revenge on the robbers, thus becoming involved in the vicious circle of violence and the economy of war (IPIS, 2018, p. 13).

Another type of economic activity for both groups was the control of cross-border trade routes. For example, the Seleka controlled the supply of coffee, honey and sesame in exchange for manufactured goods from the CAR to Sudan. The organization also controlled the main economic artery of the country – the highway connecting Bangui and the Cameroonian city of Douala. Cameroon accounted for 80% of CAR imports and exports in the late 2010s. After the 2013 coup, in conditions of instability and economic turmoil, the volume of imports from Cameroon was reduced by almost half, but on average 30–40 trucks still entered the CAR every week, and each driver had to pay militants from \$200 to \$1000 and share fuel with them. As a result, the transportation of goods was 4 times more expensive than before the crisis (IPIS, 2018, pp. 42–43). A similar practice was used at checkpoints on the CAR’s borders with Chad and Sudan (ICG, 2014).

In 2017, there were 290 checkpoints on the borders and roads of the CAR, of which 117 belonged to government troops who also collected “taxes”, 149 to ex-Seleka units, and 46 to the Anti-balaka. “Taxes” were imposed on the transportation of industrial goods, timber, minerals, agricultural products, etc. The ex-Seleka, along with other armed groups (for example, the Popular Front for the Rebirth of the Central African Republic, created in 2014 in the north of the country), in 2015–2020 received over 2.5 million Euros annually as a result of its control of trade with Sudan and further 3.5 million Euros from the taxation of pastoralists (Terwase et al., 2020).

Poaching has become another profitable business for the militants. Still before the conflict, groups of heavily armed poachers from Sudan and Chad crossed the CAR border to hunt elephants and other large game in national parks in the northeast of the country (Kah, 2014). After the emergence of the Seleka, poachers began to collaborate with the group and even assist it in military operations; they quickly adapted their activities to the conditions of the conflict: firstly, they began to trade in bush meat, which had previously been an exclusive prerogative of the local population. Secondly, in the absence of state control over peripheral areas, poachers began to freely move further inland, sometimes even crossing the border with Cameroon, where in 2012 they were involved in the destruction of about 300 elephants in the Bouba Njida National Park (Weyns et al., 2014, p. 41).

The Seleka was also involved in poaching and the ivory trade. However, due to the small number of surviving animals, ivory smuggling was not a reliable source of income for the organization. Therefore, its militants were mainly engaged in the trade in bush meat, a large market for which existed both in the CAR and in neighboring countries.

Due to the acute shortage of grazing land in southern Chad, aggravated by droughts and a massive influx of refugees from the CAR and Darfur, Chadian pastoralists began to arrive in the conflict zone, attacking villages and destroying crops along the way, paying “taxes” to Seleka for its patronage (Kostelyanets, 2015, pp. 77–78).

In addition, the Islamist group Boko Haram, which appeared in the early 2000s, in less than two decades turned from a “Nigerian” movement into a regional one, spreading its presence to several countries of West and Central Africa, primarily to the states of the Lake Chad Basin. In 2016, Boko Haram split into the ISWAP and the Society of the People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet’s Teachings and Jihad – the latter commonly still referred to as Boko Haram. After the death in May 2021 of the movement’s leader Abubakar Shekau some of the militants joined ISWAP, while others were divided into separate groups operating under the banner of Boko Haram. All of these armed groups are able not only to maintain their livelihoods, but also to enrich themselves, relying on available resources. They engage in kidnapping for ransom, smuggling, stealing and selling livestock, control farming and fishing in Lake Chad, etc.

Even before the advent of Boko Haram, the region was known for the widespread organized crime and constant conflicts over access to lake resources between certain groups of the local population. However, the military-political situation noticeably escalated in the mid-2010s, when a significant part of the Islamists was pushed out from northeastern Nigeria to the Lake Chad region. The porous border, dense forests and high mountains of Mandara facilitate guerrilla warfare and arms smuggling. Since the arrival of Boko Haram and refugees fleeing the regular Nigerian army, the region has seen a steady increase in cross-border crime and an increase in illegal economic activity, aided by the topography of the lake and the difficulty of navigating the labyrinth of its islands. Islamists are actively recruiting or cooperating with smugglers, taking advantage of their knowledge of the area and military/police tactics. Relying on smuggling networks spread across the lake, the militants have been raiding local communities and traders, prompting the latter to seek protection of the group to avoid violence (Zenn, 2018, p. 68).

As the authorities of the countries of the Lake Chad Basin – Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad – are unable to ensure food security and provide basic services to the local population, inhabitants of the basin, in order to survive, engage in cross-border trade in all necessities, from weapons and livestock to cigarettes, drugs and petroleum products, for which they use old smuggling trails. It should be noted, however, that although the development of the economy of war in the region does, to a certain extent, contribute to the enrichment of representatives of the local business class, a significant part of the lakeside and island population loses more than gains due to the regular closure of borders, the establishment of roadblocks in response to attacks by Islamists, and other security measures that hinder both legal and illegal trade.

Meanwhile, despite carrying out acts of terror that repelled potential supporters, both Boko Haram and ISWAP, in a certain sense, replaced the state, providing the population with a certain set of services: medical, educational, security, etc. (Iocchi, 2018). ISWAP, which less than Boko Haram was involved in acts of violence against the local Muslim population, managed to establish a relatively favorable environment for the formation of an economy of war, which also involved traditional institutes of power, through the development of the social sphere and the creation of quasi-state administrations.

Some of the most profitable activities for militants are cattle rustling and fishing. In 2016 alone, the sale of three shipments of cattle in Northern Cameroon brought Islamists about 12 million Euros (FATF, 2016, pp. 12–13). Between 2013 and 2016, militants stole at least 12,000 cattle worth about \$3.5 million (ICC, 2016). Islamists also take part of the profits from the trade in fish caught in the lake. Shepherds voluntarily pay ISWAP a tax per animal in exchange for safe grazing (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). In Cameroon, Islamists offer protection to various economic operators in exchange for a fee, and in Chad, fishermen give them part of the catch as the payment for the same services. Militants prefer to take taxes in kind – food, grain, fuel, etc. Islamists also cooperate with merchants, dealers and carriers, who are given “confiscated” agricultural products – onions, cotton, red pepper, etc. Cannabis, weapons, medicines, stolen cars and spare parts are also actively traded. The expropriations are carried out on a benign scale: the militants are not interested in undermining the regional commerce system, so legal shipments of, for example, smoked fish and other products from Niger to Nigeria and vice versa never stopped during the conflict (Magrin & De Montclos, 2018, p. 158).

It must be said that the local population has no illusions about the motives of the militants: the original goals of the radicalization of Islam, the spread of the Sharia law in the controlled territories and the creation of the Islamic Caliphate are gradually being replaced by the “thirst for profit”. Indeed, in the cases of Boko Haram and ISWAP, religion served and to a certain extent continues to serve as an instrument of rallying (although, as numerous splits in the ranks of the Islamists have shown, the mechanism of uniting under the banner of Jihad does not always work) and increasing the morale of the fighters. However, the gap between religion and other motivating factors – political and economic drivers, marginalization, poverty, unemployment, etc. – in the context of the spread of Islamic fundamentalism remains very vague, and the possibility of access to natural and human resources during the conflict reinforces the interconnection between all its aspects. It is surprising, therefore, that when analyzing “terrorist activity” in a particular region of Africa, its economic side is usually hushed up, and the emphasis is on the scale of violence.

As for the Lake Chad Basin, here one may expect further “Islamization” with a fair degree of confidence, since the region seems

to have been specially created by nature for the effective formation of an economy of war, and this despite the gradual reduction of the water surface and environmental degradation. Along with rich agricultural, livestock and fish resources, the region has abundant oil (reportedly over 232 billion barrels) and gas (over 14.6 trillion cubic feet) (Omenma, 2020, p. 3). When several countries are located around a large underground/underwater oil basin, the authorities of these countries inevitably have a desire to reconsider borders and prove that the field belongs to their territory. Disagreements over the use of lake resources have always predetermined tensions in relations between Nigeria and Chad, which, by the way, made the joint fight against Boko Haram less effective.

The same circumstance – the presence of natural resources in the territory controlled by the Islamists – contributed to the preservation of relatively peaceful relations between the authorities of Niger and Boko Haram – just as much as the parties were interested in each other in the context of mining, incl. oil at the Zinder and Diffa fields (Omenma, 2020, p. 23). The drilling of oil wells does not stop in the vicinity of the Chadian city of Doba, from where, despite the attacks by the Islamists, the transportation of “black gold” continues through the pipeline to the Cameroonian city of Kribi on the Atlantic coast (i.e., oil is extracted during hostilities). Thus, governments can enter into a kind of non-aggression pact with the insurgents, so the “energy” dimension of the conflict deserves more attention of researchers.

Conclusion

After more than a century of forging links with the global economy, the maturity of modern African markets is still far away. At the same time, in many regions of the continent, the development of market economy is taking place in parallel with or even gave way to the development of the economy of war in the form of “warlordism”, i.e., the rule of “warlords” associated with global mining and trading schemes for minerals and other natural resources. The spread of this phenomenon during the conflict and the emergence of quasi-state authorities and an autonomous economic space indicate that the weak influence of the central government on political and socio-economic processes in the peripheral regions engulfed in armed

confrontation does not mean at all that life there becomes chaotic: there are always individuals and organizations ready to take the situation in these territories under their control. The negative side of this development of events is that such takeovers are usually accompanied by violence.

The economy of war whose participants successfully avoid formal taxation deprives the state of a significant part of the income, but its development can become the only strategy for the survival of the population, which sometimes gains opportunities not only to improve their financial situation, but also to enrich themselves; that is why it is so difficult to resolve conflicts: too many individuals and groups are interested in their continuation.

A side effect of the formation of the economy of war is social stratification based on the principle of loyalty to one or another military-political organization or “warlord”. In addition, local residents no longer adhere to the laws established by the state and begin to focus on various centers of power, represented by insurgent movements, tribal militias or foreign companies that have their own management and security structures. Public administration at the local level is being privatized, and new elites and new power structures emerge on the ruins of state power; new local-global connections are formed. In turn, new social contradictions appear that become characteristic of the political life of countries in West and Central Africa. In addition, control over a resource-rich area allows insurgents to use it as a bargaining tool in possible negotiations with the government about the prospects of sharing political and economic power.

Thus, the formation of the economy of war is a reaction to the conflict, against the background of which, in the conditions of the destruction of formal economy, other models of production and interaction are created, which, on the one hand, leads to further depletion of the state treasury, on the other hand, perpetuates the conflict.

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Part II

AFRICA'S NEW PERILS: BEYOND CONVENTIONAL WARFARE THREATS

Dr. Predrag Obrenović
Independent University Banja Luka,
Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Dr. Dragana Popović
Independent University Banja Luka,
Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Chapter 7

HYBRID WAR – CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT OF THE 21ST CENTURY

The use of the term “hybrid war” in modern theory and practice

As much as the term “hybrid war” may seem new to us in the context of modern military, political and security studies, we can say with a great deal of certainty that it is not new at all. During the development of human civilization, there have always been conflicts between stronger and weaker ethnic communities, later nation states. Also, throughout history, certain non-state elements have always clashed with national states, striving to force the state to fulfill their demands. However, modern technological development has enabled the term “hybrid war” to receive a completely new scientific interpretation.

Frank Hoffman and James Mattis in their jointly written 2005 paper *Future Warfare: The Rise of Hybrid Wars* (Mattis & Hoffman, 2005) were among the first theorists to use this term. In their short article, these authors called the threats to the American army in occupied Iraq and Afghanistan (terrorism, guerilla warfare, information operations, activities of organized criminal groups) “hybrid” – combining different forms of action of the opponent, and considered this the future model of war. Soon after the publication of that work, F. Hoffman in his work *Conflict in the 21st Century: the Rise of Hybrid Wars* (Hoffman, 2007) put forward the corresponding scientific postulates, which American professionals and scholars, as well as their Israeli, British, and other

Western European colleagues, have been using in the following years when discussing modern warfare.

While the term “hybrid war” became widely used by Western experts in their discussions, this was not the case in the official documents, such as those of the U.S. Department of Defense (USDOD). Only after detailed pragmatic discussions, USDOD started using the term in 2010. In fact, for the first time USDOD used the term “hybrid” to indicate the increased complexity of modern war, because present-day armed conflicts involve many more actors compared to the conflicts of the past. After 2010, it can be said that the use of the terms “hybrid war” and “hybrid threats” became commonplace, both in professional and scholarly works, as well as in doctrinal documents of most Western countries. The discussion and use of the term continued and developed along with debates on its repercussions at the tactical and operational level.

However, observing the development of the use of the term in professional and scientific discussions and doctrinal documents, one needs to note that 2014, when a political turmoil in Ukraine took place, represents a year of dramatic change and completely different dynamic. Namely, the removal of the legally elected government by the opposition, which was supported by Western centers of power, and the use of methods of hybrid war in the course of this government change, were followed by an armed conflict between Kiev and Russian-speaking population in the east of the country, the secession of Crimea, and the inclusion of the latter into the Russian Federation. Immediately after these events some “experts” and politicians, from which those from Eastern European countries (Poland, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), Scandinavia, and the United Kingdom stood out, began to describe Russia’s actions in Ukraine as hybrid war, which from the distance of the present day may be seen as a conscious substitution of the concept and a cover-up of Ukrainian military preparations.

A paper by the current Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, General Valery Gerasimov, who occupied the same position at that time, was used as an excellent reason to substitute the concept. In his 2013 paper *The Importance of Science is in Forecasting*, General Gerasimov presented strategic thinking about waging a modern total war, in which the rules of warfare have changed. In particular, the use of non-military means to achieve political and strategic objectives

has gained much more importance than the use of classic military ones. According to Gerasimov, modern war involves a wide variety of actors – from computer hackers, journalists, and economists to intelligence services, special military forces, etc. – and methods, in particular, guerilla warfare. Various experts, mostly in the West, considered the views expressed in the paper to be a new Russian military doctrine (the “Gerasimov Doctrine”).

We are witnessing now that the previous theoretical and scientific discussion, which was conducted in scientific circles, is now being institutionalized by NATO and the EU. For instance, at the summit in Wales held on 5–6 September 2014, the leaders of the NATO alliance agreed on two new strategic challenges for NATO, diametrically different in their form and manifestation: the Russian Federation in the East and the terrorist group ISIS in the Southeast. The commander of NATO forces at that time, General Philip Breedlove, pointed out that these two challenges are posed by different actors that employ different forms of action within the model of modern hybrid warfare (Lasconjarias & Larsen, 2015). Regardless of the fact that there was no consensus in NATO on adopting a generally accepted definition of the term “hybrid war”, the latter can be found in several documents, as well as heard in statements of certain officials, where the term is understood as different adversary actions in the framework of the so-called DIMEFIL (diplomatic, informational, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and legal) spectrum of methods (Erdal et al., 2016).

In parallel with defining the term “hybrid war”, there was taking place the process of understanding the term “hybrid” and implementing corresponding methods into modern doctrinal solutions for national defense, including in the eastern hemisphere. For example, in the Russian Federation, another extremely interesting conception of hybrid war has been developed in addition to the already mentioned General Gerasimov’s work. Namely, Andrej Koribko, Russian journalist and publicist, in his 2015 work *Hybrid wars: indirect adaptive approach to the change of regime* had assessed “colored revolutions” in the countries such as Ukraine, Libya, Egypt, Syria, some of which have grown into armed conflicts between non-state actors and regular armies, as a hybrid war that is conducted by the U.S. and certain European countries. Koribko provided the list of key elements of hybrid war, namely: diplomacy, information attacks, economic warfare, information warfare

and propaganda, local groups, irregular armed forces (terrorists), regular armed forces, and special units (Korybko, 2015).

When we consider the content of hybrid war, we need to keep in mind that a war consists of methods, ways, means, and forms of action of the conflicting parties. Accordingly, by employing various combinations of the above, every party wants to force their adversary to accept its will. Contents of hybrid war as understood by different authors may be presented in a table (see Table 1).

Table 1. Contents of hybrid war

Source/ contents	Frank Hoffman	Russel Glenn	UK Ministry of Defence	NATO	Zdeněk Kríž, Zinaida Bechná, Peter Števkov	Andrej Koribko	The MCDC Countering Hybrid Warfare project (UK)	Munich security report 2015
Political methods		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Economic measures		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Media propaganda				x	x	x	x	x
Intelligence activity				x		x		
Impact on social groups		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cyber attacks	x			x		x	x	x
Psychological operations	x			x	x		x	
Terrorist activities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Criminal activities	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Popular riots	x		x	x		x		x
Subversive activities		x		x	x			

Source/ contents	Frank Hoffman	Russel Glenn	UK Ministry of Defence	NATO	Zdeněk Kríž, Zinaida Bechná, Peter Števkov	Andrej Koribko	The MCDC Countering Hybrid Warfare project (UK)	Munich security report 2015
Guerrilla warfare				x	x	x		x
Conventional military methods	x	x		x		x	x	x
Legal methods				x				

Source: Cvetković et al., 2019.

Based on Table 1, we may conclude that the most significant elements of hybrid war include:

- political methods and actions;
- economic measures and pressures;
- social change, which results in information, ideological, and psychological activities and conflict;
- subversion;
- IT methods (especially cyber-attacks);
- terrorism and ignition of armed rebellions;
- criminal activities;
- conventional military action.

At this point we should reiterate that hybrid war is not a new kind of warfare, but has been employed since ancient times, albeit in a different form and name. In almost every war, elements of hybrid warfare may be identified, be it the World War II, the Vietnam War, conflicts in the Balkans in the 1990s, or the most recent conflicts in Ukraine and on the African continent.

Hybrid war and Africa

The changes that befell international relations and the international order at the beginning of the new millennium are already fundamentally changing international relations and the international order. We are witnessing that currently, in the third decade of the 21st century, the

unipolar world is becoming multipolar. The economic rise of China is almost unstoppable, followed by the ascent of India, which strives to turn its enormous potential into real economic, political and cultural strength. India is increasingly projecting its strength in the region and the world. With Vladimir Putin's coming to power, Russia is moving along the path of economic prosperity, which results in its increased political reputation in other parts of the world. This course of events in the world, as well as the re-cooling of East-West relations, caused the world to once again find itself in some kind of "cold war". In the logic of this new "cold war", Africa is once again becoming a stage where the interests of various state and non-state actors in international relations intersect and clash.

Observing this from the economic aspect, we can say that these changes are almost minimal, because the neoliberal doctrine is still dominant, but criticisms against it are getting louder: it has become obvious that countries that do not follow this doctrine achieve enviable economic results. Despite the insistence on further application of the neoliberal doctrine, there is a chronic development problem that (despite certain successes) the neoliberal doctrine cannot solve, primarily from the social and environmental points of view. One may recall an observation of Joseph Stiglitz, a recipient of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences (2001), that the neoliberal economy has reached its peak, and now it is necessary to find a new form of economic policy as soon as possible.

The problem of choosing an economic policy is part of the complex challenge that each state faces when developing in the framework of the international order and international relations. The problems of economic development are especially accentuated in peripheral parts of the world, with most of the African continent belonging to this global periphery.

A key fact that is characteristic of the recent development of the continent is the appearance of new external players. Indeed, the list of traditional external players has typically included old colonial powers – the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, Italy, and Germany, while the most important newcomers in Africa are China and India. Of course, Russia has reemerged in Africa during the presidency of Vladimir Putin, who, as Western analysts claim, wants to restore the place and role that the USSR once had on

the African soil. Here we would like to briefly recall, without delving into a detailed analysis of the Africa policy of the USSR, that during the Soviet period Moscow played a very important corrective role. Representatives of the USSR both at the sessions of the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly very frequently criticized actions of traditional external players in Africa, willing to indirectly encourage the popular consciousness in the colonized countries to rebel against colonialism, and therefore enable the expansion of Soviet influence in Africa.

Before we move on, we would like to remind the reader how inhabitants of Africa themselves perceive Africa. A good illustration would be an interpretation by the famous Kenyan historian Ali Mazrui, who described the “genesis” of Africa as follows:

“Europeans named most of the world’s large continents, all large oceans, many large rivers, lakes and most countries. Europe centered the world so that today we think of Europe as if it is above Africa, on the globe, more than below it, in the cosmos. Europe measured the world so that Greenwich is the meridian that ticks the universal time. Europe usually decided where one continent on Planet Earth began and another ended [...] Europeans may not have invented the name ‘Africa’ but they played a key role in applying it to the entire continental mass we recognize today” (Mazrui, 1993). At the time of the “discovery” of Africa and the rest of the world by the Europeans, the African continent and its different civilizations were little known to European philosophers and missionaries. In the course of the exploration of Africa, not only most successful future colonizers such as the United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Portugal, Germany, but nearly all Western kingdoms and empires at that time established colonies in Africa. During the colonization of Africa, Europeans increasingly asked themselves: What is it that enabled Europe to conquer Africa? Attempting to answer this frequently asked question, the prominent American political scientist Larry Diamond particularly emphasizes the following three factors that he considers most significant: technical and technological development of weapons; widespread literacy; political organization that mobilized population in the home country in order to enable the financing of conquest and research programs (Diamond et al., 1999). In his turn, the French sociologist Claude Lévi-Strauss points out that differences in the development of societies depend on

“geographical, sociological and historical circumstances”, rather than on “different tendencies related to anatomical or physiological constitution”, further refuting racist theories that were popular during the colonization of Africa (Lévi-Strauss, 1963).

During the period of colonization, the development of the “narrative of colonization” and the creation of the “imaginary empire” were entrusted to “white heroes”, who would conquer, kill, and at the same time “save” Africa. These “white heroes” include Lord George Gordon, Dr. David Livingston, Henry Morton Stanley, Ferdinand Lesseps, Pierre De Brazza, and others. Simultaneously, through various literary works of British writers of that era, such as *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, or *She* by H. Rider Haggard, stereotypes about Africa and its inhabitants were cemented and became deeply entrenched. These narratives were used to support imperial conquest all over the world, and especially in Africa.

Based on the above, one may conclude that Africa and its population have been objects of a “hybrid war” throughout ages, only that the methods of that hybrid war differed from modern ones, as has already been mentioned in the present paper. Indeed, the hybrid war against Africa and its population continued throughout the 19th century, and by the end of the 19th century the image of Africa that needed to be “civilized” and where savagery should be destroyed had become even stronger among the imperialist powers and their populations. In fact, this image of Africa and Africans did not change in the 20th century.

At the beginning of the new millennium, the image of Africa was still burdened with stereotypes, ignorance, and negative concepts. People of Africa were seen as uncivilized and poor, incapable of governing their own countries or using natural resources for their own development and comprehensive progress. However, as we have already noted, at that time new external players made their presence visible on the continent. The working methods of the old and new external players were similar in that they employed neoliberal approaches. Yet new actors began to invest more in the construction of infrastructure, roads, railways, schools, etc.

While Africa’s image has started to improve, Victorian writers, who molded Africa’s image at the end of the 19th century, such as Haggard, Kipling and Conrad, are still among the most read – due to their talent

as well as the domination of English in the world. The biggest blow to the negative representation of Africa was dealt by the post-colonial theory, but also by the Second World War, which led to the questioning of racial qualifications and distortions of Africa's image.

At the time of colonialism, enslaved Africa was an invitation to explain: why did the Europeans succeed? Today, poor Africa is an invitation to answer another question: why have Africans failed? Then, as now, answers to these questions are most often found not in scientific works, but in popular literature, press, film, propaganda, where various prejudices and long-lasting stereotypes continue to flourish. Comparing the image of Africa over time, we come to the conclusion that decades-long stereotypes from the colonial era were dominant throughout the 20th century and still today influence Africa's image, which may be a repetition of colonial images in a different guise, hidden behind political correctness, development aid, and the discourse of Africa's victimhood. Thus, in the 21st century, changes for the better are taking place, but very slowly.

Conclusion

“Hybrid war” as a term arose relatively recently, in the 21st century, but in fact is just a modern way to describe certain forms and methods of conflict that we had already seen previously. Within the framework of this concept, we may talk about a wide range of unarmed and armed forms of aggression, where everything depends on the goals – of political, economic or military subjugation, etc. – that are to be achieved by the conflicting parties. Taking into account all of the above, the following can be concluded:

- “Hybrid war”, no matter how modern the term sounds, does not represent a new form of war, but only its methods are more modern due to the application of new science and technology achievements.
- The image of Africa, due to the preponderance of postulates dating back to the period of colonialism, has not improved significantly.
- African peoples have freed themselves from the traditional form of colonialism, but they have become subjected to a more modern form of colonialism, facilitated by neoliberal economics.
- Further conflicts between traditional and new external actors in Africa are to be expected in the future.

- Changes in the image of the African continent, especially when it comes to the perception of Africa by its own inhabitants, must start with the Africans themselves, who should mentally reject imposed narratives from the time of colonialism and improve self-understanding.

Finally, we must note that the contemporary manifestation of hybrid warfare presents a great challenge to individual states and alliances that have retained traditional military thinking. The consequences of hybrid wars are much more complex than those of traditional conflicts and therefore should be viewed in a wider context, i.e., within the general framework of all power relations and domination techniques, as governments that employ hybrid warfare aim to change the very fabric of social life in the countries they target.

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Chapter 8

“HYBRID WAR” AND “HYBRID WARFARE”: REALITY AND APPLICABILITY FOR AFRICA*

Recently, the originally military terms “hybrid warfare” and “hybrid war” have firmly entered the professional lexicon of politicians and political scientists around the world.

Many an author, attracted by the brightness and striking force of the terms, not understanding the difference between “war” and “warfare” and not going into the etymology and the originally conceived true meaning, often began to use them as interchangeable synonyms and apply them to any turbulent phenomena of political life with a complex and violent character that in fact had nothing to do with “hybridity”.

At the same time, in the absence of a comprehensive objective analysis and qualification of “hybrid” phenomena from the point of view of military science, Western political scientists are intensively exploiting the psychologically negative propaganda side of the above-mentioned terms, using them almost exclusively in an anti-Russian context.

The purpose of this chapter is to determine, within the framework of the approaches of the Russian military-scientific school and its understanding of the terms “warfare” and “war”, the essence, reality and novelty of the phenomena described by these terms and to assess their relevance and applicability to the military-political reality of the African continent.

It is generally accepted that the pioneer of the “hybrid” theme in military affairs is the American researcher Frank Hoffmann. In his papers, first published in 2004 (Mattis, Hoffman, 2004) and another one

* This is an abridged version. The full paper may be requested at oleg.v.shulga@gmail.com

in 2007 (Hoffman, 2007), Hofmann analyzed the failures of the American troops in the battles for Fallujah, Iraq, in 2004, and of the Israeli Army in operations against the Hezbollah group in 2007, and formulated the conclusion that the main method of conducting military operations in which the U.S. Armed Forces would participate henceforth would be not large-scale “traditional” operations against the “preferred enemy”, but “hybrid warfare” – “multimodal” confrontation in the form of a combination of “traditional” (“regular”) and “non-traditional” (“irregular”, “unconventional”) actions, including illegal, terrorist ones, when the true actors would be deliberately concealed and unclear and could turn out to be non-state actors, when the methods of action would be blurred, grow one into another, and actions would be carried out to achieve the same goals, in a single space, and as part of a single global force, but often with decentralized and independent planning. At the same time, “non-traditional” actors could, on an equal basis with state actors, employ classical and sophisticated means of armed struggle, methods of their application and tactics of action, while “traditional” actors, such as states, could stoop to terrorism, mass drug trafficking, criminal acts, and campaigns of outright lies.

Hoffman insists that it is the large-scale spread of “hybrid warfare” (rather than the increase in the sophistication of military equipment and weapons) that is the true essence of the modern “revolution in the military affairs”. He argues that it was the “smashing” superiority of the United States in the field of classical methods of warfare, primarily in the use of high-tech military technologies, that pushed potential adversaries of the Americans to use any means – non-classical, unconventional, criminal, and immoral – to achieve their ultimate goals (Hoffman, 2007).

Hoffman’s opponents point out that the use of a combination of “traditional” and “non-traditional” ways to achieve military goals has been successfully practiced throughout the history of warfare.

However, Hoffman saw what made “hybrid warfare” innovative, gave it a “revolutionary” character: the *equal operational value* of all its components – “traditional” and “non-traditional”, acceptable and unacceptable (terrorist, extremist, or criminal) – from the point of view of international principles of warfare and international law. At the same time, “traditional” participants (state formations) could become the subjects of “hybrid warfare” whenever undertaking required switching to “non-traditional” actions or use of “non-traditional” means, acting

independently or jointly with “non-traditional” participants (non-state actors), who employ “non-traditional” and/or “traditional” methods and means of armed violence (“National Military Strategy,” 2004).

The term “hybrid warfare” most accurately conveys the essence of the phenomenon, which consists in the obligatory presence and equivalence of at least *two different* components – in this case “traditional” and “non-traditional” subjects, methods and means – when, like in agronomy, crossing two different plants with valuable properties leads to the creation of a new plant that would be more effective in a certain context. This essence is more obvious when the term is applied at a higher, strategic level – the level of “hybrid war” in its military-scientific, not political propaganda, sense.

The discussion of the term “hybrid warfare” for quite some time had been limited to a relatively narrow circle of Western military theorists dealing with applied issues of operational-tactical activities of troops. The high-level U.S. policy papers (“National Defense Strategy,” 2008; “National Security Strategy,” 2006, 2010, 2015, 2017; “Quadrennial Defense Review,” 2006, 2010, 2014; “National Military Strategy,” 2015) avoided using it altogether or touched it only superficially. The reason was clear: both insurgent groups in Fallujah and Hezbollah were clearly unfit to be described as a serious adversary that could initiate a “true revolution in military affairs”.

