U.S. STRATEGY IN AFRICA

Edited by Maya KANDEL

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Sous la direction de :

Maya KANDEL

Responsable du programme sur les États-Unis à l'IRSEM et chercheure associée à l'Université Paris III – Sorbonne Nouvelle (CREW/CRAN)

Cette étude présente une analyse de la stratégie américaine en Afrique. À partir de contributions d'universitaires, experts et opérationnels français et américains, elle analyse les **acteurs, processus et modalités de la présence militaire américaine en Afrique**. Elle s'intéresse en particulier aux caractéristiques et aux coûts de **l'approche indirecte** privilégiée par les États-Unis. Le continent africain constitue en effet le **laboratoire** d'un aspect déterminant de la réorientation stratégique engagée par le président Barack Obama à travers le concept d'**empreinte légère** (*light footprint*). Plus récemment, il a même été érigé en **modèle de la lutte contre-terroriste** et source d'inspiration pour d'autres régions, notamment le Moyen-Orient. Enfin, la **coopération franco-américaine** resserrée et inédite dans certaines régions africaines justifie également que l'on étudie la stratégie américaine en Afrique, son évolution récente, sa mise en œuvre et le bilan que l'on peut en tirer.

Les **dogmes de la stratégie américaine** en Afrique, sont constants depuis le début des années 2000, voire les années 1990 :

- l'Afrique n'est pas une priorité stratégique ;
- l'empreinte au sol doit rester minimale (d'où le rôle des forces spéciales) ;
- pas d'engagement direct pour les militaires américains, ou alors secret ;
- leadership en retrait et intervention par partenaire interposé ;
- même dans ce dernier cas, les États-Unis ne doivent pas apparaître comme un cobelligérant ;
- sur le long terme, le mot d'ordre est « solutions africaines aux problèmes africains ».

Les **priorités américaines** sont logiquement la protection des personnels et intérêts américains sur place, puis par ordre décroissant en termes régionaux, l'Est de l'Afrique, suivi par le Nord et le Sahel, enfin le reste du continent et les littoraux.

Les **principales conclusions** de l'étude illustrent les **risques du *light footprint***, en particulier celui de traiter les symptômes et non les causes en privilégiant l'efficacité à court terme contre les objectifs à long terme, alors même que l'analyse de la menace s'est considérablement affinée du côté des militaires américains où l'on a beaucoup appris des expériences d'Irak et d'Afghanistan. L'une des problématiques essentielles de cette étude réside dans le **dilemme**, qui n'est pas propre aux États-Unis d'ailleurs, entre les intérêts à **court terme** de la lutte contre-terroriste et les intérêts à **long terme** – soit la résolution des causes du terrorisme.

Plusieurs articles s'intéressent aux **réactions africaines à la politique américaine** : à partir d'études de cas (Kenya, Éthiopie, Ouganda, Djibouti notamment), ces analyses mettent en évidence les « coûts cachés » du choix de combattre par procuration, en particulier le risque d'instrumentalisation par des pouvoirs locaux aux agendas différents, et la possibilité de conséquences négatives, voire contre-productives, à long terme. Ils illustrent également, dans certains cas, le chemin parcouru en quelques années par certains chefs d'Etat en Afrique, de la réticence à collaborer avec les États-Unis à l'enthousiasme, voire à la volonté d'une collaboration plus étroite encore. Enfin, l'étude explore à travers plusieurs exemples un autre aspect du *light footprint,* l'approche par les **partenariats**, ouvrant des pistes encore inexploitées de collaborations possibles.

■ ABSTRACT

U.S. strategy in Africa

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This study presents an analysis of American strategy in Africa. Based on contributions from academics, experts and military practicioners, it studies the **actors, processes and modalities of American military presence in Africa.** It focusses in particular on the characteristics and costs of the **indirect approach** the U.S. tends to adopt. The African continent is the **experimental site** for a determining aspect of the new strategic direction taken by President Barack Obama, by way of the "**light footprint**" concept. More recently, this concept was even declared a **model for the fight against terrorism** and a source of inspiration for other regions, namely the Middle East. Lastly, closer and unprecedented **Franco-American cooperation** in certain regions of Africa also warrants the study of American strategy in Africa, its recent developments, its implementation and the assessment that we can draw from them.

The **dogma of American strategy** in Africa has remained unchanged since the beginning of the century, and even the 1990s:

- Africa is not a strategic priority;
- American presence must bear a minimal footprint (this explains the role of the special forces);
- No direct engagement for American soldiers, or at least none that is publicly displayed;
- Behind-the-scenes leadership and intervention through partners;
- Even in the aforementioned situation, the United States must not appear as a cobelligerent;
- In the long term, the key phrase is "African solutions to African problems".

America's priorities are, quite logically, the protection of American personnel and interests on the ground, and in decreasing order in regional terms, Eastern Africa followed by the North Africa and the Sahel, and lastly the remainder of the continent and coastal areas.

The main conclusions of the study highlight the **risks stemming from the light footprint concept**, particularly in terms of addressing symptoms rather than causes by prioritising short-term effectiveness over long-term objectives, even though threat analysis by the American military has made considerable progress, drawing from the experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan. One of the fundamental questions that this study addresses is the **dilemma** – indeed, it is not a uniquely American one – between the **short-term** advantages of counterterrorism operations and the **long-term** objectives, i.e. resolving the causes of terrorism.

Several articles take a look at **African reactions to American policy**: using case studies (Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and Djibouti in particular), these analyses reveal the "hidden costs" of combat by proxy, in particular the risk of exploitation by local powers with different agendas, and the possibility of negative, even counter-productive, consequences in the long term. They also illustrate, in some cases, the evolving attitude of certain African leaders in recent years, from their reluctance to cooperate with the United States to their enthusiasm and even a positive desire for closer cooperation. Lastly, the study also explores another aspect of the "light footprint" concept, through **partnerships**, and attempts to open new options for cooperation.

■ LISTE DES ACRONYMES

ACOTA *Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance*

AFRICOM *United States African Command*

AGOA *African Growth and Opportunity Act*

ATRIP *African Trade and Investment Program*

CDC *Centers for Disease Control and prevention*

CJTF-HOA *Combined Joint Task Force-Horn Of Africa*

CSHGP *Child Survival Health Grant Program*

CSL *Cooperative Security Locations*

DCMA *Deputy to the Commander of Civil-Military Activities*

DHAPP *Department of Defense's HIV/AIDS Prevention Program*

DRL *Democracy Human Rights and Labor*

FMF *Foreign Military Financing*

GJD *Governing Justly and Democratically*

GHI *Global Health Initiative*

HRDF *Human Rights Democracy Fund*

IMET *International Military Education and Training*

LIFE *Leadership and Investment in Fighting an Epidemic*

MCA *Millenium Challenge Account*

MCC *Millenium Challenge Corporation*

NED *National Endowment for Democracy*

NTD *Neglected Tropical Disease*

OFDA *Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance*

OGHD *Office of Global Health Diplomacy*

OMA *Office of Military Affairs*

OMB *Office of Management and Budget*

ONU   *Organisation des Nations Unies*

PEPFAR   *President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief*

PKO   *Peacekeeping Operation*

PMI   *President's Malaria Initiative*

PNUD   *Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement*

TSCTP   *Trans Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership*

USADF   *United States African Development Foundation*

USAID   *United States Aid for International Development*

■ U.S. STRATEGY IN AFRICA: RISKS AND CONTRADICTIONS OF THE "LIGHT FOOTPRINT" STRATEGY

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Africa is not, and never was, a strategic priority for the United States. However, Africa's importance has risen in Washington, and the continent now plays a significant role as the testing ground for the new light footprint strategy, the symbol of an "Obama strategy" or doctrine in foreign policy. The increasingly noticeable references to African regions and countries in several of President Obama's recent foreign policy speeches highlight this new approach: in May 2014 at West Point (Obama, 2014, for example, or in September 2014 while announcing the new American strategy towards the Islamic State, during which Obama referred to the strategy implemented several years earlier in Somalia and Yemen (The White House, 2014). It is therefore clear that Africa has today risen in the hierarchy of American interests, and this can be linked to a rise in the terrorist threat level from the continent. Furthermore, if we look at the evolution of American counterterrorism, the study of U.S. strategy in Africa is essential, as it is here that America has chosen to implement the new strategic direction taken by Obama (though, as we shall see later on, some of his predecessor's policies continue to be applied). Africa is the testing ground for the new approach, known as the "light footprint" approach and "leading from behind", defined in the strategic document of the Pentagon in January 2012 as an "innovative, low-cost" approach (U.S. Department of Defense, 2012). The new approach relies particularly on the use of drones, Special Operation Forces and other discreet modalities of intervention, the importance of surveillance, and partnerships – all of which are symptomatic of an Obama approach or even "doctrine" regarding American interventions presented in detail in this article.

Better knowledge of U.S. strategy in Africa is, moreover, crucial in the context of closer and unprecedented Franco-American cooperation in the Sahel-Saharan region. In this respect, 2014 was a year of transition for a partnership renewed at the beginning of 2010, confirmed by the new resources allocated by Washington (an additional 10 million dollars in August 2014) (The White House, 2014) and an American presence alongside the French in several military installations and bases in the region (Reeve, Zoë, 2014).

Finally, the study of U.S. strategy in Africa appears vital in light of Barack Obama's speech on foreign policy at West Point in May 2014. In his speech, the American president mentioned an "African model" (Obama, 2014) for counterterrorism; the same "model" was also mentioned in the context of the fight against the terrorists of the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (The White House, 2014).

U.S. PRIORITIES AND INTERESTS IN AFRICA

The Africa Command (AFRICOM) is the most recent of the U.S.' geographic combatant commands[1]. As General Rodriguez, Commander of AFRICOM, announced to Congress in March 2014, AFRICOM conducted 55 operations, 10 exercises and 481 "security cooperation activities" in Africa in 2013 (Rodriguez, 2014). What guides the action of the American military in Africa? In the short term, counterterrorism and the fight against Al-Qaeda, the challenge being to distinguish threats to American interests from threats to U.S. allies, a distinction that sets the order of priorities. In the long term, AFRICOM's mission is to train local armies to handle crises and transnational threats.

In terms of priorities, the first remains the protection of American personnel and interests on the ground, and this was reinforced in 2012. As for other priorities, their hierarchy has remained relatively unchanged in regional terms in recent years (although the overall evaluation is that the terrorist threat from Africa is growing) (U.S. Department of State, 2014):

- Priority no.1 is East Africa, namely Somalia and the fight against piracy in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden.
- Priority no.2 is North and West Africa, which has seen renewed interest due to recent developments in the aftermath of revolutions in Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, further aggravated at the beginning of 2013 by the events in Mali (which triggered Operation Serval – the French intervention) and Algeria (the In Amenas attack). This region is the location of the fight against the affiliates and adherents of Al-Qaeda (and now ISIS[2]), including AQIM, Ansar Al Sharia, Al Murabitun (Moktar Belmoktar); there is also increasing concern over links with Boko Haram in Nigeria. We shall note the (new) link in the American strategic documents on North and Sub-Saharan Africa that warrants a renewed view that integrates the Sahara for what it is, namely a crucial porous zone of exchanges of all kinds rather than a border.
- Lastly, among the other priorities are stability in the Gulf of Guinea and along the coast of Nigeria and Senegal, and the fight against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda.

We should also note that American military action in Africa is guided (limited) by a number of dogmas, constant since the beginning of the 2000s, and even the 1990s:

- Africa is not a strategic priority;
- The footprint of American military presence must be minimal (this explains the role of the special forces)[3];
- No direct engagement for American soldiers unless it remains secret;
- Leading from behind and intervention through partners are preferred over direct engagement;

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[1] See the contribution of J. Peter Pham on AFRICOM in the present review.

[2] The original French version of this paper was completed in July, 2014. Since then, ISIS has risen in importance, and affiliations of local groups have sometimes switched from Al-Qaeda to ISIS.

[3] On the presence and role of the special forces in Africa (and the role of the special forces in the U.S. strategic transformation), see the insightful article by Kaplan R. D., July-August 2003, "Supremacy by Stealth", *The Atlantic Monthly*. On the same topic, see also Donnelly T., Serchuk V., July 1st, 2003, "Toward a Global Cavalry: Overseas Rebasing and Defense Transformation", *AEI Online*. These authors deal with aspects that will be more thoroughly analysed in 2013 in Mark Mazzetti's book on the parallel transformation undergone by the special forces and the CIA during the first decade of the 2000s: Mazzetti M., 2013, *The Way of the Knife: the CIA, a Secret Army, and a War at the Ends of the Earth,* New York, Penguin Press.

- Even in the aforementioned situation, the United States must not appear as a cobelligerent;
- In the long term, the key phrase is "African solutions to African problems".

Finally, although emphasis placed on the military dimension of the U.S. Africa policy has undeniably increased in recent years, we however point out that more than three quarters of American bilateral aid to Africa is allocated for health programmes, in particular the fight against AIDS launched by George W. Bush. Nevertheless, the countries that receive more than half a billion dollars annually (Ethiopia, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa) are also the main anchor countries of U.S. strategy in Africa, key partners in counterterrorism and long-standing allies of the United States.

Issues discussed in this article

In addition to these regional priorities and short-term objectives, Washington seeks to reconcile the protection of American strategic interests with the desire to promote democracy and specifically governance – key elements both of the strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa, released late in the first Obama term in June 2012 (The White House, 2012), and of the 2011 U.S. counterterrorism strategy (The White House, 2011). These elements stem directly from the American analysis of threat and the way to address it[4].
The underlying and determining question is to discover how to protect American strategic interests on the continent without imposing a military presence that would be harmful in the long term, and could even contradict the objectives pursued[5]. In reality, there is a trade-off between short-term interests in the fight against terrorism and long-term interests, or the resolution of the causes of terrorism: a dilemma that is also at the core of this article, and this study in general[6].

THE AMERICAN VIEW OF AFRICA

From the end of the Cold War to the fight against terrorism

Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region in the world to have escaped, until 1960, inclusion in the world division of American geographic military commands. However, and contrary to what certain contemporary articles would have us believe, American interest in Africa is not new in history. As shown by the American Marines' Hymn, on "the shores of Tripoli", the first American military interventions took place, at the beginning of the 19th century, off the African coast, and the Navy owes its existence to these pirates in North Africa. More recently, during the Cold War, Africa temporarily became the field of the indirect battle fought between the two blocs after decolonisation, before losing its strategic importance in the eyes of the Americans, particularly after

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[4] See the contribution by Marc-Antoine Brillant in the present review.
[5] See the presentation of the articles below.
[6] This article, which for the most part focuses on a recent period, uses numerous primary sources, reports by the Department of Defense, the State Department, Congress and AFRICOM, records of Congressional hearings, as well as numerous meetings organized specially in Washington and also in Paris between April 2012 and June 2014, according to the non-attribution rule (*Chatham House Rule*): civil and military institutional actors, in Congress (advisers, assistants; also several Senators and representatives); the Pentagon, specifically the DIA (*Defense Intelligence Agency*); U.S. Army War College; French officers, in AFRICOM, Washington and Paris; as well as several American experts (National Defense University, Center for Strategic and International Studies and Atlantic Council in particular).

the traumatising experience of Mogadishu in October 1993[7]. Thus, in 1995, an official strategic document issued by the Pentagon declared American strategic interests in Africa to be "non-existent" (Ploch, 2011). During the 1990s, interest in Africa was mostly borne by Congress and NGOs that operate via Congress in order to exert pressure on U.S. elected representatives. With the aid of the Congressional Black Caucus, the group of Afro-American members of Congress, this pressure led to the vote in May 2000 of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) under President Clinton[8]. Members of Congress also pushed for the United States to adopt an active role in South Sudan for instance, via the Christian Coalition in Congress (Cooke, 2013 : 67-80).

The year 1998 marked a turning point, with the two simultaneous attacks on the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania[9]. The attacks of September 11, 2001 confirmed the turn. In the national security strategy released by the Bush administration in 2002, Africa became one of the fronts of the "global war on terrorism". This new strategic importance of Africa was further confirmed in 2007 by the decision to create a new military Africa command, AFRICOM (up until then, the European command EUCOM was in charge of U.S. military engagements in Africa)[10]. AFRICOM's HQ remained, however, in Stuttgart, like EUCOM. It is staffed by 2,000 people, 40% of whom are civilians. The number of American soldiers in Africa in 2014 varied between 5,000 and 6,000 men and women depending on the operation (U.S. Department of Defense, 2014).

As explained in an inspection report released by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of African Affairs (2009), AFRICOM "is stepping into a void created by a lack of resources for traditional development and public diplomacy" (U.S. Department of State, 2009) (due to drastic cuts imposed by the Republican Congress during the latter half of the 1990s under the aegis of Senator Jesse Helms). It also aims at harmonising and rationalising the management of the different programmes destined for Africa (Kandel, 2013).

Key aspects of the current strategy in Africa

U.S. strategy in Africa favours (on paper) an integrated approach, where military assistance is accompanied by support to democratic institutions, civil society, development and economic growth (Kandel, 2013). It was therefore essential that AFRICOM would enable better coordination between these various efforts, and was even envisaged as a hub for testing a new American *smart power* that relies on a comprehensive approach to crises and leaving a minimal footprint (Kandel, Quessard-Salvaing (dir.), 2014).

The African continent is the chosen field for a central aspect of the new strategic orientation taken by the Pentagon under Obama, which promotes the *light footprint* concept (or motto) and relies on alliances and partnerships (Kandel (dir.), Fleurant, 2013). The 2012 strategic directive (U.S. Department of Defense, 2012) (confirmed by the 2014 Pentagon Quadrennial Defense Review) (U.S.

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[7] On the aftermath of the trauma in Mogadishu, and how it affected the American people, see Kandel M., 1993, *Mourir pour Sarajevo. Les Etats-Unis et l'éclatement de la Yougoslavie,* Paris; CNRS Editions, p. 203-205 ("*Octobre noir*").
[8] See the contribution by Olivia Ronsain in the present review.
[9] See for instance: Benjamin D., Simon S., 2002, *The Age of Sacred Terror: Radical Islam's War Against America,* New York, Random House; Clarke R. A., 2004, *Against All Enemies. Inside America's War on Terror*, London, Simon & Schuster.
[10] On AFRICOM, see the contribution of J. Peter Pham in the present review.

Department of Defense, 2014) mentions new approaches ("small low-cost innovative approaches"). On the political and strategic levels, it falls within the "responsibility doctrine" (Hachigian, Schorr, 2013 : 73-91), a consequence of the direction that Obama has taken in foreign policy[11].

In practice, U.S. foreign policy in Africa is based on a strategy of cooperation with African partner nations (almost all of the African states), through regional programmes and bilateral accords. The primary objective is helping local armies build their capacities. The American personnel deployed in Africa is comprised, as previously mentioned, of five to six thousand personnel, depending on the operation. The majority are deployed in Djibouti on the Camp Lemonnier base (2,500 personnel), which is also the main U.S. drone base in the world. There are, however, numerous other American bases and installations on the continent, some very rudimentary, located in various African states, especially in the region extending from the Gulf of Guinea to the Horn of Africa. Evidence that the conflict, the enemy and times have changed, they generally consist in a basic hangar, a handful of soldiers and various-sized fleets of small civilian aircrafts rigged with electronics.

The Pentagon's main mission in Africa is the fight against Islamic terrorist groups in the Horn of Africa (Somalia) and the Arabian Peninsula (Yemen)[12], through two types of actions: the training of local African forces as part of the programme called *Partnership for Regional East Africa Counter Terrorism*; and direct action by American forces through the use of armed drones and special forces (Ploch, 2013). The Sahel is also involved since 2002, when the Department of State launched the *Pan-Sahel Initiative*, with the objective of strengthening the border security and counterterrorist capacities of four countries in West Africa: Mali, Chad, Niger and Mauritania. The programme became the *Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership* in 2005 and its military component, under the banner of *Operation Enduring Freedom*, aims at combating and disrupting terrorist organisations in the Maghreb and the Sahel. Many new partners – Algeria, Burkina Faso, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal and Tunisia – have now joined the original four countries of the Pan-Sahel Initiative and the programme now has an annual budget of approximately 100 million dollars[13].

Libya (2011-2012): a turning point?

The NATO intervention in Libya in 2011 forced AFRICOM to become a fully operational military command, making it more similar to CENTCOM, the command that led the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Up until then, AFRICOM functioned more like SOUTHCOM (South America), which also favours a comprehensive civilian-military approach.
However, the real turning point came after the attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi by terrorist groups in September 2012, which led to the assassination of the American Ambassador in Libya. This last event had two consequences (to say nothing of the political affair) in the U.S.. The first was renewed attention from the Americans (particularly within Congress) to terrorism in Africa, in a region other than the Horn and perceived as a possible direct threat to American interests. Above all, the attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi added a new rapid response mission to AFRICOM's list of priorities.

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[11] See also the contribution of Bronwyn Bruton and Paul D. Williams, as well as that of Beth Elise Whitaker, in the present review.
[12] Yemen is located in CENTCOM's area of responsibility, but the drones that hit Yemen take off from Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti.
[13] See the contribution by Jérôme Pigné in the present review.

This new mission very rapidly resulted in new initiatives, such as the establishment of the Marines Rapid Reaction Force and the creation of a rapid response command in October 2012.[14] The Commander's In-Extremis Force (CIF) for AFRICOM was set up with three strategically-placed brigades – one in Djibouti, a second in Moron in Spain, and a third location in West Africa, as yet undisclosed (Dorschner, 2013).

Increased attention to Africa was obvious within Congress, where the Benghazi episode helped the Pentagon's budgetary request for Africa[15]. It is particularly evident in the changed nature of Congress's interest in Africa, obvious from the evolution of the subjects of congressional hearings and reports commissioned to the Congressional Research Service (CRS)[16].

TYPES OF INTERVENTION IN AFRICA: WHAT DOES THE "LIGHT FOOTPRINT" MEAN?

Light footprint and special forces. The African testing ground

The *light footprint* is based primarily on the use of the American special forces as well as regionally-specialised brigades, and above all on cooperation (training and joint exercises) between American military and local armed forces, that must eventually take charge of the essential tasks (the famed "African solutions to African problems"). SOCOM, the United States Special Operations Command, was spared the cuts made in the American defence budget (Kandel (dir.), Fleurant, 2013), and its budget has even increased five-fold over the first decade of the 2000s. These last years have seen SOCOM in particular assume increasing importance as the main planner and actor of security cooperation within the Pentagon, and in particular most of the training programmes of partner armies. Admiral McRaven, commander of SOCOM from 2011 to 2014, played a major part in this development. Today, American special forces total almost 70,000 personnel (less than 5% of total American military forces) with a budget of $10.5 billion in 2012 (1.4% of the total defence budget). Of the total SOCOM forces, 45% come from the Army, 28% from the Air Force, and 14% from the Navy[17].

The American special forces have two major roles: a "man-hunting capability" (for counterterrorism operations), and training and cooperation, i.e. work with and alongside local armed forces to combat terrorists, rebels and other transnational networks through a variety of defence and training programmes and actions[18], but also civilian-led programmes in various fields. For the sake of

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[14] See the following *PowerPoint* presented by the United States Special Operations Command (U.S.SOCOM) on the occasion of the creation of the CIF in October 2012, called "United States Army, Special Operations Forces and Conventional Forces, Partnering to Prevent, Shape, and Win".

[15] Congressional hearings (March 2014).

[16] Statistical analysis on primary sources, Library of Congress, Washington D.C. Also see Oliveri F., January 24, 2013 "Senators to Turn Attention to Africa Command", *Congressional Quarterly News*, and Broder J., January 26, 2013, "The Battlefield Grows Larger", *Congressional Quarterly Weekly*.

[17] On the role and future of the special forces in U.S. comprehensive strategy, see the excellent report by Robinson L., *The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces,* Council on Foreign Relations Special Report No.55, 2013. The author (who has since also published a book on the subject) shows that the U.S. are today at a crossroads in the development and use of the special forces, due to internal constraints that give priority to light footprint operations and partnerships mainly for greater cost-effectiveness.

[18] There are several possible levels: training and advice; advice during combat; providing basic assistance such as supplies, intelligence; technical joint training between special forces, etc.

simplicity, we will mention two approaches: a direct short-term approach, and an indirect long-term one, the former enabling the adoption and smooth functioning of the latter, which is in turn vital for offering long-lasting solutions to the challenges raised by terrorism (more recent studies prefer the terms "surgical strike" and "special warfare"). The most frequently cited instances where the indirect approach was successful are Colombia and the Philippines[19]. In Africa, exercises such as Flintlock also ensure the necessary interoperability and standardisation of special forces doctrines (Dorschner, 2013).

