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ISLAMISM, JIHADISM
AND COUNTER-TERRORISM
FIVE YEARS AFTER 9/11

**Collective report
with contributions by**

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This report is dedicated to the victims of terrorism and Islamist obscurantism; to those who have already fallen, and to those who, sadly, have yet to fall.

EUROPEAN STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY CENTER

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intended only to contribute to a debate on Islamism, jihadism and counter-terrorism**

ISLAMISM AND JIHADISM: TREATING THE DISEASE, NOT JUST THE SYMPTOMS

by Claude Moniquet, Chairman of ESISC

Five years after 11 September 2001, the Western world and especially Europe is still at the stage of treating the symptoms of a mortal illness, and not the disease itself. In other words, the justice system, police, the security and intelligence services are tracking down terrorist cells and fighting jihadism, but paying little or no attention to Islamism, as it gains new ground every day.

The result is that the successes recorded have been mediocre. Hundreds of suspected terrorists have been arrested, dozens of groups have been disbanded and more than thirty terrorist plots, which might have caused thousands of deaths, have been thwarted. That would be grounds for congratulations, naturally, were it not for the fact week after week new arrests are made, and hardly a month goes past without a new conspiracy being uncovered, which shows how the underlying disease is still progressing, and even flourishing. Our security system could be compared to a state which fights malaria by killing mosquitoes one by one instead of draining the marshes where they grow and reproduce.

Beyond the fine words and pious promises repeated over and over by a political class often left trailing behind events, the external signs of the radicalisation of a part of Muslim youth are increasingly visible. This radicalisation, this deadly and totalitarian ideology is Islamism, a new fascism that continues to produce the terrorists of tomorrow. And it is that ideology which is creating the tensions and the feelings of rejection and exclusion which threaten in the long term the balance of our societies and their democratic nature. Failure to understand it will condemn Europe to a sort of decadence that breaks the bonds to Muslim communities and isolates them from the rest of society. Such a weakness would be a threat not only to Europe but also to her allies, including the United States, and for moderate regimes in the Muslim world in transition towards democracy. How can we forget that the September 11 attacks were prepared in Europe? How can we forget that the Libyan Abd al-Rahman al-Faqih moved to Birmingham and partially financed the *Moroccan Armed Islamic Group* (GICM) which carried out the attacks on 16 May 2003 in Casablanca with 43 dead and hundreds injured? And Europe also produced Khaled Azig and Mohammed Reha, the two Islamist lieutenants arrested in Morocco in December 2005 as they were getting ready to set up new terrorist networks.[1]

How can we ignore the fact that Tunisian and Libyan Islamic leaders preach hatred and conspire to overthrow their respective governments in London, or that the *Sanabel*

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[1] See our brief analysis of 27.12.05 on our website www.esisc.eu.

Relief Agency, a source of finance for the Libyan Armed Islamic Group (GICL) under cover of a fake NGO operated in Birmingham?[2]

This European threat is so real that it has become normal for our partners in North Africa to point out that the risk has moved: "*While several years ago it could be said that the threat came from North Africa to Europe, these days the trend has been reversed and the threat now comes from Europe*".

While it is obviously necessary to carry on combating terrorism by any means available to our governments – including, despite what some may thing, special means put in operation by special forces – no real progress is possible until political Islamism is defeated. The jihadist is not born, he is made, by a process that includes attending fundamentalist mosques, prayer meetings and associations, and then political radicalisation.

One clarification needs to be made before going on. We will not be concerned here with "Muslims" – the vast majority of whom, in Europe and elsewhere, aspire only to live in peace and reject violence – but with "Islamists": those who use religion as an instrument for political ends by taking control of Muslim communities and seizing power. For these agitators the manipulation of Muslim communities is essential to bring them into conflict with their host society[3] in the classic dialectic of Us versus Them, a logic of systemic opposition that allows them to "prove" that the *Christian (or infidel) West* seeks to persecute Islam.

I.   The origins of "European" Islamism

In order to get a better idea of the extent of the problem, we have briefly to go back to basic principles.