Russian military science also for a long time (until the events of the Arab Spring escalated in 2013) referred to “hybridity” in military affairs as one of the exotic Western concepts – along with “proxy war” and other similar issues.

There were a number of reasons for this.

First, the concepts of “hybrid warfare” and “hybrid war” were not the fruit of scientific research on the phenomenon as such, but were formulated as a result of an applied analysis of the causes of unexpected defeats of two of the most technically advanced and best trained armies in the world – American and Israeli – at the operational-tactical level (the level not of a “war”, but that of “military warfare”), carried out for the practical purposes of further developing a pattern for the preparation and actions of specifically American units in a similar situation.

Second, analysis and planning of the conduct of armed struggle in conditions of “hybrid warfare” on the part of the enemy had for a long time been of interest only to armies of countries preparing for

offensive, aggressive actions to suppress “bad guys”, when the use of military force became an extreme political argument and the “projection of force” and “forcible entry” were enabled by overwhelming military superiority over a carefully chosen and obviously weaker adversary. The leading Western countries, above all the supposedly “defensive alliance” led by the U.S. – NATO, are preparing their armies to conduct exactly this kind of operations. Israel belongs to the same camp.

Third, Russia has always adhered to a purely defensive doctrine and neither prepared nor structured its armed forces for an invasion anywhere in the world and, accordingly, does not consider as “revolutionary” actions in conditions when a weak enemy, forced into a corner and driven to despair, is ready for any, even the most monstrous steps. In this regard, in Russian military science, “hybrid warfare” had been considered as one of the Western concepts applicable to military warfare at the operational-tactical level in an operational environment uncharacteristic of the prospective actions of Russian troops.

Fourth, the American terms of “hybrid warfare” and “hybrid war”, like many other catchy terms that have come into the global political lexicon from the North American continent, from the very beginning possess a built-in psychologically negative connotation, very useful for propaganda purposes.

Therefore, in none of the works of Western political scientists, you will find even a hint of the use of these and other similarly “tainted” terms to describe actions of the U.S. or its allies.

The foregoing provides the key to understanding the reasons for the dramatic increase in attention to the phenomenon of military “hybridity” both in the West and in Russia after the events in Ukraine in 2014 – in Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk Regions.

The West began to exploit to the maximum the propaganda potential of “hybrid” terms, accusing Russia of starting a “hybrid conflict” (“National Military Strategy,” 2015; “Food-for-thought paper,” 2015) in Crimea, adding them to the rhetoric with increasingly Russophobic character, in which other charged terms such as “lawfare”, “weaponized”

* To “weaponize” means to turn an instrument into a weapon. For example, in order for chemical agents to become “chemical weapons”, they must be placed in “delivery vehicles” – ammunition or special spraying devices that can spread them over a large

information” (Wither, 2020) and even “weaponized grain” (“G7 Leaders Communiqué,” 2022), etc., had already been widely used. The most recent example of such terminological propaganda against Russia is contained in *NATO 2022 Strategic Concept* (2022), minted at the 2022 Madrid summit of the alliance, where Western “strategists” called Russia “the most significant and direct threat to the security of the alliance”, attributing to it the conduct of “hybrid warfare”, “proxy war”, and even the use of chemical weapons.

In Russia, representatives of military science and military practitioners (“The Ministry of Defense,” 2015; Gerasimov, 2016, 2017) have focused not on the propaganda shell, but on the military content of “hybridity”, having discerned behind these phenomena the clearly visible image of the imminent future war.

In the English language, from which the terms “hybrid warfare” and “hybrid war” originate, they are largely synonymous, and the difference may be captured only by specialists discussing a specific military issue.

Russian military phraseology is much more accurate and specific in describing the phenomena. Therefore, while “hybrid warfare” – which essentially constitutes activities at the operational-tactical level – was not particularly developed by Russian military scientists for the reasons that we have already mentioned, research on “hybrid war”, which is a mutation of the “traditional war” in the context of globalization that entails providing “non-traditional” actors with access to the most advanced weapons, methods and tactics of their use and attributing to previously auxiliary non-military means of imposing will on the enemy a role in deciding the outcome of a war equivalent to military measures, has been and remains urgent in Russia.

It should be noted that the definition of the phenomenon of “hybrid war” is extremely difficult to formulate due to the lack of a single universal comprehensive definition of the category of “war” itself, and even in Russian fundamental documents such as the *Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation* (“Military Doctrine,” 2014) “war” is only characterized as a form of resolving interstate or intrastate contradictions using military force.

area in the form of an aerosol with a certain droplet size that does not settle immediately on the ground or is not quickly blown away by the wind, but will ensure contact with enemy manpower and inflict significant losses on it.

Russian military science, on the other hand, establishes a clear hierarchical subordination of the term “military warfare” to the term “war”, drawing a definite dividing line between the two.

Russian military science looks at military actions (warfare) as:

- hostilities between warring parties;
- organized use of forces and means on the ground, in the air, at sea, and in space at a strategic and operational scale to achieve political and military goals.

Thus “warfare” constitutes the content of armed struggle in a course of war.

“War”, on the other hand, is a socio-political struggle between states (coalitions of states), peoples, social, national, or religious groups, the main characteristic of which is the wide scale use of armed forces. To achieve political goals set in a war, non-military forms of struggle – economic, political, diplomatic, informational, psychological, etc. – may also be used.

War differs from other socio-political phenomena that involve the use of armed violence (armed conflict, armed uprising, etc.) by its extent and consequences (always global, strategic), the level of the involvement of the country and society (the strain of all forces and means), and the nature (political) of the goals.

The essence of war has always been and remains the use of armed violence. In other words, where there is no armed violence, there is no “warfare” and no “war” from the standpoint of military science.

Where there is no armed violence on a global scale, no involvement of all forces and means and no global political goals, there is no war, but at most a “conflict”, “clash”, “warfare”, or a “special military operation”.

The adoption of these concepts as a basis, respectively, provides an opportunity to formulate the definitions of “hybrid warfare” and “hybrid war”.

“Hybrid warfare” is a coordinated combination of the use of “traditional” and “non-traditional” components of armed struggle (such as armed forces, means of warfare, and methods of their use) in the context of performing military missions subordinated to a single goal and united by a single theater of military operations, in which both “traditional” and “non-traditional” components have *equal operational value*.

This definition assumes that:

- any “hybrid warfare” is always binary, because where there is only one element, there is no hybridity;
- in the course of hybrid warfare, neither “traditional” nor “non-traditional” components are secondary, and each of them is vital for achieving the desired victory;
- “non-traditional” military actions include terrorist attacks, the use of criminal groups, psychological operations, information operations, sabotage of military and civilian computer networks, etc.*

“Hybrid war” is a socio-political confrontation between states, peoples, social, national and religious groups, which is a combination of military and non-military (economic, political, diplomatic, psycho-informational, techno-informational, etc.) measures of influence upon the enemy with the aim of subduing him to subject’s will and achieving a global political goal, to which, in contrast to “traditional war”, military and non-military measures make an equal (or comparable) contribution.

“Hybrid war” is not only always binary (unlike “warfare”, any war in any case involves both military and non-military elements), but it is also characterized by the equal contribution of military and non-military components toward the achievement of the ultimate political goal.

Novelty of the above-described “hybrid” military concepts lies in the mandatory bicomponent and “hybrid” nature and/or equality of the contribution of components to the achievement of the final goal and/or the fulfillment of the mission.**

What is the advantage of waging “hybrid” military operations and wars over “traditional” ones?

It is the fact that in most cases the use of hybrid actions allows you to induce a destructive effect on the enemy, while:

- avoiding being defined as an aggressor;
- blurring the lines between war and peace;

* We are talking about sabotage and cyber attacks of a limited scale and limited focus, since the scale of all components of a military operation is much lower than the scale of a war.

** Achieving the ultimate goal is a preferred outcome of a “hybrid war”, while accomplishing a mission is done in the course of conducting “hybrid combat operations” at the operational level.

- often concealing own true identity (Gerasimov, 2017).
One may also add to the above:
- causing damage to the enemy without a formal start of hostilities and with minimal losses on one's own side, often via proxies;
- delegitimizing the enemy's retaliatory military action intended to minimize losses;
- employing prohibited methods and means without risks to one's reputation;
- preventing the enemy from participating in the most important global economic systems and schemes in order to inflict on him maximum economic damage, capture important markets, and increase own economic benefits;
- isolating the enemy from the most important global information systems in order to minimize his ability to respond in the context of psycho-informational struggle.

Non-military measures differ in their impact on the enemy. One may distinguish at least two fundamental non-military measures that are at least equal to military ones in terms of subduing the enemy and achieving the ultimate political goal. These are the creation of a destructive internal opposition and economic pressure. Each of these non-military measures has been used historically – separately or in combination – to achieve global political goals by changing the political superstructure of the enemy. In fact, it was the combination of these two that caused the collapse of the Soviet Union without any military effort applied.

Other types of non-military measures of any scale – diplomatic, information-psychological, information-technical, criminogenic, legal (including the imposition of one's own "rules" ("rulefare") instead of international law*), manipulation of West-controlled international organizations, currency (dollar) pressure ("dollarfare"), extraterritorialization of national U.S. jurisdiction ("courtfare"), etc. – are auxiliary and their application is intended only to complement, but not replace, the effect of fundamental non-military or military measures.

* The author proposes the terms "rulefare", "dollarfare", "courtfare", and "trade-fare" to determine elements of non-military measures used by the Western community, led by the U.S., by analogy with the terms "lawfare", "weaponized information", "weaponized grain", etc.

Today, “hybrid war” is a tragic reality for Russia. This was stated both by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov (“Speech by the Minister,” 2022) and by Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu (“Welcoming speech,” 2022) at the 10th Moscow Conference on International Security.

To what extent do the current situation and the actions of the West against Russia correspond to the characteristics of “hybrid war” as described above?

It is quite obvious that the West is implementing military measures against Russia. Having provoked Russia’s preemptive special military operation against Ukrainian nationalist formations, the collective West is implementing a “hybrid war” against the Russian Federation through the “proxy” forces of the Ukrainian ruling regime. U.S.-led NATO and a number of Western countries are increasing the supply of weapons and military equipment to Ukraine and are training personnel of the Ukrainian army. Huge financial resources are being allocated to maintain the viability of the nationalist regime in Kiev. Operations of the Armed Forces of Ukraine are planned and coordinated by foreign military advisers. Intelligence comes from all sources of information available to NATO. The use of weapons is carried out under the control of Western experts (“Welcoming speech,” 2022). Operations of the Ukrainian army are devised and planned at American and British headquarters (Barnes et al., 2022).

At the same time, using loopholes in international law (“lawfare”) and formally not being a party to hostilities, Western patrons of the Ukrainian Nazis are avoiding retaliation from Russian forces.

Another sign of the “hybridity” of Western campaign against Russia is the use of “non-traditional” methods of warfare by a “traditional” actor – the Security Service of Ukraine, which has resorted to terrorism against peaceful Russian citizens, as demonstrated by the killing of journalist Darya Dugina (“FSB,” 2022), which marks the first such instance in the post-World War II history of Europe and which has already been followed by other terrorist acts, including the murder of journalist Vladlen Tatarskiy.

However, the above-described military measures acquire the scale and quality of the “hybrid war” due to the simultaneous use by the West against Russia of the whole range of available non-military measures of influence, unprecedented in scope and comparable in operational effectiveness to military measures.

The first thing that should be mentioned among these non-military measures in the context of the ongoing hybrid war is, of course, the “fundamental measure no. 1” – the attempts that have not stopped since the early 2000s to destabilize the domestic political situation in the country through the creation, development and endorsement of a network of destructive political non-systemic opposition forces, mostly formed by and funded from foreign “pseudo-NGOs”, specifically aimed at changing the political superstructure of the country. However, as a result of the steps taken by national legislative and state bodies, the effectiveness of this traditional Western foreign policy tool in Russia has been minimized.

In the course of the unleashed hybrid war, the West has placed its main stake on the “fundamental measure no. 2” – the economic package of measures designed not only to have their own destructive impact on Russia, but also to breathe new strength into the withered internal opposition.

Within the framework of comprehensive economic measures, the West has taken unprecedented steps, which have undermined the global financial and economic system cunningly built around the dominance of the American dollar and the hegemony of U.S. speculative capital, which Washington has been developing for the past 70 years.

To date, countries of the “American axis” have imposed multiple packages of economic sanctions against Russia, under which, among other things, they have frozen Russian public and private assets in Western banks in the amount of more than \$400 billion, disconnected Russian banks from the SWIFT interbank payment system, introduced a ban on the purchase of Russian strategic goods (gas, gold, grain, etc.) – a vivid example of “tradefare”, froze the operation and development (even damaged through a terrorist attack) of a number of ground and maritime transport arteries, and implemented other economic steps that *de facto* nullified the role of such institutions as the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, etc.

Along with these comprehensive non-military measures, the West is widely using all available auxiliary non-military measures in the current hybrid war against Russia.

Among them, in the first place is the carefully thought-out, skillfully managed and professionally organized Western campaign of disinformation and psychological pressure on the world community,

which involves all leading Western media and social networks that spread false information about the special military operation in Ukraine. Fake news is fabricated according to the methodology tested in other countries that had become targets of the West's hybrid war*.

It is impossible not to mention such a type of non-military supportive measures as diplomatic sanctions. As part of the current U.S.-initiated campaign of mutual reduction of diplomatic missions to 19 countries, in 2022 five hundred fifty Russian diplomats left at the initiative of the host country, which is more than in 21 years since the beginning of the current millennium combined ("Lavrov," 2022).

The West widely uses information and technical measures of influence against Russia such as massive attacks on computer networks of critical state bodies, imposition of its own collective "rules" that replace international law ("rulefare"), dollar pressure ("dollarfare") on international and national financial institutions of dependent countries, extraterritorial jurisdiction ("courtfare"), etc.

A particular place in this list pertains to the manipulation of West-controlled international organizations. As an example, we may cite the vote pushed by the West in the UN General Assembly to condemn Russia's special operation in Ukraine, i.e., the notorious resolution ES-11/1 of March 2, 2022. According to the resolution, out of 193 UN members with the right to vote, 141 countries voted "for", 5 – "against", 35 abstained and 12 were absent from the voting ("General Assembly," 2022). Since then, other similar voting sessions have followed.

By using the aforementioned military and non-military measures against Russia, the collective West seeks to achieve global political goals, namely, to force Moscow to abandon its plans to create a multipolar world and exit the vicious financial system of absolute dollar domination. The scale and specifics of the military and non-military measures currently used by the West allow the author to state that the collective West is currently waging a global, pre-prepared and carefully coordinated hybrid war against Russia.

Applying the same pattern of analysis to other wars in modern history, hybrid wars may be conditionally classified, according to the

* For example, the fake news about the tragedy in Ukraine's Bucha followed the scenario of provocations by the White Helmets in Syria.

nature and scale of the involvement of “traditional” and “non-traditional” components, into four major types.

The first type is when a “traditional” subject wages a “hybrid war” against a “traditional object”, using military (directly or via proxy, “traditional” and/or “non-traditional”) and non-military measures that are equal in terms of their impact. Such a war is now waged by the collective West, which is using its proxy regime in Ukraine against Russia.

The second type occurs when an alliance of “traditional” and “non-traditional” subjects wages a “hybrid war” against a “traditional” object, both parts of the alliance employing military measures, while the “traditional” subject implements non-military measures equal in strength to the military ones. Such a war was waged by the U.S. and NATO in alliance with the purposefully created “internal armed opposition” against the legitimate Government of Libya, led by Muammar Gaddafi, in 2011.

The third type is when a “non-traditional” subject employs “traditional” military measures, while its ally – a “traditional” subject – implements non-military measures, equal in impact to the military ones, against a “traditional” object. An example of such a war is the war of the coalition led by the U.S. together with the purposefully created “internal armed opposition” against the legitimate Government of Syria led by Bashar Assad since 2011 and till present.

The fourth type is when a “traditional” subject implements “traditional” military and non-military measures of equal impact against the “non-traditional” object. It was this kind of war that the U.S.-led coalition and the Afghan Government ultimately lost in ignominious defeat to the religious movement Taliban in 2021.

As an intermediate conclusion, we can say that despite their widespread and not always adequate use in the political and journalistic spheres as new negative propaganda clichés, the terms and concepts of “hybrid military operations” and “hybrid warfare” in the field of military science and practice reflect new realities in military affairs.

At the same time, when analyzing “hybrid” phenomena from a military point of view, it is necessary to understand that their essence is armed violence. Phenomena not associated with armed violence belong to the non-military sphere of scientific knowledge.

As mentioned earlier, “hybrid military operations” and especially “hybrid wars” in modern conditions are mutations of “traditional military operations” and “traditional war” in the context of the progressive globalization of human life, on the one hand, making available “traditional” components of armed struggle (modern weapons, methods of their use, and tactics of action) to “non-traditional” actors and, on the other hand, giving non-military measures an impact comparable to military measures.

“Hybrid wars” and “hybrid warfare” on the African continent

Can any phenomena of military-political reality of the African continent qualify as “hybrid wars” or “hybrid warfare”?

The reality is that neither a single African country, not even the recognized leaders of Africa – Egypt, South Africa, Algeria, and Nigeria, nor the continental or regional organization that unites them, controls global economic and information networks and schemes at a level that allows them to independently influence a “traditional” potential object of war through non-military measures comparable to military ones in terms of results. The low efficiency of the African Union sanctions recently introduced against certain AU member countries that underwent unconstitutional change of power partially attests to that. Therefore, the possibility of unleashing a “hybrid war” of the first, second and third types exclusively by intracontinental forces is practically zero.

At the same time, the history of the continent contains examples of hybrid wars of all types, with the exception of the first one, involving extracontinental actors.

The experience of the current hybrid war of the West against Russia shows that even for the leading world powers and their coalitions, wars of the first type are extremely expensive and costly, primarily due to the mutual effect and unpredictability of the result of non-military measures, so the hybrid war of the first type in Africa is highly unlikely, although theoretically possible.

As to “hybrid wars” of the second type, one of the largest such wars took place precisely on the African continent. That was the aforementioned 2011 war against Libya.

Another example of a hybrid war of the same, second, type is the war of South Africa’s then ruling apartheid regime in alliance with the

UNITA movement and with the financial, political, informational and psychological support from the U.S. against the legitimate Government of the People's Republic of Angola in 1975–1992.

An example of a hybrid war of the third type that took place on the African continent, albeit in a more distant history, is the hybrid war of the USSR against the Portuguese colonial system in 1970–1975.

The Soviet Union did not conduct military operations against Portugal as a state, but provided financial, military-technical (supplies of weapons and training of specialists), informational and political assistance to “non-traditional” actors in the anti-colonial fight–national liberation movements (MPLA in Angola, FRELIMO in Mozambique, PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde).

The most common in Africa (just as in other regions of the world) are hybrid wars of the fourth type. Moreover, in the overwhelming majority of cases (unless we consider Islamic jihadists to be extracontinental non-traditional actors), they are an intracontinental phenomenon of the African continent.

This situation is quite understandable: the hybrid war of a “traditional” subject against a “non-traditional” object, in which the latter conducts, among other things, traditional military operations, as a rule, is the evolution of hybrid military operations of a “non-traditional” actor that gained strength as it defeated the “traditional” (usually Government) troops that typically had initiated a military campaign against it. The expansion of hybrid warfare of this type through a country gives it the status of a war (as a rule, religious, interethnic or civil).

Thus, as already mentioned, one example of a typical hybrid war of the fourth type is the civil war in Angola in 1992–2002 between the “traditional” Armed Forces of the Government of the Republic of Angola and the “non-traditional” armed formations of the UNITA opposition movement.

What is the likelihood and possibility of any type of hybrid war on the African continent in the foreseeable future?

While above we have briefly touched upon why a purely intracontinental hybrid war or the first three types in Africa is impossible, the current hypothetical and minimal possibility of starting a hybrid war with the participation of external qualified actors may well turn into a practical plane, and here is why.

We have already mentioned that the collective West is currently waging a hybrid war against Russia. The goals of each side in this war represent an existential threat to the opposite side, are directly related to the future architecture of the world and, accordingly, the whole world is unavoidably involved in this war to one degree or another.

In the context of this war, African countries are the object of most powerful pressure from the West, which aims at neutralizing their possible participation in the camp of “pro-Russian” countries. More and more African countries are leaving the Western zone of control: while the anti-Russian resolution of the UN General Assembly ES-11/1 of 2 March 2022 was not supported by 27 countries of the continent, the resolution on the suspension of the work of the Russian Federation in the Human Rights Council of 4 July 2022 was not supported already by 44 countries (“UN General Assembly,” 2022). On 25 August 2022, none of the countries of the continent supported the joint statement proposed by Western countries in connection with the expiration of six months of the start of the Russian special operation in Ukraine.

Moreover, on 16 August 2022, the heads of the military departments of Burundi, Guinea, Cameroon, Mali, Sudan, Uganda, Chad, Ethiopia, and the Republic of South Africa took part in the 10th Moscow Conference on International Security despite the ongoing pressure from the U.S. and their camp partners to “isolate Russia” (“Welcoming speech,” 2022).

In addition, a number of African countries have over the past years expressed their intent to join the BRICS group (“Building Bridges,” 2023). Of these countries, Egypt and Ethiopia were formally accepted to BRICS in the summer of 2023, with their membership due to become effective on 1 January 2024..

This situation does not suit the West, which has developed an entire strategy to push Russia out of Africa (El-Badawy et al., 2022).

The central place in this strategy is still occupied by the “carrot” presented at the G7 summit in June 2022 – the \$600 billion Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (Foundethakis, 2022). However, behind the “carrot” there is a “stick”: the U.S. approved the H.R.7311 act “On Countering Russia’s Malicious Activities in Africa” (“H.R.7311,” 2022), in which, in the usual rude and ultimatum form, the African countries are required to make a choice – either cooperate with Russia or with the West.

France, which is still actively parasitizing on African ex-colonies, has gone in its anti-Russian campaign in Africa even further: President Macron generally described the activities of Russia on the continent not as cooperation but as support for absolutely failed, illegitimate regimes and juntas (“Lavrov,” 2022).

In the context of the global confrontation between Russia and the West, which carries existential threats for each of the parties, the possibility of the West forcibly pushing some countries in the “right” direction, in extreme cases – by the means of a hybrid war, cannot be ruled out.

One can identify African countries that are in the “hybrid risk group” by several criteria, including proximity to the West’s opponent – Russia, refusal to unconditionally and actively participate in anti-Russian sanctions, geostrategic and geopolitical weight, and the presence of “weak” points to which any of the hybrid levers may be applied.

These include, first of all, Egypt, Algeria, South Africa, Mali, and the Central African Republic. At the same time, while hybrid scenarios are just possible for the first three, mainly in the context of the ongoing war between the West and Russia, the last two have already claimed that a “hot” “hybrid war” is waged against them by extremists supported by France, which has no intention to give up economic exploitation of its former African colonies and is acting to install friendlier governments there.

What exactly can push the West to wage a hybrid war against Egypt, Algeria, or South Africa?

The first two countries are Russia’s closest trading partners in Africa, primarily in the field of military-technical cooperation, while South Africa is a major political partner, one of the founders of the BRICS alliance – an alternative to Western blocks. As has been mentioned above, Algeria and Nigeria are intent to join BRICS as well, making the economic alliance embrace all four economically and militarily most powerful countries of the continent.

The unleashing of a hybrid war is most likely to occur if any of these countries openly condemns the West on the issue of war against Russia, actively joins the Russian-Chinese campaign to move away from the dollar as the only global reserve currency, and starts to

noticeably reduce its economic dependence on the West and to restrict the export of its raw materials to the West.

Similar steps some years ago led to the fall of Muammar Gaddafi's Libya and Saddam Hussein's Iraq, while Ayatollah Khomeini's Iran and Hafez Assad's Syria were on the brink of collapse under the deadly hybrid pressure of the collective West.

Egypt is the most serious and complex African object in terms of organizing a hybrid war of the first three types (with the participation of an extracontinental subject). This country ranks 14th in the world and 1st in Africa in terms of military power ("2023 Military," 2023), although in terms of GDP it is only in the second place on the continent after Nigeria ("GDP," 2022). If it comes to a hybrid war against Egypt, the most likely scenario is the third type, when the "traditional" external actor carries out only "non-military" measures on a global scale, while the military actions are carried out by a "non-traditional" internal actor.

In case of emergency, the U.S. and its allies may try to unleash a costlier, though more effective, war of the first type, using the templates of the Ukrainian situation and provoking a war of Egypt with Israel, using as a *casus belli* Israeli actions against the Palestinians.

It should be mentioned that at this stage there are no signs that the West, led by the U.S., is planning to use military force against Egypt. Nevertheless, the West is strongly annoyed by its military-technical cooperation with Russia, as well as its interest in joining BRICS.

There are signs that the West is slowly starting to prepare an informational and psychological campaign against Egypt, making accusations of human rights violations, which are a traditional prelude to the start of a large-scale campaign of lies ("Complementing Rafales," 2022) that in the long run may culminate in open aggression, as was the case in Iraq and Syria.

Algeria, in accordance with the abovementioned 2023 Global Firepower rating, ranks 26th in terms of military power in the world and 2nd in Africa. It is also 4th on the continent in terms of GDP ("GDP," 2022).

As with Egypt, the most likely scenario for the least costly hybrid war is a type three war. The Arab Spring is still echoing in the country with fermenting opposition forces, which, however, are not ready for independent decisive armed action.

If the question arises of tying Algeria with a war quickly and reliably, then the scenario of a hybrid war of the first type is most likely here, using neighboring Morocco as a “proxy representative” of the West.

The Republic of South Africa is the third possible target of a hybrid war by the West. In reality, the risks for South Africa (SA) are more considerable than for Egypt and Algeria not only because of its high regional political authority and substantial economic and military weight, but above all because of its political attachment to Russia. After President Cyril Ramaphosa’s declaration about an intended withdrawal of SA from the International Criminal Court that had issued an arrest warrant for Vladimir Putin, amidst unprecedented pressure from the West to the contrary, and his declarations that SA would not change its non-alignment stand in response to false allegations about arms sales to Russia, the risks of a hybrid war against the country rose much higher.

In accordance with the same ratings, the South Africa is in second place among the states of the continent in terms of military power, and in second place in terms of GDP, significantly exceeding such European countries as Denmark, Hungary, Romania, Portugal and Greece in terms of the latter.

As mentioned above, its trade volume with Russia is relatively small, but the Republic has made a considerable contribution to building multipolar world through its membership in BRICS.

At the same time, the geostrategic position of South Africa – in the extreme south of the African continent, far from Europe, the U.S. – and the absence of neighbors with a comparable military potential excludes the military and economic expediency of waging hybrid wars with a direct or proxy participation of an external “traditional” subject (i.e., wars of the first and second types).

The most likely scenario of a hybrid war for South Africa may be a type three war, in which a “traditional” extracontinental entity may create, as in Syria, an active internal “non-traditional” subject and apply powerful global “non-military” measures intent to destabilize the internal situation.

As of today, a “non-traditional” anti-government entity is not even on the horizon, but the situation in South Africa is very volatile, with the destructive opposition making use of any pretext to cast shadow on the ruling party. Inflation, the crisis associated with the COVID-19

epidemic, mismanagement of the economy and high unemployment may prompt mass protests of the population that may gain momentum very quickly.

Indicative in this sense are the events of 2021 related to the arrest of former President Zuma (Shubin et al., 2021). Ethno-political protests in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng escalated to such extent in a few days that 25,000 troops had to be called in to neutralize them. Mass protests were recognized as organized riots. This gives reason to conclude that the country has an opposition potential, which, with due preparation (and foreign funding), is able to mobilize powerful forces.

South African history confirms that and demonstrates how devastating the results of such mobilization could be. Between 1990 and 1994, at the dawn of its true independence, South Africa was experiencing intense fratricidal ethnic clashes, especially during the urban wars between the Zulu and Xhosa (Arndt, 2023).

While internal contradictions between the Africans have been mostly smoothed since then, there emerged new tensions: the white minority, which since long has become indigenous to the country, has started to feel oppressed and deprived, which has led to the establishment of action groups that oppose the government.

These old and new opposition potentials can be manipulated from outside within the “hybrid war” effort.

Unfortunately, the latest developments show that a war against SA seems to have already started.

It is timely to recall that the so-called “revolution of dignity” in Ukraine was in reality a bloody coup d’état sponsored by the collective West against the legally elected President and Government. At the time the U.S. Undersecretary of State Victoria Nuland was personally involved in the whole range of coup-related actions – from bringing in money for funding coup mechanisms to distributing cookies in the streets to the insurrectors and to facilitating the broad Western anti-government propaganda campaign that had preceded the coup.

Similar signs are currently being observed in SA.

In January–June 2023, high-ranking U.S. foreign service officials paid six visits to the country and carried out talks with South African counterparts. Four of these visits followed each other in May. On May 4–12, two separate high-ranking U.S. State Department delegations simultaneously were present in SA on formally different missions.