The special forces, considered a "tactical force with a strategic impact" (within the U.S. and increasingly elsewhere) are today the choice instrument when addressing numerous current threats. This development is expected to last due to budget constraints and the prevalence of wars and irregular threats[20]. The desire to rely on special forces is, furthermore, sustained by the U.S. Congress: a recent Report of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives stated that "U.S. Special Operations Forces (…) should be used more aggressively and surgically in Africa" in counterterrorism, and particularly in security sector reform (House of Representatives, 2012).

Lastly, training given by the special forces seems to be one of the most promising ways of providing "African solutions to African problems" in the long term. One of the few in-depth studies on the lessons learned from the training programmes by U.S. conventional and special forces in Mali (a thorough analysis of the U.S. training effort conducted after the criticism following the coup d'état in 2012) looks at the various approaches used in different American training programmes (IMET, ACRI, CFTP) and compares the results and behaviour of Malian units that took part in them. The conclusion is irrevocable: only a continuous effort (a reference to the last training concept by SOCOM, therefore by the special forces) is effective in building partner capacity (Powelson, 2013).

Apart from the special forces, the other form of intervention advanced within the concept of *light footprint* and favoured by the U.S. in Africa is the use of partnerships.

Franco-American cooperation in Africa

At the beginning of 2014, a special issue of the magazine published by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point on the future of American counterterrorism operations in Africa, presented the French-led Operation Serval in Mali in 2013 as a "template for future counterterrorism engagements: a threat is perceived, it is quickly acted on, and objectives are clearly delineated". For the authors, the key consists in identifying the appropriate actors for each role, and they note particularly that "a single major country" is enough – in this instance, France (Sheehan, Porter, 2014).

[19] On Colombia and the Philippines, RAND published a timely study that shows that the context and especially the local government (force and capacity for action) are key. Hence the difficulty of transposing and spreading this success in countries with different characteristics. American success in these two countries, the RAND study concluded, has more to do with the partner nation than American policy: Watts S., Campbell J., Johnston P., Lalwani S., Bana S., 2014, *Countering Others' Insurgencies: Understanding U.S. Small-Footprint Interventions in Local Context*, RAND.

[20] On the special forces, see also: Morrison S., 2013, "Redefining the Indirect Approach, Defining Special Operations Forces (SOF) Power, and the Global Networking of SOF", *PRISM*, 4, no.3; Major Lujan F. M., 2013, *Light Footprints: The Future of American Military Intervention*, CNAS Report; Feickert A., February 6, 2013, *U.S. Special Operations Forces: Background and Issues for Congress*, CRS Report for Congress; Watts S., Pezard S., spring 2014, "Rethinking Small-Footprints Interventions", *Parameters*, 44(1).

Franco-American cooperation in Africa was heavily emphasised by the French and American Heads of State during President Hollande's state visit to the U.S. in February 2014: evoking "a transformed alliance" in a joint statement, the two presidents noted that "perhaps nowhere is our new partnership on more vivid display than in Africa" (Le Monde, 2014).

Much has been achieved by Operation Serval: it made a strong impression on the Americans, who in turn played an essential role in supporting the French operation. U.S. interests in the Sahel itself remain peripheral for the moment, but the region deserves more attention as it is located at the apex of the arc of instability that stretches from Mauritania to Nigeria and the Horn of Africa. Furthermore, close partners of the U.S., especially France and Morocco (and Nigeria also), are interested in the region from a strategic viewpoint and call for American support (Pham, Campbell, 2014). This is what gives credence to the idea that the Malian scenario is a useful template for addressing possible future jihadist challenges in West Africa or elsewhere – a scenario already embodied in the "leadership from behind" first presented by Obama during the intervention in Libya in 2011 (Kandel, 2014). It was also expressed in Congress on February 14, 2013, during a hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs when Congressman and ranking member Brad Sherman declared that "[i]n this case, we are behind and we should stand behind France and applaud their efforts in Mali… [n]ot only do we need to cooperate with allies, but there are times and areas where they will take the lead and we will play a supportive role" (House of Representatives, 2013).

As the Assemblée Nationale report on Operation Serval in Mali mentions, American operational support to France "was key in terms of intelligence and observation as well as in-flight refuelling". This support, which was provided from January 11 on for intelligence (drones and reconnaissance aircrafts), also came in the form of strategic air transport (three C-17s) and in-flight refuelling (three KC 135s). American aid consisted in a $50 million special budget allocated by the White House on February 11 (presidential drawdown) (French National Assembly, 2013). A similar conclusion was made within the French Senate: "The United States is today France's main partner in financial terms and an important link in operational terms (in Mali). The United States immediately provided political support to the French operation" (French Senate, 2013).

An aspect that has been voiced on multiple occasions on both sides of the Atlantic, Admiral McRaven, Commander of SOCOM was said to have "strived towards building a mutual beneficial relationship with France". Moreover, France acquired at the same time American drones, expected to facilitate cooperation between intelligence services. In Niamey, the hangars of the American Reaper surveillance drones are next to the French hangars (Guibert, 2014).

It should be emphasized that this development was made possible after the change that took place under President Sarkozy in France's attitude towards the U.S. presence in Africa. This shift from the old attitude can be put down to the fact that France decided at that point that it was in its interests to cooperate with the United States in Africa, thereby choosing to put an end to the historic rivalry between the two countries on the African continent[21]. The U.S. obviously leaped at the opportunity,

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[21] On the historic rivalry between France and the United States in Africa, Durand P.-M. offers an insightful article, "Le Peace Corps en Afrique française dans les années 1960. Histoire d'un succès paradoxal", *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 2005/1 (n°217), P.U.F. The article retraces the history of the Peace Corps, that Cold War creation feared and even dreaded by the French since it set up camp in francophone Africa – cf. its expulsion from Gabon in 1968 under pressure from France. The French saw this "competition in the conquest of African hearts" in an unfavourable light. For the Americans, the Peace Corps was also a lesson in

as shown by this diplomatic cable from the American Embassy in Paris in August 2009 that notes that France's new policy "may also provide opportunities for the U.S. to extend its influence in Africa without meeting French resistance or interference" (Wikileaks, 2009). Nevertheless, what prevails on both sides is the will to share the economic burden, made even weightier by new challenges, particularly terrorism. It was also in 2009 that the expression of a different leadership ("*lead from the side*", or a lateral, non-frontal leadership) was used by the Americans in order to describe the form that their cooperation with Paris could assume (Wikileaks, 2009). The Americans knew that "the French would like to be seen as leading the counter-terrorism effort in the Sahel, rather than simply following us" (Wikileaks, 2010).

Contradictions of the light footprint and limitations of partnerships

The main risk associated with the light footprint and the emphasis on the security priority is the possible contradiction with governance and development objectives, which are essential long-term objectives as they are meant to set the conditions for the fight against the causes of terrorism. Another risk is that American aid and support may be exploited by local governments in order to fight groups that are not necessarily terrorists – and are a threat only to the political interests of the government in question[22].

One of the safeguards that the U.S. can use in this respect consists in the laws voted by Congress to supervise American aid to foreign countries. American military assistance is limited and restricted by several Congress laws, of which the best known are the Leahy laws, named after Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy. These laws ensure certain criteria are complied with when the United States provides aid to a country, criteria that impose supervision and validation by the Department of State for all programmes, including those directly managed by the Pentagon. They therefore act as a safeguard against the aforementioned risks of the *light footprint.* The Leahy laws prohibit for instance financial aid (even if voted by Congress) to any military unit if one of its members has been convicted of "gross violations of human rights" (Serafino, Beittel, Ploch-Blanchard, 2014).

It comes as no surprise that these laws have been increasingly challenged recently, most notably by U.S. military commanders concerned with the African continent. Admiral McRaven even repeatedly and overtly explained to the media and Congress that these laws "complicated his work" (Schmitt, 2013). Nevertheless, military aid has become increasingly important within the U.S. policy towards Africa and is the cornerstone of the *light footprint.* Moreover, studies on the theme show that, while the Leahy laws are often circumvented by beneficiary countries, including sometimes thanks to advice from American military themselves, they nonetheless exist, most often if only to call into question the methods and objectives pursued (Tenorio Miller, 2011; Tate, 2011).

Without getting into too much detail on the countless American aid programmes of the Department of State and the Department of Defense, it is nevertheless worth mentioning several important trends and figures. Firstly, half of the assistance programmes in the security field are now managed

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francophone Africa of a country "where one must above all be wary of the French and their steadfast attitude, made of 'an opposition never expressed but nevertheless always perceptible'". From the outset, the Peace Corps was premised on the exact opposite of the former colonial relationship and in francophone Africa the intention was to oppose the French in every aspect – therefore it comes as no surprise that Paris perceived it as a threat to its influence.

[22] See the article by Bronwyn Bruton and Paul Williams in this review.

by the Pentagon, including (a recent trend) the train and equip programmes. Military aid under the authority of the Pentagon (notably Sections 1203, 1206 and 1208 of the defence budget laws) has more than doubled since 2005 and is increasingly directed to Africa. Section 1206 in particular was created in 2005 specifically in the context of the fight against terrorism through the training of foreign armies ("building partner capacity"). It is therefore one of the preferred tools for the implementation of the *light footprint* (Serafino, 2014)[23]. Lastly, we must also mention Section 1208, the budget of which is also increasing: it was created specifically for the special forces assistance programmes, and McRaven declared during a recent Congressional hearing that it was "the single most important authority we have in our fight against terrorism" (Erwin, 2014).

More globally, African countries have now entered the top ten recipients of American aid, in particular Nigeria, which surpassed Iraq in the 2014 request, alongside Kenya and Tanzania (Epstein, Tiersky, Lawson, 2014). Considering military assistance alone, Sudan, Ethiopia and South Africa count among the major beneficiaries, as well as Somalia, Mauritania and Chad (in the last cases, absolute figures are considerably lower, but the country's size must be taken into account) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Finally, when looking at training programmes, one must also take into consideration the size of the countries and their armed forces: Burundi, Uganda, Ghana and Sierra Leone must then also be counted as important recipient countries of U.S. assistance (U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of State, 2011, 2012).

This development, however, comes with risks. The United States are currently on the verge of entering into closer partnerships, mainly in the security field, with most African countries. The United States run the risk of being pulled away from security support towards political support, and away from the stated objectives in terms of the protection of political and religious freedom and the promotion of democratic institutions, given the evolution of the situation in several countries on the continent (Nsia-Pepra, 2014)[24]. The U.S. also run the risk of repeating the mistakes made in the Middle East for instance (backing dictators in order to avert a more or less serious terrorist threat), with consequences that may be serious, even counterproductive in the long term. Barack Obama is aware of this risk, and tried to make adjustments through several high-visibility initiatives: the message resolutely focused on democracy and economic development during his Africa trip in June 2013; the launch on this occasion of "Power Africa", a new initiative to develop access to electricity in Africa; or the organisation for the first time in history of a U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit in August 2014 in Washington, a summit focussing most notably on economic development (Kandel, 2014).

The West Point speech and the prospects for the development of American strategy

Nevertheless, Obama's foreign policy speech at the Military Academy at West Point in May 2014 strengthened once again the impression of an American view of Africa essentially for its security

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[23] For instance, 1206 enabled new African countries to be included in the U.S. cooperation programmes (1206 finances notably AMISOM, TSCTP) – unlike the IMET and the FMF (that include bilateral assistance, training and equipment delivery), whose most important programmes were always destined for the Middle East – i.e. notably Egypt, Israel and Jordan. Nevertheless, almost all the countries including African ones are today involved in IMET and FMF programmes (but the sum of money is less substantial).

[24] Also see the special issue of the *CTC Sentinel* of West Point with an article of Sheehan M. and Porter G., February 2014, "The Future Role of U.S. Counterterrorism Operations in Africa", Vol.7, n°2.

stakes. This impression of an "African model" (Obama, 2014)[25] for counterterrorism was bolstered during the president's speech announcing the strategy toward the ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) terrorists and overtly referring to a model used in Yemen and Somalia (The White House, 2014). During the more general West Point speech, Obama also announced the creation of a new five billion dollar fund for the fight against terrorism with U.S. partners "from the Sahel to East Africa" ("Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund"), a budget destined for military assistance programmes that would be (if voted by Congress) a quantum leap forward compared to the current budget (the aforementioned Sections 1203, 1205, 1206 and 1208).[26] Lastly, we will note that it was also in 2014 that the United States renewed their contract with Djibouti for 20 years, while conducting extensive renovation of the runways and enlarging the base, a sign that the American presence in Africa is expected to last.

These points show why this topic warrants reflection on the experience and the lessons of a decade and a half of renewed American commitment to Africa, from Sierra Leone to Guinea, from Niger to Mali, and from Libya to Somalia (Traub, 2014). This study will attempt to provide answers to these questions, and open up new avenues for reflection.

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[25] Also see Gordon A., May 30, 2014, "Obama's Big, New Counterterrorism Plan is a Hot Mess", *Foreign Policy,* May 30, 2014, and Traub J., "Obama's Light Touch and a Heavy Hand", *Foreign Policy*.
[26] And Africa's share of this new CTPF is rising (from less than a third of the total in 2015 to more than half in the 2016 request).

PRESENTATION OF THE ARTICLES AND STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

Actors and processes

J. Peter PHAM: "AFRICOM's evolution from Bush to Obama"

J. Peter Pham retraces the creation of the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) that sparked controversy both on the African continent and within the United States, and undeniably marked the most significant change in direction for the U.S. Africa policy in almost half a century. Seven years later, the author attempts to draw up a first assessment. The creation of the command was confirmation of the increasing strategic importance of Africa in America's eyes, but did not justify the worst fears raised by its critics at the time. The core aspect of U.S. strategy, established by George W. Bush and reaffirmed by Barack Obama, focuses on partnerships with African countries and building capacity in Africa so that African countries can address African problems through cooperation with the American military. The development under Obama has consisted in supporting the role of European allies of the U.S. in Africa as well.

Olivia RONSAIN: "The Department of Defense, a major player in U.S. cooperation with Africa"

Olivia Ronsain presents the role of the Department of Defense in U.S. cooperation in Africa. The relatively unchanged American policy goes hand in hand with a shift in the sharing of competences between actors, a shift that grants an increasingly central place to the Pentagon. The article demonstrates the importance of the latter in its area of expertise, but also its expanding role in fields that do not fall directly within its remit: for example, its increasingly significant role as a vector of cultural diplomacy with the African local authorities, as well as the central role that it occupies in more remote sectors such as health. The article underscores the strong commitment of Congress in the evolution of the military engagement in Africa, and the Pentagon's absence from certain spheres of action, which provides a more nuanced picture of the "militarisation" of U.S. strategy in Africa. Lastly, the author shows that the context of budget constraint increases the importance of private actors.

Marc-Antoine BRILLANT: "The U.S. analysis of threat in Africa"

Marc-Antoine Brillant discusses the American view of the threat in Africa. In his article, he shows how the U.S. Chiefs of Staff had to reconsider their classic analysis tools (dating back to the Cold War) after September 11, 2001, and the emergence of a terrorist threat on a global scale. In the context of the "global war on terrorism" defined by the George W. Bush administration, the American military had to find new ways of conceptualising the threat, notably on the African continent. It is in this political climate that the systemic vision prevailed ("the enemy as a system"), in order to adapt warfare and defeat the enemy – a method that enabled analysis and more detailed knowledge of the terrorist environment and organisations, without necessarily changing combat methods.

Methods and case studies

Bronwyn BRUTON, Paul D. WILLIAMS: "The hidden costs of outsourcing the "war on terrorism" in Africa"

The article by Bronwyn Bruton and Paul Williams discusses one of the major characteristics of American operational strategy in Africa: the use of allied countries in order to combat terrorism by proxy, and its hidden costs, especially in the long term. The authors note that this choice is influenced by internal pressure in the United States, particularly the constraint that comes from public opinion, as well as the budget pressure, that both led Washington to rely on, and support the efforts of, several partner states, specifically Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi and Djibouti. The authors show that this American solution, despite its obvious advantages (no direct engagement of American troops, a considerably lower cost) nevertheless had negative, even counterproductive effects in the long term (increasing the terrorist threat in certain cases). It can be exploited by the countries in the region, according to their own interests, and it can sometimes be at odds with other objectives of the U.S. Africa policy.

Jérôme PIGNÉ: "The indirect approach of the United States to the Sahel: Developments in strategy and a comparative approach with the European Union"

In order to analyse the indirect approach of the U.S. in the Sahel, Jérôme Pigné's article looks into how the U.S. has been more engaged in the region, at least since the beginning of the 2000s. More precisely, the author considers that in order to understand the role of the United States in the Sahel, we must consider their view of the sub-region, as well as their interactions with other forces present in this theatre. The author particularly discusses the concept of weak or failed states, one which is central to the Americans, whereas the European Union prefers that of fragile states. He concludes by presenting possible avenues for cooperation between the United States and the EU, but also France and the different countries in the sub-region.

Beth Elise WHITAKER: "African Reactions to U.S. Counter-Terrorism Policies: Kenya, From Reluctance to Resolve"

The article by Beth Elise Whitaker looks at how African governments react to the American strategy and examines the concrete nature of their collaboration with Washington in counterterrorism policy. In her article, she looks at the case of Kenya, a case that particularly illustrates the difficulty for the U.S. to reconcile the two priorities of its Africa policy, counterterrorism on the one hand, development and promotion of democracy on the other hand. Kenya, one of the oldest American allies in East Africa, went from a relatively reluctant attitude to considerably more open cooperation, whereas the United States, especially under Obama, tried to maintain a certain distance with officials facing pending charges before the International Criminal Court – while the terror threat in the region has been on the rise. Furthermore, the case of Kenya (and *a contrario* Uganda and Ethiopia) demonstrates that it is sometimes more difficult to cooperate with transitional democracies than with more authoritarian States.

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■ AFRICOM'S EVOLUTION FROM BUSH TO OBAMA

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INTRODUCTION

The announcement seven years ago by President George W. Bush of his decision to establish a United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) to "enhance [American] efforts to bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa" by strengthening bilateral and multilateral security cooperation with African states and creating new opportunities to bolster their capabilities (The White House, 2007) was arguably the most significant change in nearly half a century of U.S. foreign policy with respect to the continent. It also proved to be one of the most controversial, eliciting an ongoing storm of protests and criticism from policymakers and commentators, not only in Africa, but also within the United States[1], which has been met in turn by equally impassioned rejoinders as well as more dispassionate analysis[2]. AFRICOM became fully operational as America's sixth "geographic unified combatant command"[3] on October 1, 2008, and is now led by General David M. Rodriguez, who took over for General Carter F. Ham in April 2013. General William E. Ward served as the command's inaugural commander, completing his tenure in March 2011. AFRICOM's seven years of operations (counting its first year as a subordinate command under the U.S. European Command) provide an opportunity for a closer examination of both its evolving doctrine and activities, which indicates that it has neither lived up to the best promises of its proponents nor justified the worst fears raised by its critics.

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[1] See, *inter alia*, Malan M., August 2007, « [AFRICOM: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing](#) », Testimony before the Subcommittee on Africa, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, 110th Congress; Keenan J., October 2009, « U.S. militarization in Africa: What Anthropologists Should Know about AFRICOM », *Anthropology Today* 24, no. 5 : 16-20; and Taguem Fah G. L., March 2010, « Dealing with Africom: The Political Economy of Anger and Protest », *Journal of Pan African Studies* 3, no. 6 : 81-93.

[2] See, *inter alia*, McFate S., January 2008, « U.S. Africa Command: Next Step or Next Stumble? » *African Affairs* 107, no. 426: 111-121; Pham J. P., Fall/Winter 2008, « America's New Africa Command: Paradigm Shift or Step Backwards? » *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 15, no. 1: 257-272; Jamieson D. G., December 2009, «AFRICOM: A Threat or an Opportunity for African Security? », *South African Journal of International Affairs* 16, no. 3 : 311-329; and Pham J. P., April 2011, « AFRICOM from Bush to Obama », *South African Journal of International Affairs* 18, no. 1 : 107-124

[3] The other geographic unified combatant commands are the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), the U.S. European Command (EUCOM), the U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM), the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM), and the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM). In addition, there are three functional commands: the U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM), the U.S. Strategic Command (STRATCOM), and the U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM). In May 2010, the U.S. Cyber Command (CYBERCOM) was activated as a sub-unified command subordinate to STRATCOM, while the U.S. Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) was disestablished as a distinct command in August 2011, having largely accomplished its mission to embed joint operations in all branches of the military.

While some of the controversy surrounding AFRICOM's initial stand-up can be attributed to the failure of the U.S. government to adequately communicate its motivations, capabilities, and intentions (Forest, Crispin, 2008 : 5-27), senior officials did not make the situation any better by minimizing the significance of the undertaking as, in the words of one summary, "primarily an internal bureaucratic shift, a more efficient and sensible way of organizing the U.S. military's relations with Africa" (Mills, McNamee, 2007), refraining from any discussion of the strategic calculus behind the biggest internal shuffle within the American military since the entry into force of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. Unfortunately, this disingenuous response only heightened suspicions—and not just among fringe conspiracy theorists— that a hidden agenda was being pursued, thereby undermining the efforts made by General Ward and key members of his leadership team to explain to diverse audiences their mission of conducting "sustained security engagement through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activities, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy" (U.S Africa Command, 2008).

In the interest of both greater transparency as well as more effective dialogue, the strategic reasons motivating this historic commitment by the United States military to Africa ought to be spelled out, examined, and, where necessary, critiqued and debated. Thus this contribution will argue that there are several rational reasons why AFRICOM made strategic sense for the United States at the command's outset—and why they remain relevant today—and that articulating a realist policy based on these considerations, rather than avoiding the discussion altogether, is the most likely path for achieving understanding of American political and security purposes in Africa, even if not always in agreement as to whether these ends necessarily align with the goals which Africans have themselves set. And even where the interests are complementary, there are lingering questions both about the identity of AFRICOM as a military structure for advancing those objectives and its very sustainability, especially in the current fiscal environment.

U.S. INTERESTS IN AFRICA

The *raison d'être* for the very existence of AFRICOM is the recognition that the United States does indeed have significant national interests in Africa which require it to engage the continent, its states, and its peoples, and that, ultimately, these interests are such as to be capable of sustaining a long-term commitment. While this assertion may seem a bit tautological, it should be recalled that it was barely fourteen years ago that none other than George W. Bush, while he was campaigning for the White House, then-responded negatively to a question from a television interviewer about whether Africa fit into his definition of the strategic interests of the United States: "At some point in time the president's got to clearly define what the national strategic interests are, and while Africa may be important, it doesn't fit into the national strategic interests, as far as I can see them" (Bush, 2000).

In truth, Bush's assertion was not particularly exceptional except perhaps in the brusque manner of its expression. Princeton Lyman, a former assistant secretary of state who also previously served as U.S. ambassador to Nigeria and to South Africa and subsequently served as President Barack Obama's Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, acknowledged that Bush's comment basically reflected "what had in fact been the approach of both Democratic and Republican administrations

for decades" (Lyman, 2006 : 49): with the exception of the Cold War period when strategists worried about what were perceived to be Soviet attempts to secure a foothold on the continent, American interests in Africa had historically been framed almost exclusively in terms of preoccupation over the humanitarian consequences of poverty, war, and natural disaster, rather than strategic considerations. Moral impulses, however, rarely had the staying power to sustain anything beyond episodic attention. In fact, in 1995, barely one year after the Rwandan genocide, some Pentagon planners argued in an official position paper that the United States should hold itself aloof from engagement on the African continent because they could "see very little traditional strategic interest in Africa" and pronounced themselves to be convinced that "America's security interests in Africa are very limited" (U.S. Department of Defense, 1995).

Hence it stands to reason that if, in just over a decade, the foreign and defense policy establishment within the United States went from a disavowal of any security interest in Africa to such an embrace of the continent's geopolitical importance that the creation of a unified combatant command was not only justified, but imperative, a shift in strategic perspective with respect to national interests must have taken place. So what might these perceived interests have been?