It is usual to divide the Muslim communities in Europe – which are very largely a product of immigration – into three groups: *first generation*, who arrived as young adults from their country of origin; *second generation* who arrived in Europe mainly as children under policies of reuniting families, and who were at least partly schooled in the host country; and *third generation*, born in Europe and more and more commonly holding the host country's nationality. The members of the first generation are nowadays 55 or over, those of the second generation over 30, and those of the third generation aged under 30. No offence is intended in pointing out that the first generation was made up of courageous men and women (it takes courage to decide to build a new life far away from home) but usually with little education even by the standards of their home

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[2] On the GICL, see the Briefing note by Alain Rodier (in French) *Le Groupe Islamique Combattant Libyen*, CF2R, March 2006, on the website www.cf2r.org.
[3] We are well aware that the notion of "host society" is debatable, seeing as the Muslim population is more and more made up of people from one or other European nation, and often native to Europe. We use this description, then, not in regard to individuals but to the religion: since the Muslim population is a small minority in Europe (about 15 million out of a total of 453 in the EU alone) it seems reasonable to consider Judeo-Christian Europe as the host to the Muslim religion.

country, and sometimes even illiterate. This generation, then, was usually unable to follow their children's education closely. Clearly, the second generation enjoyed an easier life than their parents. In certain cases the difference was a great leap forward: even while cases are relatively rare, it is possible to find professionals, managers and middle and high-level functionaries as well as well-off traders among members of this second generation.

But it was also with the second generation that the problems started, in the 1980s. Two geopolitical phenomena – the Islamic revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan which gave rise to the first global jihad – and two more sociological phenomena (a search for roots by people who found themselves straddling two different worlds, and the frustration caused by social exclusion and racism, both widely present in Europe) came together to bring out new Islamist movements, and Islamist tendencies within existing movements.

Finally, the third generation, part of which grew up at a time of heavy mediatised jihad (in Algeria, Bosnia and Chechnya)[4], which (rightly or wrongly) feels itself excluded and which conflates personal humiliations from its own life experience with "humiliation by proxy"[5], and is now, clearly, the most problematic of the three.

I.A The negative influence of Tabligh and the Muslim Brotherhood

Two rival, sometimes opposing, movements ushered in this change. The *Tabligh Jamaat,* firstly: commonly referred to as *Tabligh* ("the proclamation") it was created in India in the 1920s (before independence and therefore before Partition) under the influence of Muhammad Ilyas Kandhalawi (1885-1944), some of the preacher Muhammad Ismail. Nowadays a Pakistani organisation, it is active in dozens of countries throughout the world. He launched the movement on his return from a pilgrimage to Mecca, inspired he said by a verse from the Third Surat of the Quran: "*Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity*"[6]. The aim of this pietist movement was to "re-Islamise" Muslims who had moved away from religion, because of immigration among other reasons. As soon as possible, when possible, *Tabligh* was to convert non-Muslims to Islam. Popular, missionary, radical but also, in appearance at least, non-political, *Tabligh* opposed the corruption and compromise of "Courtly Islam", largely Saudi, and promoted a religion based on imitation of the acts of the Prophet and his pious companions. Adherents often went so far as to dress in traditional habits.

From a purely practical point of view, the movement increased the number of "wildcat" places of worship and improvised prayer halls, and in the margins of traditional

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[4] A young man who was 12 at the time of the outbreak of the civil war in Algeria would today be 27. A boy of 18 now was 13 on 11 September 2001, and has grown up with the icon of Osama bin Laden.
[5] To better understand humiliation by proxy readers are referred to the work of the Iranian-born French sociologist Farid Khosrokhavar.
[6] Surat III, The Family of Imran, verse 104. Yusuf Ali translation from www.searchtruth.com.

mosques (most often financed by Saudi Arabia) they favoured the development of what was called "*the Islam of cellars and garages*". In other words, a flourishing of small, lightly structured communities who chose their own imams, who were often barely educated. Another characteristic of *Tabligh* is its activity among young people, in particular among the marginal and in prisons. While it is apolitical and pacifist, the actions of *Tabligh* are generally considered as an essential stage, by security and intelligence services, in the creation of politicised and sometimes violent Islamist groups. Among terrorist suspects arrested in Europe since September 2001, many have at one time or another been linked to *Tabligh* and their prayer rooms. It is true that the imitation of the Prophet is one of the bases of Salafism, and that the sectarian functioning of *Tabligh* could be a good preparation for the secret life of clandestinity. We should also note that the global negative influence of *Tabligh* arises from the fact that the organisation, by its doctrine, is a brake on integration, if not an outright barrier.