It is particularly noteworthy that, right after the visit of the U.S. Assistant Secretary for Arms Control, Verification and Compliance Mallory Stewart on May 6–10, 2023, already on May 11, the U.S. Ambassador to SA committed an unprecedented hostile act, declaring at a press conference that SA secretly sold arms to Russia in December 2022. This unfriendly and groundless speculation was immediately disseminated by all major Western media outlets – BBC, Reuters, CNN, Guardian, etc., spurring a spike of “protests” of the South African parliamentary opposition. Indeed, SA officials vehemently denied and refuted the claim, and a special presidential commission was established to investigate the accusation.

The reasons for such a peculiar interest towards SA on part of the U.S., which even involved lying publicly, is obvious: on June 02–03, 2023, SA hosts the BRICS summit, which the West sees as yet another step toward the end of its global domination.

That said, the South African leadership should be well aware that the informational prologue of “hybrid war” has already begun. This is how “colored revolutions” start.

Two other African countries – *Mali* and the *Central African Republic*, that have been included by us in the list of potential targets of a hybrid aggression by the West, do not possess military, economic and political weight comparable to the previous three, but they are an example of successful cooperation between Africans and Russians in one of the most sensitive areas – in increasing security through the fight against terrorism, and for their own reasons, they themselves have already gone into open confrontation with their traditional “patron” – France.

For instance, the Central African Republic accuses France of deliberately destabilizing the country and the region as a whole in order to preserve its neo-colonial interests. The Mali government, in its turn, has appealed to the UN Security Council, accusing France of supporting Malian anti-government terrorist and separatist groups, denounced the agreement on cooperation in the field of defense, and demanded that the French ambassador be recalled from Bamako.

As Mali and the Central African Republic show other African countries that it is possible to fight the dominance of former colonial metropolises and that it is more beneficial to work with Russia, the West quite likely will begin (or continue) its subversive activities against the governments of these two countries.

The most likely scenario is the pumping of money and weapons by France to a “non-traditional” subject from among anti-government armed groups coupled with the implementation of powerful “non-military” measures in the form of financial and economic sanctions and a global information and psychological campaign to delegitimize and demonize the two governments.

At a certain stage, Western aid can ratchet up the military capabilities of the opposition to the level of “traditional” military operations, and the scope and goals of its activities to the scale of a hybrid war of the third type. It cannot be excluded that the third type will evolve into the second one, since France has been known for solving political issues in Africa through deploying its paratroopers and legionnaires.

A hybrid war against the Central African Republic and especially Mali is much more realistic than against Egypt, Algeria, and South Africa, as it can bring a tangible dividend to the West in the short term and at a lower cost, because potential “non-traditional” actors in these countries already exist, and a psychological and informational campaign at least against Mali has already begun at the initiative of Macron (“Mali,” 2022).

As for the possibility of a hybrid war of the fourth type (exclusively intracontinental actors, no outside participation), such scenarios, as before, are also quite possible.

The governments of many African countries pay insufficient attention to issues of internal military security. In the regions of Lake Chad Basin, the Sahel, the African Great Lakes and northern Mozambique, there operate armed opposition groups and outright terrorists; many of them fall into the category of “non-traditional” actors capable of conducting military operations of a “traditional” level (as the UNITA movement in Angola used to). If governments do not take radical measures, it will only be a matter of time before these militant operations grow into wars.

When identifying African military “hybridity”, it is necessary to keep in mind specifically that even successful actions of “non-traditional” armed groups against “traditional” government forces, such as terrorist actions in northern Mozambique or other aforementioned regions of the continent, separatist attacks in the Angolan enclave of Cabinda, and ethnic pogroms and riots in South Africa remain correspondingly acts of

terrorism, insurgency and ethnic violence until their perpetrators begin to widely, massively and appropriately use modern military equipment and “traditional” tactics on the battlefield (as did Hezbollah in 2007 against the Israeli army). When they do so, their actions become “traditional” military actions of a “non-traditional” object within the framework of hybrid warfare or hybrid war.

Summing up the analysis of the applicability of the terms “hybrid war” and “hybrid warfare” to military-political phenomena on the African continent, we can draw several conclusions:

First, a number of military actions in the recent history of the African continent correspond to the above-described criteria of hybrid wars and hybrid warfare and are classified by the author in this category.

Secondly, the category of “hybrid warfare” in Africa is much broader than the category of “hybrid war”, at least because each of the “hybrid wars” involving a “non-traditional” actor began with an armed confrontation on a smaller scale, i.e., military actions acquired “hybrid” character due to the increase in the level of armament and military skills of the latter.

Thirdly, according to the author, none of the phenomena of armed struggle currently taking place on the African continent already qualifies as a “hybrid war”. However, in the context of an open armed confrontation between Russia and the collective West, a hybrid war may be unleashed against individual African countries with the participation of extracontinental actors. Among the African states, potential targets include Egypt, Algeria, South Africa, Mali, and the Central African Republic.

Fourth, in a number of regions of the African continent, the armed struggle of government troops against the armed opposition or terrorists has the potential to develop into an intracontinental hybrid war. Areas of potential occurrence of intracontinental hybrid wars are the region of Lake Chad Basin, the Sahel, the African Great Lakes, and northern Mozambique.

Fifth, an analysis of the military-political reality of the African continent clearly shows that in the context of an increasingly tense geopolitical situation and the intensification of Western struggle for Africa, issues of military security require maximum attention from the leadership of almost all African countries.

The proven and most reliable way for African countries to ensure their military security is military-technical cooperation with Russia. Angola, which has been successfully eliminating internal and external military threats for more than 20 years, has become convinced of this; Mali and the CAR have only recently defended their statehood with Russia's help.

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Dr. Eben Coetzee
University of the Free State,
Bloemfontein, South Africa

Chapter 9

THE SPECTER OF NUCLEAR TERROR IN AFRICA: ANOTHER LOOK

Introduction

Time and again, one is struck by the inveterate nature of some myths. Though the evidence disproving them may be compelling, some myths – it seems – are so deeply entrenched in the collective minds of intellectuals, policymakers, and society that their successful exorcism, it seems, would require nothing short of a supernatural intervention. The specter of nuclear terrorism presents one such myth. Fears giving rise to this myth follow an all too familiar line of reasoning: a nuclear state (presumably a rogue one) palms off a nuclear weapon to an extremist terrorist group who then proceeds to attack a common enemy. All hell breaks loose. An uncontrolled nuclear exchange occurs, thus precipitating the end of human civilization as we know it. In other iterations of the same frightening story, extremist terrorist groups may choose to tread alternative routes in going nuclear, whether through purloining a workable nuclear device or creating their own from scratch. After getting their hands on a nuclear device through their own ingenuity, they then match their hatred by indiscriminately targeting the most vulnerable segments of society (presumably a population-dense area), wreaking havoc, and inducing large-scale casualties in the process.

Fears about an impending nuclear terrorist attack are commonplace among Western government officials, terrorism experts and the news media. What keeps every senior government official up at night, noted former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates in 2008, is the specter of a terrorist group armed with a nuclear weapon (Mueller, 2018, p. 95; Mueller, 2020). Some two years later, while meeting with former South

African president Jacob Zuma at the White House, former U.S. president Barack Obama remarked that “the single biggest threat” to U.S. security remains “the possibility of a terrorist organization obtaining a nuclear weapon” (Obama, 2010). The specter of nuclear terror is, however, as old as the nuclear era itself. In 1946, atomic bomb maker J. Robert Oppenheimer feared that if a few individuals could smuggle nuclear components into New York City, they would surely be able to bring that city to its knees (Mueller, 2020). Exactly thirty years later, nuclear physicist Theodore Taylor lamented the ease by which nuclear material can be purloined and assembled to create a workable nuclear device (Mueller, 2020; Mueller, 2018, p. 96). On his part, Graham Allison has repeatedly warned – in 1995 and again in 2004 – of the imminency of nuclear terrorism, while nuclear physicist Richard Garwin estimated the probability of a nuclear terrorist attack on an American or European city to be at 20 per cent per year, amounting to a probability of “89 per cent over a 10-year period” (Mueller, 2018, p. 96). Generally, analysts have concluded that a nuclear terrorist act is a matter of “not if, but when” (Jenkins, 2011, p. 92).

Although fears about an impending nuclear terrorist attack are hardly new, the specter of nuclear terrorism appeared particularly plausible in the wake of 9/11. As terrorism expert Brian Michael Jenkins (2021, p. 84) has noted, “[s]cenarios that would have been dismissed as far-fetched the day before 9/11 became operative presumptions the day after”. The Japanese millennial group Aum Shinrikyo did, of course, break the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) taboo in Tokyo in 1995 (releasing sarin gas in the Tokyo subway). The experience of 9/11, however, seemed to suggest that the specter of nuclear terrorism was real *and* imminent, even though the weapons employed on 9/11 “were no more sophisticated than box cutters” (Kiras, 2019, p. 198; Mueller 2018, p. 95). Yet, for all the fears and prognoses of impending doom, nothing remotely resembling the worst-case scenarios depicted by nuclear alarmists across generations has happened. In fact, *nothing* has happened. Fears about the imminency and ease of nuclear terrorism (or building a workable nuclear bomb), notes Brian Michael Jenkins (2016, p. 6), float “above the concrete evidence”. Not only have terrorists failed spectacularly in going nuclear, but “the best information”, notes William Langewiesche after carefully assessing the arduous process of going nuclear, “is that

no one has gotten anywhere near this. I mean, if you look carefully and practically at this process, you see that it is an enormous undertaking full of risks for the would-be terrorists” (cited in Mueller, 2018, p. 96).

While nuclear terrorism has fortunately not occurred, we are often reminded that the prospect of nuclear terrorism remains real and imminent and that in one great event – a so-called Black Swan event – all our optimism about the low probability of nuclear terrorism would be swept away. Optimism, I should point out, about the vanishingly small prospect of nuclear terrorism is not rooted in some or other idealistic conception of humankind or the world. Instead, a healthy dose of *realism* about the forbiddingly difficult paths to nuclear terrorism militates against accepting the mantra of the imminency and progressively higher possibility of nuclear terrorism. Yet, for all the reasons that can and have been proffered against the specter of nuclear terrorism, fears abound about how *future* developments in the nuclear landscape – whether through states pursuing civilian nuclear programs (with all the attendant risks associated with such programs, *inter alia*, the transfer of nuclear material or technology) or the weaponization of nuclear energy – are likely to heighten the prospect of nuclear terrorism. It is today widely feared that the increasing energy requirements of developing – especially African – states and the attendant pursuit of civilian nuclear energy programs by these states could pose severe risks, most notably those relating to the transfer of nuclear material and technology to non-state actors within and outside of Africa or the weaponization of such programs (Van der Merwe, 2021, p. 14; Van Wyk et al., 2021, p. 3). Some 16 African states are now considering establishing civilian nuclear energy programs. Although South Africa remains the only African country operating a nuclear power plant, Egypt has embarked on a program to construct four nuclear power plants, with its El Dabaa power plant currently under construction (Turianskyi, 2022, p. 2; Van der Merwe, 2021, p. 5). Compounding fears about the prospect of nuclear terrorism in Africa is the stark reality that the trend towards nuclear energy in Africa occurs against the backdrop of two other trends: the increase in terrorism (notably, the rise of Islamist extremism and Jihadism) and the increase in transnational organized crime. The fears – consisting of a trilogy of an increase in nuclear activity in Africa, Islamic terrorism, and transnational organized crime – merge to create an environment where

the specter of nuclear terror (in Africa but also beyond it) ostensibly becomes real. If ever a perfect storm pertaining to nuclear terrorism was brewing, this trilogy appears to be it. However, today as before, terrorists (in Africa or, for that matter, anywhere else) wishing to go nuclear are likely to conclude that their dogged determinism to acquire nuclear weapons (if, of course, they are doggedly determined at all) is scarcely likely to be successful.

The threat of nuclear terror in Africa

It might be prudent first to consider what is and is not meant with nuclear terrorism. In recent years, it has become commonplace – especially among government officials – to conflate nuclear terrorism with any action (whether kinetic or cyber) directed against nuclear power plants or nuclear-related infrastructure. Targeting nuclear infrastructure, purloining nuclear material, using or threatening to use radiation devices, or even demands (through the use or threat of the use of force) to transfer nuclear material – all these activities constitute, per the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, nuclear terrorism (Nuclear Threat Initiative, 2020). Thus, after Iran’s Natanz uranium enrichment facility suffered a power failure following a deliberately planned explosion (apparently by Israel) in 2021, Iranian officials were quick to decry the attack as an act of “nuclear terrorism” (Bergman et al., 2021). Lastly, in December 1982, Apartheid South Africa’s nuclear power plant (located at Koeberg) suffered four explosions at the hands of the then-banned African National Congress (ANC), an act of *sabotage* which has been described as “nuclear terrorism” (cf. Van Wyk, 2015). In all these cases, such attacks or strikes are indeed dangerous, with the dispersal of radioactive material undoubtedly the pre-eminent concern. Although the dangers are real, and I do not mean to minimize them, such attacks hardly amount to nuclear terrorism – i.e., the intentional *use* of a *nuclear weapon* by a non-state actor against a state.

Nuclear terrorism is also often conflated with the use of radiological weapons (or so-called “dirty bombs”). Fears abound that terrorists would somehow get their hands on purloined nuclear material, quickly assemble a “dirty bomb”, and then cause widespread death in one spectacular act of “nuclear terrorism”. Such fears are misplaced. Unlike

nuclear weapons (which utilize processes of nuclear fission or fusion in creating an explosion), these weapons rely on a conventional explosion (e.g., dynamite or any other conventional explosive) to disperse radioactive material – weapons-grade fissile material is not a requirement, seeing as other radioactive sources (e.g., cesium and strontium) would work just as well (Litwak, 2016, p. 46). Again, unlike nuclear weapons, such weapons “are incapable of inflicting much immediate damage at all”, and it is well-near impossible that dispersed radioactive material from such bombs would inflict a lethal dose before the potential targets are able to flee from the area – in fact, few of the targeted victims “would be killed directly, become ill or even have a measurably increased risk of cancer” (Mueller, 2018, p. 98). Although models forecasting possible fatalities following the use of a “dirty bomb” differ significantly, experts agree that, contrary to popular belief, radiological weapons do not constitute weapons of mass destruction (Litwak, 2016, p. 46). These weapons, while likely to induce economic, social, environmental, and psychological costs, scarcely warrant the label “weapons of mass destruction”, let alone “nuclear terrorism” (Litwak, 2016, p. 46). Analysts have therefore likened radiological weapons to weapons of mass *disruption* instead of mass destruction (Mueller, 2010, p. 13). Accordingly, it makes little analytical, let alone practical, sense to expand the definition of nuclear terrorism to include radiological weapons (cf. Stenersen, 2008, who, as in the case of Mueller 2020, draws a clear distinction between nuclear weapons and radiological weapons). In fact, as Mueller (2018, p. 97) contends, the practice of bracketing chemical, biological and radiological weapons with nuclear weapons under the label of WMD is misplaced – that the former weapons can indeed “inflict damage” is patently true, but they “can scarcely do so on a large scale”. Though a serious and consequential matter, the use of radiological material in pursuit of terrorist acts is a concern separate from the specter of nuclear terrorism.

With nuclear terrorism confined to using a particular *type* of weapon by non-state actors against state targets, what are the principal fears about the specter of nuclear terrorism in Africa? For some time, fears about nuclear terrorism in Africa focused mainly on South Africa. During the first decade of this century, analysts at the US-based Defense Threat Reduction Agency, in attempting to outline the future

WMD landscape in Africa, concluded that “South Africa should receive continuing attention when considering current and future WMD challenges in Africa” (Burgess, 2009, p. A1). In zooming in on South Africa, Burgess (2009, p. A1) concluded that South Africa’s past nuclear-weapons program, its existing WMD expertise, secrets and agents, and the presence of Al Qaeda on South African soil were cause for concern. While Burgess estimated the threat of nuclear terror (and WMD more generally) as “latent” during that time, it is worth pointing out that Africa’s nuclear and political landscapes have changed dramatically over the last decade or so. Various trends have coalesced to heighten – ostensibly, I should add – the nuclear terror threat in Africa (cf. Turianskyi, 2022, p. 8; Jurgens, 2022; Van der Merwe, 2021, p. 14; Van Wyk et al., 2021, p. 3; Ojo, 2020, p. 102; Smedts, 2010).

What are these trends (ostensibly) increasing the specter of nuclear terror? Three trends are discernible. The trends are highly interdependent. In fact, their interdependence, more than any other single factor, is what fuels concerns about the threat of nuclear terrorism – in Africa but also beyond it. Firstly, as variously noted above, the future African landscape is likely to be marked by increased interest in and reliance on nuclear energy, thus increasing Africa’s nuclear footprint. With some 16 African countries considering establishing civilian nuclear programs and Egypt well on its way to constructing Africa’s second nuclear power plant, analysts have fretted over the safety and security of nuclear materials, specifically that “nuclear materials will fall into the wrong hands, either during coups or through the actions of terrorists who are increasingly using such materials for acts of terror” (Turianskyi, 2022, p. 3; Smedts, 2010, p. 21). Other analysts have voiced concern over the possible use of nuclear materials for “military purposes by countries” (hence, weaponization) and, again, “for terrorism by non-state actors” (Van Wyk et al., 2021, p. 3; Van der Merwe, 2021, p. 14; Smedts, 2010, p. 19). At the same time, Africa’s rich uranium deposits coupled with the availability of highly enriched uranium in South Africa (with about 450–760 kg stockpiled at Pelindaba, South Africa’s nuclear research center) exacerbate fears about the continent becoming a hub for the transfer of nuclear material – to terrorists within Africa but, importantly, also to terrorists or countries outside its borders (Jurgens, 2022; Boureston & Lacey,

2007). Accordingly, when considering Africa's unfolding nuclear landscape, concerns over the weaponization of nuclear energy are eclipsed by those relating to the transfer of nuclear material to third parties (presumably Jihadist terrorists) within and beyond Africa, thus (ostensibly) raising the prospect of nuclear terrorism.

A second trend relates to the increase in terrorism and, concomitantly, the rise of Islamist extremism and Jihadism on the continent. As one recent publication has noted, “[a]fter years in abeyance, global terrorism is again rearing its head”, with Africa constituting “the global epicenter of terrorism”, fueled by the increasing influence of the Islamic State and Boko Haram's presence (O'Donnell, 2022; ISS, 2022). As loyalties among terrorist groups in Africa have shifted from Al Qaeda to ISIS (albeit not everywhere on the continent), the alarm has sounded that ISIS-inspired terrorist groups in Africa would tread the path of this particularly vicious and extreme offshoot of Al Qaeda, thus leading to a substantial uptick in the number of attacks and fatalities (Cilliers, 2021, p. 285; Alvi, 2019, p. 125). Connecting the dots between the realities of increased terrorism on the continent (and, importantly for our purposes, Islamist extremism and Jihadism) and the specter of nuclear terrorism is easy. Of all the fears usually cited in the literature on nuclear terrorism, the fear of an Islamist extremist group detonating a nuclear device usually tops the list. When, in 2014, ISIS captured the Iraqi city of Mosul and subsequently gained access to two caches of Cobalt 60 (a core nuclear-weapon ingredient), analysts feared that ISIS (and other extremist groups) could now match their apparent intention to go nuclear with the requisite means (Ward, 2018). Scenarios of an Al Qaeda/ISIS-inspired extremist group in Africa trafficking a nuclear weapon or nuclear material within, into or outside Africa are not hard to conjure up, with the transfer of nuclear material (in service of creating a workable nuclear device) being the most plausible.

The transfer of nuclear material is particularly worrisome in light of the third trend, to wit, the increase in transnational organized crime. In general, (transnational) organized crime is increasing in Africa, with criminality worsening in most African countries in 2021 compared with 2019 (ENACT, 2021, p. 18). Globally, the increase in transnational organized crime stems from the increase in the flow of people, goods, and money across borders (linked to globalization) and, perhaps more

pertinent in Africa, the collapse of authoritarian regimes (Trinkunas, 2019, p. 397). In Africa, many causes – ranging from porous borders, corruption, poverty, intractable conflicts, ungoverned spaces and more – fuel the scourge of transnational organized crime (cf. ENACT, 2021). With an eye on the threat of nuclear terrorism, what appears to be particularly worrisome is the increasing link between transnational organized crime and terrorism – terrorists, Jakkie Cilliers (2021, p. 285) reminds us, are also resource-dependent to conduct their operations. Crime pays, even for terrorists. The increased nuclear footprint on the continent (and, by implication, the increased availability of nuclear material), the realities of increased terrorism (specifically, Islamist extremism and Jihadism) and the increase in transnational organized crime create an environment in which the threat of nuclear terror has – ostensibly – increased dramatically. One can undoubtedly easily conjure up scenarios of how Africa’s porous borders (coupled with the prevalence of widespread corruption) can facilitate the transfer of nuclear material (purloined by organized criminal groups or terrorists) to ISIS/Al Qaeda-affiliated terrorist groups, who can then either act on their presumed intentions to develop and use a nuclear bomb or transfer the material to terrorist groups within or outside Africa willing to do so.

Paths to the bomb: obstacles, my dear friend, major obstacles

Terrorists desirous to commit acts of nuclear terrorism – whether in Africa or, for that matter, anywhere else – obviously need a bomb. Importantly, however, we should be leery of *assuming* that terrorists are, in fact, desirous to go nuclear. In fact, as Mueller (2020) contends, it appears to be the case that terrorists “have exhibited only limited desire and even less progress in going atomic”, with Brian Michael Jenkins (2016) concluding that several terrorists “have contemplated – and *contemplated* is the operative term here – acquiring nuclear weapons” (emphasis in original). The threat of nuclear terrorism “floats far above the world of known facts” (Jenkins, 2011, p. 8). Limited ambitions, limited desire, lofty rhetoric, and a few basic steps towards going nuclear – this description encapsulates terrorists’ desire to go nuclear. Evidence that Al Qaeda, the quintessential poster child for nuclear terrorism, has actively pursued or shown interest in acquiring nuclear weapons is “limited and often ambiguous” (Mueller, 2020).

What we do know is that the oft-cited claim, first endorsed by the 9/11 Commission in 2004, that Al Qaeda attempted to buy uranium in Sudan in 1993 never actually happened (Jenkins, 2011, p. 90; Mueller, 2020); Osama bin Laden considered acquiring nuclear weapons “a religious duty” (Auerswald, 2007, p. 75), though we should avoid the error of conflating a right to possess a nuclear weapon with the willingness to use it (Mueller, 2018, p. 98); and that bin Laden met two Pakistani nuclear scientists for an “academic” discussion about nuclear weapons, both of which “had neither the knowledge nor the experience to assist in the construction of any type of nuclear weapon” (both were primarily involved in uranium enrichment and plutonium production, an issue to be discussed below) (Khan & Moore, 2001, p. A01). After an exhaustive study of claims about Al Qaeda’s relentless pursuit of nuclear weapons, Anne Stenersen (2008, p. 54), a research fellow at the Norwegian Defense Research Establishment, concluded that although “al-Qaeda members were interested in nuclear weapons on a theoretical level... there is no indication that this was a central priority”. Moreover, as Mueller (2018, p. 98) notes, there is “little evidence” that Al Qaeda’s limited interest ever materialized into actual plans or that the acquisition of nuclear weapons was prioritized over other more traditional terrorist means of inflicting violence.

Interviews with the apparent mastermind of 9/11, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, revealed that Al Qaeda’s efforts to acquire a nuclear weapon failed to extend beyond searching the Internet (Mueller, 2020). Tellingly, as Anne Stenersen (2008, pp. 50–51) notes, a recovered Al Qaeda computer revealed that this group earmarked nothing more than \$2000–4000 for WMD research and all of that for developing chemical and biological weapons (which, incidentally, remained at a primitive stage). As against this, consider the more than \$30 million that the millennial group Aum Shinrikyo invested in developing their sarin gas manufacturing program alone, a program this group followed only after first attempting to acquire nuclear weapons and finding it forbiddingly difficult (this notwithstanding having a WMD budget of \$1 billion, employing some 300 scientists and operating in a secluded area suitable for setting up a machine shop) (Mueller, 2018, p. 99; Mueller, 2020). Also, after perusing the masses of information purloined by U.S. Navy Seals in their raid on Bin Laden’s hideout in 2011, analysts found “nothing about weapons of mass destruction”. Instead, what analyst

Nelly Lahoud found in sifting through the information was compelling evidence to lay to rest the popular myth that terrorists are “clever, crafty, diabolical, resourceful, ingenious, brilliant, and flexible” (Mueller & Stewart, 2022). As it turned out, post-9/11 Al Qaeda central – as noted, the poster child for the specter of nuclear terror – comprised little more than 200 people, was primarily concerned with evading missile attacks, watched a lot of pornography, and scraped by with no more than \$200,000 in assets (Mueller & Stewart, 2022).

With the emergence of ISIS, however, fears about the possibility of nuclear terror reached a crescendo. As noted above, when ISIS captured the Iraqi city of Mosul in 2014 and subsequently gained access to two caches of Cobalt 60, analysts feared that ISIS (and other extremist groups) could now match their apparent intention to go nuclear with the requisite means (Ward, 2018). ISIS, of course, failed to utilize the material because, as Ward (2018) noted, they probably were unable to access the material without exposure to deadly radiation. The group’s desire for political statehood makes it more visible than Al Qaeda. In going about its (very violent) business, ISIS has generated an impressive list of enemies in a short time (Mueller, 2018, p. 99). Encircled by several enemies and being much more visible than Al Qaeda, ISIS is “unlikely” to be in any position to go nuclear (Mueller, 2017, p. 727). Limited desire to go nuclear – let alone any progress in doing so – has thus far defined the history and activities of terrorist groups of all types and persuasions. Presumably, this stems from the fact that terrorists have concluded, after carefully considering the various paths to the bomb, that their tremendous effort is highly unlikely to yield any real fruit (Mueller, 2018, p. 96).

The first of the three paths toward a terrorist nuclear bomb is for nuclear states to transfer a nuclear weapon to a like-minded terrorist group for deployment abroad. However, the possibility of state transfer of nuclear weapons has been wildly exaggerated and lacks any concrete evidence. In the post-9/11 world, fears abounded that rogue states would transfer nuclear weapons to terrorists, with North Korea – a known proliferator of sensitive material to other *states* – often singled out. If North Korea is willing to palm off sensitive nuclear material to states, so the argument goes, can we not expect it to transfer nuclear weapons or materials to terrorists? Transferring nuclear weapons is, however, a risky endeavor. States contemplating the transfer of nuclear

weapons to terrorist groups are unlikely to risk being blamed and suffering punishment for the nuclear crimes of a terrorist group. No state can transfer nuclear weapons to terrorists without running the risk of being found out. Unlike states, terrorist groups are less adept at camouflaging weapons and disguising their movements. Moreover, in a world marked by rapid technological innovation in sensors and sensor platforms, it will become increasingly difficult for states to transfer and for terrorists to camouflage and hide nuclear weapons. In the future, states will likely have eyes and ears everywhere, thus multiplying the risks for nuclear states of being identified if they palm off nuclear weapons to third parties (Coetzee, 2021, p. 226).

At the same time, terrorist groups are unlikely to remain anonymous in the wake of a detonation of a nuclear weapon (Coetzee, 2021, p. 226). Besides, not only are ties between terrorist groups and states widely known but if nuclear weapons *are* transferred and used (an unlikely situation to start with), efforts at attributing guilt will further be aided by the rapidly developing field of nuclear forensics, which allows for identifying the source of nuclear material after a detonation has taken place. Over the last decade or so, advancements in nuclear forensics have been impressive, with this field boasting a range of impressive capabilities that would undoubtedly constrain any would-be nuclear terrorist or donor state from any risky nuclear business. As Jay A. Tilden and Dallas Boyd (2021, p. 72) explain, “modern nuclear forensic capabilities are now used to determine the provenance of nuclear materials found outside of regulatory control, such as those seized from nuclear smugglers. Additionally, if a terrorist nuclear device were interdicted before detonation, analysis of the nuclear material and device design may yield information about its origin and manufacturer. Should terrorists succeed in detonating a nuclear device, post-detonation debris analysis can help determine the source of the nuclear material used in the weapon as well as provide insights about the device design that may help identify the perpetrator”.

Where guilt can be attributed to the donor state after a nuclear explosion, unimaginable punishment (in the form of retaliating with a nuclear weapon) can follow, thus increasing the utility of the conventional notion of deterrence. Although referring to Pakistani nuclear proliferation in the light of nuclear forensics, Caitlin Talmadge’s (cited in Litwak, 2017, p. 60) conclusion is also instructive

for our case: no Pakistani government will be able to ignore a future A.Q. Khan, knowing that identifying the source of the material used in an attack would result in unspeakable suffering for that country. That terrorist groups using nuclear weapons will not remain anonymous and that the ties between such groups and states are widely known provide powerful disincentives to transfer nuclear weapons in the first place. Nuclear forensics reinforces these disincentives. Moreover, nuclear states are unlikely to see their way to palming off their costly investment in nuclear weapons to parties they cannot trust or control or whose plans and intentions may change in the future (Coetzee, 2021, p. 227). Transferring a nuclear weapon to terrorists requires relinquishing complete control over these weapons (Sagan et al., 2013, p. 195). Even among the closest allies, rifts sometimes occur. States contemplating palming off a nuclear weapon to a terrorist group cannot be sure that terrorists would not unleash the bomb on “a target the donor would not approve – including, potentially, on the donor itself” (Mueller, 2018, p. 96). In the case of both Al Qaeda and ISIS (and their various offshoots and affiliates), their list of enemies appears to be expanding by the day, with both groups unlikely to be trusted with a nuclear weapon by just about every state. Whether in the Middle East, Africa or, for that matter, anywhere else, states contemplating transferring nuclear weapons to third parties face clear and present dangers with their very survival at stake.