Counterterrorism

In the context of America's counterterrorism efforts, there is the imperative of preventing Africa's poorly governed spaces from being exploited to provide facilitating environments, recruits, and eventual targets for Islamist terrorists. As the 2002 *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* noted, "Weak states…can pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states. Poverty does not make poor people into terrorists and murderers. Yet poverty, weak institutions, and corruption can make weak states vulnerable to terrorist networks and drug cartels within their borders" (The White House, 2002). With the possible exception of the wider Middle East (including Afghanistan and Pakistan), nowhere did this analysis seem more applicable than Africa where, as the document went on to acknowledge, regional conflicts arising from a variety of causes, including poor governance, external aggression, competing claims, internal revolt, and ethnic and religious tensions all "lead to the same ends: failed states, humanitarian disasters, and ungoverned areas that can become safe havens for terrorists". The attacks by al-Qaeda on the U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya, in 1998, and on an Israeli-owned hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, and, simultaneously, on an Israeli commercial airliner in 2002 only underscored for Washington policymakers the deadly reality of the terrorist threat in Africa,[4] as did the "rebranding" of Algerian Islamist terrorist organization GSPC (*Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat*, Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat) as "the Organization for Jihad in the Land of the Islamic Maghreb" ("Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb," AQIM) (Steinberg, Werenfes, 2007 : 407-413). Also noted were the ongoing activities of various militant Islamist movements in the territory of the former Somali Democratic Republic (Shaul, 2008), including al-Shabaab, an al-Qaeda-linked group designated a "foreign terrorist organization" by the U.S. State Department in early 2008, as well as the threat posed to global commerce by Somali piracy (Van Ginkel, Van der Putter, 2010).

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[4] Pham J. P., 2007, « Next Front? Evolving U.S.-African Strategic Relations in the 'War on Terrorism' and Beyond» *Comparative Strategy* 26, no. 1: 39-54; idem, Fall 2007, « Securing Africa », Journal of International Security Affairs 13, 15-24; and Schraeder P., 2007, « The African Dimension in U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-9/11 Era », in Franco Manuela (ed.), *Estratégia e segurança na África austral*, Lisbon, FLAD/IPRI, pp. 171-196.

While the Somali piracy threat has largely been stemmed—the Somali coast experienced 15 incidents in 2013, down from 75 incidents in 2012 and a peak of 237 incidents in 2011 (International Chamber of Commerce, 2014)—due to armed guards on ships, international navy guards, and, perhaps more marginally, the influence of Somalia's government (BBC, 2014), the fight against terrorism throughout the continent is far from over. Underscored by an AQIM splinter group attack on Algeria's In Amenas gas plant in January 2013 that left at least 39 foreign hostages dead and al-Shabaab's attack on Nairobi's Westgate Mall in September 2013 that left more than 67 dead in retaliation to the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), an operation heavily backed by the United States (Bruton, Williams, 2013)—to say nothing of the September 2012 attack on the U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi, Libya, which ultimately cost the lives of U.S. Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens and three other American diplomatic and intelligence officials—violent extremists continue to demonstrate their destructive capabilities and threat to Western interests across the African continent. In fact, shortly before he retired from his command, General Ham testified before the U.S. Senate that counterterrorism is AFRICOM's "highest priority and will remain so for the foreseeable future" (U.S. Africa Command, 2013) as extremist organizations—namely AQIM and its affiliates in North and West Africa, al-Shabaab in the Horn of Africa (Jarle, 2013), and Boko Haram in Nigeria and neighboring countries (Pham, 2012)—increasingly interact with each other across the continent.

Strategic resources

Another U.S. interest was protecting access to hydrocarbons and other strategic resources which Africa has in abundance and promoting the integration of African nations into the global economy. Early in the Bush administration, even before the 9/11 attacks, the president's National Energy Policy Development Group, chaired by Vice President Dick Cheney, published a report which argued that the only way to maintain American prosperity was to ensure that the United States had reliable access to increasing quantities of oil and natural gas from both domestic and foreign sources (National Energy Policy Development Group, 2001). Specifically, the report expressed concern about the "policy challenge" of "the concentration of world oil production in any one area of the world" (i.e., the Persian Gulf region) and suggested that among those places where America might turn for a more diversified supply was sub-Saharan Africa which, it noted, held "7 percent of world oil reserves and 11 percent of world oil production" and was "expected to be one of the fastest-growing sources of oil and gas for the American market".

In fact, in 2008, the last year of the Bush presidency, data from the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration showed that African countries accounted for more of America's petroleum imports than the states of the Persian Gulf region: 916,727,000 barrels (19.5 percent) versus 868,516,000 barrels (18.4 percent) (U.S. Department of Energy, 2009). While the prospects for oil in Africa remain optimistic—124 billion barrels of proven oil reserves as of the end of 2012 (KMPG, 2013)—the inauguration of Barack Obama as president appears to have led to a digression from the Bush strategy. The new administration's White House website proclaimed its goal to "eliminate our current imports from the Middle East and Venezuela within ten years" (The White House, 2014) In fact, much of America's demand for oil has been met by increased Gulf imports and ramped-up domestic American production, especially as a result of the "shale gas revolution," rather than by additional imports from Africa, which have actually decreased (U.S. Energy Information

Administration, 2014). American imports of Nigerian crude, for example, have virtually ceased altogether (Ofikhenua, 2014). It goes without saying that U.S. planners have not been oblivious to the fact that other countries, including China, India, and Russia have been attracted by the African continent's natural wealth and recently increased their own engagements there[5].

Of course, hydrocarbons are not the only natural resources for which there is high demand. *Inter alia*, Africa holds 95 percent of the world's reserves of platinum group metals, 90 percent of its chromite ore reserves, and 85 percent of its phosphate rock reserves, as well as more than half of its cobalt and one-third of its bauxite. African agriculture's importance is also growing as demand for food by the developing world's rising and increasingly affluent populations surges even as local resources diminish. In contrast, in many places in Africa, the proportion of arable land under cultivation is negligible: in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to cite just two cases, less than 10 percent of potential cropland has been exploited (Pham, 2012 : 8-10).

Although most U.S. officials have, insofar as possible, avoided confrontation with other outside actors—and, indeed, have gone out of their way to seek cooperation in areas where interests complement each other, both to mutual benefit and that of Africans—representatives of both American political parties have also been careful to emphasize the need to be vigilant that there are no monopolies or preferential treatment. In fact, during the 2008 presidential contest, Witney Schneidman, a former deputy assistant secretary of state for African affairs who served as co-chair of the Obama campaign's Africa advisory group, spoke explicitly of the need to "engage the Chinese to establish the rules of the road and to ensure that we are working at common purpose to enhance economic development on the continent" (Schneidman, 2008).

Humanitarian Assistance and Development

And yet another priority of U.S. foreign policy was empowering Africans and other partners to cope with the myriad humanitarian challenges, both man-made and natural, which afflict the continent with seeming disproportion—not just the devastating toll which conflict, poverty, and disease, especially HIV/AIDS, exact on Africans, but the depredations of the continent's remaining rogue regimes. While not an "interest" in the sense of classical political realism, this interest reflects a certain type of idealism that has been part and parcel of the country's foreign policy throughout its history and has led to repeated instances where domestic politics create a foreign policy "priority" in the absence of a hard "interest" (Mead, 2001). An example of this is the decision by the Obama administration to deploy some 4,000 U.S. military personnel to support efforts to contain and eliminate the 2014 Ebola epidemic in West Africa, specifically to construct treatment centers in

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[5] See Pham J. P., May/June 2006, "China's African strategy and Its Implications for U.S. Interests", *American Foreign Policy Interests* 28, no. 3, pp. 239-253; idem, "India's Expanding relations with Africa and Their Implications for U.S. interests", *American Foreign Policy Interests* 29, no. 5, September/October 2007, pp.341-352; idem, « Back to Africa: Russia's New African Engagement », in Jack Mangala (ed.), *Africa and the New World Era: From Humanitarianism to a Strategic View*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, pp. 71-83; idem, December 2011, « Inde-Afrique, un marriage discret », *Alternatives Internationales* 53, pp. 10-13; idem, March 25, 2013, "What Xi Sees in Africa", New Atlanticist; idem, 2013, "India's New African Horizons: An American Perspective", *Africa Review* 5, no. 2, pp. 93-103 ; and idem, March 13, 2014, "Russia's Return to Africa", *New Atlanticist*.

Liberia and to manage a regional staging base in Senegal. The military component alone of this effort is conservatively estimated to cost the Pentagon more than $1 billion (Eiplerin, 2014).

Increasingly, trade and investment have become the points of emphasis in U.S. discussions of African development as policymakers from the president down come to recognize the extraordinary entrepreneurial dynamism that characterizes much of African business and that the continent is nowadays home to seven of the ten fastest growing economies in the world and not just a perennial beneficiary of charitable handouts in need of constant rescue. In fact, this new tone dominated the first-ever U.S.-African Leaders Summit in Washington in August 2014 (Randle, 2014).

Shared Interests

Of course, the United States is not alone in having strategic interests in Africa and, in fact, Washington policymakers and analysts are showing greater sensibility to the common objectives on the continent which they share with many of America's treaty allies and other traditional partners, both in Africa and in Europe, and increasingly have sought ways to work together to achieve those goals. For example, the links between the United States and Morocco are among the oldest of the America's diplomatic bonds, with Sultan Mohammed III being, in 1777, the first foreign sovereign to recognize the independence of the thirteen former British colonies. However, it is only more recently that the vital role the North African country can play in African security and development has become more fully appreciated (Pham, 2013).

Following a November 2013 meeting in Washington between President Barack Obama and King Mohammed VI, a joint statement noted that "the two Heads of State were pleased to note their common assessment of the critical role of human and economic development in promoting stability and security on the African continent, and committed to explore in greater detail concrete options for pragmatic, inclusive cooperation around economic and development issues of mutual interest" and committed both countries "to explore joint initiatives to promote human development and stability through food security, access to energy, and the promotion of trade" across Africa (The White House, 2013).

Similarly, during the February 2014 state visit to the United States of French President François Hollande, he and Obama published a joint opinion editorial hailing Franco-American cooperation in Africa and particularly in the Sahel region, "to prevent al-Qaeda from gaining new footholds" and "help train and equip local forces so they can take responsibility for their own security" (Obama, Hollande, 2014).

AFRICOM IN ACTION

If the establishment of a military command was intended primarily to secure U.S. national interests in Africa—and evidence seems to indicate that such is not an unfair characterization, the repeated denials of some officials notwithstanding—how has the experiment worked out so far? And how have the interests of Africans fared in the process?

Amid all the controversy that the establishment of the new command engendered, one would be excused for mistaking from the arguments adduced by both its critics and some defenders that American security engagement in Africa was an entirely new phenomenon, rather than one with a

history dating back two centuries (Pham, 2009 : 72-78). In fact, U.S. Defense Department agencies have been continuously conducting a number of security cooperation efforts across Africa, responsibility for the implementation of which was simply assumed by AFRICOM after its creation instead of being parceled out among three separate commands[6].

Camp Lemonier: The Only Permanent Base

Almost from the moment that the creation of AFRICOM was announced, rumors have flown about suggesting that a massive increase in U.S. military presence on the continent was in the offing. Yet, seven years later, the command's largest military installation in Africa remains one whose existence predates the command by more than a decade, the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), established in 2002 as a subordinate command of CENTCOM[7].

Headquartered since 2003 at Camp Lemonier, a onetime French Foreign Legion post in Djibouti, the only permanent U.S. military base in Africa[8] is composed of approximately 4,000 sailors, soldiers, airmen, and marines, as well as civilian government employees and contractors. Originally conceived as an anti-terrorism unit actively engaged in kinetic operations, CJTF-HOA's mission has evolved into conducting "operations in the East Africa region to build partner nation capacity in order to promote regional security and stability, prevent conflict, and protect U.S. and coalition interests"[9]. Today, the base plays an increasingly significant role as a major regional base supporting operations throughout Africa, as well as serving as a staging ground against counterterrorism operations in the Arabian Peninsula—specifically Yemen—and the Indian Ocean. Underscoring the increasing importance the Camp Lemonier base to AFRICOM operations the base's lease was renewed for twenty years in May of this year at an estimated cost of approximately $70 million per year, with another $1 billion of base improvements planned (Schmitt, 2014).

Thus while U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) are present and actively engaged in action against suspected terrorists in the Horn of Africa, CJTF-HOA has a separate mandate focused on indirect

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[6] Before the establishment of AFRICOM, EUCOM's area of responsibility embraced Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, in addition some fifty Eurasian states, while CENTCOM had responsibility in Africa for Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Seychelles, Somalia, and Sudan, as well as the waters of the Red Sea and the western portions of the Indian Ocean not covered by PACOM. PACOM's African responsibilities included Comoros, Mauritius, and Madagascar, as well as the waters of the Indian Ocean, excluding those north of 5° S and west of 68° E (which were covered CENTCOM) and those west of 42° E (which were part of EUCOM's space).

[7] CJTF-HOA's « area of responsibility » includes Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, although its "area of interest" also includes Burundi, Chad, Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Yemen.

[8] There have been modest temporary, but nonetheless ongoing, deployments to Uganda, Niger, and Chad in support of intelligence-gathering and counterterrorism efforts, including the hunt for remnants of the Lord's Resistance Army in central Africa, AQIM and extremists from northern Mali, and Nigeria's Boko Haram (and the kidnapped schoolgirls from Chibok). See Pham J. P., October 17, 2011, "Assessing the Hunt for the LRA", *New Atlanticist*; idem, February 25, 2013, "Niger Needs More than Drones", *New Atlanticist*; and idem, May 28, 2014, "Making a Hash(tag) of Africa Policy", The Hill.

[9] U.S. Africa Command, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, Fact Sheet "CJTF-HOA".

activities aimed at denying extremist ideologies as well as individuals and groups the ability to exploit the vulnerabilities of the nations and societies in the sub-region. The task force's operational concept includes a number of measures to foster interagency integration, including close coordination with U.S. diplomatic missions throughout its area of responsibility by posting of liaison teams at each of the embassies as well as a senior military advisor to the U.S. Mission to the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and the presence in CJTF-HOA's command element of a senior State Department officer as the commander's foreign policy advisor and a veteran USAID officer as senior development advisor. In addition to U.S. personnel, CJTF-HOA also embeds military personnel from a number of coalition partner countries in its staff, involving them in all operational phases, including strategic and operational planning and execution.

EVOLVING DOCTRINE: AFRICOM UNDER OBAMA

The election of Barack Obama as America's first president of African descent could not but have its impact on U.S. policy toward the continent. Addressing the Parliament of Ghana during his first visit to Sub-Saharan Africa after his election, Obama affirmed that "Africa's future is up to Africans" (Obama, 2009). Obama then proceeded to list four critical areas—building and sustaining democratic governments, supporting development that provides opportunity to more people, strengthening public health, and resolving conflicts peacefully—for which he pledged America's support. He also explained that it was in the interests of the United States to assist Africa's development, even if responsible government were a condition for the aid. This outlook clearly influenced the Obama administration's *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, released somewhat tardily after an extensive review process in May 2010. In that document, Washington's approach to Africa was couched largely in terms of broader development goals, rather than traditional security concerns which were emphasized in the Bush administration's strategy papers (The White House, 2010).

In June 2012, the Obama Administration released a new *U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa* articulating how it has worked to translate the critical goals from Obama's 2009 speech to the Ghanaian Parliament into action, as well as its four main pillars moving forward—strengthening democratic institutions; spurring economic growth, trade and investment; advancing peace and security; and providing opportunities and development:

> Given the growing strategic importance of sub-Saharan Africa to the United States, over the next 5 years we will elevate our focus on and dedicate greater effort to strengthening democratic institutions and spurring economic growth, trade, and investment, while continuing to pursue other objectives on the continent. Stronger democratic institutions lead countries to achieve greater prosperity and stability; are more successful in mitigating conflict and countering transnational threats; and serve as stronger partners of the United States. Additionally, promoting sustainable, inclusive economic growth is a key ingredient of security, political stability, and development, and it underpins efforts to alleviate poverty, creating the resources to support health care, education, and other public goods (The White House, 2012).
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> In June 2013, amidst criticism his administration had been ignoring the African continent—in particular Sub-Saharan Africa—Obama made a second trip to the

continent, visiting Senegal, South Africa, and Tanzania. Delivering the trip's major policy address at the University of Cape Town, Obama reiterated U.S. commitment to the continent, emphasizing a new U.S.-Africa partnership that moves beyond assistance and foreign aid and towards supporting African countries and their militaries increase their capacity to solve problems (The White House, 2013).

The guidance with respect to the Obama administration's areas of emphasis was clearly already being received at AFRICOM two months before the publication of the new *National Security Strategy* in May 2010, as evidenced by the "posture statement" presented to the U.S. Congress by the first AFRICOM commander. In the submission to the armed services committees of the U.S. Congress, William "Kip" Ward emphasized that "the challenges and opportunities in U.S. Africa Command's Area of Responsibility are complex and dynamic," hence "the application of only military means is insufficient to help our partners address them" (U.S. Africa Command, 2010). Even on security issues, "Africa's challenges require a holistic view" and the activities undertaken by the command "must provide immediate benefit and help our partners progress toward their long-term goals," including capable and accountable professional military forces, supported and sustained by effective and legitimate security institutions, and capable of increasing support for international peacekeeping efforts.

 The Obama administration in general and the leadership of AFRICOM in particular have taken pains to emphasize that they envision this ambitious agenda being implemented primarily through support of African institutions (Yates, 2009 : 154). Thus, at least formally, the programmatic focus has shifted from a superpower's preoccupation with threats arising from Africa's vulnerabilities to helping partners on the continent to assume an ever-increasing role in preventatively addressing their own security concerns (Franke, 2009). This sentiment was echoed by AFRICOM's second commander, Carter Ham, in his 2013 posture statement, when he stated that "in support of advancing regional peace and security, U.S. Africa Command focuses on priority countries, regional organizations, and programs and initiatives that build defense institutional and operational capabilities and strengthen strategic partnerships" (U.S. Africa Command, 2013).

After assuming the leadership of AFRICOM in 2013, David Rodriguez appeared to continue his predecessors' commitment to building and strengthening ties with African partners, mentioning additionally the role of European partners in "addressing immediate mutual threats, and responding to crisis" (U.S. Africa Command, 2014 : 5-6).

WHITHER AFRICOM'S ASSUMPTIONS?

AFRICOM's mission, in its most recent reiteration, is to protect and defend "the national security interests of the United States by strengthening the defense capabilities of African states and regional organizations" and, when directed, to conduct "military operations, in order to deter and defeat transnational threats and to provide a security environment conducive to good governance and development" (U.S. Africa Command, 2011). What, then, are the assumptions implicit in the adaption of such a vehicle to these objectives?

First, the very existence of AFRICOM assumes that by superseding of an antiquated structural framework inherited from times when the continent was barely factored into America's strategic

calculus, the various bilateral and multilateral military-to-military relationships would be better managed and the myriad security assistance programs already in place would benefit from more focused attention and advocacy (Pham, 2009 : 72-78). Unfortunately, the resources the command requires if it is to do even this much have not been readily forthcoming—and that was before the fiscal austerity. In fact, AFRICOM Commander General Ham acknowledged earlier this year that "due to the vast challenges and opportunities on the continent, as well as current fiscal realities, we have prioritized regions in Africa to better focus our exercises, operations, and security cooperation activities" (U.S. Africa Command, 2012).

Second, even were it not for the current stretched force capacities of the U.S. armed forces, AFRICOM is premised on the notion that what should be built up is local capabilities so that African states can manage their own security challenges. This means that, without prejudice to preparedness for kinetic operations, defense intelligence activities, and other functions, the command will necessarily privilege military training with partner nations, working with Africans to build their regional security and crisis response capacity. The difficulty with this doctrinal premise, however, is that the starting point of many African countries insofar as security capabilities are concerned, is relatively low, even if "compared to other national institutions in most of these countries, the military is well organized and adequately funded" (Gribbin, 2008 : 27). Moreover, with the exception of the continent's handful of natural resource-rich, low population-density countries like Angola, most of America's would-be partners are constrained by lack of the financial wherewithal to upgrade their capabilities to meet even short-term priorities. It is a vicious cycle in which many are trapped: security is a prerequisite for development and development is a preventative for insecurity, yet these states lack the basic means to pay for the security that would facilitate the stability and economic growth that would, in turn, generate the revenues for the governments.

Third, AFRICOM's overall objectives are focused on the nexus between security as a prerequisite for development and development as preventative for insecurity (McFate, 2008 : 10-21). As operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have shown, while achieving security is a precondition for development, without noteworthy progress on the latter the former is at best illusory. Hence, as the Pentagon has formally recognized, "stability operations," are now a "core U.S. military mission" which ought to "be given priority comparable to combat operations" and defined as "military and civilian activities conducted across the spectrum from peace to conflict to establish or maintain order in States and regions" with the short-term goal of providing the local populace with security, essential services, and meeting its humanitarian needs and the long-term objective of helping to "develop indigenous capacity for securing essential services, a viable market economy, rule of law, democratic institutions, and a robust civil society" (U.S. Department of Defense, 2005 : 2).

Translated into other terms, the security objectives of Americans and Africans cannot ultimately be achieved and sustained unless alongside the investment in building security there is an investment in developing the infrastructure, legal and physical, that will facilitate for the emergence of both effective governance and prosperity-bringing markets. However, because the global and domestic fiscal crises combined with the bitter partisan divide have created a political climate within the United States where the sort of major increases in foreign aid which promised by President Obama during his 2008 presidential campaign are simply not politically viable, the administration has looked for creative ways to encourage the private sector to be more engaged with efforts to develop and modernize Africa's infrastructure, including financing facilities such as

the relatively modest amounts currently available through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) and the Export-Import (Exim) Bank of the United States, and tax incentives, which might prove particularly attractive insofar as they do not require direct public expenditures. To this effect, the Obama administration announced "Power Africa" in June 2013, a signature initiative to encourage private sector engagement in Africa and help African governments streamline key energy projects for sustainable long-term energy security. Working with African governments, the private sector, and multilateral partners such as the World Bank and the African Development Bank, the United States has pledged more than $7 billion in the initiative's first five year phase to ultimately add 10,000 megawatts of clean, efficient electricity generation capacity to six Power Africa target countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, and Tanzania (USAID, 2014).

Fourth, working with African nations to build their security and crisis response capacity means that AFRICOM will necessarily not just enhance bilateral military relationships, but it must also strengthen the capacities of Africa's regional and sub-regional organizations. A point entry for the United States will definitely be to support the well-articulated desire of African leaders themselves to enhance their own joint capacity to deal with the continent's myriad security challenges. Thus the thinking behind the creation of AFRICOM presumed adequate resources both to assist in African capacity-building and to deploy more uniformed U.S. personnel to collaborate in training missions and other similar activities.

Moreover, given both the historical caprice of the frontiers of many African states (Pham, 2008a : 183-203; 2005 : 31-49; 2008b : 21-25; 2010 : 208-214) and the current desire of many African governments and people to work through continent-wide and regional frameworks, the United States in general and the Africa Command in particular would do well to place a premium on support for and engagement with the African Union, subregional bodies like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and Africa's specialized multilateral institutions like the African Development Bank and the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA), recognizing that Africans must take the lead.

American security initiatives in Africa need to be multilateral as well as bilateral. For example, along the increasingly strategic Gulf of Guinea, it would seem to make very little sense to be building up the maritime domain awareness capabilities of littoral states with very short coastlines like Togo (56 kilometers) and Benin (121 kilometers) when a cooperative, subregional coast guard would probably better serve the national interests of the individual countries. The assumption, of course, is that, all pan-Africanist rhetoric aside, these multilateral institutions actually have not only the capacity to engage on security issues, but also the institutional wherewithal and political capital to do so. It also assumes that, unlike the recent past, the United States manages to sustain its support of African peacekeeping training programs rather than switching from one initiative to the next (Bah, Aning, 2008 : 118-132).

One positive sign is the raft of security-related initiatives announced by President Obama during the August 2014 U.S.-African Leaders Summit (Obama, 2014)—including $110 million a year for a new African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership to build the capacity of African militaries to respond to emerging conflicts and $65 million in the initial year for a new Security Governance Initiative to help an initial six countries (Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Tunisia), as well as

the U.S.-Morocco Framework for Cooperation, signed at the margins of the meeting and aimed at developing Moroccan training experts as well as jointly train civilian security and counterterrorism forces with other partners in the Maghreb and Sahel regions—all largely build on existing and, indeed, longstanding programs.

The question in the post-Iraq War, post-Arab Spring, post-Afghanistan mission, unpredictable and financially constrained "new, new world" of American defense planning is: How do these assumptions hold up? And while there has been in recent years a greater appreciation of the strategic importance of Africa, both for the United States and for the international system, have realistic goals for America's engagement—to say nothing of the grand strategy and tools for it— even been adequately defined? (Pham, 2011 : 57-74).