Then we come to the *Muslim Brotherhood*. The Brotherhood, as we know, was founded in Egypt in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna, a teacher in Ismailia, a city on the Suez Canal. The Brothers were at that time the most senior political movement of Sunni Islamism (a majority within Islam). Like the Saudi Wahhabites, the *Muslim Brothers* organise their doctrine around the central dogma of *Tawhid*, the unity of God. Their ideology and practice were perfectly captured in the first article of their constitution: "*God is our goal, the Prophet is our model, the Quran is our law, jihad is our life and martyrdom our desire*". The Brothers rapidly made their presence felt as one of the main opposition forces, at times purely political, at time violent, in Egypt as well as in other Arab states. As noted by Alain Chouet, former head of security and intelligence at the General Office of External Security in Paris and nowadays a researcher at ESISC: "*From its inception the Brotherhood replicated the systems of extreme right throughout the world, as well as their ways of operating: xenophobia, exclusion, the rejection of any scientific approach, insults and anathemas and physical violence.* "[7].

As the years passed, the *Brotherhood* spread abroad clandestinely, which their Supreme Guide Mustafa Machhur admitted for the first time in 1995: "*We have branches abroad. In London, in Germany and elsewhere in Europe. Every Brotherhood militant who left Egypt formed a branch in another country, with contacts to the central organisation*"[8]. One of the Brotherhood's main thinkers, whose influence on violent Islamism was the greatest, was Sayyid Qutb, a former teacher in Cairo, himself heavily influenced by the Pakistani Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi. Thrown in prison when the organisation was dissolved by Gamal Abdel Nasser on 21 January 1954, Qutb set to developing his thesis. This held that the world was divided into two irreconcilable tendencies, Islam and barbarism (*jahiliya*), and that independent nations arising out of colonialism and corrupted by Western influence were not true Islamic societies.

In parallel with the main Egyptian organisation, another branch of the *Brotherhood* had a profound influence on the international Islamist movement: the one developed in Syria. In the 1970s and 1980s Damascus was faced with a real Islamist insurrection

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[7] Alain Chouet: *The Association of the Muslim Brotherhood: Chronicle of a Barbarism Foretold*, background analysis published by ESISC on 6 April 2006, www.esisc.eu.
[8] Quoted in the *Dictionnaire mondial de l'Islamisme*, Editions Plon, Paris 2002.

fomented by the *Muslim Brotherhood*: more than 300 people were killed in attacks, and on 26 June 1980 Hafez al-Assad himself narrowly escaped death. The regime responded with bloody repression: the massacre of 800-1200 Islamist prisoners at a prison in Palmyre at the end of June 1980, and above all the crushing of a rebellion in the town of Hama in February 1982 (20-30,000 dead, though the exact death toll is to this day unknown).

Following that repression, part of the leadership of the Syrian chapter of the Brotherhood took refuge in West Germany. Under the leadership of Sheikh Issam al-Attar and small and very active organisation named *al-Talia* grew up in Baden Baden and Aachen. This organisation in turn gave rise to local *Brotherhood* bases all over Europe.

Alain Chouet describes the opportunity that this European implantation offered to the Brotherhood, and the strategy that then arose: "*Traditionally placed under the joint – but rather superficial – control of country of origin and host country, these communities proved to be permeable to the populist identity discourse of the Brotherhood, which took majority control of local representations (UOIF in France) in a decade or so. They had three objectives: to prove their capacities for mobilisation to their Saudi sponsors; to constitute a mass for manoeuvre against the regimes in countries of origin; and to make Islam hateful to Westerners in order to preclude any tendency they may have to intervene in the Muslim world*"[9].

In Europe as in the Third World, the Muslim Brotherhood were the driving force behind violent international protests at the publication of caricatures of Muhammad, in February 2006[10].

To end on the argument of Alain Chouet, we note that on a European level, the political agenda of the *Brothers* is simple: fan the fires of communitarianism so as to isolate Muslim communities from the societies in which they live, to allow them to be "taken in hand" by associations close to the movement. Along the way, of course, one of the most important strategic goals of the *Brotherhood* returns to the surface: the imposition of certain aspects of Sharia to the non-Muslim world.