The second path towards a terrorist nuclear bomb would be for would-be nuclear terrorists to either steal or buy a finished nuclear bomb. For some time after the Cold War, nuclear observers were concerned about “loose nukes” in post-communist Russia (where poor security ostensibly carried the day), fearing that terrorists could steal or illicitly buy “suitcase bombs” (Mueller, 2020). However, various studies have concluded that none of these “devices has been lost” and that it is “probably true that there are no ‘loose nukes’, transportable nuclear weapons missing from their proper storage locations and available for purchase in some way” (Mueller, 2020). Even fears about lax security at Russian nuclear storage sites are wildly exaggerated (cf. Younger, 2009, p. 151). Notwithstanding assertions to the contrary, nuclear states have every incentive to “take the security of their weapons very seriously” (Stephen Younger cited in Mueller, 2020). At any rate, any terrorist group that manages to steal a nuclear

weapon (a well-nigh impossibility in the first place) is bound to face the harsh reality that possession of a nuclear weapon does not translate into the capability to explode it (Younger, 2009, p. 153). Nuclear weapons are designed to prevent unauthorized detonation. Upon tampering with the weapon, a non-nuclear explosion will be triggered that destroys the bomb (Mueller, 2020). Exploding a stolen nuclear weapon requires having someone who knows how to operate the weapon, and “[s]uch people are very rare” (Younger, 2009, p. 153). While most weapon designers are familiar with how a nuclear weapon works, only a few are familiar with the types of signals to be sent to the weapon to detonate it. Individuals trained in weapons maintenance perform selected functions and are often unfamiliar with the weapon’s details on which they are working. Ultimately, as Stephen Younger (2008, p. 153) concludes, “[o]nly a few people in the world have the knowledge to cause an unauthorized detonation of a nuclear weapon”. Disassembling bombs and keeping their component parts in separate high-security vaults (as is the practice in, for instance, Pakistan) further complicates matters, as does the possibility of ensuring that the use, storage, maintenance, and deployment of nuclear weapons are dependent on several individuals and multiple codes (Mueller, 2018, p. 96).

If terrorist desire to go nuclear is negligible and if the paths toward stealing or receiving a nuclear weapon from a generous donor state prove well-near insurmountable, how likely are terrorists to build their own bomb (using purloined fissile material, whether plutonium or highly enriched uranium) from scratch? The short answer is: extremely unlikely. Terrorists desiring to build their own nuclear devices are confronted with “Herculean challenges” (the Gilmore Commission cited in Mueller, 2018, p. 96). In attempting to produce a workable nuclear device, terrorists would have to complete a series of steps meticulously and successfully – importantly, failure to complete one or a few of the steps would not “simply imply a less powerful weapon”, but one unable to produce “any significant yield at all” or wholly undeliverable (Mueller, 2018, pp. 96–97). The first step in producing a terrorist nuclear bomb would be for terrorists to get their hands on either plutonium or highly enriched uranium. Given that plutonium is not a naturally occurring resource and the immense difficulties and dangers in handling it, a terrorist nuclear bomb would presumably use highly enriched uranium (Younger, 2008, pp. 142–144). However, for

terrorists to buy or steal fissile material (let alone a finished bomb) is forbiddingly hard. Incidents of theft of highly enriched uranium are negligible, totaling fewer than 16 pounds, far less than the requisite amount to detonate even a crude bomb (requiring more than 100 pounds to yield a blast of one kiloton). Even more reassuring is the fact that in those incidents, no connections were established between the thieves and terrorist groups, none of them had prospective buyers in mind, and almost everyone was caught as they were attempting to sell their illicit goods (mostly to covert agents running a sting) (Mueller, 2020). As far as we know, neither a black market nor a commercial market for fissile material exists (Jenkins, 2016). The desire for and attempts at stealing radioactive material from nuclear reactors have also been mostly unsuccessful. As John Mueller (personal communication, September 21, 2022) notes, “[r]eactors are rather secure facilities”, although a few attempts at breaking into such facilities have occurred. In November 2007, for instance, one such attempt occurred in South Africa, with two teams attempting to break into Pelindaba, that country’s research station (Jurgens, 2022). After investigating the attempt, an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) security review team “found no evidence to conclude that sensitive nuclear areas were under any threat” (Jurgens, 2022). Compounding terrorists’ difficulties in acquiring nuclear materials is the fact that its successful completion would require such groups to engage with corrupt and greedy collaborators – these could easily turn on them (out of sheer incompetence or guile) or transfer material that may turn out to be utterly useless. Where any theft does occur, a vigorous international policing effort is likely to follow (Mueller, 2018, p. 97). Importantly, whether uranium or plutonium is used, the acquisition of the material must be followed by the difficult task of machining the material “to tight tolerances to ensure a fit with other components of the weapon” (Younger, 2008, p. 143).

The second step in producing a terrorist nuclear bomb relates to creating a workable nuclear device, an undertaking that Stephen M. Younger (2008, p. 144) has described as beyond the technical reach of *all* terrorist groups. Even states have found it exceedingly difficult to develop nuclear weapons. Libya’s WMD program provides a case in point. The country’s WMD program was decades old yet very unsuccessful, and during 2000 it became a customer of the rogue

A.Q. Khan network, buying centrifuges, weapons design, and anything else Khan had on offer (Sagan et al., 2013, p. 189). Incidentally, some individuals and companies in South Africa also supplied nuclear components to Libya as part of Khan's network (Boureston & Lacey, 2007). Upon giving up its WMD program in 2003, it was apparent that nothing had been accomplished. Importantly, purchasing nuclear components was only a very small part of that country's problem in going nuclear; putting it all together proved the more vexing one (Sagan et al., 2013, p. 189). Without the required technical expertise, any procurement of nuclear technology is bound to yield little results. With this in mind, it is worth repeating Graham Allison's (2018, p. 8) conclusion that terrorists have historically been "technically challenged".

Any terrorist nuclear bomb is likely to be a primitive one – what has generally been termed an improvised nuclear device (IND), one that uses a gun-assembled design. Contrary to what is widely believed, making a primitive nuclear device is not "as simple", as some suggest, "as shooting two slugs of uranium against each other in an old artillery barrel" (Younger, 2008, p. 144). Even after constructing such a device, it remains distinctly possible that the gun-assembled device will not work. Although nuclear alarmists often correctly point out that bomb dropped on Hiroshima employed a gun-assembled design (the design terrorists would presumably emulate), Younger (2008, p. 145) reminds us that "that device was the product of some of the greatest physics and engineering minds in the world, and its success should not be used as a demonstration of the ease with which a nuclear weapon might be created". Would-be terrorists will also run into debilitating weapon-design issues. Access to blueprints found on the Internet – even accurate ones – is also of little help in creating a workable nuclear device – even if terrorists could get an accurate blueprint, "they would most certainly be forced to redesign" (Wirz & Egger, 2005, pp. 499–500). Although various instruction manuals are available on the Internet today (and, of course, a great deal of misinformation and error), similar manuals were also available at libraries or bookstores decades ago. Notwithstanding this, "terrorists then built better bombs than they do now" (Jenkins, 2017, p. 3; Mueller, 2017, p. 727).

Furthermore, captured documents and interrogation efforts of Al Qaeda and ISIS prisoners have evinced that none of these groups had managed to obtain fissile material or possessed the technical

knowledge to build a nuclear weapon (Jenkins, 2016). In sifting through information obtained at Al Qaeda training camps, analysts concluded that the group “would not have known how to fabricate a nuclear bomb” (Jenkins, 2016). Against this backdrop, four reasons emerge that militate against terrorists developing their own bomb: one, the requisite expertise is very difficult to acquire, and the technical requirements are exceedingly high (in fact, in some fields, such requirements “verge on the unfeasible”) (Wirz & Egger, 2005, p. 501); two, obtaining sufficient amounts of highly enriched uranium is exceedingly difficult, coupled with the problem of machining the material to tight tolerances and finding a workable bomb design; three, highly sophisticated machine tools and infrastructure are required, along with multiple co-conspirators and a large and secluded area to set up shop; and four, even if terrorists manage to acquire a workable bomb design, they would surely be forced to redesign, something that requires expertise beyond the reach of any terrorist group. When all these steps are completed, the finished bomb, likely weighing over a ton, would have to be transported to the planned target, without, of course, arising any suspicion (Mueller, 2018, p. 97). Even after all their efforts and the financial costs incurred, the weapon may prove to be a dud (Mueller, 2018, p. 97). Ultimately, as Stephen Younger (2008, p. 146) concludes, the notion “that a terrorist group, working in isolation with an unreliably supply of electricity and little access to tools and supplies” could create a workable nuclear device is “far-fetched at best”.

The trends outlined above concerning the specter of nuclear terror in Africa – notably, the interdependence of an increased nuclear footprint in Africa, increased terrorism (of a particular type and creed), and transnational organized crime – do not alter these conclusions. One can, of course, argue that the plague of “ungoverned spaces” in Africa, the existence of well-established networks for illicit commodities, the presence of extremist groups, and corrupt security officials and weak security agencies coalesce to help tick some of the boxes relating to the postulated requirements for terrorists to go nuclear. Ticking some boxes will scarcely be sufficient in creating a nuclear bomb. One would do well to recall that Aum Shinrikyo, despite having a WMD budget of \$1 billion, employing about 300 scientists and operating in a “safe haven” fit for setting up a machine shop, failed miserably in their attempt to go nuclear.

Whether in Africa, the Middle East or elsewhere, terrorists desiring to go nuclear face well-near insurmountable challenges.

Conclusion

I have presented a picture of trends that appear to raise the specter of nuclear terror – in Africa but also beyond it. On the face of it, these highly interdependent trends coalesce to create an environment ripe for nuclear terror. In considering the nuclear equation (in Africa and elsewhere), this picture is scarcely the only one to be considered and most definitely not the most important one. Juxtaposed with this picture is one in which terrorists have manifested little desire in going nuclear and, importantly, in which the challenges presented in each step towards a bomb are well-near insurmountable. Obviously, this analysis does not suggest that the international community of states (and other actors) should become *less* devoted in its efforts to safeguard nuclear material. What it does suggest, however, is that the specter of nuclear terror – in Africa, but also everywhere else – is hardly something to lose sleep over.

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Chapter 10

PEACEFUL ATOM FOR AFRICA? ENERGY SECURITY AND GEOPOLITICS

Introduction

Africa is no stranger to acute energy shortages, which cost the continent up to 4% of GDP annually. These shortages have a significant negative impact on sustainable development, economic growth, jobs, and investment in the continent. Average per capita consumption in Sub-Saharan Africa, excluding South Africa, is 65% below the average for developing economies (IEA, 2019, p. 15). Given increasing population and expanded industrialization in Africa, it is expected that corresponding electricity demand will continue to rise in the decades to come.

The COVID-19 epidemic and related restrictions have had a severe detrimental impact on Africa's energy development. In 2019–2021, the number of Africans without access to electricity grew by 4% (IEA, 2022). The potential of industrialization in Africa and the rapidly growing population cause a sharp increase in demand for electricity on the continent. It is expected that energy consumption in Africa will have at least doubled by 2030, offering huge potential for new energy sources (“African Energy,” 2018, p. 5).

Over the last three decades, the energy mix in Africa has been relatively constant, dominated by fossil fuel generation, with only hydropower as a meaningful renewable energy contribution (see figure 1). In 2011–2020, the share of the fossil fuels stood at 83%. The rapid rise in prices for fossil fuels, which today serves as the main source for energy generation, has forced African governments to look for alternative sources.

The situation is exacerbated by growing problems associated with climate change on the continent. Although the energy mix in Africa is

dominated by fossil fuel generation, the share of the continent in the world’s emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) is only 3%. Nevertheless, Africa will need to do substantially more to avoid the worst consequences of climate change than the rest of the world. By 2023, 54 African countries have ratified the Paris Agreement that provides for the reduction in CO₂ emissions and transition towards carbon free energy sources. However, the quest for new generating sources is hindered by the lack of technical know-how, an unstable political situation, significant corruption and geopolitical situation. Since February 2022, the contestation over the continent has significantly intensified as evidenced by the U.S. actions to counter Russian and Chinese “malicious” influence in Africa (more on it below).

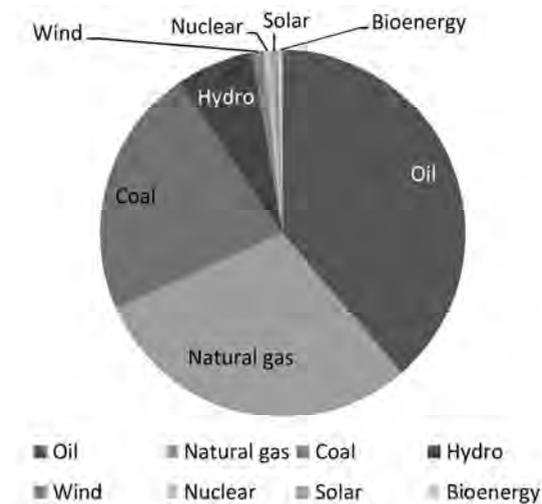


Figure 1. **Africa’s energy generation mix, 2020**
Source: “Electricity generation,” 2022.

Prospects of nuclear energy development in Africa

One of the most effective solutions of acute power deficit and transit to green technologies in Africa could be nuclear energy*. Currently

* It should be noted that there is still a discussion whether nuclear energy can be considered a green technology (*author’s note*).

nuclear power has no serious competition, especially if consideration is given to large countries with populations of tens of millions of people. It could be argued that nuclear energy is relatively clean and safe, carbon-free and can ensure stable electricity prices for many decades. However, nuclear energy business comes with its own risks and challenges. In general, opponents of nuclear energy point to a possible danger for nature and society associated with the extraction and utilization of nuclear materials. Recognizing the validity of these concerns, it is worth noting that modern mining methods allow avoiding any off-site pollution (World Nuclear Association, 2017). As far as the disposal and utilization is concerned, many African countries have uranium mines, and South Africa has the Vaalputs Radioactive Waste Disposal Facility.

Recently, several African countries have demonstrated their interest to develop nuclear energy technologies. In Africa, possession of nuclear energy technologies is seen as not only a solution to the current energy deficit but also as bestowing prestige on governments that own it. This interest attracted strategic attention from global players in nuclear energy such as Russia, France, China, South Korea, the U.S. and Japan. For Russia, which is trying to restore its former positions in Africa, one of the priority areas of cooperation is the energy sector. Russia's State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom, one of the leading nuclear energy companies in the world, tries to disseminate its technologies across the continent. This is apparent considering the various deals Rosatom entered into with different African countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt, Zambia, Ghana, to mention but a few.

As has been noted above, for many African countries possession of nuclear energy technologies is a matter of prestige. In particular, nuclear technologies are used in both national and international contexts to demonstrate strength and economic advancement. This may explain the increasing attraction to nuclear technology among African nations. Apart from Egypt, South Africa and Nigeria, several other African countries have started or are planning to launch a nuclear program. This is especially true of countries such as Zambia, Uganda, Kenya and Ghana, among others.

For large African economies such as South Africa, Nigeria or Egypt, large-scale nuclear energy projects can be seen as a good investment for the future to overcome energy shortages and reduce share of high-

carbon energy sources. For medium-sized economies in Africa such as Zambia, Uganda or Ghana, it makes more sense to develop smaller projects in the field of nuclear technologies, which is not limited to energy alone, but also involves medicine, industry and agriculture. In any case, energy security of Africa cannot be provided by a single solution, be it nuclear power plants (NPP) or renewable energy facilities, and requires diversification of energy mix, especially in countries with a stable political regime and rapidly growing economies.

However, a serious obstacle to the construction of NPP is the high cost and lengthy construction process. The process of building a nuclear power plant usually takes at least 7–10 years and also requires a long planning time to develop an appropriate regulatory framework. This is especially difficult for African countries, which have weak public institutions and experience difficulties obtaining finance to develop capital-intensive projects. For example, the cost of South Africa's nuclear program was estimated at \$50 billion for eight NPP units (total capacity of 9.6 GW*), while for Nigeria it is estimated at about \$20 billion for four NPP units (4.8 GW). Thus, only large and advanced African economies can afford the construction of NPP.

South Africa. The country has the only NPP on the entire African continent. It is located in Koeberg, about 30 km north of Cape Town. It was constructed using technologies of France's nuclear power company Areva (now – Orano) and began operation in 1984–85. In 2024, the Koeberg power plant will require renovation and extension of its design life when it reaches the end of its 40-year lifespan. It is planned that this extension will raise the capacity of the NPP to the initially planned 1.926 GW (Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, 2019). The two-reactor NPP is expected to be decommissioned between 2045 and 2047 (Govender et al., 2018).

During Jacob Zuma's presidency (2009–2018) in South Africa, the possibility of building new NPP units was seriously considered. In October 2010, South Africa's Department of Energy and Mineral Resources released a draft of the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) for 2010–2030. The plan was in effect a road map for the South African electricity development. However, the sector of nuclear power has become a subject of great dispute. As a result, the plan has been edited

* Gigawatt.

and revised several times. According to the 2016 edition of the plan, it was envisioned that by 2050 the construction of new power plants of different types would have increased the generating capacity to more than double of the current power generation – by about 125 GW (of solar – by 17.6 GW, wind – 37.4, nuclear – 20.4, gas turbine – 35.9, other sources – 15.2 [Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, 2016]).

The first stage of the nuclear project assumed construction of two NPP units at either Thyspunt in the Eastern Cape Province or Duynefontein in the Western Cape Province near the already operating NPP at Koeberg; the Bantamsklip location was found unsuitable. The first two mentioned sites have been approved by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (Polikarpov, 2016) with a plan to start construction in 2026 (Joemat-Petterson, 2016). The government of South Africa announced a state tender to build NPP. Orano and Rosatom were considered as the main vendors. The French company Orano has historical connections with ESKOM because they built the Koeberg NPP between 1976 and 1984. However, considering that Orano has been facing problems with reconstruction, it is unlikely that the company could lead the process of developing nuclear energy technology in South Africa. For instance, the construction of a single nuclear reactor in Finland by Orano was years behind schedule (after winning the initial tender). As a result, the tender for a new Finnish NPP was won by Rosatom (Ivanter & Semikashev, 2017). However, this contract was terminated in March 2022 after the start of Russia's military operation in Ukraine.

The Russian company, in turn, offered quite favorable terms for South Africa. In particular, it was prepared to ensure a high degree of localization in terms of construction work, which would depend on a number of nuclear reactors built. That is, 30% localization if only one or two power units were erected, and up to 60% for the construction of seven or eight reactors (Polikarpov, 2016). That is partly a reason why Russia was considered the likely choice for building a NPP in South Africa.

When Cyril Ramaphosa came to power in February 2018, the plans of nuclear energy development were put on hold and the priorities of the energy development were changed. Ramaphosa said that South Africa could not afford a nuclear project. At the World Economic

Forum in Davos, he claimed that “we have no money to go for a major nuclear plant building” (Dahinten et al., 2018). The South African president once again confirmed that position during a private meeting with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin during the BRICS summit in Johannesburg in July 2018 (“Russia’s Putin raises,” 2018). In the new IRP Update Draft Report 2018, the focus was changed to renewable energy development, while the implementation of the nuclear program was suspended (Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, 2018). However, according to Minister of Energy Gwede Mantashe, South Africa still considers adding nuclear power capacity in an affordable way as part of long-term plans of energy development (“SA to consider,” 2019).

Thus, despite some promising potential and long-term benefits of the South African nuclear project, its implementation is cumbersome. The main reason is simple: the South African budget deficit has made it difficult for the country’s treasury to fund the atomic project. Another option of obtaining project financing by using government employees’ pension savings was also discussed. However, it is very doubtful that the South African government will engage such an option given the strong resistance of the public to the proposal. Sections of the media also stand against NPP construction, often condemning the project as potentially corrupt and dangerous for the society. Renewable energy companies and most eco-activists oppose the NPP project as well.

Nigeria. The government of Nigeria has repeatedly expressed its interest in developing nuclear power as a possible solution to the country’s acute energy deficit. Nigeria’s nuclear power prospecting started in 1976 when the National Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC) was established by Act No. 46. According to the provisions of the document, it was aimed to prepare Nigeria to adopt, build and implement a nuclear energy power program. In 1979, the Energy Commission of Nigeria was created, and several programs, protocols and cooperation agreements to ensure the energy security of Nigeria through the deployment of NPP were adopted. To achieve these particular objectives, several centers were established at universities across the country to ensure institutional and human capacity development to manage the delicate and technologically driven NPP. Later, a national center known as the Nuclear Technology Centre was created at the Sheda Science and Technology Complex in Abuja

(“History,” n.d.). Subsequently, the Nuclear Regulatory Authority (NRA) was formed to initiate the operationalization and standardization of future atomic policy.

However, the implementation of the NPP project has been repeatedly delayed due to several reasons. One of them is the lack of political will by successive governments to implement the NPP project. This is coupled with unstable political situation, as there took place a coup d'état and counter coup that put the NPP project in the back seat of national discourse. Another reason for the delay in the Nigerian atomic program has been the growing voices of civil society organizations within and outside the country against the project. Many of its critiques have raised issues on the potential environmental and human disasters that could occur, considering the experience that Nigeria has had with its fossil fuel power generation. For example, Nigeria has experienced regular gas pipeline vandalism in the Niger Delta region, which culminated with the Niger Delta insurgency in 1999–2008 (Okoki, 2019).

Violent agitation has put sensitive national projects and installations at risk of sabotage and disruption. This could explain why several environmental activists argue that Nigerians do not have confidence in using nuclear energy to solve the country's energy needs and there are safer alternatives such as solar and wind sources. They expressed strong reservations with the high cost of building of a NPP, and there are also concerns about radioactive waste utilization (Proctor, 2018). It must be noted that these concerns are credible because nuclear energy development in Nigeria comes with serious technical and security risks. In the country, the possible construction of such a critical and hazardous facility as a NPP would be predominantly carried out by foreign specialists, which could attract attention of various extremist groups. They could try to use this opportunity to achieve their goals. It is especially true taking into account that the potential sites for NPP construction are located in regions with large-scale unemployment, widespread poverty and high social inequality, which present a fertile ground for spreading radical ideas.

Nevertheless, with President Muhammadu Buhari (2015–2023) coming to power, the nuclear project attracted a renewed interest. As of 2023, nuclear energy is considered to be a potential major source of electricity to improve and diversify electricity generation. To achieve

this feat, the Nigerian government reactivated the deployment of a national nuclear power generation program. To this end, the government started negotiations with different countries in order to acquire nuclear technologies. The Russian proposal, buttressed by expertise in building NPP, is regarded by the Nigerian government as most viable solution for implementing its nuclear technology objectives. Thus, in 2017, the countries signed the agreements on construction and operation of a NPP and a research center to conduct multi-purpose nuclear research. It was reported that Nigeria planned to construct 4 NPP units with a total capacity of 4.8 GW. The preliminary cost of the project is \$20 billion (“Russia to build,” 2017). The parties also signed a roadmap for cooperation in the field of peaceful usage of nuclear technologies, but specific details like the time and place of construction were not disclosed. According to the NAEC, the nuclear roadmap, which among other things provided for “a commercial plant and... three more in five to 10 years”, was to be completed by mid-2020s (Awodiye, 2018).

Two locations in Kogi and Akwa Ibom states were approved by the NAEC in 2017, and they are now under consideration by the IAEA. Proponents of the nuclear project have supported the notion that Nigeria stands to benefit from construction of a NPP despite the high cost involved. In comparison, Nigerians spent about \$14 billion yearly on off-grid petrol and diesel generation (Osugwu, 2017). Considering the government declarations on boosting electricity generation in Nigeria, it is expected that it will advance the NPP program that has stalled for decades. Thus, it is very likely that the development of nuclear technologies will continue in the country. This could also improve Nigerian electricity mix and generation that is in dire need of expansion. Besides, it will give the country the prestige of possessing nuclear technology, as well as reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Egypt. The country has considered constructing NPP since the 1960s. The regulatory body – the Nuclear Power Plants Authority (NPPA) – was established in 1976. The El Dabaa site, which is on the Mediterranean coast, about 320 km northwest of Cairo, was approved by the IAEA in 1983. However, due to the Chernobyl accident in 1986, nuclear energy development in Egypt was put on hold. Only 20 years later, the government of Egypt announced that it would revive its civilian nuclear power program and build NPP. In March 2008, Egypt

signed an agreement with Russia on the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Similar agreements were signed with China (2006) and South Korea (2013).

Rosatom offered the most favorable terms for Egypt, which helped the company win in the competition for the “atomic contract”. In December 2017, Egypt and Russia signed a contract to build the country’s first NPP. The estimated cost of the project is \$45.5 billion; Russia granted a long-term loan that will cover \$25 billion with an annual interest rate of only 3% to be paid from 2028 to 2050 (Mahmoud, 2022). For Egypt, the expected profit will amount to \$260 billion given the minimum reactor life of 60 years, or even \$340 billion if reactor operates for 80 years (Fadi Francis, 2017). The cost of producing a unit of electricity (kW·h) at El Dabaa will not exceed 1.75 cents (Fadi Francis, 2017). The construction of the first unit assumes a 20% localization of equipment and services. It is expected that the degree of localization will increase with the construction of the subsequent units. In turn, Egypt will finance the remaining amount of the contract payment and also start repaying the loan in 2029 (“Russia to lend,” 2016).

The El Dabaa NPP will be the first of its kind in the region, which makes Egypt the only country in Africa that has a NPP under construction. Rosatom will use VVER-1200 technology of the “3+” generation, which today corresponds to the highest, so-called “post-Fukushima” safety standards. The first power unit should be commissioned by 2030. The construction project assumes the erection of 4 NPP units with a total capacity of 4.8 GW, which is more than 8% of Egypt’s total installed capacity of 57 GW (US Energy Information Administration, 2022).

Nuclear energy and geopolitical contestation in Africa

Contestation over the African nuclear market is not only economic but also geopolitical. It is speculated that the country that builds a NPP will obtain considerable influence over the host country for the next 50–100 years. One can argue that Russia is trying to increase its influence in Africa through promoting nuclear energy solutions. No wonder, Russian nuclear projects in Africa have experienced strong resistance from other global players.

Since the start of Russia's military operation in Ukraine in February 2022, the geopolitical contestation for political influence in Africa has increased. Notably, unlike some other regions, half of African states did not support the UN General Assembly resolution of 3 March 2022, which condemned Moscow's actions in Ukraine: Eritrea voted against, while twenty-six African governments abstained or were absent. In the similar vein, presidents of many African countries commented in a rather conciliatory manner on the situation in Ukraine. For example, the South African president Ramaphosa has resisted calls to condemn Russia and even blamed the U.S. and NATO for not heeding warnings from Moscow about its eastward expansion. "Our position on this is respected, it is known and recognized. We should not be told by anyone who we associate with and we should never be put in positions where we have to choose who our friends are" ("Biden talks," 2022), Ramaphosa told reporters after the meeting with the U.S. President Joe Biden on 16 September 2022. Interestingly, the South African president was also one of the few world's leaders who congratulated Putin on his 70th birthday in October 2022.

To counter Russian influence in Africa, the U.S. has taken several steps, including the adoption of the Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa Act, which passed the House of Representatives on 27 April 2022 by a significant bipartisan (419-9) majority. The act is expected to become law soon. It would direct the U.S. Secretary of State "to develop and submit to Congress a strategy and implementation plan outlining United States efforts to counter the malign influence and activities of the Russian Federation and its proxies in Africa" ("H.R.7311," 2022). Similar steps, though not yet formalized into law, have been taken by EU leaders.

Although most of African countries have not joined the sanctions against Russia, Russian projects on the continent have come under severe pressure. According to Al Jazeera, in March 2022 the Egyptian government unofficially put on hold the project of NPP construction in El Dabaa due to anti-Russia's sanctions, the disconnection of Russian banks from the SWIFT system, and the rapid depreciation of the ruble. In June 2022, however, the Egyptian leadership issued a license to Rosatom for the NPP construction. Nevertheless, difficulties still exist, and the Western sanctions, among other things, will affect the ability of Rosatom to purchase the components for the construction of the NPP.

At best, it will only affect the price; at worst, the company will not be able to obtain necessary components.

However, it is unlikely that direct sanctions against the Russian nuclear industry will be introduced any time soon. The CIS countries together with Africa produce over 70% of uranium, while Russia controls about 35% of the world market for enriched uranium. NPPs in the U.S. and EU are critically dependent on enriched uranium supplies from Russia and Kazakhstan. No wonder that Rosatom was excluded from all sanction packages both in the U.S. and the EU. Notably, in August 2022 South Korea's nuclear power operator Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power was subcontracted by Russia's Atomstroyexport "to provide materials and help to build four plants in Egypt" ("S. Korea wins," 2022).

Overall, Rosatom remains a significant exception; no sanctions have been imposed against the ultimate parent company Rosatom as of August 2023. Notably, the U.S. continues to purchase uranium fuel from Rosatom to supply its own atomic reactors. However, on July 20, 2023, the U.S. imposed the fourth round of sanctions against subsidiary companies of Rosatom. This measure was declared by the U.S. State Department as putting "continuing pressure on Rosatom" (U.S. Department of State, 2023).

Conclusion

The energy partnership between Russia and Africa is beneficial to both sides. A positive aspect of cooperation for Russia is entering new promising markets of African countries, which can provide additional impetus to the development of Russian energy technologies. Africa is also interested in attracting Russian business to solve the acute energy shortage problem.