CONCLUSION

In 2013, General David Rodriguez, previously commanding general of U.S. Army Forces Command, succeeded AFRICOM's second commander, General Carter Ham, who retired after nearly four decades of military service (U.S. Department of Defense, 2013). With each successive transition, the commanders of the U.S. Africa Command have assumed charge of the organization in a much better place than their predecessors. Under any circumstances, the birth of the new command would not have been easy. To many Africans with memories of liberation struggles still fresh in their minds, the very idea smacked of a neo-colonial effort to dominate the continent anew—a notion not entirely unreasonable given the history of efforts by some erstwhile European imperial powers to continually meddle in the internal affairs of their former colonies as witnessed, *inter alia*, by France's nearly three dozen post-independence interventions in sub-Saharan Africa (Glaser, Smith, 2005). To others who recall the cyclic nature of past U.S. engagements, it was a question of the long-term sustainability of the effort. Still others, noting the increased attention paid by U.S. analysts to the role in Africa being played by relative newcomers to the continent like China and India, worry about the possible polarization of the continent in some sort of new scramble between the great powers of the 21st century. To his credit, General Ward, with his tireless effort to engage leaders and other stakeholders across the continent as well as his forthright manner, allayed many of these concerns and laid the groundwork for General Ham and General Rodriguez, who have strengthened relationships with African partners to create a more operationally focused AFRICOM. The election of Barack Obama, an event which was met with genuine enthusiasm across the continent, likewise also helped. However, what has probably done the most to win AFRICOM a place and, indeed, at least grudging acceptance across Africa is perhaps the fact that African states and individuals discovered that it was not what they feared it to be, but rather it was both a continuation of already existent security engagements and the opportunity to enhance them in their own interests even as America pursued her own.

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■ THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, A MAJOR PLAYER IN US COOPERATION WITH AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

Certain aspects of U.S. strategy in Africa that began during the Bush administration have been pursued by the Obama administrations. Wishing to "do good with Africa, rather than to do good for Africa", Obama reaffirmed the notion of partnership when stating the four priorities in U.S. cooperation with the African continent in February 2009 at the *African Center for Strategic Studies*. Security, economic development, health and democracy are the cornerstones of U.S. strategy in Africa (U.S. Department of State, 2009), in which defence remains the central pillar: in 2012, foreign military assistance to Africa reached 7.8 billion dollars (Ploch, Salaam Blyther, 2011 : 2) and AFRICOM's budget amounted to 290 million dollars (Ploch, 2011).

U.S. cooperation with Africa is essentially the responsibility of five actors: the Department of State manages programmes; Congress supervises them and votes on the budgets; USAID coordinates programmes linked to post-conflict development and reconstruction; and the Department of Defense, whose missions focus primarily on security and defence programmes implemented with partner nations. The Treasury plays an important part as well, coordinating economic development programmes in the region.

The Department of Defense has assumed a central role within this cooperation. Its missions have gradually expanded beyond programmes to combat terrorist organisations, designed to build the capacities of African states. The functions of "diplomacy by proxy" that it fulfils on the terrain with local authorities partially distances the Department of State from its traditional role.

Furthermore, the United States has also demonstrated strong commitment to health programmes, a matter of concern to the American administration since the end of the 1990s: the American fight against HIV contributed 52.3 billion dollars in funding through PEPFAR since its creation in 2004 (U.S. Department of State, 2013), an unprecedented commitment by a foreign nation. However, in the same field, the Department of Defense plays a leading role in the implementation of programmes.

This article aims at analysing the strengthening of the role of the Department of Defense in fields that do not directly fall within its remit, such as the increasing diplomatic support responsibility that it exercises with African local authorities, as well as the central role that it occupies in more surprising fields such as health.

THE EXPANSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE'S ROLE TO AREAS TRADITIONALLY UNDER THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S REMIT

Security in Africa, and specifically in East Africa, has been a matter of concern to the United States since the 1990s. From the humanitarian wars under Bill Clinton, which included the operation in Somalia that ended with the Black Hawk Down tragedy, to the beginning of the fight against Islamic networks notably in Sudan and Kenya, security weakness in the region has threatened U.S. interests. The attacks on September 11, 2001 led to the creation of several American programmes designed to build African capacities to enable African countries to combat this threat.

The Department of Defense is in charge of government programmes that combat terrorist organisations together with African partner nations

The 9/11 attacks, while revealing the strength of Islamic terrorist organisations present in the region, prompted a long-term commitment from the United States with local governments in order to wage the global war on terror (GWOT). In this respect, the Department of Defense established its presence in Africa on "mini-bases", or "Cooperative Security Locations" (CSL), most notably in the Horn of Africa. The main American base is Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti. The base is also a diplomatic tool enabling the improvement of relationships between the United States and Africa[1] through operational aid to partner nations. Camp Lemonnier is intended to support missions of AFRICOM – the United States Africa Command, created in 2007 by George W. Bush (Ploch, 2011). In cooperating with the African Union and other African regional organisations, AFRICOM participates in several humanitarian projects or programmes intended to build capacities of African nations. The first major military operation led by AFRICOM was *Odyssey Dawn* in Libya in 2011, that enforced UN Security Council resolution 1973.

In order to support states in the Horn of Africa vulnerable to terrorist groups, a major government military programme was implemented by the Department of Defense: the first, the CJTF-HOA, *Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa*, with the aim of building defence capacities of states in which terrorist threat is growing and leading stabilisation operations in the Horn of Africa. It is a rapid deployment force[2] that was the leading actor during *Operation Enduring Freedom – Horn of Africa*, aimed at combating piracy acts in the Horn of Africa. It also provides military support to African partners in their fight against extremist organisations.

Numerous "two-pillar diplomacy-defense initiatives" give order to the security programmes proposed to African states

The Department of State and the Department of Defense develop or participate in cooperation programmes intended to fund African capacities and mitigate the risk of local populations being recruited to these terrorist networks. In addition, they dedicate ongoing efforts to the institutionalisation of cooperation and pooling of their resources.

In military training programmes for local security forces, the Department of State finances and supervises their implementation, whereas the Department of Defense provides the teams of

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[1] U.S. Military bases, *Camp Lemonnier*, consulted on January 2, 2014.
[2] Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa, *Vision and mission*, consulted on January 2, 2014.

specialists. IMET[3] was created in 1976 with the aim of providing training in U.S. military academies to foreign military personnel, in order to professionalise the armed forces of allied countries and thus enhance defence capacities (Federation of American Scientists, 2001; Allgov; U.S. Department of State). This programme is a key element of the overseas security assistance policy. The same is true for ACOTA, *Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance* (formerly ACRI, created in 1996 and which became ACOTA in 2002), which was an answer to the U.S. doctrine which discouraged the deployment of U.S. soldiers in peacekeeping operations in Africa, after the traumatising experience in Mogadishu in 1993 (Opérations paix, 2014). The Department of State also establishes which countries are eligible to receive the loans provided by FMF (Foreign Military Financing), and PKO (Peacekeeping operations fund), that make up most of the funding to defence capacities of African states. The Department of Defense is charged with implementing these programmes (Defense Security Cooperation Agency, 2014).

In order to reduce the conflict threat in the region, the Department of State, the Department of Defense and USAID have worked together and pooled their resources to create TSCTP (*The Trans Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership*), that aims at mitigating the risk of recruitment by extremist networks of excluded populations and institutionalising regional security cooperation with partner states within which AQMI networks operate. This programme is of great importance to Congress, as shown by the creation of an additional budget post in 2009 despite budget cuts (U.S. Department of State, 2009).

Lastly, the coordination of humanitarian aid programmes and programmes to support post-conflict reconstruction with the policy of the Department of State and the Department of Defense is carried out by the Office of Military Affairs (OMA), created in 2005. Given the disparity in resources between the Department of State and the Department of Defense, and the expanding scope of the Department of Defense's competences in Africa, Congress pays particular attention to this coordination so that U.S. policy is consistent and effective. The Department of State and the Department of Defense are each represented within the structure of the other by a liaison bureau that enables mutual knowledge of their political stance and strategic view; this is an important aspect, for the two departments often share responsibility for programmes currently in operation, which enables them to institutionalise their cooperation. The Department of State is represented within the Pentagon by the Political-Military Affairs Bureau (PM). The International Security Affairs (ISA) office, which provides the Department of State strategic guidelines to defence personnel, and the DCMA, Deputy to the Commander of Civil-Military Affairs, which ensures there is coherency between security policies and the foreign policy of the government, are also part of the Pentagon. DCMA leads numerous civil-military AFRICOM programmes. Administrations and embassies put ongoing effort in improving coordination between diplomacy and defence.

Coordination between the Department of Defense and the Department of State focuses on funding, training local security forces and the mitigation of risk of recruitment by terrorist organisations. This coordination compensates for the disparity of resources between these two departments. The presence of the Department of Defense on the terrain grants it the de facto responsibility of implementing programmes and also enables the Department of Defense to expand its scope of action.

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[3] *International Military Education and Training.*

The Department of Defense and "diplomacy by proxy" in Africa

In parallel with the close cooperation between the Department of State and the Department of Defense, there has been a gradual shift recently of certain diplomatic responsibilities from the Department of State to the Department of Defense. In addition to the difference between their resources and, consequently, operational capacities, the armed forces' experience and field knowledge (they are the main contact point between the American government and local representatives) are an essential asset of the Department of Defense in the implementation of programmes and maintaining relationships with local authorities. In fact, an increasing number of responsibilities that were traditionally the field of diplomacy and agencies of the Department of State have been passed on to the military: this is one of the developments in the Pentagon, which plays an increasingly important role in diplomatic relations through these exchanges.

In this context, we are witnessing a weakening of the Department of State's role in Africa, and it has expressed concern over a possible militarisation of diplomacy, as shown by a Department of State report in 2009: "The U.S. Military is stepping into a void created by a lack of resources for traditional development and public diplomacy" (U.S. Department of State, 2009). This concern is equally underscored by the Department of Defense itself, which underlines the lack of civilian capacities. Moreover, it must be emphasised that the Department of Defense is favourable to stronger commitment from civilian agencies in planning solutions offered by AFRICOM.

THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE: PLAYING AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN HEALTH POLICY IN AFRICA

Whereas the Department of Defense is a major actor in defence cooperation, its responsibilities have gradually expanded to include a variety of fields, most notably the health sector.

The health sector has attracted growing interest and funding from successive U.S. administrations

Health has been a matter of growing concern to U.S. administration since the end of the 1990s, as shown by the release of several *National Science and Technology Council* reports highlighting the significant spread of diseases, such as AIDS and malaria, as well as the outbreak of infectious diseases believed to have been eradicated, such as tuberculosis. AIDS is a major scourge in Africa, killing approximately 1.2 million people in 2011 (World Health Organization, 2013). The eradication of this disease is therefore part of the more global development strategy for the continent. The first actions, aimed at improving surveillance, prevention and response capacities, were launched by President Clinton, who considered the national and international means insufficient (The White House, 1996) and therefore created *Centers for Disease Control and prevention* (CDC), in charge of national and international coordination.

However, it was George W. Bush that, considering infectious diseases a threat to national and international security, developed the main programme in the health sector in 2004: PEPFAR (*President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief*), that remains an important lever for American health policy in Africa, as stated by Barack Obama during his speech at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies in 2009 (U.S Department of State, 2009).

Finally, the Obama administration designed the *Global Health Initiative* (GHI), in 2010, in order to coordinate the different existing initiatives and provide consistent direction and greater impact to the American foreign health policy. Even though this initiative came to an end in 2013, the governance structure of the health policy between agencies (USAID, CDC, OGAC) was maintained (Salaam-Blyther, 2013) and the Department of State created the *Office for Global Health Diplomacy* (U.S. Department of State, 2013) .

As we can see, the various U.S. administrations have been supporting the improvement of sanitary conditions and health care in Africa. The main focuses are the eradication of HIV and the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of the virus, but also the eradication of tropical diseases such as malaria.

The major external role played by the Department of Defense in African health policy

The Department of Defense plays an important role in foreign aid in the health sector; it is the actor that is most present at all stages of the health policy. In addition to implementing programmes, proposing new initiatives in the health sector, and being a major actor in funding, it also participates in the strategic development of the health policy, mobilisation of resources and its implementation on the terrain.

It also led to the creation of new health and prevention programmes (the *Defense Health Program*), such as DHAPP (the *Department of Defense's HIV/AIDS Prevention Program*). Eighty countries in the world, half of which are located on the African continent, benefit from this programme (Navy medicine, 2011). These programmes, mostly focusing on HIV prevention during humanitarian exercises and activities (Serafino, 2008), are funded by Congress and implemented by the Pentagon.

The Department of Defense is also the agent that implements this policy and enables the administrative link with the Department of State. It cooperates with CDC and USAID, helps to establish prevention programmes locally and reinforces prevention and treatment capacities of countries affected by these diseases.

Meanwhile, the sphere of action of traditional actors of these health programmes, the Department of State and USAID, is limited to more precise missions: the Department of State coordinates and funds most of the initiatives, and USAID takes charge of the implementation of secondary programmes, such as the *Child Survival Health Grant Program* (CSHGP).

Conclusion

Within the U.S. strategy in Africa, the Department of Defense, the main actor in security cooperation, also plays an increasingly important role of diplomatic support – a function that it shares with local authorities – as well as the implementation of health programmes. This evolution of the responsibilities of the Department of Defense comes at the expense of the Department of State and USAID that play a secondary role in their traditional spheres of action. A shift is evident in the responsibilities of actors that take part in the cooperation: the Department of Defense has become the major player within the U.S. strategy in Africa.

Nevertheless, this trend is not manifest in all fields: economic development initiatives are mostly led by Congress, USAID, and the Department of Commerce that supervises these policies. Congress played an essential role in the creation of several agencies, such as the *Millennium Challenge Corporation* (MCC), a flagship programme (with an 898 million dollar annual budget) created in 2004 under the Bush administration, that provides significant loans to local actors in order to enable food security. Moreover, partnerships between the private and public sectors finance an important number of these projects, diminishing government spending in the allocation of resources. This pattern tends to develop especially in the context of budget cuts in the United States. As far as the Department of Defense and the Department of State are concerned, they are not leading actors in this field, whereas economic development is a strategic pillar of U.S. foreign policy in Africa.

In addition to the Department of State and the Department of Defense, Congress is strongly committed to the evolution of military engagement in Africa. Its responsibility in security policy through its "power of the purse" includes determining the level of funding for programmes, examining and validating the allocation of resources proposed by the two departments. Moreover, it also plays a political role of adviser on decisions made and the direction taken and its executive branch: it is, for instance, Congress that underlined the need for a combatant command for Africa, prior to the creation of AFRICOM (Ploch, 2011)[4]. Thus, even though the Department of Defense plays the leading role, it must also cooperate with other actors of the U.S. administration, which limit its power of decision and actions.

Although the responsibilities and the scope of the Department of Defense have expanded over recent years, it is not possible to speak of a militarisation of U.S. strategy in Africa, for the Department of Defense remains in the background in several key fields. Lastly, we note that, regarding economic cooperation, as well as security policy in Africa, the Obama administration pursues the strategy implemented by the Bush government.

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[4] Materialised through S. 2766 and amendment 4527.

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■ THE U.S. ANALYSIS OF THREAT IN AFRICA[1] : THE ENEMY AS A SYSTEM

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"So long as parts of Africa continue to be ravaged by war and mayhem, opportunity and democracy cannot take root (…). From Mali to Mogadishu, senseless terrorism all too often perverts the meaning of Islam (…). In too many countries, the actions of thugs and warlords and drug cartels and human traffickers hold back the promise of Africa, enslaving others for their own purposes".

Remarks by President Obama at the University of Cape Town,
South Africa, June 30, 2013.

After launching the Global War on Terror[2] (GWOT), which did not always yield the desired results[3], the United States has since begun to adopt a different approach. In spite of the blows suffered, the terrorist threat persists and is even growing in places. Public opinion in Western nations in general, and in the U.S. in particular, is less willing to accept sacrifices and even the idea of risk. The classic military operations launched in the name of this GWOT – Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Iraqi Freedom – were criticised namely for their lack of long-term vision, their questionable effects and human and political costs that were considered to be too high. Although there is no question that the reasons behind the war against terrorism were legitimate ones, political and military authorities now prefer to implement a different strategy based on prevention and pre-emptive action[4] in coordination with local partners. The purpose of this strategy, called the "light footprint" strategy, is to maximise results by engaging a limited number of highly efficient forces (special forces, military advisers and drones), in opposition to the mass employment of conventional forces. This decision aims at achieving the strategic goals set by the White House, at a political cost that has become acceptable again due to, on the one hand, the optimisation of armed force operations, and on the other hand, the use of military assistance[5].

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[1] The author would like to thank Fabrice Nicol for his thorough, detailed and extremely beneficial proofreading.

[2] It was the George W. Bush administration that, bearing the brunt of the attacks on September 11, 2001, proposed the notion of a "war on terror". Its concrete results were the military campaigns launched against the Al Qaeda movement and the countries suspected of protecting it. Although the expression is no longer used today by the Obama administration, the "war on terror" has not yet ended.

[3] Despite highly symbolic success, such as the death of Al Qaeda's charismatic leader Osama bin Laden, the results of the military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the use of drones in Yemen, are subject to controversy as to their real effectiveness in reducing the harmful potential of terrorist organisations.

[4] A prevention policy aims at preventing the emergence of a potential, undeclared threat. A so-called "pre-emptive" strike aims to destroy a threat perceived as real and immediate. This last action was often perceived as the logical corollary of GWOT.

[5] According to French Joint Doctrine 3-4-5.1 dated January 4, 2011, called *Operational Military Assistance to a Foreign Force*, whether technical or operational, the main aim of military assistance is to "*contribute to the*

Having long been the theatre where the great powers battled for influence, the African continent will now serve as a large-scale "testing ground" for this new regional approach to conflict management.

In a speech given at the University of Cape Town, the Commander in Chief of the most powerful army in the world outlined the framework for his army's engagement. To ensure that this action would remain true to his vision, he used words that create the image of an enemy; words such as "terrorism", "thugs", "warlords", "drug cartels" and "human traffickers" all appear in his speech.

Without being exhaustive, this list reveals the great difficulty that Western and African nations have to face. From terrorist groups to criminal gangs, including insurrectional movements, the threat in Africa is multiple, hybrid[6] and varied. It has adapted to its environment and proliferated in destabilising grey zones[7]. Taking advantage of poverty and the institutional vacuum left by weak local authorities, these non-state organisations disseminate or even impose their cause among populations, convinced that a lasting victory cannot be achieved without this support.

Soldiers had great difficulty trying to understand the complexities of these movements. Army staffs remained imbued in the context of the Cold War, and so were equipped with classic analysis tools that enabled them to anticipate the modes of action of a state enemy, above all characterised by known and therefore predictable structures and doctrine. Nevertheless, these instruments became inoperable when applied to new threats. Other more appropriate instruments therefore had to be envisaged.

For the United States, the experiences of war in the 2000s were vital in reassessing previous patterns. Of course, identifying the enemy's weaknesses is and will always remain the priority. However, in order to counter an asymmetrical threat which knows no border or rules, perfect knowledge of the environment becomes necessary again. Thus, although the new adopted strategy is not specific to the African continent[8], the study of its application in Africa is beneficial, for it raises the question of the American obsession with the al-Qaeda movement and the underlying risk of conflating the two, which stems from a viewpoint that is often too simplistic.

While it was soon realised there was a pressing need for a new analysis[9], adopting a renewed, more scientific approach, took longer. However, from this new perspective, two concepts were developed: the notion of *Violent Extremist Organisation* (VEO), and the *Al Qaeda Network* that occupies a special, if not almost exclusive position in strategic thinking across the Atlantic. Let us now try to understand how the U.S. military conceptualises threat on the African continent.

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security of the supported state within the framework of the "prevention" strategic function in order to decrease the risk of destabilization and of a direct intervention of our Armed Forces – with its load of consequences in terms of human and financial costs." Operational military assistance (OMA) is the provision, by the French armed forces, to the various components of a foreign armed force of skills, knowledge, expertise and experience in the security sector and the capacity to act during an operation.

[6] A hybrid threat can be understood as an enemy that is able to simultaneously use specifically tailored, means to reach his objective, both conventional and non-conventional. Hezbollah in Lebanon is, for instance, the most frequently cited example of a hybrid actor.

[7] The concept of grey zone, which appeared at the beginning of the 1990s, refers to situations that include the collapse of a state, the presence of large-scale criminal activities, territorial predation and the emergence of warlords.

[8] It was implemented during the two main conflicts after September 11, 2001, namely in Afghanistan and Iraq.

[9] The war in Iraq in 2003 and the emergence of Shiite and Sunni insurrections radically shook U.S. convictions.

COMPLEX, YOU SAY?

"Now, we can see a new world coming into view. A world in which there is the very real prospect of a new world order. (…) A world where the United Nations, freed from cold war stalemate, is poised to fulfil the historic vision of its founders".

George H.W. Bush, in an address to the U.S. Congress, March 6, 1991.

Our world did not become more complex in the seconds that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the dissolution of the USSR. It was already complex, but above all we had dual visions and perceptions of this environment. At the risk of seeming hyperbolic, all problems were often seen through the prism of the antagonism between the two blocs. For this reason, the influence of local factors, whether economic, social, religious, or obviously ethnic, were taken into consideration much later for a large majority of Western observers and leaders.

After having long been a land where great European nations tapped into its resources and also exercised their power, Africa gradually freed itself from this "domination" during the decolonisation years (1950-1960). Unfortunately, not only did this legitimate desire for independence lack support from former colonists, but it mostly originated in an inaccurate view of the African human reality, that African leaders themselves did not call into question. The arbitrary borders of the Maghreb and West Africa clearly illustrate this lack of understanding or feigned ignorance.

Left to themselves and sometimes victims of other external negative influences, certain "young" states, such as Mali, have been unable or failed to create the cohesion that a nation needs to survive. Certain regions in Africa, unable to unite the population under a democratic government on a common territory, saw their development stall and entered the zone of geopolitical turbulence that comes from the absence of a rule of law. This produced an ideal breeding ground for violent non-state actors motivated by criminal, political or religious causes, which gradually established themselves within various human communities. Exploiting the chaos generated by infra-state conflict[10] and their effects in terms of territorial integrity, political stability and social divides, these groups varied their activities and sometimes coordinated them in order to survive.

Asymmetric threats, as they evolve in a complex human environment that jostles ethnic factors and religions, are transnational, mobile and difficult for the foreign observer to perceive. These threats, which function like networks, have a strong local or even regional presence, depending on their size and power[11];

Let us consider the case of Mali. The landscape of armed groups is today divided into armed terrorist groups[12] – that include Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the Movement for Oneness and

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[10] Infra-state conflict – the most violent consequence of ethnical antagonisms within a country – is internal conflict that is mainly characterised by a demise of the State's governing power, porous borders and the violence of intercommunity conflict.

[11] For instance, Joseph Kony's *Lord's Resistance Army* (LRA) is present in Uganda, but also in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in South Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR).

[12] Formerly armed jihadist groups.

Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA), Ansar Dine and Al-Mourabitoun – and signatory armed groups[13] – the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad[14] (MNLA), the High Council for the Unity of Azawad (HCUA) and the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA). Within MAA, there is a division between the pro-Bamako camp, that has close ties with MOJWA, and the pro-Azawad camp. Similarly, the leader of Ansar Dine (Iyad Ag Ghali) also maintains a close relationship with the Ag Intallah family, leaders of the HCUA, the "organisation" that recruits former Jihadist fighters from Ansar Dine. On top of this, there is the issue of the AQIM katiba (*Tarek Ibn Zyad* or *Al Forqan*, for example) that wish to preserve the autonomy that they have gained, sometimes to the detriment of AQIM's core branch in Algeria. Another issue is the traffickers that thrive in the region and whose allegiance varies according to interests that often converge with that of their customers.

This simple example illustrates the complexity of a fairly common situation in Africa, one in which there are multiple actors, tribal and economic interactions, and opportunism of all kinds.

When U.S. general staffs started to properly consider the "African threats" to their interests[15], they soon came up against a certain number of difficulties. They were slow to acknowledge the reality of extremist violence.

What were known as "classic" methods, which were based on the assessment of physical criteria, mainly led to military-centred operations, regardless of the environment. Therefore, a new analysis tool, more suitable for this context, needed to be defined or adopted. Systemic analysis, the fruit of Colonel Warden's work, gradually emerged as the preferred tool for the dissection of asymmetric threat.

SCIENCE AS INSPIRATION: THE SYSTEMIC APPROACH

"Of all dangers, the greatest is to underestimate one's enemy".