II.   The fields of targeted actions: schools, hospitals, businesses and prisons

Encouraged by *Tabligh*, the *Muslim Brotherhood* and linked associations and movements, various claims or attitudes have appeared in recent years in Europe, mainly focussed on young people and in four distinct fields: in schools, in hospitals, the workplace and in prisons.

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[9] Chouet, op cit.
[10] See our background analysis, Caricatures of Muhammad: the history and consequences of a global manipulation, February 2006, www.esisc.eu.

II.A In schools

The progress of communitarianism and Islamism in schools is shown, in the case of France, by the report of inspector-general Jean Pierre Obin to the ministry of national education in June 2004[11]. Mr Obin's mission visited 61 colleges, high schools and professional schools between January and May 2004, in about 20 French départements.

The report stresses, among other things:

A regression in the feminine condition, shown by[12]:

- a marked decrease in sporting participation by girls;
- a "ban" on skirts and dresses in some establishments;
- widespread adoption of "veils" covering the entire body;
- strict surveillance of girls by their brothers, even younger brothers;
- frequent violence towards girls who refuse to bow to the new "code of conduct": slaps, whippings with belts, beatings etc;
- fraternisation disallowed;
- offensive comments and insults aimed at female teachers.

Growing proselytising, marked by[13]:

- criticisms aimed at teachers and monitors of North African origin by youths attacking them for not fasting or behaving in ways considered "incorrect" according to Islam;
- on the subject of Ramadan, the impossibility in some colleges for "*pupils whose families are from so-called Muslim countries to avoid taking part in the rite, even in cases where the parents explicitly request that their child continue eating in the dining-hall*".

Anti-Semitism and racism[14]:

- *"Insults, threats and aggression [...] on the increase towards Jewish pupils or those presumed to be Jewish, both inside and outside the establishments concerned; these are generally the work of fellow pupils of North African origin";*
- *"Apologies for Hitler and Nazism are not uncommon; this appears overwhelmingly in graffiti, featuring swastikas, and even sometimes in overt statements made to teachers, professors and education staff";*

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[11] Jean Pierer Obin et al, *Les signes et manifestations d'appartenance religieuse dans les établissements scolaires*, National Education Ministry, June 2004. In French.
[12] Jean-Pierre Obin, op cit. pages 10, 12 and 21.
[13] Ibid., p. 20.
[14] Ibid., p. 22 and 23.

- *"We see before our own eyes a horrifying and cruel reality: Jewish children – and they are alone in this – cannot be taught in just any school establishment in France in this day and age".*

Political and religious conflict[15]:

- *"In most of the establishments visited, moments of national remembrance [organised following the attacks of 11 September 2001] were disrupted or disturbed from within, and only sometimes from outside, or could not take place at all, or were diverted from their intended purpose by principals anxious that proceedings might continue in peace";*
- *"Osama bin Laden is in the process of becoming the emblematic figure of a conquering Islam among the young people of our housing estates and thus for a large proportion of our students, who moreover have less and less reticence about expressing their admiration. This is an expression of symbolic vengeance by those whom progress has left behind, and a rejection en bloc of the values of our civilisation".*

Questioning or contesting the content of courses[16]:

- refusing mixed education and protecting the "morals" of girls during sports and physical education;
- repeated certificates allowing girls an exemption from swimming class;
- refusal to study certain writers (Voltaire, Rousseau etc);
- refusal to study certain works considered blasphemous (*Tartuffe* by Molière) or libertine (*Madame Bovary* by Flaubert);
- refusal to consider the sacred texts of other religions, or to allow a non-Muslim teacher to mention the Quran;
- the impossibility in history classes of mentioning certain matters calmly (the Crusades, colonialism, the Holocaust and the Second World War etc);
- the questioning of the theory of evolution by natural selection in science classes;
- rejection of those parts of various courses which touch on reproduction.

In a general way, Jean-Pierre Obin and his colleagues note that the same behaviour patterns showing up in establishments all over the country seems to suggest that *"religious and politico-religious organisations appear to "work" these students often from as early as primary school, together with their families, social contacts and neighbours, and try to turn them against the school, its teachers ('those liars') and the education they serve up"*[17].