Today, most of the energy produced in Africa comes from thermal coal and gas power plants. The necessity to decrease CO₂ emissions in African countries in line with the Paris agreement makes nuclear solution a viable option. Even though the share of Africa in global CO₂ emission is minimal compared to advanced economies such as the U.S. and China, the threat of global warming on the continent is more apparent in comparison with the Northern hemisphere. Nuclear energy could both contribute to a soft transition from environmentally

unfriendly fossil-fired power plants to carbon free technologies, and also be an effective solution to the acute energy crisis on the continent. The huge financial cost in NPP construction will be compensated by the supply of stable and cheap electricity for up to 100 years. Also, it will help address such acute problems in Africa like unemployment, lack of technological skills, and low scientific capacity in relevant areas.

However, with a new Cold War between Russia and the West, competition for Africa has increased both in the political and economic spheres. Nuclear energy has not yet been subjected to restrictions by Western countries, as their dependence on uranium supplies from Russia is very high and they are forced to continue cooperating with Moscow in this area. However, there is no doubt that they will try to overcome this dependence, and nuclear energy projects have already received a second wind in Europe. The growing antagonism will increase competition in the global nuclear energy market, which will affect the prospects of development of new peaceful nuclear technologies in Africa.

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Part III

ADDRESSING SOURCES OF INSECURITY IN AFRICA: PROMISE AND PITFALLS

Dr. Albert Schoeman
University of the Free State,
Bloemfontein, South Africa

Chapter 11

HYBRID POLITICAL ORDERS: A POST-WESTERN ALTERNATIVE TO STATE-BUILDING IN FRAGILE STATES OR A HOPELESS FANTASY? THE CASE OF SOMALILAND

Introduction

The insufficiencies of the current and dominant state-centric approach to state-building are made apparent because the world's nearly 200 nation-states are not serving the interests of most of the world population of eight billion people. Current international relations theory, with specific reference to issues of statehood, the fragile state perspective, and state-building, is accused of being exclusive and serving only a small minority at the expense of the rest of the world population. Instead of over-emphasizing the politics of public bodies, political science and international relations theory should rather focus more on people or politics at the level of the man on the street. By emphasizing the role of Hybrid Political Orders (HPO), the chapter will attempt to provide a post-Western revisionist, and alternative perspective to current state-building practices and, therefore, sets out to provide a post-Western, more inclusive and less state-centric perspective on the study of the state.

The chapter focuses on Somaliland as a case study to demonstrate how a bottom-up hybrid state-building approach can be applied in practice. In contrast to Somalia's collapse of government institutions, clan leaders in Somaliland were instrumental in establishing a functional, effective, and legitimate political order through the integration of traditional institutions (House of Elders) and modern state institutions. Contrary to most other state-building exercises, the reconstruction of Somaliland had been pursued with very little external

assistance. The case of Somaliland has proven that new forms of state-building were possible without just copying Western state institutions but also emphasizing the role of customary institutions (Boege et al., 2009a; Pham, 2008).

The chapter, therefore, argues that the state-centric approach, manifesting in the Weberian definition of the state and adhered to by the fragile state discourse as well as Western state-building efforts, has not succeeded in providing an objective, counter-hegemonic and emancipating perspective of states that they label as weak, failed, or collapsed. Instead, focus is directed to Hybrid Political Orders as an alternative perspective that follows a post-Western approach more suited to understanding the realities in fragile states while acknowledging the role of traditional authorities as equally important in the hybrid state-building process. These state-centric ideas have to a large extent been influenced by the decades following the end of the Cold War.

The post-Cold War origins of the fragile state discourse

The fall of the Berlin wall and the consequent demise of the Soviet Union caused an ideological paradigm-shift in International Relations. With the threat of communism as the ideological rival of the West eliminated, the impetus shifted towards the encouragement of liberal democratic values in those states that were previously under the control of the former Soviet Union, but also states in the developing world that suffered under the brutality of authoritarian regimes and failing governments (Wesley-Smith, 2004). The “third wave of democratization” described by political scientist Samuel Huntington (1991) reflected on the shift towards liberal democracies as the governance choice in the 1990s. Especially in Africa, several states experienced political and economic turmoil after independence. This situation encouraged a body of literature that became known as the failed state (later to be re-named fragile state) discourse. The fragile state discourse attempted to explain why states in the developing world would deteriorate from a condition of relative stability to a position of failure. By the early 1990s, the concept of state failure had gained widespread acceptance among academics, government agencies, think tanks, and development organizations. As the Cold War ended and the new

millennium dawned, the emphasis of the fragile state discourse began to shift from a more humanitarian focus (e.g., civil wars, poverty, socio-economic stagnation) towards a position that regarded fragile states as a security threat. The 9/11 terrorist attacks convinced many Western governments that a global security threat now replaced the localized threat that fragile states presented. For most of the 1990s and into the new millennium, fragile states were held responsible for everything from terrorist attacks to political and economic instability (Andersen, 2008; Taylor, 2013). In the following section the influence of the Weberian definition of the state on the fragile state discourse will be briefly scrutinized.

The Weberian definition of the state as the foundation of the fragile state discourse

Max Weber (1946, p. 77) describes the state as “a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate physical force within a given territory”. What distinguished the state from other political associations was the drastic nature of its means of ultimate control or physical force. The Weberian definition of the state has appealed to adherents of the fragile state discourse as manifested in their perspectives on what an ideal-type state should be composed of and is further utilized as the criteria against which different degrees of deterioration in fragile states are measured. Ideal-type (or efficient) states succeed in combining well-developed and functioning bureaucratic structures with strong public-private ties. The appeal of the Weberian definition lies in its emphasis on the state structure and organization, which has had a profound influence on social science research of the state. Fragile state scholars have further embraced Weber’s emphasis on the empirical (*de facto*) characteristics of the state (the ability to use force) rather than the juridical (*de jure*) attributes of statehood (Jackson, 1990). However, to provide an authoritative definition of the state, the empirical and judicial characteristics had to be considered as both these attributes can be regarded as the cornerstone on which the Montevideo Conference of 1933 based its authoritative legal definition of the state. It defined the state as having a permanent population, a defined territory, a government, and the capacity to enter relations with other states (sovereignty). Sovereignty

and territory were identified as the main components of the juridical (*de jure*) attributes and population and government as the empirical (*de facto*) attributes of the state (Du Plessis, 2004; Solomon, 2013).

A conceptualization of the fragile state discourse

To get to the heart of defining fragile states, scholars within this discourse focus on the government and state apparatus being able to function efficiently, be transparent, enforce its will effectively within the entirety of its territory, be regarded as legitimate among its population, have a strong, vibrant economy, grant several fundamental rights to its citizens, and distribute essential political goods. These governance attributes must be present in any successful state (Faria, 2011). The fragile state discourse justifies its state-centric approach by arguing that no other form of social organization has succeeded in history in displacing the state. The discourse then used these attributes as the benchmark against which conditions in fragile states are compared and then categorized according to the extent of the deterioration that these states experience (Brock et al., 2012).

The fragile state discourse developed various approaches to interpret and explain why some states failed and others succeeded. The first approach involved using the Weberian definition of what is referred to as an ideal-typical state as the benchmark against which states had to adhere (as briefly discussed in the previous section). As the bearer of a monopoly of overwhelming force, the state had to guarantee and maintain the protection and security of its citizens within the jurisdiction of its borders. States that could not maintain authority over their entire territory would find themselves on the road to failure. The second or Lockean approach described the responsibility of the state as that of a service provider. Zartman (1995) and Rotberg (2002) referred to the state's ability to provide its citizens with political goods such as infrastructure, medical care, and education. The degree to which a state could not provide these political goods determined its degree of failure.

The fragile state discourse has been influential and controversial within both the fields of development and security studies. From both these perspectives, fragile states are regarded as a threat to national security and democratic governance, specifically to good governance, the rule of law and safeguarding of human rights. According to Chuter

(2009), the fragile state approach has further created confusing classifications, describing these states as weak, failed, failing, and collapsed. Attention must also be focused on the global South's criticism of failure as having a threatening and humiliating tone and detrimental to states classified as failed because it discourages foreign investments in states that need it the most. The stigmatization of the term "failed" is seen as just another justification of the West to interfere in the affairs of these states (Chuter, 2009; Grimm et al., 2014).

Two categories that have been important in defining the fragile state concept must be scrutinized. According to Grimm et al. (2014), the first category is referred to as problem solvers and the second as critical scholars. Problem solvers focus most of their attention on performance issues of states and provide governments and international institutions with recommendations on how to improve conditions in fragile states. On the other hand, critical scholars question the value, significance, and meaning of the fragile state concept. Problem solvers have attempted to determine the different degrees of failure in fragile states by developing different classification models as well as attempting to predict the likelihood of failure in different scenarios. Focus can, for instance, be placed on the contributions of problem-solving scholars such as Geldenhuys (1999), Rotberg (2002) and Gros (1996), as their classification models can be regarded as some of the most authoritative and their approaches to distinguish between different degrees of failure have also been quite similar. Focus must also be directed to a second category of the definition of fragile states, namely the critical scholars. Here, focus must be placed on criticism of the fragile state discourse. The discussion was organized by focusing on four levels of criticism: the state-centric approach of the concept, its flawed classification models, the idea that fragile states are havens for terrorist activities and the fact that the whole fragile state concept has weak theoretical foundations (Brock et al., 2012). The fragile state discourse describes the state as a collection of institutions, oblivious to the fact that it is a particular type of relationship between these institutions and society. Finally, the discourse "bases their explanation of state failure on a particular normative model of the state – a liberal democratic state that follows free-market economic principles, that is transparent and accountable and possesses very specific institutional requirements.

Critics see this as nothing more than a value-based notion of what the state is supposed to be and a patronizing approach to scoring states based on how these states manage to adhere to those values” (Schoeman, 2008, pp. 751–770). Western state building approaches have also embraced the Weberian definition of the state as their point of departure.

Western state-building practices and its embrace of the Weberian definition of the state

The role and influence of current peace- and state-building practices, and how its operations are founded on the Western (Weberian) model of the state as well as the fragile state discourse must also be scrutinized. Current peace and state-building approaches are seen as obstacles to the successful reconstruction of fragile states because of their ignorance of the role of traditional authorities. Peacebuilding became prominent during the 1990s and was endorsed by the United Nations who initiated several peacekeeping efforts in fragile states. The main functions of peacebuilding can therefore be summarized as follow: the establishment of liberal governance (promotion of the rule of law, multi-party elections, constitutional democracy, human rights, and a free-market economy), guaranteeing order within the state in the context of global security and stability, upholding social justice and ensuring an end to any form of discrimination against minorities (Menocal, 2011).

According to Andersen (2008), state-building has emerged as the primary strategy for addressing the numerous “ills” associated with state fragility. State-building is further explained as external interventions that seek to reconstruct those governance arrangements that can assist the citizenry with physical security and economic sustainability. Additionally, it referred to the establishment, re-establishment, and strengthening of a public structure capable of delivering public goods in each territory (Menocal, 2011). Grävingsholt et al. (2009) argued that this conceptual confusion between these two concepts could be resolved by emphasizing that state-building appeared to be a central element of peacebuilding in post-conflict situations while peacebuilding activities are often regarded as important elements of state-building activities. The Weberian point of view towards state-

building, with its overemphasis on imposing Western governmental institutions on fragile states, has, therefore, become unsuited to understand states' political and social dynamics in these unstable dispensations.

The chapter further argues that like the views of the fragile state discourse, practitioners of peace- and state-building shared the same fixation about transforming states that experienced failure and even collapse into an ideal-typical Western manifestation of the state. In doing so, they have neglected the influence of traditional authorities and customary law as the providers of law and order, protection, and services in the absence of a functioning state. Current peace- and state-building practices had to be re-thought or even re-designed to acknowledge the role of customary forms of governance in collaboration with state institutions to create state-building efforts that guarantee strong state capacity, effectiveness, and legitimacy. In most developing states, and especially those classified as failed, the practices of governance and the creation of order often reside in non-state forms of customary rule rather than in government institutions (Chemhuru, 2017).

The neo-liberal Western top-down state-building approach that has been followed in Somalia has failed because it was unable to bring an end to a conflict that has been carrying on for many decades, and that the focus should rather be on the relative successes of the bottom-up state-building approach that had been achieved in Somaliland (Wennmann, 2010). There are several reasons why state-building exercises have been unsuccessful. To begin, the rapid results promised by a massive influx of foreign aid created unrealistic expectations. Second, due to weak state capacity, aid is provided through non-governmental or international organizations, bypassing governments, and relegating them to the role of spectators rather than distributors. Thirdly, donor organizations' capacity-building efforts have been highly ineffective, and despite lessons learned from other countries about inefficient technical assistance, they have continued to pour money into these areas. The final issue is that international communities are implementing a broad range of political, social, and economic reforms ahead of the capacity of governments in developing countries to foster ownership (Francois & Sud, 2006). As a result, it can be argued that current state-building practices did not adequately

respect indigenous cultures and lacked the capacity to facilitate widespread democratic participation and ensure the effective delivery of government services. The need for change has led to revisionist approaches to state-building that provided alternative views to the current norm of Western state-building practices.

A revisionist approach to Western state-building

Recent studies on political pluralism, neo-patrimonialism and ungoverned spaces have attempted to investigate different aspects of the roles of non-state actors in developing states. This further included the so-called neo-Weberian institutionalism approach, which circumvented traditional approaches towards fragile states and rather focused on promoting governance amongst the dominant groups at local level. It proposed a revisionist approach, attempting to better understand the political dynamics of local authorities in developing states, thus developing into what is now referred to as Hybrid Political Orders (Solomon, 2013; Kraushaar & Lambach, 2009). Within the revisionist body of literature, two goals could be distinguished: one focused attention on the internal dynamics of ordering a post-conflict state to achieve a balanced coexistence between state institutions and non-state actors, whilst the other goal was to determine how external international donors and agendas interacted, contested, and merged with local actors (Moe, 2011).

The term Hybrid Political Order is the manifestation of these two goals. The revisionist approach, it is argued, is more critical of the liberal state-building project and advocates for a much stronger emphasis on local realities, institutions, knowledge, and agency. Within the revisionist approach, several scholars have attempted to better understand the political dynamics in developing states by focusing on local/traditional institutions that seemed to be intertwined with state institutions. One problem with these theoretical perspectives is that they have a limited scope regarding their focus on traditional institutions. However, these perspectives have planted the seed to move towards a post-Weberian approach to state-building instead of the neo-Weberian approach that is currently followed (Lottholz & Lemay-Hébert, 2016). Hybrid state-building which manifests itself in the hybrid political order discourse is discussed next.

A conceptualization of hybrid political orders

A Hybrid Political Order is defined by multiple and competing authority structures, distinct rules, behavioral logics, and claims to power that merge, interact, and intertwine while incorporating elements of Western models of governance and indigenous institutions. In fact, Boege et al. (2009b) argues that “in hybrid political orders diverse and competing authority structures, sets of rules, logics of behavior and claims to power co-exist, overlap, interact, and intertwine. They combine elements of introduced Western models of governance and elements stemming from local indigenous traditions of governance and politics, with further influences exerted by the forces of globalization and related societal re-making of fragmentation (e.g., ethnic, tribal, religious)”. This form of hybridity is further distinguished by the absence of the use of categories or binaries that have been characteristic of the fragile state and liberal state-building practices. It provided a more holistic approach that avoided orthodox conflict analysis templates, which often takes no recognition of issues such as gender, dissent, and inconsistencies among the population (MacGinty & Richmond, 2016).

Hybrid Political Order was, from a revisionist perspective, the best able to theoretically explain the realities of the post-conflict political community, with specific reference to the importance of the role and resilience of traditional and customary authorities (Wennmann, 2010). The term hybrid was also broad enough to encompass a variety of non-state forms of order and the realization that they did not function in isolation but were interwoven. Adherents of the HPO discourse were not opposed to Western state institutions as such. It rather focused on blending these state institutions with traditional types of authorities to create a system of governance that was a more accurate reflection of the internal dynamics of states categorized as failed. Instead of focusing on negatives such as weakness, failure and collapse emphasized by the fragile state perspective, the HPO discourse focuses on the positives associated with hybridity, which highlights generative processes, innovative adaptation, and ingenuity.

The Hybrid Political Order discourse did not claim to provide a paradigm shift in terms of how institutional interaction ought to be studied. It rather made valuable contributions on refocusing a debate

that seems to have lost sight of differences among states that were institutionally complex and changing. This re-conceptualization of fragile states as Hybrid Political Orders opened new possibilities in the study of governance systems by re-orientating thoughts about the role of external assistance in state-building endeavors. Despite the many potential positives associated with the HPO discourse, the study acknowledges that because it was still a new approach, it was far from a position of providing all the answers to continuous questions that arise from post-conflict societies (Boege, 2009).

Additionally, it was noted that in many developing states, customary, non-state institutions of governance (which date all the way back to pre-colonial times) continue to play a significant role in the lives of people living in traditional societies (Mutusi, 2011). In their approach to state-building in fragile states, Western policymakers have made two crucial mistakes. On the one hand, there was limited engagement with the local populations and non-elites in traditional societies that felt that they had little to contribute to the process of reconstructing the state. On the other hand, there was also significant tension between the international fixed standard of legitimacy and the idea of good governance and perceptions on what constituted legitimacy that was held by local populations (Smith, 2012).

Hybrid state-building acknowledges the importance of a governing partnership between traditional and state institutions in contrast to neo-liberal state-building practices that only acknowledge the model of Western state institutions. The realization that the co-existence of official state institutions (that can no longer provide security, individual rights, and political goods to all within its territory) and customary non-state authorities (that then fill this institutional void by providing some of those services) have forced scholars to rethink the traditional perception that the fragile state had to be reconstructed according to Western models of state-building (Wennmann, 2010). The HPO discourse emphasizes the resilience of customary, non-state institutions and authorities such as clan chiefs, village elders and religious leaders in determining the local experience and is often also instrumental in the successful operation of state institutions (Moe, 2011). One must, however, be careful not to blindly romanticize the role of customary or traditional authorities as faultless and perfect as they also displayed their own limitations. They often tended to be reactionary and

discriminatory towards women and the youth. Simultaneously, their authority rarely extended beyond their own ethnic, tribal, or clan group, with their responsibilities frequently limited to a few specific legal, political, and social issues.

The chapter argues that the Weberian form of statehood existed in very few states that were not members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Furthermore, very few states in the “rest of the world” (mostly states in the developing world) showed any resemblance to the Western state model. From the dominant Western perspective on state-building, the view remained that the state’s authority had to be transplanted to post-colonial environments. In contrast, HPO scholars shifted the emphasis away from the notion that Western institutions of the state are the only superior and ultimate form of political order to one that incorporates both non-state indigenous societal structures and introduces conventional Western state structures (MacGinty & Richmond, 2016). The application of hybrid state-building in Somaliland receives attention in the next section.

Hybrid state-building in Somaliland: A post-Western alternative or a hopeless fantasy?

Somaliland is emphasized as a case study for hybrid state-building, which involved the participation of traditional authorities in a bottom-up strategy with the almost complete absence of external assistance and intervention. Somaliland could be regarded as a beacon of hope and relative peace and tranquility amidst decades-long conditions of chaos and disorder in Somalia, of which it still forms part but from which it has demanded independence since 1991. Somaliland was granted independence from Britain in 1960, and its sovereignty was recognized by 35 states, including the U.S. The world community welcomed the new Republic of Somalia with enthusiasm. It was one of the few post-colonial African states with a population that was ethnically, linguistically, and religiously homogeneous, which made the possibility of a peaceful, stable region much more likely. Any possibilities for a peaceful co-existence of the union ended abruptly when General Mohamed Siad Barre overthrew the government of Somalia in a coup d’état on 21 October 1969 (Mesfin, 2009; Arieff, 2008; Solomon, 2013).

On 18 May 1991, Somaliland proclaimed its independence from Somalia, intending to reestablish the sovereign independence granted to them by the United Kingdom as the new Republic of Somaliland. The international community totally ignored the process of peacebuilding and post-war reconstruction in Somaliland after 1991 as they were preoccupied with the conflict in Somalia and the Balkans. The lack of external support, however, granted the people of Somaliland the opportunity to organize several conferences during the 1990s to forge consensus on peace as well as sign agreements on how political institutions and power-sharing should be constituted (Bradbury, 2008; Hagemann & Hoehne, 2009; Heleta, 2014; Hersi, 2018). The first conference took place in Berbera in February 1991, with reconciliation between the Isaaq and non-Isaaq clans as its main objective (Jama, 2017). This laid the groundwork for the second conference in Burco, where it was decided to break away from Somalia, establish an interim government, and draft an interim constitution. The first Somali National Movement (SNM) government under the leadership of Ahmed Ali Tuur was given a two-year mandate to reconstruct the state, establish security on its borders, revitalize the economy, formulate a new constitution and ensure the political accommodation of all clan structures (Ridout, 2012). The third conference held in May 1993 in Borama could be regarded as the most defining event in Somaliland's political development. The conference laid the groundwork for Somaliland's system of government (which became known as the *beel* referring to the community) and formalized the future role of traditional institutions. Additionally, the conference presided over the peaceful transition of power from the SNM government to a new civilian administration led by Mohammed Egal, who was elected for a two-year term. The new government arrangement could be described as a dynamic synthesis of Western form and traditional substances, consisting of an executive president, an independent judiciary, and a bicameral legislature comprised of an Upper House of Elders (the *Guurti*) and a Lower House of Representatives whose members were nominated on a clan basis by an elder's electoral college. This was, however, only one side of the story as the Egal government soon after the establishment of the state was accused of instigating a patronage system with handouts becoming the primary source of the legitimacy of statehood. While the elders in the *Guurti* had a significant role to play in decision-making during the

Borama conference, they started to lose their political initiative as they now became an ordinary organ of the state and partisan to Egal's government (Ridout, 2012; Mills, 2014; Hersi, 2018; Mesfin, 2009; Walls & Kibble, 2010).

At the dawn of the new millennium, a committee consisting of 45 members, appointed by the President, promulgated a draft constitution. A referendum was held a year later, on 31 May 2001, to approve the constitution and finally confirm Somaliland as an independent state. Consequently, 97% of the population approved, which meant that the new constitution facilitated the transition from a clan-based administration to a multi-party democratic system that guaranteed universal suffrage with specific emphasis on women's rights (Bennet & Woldemarian, 2011; Mesfin, 2009; Mills et al., 2019). The adoption of the new constitution further introduced the transition from a clan-based system to a multi-party democracy while retaining the *Guurti* as the representative chamber of traditional clan-based structures.

The study of HPO in Somaliland is significant since its peacebuilding and state formation exercise involved different clan authorities that were integrated within formal state institutions (the *Guurti*). Thus, Somaliland's governance system was a hybrid of Western political institutions and traditional clan representation systems, which contributed to the country's relative peace and stability by fusing the best of local and international practices. The establishment of a multi-party democracy was the culmination of the use of traditional consultative and consent processes, as well as Western electoral models adapted to fit Somaliland (Harper, 2012; Heleta, 2014; Hoehne, 2013).

Bottom-up state-building in Somaliland was internally organized by local political elites and authorities, especially those whose contributions have traditionally been marginalized and with or without external assistance (Johnson & Smaker, 2014; Phillips, 2016). Regarding Somaliland, the bottom-up approach was culturally rooted, locally owned, and therefore socially acceptable to the people in Somaliland (Hersi, 2018). It was acknowledged that for an enduring peace to have longevity Western (Weberian) state institutions still had to be an ingredient of this state-building recipe and often, the influence of external assistance is necessary to end large scale violence and prevent recurring conflict.

Because of this, Somaliland presented a stark illustration of the mismatch between internationally recognized sovereignty and what

might be called statehood or the *de facto* ability to govern institutions to exert control and security over its territory. As an unrecognized state, Somaliland has managed to maintain relative peace as a region that forms part of recognized Somalia that is buckling under the strain of lawlessness and ungovernability. In comparison, Somaliland's civil society has made a commitment to peace and the rule of law, which has served as a deterrent to would-be criminals, warlords, and politicians seeking to exploit clan tensions (Arieff, 2008; Hersi, 2018; Hoch & Rudincová, 2015; Keating, 2018).

The dilemma of the non-recognition of Somaliland as a sovereign state is to a large extent the result of many decades of unwillingness by the African Union and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), its predecessor, to support the secession of regions from their mother country with their adoption of two Charters that acknowledged only the existence of colonial borders at the time of a state's independence. These sentiments were also shared by the Arab League, which regarded the unity and integrity of member states as sacrosanct. There was also an unwillingness from the international community, intergovernmental organizations, and the UN because of the bad reputation of areas that have seceded and rather preferred the return of breakaway states to the administration of mother countries where they are granted wide autonomy within a federal type of system. By its seclusion, Somaliland has excluded itself from international deliberations, which have motivated the international community to support Somalia, in the hope that it would unify, rather than a secessionist region with no sovereignty (Arieff, 2008; Harper, 2012; Jama, 2017). By late 2020, Somaliland's internationally and regionally isolated status changed significantly as it established new diplomatic engagements, in the process winning for itself both friends and foes. Somaliland has been a silent actor in regional dynamics since it declared independence in 1991, owing to its lack of recognition and incentives from regional and global actors.

Concluding remarks: evaluating the successes and failures of hybrid state-building in Somaliland

The question whether this unique process of state-building could be regarded as a true practical application of successful hybridity

(which involves traditional as well as liberal democratic institutions in the governance process) was weighed against the possibility that the hybrid state-building process was just an interim phase towards Somaliland becoming a liberal democratic dispensation in which traditional authorities have very limited influence and authority. As the case of Somaliland indicated, hybrid state-building has not occurred according to how Boege (2009) and his associates have envisioned it. From their HPO perspective, state-building should involve the participation of both traditional authorities and Western state institutions in the formation of a government where they are equal partners in a permanent arrangement. As discussed earlier, this would involve a situation where formal and informal institutions achieve translation, accommodation, or equilibrium – hybrid peace.

The idea of this arrangement is to guarantee that citizens living under the authority of traditional leaders are fully represented in government. As the chapter argued, Western state-building exercises driven by external actors often involve the institutionalization of Western government structures that are alien and distant for people living under the authority of traditional institutions. These traditional authorities are rarely consulted in state-building initiatives and therefore excluded from the process that affects their futures and livelihoods. The study argued that Hybrid Political Orders are almost never balanced and frequently become imbalanced, with one side – either formal or informal institutions – gaining power over the other. Despite HPO's assertions that its contribution promotes Africa's democratic consolidation, the case of Somaliland demonstrated that the traditional system based on local communities and customary law and the state based on democratic principles and statute law merge at best for convenience and on a temporary basis.

Power imbalances were normal in Hybrid Political Orders, as was illustrated in Somaliland (Hoehne, 2013). Here, hybrid state-building was most successful even before the Boroma conference in 1993 when traditional authorities facilitated conflict mediation and peacebuilding from different clan groups. Many of them were former enemies of one another during the civil war. But it was the institutionalization of the House of Elders (the *Guurti*) into the government structure that could be regarded as the greatest political achievement of clan leaders and the crowning achievement of their

political power. This, however, also introduced a period where governance based on traditional authority and consensus seemed to have outlived its usefulness. As President Egal's power increased and the transition to a liberal-democratic system began, the HPO became unbalanced to the other extreme. As *Guurti* members became more urbanized and involved in government activities, they began to neglect their elderly responsibilities and lost touch with their traditional constituencies. Additionally, they were political pawns of successive presidents, and the less-than-transparent relationship between the presidency and the *Guurti* proved to be a significant impediment to the democratic process.

By 2004, the government's elders had devolved into "willing executors" of presidential decrees, and by repeatedly deferring presidential elections, they had marginalized and weakened the country's constitution. The preceding demonstrated that Hybrid Political Orders are almost never balanced and frequently become imbalanced, with one side gaining power over the other via formal or informal institutions. The chapter argues that Somaliland exemplified how a traditional system based on local communities and customary law and Western state institutions based on democratic principles and statutory law merged at best for convenience and was largely a temporary arrangement. In the case of Somaliland, the *Guurti* became vulnerable to manipulation and corruption once they became the weaker partner. The chapter supports the argument that Somaliland was a "crippled hybrid order" that promoted neither effective democracy nor traditional governance, but rather undermined both. Furthermore, it is argued that while hybrid state-building was effective in assisting Somaliland's transition from a war-torn or extremely fragile context to a more stable form of political existence, once this was achieved, it appeared to lose its utility. The adoption of the constitution in 2001 confirmed the transition from a hybrid to a more democratic government. In the end, the decision-makers in Somaliland always wanted the hybrid phase to be temporary as they believed that the chances of gaining international recognition would be much more likely if they could pride themselves in being a successful democracy. Whether Somaliland will be able to call itself a *de jure* state soon remains to be seen (Hoehne, 2013; Hashi, 2005; Heleta, 2014; Menkhaus, 2006, 2007).

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Dr. Benjamin Mokoena
Stellenbosch University,
Stellenbosch, South Africa

Chapter 12

STATE FRAGILITY AND IMPEDIMENTS TO CIVE: THE CASE IN KENYA

Introduction

This study examines the relationship between state fragility and impediments to countering Islamist violent extremism (CIVE) in Kenya. This relationship is the theoretical case; Kenya is the context. State fragility is employed to explain assorted development and security challenges, including Islamist violent extremism (IVE). IVE or Islamism is an ideology and movement that is formed by linked and at times competing organizations that often espouse violence. IVE thus often finds expression in terrorism. State fragility explains IVE as well as impediments to both CIVE and counter-terrorism (CT).