Pearl S. Buck, *Imperial Woman*, 1956.

A researcher, when confronted with a new situation for which the reasons are not immediately clear, first tries to observe and list the facts. The results of this preliminary work must then provide the basis for a thorough analysis, based on the classification of the components of the phenomenon observed. Lastly, this lengthy step is followed by interpreting and hypotheses-building. The transposition of this scientific approach to the analysis of the enemy became the model for creating the new method.

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[13] Arab and Tuareg movements that signed the Ouagadougou agreements on June 18, 2013, with the Malian transitional authority.

[14] Even though there are no clearly-defined borders, the Azawad may be described as the territory situated north of the Niger River in Mali. Traditionally a land of pasture for nomadic peoples, it is the subject of secular conflict between the Tuareg that claim independence for it and the central power in Bamako.

[15] The attacks in Dar Es Salam and Nairobi in 1998 were the first actions to alarm U.S. authorities as to the new danger that terrorism in Africa could represent. However, the attacks of September 11 and their aftershock 11 years later with the death of Ambassador Stevens in Benghazi heightened awareness.

In the 1980s, U.S. Air Force Colonel John A. Warden conducted thorough research on the strategic consequences of technical and technological progress for the battlefield (Warden, 1988). Using computers, precision munitions and increased stealth, a different type of warfare seemed possible. Air power was flourishing and all indications placed it at the core of future military strategies. The mindset that focused on annihilating the enemy gradually disappeared, giving way to what Warden called "the concept of strategic paralysis." He created a model of the enemy (Warden, 1996) as a strategic entity in five concentric circles[16]. This theory was put into practice somewhat successfully during the First Gulf War, "by simultaneously targeting the centres of gravity identified on each of the circles that characterise the Iraqi system" (Le Saint, 2014). The purpose of the air campaign was to paralyse the central nervous system of the Iraqi state by destroying its decision-making centres and disrupting its economy.

Nevertheless, whereas this perception of the enemy is an interesting first step in identifying a state's centre of gravity, it is not necessarily appropriate for an asymmetric actor. It is difficult to interpret a changing and secret human construction that does not react to the same stimuli as a structured military organisation. In July 2006, in South Lebanon, the Israel Defence Forces committed this error during their systemic air campaign against Hezbollah (Goya, Brillant, 2014), the perfect example of a hybrid enemy. This is particularly true when the observer's culture or practice naturally pushes him towards the known, which he tends to consider as a rule. However, when faced with complexity, there is a great tendency to oversimplify in order to identify obvious points that are, of course, "hard facts", but are in fact disconnected from reality. It was in order to avoid this pitfall that systemic analysis was applied in a military context.

Drawing inspiration particularly from biology, systemic analysis does not study the elements of a complex structure individually, but rather as integral parts of a whole, with its various components interconnected through mutual dependence. The advent of this new method can be interpreted as one of the consequences of the "revival" of counter-insurrection with the comprehensive approach[17]. Today, systemic analysis has been adopted as a standard tool by the U.S. armed forces. It enables the observer to deconstruct an organisation, expose its inner mechanisms, and gives a new perspective on the links and interactions between its members, on the one hand, and other rival entities, on the other. It is comparable to the work of the watchmaker applied to a human structure.
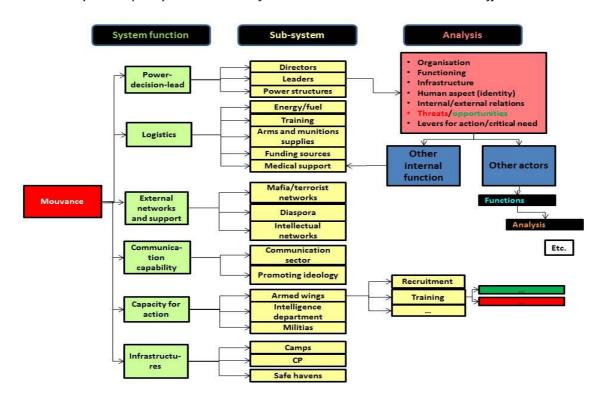
For France's Joint Forces Centre for Concept Development, Doctrine and Experimentation (CICDE), *"what is referred to as 'systemic' analysis is above all a practical tool for identifying and analysing systems and actors, their capacities and role in the evolution of the situation and, lastly, finding relevant levers to act or influence the situation in a favourable way. Thus, this analysis tool is mainly used to represent structures and relations in order to act* (CICDE, 2012). It determines the main functions of a system (leadership, refuge zone, funding, communication, movement, intelligence,

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[16] At the heart of this five-ringed model, resembling a dartboard, there is a core which is perceived as being the enemy's leadership, with the outer layers representing the organic essentials, national infrastructure, the population and the fielded military.

[17] In the context of recurring complex crises that need better coordination of all actors, the concept of the comprehensive approach is now commonly implemented both by international organisations and at state level. It aims at restoring and/or improving the three essential levers (security, governance and development) for the continued existence of a society upon exiting conflict, through an interagency, inter-ministry and inter-organisation approach.

weapons, personnel, ideology) from which studies are conducted to identify weaknesses that can be exploited.

In order to explain the process, the diagram below, taken from the referenced document on the systemic approach, illustrates the generic functional deconstruction of a movement, *the purpose being the categorisation of factors in terms of threats and/or opportunities, and the assessment of the suitability and capacity to reach these factors in order to obtain the desired effects.*

However, it is necessary to note that this method is merely a tool with a clear objective: weaken the enemy with an acceptable cost-effectiveness ratio. The strategy that it proposes is to cause a change in the behaviour of the target system, by producing an effect on one or several of its subsystems, whether material or immaterial, and, if possible, with optimised deployment assets.

The U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), whose method has already been tested in conflicts in the Middle East, could develop its own reading of the threats on its theatre of operations, by using two concepts developed in the 2000s in order to classify and designate violent non-state organisations.

THE VIOLENT EXTREMIST ORGANISATION (VEO) CONCEPT

"*A violent extremist organization (VEO) is not a monolithic entity, but rather a complex organization operating in an even more complex environment*" (Davis, 2012).

As suggested by this excerpt from a study published by the Rand Corporation, the construction of the notion of violent extremist organisation was the "theoretical" solution to the need to define an atypical enemy that did not match conventional description.

For American think tanks, VEOs, also called *Violent Extremism*, are among the major factors of instability in Africa, alongside weak governance, organised crime, intercommunity tensions and insecurity over natural resources. VEOs are the product of the central power's inability to establish its authority across the entire territory. They may be political (insurrection), criminal (mafia and international traffickers) or religious (radical Islamists) in nature. They take advantage of this failed state situation to develop their activities, paying no heed to national borders. This is precisely how they earned the label of "transnational threat". Nevertheless, on a purely academic level, these organisations are, to a certain extent, subject to "controversy" over the very meaning of the notion of VEO.

According to certain experts, this notion is distinct to the insurrectionary movements and even radical groups using terrorist methods. Of course, its logic is similar to the latter in that it tries to create a climate of insecurity in order to put pressure on the established power. However, a certain number of features distinguish it from other entities. VEOs are, for example, more likely to vary their criminal activities, while committing acts of brutality on the population that hosts them.

For other specialists, this expression is a generic one, as it brings together all non-state actors that commit acts of violence with political, ethnical, economic and religious ends. AFRICOM, for instance, has applied the concept of VEO to the terrorist groups present in the Sahel (AQIM), Somalia (Al Shabaab) and Nigeria (Boko Haram), as well as paramilitary groups with political ends such as M23, smuggling and trafficking networks and rebellion movements.

This "dispute" between experts most notably reveals that the frontiers between these entities remain blurred, and this is precisely their strength. While issues are becoming more regional, States are struggling to harmonise their security policies. The systemic analysis focuses on the transnational links between these entities and sometimes even the relative complacency they are shown by certain countries. However, it also comes up against the realities of an action that is limited by borders.

In conclusion, the value of this notion does not necessarily lie in its features, but rather that it conduces to regarding the distinction between the entities concerned. Designating a group as extremist and violent actually predisposes U.S. partner nations towards acknowledging and accepting the logic followed. It is, in a way, a means of applying a single vision and law for all.

THE AL QAEDA NETWORK[18]

"Instability in North and West Africa has created opportunities for extremist groups to utilize uncontrolled territory to destabilize new governments. The Al Qaeda network and its affiliates and supporters continue to exploit Africa's poorly governed regions and porous borders for the training and movement of fighters, resources, and skills"[19].

The threat posed by the Al Qaeda (AQ) movement was revealed to the public following the attacks on September 11, 2001, and has profoundly shaped U.S. foreign policy over the last 13 years. Today

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[18] See Zimmerman K., April 25, 2013, "Al Qaeda and its affiliates in 2013", *Critical Threats*.
[19] Excerpt from the hearing of General Davis M. Rodriguez, U.S. AFRICOM commander, before the House Armed Services Committee, March 5, 2014.

perceived as a "constellation" that unites the satellite groups around a central core, the AQ network is believed to control more territories and supporters than any other violent extremist organisation in the world.

Al Qaeda, founded by Saudi Osama Bin Laden and Egyptian Ayman Al Zawahiri, defines itself as a movement that fights "against the presence of Jews and crusaders on the lands of Islam" with the aim of establishing an Islamic caliphate practicing Islamic law. After over 15 years of confrontation with the United States, the core of the movement established in the tribal areas of Pakistan (Al Qaeda core or Al Qaeda central) is weakened on the operational level. Nevertheless, even though its capacities are not sufficient to organise large-scale actions from its original base, its potential to cause harm has not changed. On the contrary, a new influence strategy was rapidly implemented. The mid-2000s saw the emergence of a new expansion policy, this time centred on the dynamic development of regional "affiliates" from the Maghreb to Asia and across the Arabian Peninsula. In economic jargon, a base in "AfPak"[20] has thus favoured external growth and brand promotion by exporting war to other territories. This desire to reorganise and reinvigorate the "fight against the apostate governments", by encouraging other groups to join forces under a single banner, has proven beneficial. In a win-win rationale, the groups now linked to AQ can take on another aura, receive additional financing and recruitment resources, while the "base" can use this as an opportunity to gain recognition by the media and on the Jihadist stage by continuing the fight and launching activity on other fronts.

Thus, according to Charles E. Berger[21], specialist researcher at the FBI, we are today witnessing a "balkanization" of the movement, i.e. a fragmentation of the movement into multiple entities, each fully autonomous on the operational level. In contrast, for Katherine Zimmerman[22], Al Qaeda is following a "decentralisation" policy, with affiliates being regularly required to justify their actions.

Through this multiplying effect strategy, the Al Qaeda network has not only considerably expanded, but also found itself at the core of U.S. military analysis on terrorist threat in the world and, more specifically, in Africa. This method, that points to the Salafist ideology as the common denominator, led to the concept of *Al Qaeda Adherents and Affiliates* (AQAA). The use of this terminology testifies to the importance of the *Al Qaeda* franchise over recent years, its influence in the globalisation of Islamic terrorism, but also the American tendency to view the world through a single prism.

Let us clarify the terms of this concept.

The *Affiliates* are the groups that have espoused the *Al Qaeda* ideology, pledged allegiance to the core group and were accepted by the latter to fight in its name. They are the "converted and aligned." In Africa, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Harakat Shaba al-Mujahidin (the Shabaab) belong to this category. These groups, that have a very strong local presence, act independently from the core group while operating under its banner.

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[20] Neologism used to refer to Afghanistan and Pakistan.
[21] Charles E. Berger, *The balkanization of Al Qaeda*, February 21, 2014, nationalinterest.org.
[22] Senior analyst on "Critical Threats" project of the American Enterprise Institute. She most notably specialises in monitoring the Al Qaeda movement.

The *Adherents* or *Associated* are the groups and people that share all or part of the *Al Qaeda* ideology and use it to engage in terrorism, without pledging allegiance. They can be described as "non-aligned followers", such as MOJWA or the Murabitun, particularly present in Mali.

The last category is the *Allies*, and brings together movements that, according to their preoccupations of the day, may have an interest in occasionally taking part in AQ activities. The Ansar Al Sharia group in Libya and the Boko Haram group in Nigeria seem to follow this course, although their agendas remain mostly national.

Adepts of this method, the Americans have caught up and improved their knowledge of the extremist threat on the African continent. Nevertheless, if systemic analysis is employed without a certain distance, it may distort reality by directing the reflection according to the needs of the moment and not necessarily long-term interests.

THE DANGERS OF "SYSTEMATISATION"

"Who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe"

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

The American method is an appropriate and reliable one, which provides the capacity to understand how the adversary's system works and identify its exploitable weaknesses. With these, key objectives can be determined: leaders, enablers, recruiters, ideologists and any other authority whose loss would be detrimental, in this case munitions experts, financiers and other logisticians.

Nevertheless, the spread of this practice may reveal hidden vices whose consequences are not immediately obvious. Exposing a mechanism does not necessarily mean understanding the mindset behind it, especially when this analysis is centred on human non-state organisations that are also clandestine, with a great propensity to ensure that misinformation is deliberately disseminated.

We must not forget that, in terms of terrorism, the U.S. military tends to construct threat so that it is not only in accordance with their national interests, but also and particularly the pretext for specific interventions. Anxious to ensure the shadow of *Al Qaeda* looms in each of their studies, they sometimes forget to take the enemy's motivations into account, at the risk of establishing it as a simplistic paradigm. Intentionally directing the systemic analysis towards the desired result may distort the reality of the terrain, and this is precisely the danger faced by general staffs caught up in establishing a model of a complex system.

Moreover, as noted above, the benefit of such a carefully detailed study requires thorough knowledge of the environment in which the enemy being studied evolves. This crucial step is long and unresponsive to the famous *black swans* dear to Nassim Taleb[23]. Thus, systemic analysis must

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[23] In his study *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable*, Nassim Taleb denounces those who claim to predict future shocks (what soldiers call strategic surprises) due to calculations and software based on past experience. For the author, the black swan will always be an "unpredictable surprise." Only reinforced resilience of organisations and procedures could enable the attenuation of its effects.

remain in its original field of application: planning assistance[24] on the long-term, and not to be used in urgent cases.

Finally, in a context of counter-insurrection or combat against a radical movement with terrorist modes of action, this method often points to ideology as the key element in launching an attack. However, the solutions chosen have, above all, lethal effects and insufficient impact on perceptions. The need for rapid results and political pressure are certainly the reasons that encourage the general staffs to favour the impact of fire over erosion through ideas.

For the United States, the challenge today is no longer to better analyse or even understand the asymmetric enemy, a long road that has already been travelled. The challenge henceforth lies in the definition of the solution that will be chosen, and kinetic action must certainly not be the generic US policy line. Indeed, is there any point, in the long term, of carrying out thorough analyses on the enemy and its environment, to simply drop bombs in the end?

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[24] Developed in the 1960s by four Harvard professors, the SWOT analysis (*Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat*) has gradually become the tool of reference for the strategic business diagnosis. Easier to use than the systemic analysis, this tool has also appealed to the U.S. armed forces that appropriated it for the assessment of threats.

■ THE HIDDEN COSTS OF OUTSOURCING THE "WAR ON TERRORISM" IN AFRICA

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The commencement speech delivered by President Barack Obama on May 29, 2014, at the United States Military Academy at West Point was an important attempt to articulate and clarify the basic tenants of a foreign policy that has been lambasted—even at times by the president's Democratic allies—as vacillating and incoherent (Bowman, 2014).

Yet when it comes to conducting the struggle against transnational terrorism, the Obama Administration faces three contradictory pressures. First, threats from transnational actors using terror tactics have increased in recent years. But, second, after two long wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the American public shares President Obama's reluctance to directly engage American forces abroad. And, third, the U.S. public seems less and less willing to bear the cost of military activities reflected in the shrinking U.S. defense budget. As a consequence, the Administration aspires to a more cost-effective means of countering transnational terrorism. Building the security capacities of partner states has emerged as the preferred solution.

"A strategy involving invading every country that harbors terrorist networks is naïve and unsustainable," Obama argued at West Point. As part of his alternative approach he proposed allocating up to US$5 billion on a *Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund* that would enable the United States to "more effectively partner with countries where terrorist networks seek a foothold." He specifically named a series of countries—Somalia, Mali, Libya and Yemen—as prime targets of the fund.

These territories are regarded by many American defense analysts as fronts in the "war on terrorism" that the United States cannot afford to ignore, although the spread of al Qaeda to new theaters in Africa is less strategically relevant to the United States than to Europe and China.[1] The consolidation and rise of al Qaeda's affiliate in the Sahel – Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) – has been especially worrying to France. Eager to share its defense burdens, Washington has encouraged France's engagement in local counterterror efforts. The *Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund* is specifically intended, among other things, to bankroll and otherwise support France's operations in this area.

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[1] Europe's geographic proximity to Africa, its large population of African migrants, and the colonial history of many European countries, renders the continent a more-likely target for terrorist attacks originating in Africa. China has extensive commercial interests on the ground in Africa that are accessible to terror attacks.

AFRICAN SOLUTIONS TO AFRICAN PROBLEMS

The capacity-building strategy is nothing new to U.S. counterterror efforts in Africa, where, for more than a decade, both the Obama and Bush Administrations consistently outsourced the prosecution of the "war on terrorism" to African states. This strategy is often euphemistically described as pursuing "African solutions to African problems" even though in reality it involves hybrid international solutions to address problems that are transnational rather than solely African.

The threat of transnational terrorism emanating from Africa has ebbed and flowed for more than two decades. In 1992, Osama bin Laden established his early al Qaeda training camps in the Sudan. In October 1993, al Qaeda's alleged involvement in training and arming Somali militiamen culminated in the infamous Battle of Mogadishu, which killed 18 U.S. soldiers and prompted a precipitous withdrawal of U.S. military and humanitarian resources from Somalia (United States District Court, 1998 : 7; Meek, 2013). The 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya increased Washington's anxiety about the potential for terrorist strikes on U.S. interests in the region.

But it was the terror attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001, that created a major sense of urgency in Washington. They also reinforced a budding consensus among academics, policy makers and development professionals that the proliferation "failed states" posed a great, unseen threat to the United States' national security (U.S. Department of State, 2002).

THE SOMALI FRONT

Following the 9/11 attacks, Washington sought to preempt the terror threat in East Africa by bankrolling the efforts of friendly African states (including Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi and Djibouti), as political proxies engaged in creating a new government for Somalia. Unfortunately, many Somalis perceived these efforts as malign regional meddling, and a popular revolt against both the Transitional Federal Government that was created under the region's auspices and a group of local warlords rumored to be supported by the United States quickly gathered strength. The wave of popular discontent then propelled an alternative, home-grown political movement — the Union of Islamic Courts—to power in Mogadishu. The United States, fearing that the Union of Islamic Courts had links to al Qaeda, then engaged Ethiopia, Uganda and Burundi to serve as indirect and later direct military proxies deployed to fight the "terrorist" forces that had emerged in Mogadishu (Bruton, 2010 : 6-10). Since December 2006 until the present day, Washington has continuously helped African forces to battle the Somali backlash against regional and Western state-building efforts. This assistance has come in various forms, including finance, training, equipment as well as the deployment of U.S. military advisers.

In Somalia, a new al Qaeda proxy emerged in the form of Harakat al Shabaab. Since 2006, al Shabaab has managed to control significant swathes of territory in south-central Somalia. However, since mid-2011 it has lost ground to a combination of Kenyan, Ethiopian, African Union and Somali government forces and has pivoted towards attacking these countries on their home ground, launching major terror strikes in Kenya and Uganda, while attempting and sometimes succeeding in launching lesser strikes in Ethiopia and Djibouti.

Al Shabaab is now considered by the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) to be the greatest threat to U.S. interests on the continent (Donna, 2012; Doyle, 2012). Ironically, al Shabaab's emergence and rise was directly connected to the efforts of Washington (and other states) to meddle in Somali affairs (Bruton, Williams, 2013 : 10-12). Washington's solution to the threat—the continued deployment of neighboring military forces to fight al Shabaab—has threatened to aggravate and prolong Somalia's political instability.

After nearly four years of bloody military stalemate in Mogadishu, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) started to turn the tide against al Shabaab, forcing the rebels out of most of the city. In October 2011, Kenya unilaterally invaded southern Somalia without prior notification to the UN Security Council, the African Union (AU), or Washington, and despite the objections of Somalia's then-president. Despite fears that Kenya's military campaign would play into al Shabaab's hands, the following month Ethiopia also deployed troops to central Somalia. Together with AMISOM, Somalia's two neighbors launched a multipronged assault on al Shabaab forces and expelled them from several of their previous urban strongholds. In early 2012, Kenyan forces were integrated into AMISOM. By mid-2012, their allowances were being paid by the European Union, Washington stepped up its training and assistance programs, and the United Nations (UN) was providing them with logistical support.

After seizing Kismayo from al Shabaab forces in October 2012, Kenya quickly decided to support a proxy administration in Somalia's border region with Kenya—"Jubaland state"—headed by a former ally of al Shabaab, Ahmed Madobe. Kenya's leaders want friendly authorities in Jubaland to provide a buffer zone to stem the flood of refugees and attacks coming across the border from Somalia. Unfortunately, Kenyan forces also used the proxy administration to restart Kismayo's banned charcoal trade and to divert revenues from its port, in direct contravention of UN Security Council resolutions, AMISOM's mandate to support Somalia's Federal Government, and the directives of the AMISOM force commander.

Like the Ethiopian intervention that occurred between 2006 and early 2009, Kenya's support of Madobe and Jubaland provided an opportunity for al Shabaab to recruit more fighters to its cause and take action against Somalia's neighbor. The attack on the Westgate mall in September 2013, for instance, was intended as retribution for Kenya's actions in Somalia—and its perpetrators appear to have been drawn from the Somali diaspora.

It is thus abundantly clear that U.S. counterterrorism strategy in the Horn of Africa has been heavily influenced by the interests of Ethiopia and Kenya, not always with positive results. As the UN Security Council correctly recognized when it initially supported AMISOM in February 2007, the solution to Somalia's conflicts lies not in killing particular individuals or backing one faction over others, but in pursuing an inclusive process of dialogue (United Nations Security Council, 2007). Yet both Ethiopia and Kenya have supported their preferred Somali faction(s) at the expense of more constructive international engagement. In so doing, they have fanned the flames of extremism both within Somalia and abroad and become part of Somalia's political instability.

In Washington, a military-heavy approach was adopted that tried to support the rule of a centralized government in Mogadishu: the two iterations of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and now the Federal Government, none of which was elected by popular vote. Backing these governments has proved counterproductive in several respects, not least because of their corruption, lack of crucial

capabilities to govern, and deficit of popularity across the country (as opposed to being popular with particular clans). Among other dubious individuals, the United States reportedly supported a warlord turned government general, known as "Inda'ade" or "the Butcher," who ran gun- and drug-trafficking operations and admitted to protecting some members of al Qaeda (Axe, 2011). U.S. support for centralized, unpopular governments has also raised the stakes for Somali combatants, who have tended to believe an immense state-building budget is up for grabs and have fought harder than ever to capture the imagined spoils of government.

This left Washington's principal instrument of counterinsurgency – AMISOM – without a reliable local governing partner, a strategic error that was magnified by AMISOM's shortage of funds and equipment. AMISOM has long struggled with inadequate financial resources and logistical support, troops, and military enablers like tanks, armored personnel carriers, helicopters, and intelligence-gathering assets. Unsurprisingly, from late 2012 until early 2014, AMISOM adopted a posture of consolidation and refused to undertake any more major offensives against al-Shabab's strongholds (African Union, 2013).

KNOCK-ON EFFECTS

Despite its problems, AMISOM's recent success in battling al Shabaab has been cited as a proof of the effectiveness of the "African solutions to African problems" strategy (Carson, 2013). Johnnie Carson, former assistant secretary of state for Africa, has referred to Somalia as one of his greatest successes, which on paper epitomizes an "African solution to an African problem" by empowering African militaries to counter al Shabaab (U.S. Department of State, 2013).

The idea of collective responsibility and action continues to be championed by the AU, and backed by the UN's preference for regionalized peacemaking (Battle, Cousin, 2011). Washington has also supported the partnership approach: U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) Commander General David Rodriguez said in a 2013 interview that AFRICOM works to improve partner capacity so that "African solutions are the way of the future" (U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Nigeria, 2013). Obama's remarks at West Point also seemed to confirm his Administration's commitment to continuing this approach and indeed expanding the strategy to other theaters.