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[15] Ibid., p. 23.
[16] Ibid., pp. 24 and 29.
[17] Ibid., p. 30.

Less exhaustive, and sometimes more empirical, studies carried out in other countries have arrived at similar conclusions[18].

II.B In hospital

An important social space because of the movement of people who pass through, because of the issue (health) with which it is concerned, the ethical questions constantly being faced there and the daily confrontation between highly-qualified personnel and "users" of all cultural levels in every condition, the hospital[19] has not escaped being the target of the Islamist offensive.

So, in some European countries, the following have been seen in recent years:

- an increased demand for medical certificates to cover the period of Ramadan and escape school and professional obligations;
- increased demand for certificates to be excused sporting activities within schools;
- increased recourse to the advice of an imam before accepting some kinds of health care;
- a refusal, sometimes with threats or violence, to be treated by a member of the opposite sex;
- refusal to be treated by a Jewish health-care provider;
- refusal (in Great Britain in 2004) by some Muslim interns to treat women or patients suffering from sexually transmitted diseases, which latter are considered a punishment for "depravity";
- refusal by Muslim doctors to practice termination of pregnancy or prescribe contraceptives except in cases of medical necessity;
- impossibility to examine some women except in the presence of the husband, with the man responding in the place of his wife during the consultation;
- refusal to ingest medicines during the period of Ramadan;
- systematic request for "certificates of virginity";
- marked increase in demand for hymeneal reconstruction;
- the requirement to carry out certain surgical procedures through an incision in the abdomen of the female patient if she is a virgin, when another less invasive, less painful and less costly method for the public purse would entail the rupture of the hymen;
- at least one death (in France) following the refusal to consent to a Caesarean section;

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[18] We have ourselves carried out an inquiry of this sort, interviewing several dozen teachers in order to publish one of our works, *Islamisme et jihad en Belgique (Islamism and Jihad in Belgium)*, available (in French only) from Editions Jourdan Leclerq, Brussels 2005.

[19] See in particular the study by Carine Vassart, *Les soins de santé face aux défis de la diversité, le cas des patients musulmans* (Health care and the challenge of diversity: The case of Muslim patients), King Baudouin Foundation, Brussels, August 2005. Available in French and Dutch only. www.kbs-frb.be/code/home.cfm.

- strong pressure on Muslim members of the medical team to accept the behaviour described above.

II.C In the workplace

Excused attention for many years, the workplace is now no longer protected from the Islamist offensive. In a September 2005 report[20], Eric Dénécé notes:

"*The strategy consists of three steps: firth religious proselytising, then the seizure of control of the business by the Muslim community, and finally the questioning of the rules by which it functions, to replace them with Islamic values. The tactic is the same all over. The Islamists formulate a set of demands which may appear legitimate*":

- *the creation of prayer rooms in the workplace*
- *the adoption of daily breaks for religious observance*
- *the organisation of working time at Ramadan or to allow Friday to be a day of rest*
- *respect for dietary restrictions in company catering facilities.*

Several major retail chains as well as car manufacturers have reported an increase in requests for prayer rooms in the workplace, as well as demands from employees wishing to organise their working hours to accommodate the demands of religious observance.

If these initial moves do not provoke the outright opposition of management or other workers, the Islamist then pass on to more overt action and pressures:

- *active religious proselytising in the workplace*
- *the rejection of certain products (wine, pork) in company catering facilities when the majority of the workforce are Muslims*
- *pressure on women to wear the veil*
- *the refusal by some Muslim workers to recognise the authority of their superiors when these are women*
- *the desire for certain Islamic religious holidays to be free*
- *taking control of some recruitment channels within the business[21].*

In the last two years, in France and elsewhere, major companies have been the target of the actions and demands listed above.

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[20] Eric Dénécé, *Le développement de l'Islam fondamentaliste en France : aspects sécuritaires, économiques et sociaux (The growth of fundamentalist Islam in France; security, economic and social aspects)*, Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement (French Centre for Research on Intelligence Matters), September 2005. Available in French only.
[21] Eric Dénécé, op cit., pp 24 and 25.