It must be noted that violent extremism (VE) and countering violent extremism (CVE) apply to varied identity-based ideological categories, including ethnic, right-wing, religion, and gender categories. Ethnic VE seeks ethnic separatism (Zariski, 1989). Right-wing VE pursues racial supremacy or separatism (Ellis, 2015). Religious VE includes Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamist categories that seek to respectively create Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic states, based on the values of their respectively religions (Pratt, 2010; Marshall, 2004; Denooux, 2013; Gunasingham, 2019; Mozaffari, 2007). Gendered VE, i.e., violent political misogyny, seeks to subordinate females in society (Duriesmith et al., 2018; Orr, 2019; Bell, 2020). This study exclusively focuses on Islamism, and hence the reference to Islamist violent extremism (IVE) and countering Islamist violent extremism (CIVE).

CT has failed, as the history of terrorism clearly demonstrates. The history of IVE shows that CIVE, ineffective and counter-productive, is failing as well. Ineffective CIVE does not achieve its

intended outcomes or does not achieve these outcomes within given timeframes, and counterproductive CIVE achieves unintended results or undermines the intended results. These unintended outcomes include increased radicalization, counter-extremism, and Islamophobia, and state-building that bolsters regime survival at the expense of nation-building and social cohesion. Consequently failing, CIVE is unable to eradicate or mediate IVE or resolve the grievances of the aggrieved ethno-religious identity.

Conceptualization and approach

This study is informed by two observations. The first is that state fragility has debilitating causal capacity and tendency, severely limiting CIVE options. The second is that state fragility has conflict-generating causal capacity and tendency, resulting in abusive CIVE. The debilitating and conflict-generating properties of state fragility create impediments to CIVE, ending in the acute failure of CIVE. Given these observed outcomes, the study's aim is not to make recommendations about state fragility or impediments to CIVE, but to examine the key factors that impede the success of CIVE in Kenya.

State fragility is a conceptual instrument, an analytical framework, a theoretical perspective, and this study's *explanans*. Often imprecisely only linked with state weakness, a capacity deficit, state fragility is accurately defined by both underperformance and misperformance at the macro, meso, and micro levels of the state: (1) in state institutions, (2) between the state and society, and (3) between groups in society. Variedly conceived as "captured", "hollowed-out", "soft", "shadow", "stressed", "decaying", "insecure", "at risk", fragile states are identified by endemic underdevelopment and insecurity. The Fragile States Index (FSI) is one measurement of state fragility. Based on a scale of below 20.0 to 120.0, Kenya had an average *alert* score of 96.2 between 2005 and 2019 on the FSI. *Alert* (90.0–99.0) is the third highest state fragility range on the FSI, indicating heightened state fragility and conflict risk.

In the period under review, Kenya scored the worst in nine indicators (out of 12) on the FSI on average: demographic pressures (8.8), factionalized elites (8.7), group grievances (8.4), state legitimacy (8.2), refugees and internally displaced persons (8.1), uneven economic

development (8.0), external intervention (7.9), security apparatus (7.8), and public services (7.8), each scored out of 10.00 (FFP, 2020). Varied conceptions of state fragility exist. Collier (2007) speaks of “the bottom billion”, Acemoglu and Robinson refer to “extractive institutions” in *Why Nations Fail* (2012), and Rotberg (2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2004) refers to a continuum from strong (resilient), weak, failing, to collapsed (or failed). The FSI refers to the inability of the state to effectively “manage social, economic, and political pressures” that are otherwise managed by other states (FFP, 2016, 2017). Baker (2017b) speaks of a fragility-resilience model where all states are neither entirely resilient nor entirely fragile. Collier et al. (2018, pp. 50–54) list the following symptoms of state fragility: (1) “the state faces security threats from organized non-state violence”, (2) “the government lacks legitimacy in the eyes of many citizens”, (3) “the state has weak capacity for essential functions”, (4) “the environment for private investment is unattractive”, (5) “the economy is exposed to shocks with little resilience”, and (6) “there are deep divisions in society”. Varied views on the indicators of state fragility also exist (see, e.g., Zartman (1995), Rotberg (2002b, 2003), Nafziger and Auvinen (2002), Hanlon et al. (2012), FFP (2016), and Baker (2017a, 2017b)).

The study’s *explanandum* is impediments to CIVE. CIVE is a response to IVE. IVE, as a counter-revolution to secularism, has two key objectives: (1) to establish Islamic states (or the Caliphate), and (2) enforce the Sharia (Islam’s canonical law) in such states. IVE often espouses violence in pursuit of these objectives, manifesting in terrorism, insurgency, and proto-states. The global leadership of IVE is contested by two organizations that have regional affiliates, Al Qaeda and the Islamic State. In Kenya, IVE finds expression through terrorism, and not wider campaigns such as insurgency or proto-states as one would find in contexts such as Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, or recently Mozambique*.

Kenya, as agent and structure, is the study’s *explanatory context*. Agency and structure are entities with causal capacity and tendency. As Wendt (1987, pp. 337–339) explains, agents and structures act and

* See, for example, Mozaffari (2007), Gerges (2009), Zelin (2014), Hafez (2017), and Borárosóvát et al. (2017) for the tenets, objectives, and history of IVE as an ideology and movement, including its varied organizations.

interact, and both explain the observed outcomes. Explanation-building in this study is then based on entities (agency and structure) that have properties (with causal capacity and tendency), that engage in actions (activities), generating (causing) impediments to CIVE. While the state is both agent and structure, the state is also viewed as “a structure of political authority in which government agents are in turn embedded” (Wendt, 1987, p. 339). Social structures such as government institutions and other organizations also have and take emergent properties, i.e., “they exercise their own causal powers, independently of the agency which produced them” (Bakewell, 2010, p. 1696). Just as fragile states such as Kenya have agency and a generative structure, IVE entities such as Islamist ideologues and Islamist organizations such as Al Shabaab have reciprocal agency and a generative structure.

Far from being merely the stage on which the drama of IVE and CIVE plays out, Kenya is the principal actor on that stage. The state itself is the source of endemic insecurity and pervasive conflict and its government, institutions, and society are the object of the blame system of IVE, and therefore the (perceived) legitimate target for *Jihad Asgar* (armed struggle or “holy war”). It is this state that must then be replaced with an Islamic state, linked with the Islamization of its government, institutions, and society. This explains why Kenya has found it hard to mediate with Al Qaeda since the 1990s, and with the Al Qaeda affiliate Al Shabaab since its formation in 2006. The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) is one measurement of terrorist activity. In the period under review, with the lowest terrorism score (*low* impact) of 2.50 in 2004, the worst score of 6.60 (*high* impact) in 2014, Kenya has an average *medium* impact score of 5.04 between 2001 and 2019 on the GTI (IEP, 2020b).

(The GTI’s measuring scale is 0.00 to 10.00. With the 8th edition of the GTI (2020), the data covers 2001 up to 2019. In 2021, the GTI was not issued. In the 9th edition (2022), the index changed its main data source from the Global Terrorism Database to Terrorism Tracker, and changed its methodology, now measuring terrorism by annual (1) attacks, (2) fatalities, (3) injuries, and (4) hostages (not [4] “damage to property” anymore), weighted over five years (IEP, 2022, pp. 2, 88–90). I use the dataset, methodology, and definition of terrorism, as used on the index up to 2019. The GTI records terrorism by all non-state

actors. I therefore hereafter rely on data from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data project (ACLED) that disaggregates Al Shabaab terrorist incidents.)

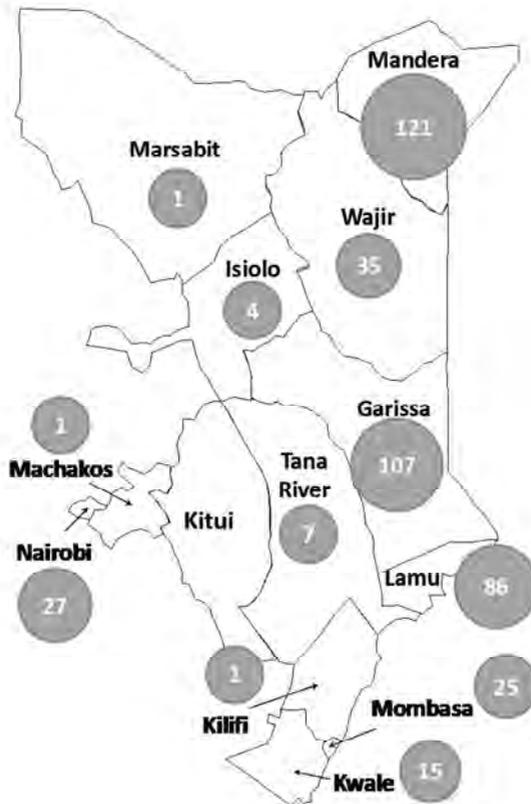
As shown hereafter, Islamist terrorist activity is geospatially concentrated in Kenya. This terrorist activity is most virulent in areas where state fragility is most evidenced. In tandem, impediments to CIVE are most pronounced in areas where state fragility is most evidenced. This concentration of state fragility, Islamist terrorist activity, and impediments to CIVE, is in the arc of insecurity in Kenya. The core of this insecurity is in the Northeastern region (former North Eastern Province) that comprises Garissa, Wajir, and Mandera counties. (Viewed as a geographical construct, Kagwanja (2014a, 2014b) and Ombaka (2015) refer to the areas in Kenya that are defined by underdevelopment and insecurity, with high levels of terrorist activity, communal violence, and criminal activity, as the *arc of insecurity*. As Ombaka (2015, pp. 12–13) explains, these spaces are “only nominally under the control of the central government... [insecurity here is] a normal burden of citizenship”.)

As evidenced in the arc of insecurity, ungoverned spaces are the most defining indicator of state fragility. It is in these ungoverned spaces where impediments to CIVE are found, encompassing Kenya’s physical, cohesion, economic, political, legal, and social spaces, as well as Kenya’s neighborhood. In Kenya, the further from the center, the less meaningful and effective is state presence, the more insecurity and lawlessness, the more incentives for political violence, and the more challenging the CIVE project*.

Ungoverned geographical spaces: “the arc of insecurity”

As stated above, IVE in Kenya mainly manifests through terrorism. I thus use terrorist activity as an indicator of IVE. Islamist terrorist activity is singularly concentrated in the 12 counties (out of 47) in the arc of insecurity in Kenya as shown on Map 1.

* *Ungoverned spaces* can therefore be equated with *distance decay*. Different dimensions of distance decay include administrative distance decay, decay in the regulatory framework, economic decay, and security distance decay (Ngunyi and Katumanga, 2014, p. 1; Katumanga, 2014, pp. 141–142; 2017, pp. 140–141).



Map 1. **Incidents of terrorism in Kenya's east, 2008–2019.**
Source: created by the author from GeoCurrents Maps (2020),
 based on ACLED (2020) data.

As a coding rule, I amend the GTI's conception of terrorist activity. I define terrorist activity to include the following incidents: (1) attacks, (2) armed clashes with security forces, (3) raids by security forces, and (4) arrests of terror suspects. I exclude non-violent incidents such as reported movements, reported recruitment, or similar incidents. Given the coding rule, since its formation in 2006, Al Shabaab was involved in only three terrorist incidents in Kenya prior to 2010: one in 2008 and two in 2009. The first was an armed clash with security forces on 29 May 2008 in Garissa County, and on 13 December 2009 there was

an attack and an armed clash in Wajir County. Falling outside of the 12 counties in the arc of insecurity are two outliers between 2010 and 2019. In 2012, there was one arrest in Trans-Nzoia County in the Rift Valley region, and in 2013 there was an armed clash in Kiambu County in the Central region (ACLEED, 2020). Whilst the period under review is up to the end of 2019, explanation-building in this study is valid beyond 2019 and covers relevant factors after 2019 and beyond. This temporal demarcation is informed by specific factors. Mostly the demarcation is designed to allow for the uniform coverage of multiple, parallel, and interacting longitudinal data sources that are used in the study, but also to exclude the impact of COVID-19 with its far-reaching socio-economic and political effects experienced since the start of 2020. Whilst COVID-19 is an exogenous-extraneous factor in the relationship between state fragility and impediments to CIVE in Kenya, COVID-19 has had some yet to be fully determined impact. For example, the 2020 GTI holds that “[s]ince COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic... preliminary data suggests a decline in both incidents and deaths from terrorism across most regions in the world” (IEP, 2020a, p. 12).

From the first recorded incident in 2008, after 2010 there was a surge in the incidence of Al Shabaab terrorist activity in Kenya. From six incidents in 2010, 24 in 2011, 51 in 2012 to 58 by 2014, and 25 incidents in 2019. There was thus a 750% increase between 2010 and Operation *Linda Nchi* in 2012 (six in 2010 and 51 in 2012). The highest incidence occurred in 2017 (88 in total), and the lowest in 2010 (only six). Lamu records the most incidents in a given year (31 incidents in 2017), and Mandera records the most incidents in total (121 incidents), followed by Garissa (107 incidents), and Lamu (86 incidents). Nairobi records 27, and Mombasa 25 incidents*.

Three broad patterns are discernible. Firstly, 100% (430 incidents) of these incidents occurred in 12 counties (out of 47) that are symbols of Kenya’s power (Nairobi and Mombasa) or are historically inhabited by ethnic Somalis and other Muslims. Secondly, 92.32% (397 incidents) of these incidents occurred in eight counties in the Northeastern region (Garissa, Wajir, and Mandera) and the Coast (Lamu, Mombasa, Kwale,

* *Linda Nchi* (Protect the Nation) was a forward defense operation in Somalia between 2011 and 2012 that was designed to limit or deny Al Shabaab’s terrorist attacks on Kenyan soil (Throup, 2012; Blanchard, 2013, p. 4).

Tana-River, and Kilifi). The Northeastern and the Coast regions are the locus of ethnic Somali and Muslim secessionist aspirations since independence in 1963*. Thirdly, 61.16% (263 incidents) of these incidents were in the Northeastern region. The Northeastern region is historically the most securitized and deprived region in Kenya, and it is also dominated by ethnic Somalis and is home to 2.4 million Muslims, almost half of all Kenya's Muslims. In fact, 92% (4.7 million) of all Muslims in Kenya are concentrated in the 12 counties in the arc of insecurity**. It is here where you find Boni reserve, the Somalia-Kenya border, and the hinterland counties of the Northeastern region. State fragility has converted these ungoverned spaces into wormholes for Al Shabaab and impediments to CIVE***.

The CIVE Operation *Linda Boni* (Protect Boni) was launched in September 2015 with the intention of dislodging Al Shabaab from this stronghold. *Linda Boni* was initially planned for 90 days. Passed the 90 days, and years after the initial operation was launched, Boni is still not secured. Kamau (2021, pp. 216–217) offers four main reasons for the failure of *Linda Boni*: (1) the sheer size of the reserve and forest and their density make it difficult to pinpoint hideouts even with aerial surveillance; (2) with the nearby permeable border with Somalia, it is easy to escape or move between Boni and Somalia; (3) Kenya's security apparatus does not have the goodwill and trust of the local communities; and (4) the lack of capacity, coordination, and integration between the varied security agencies involved. Adjacent to Boni reserve, the permeable border with Somalia is another wormhole. As Wakube et al. (2017, p. 6) observe regarding the condition of the border at various parts of Garissa and Wajir counties: “[o]n the unpaved,

* Immediately after independence in 1963, the *Mwambao* (coastal strip) United Front (MUF) agitated for the independence of the Coast. Since its formation in 1999, the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC) has taken up this aspiration for independence (Ndzovu, 2010, p. 9; Chome, 2015; Patterson, 2015, p. 18; Aluoka, 2016, p. 35).

** See the section below, *Ungoverned social spaces*, for these demographics in Kenya.

*** The concept of wormholes is derived from Einstein and Rosen's theory of *general relativity*. Wormholes are “bridges”, “tunnels”, “passageways”, or “shortcuts”, linking different and separate locations, points in space, or points in time (even separate universes). Wormholes allow travel across and through space and time, shortening distances between different and separate points and locations. See, for example, Sutter (2021) and Font (2021).

poorly signed roads trailing east, one could easily stumble unawares across the border into Somalia”. The border is therefore largely imagined and postulated, and so is the state’s presence in spaces such as Boni reserve and the hinterland counties in the Northeastern region.

Given the lack of infrastructure and state presence, these ungoverned spaces are also difficult and even impossible to police. Take the 2015 Garissa University attack for example. Aside from intelligence failure and weak security measures, Garissa is also faulted for slow response time. The local security personnel arrived two hours after the attack. The Rapid Response Team (RRT) took more than seven hours to respond and had to be flown from Nairobi to Garissa (370 km apart). When the RRT arrived in Garissa, 148 students and security personnel were dead and 80 more were injured by four Al Shabaab militants armed with AK-47s and hand grenades (Kigotho, 2015; Malm and Gillman, 2015).

Hinterland communities have also been subjected to unjust social orders and historical injustices. The historical injustices against ethnic Somalis in particular in these areas include the Isiolo (1968), Garissa (1980), and Wagalla (1984) massacres that have since escaped liability by the state (see *Ungoverned social spaces*). This history dates from the Shifta war (1963–1968). Securitization regulations that followed the Shifta war allowed for search, seizure, and arrest without a warrant, “screening” and detention without trial, restrictions on movement, and a curfew between dusk and dawn. Another response was the forced settlement of “dissident” frontier populations into government villages in the Northeastern and Coast regions. As Whittaker (2012a, p. 353) points out, instead of being promised development initiatives, these government villages “bore a striking resemblance to *Mau-Mau* detention centers”. After the Shifta war, these “villages” expanded, hosting these disenfranchised communities. This “collective punishment” expanded the marginalization and securitization of these regions that was started by British colonialism.

(The ‘*Mau-Mau* rebellion’ was a pejorative name given by the British colonialists to the Kenya Land and Freedom Army (KLFA) that fought for Kenya’s independence. Straight from the British script, after independence the Kenyan government pejoratively branded the ethnic-Somali dominated Northern Frontier District Liberation Army (NFDLA) that fought for the secession of the Northern Frontier District

(NFD) as '*shifita*' (bandit). Regarding the Shifita war and its impact see for example: Ringquist (2011), Whittaker (2012a, 2012b, 2015a, 2015b), Khalif and Oba (2013), Njeri (2015), and Wakube et al. (2017). The Shifita war occurred in the former NFD and the Coast region. The NFD encompassed the counties in the current Northeastern region (Mandera, Wajir, and Garissa) and parts of the Eastern region (Moyale, Marsabit, and Isiolo). Moyale district has since been partitioned between the current Marsabit and Wajir counties. The Shifita war was a secessionist/irredentist war. The NFD, partitioned from Somalia by British colonialism, with the support of Somalia sought to be reincorporated into the newly-independent Somalia state. Dominated by ethnic-Somalis, the NFDLA included other groups. Whittaker (2015b, p. 8) points out that between 10 and 20% of *shifita* were Boran and Rendille who had adopted Islam.)

Mwangi (2017, p. 117) finds that “Kenyan Somalis, [Muslims], and Somali refugees who live or reside in Kenya’s ungoverned spaces are stateless persons given the adverse violent structural and physical conditions under which they live”. As demonstrated hereafter, the communities in the arc of insecurity have since largely disengaged from the state, and in the search for ontological security, have become amenable to IVE and unreceptive to CIVE. Disengagement from the state includes emigration, withdrawing into self-sufficiency by relying on kinship and reverting to subsistence farming, surrendering to criminality, and ultimately, adopting all manners of political violence. See, for example, Thomson (2016, pp. 219–222) for an outline of these disengagement strategies that communities and individuals adopt in response to the failures and excesses of state fragility. Distinguished from physical security, ontological security is used in the context of the individual, community, or the state. Giddens (1984, p. 75; 1990, pp. 124–125) defines ontological security as “confidence or trust” (mostly in the future) and “a sense of continuity and order”. Mitzen (2006, p. 344) defines ontological security as “the security of the self”.

Ungoverned cohesion spaces

The cohesion spaces also reveal varied impediments to CIVE. These impediments range from the all-government approach to CIVE, factionalized elites, privatized security, the oligopoly of violence,

depreciated resilience, ineffective and abusive institutions, corruption in state institutions, heavy-handed and indiscriminate CIVE that is linked to state terrorism, and cognitive barriers that are linked to the Islamization and Somalinization of CIVE. With these impediments, there is evidence of Islamist terrorism as an exaggerated security threat and the resultant use of the economy of danger^{*}. In a study of the origins of insecurity in Kenya, Atta-Asamoah (2015, pp. 7, 9) found that between 2008 and 2014 Al Shabaab accounted for only 9% of all incidents and fatalities linked to insecurity in Kenya. A massive 91% of these incidents and fatalities were credited to other actors, including organized “ethnic” militias, and Kenya’s own security forces. It must be explained here that given the levels of insecurity, varied ethnic groups maintain organized militias. Lafargue and Katumanga (2008), for example, outline the role of these militias during the 2007/2008 post-elections violence that brought Kenya to the precipice of a civil war, including the role of *Mungiki* (Kikuyu militia) and the *Taliban* (Luo militia). The post-elections violence left more than 1300 people dead and more than 700,000 internally displaced. This bloodletting was followed by a constitutional crisis when the International Criminal Court (ICC) indicted several Kenyan leaders in 2011 for crimes against humanity, for their alleged involvement in the violence. The indicted leaders included, from 2013, the sitting President Uhuru Kenyatta and Deputy President William Ruto. These charges were dropped in 2015/2016, chiefly on the basis of a lack of evidence, as the ICC mentioned at the time.

The threat posed by Al Shabaab is nonetheless used to justify dubious government actions. Such actions that characterize CIVE in Kenya include detention without trial, disappearances, extrajudicial killings, renditions, and refoulement. Unlike extraditions, renditions are problematic because they occur in a covert context, often outside the law, and suspects are sent to places with less rigorous regulations for the humane treatment of terror suspects. In the case of refoulement, terror suspects, refugees, and asylum-seekers are sent back to countries where they are likely to face persecution, including torture. These and

^{*} The economy of danger refers to the political employment of the danger of terrorism or perceptions of such danger, as a commodity or resource, to justify questionable government policies and actions, and to suppress dissidence against such policies and actions (Salter, 2003, pp. 116, 121, 125).

related factors and actions that are involved in CIVE programs have contributed to increased radicalization in Kenya (see *Ungoverned political and legal spaces*).

The aforementioned actions are in violation of international and national law, including Kenya's 2010 Constitution. Recently President William Ruto directed Kenya's Independent Police Oversight Authority (IPOA) that "extrajudicial killings must come to an end. It is illegal, it is unconstitutional" (Amunga, 2022).

The result of such heavy-handed and indiscriminate CIVE is that since the first recorded Al Shabaab terrorist incident in Kenya in 2008, and except for 2011, on a scale of 1–5, with 5 being the highest level of state terrorism, Kenya scores a sustained level four on the Political Terror Scale (PTS-S). Level four indicates that the levels of state terrorism have "expanded to large sections of society" but acts of terror are still limited to those who "engage in politics or political ideas" (Gibney et al., 2020). These sections of society are mostly ethnic Somalis and other Muslims. This kind of CIVE radicalizes targeted groups and forces otherwise neutral groups to choose sides. As Islamist ideologue Abubaker Shariff Ahmed (commonly known as "Makaburi") pointed out, "I am the one who is accused of radicalizing when it's the police who are radicalizing the Muslim youth by killing us" (Kiser, 2014). "Mombasa youths are looking for guns. It was nothing, then knives, and now it's guns" (Crossley, 2014)*.

The Islamization and Somalinization of CIVE are also impediments. These cognitive barriers stem from the *theological and social-psychological radicalization model* that dominates the CIVE architecture in Kenya. This model links Islamic beliefs and social-networks with radicalization and terrorism risk. The role of CIVE is then reduced to identifying "at risk" individuals in specific communities, i.e., creating a "terrorist profile" (Breidlid, 2021, pp. 227–228). Instead of rightly mediating the political and socio-economic issues involved, CIVE in Kenya has a misplaced fixation with Islam and ethnic Somali identity, dismissing Al Shabaab as "terrorist-extremist-criminals" that radicalize an otherwise "moderate" community. This community must then be

* Makaburi ("Graveyard") was gunned down in 2014 in Mombasa in what is believed to be Kenya's "elimination program" (extra-judicial killings by state agents). See *Ungoverned political and legal spaces*.

inoculated against such radicalization. On the contrary, radicalization is not the flu. Ethnic Somalis and other Muslims are already aware of the avoidable unjust social orders and historical injustices they have been subjected to. Empirical evidence shows that IVE also appeals to non-ethnic-Somalis and non-Muslims on the margins of society. These individuals then convert to Islam. Further, far from being “criminals” pursuing personal gain, Al Shabaab are political actors with a constituency, albeit engaging in pressure politics and violent politics, and not persuasion politics.

Given the above, the result is growing counter-extremism and Islamophobia, and is CIVE transformed into a law-and-order enforcement project on recalcitrant “terrorists-extremist-criminals”. Ndzovu (2017, p. 156) has hence observed “a quiet rage simmering among Christians, against Islam” in Kenya. Mwakimako (2007, pp. 288, 289), speaks of the perceived “Islamic difference” in Kenya, noting a widely held view that “not all Muslims are terrorists, but all terrorists are Muslim”. Further, and contrary to the exaggerated danger of Islamist terrorism, in reality Kenya is an ungoverned security market that is defined by an oligopoly of violence. The sources of insecurity are the Kenyan state itself, as well as varied non-state actors, including organized “ethnic” militias, criminal gangs, and Al Shabaab. Given the fragility of the state, these non-state actors act as alternative security providers. The terrorism space exists in addition to this space occupied by other forms of political and criminal violence in this security market (these spaces interact). The terrorism space itself, although dominated by Al Shabaab, is not limited to Al Shabaab, as revealed by the Global Terrorism Index and the Political Terror Scale.

(Oligopoly is contrasted with monopoly. Oligopolies are encouraged and monopolies are discouraged in an economic market. It is the opposite in a security market. In the state as a security market, the state provides security and violence as products or services to society, exercising monopoly over the use of violence. If the state fails in this role, varied non-state actors claim the role. Unable to exercise monopoly over the use of violence, the fragile state then competes or collaborates with these

* See, for example, Warner (2015) and Chome (2019) regarding this appeal of IVE and these converts to Islam. In addition, see *Ungoverned economic spaces*, *Ungoverned political and legal spaces*, and *Ungoverned social spaces*.

non-state actors. Andreas Mehler (2004) outlines this concept, what he calls “oligopolies of violence”. To monopoly (one actor) and oligopoly (few actors) Mehler (2004) adds “polypoly”, where a multitude of non-state actors participate in a security market. A polypoly invokes images of something close to a Hobbesian “state of nature”. Thomas Hobbes (1651, p. 62) describes a state of nature as “every man, against every man”, where life is “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short”.)

Another impediment to CIVE is the “all-government” approach that underpin the CIVE architecture in Kenya. Based on centralization, coordination, and integration, this approach is intended to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in CIVE. Instead, this approach results in complex and cumbersome organizations, slow coordination, and inhibiting centralization. As stated earlier, the 2015 Garissa attack is blamed on weak security measures, intelligence failure, and slow response by security forces. Garissa is also faulted because of this all-government approach. The RRT’s response time was more than seven hours because decision-making had to be escalated first up to the National Security Advisory Committee and the National Security Council in Nairobi (Malm & Gillman, 2015; Kigotho, 2015).

Another impediment is endemic corruption. Kenya had an average Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) score of 23.05 points between 1996 and 2019. In 2019, the CPI score was 28, higher than the world average of 43 points (TI, 2020a, pp. 3–4)*. After “the handshake” of 2018, Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga (2018, p. 6) lamented the levels of corruption, describing corruption as “an existential threat” to the state, “undermining both public and private institutions”, and “undermining Kenya’s aspirations as a nation”. According to Ombaka (2015, p. 18) the police service “comprise a significant number of corrupt individuals whose main qualification for joining the service was because they were able to bribe their way into it”. About the military, Ombaka (2015, p. 20) recounts how, after the Westgate Mall attack (2013), Kenyans were shocked to see closed-circuit television footage of Kenyan soldiers looting. Such are the levels of documented depravity in the security apparatus in Kenya.

* The CPI is based on an inverted scale of 0–100, with 0 as *highly corrupt* and 100 as *very clean* (TI, 2020b), thus the higher the allocated score the lower the level of perceived corruption, and vice versa.

The largely privatized security in Kenya is yet another impediment to CIVE. Whilst the UN recommends a police-to-civilian ratio of 1:450, the ratio in Kenya is 1:1250. With more than 500,000 active security guards (excluding other support personnel), private security companies employ more than five times the number of both the police and the military. The strength of the national police service is just over 100,000 and the military strength is 29,000 active personnel (“Govt completes”, 2019; URF, 2019, pp. 20, 40; Zheng and Xia, 2021, p. 5; World Bank, 2021). The result is that security is the preserve of the privileged few and not a shared public good. Ordinary citizens on the fringes of the state are left to their own devices, at the mercy of whomever wields power in these ungoverned spaces in Kenya.