"African solutions to African problems" undoubtedly has its advantages: the presence in AMISOM of forces from Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Djibouti, Sierra Leone, and Burundi has allowed Washington to execute its war against al Shabaab without getting sucked into a quagmire. There have not been American soldiers on the ground in Somalia, except for occasional special forces operations and some military advisers deployed in late 2013 (Whitlock, 2014).

The financial cost of AMISOM has also been relatively small, particularly when compared to U.S. deployments and even UN peacekeeping operations. Since 2007, the U.S. has provided approximately US$512 million of direct support to AMISOM (Psaki, 2013). In addition, the UN Support Office for AMISOM will spend an estimated $2 billion through fiscal year 2014/15, of which

the United States has paid about thirty percent (United Nations General Assembly, 2014)[2]. These figures do not include the substantial bilateral assistance packages to AMISOM troop-contributing countries, which annually total tens of millions of dollars. This may sound expensive but it is much smaller than the sums spent by the United States in other theaters of the "war on terrorism"—the equivalent of less than a week's expenditure in Afghanistan (where costs at the height of the war averaged US\$300 million per day) (Activist Post, 2011).

While relatively cheap, America's proxy strategy is nevertheless problematic. Indeed, in Somalia it has arguably created more problems than it has successfully addressed. There is also a sense in which it has encouraged a number of serious long-term problems for the United States in East Africa by creating profoundly negative and counterproductive effects in its partner countries. American policymakers and proxy countries appear blind to these effects.

The long-term consequences of the proxy strategy are most clearly demonstrated by their second and third order effects. One second order effect, is to raise the risk these partners will be targets of retaliatory terror attacks, either by al Shabaab or al Qaeda. Another problem revolves around the sometimes corrupt and abusive behavior displayed by some of these proxy armies in the field—such as engaging in fraud, diversion of resources, including weapons and ammunition, and illicit commerce. We have already noted how, in addition, sometimes these forces may be used to consolidate preferred power structures in Somalia rather than impartially keeping the peace. Third order effects of this strategy reinforce the widely held perception that the United States cares more about its national security than democracy or human rights in the region, and will turn a blind eye to abuses as long as the country's military remains amenable to American priorities and directives. Too often the impact of military assistance on partner countries strengthens authoritarian and repressive regimes, which use U.S. support to consolidate power and repress political opposition under the guise of "counterterrorism." One example is Ethiopia's late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who sold Ethiopia as the Pentagon's darling in countering Islamic extremism—receiving millions of dollars of aid—while simultaneously jailing political dissidents and overseeing massive human rights violations perpetrated by his military in both Ethiopia (Gettleman, 2007) and Somalia (Human Rights Watch, 2007; Amnesty International, 2008).

The number of terror attacks conducted by groups claiming inspiration from various strains of Islamism, are on the rise across the continent. Consequently, problems created by the U.S. proxy approach could multiply if the United States widens the scope of its strategy (Dowd, 2013). As Boko Haram's April kidnapping of more than 200 Nigerian schoolgirls attracted international attention, the radical Islamist group has increased the frequency of violent attacks in northeast Nigeria, with spillover effects now in neighboring countries[3]. Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and its affiliates continue to carry out attacks throughout the Sahel and Sahara region— demonstrating their capabilities while operating largely unchecked across northern Mali in the aftermath of the 2012 coup and when a splinter group killed 39 foreign hostages during a January 2013 raid on Algeria's In Amenas gas facility. In North Africa, instability from the Arab Spring facilitated an increased al Qaeda

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[2] « Budget performance for the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013 of the financing of support for the African Union Mission in Somalia and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 of the United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia », United Nations General Assembly.

[3] Campbell J., "Nigeria Security Tracker", Council on Foreign Relations.

presence in Libya and Egypt and saw seized Libyan weapons surface in conflicts from Syria to Mali to northern Nigeria.

As in Somalia, "African solutions to African problems" may well produce short-term security wins but it risks embedding the U.S. in other medium- and long-term situations that are more dangerous, expensive, and intractable than they initially appear.

THE KENYAN FRONT

The United States' partnership with Kenya epitomizes the negative second and third order consequences resulting from the proxy strategy (Bachmann, Hönke, 2011 : 87-114; Presthold, 2011, 3-27). In the aftermath of al Qaeda's attack on the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi in 1998, the United States and Kenya engaged in an increasingly cooperative bilateral relationship. Today, Kenya is one of the largest recipients of U.S. aid in the world—receiving upwards of US$1 billion as an anchor to fight terrorism in East Africa (Ploch, 2013). Kenya's unilateral intervention in Somalia in 2011 to create a buffer zone and protect economic and security interests and its integration into AMISOM has prompted retaliatory attacks by al Shabaab in Kenya. While most attacks occur near the Kenya-Somali border, al Shabaab grabbed international headlines by attacking Nairobi's Westgate mall in September 2013, demonstrating the organization's ability to carry out large-scale attacks outside of Somalia despite being displaced from some of its urban strongholds by AMISOM and Somali government operations.

Tensions between Kenya's government and its large Somali refugee and naturalized population have also posed security problems. This led to a nationwide crackdown by the Kenyan government in March 2014—focusing on the predominantly ethnic Somali neighborhood of Eastleigh in Nairobi—ostensibly to flush out illegal immigrants and militant Islamists believed to be a base for al Shabaab recruiting. Though U.S. assistance has helped Kenya achieve short-term military "wins" in Somalia, Kenya has experienced significant attacks and security challenges that have produced a greater level of insecurity in the country than before its intervention and subsequent operations in AMISOM.

The United States' continued support for the Kenyan government has been complicated by pending International Criminal Court (ICC) crimes against humanity charges against President Uhuru Kenyatta and Vice President William Ruto. It also reflects Washington's priority of short-term security wins over supporting human rights and "good governance" in the region. Kenyatta, whose trial has been postponed until October, and Ruto, whose trial has been suspended until June, are accused of orchestrating post-election ethnic violence after losing the 2007 elections, resulting in over 1,200 deaths and 600,000 displaced individuals (BBC, 2014). Despite Johnnie Carson's statement that "choices have consequences" prior to Kenyatta and Ruto's victory in 2013, the United States has avoided punitive action against the Kenyan government. Instead, the Obama administration has continued its support on the grounds that Kenyatta and Ruto's cooperation with the ICC is a sufficient means of accountability. The Kenyan government and its police force have also been accused of human rights violations relating to the crackdown on Kenyan Somalis and refugees, including deportations without trial and extortions, beatings, extralegal detentions of women and children (Ploch, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2014). By continuing to provide financial assistance to

Kenya, the Obama Administration has signaled that even large-scale human rights abuses will not generate consequences if Kenya continues to act as a strong security partner.

The Ethiopian Front

Ethiopia has long been a key U.S. strategic partner in East Africa. In May 2014, for instance, during his visit to Addis Ababa, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry thanked the country for its "essential role" in regional security (U.S. Department of State, 2014). Though the partnership has cost the United States millions of dollars in military support, logistics, and training, it means that it is Ethiopian, rather than U.S., boots on the ground in Somalia to battle al Shabaab.

In relation to Somalia, it was Ethiopia's leading role in eliminating the initial "threat" of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) to the United States or its European allies in late 2006 that was the first major act in the post-9/11 "war on terrorism." In this case, the military, logistics, and diplomatic costs of supporting the Ethiopian intervention were relatively small compared to the potential nightmare of mobilizing a U.S. intervention force. Moreover, a direct U.S. presence in Somalia would not have been tenable to the American public after the Black Hawk Down incident of October 1993. Ethiopia once again dispatched troops in 2011 to support AMISOM and the newly arrived Kenyan troops. In January 2014, over 4,000 Ethiopia troops officially joined AMISOM as part of a "surge capacity" to enable the AU mission to undertake offensive operations against al Shabaab. Al Shabaab, of course, used this move in its subsequent recruitment drive and threatened retaliation against the foreign occupying forces.

While al Shabaab has not carried out a successful attack in Ethiopia, this is attributable more to the effectiveness of Ethiopian security forces than to al Shabaab's incompetence. The closest thing to a successful attack inside Ethiopia came in October 2013 in an upscale Addis Ababa neighborhood, when a bomb prematurely exploded and killed two individuals. Ethiopian authorities believe that the two were Somali nationals and al Shabaab members who planned to detonate the bomb during a soccer match. Most recently on May 29, the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa issued a message to U.S. citizens, warning of "Al-Shabab's intent and capability" to carry out attacks inside Ethiopia. The current warning follows a series of similar previous ones, noting specifically the threat in Ethiopia's restive east—which borders Somalia—and reporting recent cross-border incursions.

An often-ignored result of U.S. support for proxies is the effect that military training and support has on the status of human rights and governance in partner countries. Particularly since the disputed elections in 2005, the government has cracked down heavily on civil society, the media, the political opposition, and even organized religious groups (Tronvoll, 2011 : 121-136). Protests over the 2005 elections ended when the government arrested thousands of peaceful demonstrators, charging hundreds of opposition leaders and journalists with treason (Washington Post, 2005; IRIN News, 2005). Since then, the government has implemented laws that criminalize social advocacy by "foreigners" (including Ethiopian charities that receive donations from abroad); imposed draconian restrictions on the press (even copy shops can be fined ruinous amounts for printing articles that criticize the government); and enforced such a broad definition of "terrorism," under a 2009 proclamation, that the mere act of blocking traffic during a peaceful street protest can be punishable by the death penalty.

In April 2014, nine prominent journalists and bloggers were arrested in Ethiopia, apparently for the crime of collaborating with foreign human rights groups (Greenslade, 2014). They are being held incommunicado. An unknown number of other journalists and political activists are already in jail. Yet despite such repression Ethiopia was among the top 10 recipients of U.S. foreign aid in 2012, receiving US$580 million in development, humanitarian relief and health programs[4]. As Ethiopia's second largest donor after China, Washington's underwriting of the Ethiopian state's budget has helped keep the regime afloat for years. Foreign donations now account for at least 50 to 60 percent (The Oakland Institute, 2013) of the country's $8.3 billion budget (Abiye, 2013). Until very recently, only a tiny fraction of that funding has gone directly to the military. But development and humanitarian contributions allow the ruling party to direct the bulk of its discretionary, domestic revenues to military spending (money that might otherwise be spent on social services like schools, hospitals and infrastructure). As a result, Ethiopia maintains the fourth largest army in sub-Saharan Africa as well as an array of additional security institutions (International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2014).

Even as Addis Ababa uses this security apparatus to intimidate its own population, it is supporting American national security interests in the region. In addition to joining AMISOM, Ethiopia also deployed large numbers of peacekeepers to UN missions in Darfur and Abyei in Sudan. Current Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn has been the primary host and broker of peace talks between the combatants in South Sudan, which will soon see the deployment of an IGAD (*Intergovernmental Authority on Development*) Task Force involving Ethiopian, Kenyan and Rwanda troops to protect IGAD peace monitors. In such ways, Ethiopia has remained a vital U.S. ally in the "war on terror," despite the subsequent costs.

THE UGANDAN FRONT

The United States has engaged in an increasingly intense proxy relationship with Uganda in recent years, most notably through Uganda's deployment of troops in Somalia and in its anti-Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) activities in Central Africa. Indeed, Uganda now receives its largest slice of foreign aid from the United States to support counterterrorism operations in the region. Some analysts have argued that these military operations have been part of Museveni's "image management" strategy to ensure that his regime continues to receive economic and military assistance and is perceived as a key guarantor of regional stability (Fischer, 2012 : 404-423).

Though United States assistance helped Uganda's defense forces displace the LRA rebel organization that terrorized the country for nearly two decades, al Shabaab has carried out retaliatory attacks in Uganda for its pivotal role in AMISOM. Uganda endured al Shabaab's first major attack outside of Somalia in July 2010, when the group bombed an Ethiopian restaurant screening the World Cup in Kampala — killing 76 people, including an American. This was a significant event in al Shabaab's evolution, demonstrating its willingness and capability to carry out attacks on AMISOM's troop-contributing countries. Though additional attacks have not taken place in Uganda, al Shabaab has threatened further attacks, resulting in a recent United States Embassy warning of an al Shabaab attack in Kampala this summer (Bariyo, 2014).

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[4] ABC News, "Top 10 U.S. Foreign Aid Recipients".

The United States' significant foreign assistance to Uganda has emboldened Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, whose recent actions have highlighted his authoritarian tendencies and poor human rights record. Democratic institutions have experienced a slide since electoral reforms allowed multi party elections in 2005. Also that year, Museveni amended the constitution to eliminate presidential term limits, paving the way for his victory in the 2006 and 2011 presidential elections. Despite elections discredited by opposition and international observers (BBC News, 2013; Malone, Biryabarema, 2011), the United States reiterated its support for Museveni[5]. Museveni's recent human rights record has also been criticized. In February 2014, Museveni's support for an anti-homosexuality bill criminalizing various forms of same-sex conduct with life imprisonment received considerable international criticism. Security forces also continue to receive impunity despite allegations of torture, extrajudicial killings, and deaths of at least 49 people during protests in 2009 and 2011 (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Thus, continued United States assistance to Uganda has correlated with Uganda experiencing retaliatory al Shabaab attacks and Museveni's regime backsliding on its commitments to ensure "good governance" and human rights. According to Freedom House, for example, between 2007 and 2014, Uganda regressed in its domestic political rights (Freedom House, 2007, 2014).

THE DJIBOUTIAN FRONT

As a result of Djibouti's strategic geographic importance and willingness to host Western military bases, the United States has engaged in a strong proxy relationship with the Djiboutian government. Djibouti, which sits on the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, has been an AMISOM troop contributor since 2011 and generates many millions of dollars by renting military bases to the United States and other allies, including France, Italy, and Japan. In May 2014, the United States extended its lease of Camp Lemonier – Washington's only permanent military base in Africa – for 20 years at an annual cost of US$70 million (Schmitt, 2014). Camp Lemonier is a significant strategic base for the United States, serving as a hub to carry out counterterrorism operations, notably in Somalia and Yemen.

Djibouti's contributions to AMISOM and ties with Western countries have also had consequences however. Specifically, al Shabaab carried out its first attack in Djibouti on May 24, 2014 when two suicide bombers targeted a French restaurant, killing three and wounding eleven people. In claiming responsibility, al Shabaab warned of further attacks if Djibouti continued to support Western countries and deploy troops to AMISOM operations (Hamza, 2014). Given Djibouti's strategic importance and the government's willingness to assist in counterterrorism operations, Djibouti will remain a target for the foreseeable future.

The United States' strategic partnership with Djibouti has not improved the country's domestic governance, as President Ismael Omar Guelleh has used foreign aid to consolidate power and eliminate opposition. After Guelleh succeeded his uncle, Hassan Gouled Aptidon, during Djibouti's

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[5] "On July 27, 2010, Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Johnnie Carson stated during a press conference in Kampala: "I do not think President Museveni is a dictator. I think President Museveni is the duly elected leader of the country that he's been elected openly and transparently in free and fair elections". His statement contradicted the findings of the U.S. Department of State, which had characterized Uganda's 2006 presidential election as "marred by serious irregularities » and « election-related violence" and his own earlier description of Museveni's continued rule in Uganda as "a threat to Africa's success story".

first post-independent multiparty elections in 1999, Guelleh embarked on reforms to consolidate power. In 2005, Gulleh pressured parliament to overturn the two-term limit on the presidency, which allowed him to win a third term in 2011 (Freedom House, 2011). Gulleh also used state resources and power to stay in power, dissolving opposition parties, and taking advantage of opposition election boycotts and electoral rules that helped his People's Rally for Progress Party control all parliamentary seats. The government has also trampled on constitutional rights guaranteeing freedom of expression, and freedom of assembly, as the government is intolerant to criticism. By continuing to partner with the Djiboutian government, the United States is clearly demonstrating how strong security partnerships trump democratic values in East Africa.

THE BURUNDIAN FRONT

After emerging from a devastating civil war in 2005, Burundi hosted a UN peacekeeping mission, which remained in the country until late 2006[6]. Between 2003 and 2004 the country had also hosted an AU peace operation, AMIB. Nevertheless, in December 2007, Burundi joined AMISOM. Since then it has provided the second largest contingent of troops to the mission—more than 5,000 soldiers, all of whom benefit from U.S. training, equipment, and financial support, including a new training institution in the country.

Burundi has remained a steadfast contributor to AMISOM despite enduring a significant number of casualties, not only from combat with al Shabaab but also from disease. By early 2014, it had provided more than 25 battalions for peace operations in Africa. Beyond Somalia, Burundi has also contributed troops to the AU mission in the Central African Republic, once again with considerable support from the United States (United State Africa Command, 2013).

As a consequence of Burundi's participation in AMISOM, al Shabaab has threatened to carry out attacks inside Burundi akin to the World Cup bombing in Kampala. The U.S. Department of State has issued regular warnings to travelers advising caution due to the terror threat. While Burundi has not experienced attacks on its home soil, it has experienced large numbers of casualties during operations inside Somalia, notably in two battles in March and October 2011 (Raghavan, 2011 ; Kron, Ibrahim, 2011).

Continued U.S. military assistance to Burundi overlooks the serious backslide into authoritarianism that began with the country's contested 2010 elections. President Pierre Nkurunziza imposed draconian laws to stifle free media and political opposition while simultaneously pushing to eliminate term limits. The ruling party has also allegedly armed and equipped its youth wing, a tactic which does not bode well for a country still in the midst of reconciliation (Bankukira, 2014). Aside from United Nations statements expressing concern over the developments, the U.S. has done relatively little to counter the narrative that strong security partnerships outweigh good governance policies and practices.

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[6] United Nations Operation in Burundi, "United Nations Operation in Burundi".

CONCLUSIONS

The United States' proxy strategy has been too heavily influenced by the national security interests of the proxies and facilitated opportunities for human rights and governance abuses. These relationships have also opened opportunities for new jihadi recruitment.

Moving forward, the danger of attacks similar to Westgate mall will likely persist until Somalis are able to engage in a meaningful process of reconciliation. This is unlikely to happen while regional states continue to exploit Somalia's multiple conflicts and the "war on terror" to pursue their own interests—and while the United States allows, and financially supports such activities.

Similar risks could spread elsewhere should the United States continue to embrace a proxy strategy. Al Qaeda is focused on creating footholds in Africa and will almost certainly look to embed itself in the continent's complex wars. Currently, the neighbors of war-torn states in which al Qaeda might work to establish a strong presence—from Mali to the Democratic Republic of the Congo—are perceived by local populations as partisan combatants, not neutral observers. If the United States tries to utilize such regimes as proxies on new fronts in its battle against al Qaeda, there is a serious risk that, like Kenya and Ethiopia, they will use counterterrorism as camouflage for other goals, such as eliminating political opponents or accumulating natural resources. The United States, in turn, might create more enemies among local populations than it eliminates.

Similarly, the Somali case suggests that the meddling of regional states has galvanized some U.S. passport-holding members of the diaspora to plot attacks in Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya. It also raises the specter of homegrown radicalization—some fifty Somali-Americans are thought to have joined al Shabaab—and "lone wolf" attacks in the United States. These concerns will only grow if Washington continues down the strategic path it has charted in Somalia in other African states.

The proxy strategy has effectively eliminated top targets in Somalia at a relatively low cost, but there have been problematic consequences: proxy states contributing troops to AMISOM operations in Somalia have all been targeted by al Shabaab in retaliatory attacks, though the success of carrying out such threats varies. Moreover, continued U.S. security assistance to these proxy regimes, all of which have committed blatant human rights violations and undermined democratic governance, gives the impression that Washington is unwilling to hold strongmen rulers accountable for their abuses. Thus, while support of proxy regimes might generate quick positive results, significant secondary consequences may outweigh its benefits.

Repeating the proxy strategy might produce more tactical successes for al Qaeda in Africa and even bring some of the continent's wars home to the United States. Washington would be wise to recognize the costs as well as the benefits of its proxy strategy, including the damage it could do in the future. This might prompt a refocus of U.S. engagement which does not conflate state-building with counterterrorism. Washington should pursue al Qaeda by targeting only those individuals who pose a direct threat to the homeland through special forces operations. Separately, in countries struggling to establish stability, Washington could help promote political reconciliation and conflict resolution, including by paying for peace-building and reconciliation conferences.

If the United States avoids the temptation to drag regional proxies into other countries' wars, al Qaeda will have a much harder time convincing Africa's rebels that their causes are part of the global jihad. In turn, the fight against terrorism in Africa will become easier to win.

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◼ THE INDIRECT APPROACH OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE SAHEL: DEVELOPMENTS IN STRATEGY AND A COMPARATIVE APPROACH WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

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INTRODUCTION

The reflection proposed in this article is based on two observations. To begin, the Sahel faces a certain number of transnational threats that have materialised from the chaotic situation in Libya and Mali. Secondly, the increasing number of actors that play a part in international relations generates a reconfiguration of the international system and challenges U.S. hegemony, most notably in the security field. In light of this development and a Sahelian equation with several unknowns, the United States and the European Union propose, with different perspectives, cross-cutting and all-encompassing approaches (known as "comprehensive"), in order to meet the needs of a complex situation. The fact that the Sahel has become (for many) a region fraught with dangers and a place where violent extremism came to light on the international stage is evidence of the need for a reflection on the effectiveness and consistency of the various strategies for the Sahel, and Washington's above all.

The following article, therefore, will be a reflection on the evolution of U.S. strategy in the Sahel in light of several factors: the weight of U.S. recent history in the fight against international terrorism at a time when the American president is seeking to strengthen U.S. influence across the world (using the smart power concept); the role of the United States in a region that is not one of its strategic priorities and lastly, the challenges of better interaction and cooperation with the other actors present in the Sahel, most notably the European Union. In other terms, how is the U.S.' indirect strategy in the Sahel evolving, and what are the results of this action?

THE EVOLUTION OF U.S. STRATEGY IN THE SAHEL AND THE "LIGHT FOOTPRINT"

In order to analyse the evolution of U.S. strategy in the Sahel and its impact on stability in the sub-region, it is important to sequence the action in several stages. Despite a strong security and military heritage in the combat against international terrorism, the election of Barack Obama in 2008 put the analyses of the American approach up until then and U.S. influence was considered in new ways (CSIS Commission, 2007). This encompassed the desire to break away from the Bush administration discourse, a multi-sector, inter-agency approach in cooperation programmes in the Sahel, an effort to reduce U.S. military presence on the terrain and lastly, a desire to impart information on action taken in order to convey a positive image ("winning hearts and minds"). Nevertheless, beyond a

discourse meant to reassure partner actors (African and otherwise), the facts indicate no complete break with the past, which leads us reflect on the nature and effectiveness of the American approach that is intended to be intelligent, light, and indirect.

Key trends

The military and security legacy – Washington's frontal approach within the Global War on Terror

The prompt and virulent reaction of the Bush administration to the 9/11 attacks, and the ensuing decade of the "global war on terror", strengthened, in the collective imaginary, a negative image of America and certainly left a permanent mark. This frontal military approach taken by the U.S. was a realist response (in the classic international relations sense) to the attacks in 2001 that turned Al-Qaeda into a political actor in the international system. This "declaration of war" by President Bush strengthened the position of Al-Qaeda on the international stage (war being defined as an armed conflict between two or more recognised and identifiable parties). For the American president, the only way to fight Al-Qaeda was by using violence: "disrupt, dismantle, deter". The analysis of this narrative (and the impact that it has had until today) is essential in order to better understand the challenges of the fight against terrorism in the Sahel and the role of the U.S. in the context of the new directions taken by President Obama. Furthermore, we consider this historic legacy is rarely taken into account by the American government in the implementation of its strategy in the Sahel.[2] However, almost a decade ago, a new dynamic was set in motion, gradually setting the pace for a more cross-cutting and comprehensive American approach. It was in the Bush (Junior) era that multi-dimensional programmes (although centred on security and military aspects) were born: the Pan Sahel Initiative (PSI), followed by the Trans Saharan Counter Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP) which will be discussed later on in this article.

Operation Serval and the forces present in the Sahel: a golden opportunity for the U.S. indirect approach?

The U.S. indirect approach in Africa and the Sahel is the result of the Obama strategy that is intended to be light (*i.e.* light footprint) and discreet (leading from behind) and claims to bring a new dynamic to foreign policy for Washington (Pigné, 2015). It relies on local and regional partners, such as Algeria or Morocco (for the Maghreb) and Niger for the Sahel, surpassing Mali, which had formerly received most of the American funding for the sub-region.