II.D In prison

For five main reasons, prison is a choice location for Islamist activism:

- the Muslim population is always strongly represented and sometimes even a majority in the prisons of some European countries[22];
- in crisis circumstances as they are, cut off from families and friends, Muslim prisoners are more vulnerable and more easily manipulated by those who explain they are themselves not there because of the crimes they have committed but purely because they are Muslims. Sometimes it is even claimed their crimes are justified, not having been committed on "Islamic territory";
- since 1995 in France and since 2001 in the rest of Europe, hundreds of prisoners accused of terrorist crimes have been inserted into the prison population. Those facing terrorist or similar charges are assigned a certain aura, especially by younger prisoners;
- Muslim clerics are under-represented in prisons, so that while Muslims represent more than half of France's 60,000 prisoners, at June 2005 there were only 69 imams active in prisons, compared to 513 Catholic priests. This situation clearly works to the advantage of extremist prisoners;
- Finally, prison is an easy and fruitful source of recruitment as it places "political" prisoners in contact with common law criminals, allowing the former to make better use of the particular skills, talents and contacts of the latter.

Researcher Jean-Luc Marret notes: "*Radical Islamic proselytising in prisons is not new. The use of prisons for recruitment of new militants and sympathisers has already been considered by far-left and European separatist groups [...] Radical Islamic proselytising really took off in France at the beginning of the 1970s with the entry of Tabligh into the prison system here*"[23].

In all of the environments we have rapidly covered here, it is Muslim youth, mainly of the third generation, that is the target of radical Islamism. This is for various reasons: the third generation is an attractive and easy target because it is easy to "work", as a result of its identity problems, its feeling of being excluded and its relative solidarity with "Muslim victims" the world over. Also because, it seems obvious to point out, it makes more sense to invest in youth than in a second generation that will begin to retire from active life in ten years or so. This is why some organisations (principally *Tabligh* and the *Muslim Brotherhood*) are targeting this third generation.

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[22] In the United Kingdom, the Muslim community represents only 2.5% of the population, but 10% of the carceral population. In France Muslims make up 10% of the population as a whole but Muslim prisoners are a majority in some establishments, with the proportion rising as high as 80%.
[23] Jean-Luc Marret, *Radicalisations et recrutements de l'islamisme radical dans l'Union européenne : l'exemple des prisons (Radicalisation and recruitment by radical Islamism in the European Union: the example of the prisons)*, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, 14 January 2006. www.frstrategie.org/barreCompetences/secuInterieureTerrorisme/20060114.pdf. Only in French.

III.   An ever-present propaganda apparatus

This targeted action, concentrated on clearly identified and delimited objectives, is upheld and supported by very active propaganda networks. The messengers of these networks are the imams, often self-appointed, who frequent certain mosques and prayer rooms (on that subject, the Belgian MP Denis Ducarme[24] revealed in spring 2006 that "at least 15% of the imams operating in Belgium are allegedly not legally on Belgian soil" and similar figures would doubtless be found in other European countries). They are also busy in youth groups and websites which spread the preaching of hate messages, discussion forums which allow the propagation of Islamist subversion and audio and video cassettes which circulate in certain circles.

These networks prosper by playing on the anxieties of Muslim youth. In a document dated Spring 2004[25], the British security services underlined several of the "*factors which could attract certain types to extremism*":

- *Anger : a perception of "double standards" in British foreign policy, where democracy is preached but oppression of the Ummah is practised or tolerated e.g. in Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Chechnya;*
- *Alienation: the struggle to reconcile a modern Islamic identity with modern secular challenges; a general lack of young Muslim participation in mainstream politics and public life;*
- *Activism: a proactive desire to forge an alternative Islamic identity to that of parents but often without an underpinning knowledge of Islam.*

It should be pointed out that these factors that facilitate manipulation (as well as several others such as persistent racism) are the same at one end of Europe as the other.

Such unsubtle propaganda can appear brutish and caricatural. To take a single example, the US, the UK and other Western powers are systematically depicted as being hostile to Islam and engaged in a vast global attempt to enslave Muslims. Yet everyone knows that American and British troops tried to intervene in Somalia in 1993 (before being ejected by terrorists and warlords) in an attempt to end a civil war where Muslims were dying. And it was also Western armies who stepped in (albeit too little, too late) to stop ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, and more recently and more successfully in Kosovo to protect ethnic Albanians, for the most part Muslims. These incontestable facts are, obviously, covered up.