In the cohesion spaces in Kenya, leadership failures and factionalized elites also form impediments to CIVE. Unjust social orders and historical injustices are deliberate policy choices and given their impact on IVE and impediments to CIVE, they are also leadership failures. Factionalized elites, representing ethno-religious alliances, have defined political leadership since independence in Kenya. In fact, political representation and access to state resources are largely defined by differentiated hegemonial exchange with the elite trading support from their communities in exchange for political power and access to state resources*. As Kenya’s state motto, *Harambee* (pulling together), remains elusive resulting from such leadership failures, so will CIVE that is dependent on leadership-based shared loyalty and common enterprise. Such failures in the cohesion spaces are also reflected in ungoverned economic spaces.

Ungoverned economic spaces

Kenya is among the fastest growing economies with an average GDP growth rate of 5.45% between 2004 and 2019. From \$40 billion in 2010, the economy more than doubled to \$87.928 billion by 2018.

* Hegemonial exchange is a form of representation and co-optation where the fragile state, otherwise unable to assert its hegemony, distributes patronage, goods, and services, in exchange for support, neutrality, or some form of compliance from specific identity groups, based on the groups’ relative political significance and political influence (Rothchild, 1985, pp. 71–73; Lake and Rothchild, 1996, p. 59; Thomson, 2016, pp. 64–65).

In 2019, the economy was \$98.607 billion, ranking third in Sub-Saharan Africa after Nigeria and South Africa (IMF, 2019). But Kenya is a lower middle-income economy, and just as most African nations lacks the resources to address the socio-economic development imperatives of CIVE. The Africa Center for Strategic Studies also bemoans the fact that most “African states do not command the official budgets necessary to overcome the socio-economic drivers of violent extremism” (ACSS, 2016, p. 10).

Added to the relative capacity deficit, Kenya mismanages the existing economic quantum for the benefit of the few. Consequently, Kenya on average scores worse with uneven economic development (8.0) as opposed to economic decline (7.1), when looking at economic indicators on the Fragile States Index in the period under review (FFP, 2020). Kenya’s 2019 Gross County Product (GCP) also shows that of the 12 counties in the arc of insecurity, besides Nairobi, Mombasa, and Machakos, seven have the lowest share of national GDP, and the other two counties are among the lowest. Isiolo’s share is 0.2%, Lamu is 0.4%, Marsabit, Tana-River, Wajir, and Mandera each contribute 0.5%, and Garissa’s share is 0.6%. With the other two counties, Kwale’s share is 1.1% and Kilifi’s is 1.6%. Machakos contributes 3.2%, Mombasa 4.7%, and Nairobi 21.7% (KNBS, 2019b, pp. 7, 9, 11). Kenya’s County Development Index (CDI) classifies Mandera, Wajir, Marsabit, Tana-River, Kwale, Garissa, and Kilifi as “most marginalized”, and Isiolo, Machakos, and Lamu as “moderately marginalized”. Only Mombasa and Nairobi are classified as “well off”. Given the highly skewed economy, Kenya’s social spaces are defined by uneven regional development and horizontal inequality, largely marginalizing ethnic Somalis and other Muslims (including other groups)*. The foregoing socio-economic factors serve as impediments to CIVE as further outlined below under *Ungoverned social spaces*.

* The CDI measures human development and marginalization based on four dimensions: (1) health, (2) education, (3) infrastructure, and (4) poverty gap. Marginalization is largely linked to “poor governance”, “uneven allocation of resources”, and “historical injustices”, and is defined as “social exclusion from the dominant socio-economic, cultural and political structure” (CRA, 2012a, pp. iv, 16, 18–21, 23–24, 27; 2012b, pp. 2–4; 2012c, p. 1).

Ungoverned political and legal spaces

First let us deal with Kenya's ungoverned political and legal spaces. The first CIVE impediment in these spaces is the failure of the Kenyan government to govern and command the state as a political marketplace. A democratic political marketplace is identified by competing political ideas and political bargaining. Instead, Kenya's political space does not allow competing ideas and peaceful dissent, and therefore does not engender peaceful collective action and conflict resolution, including in the case of mediating Muslim interests and grievances. Whereas most Muslim formations in Kenya engage in persuasion politics to represent Muslim interests and grievances, Al Shabaab engages in pressure politics and violent politics in representing the same Muslim interests and grievances. The result of the above is paying lip service to secularism, as well as the constricted democratic space that is defined by factionalized elites and ethno-religious alliances as outlined above (*Ungoverned cohesion spaces*). The fragile state consequently is simply unable to command the loyalty of sections of its society*.

The factors that are framed as indivisible by the two sides also add to the impediments to CIVE. The key indivisible for Kenya would be the territorial integrity of Kenya. On the side of Al Shabaab, the key indivisible may be the area of what will constitute "Greater Somalia" or "the Islamic state", or the ontological security of ethnic Somalis and other Muslims**. Linked to these indivisibles is the opposed

* Political action ranges from persuasion politics, pressure politics, to violent politics. Whereas persuasion politics occurs within the rule of law and in the context of constitutionalism, pressure politics is about government repression or applying pressure to an otherwise unresponsive government. Violent politics is about the violent suppression of challenges to the status quo, or the use of violence to challenge state power. Violent politics is therefore the result of the failure of persuasion politics and pressure politics (Schmid, 2013, pp. 13–14).

** Indivisibles are tangible, or intangible, material, or non-material, issues, concerns, or goods. Hassner (2003, pp. 8, 12–13) defines indivisible as "perfectly cohesive", and "cannot be substituted or exchanged". Albin (1991, p. 47) says indivisibles "cannot be split physically into parts", and "cannot be compromised on, without losing their intrinsic value". Indivisibles are therefore often deemed non-negotiable because they cannot be substituted with something of equal value or because they would lose their value once divided or compromised.

positions held by Kenya and Al Shabaab regarding secularism versus Islamism. Kenya is further accused of paying lip-service to secularism. It does not help to purport to be a secular state and, for example, still have the Constitution with a preamble that starts with “[w]e, the people of Kenya – acknowledging the supremacy of the Almighty God of all creation” and ending with “God bless Kenya” (Republic of Kenya, 2010, p. 12). To be perceived as a Christian state becomes a logical and foregone conclusion based on Islamist lived-experiences and perceived reality. Islamism, an ideology of the disenfranchised, will then logically find reasons to view and frame Islam and Muslims, as marginalized.

The political spaces coexist with ungoverned legal spaces. These legal spaces are underdeveloped, abusive, ineffective, counterproductive, with low terrorism arrests, prosecution, and conviction rates, and undermine human rights and civil liberties, and the rule of law. For example, despite experiences with terrorism since the 1970s, the first pieces of terrorism legislation and policy in Kenya were only enacted since 2012, including the 2012 Prevention of Terrorism Act and the 2014 Security Laws Amendment Act. The first CIVE policy is the 2016 National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism, which is yet to be revised. Kagwanja (2015) accordingly finds that despite being “in the vortex of terrorism” for years, Kenya has “the most underdeveloped counter-terrorism architecture” in East Africa. As Kagwanja (2015) and Khamala (2019, pp. 96–98) explain, Kenya’s civil society and judiciary resisted earlier attempts at enacting anti-terrorism legislation, fearing the risk of violations of human rights, and given the levels of identity-politics in Kenya, fearing that such legislation would be used to target specific communities. Such fears are not unfounded. For example, Kenya has sent terror suspects, including its own citizens, to the U.S.-run Guantanamo Bay base in Cuba, to Somalia, Ethiopia, and Uganda, for interrogation and to stand trial. Kenya has justified such renditions and refoulement in the name of “national security” (Horowitz, 2013). As indicated above (*Ungoverned cohesion spaces*), these violations of the law and human rights include the extra-judicial killings of terror suspects.

The case of the Islamist ideologues, Aboud Rogo and Abubaker Shariff Ahmed, and the case of Salim Awadh Salim et al., also illustrate these ungoverned legal spaces. After years of failed prosecutions on

terrorism and inciting violence charges, relating as far back as Al Qaeda's 2002 Mombasa attack, Aboud Rogo and Abubaker Shariff Ahmed were killed in what is believed to be Kenya's "extermination program". Aboud Rogo's death in 2012 sparked days of violent rioting in Kenya. A week before he was killed in 2014, Abubaker Shariff Ahmed was awarded 670,000 Kenyan Shillings by the High court in Mombasa in compensation and damages for unlawful seizure of property following a 2011 police raid. In the 2008 Salim Awadh Salim et al. case, the High court in Nairobi awarded each of the 11 terror suspects damages ranging between 2–4 million Kenyan Shillings for unlawful detention, ill-treatment, and rendition*. In the Salim Awadh Salim et al. case, the High court ruled that "[t]he imperative to fight terrorism... is not a sufficient reason to ignore the rule of law" (Horowitz, 2013). Given the foregoing and the levels of insecurity that ethnic Somalis and other Muslims have been subjected, this ethno-religious identity has largely adopted political violence as a viable option in the search of ontological security. These levels of insecurity in Kenya, and the offer and promise of security in the Islamic state by IVE, also explain why this ethno-religious identity would be resistant to CIVE.

Ungoverned social spaces

Based on the 2019 population census, Muslims are 5.2 million, accounting for 11% of the population. 92% (4.7 million) are concentrated in the 12 counties in the arc of insecurity. Almost half, 47.34% (2.4 million), live in the Northeastern region (Mandera, Wajir, and Garissa counties). 54% (2.8 million) of Kenya's Muslims are ethnic Somalis, making up 6% of the total population. Ethnic Somalis are among the most deprived groups in Kenya, with 79.27% of them multi-dimensionally poor, most making ends meet on less than \$1.90 a day. In fact, of the more than 40 ethnic groups in Kenya, only ethnic Turkana and ethnic Samburu have higher deprivation rate than ethnic Somalis. Among ethnic Turkana, 80.23% are multi-dimensionally poor, and with ethnic Samburu, 85.21% are multi-dimensionally poor

* See for example: Horowitz (2013), Crossley (2014), Gisesa (2014), Kiser (2014), Shabibi (2020a, 2020b).

(KNBS, 2019a, pp. 1, 12, 422–423; Kovesdi and Mitchell, 2020; Jennings and Oldiges, 2020, p. 12; Balaton-Chrimes, 2021)*.

As indicated above (*Ungoverned geographical spaces: “the arc of insecurity”*), all Islamist terrorist incidents occur in the 12 counties in the arc of insecurity where 92% of all Muslims in Kenya reside. Excluding Nairobi City County as the center of power, the other 11 counties are in the former Northern Frontier District (which included the current Northeastern region) and the Coast region, which are the locus of ethnic Somali and Muslim secessionist aspirations since independence in 1963. Most of these terrorist incidents – 92.3% – occurred in eight counties in the Northeastern region and the Coast region. The Northeastern and the Coast regions are therefore the epicenter of secessionism and IVE. Regarding the core of the epicenter of IVE, the Northeastern region, 61.16% of these terrorist incidents occurred in this region. As has been mentioned above, the Northeastern is not only historically the most securitized and deprived region in Kenya, but it is also dominated by ethnic Somalis and is home to almost half of all Muslims in Kenya.

Kenya’s highly skewed economy also ensures the regionally differentiated provision of public goods and services as demonstrated in the arc of insecurity. The provision of public goods and services is perhaps the most tangible state function for society, often used as a barometer of governance itself. Fragility in this function impacts on state legitimacy as well as impediments to CIVE. For example, there are upwards of over 95% of households in the arc of insecurity that are not connected to the national grid and must rely on firewood and charcoal as cooking fuel. Between Kilifi, Isiolo, Kwale, Lamu, Garissa, Marsabit, Wajir, Tana-River, and Mandera counties, these households range from 80.1% in Kilifi to 96.4% in Mandera. In the Northeastern region, only 7% of households have access to electricity (World Bank, 2018, p. 1; KNBS, 2019a, pp. 330–337). The 2019 population census also indicates the percentage of households in each county that have no amenities other than the open bush to “dispose human waste”: Tana-River (48.6), Marsabit (47.4), Wajir (43.6), Mandera (39.4), Garissa

* Different classifications of the ethnic groups exist. For example, whereas the 1969 census recorded 42 ethnic groups, the 2019 census records more than 120 ethnic groups (see Balaton-Chrimes, 2021; KNBS, 2019a).

(36.2), Kwale (31.7), Isiolo (30.6), Lamu (17.9), and Kilifi (17.0). This level of absolute and relative deprivation in these nine counties coexists with 0.1% for Nairobi and 0.9% for Mombasa and Machakos (KNBS, 2019a, pp. 310–312, 316).

At the core of this insecurity, in the Northeastern region, depreciated social cohesion is at its lowest. On a scale of 0–100, with 0 indicating the lowest level of social cohesion, Kenya’s Social Cohesion Index (SCI) scores Wajir at 22.0%, Garissa at 36.5%, and Mandera at 38.8%. The six disaggregated dimensions on the Index are even more telling. Take trust for example. Trust is coded as: intergroup trust (ethno-religious identities), trust in government, and trust in institutions. Trust levels in Wajir are as low as 2.6%, 8.9% in Garissa, and 14.4% in Mandera (Onsomu et al., 2017, pp. 11, 16–19, 23–27, 34–36). The attributes of social cohesion such as shared trust, shared loyalty, and common enterprise, all integral to CIVE, are therefore grossly compromised in Kenya.

Kenya’s Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA) lists nine of the 12 counties in the arc of insecurity (excluding Nairobi, Mombasa, and Machakos) among the 15 counties that have suffered historical injustices since independence. These historical injustices, what the Commission defines as “harms and wrongs”, include legalized discrimination; land alienation; state repression; underrepresentation in politics and national development; massacres, extrajudicial killings, and collective punishment; discriminatory laws, regulations, and practices; religious profiling; and deprivation of education (CRA, 2012b, pp. 59–64). The state is therefore a source of insecurity for its own society. This impunity is entrenched. For example, in 1970 Kenya enacted the Indemnity Act No. 5 that shields the state from legal proceedings and claims for compensation for the gross violations of human rights during the Shifta war. These violations continue. With the 2014 CIVE Operation Usalama Watch (Security Watch), more than 4000 ethnic Somalis were detained without trial and subjected to other violations, including extortion, torture, disappearances, refoulement, and renditions*. Anderson and McKnight (2015, p. 26) conclude that “[t]here are no better recruiting agents for Al Shabaab than the poorly

* See for example: Nation (2010), KTJN (2013), Whittaker (2012a, 2012b, 2015a), Botha (2014), Ali-Koor (2016).

trained, ill-disciplined, and corrupt soldiers and police who carried out Operation Usalama Watch”. Added, the failure to implement the 2013 Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) recommendations relating to the Shifta war, and the Isiolo, Garissa, and Wagalla massacres, impedes the prospects of both CIVE and national reconciliation. The TJRC was mandated to investigate and establish a record of gross human rights violations from independence in 1963 to the post-elections’ violence of 2007/2008. The TJRC timelines for implementing the varied recommendations ranged from 6 to 36 months. The recommendations included admission of atrocities, restitution, reparations, apology, establishing memorials, criminal investigations and prosecutions, economic development of marginalised regions, a comprehensive and sustained national dialogue, and repealing the *Indemnity Act No. 5 of 1970**.

Given the foregoing, dystopia is decidedly the collective lived-experience for ethnic Somalis and Muslims who call the arc of insecurity their home.

Ungoverned external spaces

The lived experience of ethnic Somalis and other Muslims, including historical injustices such as the Shifta war, and the Isiolo, Garissa, and Wagalla massacres, are present in the collective memory of their coethnics and coreligionists outside of Kenya. The shared demographics with Somalia also make grievances and conflicts communicable. The kin-country syndrome therefore, serving as a conduit for shared discontent and collective action, linking coethnics and coreligionists across borders, and hence linking Kenya with its fragile and volatile neighborhood, is a major impediment to CIVE in Kenya**.

Kenya’s ungoverned external spaces are in this forbidding neighborhood. Kenya is bordered by other fragile states, and each offer

* See, e.g., Asaala (2010), KTJN (2013), HRW (2019), and Maliti (2020).

** The kin-country syndrome refers to cross-border affinities and solidarities in identity fault-lines. Identity fault-lines range from fault-lines involving clan-kin and ethnic-kin as outlined by Lemarchand (1997, 2001) for example, to the more expansive religion-kin and civilization-kin as outlined by Huntington (1996) for example.

their own challenges to the security of Kenya. Kenya's neighborhood is also an epicenter of the fight against Islamist terrorism. The links between Al Shabaab in Somalia and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in Yemen add to the complexities of this neighborhood*. It is however Somalia that presents the most intractable obstacles to CIVE in Kenya. Proximity, and shared demographics, grievances, and fragility, dictate that as CIVE fails in Somalia, CIVE will fail in Kenya as well. As Ingiriis (2020, pp. 130–132, 139) points out, Somalia's institutions are “dysfunctional”, “corrupt”, “personalized”, and highly dependent on foreign partners. Felter et al. (2021) also observe that because of corruption and negligence in state institutions Somalia is unable to effectively govern its geographical area, or even provide the most basic services. Given these conditions, and as Afghanistan has so dramatically demonstrated, it is unlikely that Somalia will be able to govern itself, protect itself, and fend-off or defeat Al Shabaab without external intervention. The fragile state, as defined by state extraversion, is on life support, gingerly secured by varied forms of external intervention.

(In the case of Afghanistan, whilst U.S. Intelligence warned on 10 August 2021 that with the U.S. withdrawal it will take thirty to ninety days for Afghanistan to collapse in the face of the Taliban advance, it took five days! By 15 August 2021, the Afghan government in Kabul had collapsed and several units of the Afghan security forces surrendered without firing a shot, others defecting and joining the Taliban (Mellen, 2021).)

Linked to state fragility and IVE in Somalia, another barrier to CIVE in Kenya is the war in Somalia. The war can settle into a mutual enterprise, a conflict equilibrium with no end in sight**. Facing a common adversary in Al Shabaab, a “forever-war” in Somalia will be a “forever-war” in Kenya. Equally, is the broader regional threat by Al Shabaab. As Katumanga (2017, p. 164) holds, the Islamization of Kenya or Somalia are narrow objectives. An Islamic state in East

* IVE as an ideology and a movement links the Horn of Africa with the Arabian Peninsula (and the broader Middle East). The linkages between Islamist organizations are discernible as is the case with Al Shabaab in Somalia and AQAP in Yemen. Both are Al Qaeda Central affiliates (Carter, 2012, p. 75; Blanchard, 2013, p. 2).

** Kaldor (2012, 2013) holds, instead of being “contests of wills”, such “new-wars” tend to be “mutual enterprises”.

Africa is a broader objective. But despite this regional threat, there is no regional response. Further, none of the actors involved, neither AMISOM (now ATMIS), Kenya, Somalia, Al Shabaab, nor the U.S., are achieving any strategic effect beyond short-term reversible gains. No one is “winning”, no one is “imposing their will”*. Al Shabaab remains resilient and resourceful. For example, despite setbacks since 2015, Al Shabaab is believed to have an annual income of \$180 million in 2021 (Hiraal Institute, 2022, p. 8). Kenya and the coalition of forces against Al Shabaab are yet to impose their will in a manner that convinces Al Shabaab that violence is not a viable option. Kenya, Somalia, and this coalition, are also yet to convince Al Shabaab to negotiate and to abandon the objective of the Islamic state and accept “lesser objectives” that may include political representation, equal rights, and economic opportunities for Al Shabaab’s constituency.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine the key factors that impede the success of CIVE in Kenya. These factors are found in the ungoverned spaces that define state fragility in Kenya. These ungoverned spaces, offering support and safe passage for Al Shabaab, are safe havens and incubators of IVE, added to enabling and generating impediments to CIVE. State fragility (the *explanans*) provides the context, enables, and generates impediments to CIVE (the *explanandum*). Granted, CIVE has innate drawbacks such as the limited use and utility of force in such contexts and the limited economic resources to address the socio-economic developmental imperatives of CIVE, all hampering the response choices available. It is however the limitations and excesses of state fragility that generate impediments to CIVE, that explain ineffective and counterproductive CIVE, and therefore explain the failure of CIVE.

* The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has been deployed against *al-Shabaab* since January 2007. Kenya is part of AMISOM since 2012. The African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) replaced AMISOM in April 2022. The mandate of ATMIS ends in December 2024 (Helfrich, 2022). The mandate of ATMIS is unlikely to be renewed.

As the Fund for Peace (2017) holds, a fragile state is unable to effectively manage social, economic, and political pressures that are otherwise managed by other states. A fragile state has depreciated resilience to deal with these pressures. If resilience is (1) resisting IVE, (2) managing IVE, and (3) recovering from IVE, the varied ungoverned spaces in Kenya show that Kenya has failed and is failing in all three counts. Given the limitations and excesses caused by the properties of state fragility, the hammer, often the main tool in the CIVE toolbox of fragile states, ensures that CIVE in fragile contexts is heavy-handed and indiscriminate, and CIVE is consequently ineffective and counter-productive. As CIVE impediments persist, CIVE in Kenya will continue to fail. Many of these impediments, such as horizontal inequality, a constricted democratic space, depreciated legitimacy, and ungoverned spaces, applying to both CIVE and to the broader challenges of state-building and nation-building, will hamper conflict resolution and the prospects for positive peace, further entrenching state fragility in Kenya.

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Dr. Jude Cocodia
University of the Free State,
Bloemfontein, South Africa

Chapter 13

THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA AND SECURITY IN AFRICA: DOCTORED REPORTAGE AND DIRE OUTCOMES

Introduction

In our everyday lives, especially for adults, there is the need to be up to date with news in our communities, states and the world. Beyond the need to know, there is the awareness that events that occur near or far away could have profound effects on our lives. This makes the dependence on the news and information media indispensable in our lives as we believe that what we hear is true and plan accordingly if necessary. Watching and listening to international media streams, there is the assumption that what we hear is true, and these drive our convictions and beliefs. With this happening all over the world, then the power of the global media is massive. When this force serves the parochial interests of states, rather than the facts as they really are, what happens? Do the news corporations ever think of the public trust vested on them, and the need to live up to that trust and present the facts as they are? If they did, would there ever be the issue of the pervasive fake news phenomenon? How much damage does this do? Does the end justify the subversion of facts? Do citizens query the content of what they hear (or are tired of querying)?

Molina et al. (2021) acknowledge that information distortion, which has been popularly termed *fake news*, has become a scourge that has plagued the information environment. They identify misreporting, commentary and persuasive information among the distortion of information. Zheng and Almeida (2021) contend that it consists of plain deception and political rumor peddling. However, information distortion is conceived and employed as a political, conflict or security strategy, and it has far reaching and sometimes dire implications.

In Somalia, this strategy was adopted to pave way for the usurpation of the authority of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in Somalia (Hull & Svensson, 2008; Cocodia, 2021). The usurpation drew its momentum from the stigmatization of Islam (Islamophobia) and its link to terrorism and securitization as conceived in the West (Kaya, 2011; Smith, 2016; Solomon & Cocodia, 2021; Mokoena, 2022). The Western media were in the vanguard of weaving and promoting the dominant narrative that labeled Somalia as the spoiler in the region, and the ICU as an ally of international terrorists. This was one of many dominant narratives contrived by the influential Western media to achieve objectives either noble or despicable. Reportage of events such as the invasion of Iraq and Libya, and even going as far back as Nigeria's civil war, has shown that the objectives of the media, in consonance with their principles, were often sinister rather than benign (Forsyth, 2016; Brown, 2021). While some accounts tie such calculated misinformation to political elites of benefiting countries (see Brown, 2014; Kessler, 2016), others contend that though the distortion of facts largely emanates from the political elite, the mass media has been culpable in ignoring the facts, and in the spread and public acceptance of the contrived falsehoods (Follmer, 2008; Forsyth, 2016; Garfield, 2018; Preble, 2018; Brown, 2021).

Drawing on the instability in South-Central Somalia, this study examines the role of the international media in the demonization of the Islamic Courts Union, the radicalization of its youth wing – Al Shaabaab, and the stalemate/insecurity from a conflict that has dragged on for over thirty years. Adopting case study for the research design and process tracing for its analysis, this chapter concludes that it is up to the local and international public to wake up to the politics of the global media and so challenge their hold on shaping national and regional trajectories based on falsehood.

The international media and Africa: a force for good or evil?

The impact of the media has grown exponentially in the last century with the advance in technology and the advent of the print and electronic media, and now the Internet. The influence of the media emanates from its provision of information (news), entertainment and education (Mughal, 2013). Its function as a provider of information places it at an advantage to influence public opinion and political outcomes both within

and beyond borders (DellaVigna & La Ferrara, 2015; Zhuravskaya et al., 2020). Similarly, based on data collected over a 50-year period, Huang et al. (2021) noted that reports on China by The New York Times, which has 7.5 million elite subscribers, in one year explained a 54% variance in American public opinion on China in the following year, and this despite the ideological biases and nuances. That the media is influential in forging beliefs and public opinion, even on an international scale, is not in doubt, so imagine the impact when what is peddled by the mass media is distorted information to promote certain interests.

There is an axiom that says that the history we know is that which is told by the victor. In modern times, the media is the tool which is used to propagate this history and this is because the mass media is a very powerful weapon that shapes minds on issues. Unfortunately, much of the international mass media is controlled by major powers and organizations, some of which are covert, which dominate politics at the international, national and grassroots levels. Considering that every group has its interest to protect, the truth is many a time sacrificed for these interests and the media is used by these groups to weave these false narratives. Cases abound through history and some will be treated here to show the power of the media and those whose interest they protect and propagate in constructing narratives that become dominant. Unfortunately, Somalia fell on the wrong side of this narrative given its antagonistic history with a U.S.-backed Ethiopia that emerged the victor in their conflict. Much of the dominant narrative, which unfortunately too has been absorbed and peddled by the academic community, presents Somalia as a threat to the Horn of Africa.

Nelson Mandela was once classified a terrorist and was on the U.S. terrorist watch list until 2008. This was the outcome of the Cold War attitude of the U.S. that saw it support South Africa's apartheid regime and any other regime that purported to be anti-communist (Waxman, 2018). Elliot (2019) notes that Mandela was branded a criminal in his own country and a terrorist by the U.S. because he was considered a communist. Since the U.S. and the white-minority South African governments were in charge during the apartheid era, they controlled the media at international and national levels. So, Mandela being branded a terrorist for his nationalist activities was the dominant narrative for much of the Western world whose governments used the media and even the academia as tools of propagation.

The picture painted of Muammar Gaddafi was just as lopsided and grossly misleading. The dominant narrative of Gaddafi in the international media was that of a dictator who violated the rights of his Libyan people, persecuted dissidents abroad and supported international terrorism. This is evident from the headlines in major newspapers in the United Kingdom, the U.S., through the EU, to Israel and proxy states in the Middle East (Greensdale, 2011; Karniel et al., 2015). The negative image created of Gaddafi by the international media such as Asser's (2011) piece for the BBC, was apparently hyped to justify his violent removal and death in the eyes of the international community, and the international media played a major role in this to the very end. This strategy is reminiscent of the English proverb *give a dog a bad name and hang him*.

In contrast to this narrative of a vile dictator, in 2010 that marked Gaddafi's 41st year in power, the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI), which is the measure for health, education and income, ranked Libya 53rd in the world and 5th in Africa. During his rule Gaddafi transformed Libya from a rural and backward country to a modern economy with a high literacy level (Mamdani, 2011). Brown (2021) notes of Gaddafi's era:

Education and medical treatment were free; having a home was considered a human right; and Libyans participated in an original system of local democracy. The country boasted the world's largest irrigation system, the Great Man-Made River project, which brought water from the desert to cities and coastal areas; and Gaddafi was embarking on a program to spread this model throughout Africa. But that was before U.S.-NATO forces bombed the irrigation system and wreaked havoc on the country.

Within Africa, Gaddafi was lauded for his support for Pan-Africanism and willingness to tackle the unfair economic legacy of neocolonialism (Koenig, 2017). Gaddafi's plan to actualize Africa's economic independence was not taken lightly by Western governments, and the international mass media machinery was co-opted in the scheme to unseat him*.

* Authors have argued about this extreme form of neocolonialism that has contributed hugely to the underdevelopment of Africa. Prominent among these works are: Chossudovsky, M. (2015). *The Globalisation of Poverty and the New World Order* (2nd edition); Perkins, J. (2005). *Confessions of an Economic Hitman*; and Nichols H. (2015). *Underdevelopment in Africa – What is the real story? The role of economic policies and international institutions in the 'underdevelopment' of Africa*.

Brown (2021) notes:

Thanks to the 2016 publication of Hillary Clinton's emails that the reason behind NATO's entry into Libya was revealed. It was to prevent the creation of an independent hard currency in Africa that would free the continent from its economic bondage under the dollar, the IMF and the French African franc. That hard currency would have allowed Africa to shake off the last heavy chains of colonial exploitation... so the violent intervention was not chiefly about the security of the people. It was about money, oil and the security of global banking.

In addition, Davidson (2017) discusses the deceitful media coverage of the uprising in Libya:

In the wake of the "Arab Spring"... the Benghazi uprising in eastern Libya in February 2011 was widely portrayed as the start of yet another revolution... that would soon see Muammar Qadhafi's regime swept from power by an overwhelming majority of the population. As the weeks dragged on, however, with Qadhafi still effectively in power and the bulk of the Libyan armed forces apparently remaining loyal, this narrative had to be abandoned and replaced by a new one depicting a desperate regime clinging to power by wielding extreme violence against its people and deploying vicious foreign mercenaries.

The international media then sought to justify the need for foreign intervention in the name of preventing a human catastrophe. As Davidson (2017, p. 91) notes: "By March 2011 it was generally assumed that Qadhafi's fighters... would massacre thousands of civilians... if the Western powers and their regional allies did not step up to the plate with some sort of humanitarian intervention on behalf of the Libyan revolution."