Although the French government made clear its desire to break away from its past in Africa, the history of the relationship between Paris and part of its former colonies seemed to weigh more than ever, and in a positive manner, on recent events in the Sahel. Militarily engaged in Mali and in the Central African Republic, France is playing a central role in the fight against the various manifestations of political violence south of the Mediterranean. Moreover, France is attempting to embark the European Union on its "journey", however difficult this appears. Although France's

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[2] This observation is based on a research trip made to Washington between March and June 2013. We will emphasise U.S. programmes in the Sahel in order to show the difference in views within the U.S. administration itself. As certain U.S. officials see it, it is necessary to take greater account of the heritage of the war on terror when planning and implementing a strategy for the Sahel and, more generally, for Africa.

proactive role played by is mostly welcomed by the international community, it is also subjected to criticism. At times accused of lacking coherence[3], (e.g. its relationship with certain rebel groups in Northern Mali, the lack of strategic vision during the intervention in Libya), France seems unable to address the complex challenges in the Sahel on its own, a situation which enables the United States to step in while without being in the vanguard.

In 2011, France and the United Kingdom launched Operation Harmattan in order to depose Muammar Gaddafi and put an end to civil war. The American support, in the context of leadership "from behind" (Kandel, 2014), showed the feeble capacity of EU member states to engage in operations without NATO's muscle.

Lastly, in Mali, American operational support proved crucial to France, providing in-flight refuelling, transportation and strategic support by American drones. This observation does not take away from the merit of the French armed forces and the political courage of the French president, but it is important to note that the situation would certainly have been different in the absence of American support. This raises the question of European dependence on Washington on the Sahelian theatre.

The American view of the Sahel

The reasons for U.S. surveillance of the region and the origins of American cautiousness

Numerous analysts tend to retrace the renewed interest of the United States in Africa to the period after September 11, 2001. However, in reality, Washington was already engaged in Africa since the mid-1990s: the UN military operation in Somalia in 1993[4], known due to the tragic events (*Black Hawk Down*) in Mogadishu, is still present in the memory of American soldiers. During the operation in the Somali capital, eighteen American soldiers died during battles with the armed militias. Ever since, Washington has been particularly disinclined to engage on the African territory, even in the case of humanitarian issues (America did not intervene during the Rwandan genocide). In 1996, the Clinton administration created the Africa Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), with the aim of developing the crisis management capacities of African States. During the same period, the U.S. authorities were aware of Osama Ben Laden's presence in Sudan. In 1998, the U.S. Embassies in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) and Nairobi (Kenya) suffered violent attacks (causing more than 200 deaths), followed by U.S. offensives against strategic points in Khartoum, and later Afghanistan. Nevertheless, it was after the attacks on September 11 2001 that the G. W. Bush administration began to view Africa as a wide group of territories and countries difficult to control headed by states that were weak, fragile and/or failed. This structural fragility of African countries is (for Washington) a fertile ground for areas of lawlessness and sanctuaries for Islamic terrorists to thrive.

It was in this context that America developed, for the Sahel, the Pan Sahel Initiative (PSI) at the end of 2002, and which was operational in 2003. "The PSI was initially intended to combat terrorism, control illicit trade and improve regional security. For Stephen Harmon, it was the political instability

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[3] In May 2014, on the fringes of a meeting of the trial in Nouakchott, in Burkina Faso, which brought together the heads of the security services of the countries concerned, a G5 meeting was held in Mauritania. France took part in this meeting through its Minister of the Interior. The question arises as to the coherency of such a meeting in Mauritania, supported by France, whereas the trial in Nouakchott was considerably more inclusive.

[4] It is worth recalling here the first attack in 1993 on the World Trade Center in New York.

and traffic that raged in the Sahel that first attracted the attention of the United States. From the American viewpoint, three characteristics were to contribute to turning the Sahel into a sanctuary for radical Islamists. First, Algeria experienced in the 1990s a civil war linked to the emergence of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC). Second, there was a strong risk that a number of citizens of countries in the sub-region that had left to fight the USSR with the Mujahedeen, would return to their country of origin. Third, the Sahel, whose inhabitants are mostly Muslim, is considered a potential area of radicalisation" (Pigné, 2015). Finally, we consider that the American view of the Sahel will remain biased until the question of whether AQIM constitutes a direct threat to U.S. interests and the national territory is settled (by the U.S. government and American discussion groups) in a rational and dispassionate manner.

The "militarisation" of U.S. policy in Africa and the Sahel

In recent years, three major factors have strengthened the image of a war on terror being transposed to the African continent, continuing on from the previous decade with the use of drones by Washington (or rather, we should say, the excessive media coverage of the use of drones), the intervention by American special forces on the theatre of operations, and lastly, the creation of AFRICOM in 2007-2008, that generated a certain amount of excitement regarding American military engagement on the continent. However, it seems that the facts reported show continuity rather than a break with the preceding period.

Although drones, a high-tech tool, were not used in the Sahel to "deal with" (in military terms) possible targets, they often are a source of heated discussion among detractors over ways of combating violent extremism (legality, legitimacy etc.). It is true, nevertheless, that since February 2013 the United States have had a drone (surveillance) base in Niger that is currently used to support Operation Serval in neighbouring Mali and more generally, track down jihadists at large. These ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) assets are a crucial military advantage. However, the question remains as to whether they are an indication of the militarisation of U.S. policy in this part of the world.

Secondly, the intervention of U.S. special forces in foreign territory also fuels the speculations that depict American strategy as increasingly aggressive and militarised. In October 2013, two raids were carried out in order to seize jihadist leaders. In Somalia, *Seal Team 6* attempted a raid on Al Shabaab territory with a view to seizing Abdikadar Mohamed, alias Ikrima.[5] During the same period, in Tripoli, Libya, a Delta Force detachment successfully conducted an operation intended to capture a prominent figure of international terrorism, known as Abu Anas Al Libi. Al Libi (who has since been tried by a court in New York) is one of the main figures suspected of having masterminded the attacks on U.S. embassies in 1998.

Thirdly, the New York Times revealed that the U.S. army trained troops in anti-terrorist combat in four countries in the Sahel (Schmitt, 2014), in addition to the cooperation programmes that were already known. The funds allocated (between 10 and 15 million dollars) are significant, given the capacities of the countries in the region, and are provided in addition to the Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP) programmes. In spite of the fact that these "revelations" will certainly

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[5] It was since revealed that the special forces commando preferred to abandon the intervention, as the conditions necessary to carry out the operation were not met.

reinforce the idea of a *"militarisation of the Sahel"* (Association of Concerned African Scholars, 2010), it is difficult to distinguish the budgets committed to TSCTP (notably within the framework of Exercise Flintlock)[6] from those that correspond to additional programmes of anti-terrorism combat in Africa. Regarding TSCTP[7], a flagship programme of American strategy in the Sahel, with a budget of 580 million dollars for the period spanning 2005 to 2012, it symbolises the U.S. comprehensive and indirect approach in the region. TSCTP, which is essentially centred on programmes dedicated to security and defence services of partner nations, nevertheless saw these budgets readjusted in favour of so-called development activities (awareness, training, radio broadcasting). These different programmes are managed by USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development). The results are somewhat disappointing, given the situation of the armies in the sub-region, but enables Washington to emphasise a central aspect: the desire to train, support and enable African countries to take the lead on African problems. The fact that AFRICOM is established in Germany (linked to the fact that no country wanted to host the U.S. command on its territory) also allows it to justify its light footprint on the continent.

Nevertheless, the term "militarisation", implying an ongoing process, or even a process of accentuation of the security and military dimension of U.S. strategy in the Sahel, and more generally in Africa, seems excessive. As we see it, it is rather a question of an essentially military-centred view of counterterrorism (a fact that is not excluded by a certain number of U.S. political figures).[8] Thus, it is not a question of changing American aims, strategy or doctrine (neutralise terrorists, continue to cooperate with partner nations with which cooperation has been successful), but rather changing how things are said (discourse) and done (drones).

The Boko Haram phenomenon in the light of the situation in the Sahel

There is an abundance of literary production on the Sahel, AQIM and, more generally, questions related to security in Africa. Nonetheless, we think that it is necessary to develop an analysis and a cross-cutting definition of the Sahel which systematically incorporates a transnational space that encompasses phenomena of violent extremism in the Sahel (namely AQIM and its offshoots) and Northern Nigeria and, by extension, in the Lake Chad region (Boko Haram and Ansaru). A more inclusive and interdisciplinary view of the Sahel seems necessary for two major reasons: most importantly, if links between Boko Haram and AQIM are proven to exist, it is necessary to reflect on the sociological dimension of the violent extremism phenomenon in West Africa, and in particular on the question of enlisting black African populations (Pigné, 2013).

Meanwhile, Washington is paying particular attention to the situation in Nigeria, where the escalation of violence, for over more than a year, has been linked to the Boko Haram insurrection and the incapacity of the central State to deal with it. It is important to note that Nigeria is a strategic partner for Washington (Pigné, 2015) and that the "Rewards for Justice" programme, launched by

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[6] For more information on Exercise Flintlock.

[7] TSCTP involves 10 countries: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso, Senegal, and Nigeria. For a thorough analysis of programmes, see Lesley Anne Warner, *The Trans Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership, Building Partner Capacity to Counter Terrorism and Violent Extremism*, CNA Corporation, March 2014.

[8] Generally, the people we interviewed during our research that come from the security sector (namely the Pentagon, the secret service) pride themselves on American skills in counterterrorism and military capabilities.

the United States in 2013 (reward for information leading to the capture of terrorists) primarily target Boko Haram members (BBC News, 2013)[9]. Recent events in the country (most notably the abduction of more than two hundred young girls in April 2014), and the discourse of certain heads of state (BBC News, 2014) have contributed to reinforcing the narrative of the global war on terror.

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACHES[10] : U.S. AND EU STRATEGIES IN CONTEXT, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION

Different perceptions of the problem

The question of the interaction and cooperation between the United States and the European Union in the Sahel is too rarely raised. In order to better understand the challenges of cooperation between Brussels and Washington, it is necessary to compare their respective approaches[11] to determine the degree to which U.S. "smart power" enables better cooperation with other partners.

To begin, American and European perceptions of the Sahel, and the ensuing strategies, oppose each other for historical reasons and due to the role that these actors play on the international stage. The United States has turned the fight against international terrorism into a frontal war, all too often far-removed from the realities and dynamics on the terrain. Driven by its role as the world's greatest power, it unintentionally enabled the development of a paradigm of war on terror with serious consequences even today, particularly by combining counter-insurrection and counterterrorism. As for the European Union, it struggles to emerge as a powerful actor on the political level, and seems to have great difficulty in overcoming its image of development cooperation actor. In the context of a changing world, where new powers are emerging, it seems vital to reflect on the role of the United States and the European Union in a region in turmoil, and on the challenges involved in better structuring the two policies. In other words, how can their comparative advantages be of benefit to interdisciplinary and inclusive approaches, henceforth known as comprehensive approaches?

In spite of different historical trajectories, the security problem in Africa has raised concerns on both sides of the Atlantic, as seen by the different summits on the matter (the Elysée Summit in December 2013, the EU-Africa Summit in Brussels in April 2014, and the U.S.-Africa Summit in Washington in August 2014). However, beyond these shared concerns, the role of each must be analysed with regard to the historical baggage of the actors concerned.

Intercultural dialogue as an avenue for reflection on the security issue

The question of intercultural dialogue and the role of civil society represent a dimension that could be better explored and put to use within the fight against violent extremism. It is, however, a central avenue for reflection in the effort towards greater balance between hard and soft power that is required to implement a comprehensive approach. As Aomar Baghzouz states, there are human and

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[9] The United States also added Boko Haram to their list of terrorist organisations.

[10] Major General (Ret.) de Langlois (dir.) M., October 2014, « Approche globale et Union européenne: le cas de la Corne de l'Afrique », *Études de l'IRSEM no. 35*.

[11] On the EU approach, see the thorough analysis of Rouppert B., August 14, 2014, "The European concept of 'comprehensive approach' challenged by the Sahelian crisis", GRIP, Analysis note.

cultural challenges between the two shores of the Mediterranean, and mutual needs between peoples. For him, the crisis in the Sahel, like the Arab Spring, should have been the occasion to develop cooperation between European and African actors. Moreover, "the Maghreb and Europe are sentenced by History, geography, security challenges and development, to a common future" (Baghzouz, 2013 : 173-192). Transnational threats must resonate and a solution needs to be found outside the usual circuits and formats, as threat is constantly evolving, and is even hybrid. In addressing this problem, the role of civil society should be highlighted on both sides of the Mediterranean. Europeans, and especially the former colonial powers, believe that a shared history binds populations and States together. However, the challenge is to discover how to use these historical relationships in a beneficial way. In 2003, the EU declared that stability in Europe was directly impacted by what goes on beyond its borders (European Security Strategy, 2003). Still, this aspect fails to materialise in the EU security and development strategy in the Sahel. Whereas history and the proximity of peoples can be a positive lever for action in the security area, the two terms of President G. W. Bush only served to widen the gap between East and West. The fact that Europe is assimilated to the West by those that fight the United States should be an opportunity for greater implication in the dialogue between peoples and to prevent a clash of civilisations to form in the collective mind, which would benefit ideologists and terrorists, laying the foundations for international terrorism.

"Fragile and failed states": two different perceptions?

The objective here is not to provide a fresh review of an abundant literature that constantly fuels debates, considerably more in the English-speaking environment than in the French-speaking one, on the links between fragility, even failure, of a State and the emergence of grey areas conducive to terrorism. This type of concept, extremely prominent in the idea that U.S. authorities have of Africa, did not follow the same trajectory in Europe. Nevertheless, as François Gaulme notes, "the decade that just ended saw the gradual rise of the theme of "fragile states" on the international stage" (Gaulme, 2010 : 729-740) and "consequently, the concept is deeply rooted in Western security discourse" (EUISS, 2008). Highlighting this conceptual debate is key, for it reveals, from different perspectives, the manner in which international actors perceive a situation on the ground and the means through which they see fit to intervene.

On the European level, in 2007 the European Commission adopted the expression "*situations of fragility*" to replace an earlier definition that appeared in the EU security strategy (2003), and which met with strong disapproval and rejection from African actors[12]. Thus, the European Union, like other institutions (IMF, the World Bank), has gradually given a wider and interdisciplinary scope to the notion of fragility, unlike the English-speaking milieu (with the United States at the forefront), that continues to refer to "failed States", a considerably more pejorative expression. The concept of a fragile State is all the more interesting in that it was adopted by specialists and practitioners of development with the aim of establishing links between fragilities and conflicts, and providing adequate solutions to these situations. Certain analysts, however, consider that the definition given

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[12] Three factors led the African Union to prefer the definition of "situations of fragility" to "fragile States": 1) categorisation and criminalisation of African States based on Western concepts after September 11, 2001; 2) context of justification of Western interventionism; 3) difficulty in attracting foreign investment in a situation considered unfavourable under the label of fragile states, *op. cit*. p. 4.

to human security may be inconsistent, even dangerous, as it makes a distinction between State security and human security. What is being singled out here is the risk of the "securitization of development" (Gaulme, 2010) that would cause security issues to be swallowed up by those relating to development (DCAF/UNOG, 2004).

Capacities for countering violent extremism – Development serving security

The United States, France and the European Union have, under different circumstances, imposed a "liberal peace", that aimed to promote socio-economic and political regimes, which sometimes did not correspond to the reality of the countries concerned. Whether it was out of lack of strategic vision, negligence or for other reasons, the result was often the same: political failure with serious consequences for local actors. For the European Union, the issue comes down to a matter of consistency (Helly, 2010). Conditionality policies, incentives to democracy and good governance (following a counterproductive decade of structural adjustment policies) had dramatic consequences (Moyo, 2007) on the economic and political development of the States concerned. These doctrines were implemented in regions in Africa where the political landscape was fragile (decolonisation period, followed by military dictatorship). Conditionality, that disregarded local socio-cultural and political realities, was as counterproductive as the U.S. security approach during the global war on terror. These failures resulted in a rekindling of anti-Western discourse, accusing Western peoples of being neo-colonialists and imperialists.

The role of USAID: the spearhead of the American comprehensive approach?

Ever since President Obama's election, the *United States Agency for International Development* (USAID) has been at the core of the American inter-agency system in the Sahel[13]. Its role is to contribute, through development policies, to the eradication of violent extremism and insurrection (approximately 50 million dollars per annum since 2008). Although the two phenomena are different, USAID includes them both in its strategic thinking. The agency has developed a categorisation of the different factors that contribute to violent extremism. This stratification seems to draw inspiration from the conceptual debate on the fragility and failure of States. USAID identifies five types of *push factors*: 1) insufficiently governed or ungoverned spaces, 2) marginalisation and exclusion of populations, 3) government repression and violation of human rights, 4) endemic corruption and impunity of the elites, 5) the sense of persecution linked to cultural affiliation (in this precise case, the perception of a plot against Islam) (USAID, 2011). As far as *pull factors* are concerned, these are factors that pull individuals into violence; access to material resources, recognition and respect by peers, self-esteem, etc. are all *pull factors*. USAID has developed a certain number of tools in order to assess the mechanisms of violent extremism, in particular "The guide to the drivers of violent extremism" in 2009. Finally, it implements programmes designed to fight violent extremism, "Counter Violence Extremism Programs" (CVE), symbols of the cooperation between the various structures of the government, within which strategic research plays an important role. It is important to note that these steps and platforms for dialogue are part of the development objectives in the

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[13] Since 2008, budgets, which are essentially distributed between the Pentagon, the Department of State and USAID, were significantly increased for the latter two actors. During the early years of TSCTP, the trend was the opposite, with the Department of Defense being heavily favoured in the allocation of the budget. See Pigné J., January 2015, "Stratégie américaine au Sahel; entre héritage historique et enjeux stratégiques", in *Policy Brief*, German Marshall Funds, GMF.

world serving the U.S. national security strategy. For Washington, the role played by USAID and, more generally, by civilian bodies of the U.S. government (the Department of State) confirms the principle of complementary roles that civilian and military action can play. AFRICOM is a good example of this principle. For François Gaulme, it is a question of "consolidating the development aspect of U.S. security action" (Gaulme, 2010). Whereas the African Union deplored Western reflections on development and the security issue over the past decade, it would be particularly interesting to reflect on the consequences of U.S. programmes in the Sahel.

Unyielding EU dogma: development budgets will not be allocated to security

At a time when the European Union still sorely lacks coordination between its various structures and expertise in terms of security and counter-radicalisation issues, what are the results of its comprehensive approach in the Sahel? After years of equivocation (since the mid-1990s) over how to structure the security/development link in political governance in Africa, the EU eventually implemented a security and development strategy[14] for the Sahel, advocating an interdisciplinary, multi-sector and comprehensive approach (approximately 600 million euros for the initial 2011-2014 phase). The four pillars of its strategy[15] revolve around two major instruments, namely the European Development Fund (EDF) and the Stability Instrument, which has recently become the Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (ICSP), designed to provide support in issues linked to conflict prevention and strengthen the political mandate of Brussels through EEAS[16]. Added to these are the humanitarian emergency and development budgets (namely through the Global Alliance for Resilience, AGIR), that the EU provides for its partners (over 900 million euro between 2008 and 2013 for Mali alone) (Rouppert, Tisseron, 2013 : 85-86). One thing is certain: Brussels bears the burden of its past as an actor in development aid to such an extent that behind its declared intentions, the attempts to produce a real policy that would connect security and development remain feeble, even ineffective[17]. The budgets earmarked for security (under the security, rule of law and countering violent extremism programme) are considerably less substantial than those allocated to governance and development (EEAS, 2012). Moreover, the EU seems resigned not to use the resources of the European Development Fund for security cooperation. However, it would seem that a true comprehensive approach would require that budget allocation be rebalanced between development programmes and security and conflict-prevention programmes.

The difficulty of assessing programmes on the ground

It is obvious that one of the causes of the failure, if only partial, of comprehensive approaches lies in the incapacity of the actors concerned to accurately assess the impact of their programmes on the terrain. In 2010, USAID held a conference on this assessment issue (USAID, 2010) that, despite a certain number of recommendations, does not seem to have enabled more consistency in the field.

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[14] More than three years after establishing its strategy, the EU has not yet drawn up its road map to render these field programmes operational.

[15] The pillars are: 1) development, governance, management of internal conflicts; 2) political and diplomatic action; 3) rule of law and security; 4) countering violent extremism and terrorism.

[16] 750 million euros will be allocated, between 2014 and 2016, by Brussels under the 11th EDF, to the African Peace Facility (APF), of which approximately 50 million euros are earmarked for strengthening the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) of the African Union.

[17] Approximately three quarters of the Sahel strategy budgets come from the EDF and are allocated to development programmes, not security ones.

Ever since, other reports have been published having no significant impact on the strategy implemented (AMEX International & QED Group, 2011). As for the European Union, some denounce the rules dictated by financial instruments, together with a lack of political-strategic vision[18]. In terms of local presence and appropriation, the challenges are major and the establishment of evaluation and monitoring mechanisms, designed in close cooperation with the actors that benefit from the aforementioned programmes, seems necessary. Finally, as long as the strategies of external actors (called comprehensive approaches) are not modelled on the needs and realities of the populations on the ground, they will remain but wishful thinking that cannot match the funds committed in terms of scope.

CONCLUSION

This analysis enables us to draw a number of lessons on the evolution of the positioning of the United States in a region that has gradually gained in importance. Beyond a military paradigm that still characterises American commitment on terrorism issues, the desire of the United States to balance its action between *hard* and *soft power* programmes is a significant development. Its indirect, light approach is characterised by the desire to develop partnerships with countries in the region (Algeria and Morocco to a lesser extent for the Maghreb, and Mali for the Sahel) and to build institutional capacities of partner countries. Despite over a decade of commitment to the sub-region (2002 with PSI), the events that have destabilised the Sahel over the last years (Mali, Libya, Nigeria) perfectly illustrate the limitations of the U.S. comprehensive and indirect approach that failed to anticipate or adapt to a fragile situation.

The European Union, which has also recently begun to test the comprehensive approach (2011 in the Sahel), seems to struggle with its capacity to act before crises. Mired in its historical role of fund provider and actor in cooperation, the EU remains incapable of creating the right balance between development imperatives and security needs.

Both approaches share several common points despite having been created and developed in fundamentally different circumstances. Both actors want to make conflict prevention an important pillar of their strategy by reinforcing capacities (in various sectors) of Sahelian partners. Historically, the fight against corruption, a weak state and bad governance are strong anchors (if not dogmas) at the core of the European and U.S. discourse and systems. Inconsistencies due to democratic obligations were not sufficient to reposition their approach, excessively relying on a universal dimension of the Western model of governance. Nonetheless, it is difficult to see signs of improvement in the political behaviour of States in the Sahel. Brussels and Washington also have in common suffocating bureaucracy that causes severe lack of coordination and monitoring/assessment of their programmes, making their comprehensive approach a thorny process. In addition, the two international powers do not seem inclined towards further cooperation in the near future.

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[18] Interviews, Brussels, spring 2014.

Cooperation could, nevertheless, be a wise option, considering the comparative advantages of the two protagonists (military capacities for one and funding capacities for the other).[19] It is certainly at the level of bilateral cooperation that things can change at a time when France, Germany and Spain, to name but a few, are clearly engaged on this theatre and concerned about its stability. Lastly, the debate should certainly not be confined to the interaction between the two major players, the EU and the United States. In the context of the growing and vital role of civil societies in the Sahel, as well as debates on human security, the solution is to be found within the sub-region itself. This assumption cannot be transposed to reality unless each actor contributes, so that endogenous initiatives that are in line with the dynamics specific to the Sahelian terrain can be formed.

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[19] During interviews in Washington in spring 2013, on the question of cooperation between Washington and Brussels, we sensed a lack of interest in Brussels on the part of American interlocutors. However, given the budget and financial constraint of most of the actors present today in the Sahel, both sides may come to realise that the mutual need is real.

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■ AFRICAN REACTIONS TO U.S. COUNTER-TERRORISM POLICIES: KENYA, FROM RELUCTANCE TO RESOLVE

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For nearly two decades, United States foreign policy goals in sub-Saharan Africa have included counter-terrorism and democracy promotion. The assumption among many policymakers has been that these priorities complement one another. Fighting terrorism and similar threats creates the stability that is necessary for democracy to thrive, while establishing participatory institutions reduces the chances that dissidents will resort to violence. Thus, it is reasoned, the two goals go hand in hand. But recent experience around the globe shows that counter-terrorism and democracy promotion are often at odds with one another. In places such as Egypt, Gaza, and Pakistan, democratic elections have empowered parties with ties to extremist groups. Meanwhile, aggressive counter-terrorism programs have undermined civil liberties and strengthened authoritarian leaders in countries such as Uganda, Malaysia, and Algeria, among others. Given the primacy of U.S. security concerns, counter-terrorism nearly always takes precedence over efforts to promote democracy.