The simple fact that such caricatural propaganda can influence young people even in this information age, when they have access to all sorts of media, says a great deal about the extent of their confusion, the talents of the propagandists and the mistrust held by huge

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[24] Denis Ducarme, proposed resolution: To allow liberal Islam to exist peacefully no false move by radicals can be tolerated. The text in French of this resolution can be found on the ESISC website www.esisc.eu under "Forum".
[25] *Young Muslims and Extremism*, FCO/Home Office paper, April-May 2004.

swathes of the Muslim community towards everything that comes from their host society, and the news in particular.

And it is this propaganda which reinforces the foundations of extremism in those target populations mentioned already.

IV.   The extent of the problem

We have now seen how the object of the Islamists' attention is the third generation and, to a lesser extent (because they are already far more integrated) the second generation. It remains to try to evaluate the exact extent of the problem.

Such an evaluation is extremely delicate and politically sensitive. It is worth repeating: the majority of Muslims in Europe want nothing more than to live a normal free life, and it would be wrong to judge rashly and consider, say, the number of women in the streets wearing the veil as a sign of increasing radicalism. In the first place, there are veils and veils: the hijab worn voluntarily by a girl who wants to affirm her identity cannot be compared with the headscarf, ankle-length robe, black coat, gloves and boots worn by some, let alone the *burqa*. Divisive behaviour – a girl refusing to shake a man's hand or speak to him, refusal of sex-mixing or rejection of course content as described above – should, on the other hand, be considered a worrying sign.

In the absence of any scientific study, we are limited to reporting opinion polls or the estimates of security and intelligence services. Thus, a British poll taken in 2004[26] showed that 13% of British Muslims considered new terrorist attacks on the United States to be justified. However other surveys taken in the UK showed 26% of Muslims felt "no sense of loyalty" towards Britain, while 85% said that attacks on Western targets were "unjustifiable"[27].

The intelligence and security services, faced with an urgent situation, are less concerned by Islamism than with terrorism. In Great Britain, "*Intelligence indicates that the number of Muslims actively engaged in terrorist activities, either in this country or abroad, or who support such activities, is extremely limited, and estimated to be less than 1%*"[28].

In Belgium, of the 300 or so "official" mosques (this figure does not take account of the places of worship of the "cellar and garage Islam" mentioned above) "*only about thirty could be labelled 'radical' according to State Security*"[29].

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[26] *The Guardian*, 15 March 2004.
[27] *Young Muslims and Extremism,* op cit., p. 10.
[28] Ibid, p. 11.
[29] Report of Belgian State Security cited in *Report of the inquiry into the manner in which intelligence services follow Islamist, extremist and terrorist activities*, published in 2001 Activity Report of the *Permanent control committee on intelligence services,* in French and Dutch only.

In France 5-10% of the Muslim community meets the criteria that would allow them to be considered "Islamist", with 630 "sensitive" neighbourhoods under the special surveillance of General Intelligence (RG). An estimated 1% of Muslims would be prepared to become engaged in terrorist activities[30].

In considering these different figures, and extrapolating them to a European (EU) level, one could safely estimate that 15% of European Muslims could be considered as "fundamentalists" (that is, adopting personal behaviour such as to make sustainable integration in the host society impossible); 10% are "Islamists" (actively militate to impose their vision of the world on their community and on the host society); while 1% are open to becoming engaged in terrorism-type activities.

Clearly stated, and assuming a population of 15 million Muslims, that would translate as 2.25 million fundamentalists, 1.5 million Islamists and 150,000 potential terrorists.

These figures should be treated with caution, but it is worth pointing out that, even were they to be divided by two or three, the threat is still very real from a security point of view (terrorism) and a social point of view (radicalisation of communities, social unrest and public order problems that ensue).