With this humanitarian intervention underway via NATO, the media still had to establish the narrative of desperation and brutality of the government in Tripoli. According to Davidson (2017, p. 101):

With the uprising soon reaching Tripoli and state television headquarters being stormed, the collapse of the regime seemed imminent, at least according to the international media. As the days went by, however, the capital appeared to remain quite firmly in Qadhafi's hands, with the much-anticipated nationwide revolution simply failing to materialize. Explained away with stories of pro-government thugs being unleashed in residential areas to keep people off the streets, along with busloads of paid Qadhafi supporters arriving

in public squares and – according to the Qatar Owned Al Jazeera – aircraft and helicopter gunships mowing protesters down.

A month after the ousting of Gaddafi, Robert Gates, the U.S. Secretary of Defense at the time, stated that he read the media reports and had no confirmation whatsoever that Gaddafi’s regime had used airpower to attack civilians. Similarly, after due investigation, the director of the International Crisis Group (ICG) North Africa project noted that Al Jazeera’s stories of Gaddafi’s forces repeatedly attacking protesters with bombs and machine gun fire from low flying aircraft were untrue (Davidson, 2017). Amnesty International (in Pothier, 2022) observed that, “Libyan rebel groups were responsible for numerous human rights violations, including ethnic cleansing and the systematic kidnapping and murdering of dark-skinned Libyan residents... Many Libyans interviewed during the time said they preferred living under Gaddafi than under the constant threat of rebel groups”. By the time these revelations came, the damage had been done, Gaddafi was dead, and countries of the Sahel have been very unstable ever since as Islamic fundamentalism is on the rise.

In examining the discourses about the fall of Gaddafi on CNN and Fox News, Fernando and Marcias (2019) aver that, “the news around the fall of Gaddafi had been manipulated in texts and images... ignorance about the political and social processes in Libya led the Fox and CNN audiences to accept, without questioning, before or after the conflict, the actions of NATO in Libya”. Still, the public wait on the media for information and to validate public opinion despite knowing that the allegiance of the international media is to their political and financial benefactors over and above facts. This hold of the international media over public opinion and the minds of men has framed Somalia’s narrative and the status of Al Shabaab to the detriment of the country, and only a handful seem to care.

History as told by the victor: the dominant narrative, external actors and Al Shabaab

The problems of the ICU arose because, firstly, it was a Muslim group that was intricately linked to the Sharia law. This was unavoidable given that it evolved from Somalia’s grassroots, as an indigenous socio-cultural body whose emergence was to address the

conflict that had plagued Somalia for two decades. Le Sage (2005) notes that the Sharia law has been a traditional feature of the Somali society and it is officially woven into the State as it is the basis for all national legislation. The rise of the Sharia courts to *de jure* status was unappealing and a threat to Somalia's Christian neighbor – Ethiopia, and by extension, the West. The Sharia status of the ICU made it easy to fabricate claims of its ties with Al Qaeda (Khayre, 2016; Cocodia, 2021). Khayre (2016, p. 32) notes that “the Bush administration and Ethiopia saw this group as a threat and worked hard to find a pretext to eliminate them”. In that respect, the global “war on terror” took a prominent position in Somali politics from that time onward. Cocodia (2021) argues that since the ascendancy of the ICU was at the expense of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) that was backed by Ethiopia for its national interest (not that of Somalia because the ICU had succeeded in stabilizing a country at war), Abdullahi Yusuf who was the president of the TFG capitalized on Western Islamophobia, the ICU's Sharia status, and the U.S.-led War on Terror, and claimed that the ICU had links with Al Qaeda. This gave the conflict a religious connotation as the ICU was labeled an Islamic extremist sect (Shinn, 2007, p. 62; Khayre, 2014, p. 209) and the U.S. ousted it from power under the pretext as part of the War on Terror*.

While Ethiopia was uncomfortable with a Muslim government next door, connections with Al Qaeda, real or imagined, was all the excuse that the U.S. needed to support and aid Ethiopia in its invasion of Somalia and the usurpation of the ICU that had managed stability in South-Central Somalia. The connection to Al Qaeda was all that was needed to get the tacit approval, indicated by the silence of the international community, in ousting the ICU. With growing Islamophobia in the West, the international public seldom questioned the narratives about Somalia that have been peddled by the international media on the need for intervention by Ethiopia and the U.S., and the unfounded claim of the ICU's connections to Al Qaeda.

In ousting the ICU, the results of its rule, which was seen as Somalia's golden age of stability, were muted or ignored in the news, Western scholarship (and by extension, African scholarship) and think

* Hull, C., & Svensson, E. (2008, October) present a more detailed description of events.

tank reports. Instead, texts that support external intervention in Somalia and justify the operations of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) abound and form the dominant narrative. In these texts the ICU and its offshoots are branded as Islamist radicals, extremists or terrorists (see Shinn, 2007; Assowe, 2011, 2015; Williams, 2018). Consequently, the stable years under the ICU are seldom discussed (Cocodia, 2021). Contrarily, texts by Somali (or a few other African) authors on the issue hardly get mentioned in Western mainstream media or published in the more widely read Western academic journals. Below is what major news streams reported about the ICU, as searched by the key words “the Islamic Courts Union”.

BBC (2017) website displays the following: “Al Shabaab emerged as the radical youth wing of Somalia’s now-defunct Union of Islamic Courts, which controlled Mogadishu in 2006, before being forced out by Ethiopian forces.” The online media outlet has little or nothing on the ICU, but it possesses volumes on the groups’ later radicalized youth wing Al Shabaab.

CNN, (see Lister, 2012): “Al Shabaab began prospering when the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) seized the capital Mogadishu and much of central Somalia in 2006. After defeating a coalition of warlords backed by the United States, the ICU brought Sharia-style justice to the capital, temporarily halting the anarchy in the city... Six months after the ICU established itself in Mogadishu, Ethiopia invaded Somalia, with backing from Washington. Both governments were concerned that the ICU were establishing fundamentalist Islamist rule and giving Al Qaeda a foothold in Africa”.

Al Jazeera (see Adow, 2009): “A group of Islamic scholars came together and formed the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) to impose law and order... Between 2002 and 2003 a group of Somali youth, angry with the lack of progress in attempts to establish a government, joined ranks to push their goal to create (by any means necessary) a state governed by the Sharia law. Now, 18 years after Somalia began its slow descent into anarchy, it is again the setting for one of the bloodiest wars in Africa’s recent history”.

Council on Foreign Relations (see Klobucista et al., 2021): “In the early 2000’s a group of young hard-liners who sought the establishment of a ‘Greater Somalia’ under fundamentalist Islamic rule joined forces with an alliance of Sharia courts known as the Islamic Courts Union

(ICU) and served as its youth militia. Al Shabaab and the ICU wrested control of the capital in June 2006, a victory that stoked fears in neighboring Ethiopia of spill-over Jihadi violence”.

The New York Times (see Hanson, 2009): “Originally the militant wing of the Islamic Courts Union, the group that controlled Somalia prior to the country’s invasion by Ethiopian forces, Al Shabaab leaders have claimed affiliation with Al Qaeda since 2007”.

A major point of note across these randomly selected major international news outlets is that none of them goes into even the smallest detail of the exploits of the ICU that made it popular among the Somalis. It is for this reason, the period between 2004 when the ICU came on board and 2007 when they were removed is often missing in the dominant narrative. As seen above, the international media is keener to link the ICU to its youth wing that became radicalized after the ICU had been deposed. This narrative does not provide justification for the ICU being in power, nor does it provide any reason to condemn the intrusion of Ethiopia and the U.S. into Somalia’s affairs. On the contrary, the dominant narrative propounded by the international media provided salient grounds for the invasion.

While the international public may not seem to have much of a choice than to absorb the information provided by the international media, it owes it to itself and the actors involved in these stories/events (of usurpation) to investigate deeply, examining the views of the parties involved, and decide for itself what is fact. This way, the international public decides, judges and acts out of being well informed. Researching the news therefore becomes essential in present day.

Conclusion

The international news (mass) media is relied on by the international public for sound and apt information. But given the series of misinformation that have come to the fore, and the dire consequences that come with them, one is left pondering if relying on the international media for information is worth it given the falsehood they peddle.

The world deals with a radicalized Al Shabaab today and views it with disdain. Thanks in large part to the actions of Ethiopia and the U.S., and the manipulation of the narrative by the international media.

The international public has failed to see the gaps in the dominant narrative to ask, “what things were before this period”, what was Al Shabaab before its radicalization; and what prompted its radicalization. This is the narrative that has been ignored and what this chapter draws attention to.

The dominant narrative has held sway for too long and left a trail of destruction in its wake, Libya, Iraq and Somalia among many others, most of which are Muslim societies. This corroborates the argument that the dominant narrative is largely built on an Islamophobic agenda where Muslim societies, especially those drawn to the implementation of the Sharia as state law, are conceived as threats to a “democratic free world”. This naïve approach to state relationship has caused a lot of havoc in state relations and encouraged dangerous adventurism in the name of intervention to protect freedoms. Incursions into Libya, Iraq and Somalia based on this maxim have left these countries in ruins and much worse off than when the intervention began.

This argument is captured in this paper using Somalia and the ICU as the victims (which they really are) of this self-serving ideology, and the international media as the tool adopted by powerful external players to subvert the facts as they are and execute their scheme of subjugation. While the ICU might have been consigned to the doldrums of unsung history, no thanks to the international media, the golden era of stability (2004–2007) they ushered in Somalia shows that the solution to the crisis does not lie in contrived or puppet governments, enforced democratic systems that are out of sync with the country’s indigenous culture, but in the development of a system that emanated from, and embraces much of Somali culture and social structure. If the Sharia is a part of this, then so be it. Somalia’s neighbors, the rest of the world, and the international media should accept this and learn to live with it.

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CONCLUSION

The title of this book – *Between Promise and Peril: African Security in the 21st Century* – resonates with the tectonic shifts that are taking place in the world in the first part of the 21st century. The situation may perfectly be captured with the 1929 quote by the Italian communist Antonio Gramsci, “The old world is dying, and the new world struggles to be born: now is the time of monsters”. The current interregnum where the hegemonic powers are in decline whilst new powers assert themselves is being played out on the African continent through a new scramble for the continent’s resources. Thus, while the present volume’s focus is on Africa’s security challenges, these cannot be separated from current geopolitical issues. Much has been said within the pages of this book about the perils confronting the Africa continent, but we would like to end this book on a more optimistic tone, focusing on the promise of a better tomorrow for this blighted continent.

Dr. Zdravko Todorović makes it clear that Africa’s impoverished status needs not be taken as a given, as Africa’s development was interrupted by the Europeans and the current unequal terms of trade, as well as the dependence on the West for the transfer of capital, technological knowledge, and information, have had a deleterious impact on Africa. Objectively though, Africa produces 62% of the world’s gold output, 77% of its diamonds, 17% each of its copper ore and bauxite, 26% of coal, large amounts of phosphate, cobalt, tungsten and other ores. This is not a poor continent, but an extremely rich one. Africa, therefore, must seek to challenge the prevailing terms of trade, end its exploitation, and seek to ensure that its natural resources benefit its people and not the Global North.

Building on this theme, Dr. Dragisa Jurisic notes that it is Africa’s natural resources that attract this often-malevolent international attention. One such example of this is French complicity in the ouster of Gaddafi in an effort to maintain its access to oil exploitation. Dr. Jurisic notes that African countries have developed strong bilateral ties with key world powers as well as international organizations such as NATO and the EU. Moreover, there are six active UN missions on the continent. Often, it is the national interests of the external partner that predominate because African states do not typically set the agenda

in these relationships as they pursue them with different partners with diverse end goals. What is needed is greater coherence and solidarity amongst African nations in terms of what they desire, more selective approaches to working with some international partners and not with others, and a strong focus on ensuring positive results for their people.

In his chapter, Dr. Sergey Kostelyanets explores the global military competition for Africa. Under the guise of fighting terrorism and humanitarian considerations, foreign military presence in Africa has increased exponentially since 2001. As of 2023, Russia is the only permanent member of the UN Security Council who does not have a permanent military presence in Africa, he notes. Despite the increased foreign military presence and assistance, jihadist attacks have grown stronger, while government forces have been on the backfoot, especially in the Sahel. The altruistic claims of those militarily intervening on the African continent is evident in Djibouti where several foreign countries established military bases ostensibly to counter piracy – this despite piracy having been on the wane for some time. For Dr. Kostelyanets, for Africa to embrace the promise of a better tomorrow, foreign military influence on the continent has to be minimized and Africans have to develop and strengthen their own national, regional and continental security mechanisms.

Endorsing Dr. Kostelyanets' position that insurgencies have been gaining ground in Africa despite foreign military intervention, Prof. Hussein Solomon examines what is wrong with Africa's counter-insurgency strategies. Debunking the myth that insurgencies could end with a negotiated settlement with the likes of Boko Haram or Al Shabaab, Prof. Solomon provides seven steps in which counter-insurgency strategies could be made more effective. Key amongst them is focusing on what has been termed as the "trinity of gravity" – degrading the enemy force itself, disrupting its finances, and undercutting its support amongst the local population. If one could implement such a strategy, insurgencies could well be minimized and the promise of a better tomorrow become more realizable.

Turning to the challenge of insurgencies and terrorist movements in Burkina Faso, Dr. Natalia Zherlitsina explains the threats and difficulties confronting the Ouagadougou authorities. For instance, there is only one gendarme for every 1800 people as opposed to the international norm of one for every 400 people. Moreover, despite the overt

Islamist rhetoric of the jihadists, Dr. Zherlitsina notes, poverty, political instability, state weakness, and ethnic fragmentation is what drives the insurgency. Given this, there is a need for a combination of both military and non-military responses to quell the insurrection. These measures, embarked upon by Ouagadougou, include building up the capabilities of the defense and security forces to ensure the security of the population, the development of mechanisms to prevent and resolve conflicts and tensions in ethnic communities, which are often exploited by terrorist groups, and improving public administration so that the basic needs of citizens are met. This more comprehensive approach holds the promise of the glimmer of peace for the long-suffering citizens of Burkina Faso.

The issue of insurgency is also examined by Dr. Tatyana Denisova in the context of West and Central Africa. While acknowledging the socio-political, ethnic and religious dimensions of the insurgency, Dr. Denisova stresses the importance of economic factors. In particular, competition for access to the development of natural resources and their exports and for control over trade, supply chains, and agricultural production has become the driving force of insurgencies in both West and Central Africa. These “economy of war” considerations are clearly evident in the Lake Chad Basin, where both Boko Haram and the Islamic State’s West Africa Province (ISWAP) have entrenched themselves, resulting in the phenomenon of “the economy of terrorism”. In the Central African Republic (CAR), all fifteen armed groups involved in the insurgency are actively involved in illegal economic activities. Importantly, these economic activities involve not only local actors, but external ones too. As the CAR is rich in oil, uranium, gold, and diamonds, this war economy has attracted French, American, Chinese and other companies. Indeed, the establishment of peace and the ending of conflicts will threaten their lucrative profits. For those seeking to end conflicts in the two regions, a way needs to be sought to contain potential spoilers of any peace process.

There is, however, another type of war being waged globally and on the African continent, which unlike insurgencies may not necessarily involve a kinetic element. This is termed “hybrid warfare”. According to Dr. Predrag Obrenović and Dr. Dragana Popović, this has become part of the military doctrine of the U.S. Armed Forces and refers to the deployment of conventional and unconventional tactics within the same

battlefield with the aim of achieving certain political goals or, as we saw in the course of so-called “color revolutions” in Eastern Europe – regime change. In Africa, as Mr. Oleg Shulga notes, hybrid warfare in its modern form was first employed in Libya in 2011, where the U.S. and NATO forged an “internal armed opposition” to oust the government of Muammar Gaddafi. What makes Africa vulnerable to this type of warfare is its economic, technological and media weakness and domination by Western countries. In view of the current state of geostrategic tensions between the West and Russia, both chapters note that a number of African countries that refuse to adopt an anti-Russian stance may become targets of hybrid warfare. These African countries include Egypt, Algeria, and South Africa.

Africa’s development prospects are seriously constrained by its energy limitations. This is especially true given its burgeoning population and its desire to industrialize. Dr. Eldar Salakhedinov cogently argues that one way to overcome the power deficit in Africa is to change its energy mix – thereby moving away from fossil fuels and its attendant carbon emissions. Nuclear energy, he notes, provides relatively clean and safe carbon-free energy at stable electricity prices for many decades. Nuclear energy does have its critics, however. Some in the West, Dr. Eben Coetzee argues, have speculated over whether civilian nuclear reactors could increase the likelihood of nuclear terrorism. After due consideration of all the evidence, he concludes that the specter of nuclear terrorism is a myth on the African continent. As Dr. Coetzee points out, terrorists have manifested little desire in going nuclear and the challenges presented in each step toward a nuclear bomb are well-near insurmountable. Other critics have raised concerns about the potential dangers for state and society associated with the extraction and utilization of nuclear materials. Whilst recognizing the validity of these concerns, Dr. Salakhedinov argues that modern mining methods prevent any off-site pollution. While nuclear energy would greatly enhance Africa’s development prospects, there is contestation over the African nuclear market on economic and geopolitical grounds. The latter has taken on added significance following the conflict in Ukraine, with African states being actively pressurized not to engage in nuclear power projects with Moscow.

Without doubt, Africa confronts immense challenges, but as has been pointed out repeatedly in this volume there are opportunities out of the

current crises – and, according to Dr. Albert Schoeman, one should start with reconceptualizing the state. Western-style neo-liberal democracies based on the Weberian ideal are far from conducive to the reality of the lived experiences of Africa's people. Western-style top-down approaches with the imposition of alien institutions which do not factor in the indigenous culture of ordinary citizens are unlikely to succeed. The fragile state discourse, whilst not going far enough in terms of the structural reasons for state failure, does at least point to the Weberian state ideal and its imposition on the peoples of Africa. The way out of this quagmire, according to Dr. Schoeman, is the adoption of a hybrid political order that incorporates Western models of governance and indigenous institutions. Somalia followed the Weberian state model and has been mired in conflict since the fall of Siad Barre. Somaliland, on the other hand, has implemented a hybrid political order and is far more peaceful. The Somaliland government could be regarded as a fusion of Western form and traditional substance; it consists of an executive president, an independent judiciary, and a bicameral parliament, which in turn consists of an Upper House of Elders (the Guurti) and a Lower House of Representatives, whose members are nominated on a clan basis by elders from an electoral village. Such hybrid political orders may well be the future of the African polity.

The issues of state fragility within the context of countering violent extremism and terrorism are also explored by Dr. Benjamin Mokoena in the context of Kenya. Boldly noting that counter-terrorism has failed in Kenya, Dr. Mokoena links this failure to state fragility. State fragility, he argues, results in the government being unable to eradicate or mediate Islamist violent extremism (IVE) or resolve the grievances of particular ethno-political groups. State fragility undermines both state capacity and legitimacy, and indeed is conflict-generating. Within the Kenyan context, Dr. Mokoena notes, state fragility has taken on a peculiar form and is characterized by horizontal inequality, constricted democratic space, depreciated legitimacy, and ungoverned spaces. For counter-terrorism to be effective in this context, the broader challenge of both state-building and nation-building needs to be addressed and the focus should be placed on positive peace – on addressing the challenges of structural violence caused by state fragility.

Turning to neighboring Somalia, Dr. Jude Cocodia challenges the dominant image of Al Shabaab merely as a radical Islamist movement.

Painting a more nuanced picture, Dr. Cocodia examines how Al Shabaab emerged within the context of the environment – the semi-arid nature of Somalia and the deficit of arable land. Moreover, the physical environment has compelled Al Shabaab to adopt pro-green policies, including the ban they imposed on single-use plastic bags as these present a threat to both human and livestock and contaminate the natural environment. Al Shabaab also played an active role in attempting to curb the spreading of the COVID-19 epidemic. This more insightful picture of this ostensibly extremist organization suggests that we need to move beyond stereotypes and examine these movements more holistically if we are to end the scourge of Islamist terrorism on the continent and embrace a better tomorrow.

A conclusion may be drawn from the above chapters that despite the geopolitical adversities, foreign meddling, and structural impediments such as the plagues of corruption, state repression, factionalism, maladministration and bureaucratic inefficiency, poverty, inequality and marginalization, which severely undermine Africa's ability to tackle security challenges on its own, there is still promise for the future of the continent as African countries gradually realize that to decrease insecurity they must increase their agency on the international arena through uniting their voices, reduce their dependence on the external partners that abuse their influence, review terms of foreign trade and restrict predatory activities of foreign businesses that act as spoilers in peace processes, implement Afrocentric approaches to state- and nation-building, and develop measures to counter hybrid threats. Indeed, the general trend toward deeper political, economic and cultural integration of the continent holds considerable promise in this regard.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Zdravko Todorović, PhD (International Relations, National Security) is a research associate at the Institute for Scientific Research of the Independent University Banja Luka and an assistant professor at the Independent University Banja Luka. His research interests include the study of geopolitical and security relations in the Balkans, especially aspects of international relations related to the Balkans and Serbian countries, specifically Bosnia and Herzegovina. He studies contemporary problems of the Balkan countries, such as geopolitical realignments, energy problems, relations with Europe and Turkey. Dr. Todorović published the book *Geopolitical Perspectives on the Integration of the Western Balkans - A Review of Bosnia and Herzegovina* and over ten scientific papers in Serbian academic journals. ORCID ID: 0000-0003-4958-7503

Dragisa Jurisic, PhD (Security Science) is a member of the Security Research Centre, Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina. He is a former UN Military Observer in UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. His book *The Guardians of the Ark of Covenant* became a manual for cultural awareness for observers in that mission, which ended in 2008. He also prepared a publication *Observer for a limited time*, which was used in the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina as material for Military Observers' preparation for different UN missions. In addition, he published over 30 research papers in different academic journals and collection of works. He also completed several courses in the sphere of international security, including: Peace Support Operations Staff Course at the Peace Support Operations Training Center Bosnia and Herzegovina, Butmir, Sarajevo; UN Staff Officer Course at the German Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Hamburg, Germany; and Civil-Military Relations Course for UN Missions at the Swedish Armed Forces International Centre, Stockholm, Sweden. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-7225-0493

Sergey V. Kostelyanets, PhD (Political Science) is Leading Research Fellow and Head of the Centre for Sociological and Political Sciences Studies at the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Senior Research Fellow at the International Centre of Anthropology of the National Research University Higher School of Economics, and Associate Professor at Patrice Lumumba Peoples' Friendship University of Russia. His research interests include the study of armed conflicts and conflict resolution in Africa,

particularly in North Africa and the Horn of Africa, terrorism, secessionist movements, involvement of African troops outside the continent, and relations between Russia, Turkey, GCC countries and Africa. Dr. Kostelyanets has published the book *Darfur: A History of the Conflict* (in Russian) and over 100 research papers in Russian and foreign academic journals and anthologies. Dr. Kostelyanets worked previously at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in the sections for human rights and for combating human trafficking. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-9983-9994

Professor Hussein Solomon is a member of the Centre for Gender and Africa Studies at the University of the Free State, South Africa. He is also an Extraordinary Professor at the School of Government, North-West University, Visiting Professor at Osaka University, Visiting Professor in the Department of History and Politics at Nelson Mandela University, Visiting Professor at the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Military Science, Stellenbosch University and Senior Research Associate of the Jerusalem-based think tank Research on Islam and Muslims in Africa (RIMA). ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5980-9280

Natalia A. Zherlitsina, PhD (History) is Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Academic Secretary of the Russian Academy of Sciences Research Council for the Problems of Africa and Associate Professor at Patrice Lumumba Peoples' Friendship University of Russia. Her research interests include the study of the history of relations between Russia and the countries of North Africa in the 18th – 20th centuries. In addition to historical studies, Dr. Natalia A. Zherlitsina studies the modern problems of the Arab countries of the Maghreb, such as the threat of Islamist terrorism and the political consequences of the Arab Spring. Dr. Zherlitsina has published the book *Russian-Tunisian relations from 1780 to 1991* and over 80 research papers in Russian academic journals and anthologies.

Tatyana S. Denisova, PhD (History) is Leading Research Fellow and Head of the Centre for Tropical Africa Studies at the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Her research interests include the study of social and political problems in countries of Tropical Africa, political leadership, armed conflicts, primarily in West and Central Africa, terrorism and secessionism, relations between Russia and countries of Tropical Africa.

Dr. Denisova has published three books, including *Tropical Africa: the Evolution of Political Leadership* (In Russian), and about 100 research papers in Russian and in English. ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6321-3503

Predrag Obrenović, PhD, Doctor of Military Sciences in the field of strategy, is Professor at the Faculty of Political Science, Independent University Banja Luka. His scientific area of interest is International Relations and National Security. He has authored three books in the field of international relations and security, as well as over 40 scientific papers. He participates in several domestic and regional research projects on global and regional security challenges. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-7464-3266

Dragana Popović, PhD (Spatial Planning) is Director at the Institute for Scientific Research and Associate Professor at the Faculty of Ecology at the Independent University Banja Luka. Her research interests include the study of spatial planning, regional and local development programs and strategies, tourism, demography, spatial economy (spatial economic and economic development), demography, settlement system, and social ecology. In addition, Dr. Popović studies the spatial and functional development of local self-government units and the paradigm of social ecology. She has participated in various projects in the field (spatial planning, regional and local development programs and strategies, tourism, demography, the regional development state). Dr. Popović has published many scientific and professional papers in nationally academic journals and as part of international scientific-professional conferences. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-0724-2390

Oleg V. Shulga, applicant for the degree of candidate of political science at the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Master of State Administration, Retired Lieutenant-Colonel, United Nations Inspector for Iraq. He participated in two NATO conferences on American missile defense doctrine, the conference of Wilton Park (United Kingdom) on the organization of arms control, international conferences (six) of the Frankfurt Peace Institute on the creation of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East, the international conference of the Arab Institute for Security Studies on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. He also participated in the Geneva Center for Security Policy Consultations “Security in a Nuclear-Free World” and an international conference of the Moscow Center for Energy and Security Studies on nuclear energy, disarmament and nonproliferation.

Eben Coetzee, PhD (Political Science) is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Political Studies and Governance at the University of the Free State. He has written several articles on nuclear weapons, nuclear deterrence and nuclear terrorism. He has also delivered various international and national papers dealing with nuclear weapons, the effect(s) of emerging technology on nuclear deterrence, nuclear terrorism, a nuclear-armed Iran, and nuclear deterrence in general.

Eldar R. Salakhedinov, PhD (International Relations) is a Research Fellow at the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, former Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of South Africa. His research interests include the study of the problems of energy security and socio-economic development in Southern Africa. Dr. Salakhedinov has published over 30 research papers in academic journals and conference proceedings. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-3124-8928

Albert Schoeman, PhD is Head of Department of Political Studies and Governance at the University of the Free State, South Africa. Dr. Schoeman was a lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the Qwaqwa campus of the University of the North from 1998 until 2004, when the campus was incorporated into the University of the Free State. Since 2004, he served as lecturer and later Subject Head of the Department of Political Studies and Governance, as well as Acting Assistant Dean (2016) and Assistant Dean (2017–2018) of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Free State (Qwaqwa campus).

Benjamin Mokoena, PhD (Political Science) is a lecturer at the Department of Political Science (Mil.), Faculty of Military Science, Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Dr. Mokoena is an alumnus of Stellenbosch University and the University of the Free State (South Africa), as well as the Africa Center for Strategic Studies and the Arnold A. Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies (USA). His research focus is Security Studies (viz., internal wars, terrorism, violent extremism, insurgency). His teaching areas include African Security, Political Theory, Foreign Policy and the Military Instrument, Geopolitics, and International Political Economy. ORCID ID: 0000-0003-2521-4550

Jude Cocodia, PhD (International Relations) is an Associate Professor of the Department of Political Science, Niger Delta University, Nigeria. He got

his PhD from the University of Nottingham, UK in 2016. He is a Research Fellow of the Department of Political Studies and Governance, University of the Free State, South Africa, a Fellow of the International Peace Research Association and an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, UK. His major areas of expertise are Peace, Conflict, Security, and Democracy in Africa. His Publications include *Peacekeeping in the African Union: Building Negative Peace* (Routledge, 2018). Some of his current researches include Small and Light Weapons and Terrorism in Africa; the African Union, Al Shabaab and the conflict in Somalia; Maritime Security in Africa; African Women in Peace Processes; and Islam, Terrorism and Democracy in Africa.

**BETWEEN PROMISE AND PERIL:
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This book discusses the multitude of security perils Africa is currently facing, as well as contexts – geopolitical, regional, and national – that give rise to these threats. The escalating tensions between great powers make the scramble for the continent’s resources, markets, and political allegiances increasingly more tense and undisguised, while African countries struggle to maintain neutrality and defend their national interests under mounting foreign pressure. The global competition also facilitates the “hybridization” of warfare in Africa, which implies a growing role of unconventional tactics and non-state actors in the course of conflicts. In the meantime, insurgent and terrorist groups continue to take advantage of porous borders and weak security coordination among African nations to expand their spheres of influence in the Sahara-Sahel zone and beyond. Nonetheless, authors of the volume argue that the future holds the promise of peace for the continent as its countries gradually increase solidarity, deepen political, economic and cultural integration, develop security coordination, and adopt more Afrocentric approaches toward state- and nation-building.

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