The tension between promoting democracy and fighting terrorism is especially pronounced in transitional democracies, where the outcome of both processes is highly uncertain. Among the countries in which the United States has faced particular challenges navigating the relationship between these foreign policy goals is Kenya, a long-time ally in East Africa. In 2002, after years of domestic and international pressure, including from the United States, Kenya experienced a transition from one party to another through democratic elections. Just five years later, a controversial vote led to political violence in which roughly 1,300 people died. The 2013 election was peaceful, but raised eyebrows when it brought to power people accused of organizing the earlier violence. As the roller coaster that is political liberalization in Kenya has continued, the country has experienced various incidents of terrorism. The most well-known were the 1998 destruction of the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, the 2002 bombing of an Israeli-owned hotel near Mombasa, and the 2013 attack on the Westgate shopping mall, though there have been lower-profile attacks throughout this period as well. In Kenya, therefore, the United States has faced an ongoing dilemma of how to fight the terrorist threat without undermining fledgling democratic institutions.

In this political context, as explored in this chapter, counter-terrorism cooperation between the governments of Kenya and the United States has been complicated at best. From the beginning of the U.S. war on terror, Kenya was a reluctant partner. It cooperated extensively with the United States behind the scenes, especially on border control and intelligence sharing, but resisted American pressure in more publicized areas, especially those involving domestic legislation. In recent years, however, security concerns and domestic political factors have increased the Kenyan government's resolve to fight militant extremists in the East African region, particularly Somalia's al-Shabaab. Ironically, this shift has come at a time when the United States is more reticent to cooperate with Kenya, in part because of pending International Criminal Court (ICC) charges against the current leadership for human rights violations. Once again, tension has emerged between two major U.S. foreign policy goals in Africa. The way in which this tension is addressed in Kenya has

important implications for other transitional democracies in the region and elsewhere around the globe.

A RELUCTANT PARTNER

In the years following the 9/11 attacks, as the Bush administration pursued its global war on terror, Kenya's government took a cautious approach (Whitaker, 2008 : 254-271). On one hand, security officials participated actively in U.S. initiatives designed to improve Kenya's capacity to identify terrorist cells, investigate incidents, and coordinate law enforcement efforts. As the primary beneficiary of the United States' $100 million East African Counterterrorism Initiative (EACTI) launched in 2003 (which later evolved into the East African Regional Strategic Initiative), the Kenyan government established the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit (2003), the Joint Terrorism Task Force (2004, though it was disbanded after a year), the National Counter-Terrorism Centre (2004), and the National Security Advisory Committee (2004). With additional training and financing from the United States, Kenyan officials also upgraded security measures at airports and border crossings. These initiatives were coordinated mainly out of the president's office with little opportunity for public scrutiny, though they were not without criticism from civil society groups. U.S.-Kenyan counterterrorism cooperation reportedly resulted in some successes, with officials claiming to have thwarted several terrorist plots.

In areas that were more visible, on the other hand, Kenyan collaboration was less certain. Several issues emerged as key points of contention between the two countries. Most notable was the lengthy debate over a proposed anti-terrorism bill. In the wake of 9/11, the United States actively lobbied Kenya and other countries to pass legislation criminalizing terrorist activity and imposing stiff penalties for violations (Whitaker, 2007 : 1017-1032). In 2003, the newly-elected government of President Mwai Kibaki introduced an anti-terrorism bill that was promptly criticized by human rights groups for violating civil liberties and targeting Muslim populations. The bill included a provision, for example, that would have allowed police to arrest people for wearing certain types of clothing. Critics accused the government of bowing to U.S. pressure, and the measure was eventually withdrawn for revision. A new bill published in 2006 included better civil liberties protections, even according to earlier critics, but opponents blocked it anyway due in part to its association with the United States. The controversial 2007 election and the subsequent creation of a power-sharing government eliminated any chance of parliament passing counter-terrorism legislation during Kibaki's remaining time in office.

Tensions between the United States and Kenya over anti-terrorism legislation were exacerbated by several other issues. Kenyans criticized the U.S. for failing to adequately compensate victims of the 1998 embassy bombing, especially after seeing the comparatively huge sums of money paid to 9/11 victims. Many Kenyans were angered by a series of travel warnings issued by the U.S. Department of State starting in 2002. Although the wording fluctuated over time—ranging from advising Americans to be vigilant to discouraging non-essential travel—Kenyans saw any warning on travel to the country as undermining their vital tourism industry. Kibaki breached protocol by mentioning the issue at a White House state dinner in his honor in 2003. Although U.S. officials denied any *quid pro quo*, Kenyans believed that the travel warning would only be lifted with the passage of anti-terrorism legislation. Kenyan leaders also were under U.S. pressure to sign an Article 98 bilateral immunity

agreement to protect American citizens from prosecution before the ICC. Although not directly related to the war on terror, Kenya's refusal was caught up in the other points of contention. Lastly, Kenya criticized U.S. policy in Somalia during this period, particularly its decision to back an alliance of warlords instead of the weak transitional government against the rise of an Islamist movement. Kenyan officials felt slighted when they were excluded from a U.S.-organized contact group on Somalia, though they were subsequently asked to join.

Despite behind-the-scenes cooperation on security operations and intelligence sharing, therefore, "the willingness of Kenyans to assist the United States… [was] by no means assured." (Barkan, 2004 : 87-100). Kenyan reluctance to cooperate more publicly was due in part to the country's shaky transition to democracy, which itself was promoted by the United States. Having finally emerged from authoritarian rule in 2002, Kenyans were wary of increasing government surveillance powers and strengthening security institutions. The democratic transition ushered in a new era of optimism in which Kenyans felt empowered to stand up to external pressure and determine their own interests. The Kenyan parliament also developed a greater degree of independence, making it impossible for the executive branch to simply ram through policy proposals. In this new context, Kenyan politicians found it popular to stand up to the United States on issues such as the anti-terrorism bill and Article 98.

Democratization also led to the mobilization of Kenyan Muslims, who represent about 15 percent of the population (though that number is fiercely debated). Their historic economic and political marginalization started to change with the return to multiparty competition in the 1990s, when presidential candidates were required to win at least 25 percent of the vote in five of the country's eight provinces (subsequently changed with the 2010 constitution to winning at least 25 percent in 24 of the country's 47 counties). Highly concentrated in two provinces, Muslims suddenly found themselves being wooed by presidential candidates and party leaders in their competition for power. Until recently, as discussed below, there was little evidence that Islamic radicalism had gained much support in Kenya. Even so, along with human rights organizations and other groups, Kenyan Muslims strongly opposed provisions of the anti-terrorism bill that were seen as explicitly targeting them (by allowing police to detain people who wore certain types of clothing, for example).

Finally, many Kenyans were reluctant to cooperate in the U.S. war on terror because they saw terrorism largely as an American (and Israeli) problem playing out on African soil. In a 2006 survey of 420 Kenyans, 73 percent of respondents said that Kenya had been a victim of terrorism because of its friendship with the United States (Whitaker, 2008). Senior government officials interviewed around that time expressed similar views that Kenya itself was not a terrorist target; instead, its citizens were collateral damage in the struggle between the U.S. and al-Qaeda. By cooperating more closely with the United States, some reasoned, Kenya was even more likely to be targeted. In addition, most average Kenyans were far more worried about the daily insecurities they faced from theft and crime than the possibility of another terrorist attack. In criticizing the United States war on terror, of course, many Kenyans were not alone; they found allies in Europe and elsewhere in Africa (especially South Africa) who questioned the heavy-handed approach of the Bush administration.

Interestingly, in contrast to Kenya, less democratic countries in East Africa were more willing to go along with U.S. counterterrorism efforts (Whitaker, 2010 : 639-662). Cooperation has been especially high with Uganda, which passed wide-ranging anti-terrorism legislation in 2002, joined the "coalition

of the willing" to invade Iraq in 2003, and sent troops for the U.S.-funded African Union (AU) mission to support the weak Somali government against Islamist insurgents in 2007. In power since 1986, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni re-framed long-standing domestic conflicts in the language of the war on terror and used anti-terrorism measures against political opponents. Tanzania also pushed through counterterrorism legislation quickly after 9/11 and worked closely with U.S. security officials, though these policies generated scattered protests. In 2003, for example, activists organized a large demonstration against American involvement in the arrest of two Muslim leaders. Of the three countries in East Africa, though, Kenya was most cautious about cooperating with the U.S. war on terror.

COUNTER-TERRORISM AS A PRIORITY

In recent years, Kenya's approach to terrorism has changed dramatically. Instead of being pushed largely from outside, counter-terrorism has emerged as a top priority of the Kenyan government, first under Kibaki and since 2013 under President Uhuru Kenyatta. The most obvious indication of this change was the decision in late 2011 to launch Operation *Linda Nchi* (Protect the Country). On October 16 of that year, the government sent Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) troops into Somalia to fight against al-Shabaab, an al-Qaeda-affiliated group that had taken control over much of the country. U.S. officials knew Kenya had been considering such a move for a while, but they had been critical in the past and were not consulted at the time. Mixed messages from members of the weak Somali government also raised questions about whether it was consulted. Regardless, international actors quickly got on board with the Kenyan operation and, in June 2012, the 4,000-strong KDF force was formally incorporated into the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which already included troops from Uganda and Burundi. By 2013, al-Shabaab was forced out of most major towns in Somalia, but continued to control many rural areas.

The invasion of Somalia was followed by other signs of increased Kenyan resolve to fight terrorism. After nearly a decade of heated debate, lawmakers finally passed the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012, which imposed stiff criminal penalties for participating in terrorist attacks or assisting others to do so, made it easier to disrupt terrorist financing, and allowed suspects to be turned over to other countries for trial. In contrast to earlier attempts, the government was more strategic about getting counter-terrorism legislation passed and Kenyan Muslims were more divided. The Association of Muslim Organizations in Kenya came out in support of the bill soon after it was introduced in July 2012, while the Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims and the Kenya Council of Imans called for a longer period of public debate (initially just four days). In response to concerns, the government allowed amendments to the bill in September, facilitating its passage in early October. In the context of a power-sharing government that was divided on many issues, the swift passage of this legislation was noteworthy.

Recently, Kenyan authorities also have taken a more aggressive approach to going after terrorism suspects within the country. The Anti-Terrorism Police Unit (ATPU) has been especially active in Muslim areas along the Kenyan coast, where they have arrested hundreds of people. Some have been released for lack of evidence, while others have been detained and tried. A number of terrorism suspects have disappeared or been killed, with human rights reports blaming the ATPU for such incidents (Horowitz, 2014). Since 2012, three high-profile Muslim clerics with alleged links to al-

Shabaab have been assassinated in Mombasa under questionable circumstances. The government's denial of responsibility seems to contradict statements such as this one from an active ATPU officer: "The justice system in Kenya is not favourable to the work of the police. So we opt to eliminate them. We identify you, we gun you down in front of your family, and we begin with the leaders" (BBC News, 2013). In early 2014, the Kenyan government ordered all urban refugees to go to camps in Dadaab and Kakuma and rounded up roughly 4,000 Somalis in Nairobi and Mombasa. As reports increased of police harassing ethnic Somalis, including many Kenyan citizens (Human Rights Watch, 2013) legitimate concerns emerged that the government's heavy-handed approach would "push its Muslim citizenry into the arms of the extremists" (Hidalgo, 2014), increasing the power of al-Shabaab instead of undermining it.

After years of denying counter-terrorism as a top priority, why did Kenya change its tune? The most obvious reason is that the threat of terrorism increased. The immediate trigger for the 2011 intervention in Somalia was a series of kidnappings of tourists and aid workers in September and October that hit the tourism industry hard and undermined relief efforts in Dadaab refugee camp. Al-Shabaab promised retaliation. Since then, the September 2013 attack on Nairobi's Westgate Mall and a wave of smaller bombings have killed hundreds of people. Unlike earlier terrorist incidents in the country, which were widely seen as targeting western interests, these have shown that Kenya itself is a prime target. In 2011 and 2012, most attacks were in poor and/or remote areas, and many were on police posts, creating a false sense of security among the broader population. For middle class Kenyans, though, the brazen assault on the Westgate Mall was a wake-up call. Although the mall was frequented by expatriates, and foreigners were among the victims, its core clientele was the growing Kenyan middle class that drives the largest economy in East Africa. In this sense, 9/21 was Kenya's 9/11.

Government officials claim that recent policies are driven by the need to protect Kenya's security, which is clearly threatened, though observers have noted other possible explanations (Miyandazi, 2012). The domestic political context cannot be ignored. The 2011 invasion of Somalia came just a year before expected elections (though they were not held until March 2013). At the time, the power-sharing government included a lame duck President Kibaki, who was seen as having rigged re-election in 2007, and a controversial Prime Minister Raila Odinga, who probably won that election and was the frontrunner for the next vote. The Somali invasion provided a divided government with the opportunity to show united resolve in addressing security problems in the northeast, including a Somali refugee population that had surged to nearly 500,000 people. After the 2013 election, controversy continued given the ICC cases pending against both President Kenyatta and Deputy President William Ruto for alleged involvement in earlier political violence, as discussed further below. In this context, especially after the Westgate Mall attack, Kenya's fight against terrorism diverted domestic and international attention away from the court cases and allowed Kenyatta to appear strong and rally support behind the cause of national security.

Interestingly, the 2011 invasion of Somalia in particular also reflected the growing political importance of a number of ethnic Somali Kenyans within the Kenyan government. Senior politicians and military and intelligence officials from that community were among those promoting the creation of a buffer zone, sometimes called "Jubaland," between al-Shabaab-controlled areas of Somalia and Kenya. Kenyan officials pursued alliances with various armed groups in Somalia, drawing themselves into complicated clan and sub-clan rivalries, and divisions emerged among Somali Kenyan elites. As a result, Kenya's Somali partners "are as likely to fight one another as they are to take on

Shabaab" (Menkhaus, 2012). Critics also worried that an autonomous Jubaland government dominated by the Ogaden clan would raise suspicions in Somalia and Ethiopia, and U.S. officials were concerned that it would rally other clans behind al-Shabaab (International Crisis Group, 2012). Many Kenyans still believe this plan was a central goal of the Somalia invasion.

Finally, there is speculation that Kenya's recent approach to counter-terrorism is an effort to project greater military power within the region. Despite the importance of its economy, Kenya's military has not been seen as a threat to neighboring countries. Ethiopia's strong army flexed its muscle with the 2006 invasion and subsequent occupation of Somalia, prompting a backlash due to longstanding rivalries between those two countries. With troops that were recently trained and equipped for counter-terrorism operations by the United States, Kenya may have calculated that it was a good time to use its new focus to shape the future of the region. Rumors also have circulated that Kenya's recent assertiveness is motivated by oil, which has been discovered near Lake Turkana, while exploration continues along the coast. Plans are underway for the construction of a pipeline that would bring oil from inland Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan to a port near Lamu, some 400 miles from Somalia, but continued insecurity in the region threatens those efforts.

By early 2014, there was growing debate within Kenya about the approach and effectiveness of government counter-terrorism policies. In addition to the concerns expressed by human rights activists and Muslim leaders over the harsh crackdown on ethnic Somalis and others, there were increasing calls for Kenya to pull its troops out of Somalia. Responding to public frustration over frequent al-Shabaab attacks, members of parliament became more vocal in their criticism. Among those requesting a timetable for withdrawal was the foreign affairs minister at the time of the 2011 invasion, Moses Wetangula, who was now minority leader in the new Kenyan Senate, but ruling party members were also among the critics. Despite such calls, Kenyan cabinet officials staunchly defended government policies and argued that withdrawing troops from Somalia would give al-Shabaab a victory that could ultimately destabilize the entire region. Supporters agreed that pulling out before al-Shabaab was defeated would do little to increase Kenyan security (Ramah Salad 2014). As a healthy domestic debate continued, the Kenyan government showed few signs of backing down from its recent approach to counter-terrorism.

THE TABLES TURN

Ironically, just as Kenya has become more determined to fight terrorism, the United States has grown cautious about its partnership with the Kenyan government. Most of this goes back to the controversial December 2007 presidential election and the violence that followed. Prior to the election, polls showed a tight race between incumbent Mwai Kibaki and his ally-turned-opponent Raila Odinga. In the context of Kenya's complicated ethnic politics, each man drew support from a carefully-constructed ethnic coalition. Balloting went smoothly, but there were irregularities and delays during vote counting. The electoral commission initially announced results from individual polling stations, which showed Odinga with early lead, but then went silent for more than 24 hours, emerging only to declare that Kibaki had won re-election. The controversial announcement and prompt inauguration of the president for a second term sparked political violence between supporters of both sides. Due to a complicated history of relations among groups that included longstanding grievances over land, the violence soon took on an ethnic dimension. By the time Kibaki

and Odinga agreed to an internationally-brokered power-sharing agreement at the end of February 2008, more than 1,300 Kenyans had been killed and 300,000 displaced.

Even as the United States continued its counter-terrorism cooperation with Kenya during Kibaki's term, American officials joined international calls for the Kenyan government to hold organizers accountable for the post-election violence. The alleged ringleaders included several senior politicians and prominent media personalities. Political wrangling and foot-dragging soon made it clear that the divided government would be unable (or at least unwilling) to prosecute its own, prompting former United Nations Secretary General Koffi Annan to turn over to the International Criminal Court evidence he had collected against several high-profile individuals. The ICC eventually indicted six people (conveniently three from each side of the 2007-2008 political divide), including two politicians who were not shy about their plans to run for president in the future. William Ruto allegedly had mobilized members of his own Kalenjin ethnic group to attack Kikuyu living in the Rift Valley, and Uhuru Kenyatta was accused of funding Kikuyu reprisals against the Kalenjin during the post-election period.

As the ICC proceeded with the painstakingly slow process of investigating and prosecuting these cases, the political environment took an interesting twist in the lead-up to the 2013 elections. Just before the coalition formation deadline in December 2012, Kenyatta and Ruto joined forces and agreed to run on the same ticket as candidates for president and deputy president respectively. Their alliance was hardly an indication that longstanding issues between their communities had been resolved; rather, it reflected the need to put together an ethnic coalition that would defeat the one assembled by their main rival, Raila Odinga. On the campaign trail, Odinga and his running mate highlighted the fact that their opponents both faced international criminal charges for their alleged involvement in the post-election violence. Meanwhile, Kenyatta and Ruto spun the situation differently, arguing against western interference in sovereign domestic matters and portraying themselves as opponents of neo-colonialism. After a tight race in the final months of the campaign, Kenyatta managed to win just enough of the vote (50.07 percent) in the March 2013 election to avoid a run-off under the new majority electoral system established by the 2010 constitution. Odinga briefly challenged but then accepted the results.

Not surprisingly, the election of Kenyatta and Ruto immediately complicated matters for the ICC prosecutor. With the accused now in charge of the Kenyan government, several witnesses recanted their stories or refused to testify. The president and deputy president repeatedly sought delays or dismissals given their governmental responsibilities, and at one point requested for the trials to be held via Skype (a request that was denied). On September 10, 2013, the trial finally opened in the ICC case against Ruto and co-accused Joshua Arap Sang, a Kalenjin-language radio host at the time of the post-election violence. Less than two weeks later, on September 21, the Westgate Mall in Nairobi was attacked; Ruto was granted a one-week adjournment to return home from The Hague to assist with the situation. The trial resumed and was ongoing as of June 2014, with periodic adjournments and delays related in part to the unwillingness of eight prosecution witnesses to testify. Meanwhile, the trial in the case against Kenyatta has now been delayed for a fourth time to allow the defence to provide financial records that the prosecution has reportedly been requesting for more than two years. At the time of writing, the ICC trial against Kenya's sitting president was expected to open in October 2014.

In this complicated political context, the Obama administration has been reluctant to engage the Kenyan government too closely. Although the current president and deputy president were democratically elected, they stand accused of serious human rights violations that undermine their domestic and international legitimacy. The United States does not want to be perceived as backing leaders whose paths to power may have included violence, at least while the ICC cases are still pending. U.S. officials also are wary of mounting accusations against Kenyan security forces of serious human rights abuses in going after terrorist suspects. Even so, especially after the Westgate Mall incident in September 2013, the U.S. may have little choice but to work hand-in-hand with Kenyan officials on counter-terrorism efforts in the region. With al-Shabaab seemingly seeking to establish a foothold within Kenya and KDF forces merged into the U.S.-backed African Union mission in Somalia, the two governments must continue to cooperate despite their differences. For Kenyatta, the fight against terrorism provides a welcome distraction from the ICC cases and an opportunity to improve his international image. For the Obama administration, however, the challenge is to cooperate on counter-terrorism without being seen as legitimizing controversial leaders or undermining the country's nascent democratic institutions.

CONCLUSION

As we have explored in this chapter, the Kenyan case illustrates the difficulties for the United States of cooperating on counter-terrorism with transitional democracies in Africa and elsewhere. Popularly-elected leaders whom the United States backs do not always find public support in going along with American policies and may be reluctant to comply in certain areas. This was the case during President Kibaki's first term in office, when his government worked with American counterparts on policing and intelligence but could not muster public or parliamentary support for counter-terrorism legislation that would increase government surveillance powers, among other areas of contention. When an election is flawed, as with Kenya's in 2007, or brings to power a controversial leader, as in 2013, the United States may be wary of collaborating with its foreign counterparts even when both sides recognize the urgency of counter-terrorism. Just as Kenyan resolve to fight terrorism has increased, due largely to the ongoing threat from al-Shabaab, U.S. officials have been reluctant to cooperate too closely with elected officials who face pending charges before the International Criminal Court. In such situations, the United States must seek a delicate balance between supporting counter-terrorism and promoting democratic processes and procedures.

In many ways, the United States has found it easier to work on counter-terrorism programs with less democratic countries in Africa such as Uganda. With little risk of being removed from power through elections, Uganda's President Museveni has been a strong and predictable partner in the fight against terrorism. This has not come without costs, of course, including the loss of troops in Somalia and the 2010 bombings by al-Shabaab in Kampala that killed 74 people watching a screening of the FIFA World Cup Final. Even so, in a political context where public debate about foreign policy is discouraged, such incidents have seemed only to increase the government's resolve. In contrast, the United States has faced more challenges working with transitional democracies like Kenya, as we have seen, where recently-empowered citizens are especially reluctant to increase government surveillance powers and strengthen security forces. In South Africa in 2002, when memories of apartheid were still fresh in people's minds, the introduction of an anti-terrorism bill sparked a major

backlash among civil society groups, in part because it was promoted by the United States. Not until the bill was revised to include better civil liberties protections and a name change was the Protection of Constitutional Democracy against Terrorist and Related Activities Act of 2004 passed by the South African parliament.

In the end, the challenges of counter-terrorism cooperation with transitional democracies in Africa suggest the need for a more nuanced U.S. approach that recognizes the legitimate concerns of people in partner countries and avoids a reactionary backlash. It is too soon to tell if this is what President Obama meant in a May 2014 speech at West Point, when he warned that the U.S. "must not create more enemies than we take off the battlefield" and proposed a new $5 billion terrorism partnership fund to help other countries fight extremists. If the United States can prioritize democracy as much as it does security in such partnership programs—by genuinely seeking input from affected populations, for example, and by developing a more locally-relevant definition of security—it might be surprised at the level of cooperation it could get on counter-terrorism and other issues. African citizens in transitional democracies generally have the same priorities as Americans, including peace, democracy, and freedom. As they are given the opportunity to assert their own voices in domestic and international politics, it is very possible that the resulting policies of their governments will resemble U.S. preferences, as with the counter-terrorism legislation that eventually passed in South Africa. In this way, such countries could become legitimate full-fledged partners with the United States rather than reluctant ones. Thus, prioritizing democracy over counter-terrorism in the short term may actually contribute to both foreign policy goals down the road.

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U.S. STRATEGY IN AFRICA

This analysis of American strategy in Africa sheds light on the actors, processes and modalities of American military presence in Africa, and particularly focuses on the characteristics and costs of the indirect approach the US tends to adopt. It is based on contributions from academics, experts and military practitioners.

This study highlights the risks stemming from the light footprint concept, particularly in terms of addressing symptoms rather than causes by prioritising short-term effectiveness over long-term objectives, even though threat analysis by the American military has made considerable progress, drawing from the experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan. One of the fundamental questions that this study addresses is the dilemma – indeed, it is not a uniquely American one – between the short-term advantages of counterterrorism operations and the long-term objectives, i.e. resolving the causes of terrorism

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