The figures demonstrate the real extent of the threat and the urgency required in tackling it. The also explain the change that has taken place in the last five years within "European" jihadist circles. Between the GIA attacks in France in 1995 and the beginning of 2003, the main Islamist terrorist plots directed at Europe were by terrorists from outside, having little or no background of living in Europe. That was particularly the case for the attacks against the *Christmas market* in Strasbourg in December 2000, the *Tafkir wal Hijra* plot to attack American targets in Europe in 2001, the Jordan-Palestinian *al-Tawhid* conspiracy to attack Jewish targets in Germany in spring 2002, and the *Chechen connection* plot in France in December that same year[31].

But in the three terrorist plots that hit Europe after 2004 (the Madrid bombings on 11 March 2004, the assassination of Theo Van Gogh in Amsterdam on 2 November 2004 and the London bombings on 7 July 2005) as well as in several abortive attempts (in Brussels and most recently in London in August 2006) the terrorists were residents of long date, often in possession of a European nationality, some the children of European citizens. Without going into the involvement of European converts to Islam on the international terrorist scene, the most spectacular case being Belgian convert Muriel Delgaucque, killed in a suicide bomb attack in Autumn 2005. The age of terrorist suspects has also fallen to around 18-25 years today.

These changes are the result of progress made in the radicalisation of part of Europe's Muslim youth.

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[30] Figures confirmed to us several times in recent years by contacts in the French security services.
[31] See: Petter Nesser, Jihad in Europe – A survey of the motivations for Sunni Islamist terrorism in post-millennium Europe, Forsvarets Forskningsinstitutt, Kjeller, Norway, 2004.

V.   How to react?

In an ESISC background note[32] published some time ago, we proposed a series of measures to rein in radicalisation. In our view, those proposals remain relevant. Here are several examples:

- Major efforts have to be made in the field of information, to stress the superior nature and advantages of our democratic model. And the benefits for the developing world of adopting this model need also to be systematically brought to the fore. These efforts could be made concrete via exchanges of intellectuals, artists and journalists. A European cultural agency could be created to coordinate the efforts and give them the strength they need;
- Women and girls could be a natural vector for this information, and a powerful factor for change and democratisation. In the Muslim communities of Europe as in the Arab Muslim world, specific programmes aimed at girls and women would be created, while more general information stressed the benefits of respect for women's rights;
- Encouragement for the representation at national level for Muslim people who are not themselves practicing;
- On the subject of religious representation of Arab-Muslim communities, favour should be given where possible to dialogue with leaders committed to the modernisation of Islam, and no encouragement given to representatives linked to Saudi Arabia, the Muslim Brotherhood or other organisations representing the same ideology;
- Courses could be organised in schools on the history of immigration, to help remove young people of immigrant origin from their ghetto, to raise their self-esteem and their esteem in the eyes of their peers, and to help develop positive role models;
- Positive measures are not enough: within its own borders Europe needs to obtain a legislative arsenal allowing it to prosecute calls for extremist hatred and violence, written or spoken, wherever they might be expressed – even within mosques;
- The background of imams, teachers of Islam and prison visitors should be controlled. We know that Wahhabists expend an enormous amount of energy in prisons, where they play a pernicious role;
- In general, more needs to be done to restrict and isolate Saudi Arabian influence on the Muslim community, in Europe as elsewhere in the world.

It is also necessary – and this is not merely a detail – to eliminate exclusion and racism that are still found all too often in Europe, and which create fertile soil for extremism.

But what is essential for victory in this battle for hearts and minds is to involve Muslim communities themselves, and help them to identify, isolate and combat the extremist elements in their midst. The good will does exist, but has to be coordinated and

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[32] After Madrid: Thirty proposals to fight terrorism, 24 March 2003. Available (in French) on the ESISC website: www.esisc.eu.

supported, so that the radicals are not in the first rank. Unfortunately we are not there yet.

In April 2005, we were invited to speak before a Committee of the US Congress on the subject of the radicalisation of Muslim youth in Europe[33]. Our conclusion then was: "*This new generation of terrorism [...] has hardly begun to appear on the terrorist scene. Recruits come from the 'third generation' of immigration, who we know has identity problems and feels itself the victim of imperfect integration. These problems can push many young people towards violence. We are then confronted with a new situation where diffuse and informal networks of young people who were born in Europe, who know it well and who have scores to settle, could serve as a relay to more structured international organizations, or even try to lead its own jihad to take revenge for the real or supposed humiliations felt by these young people*."

Sixteen months later, as the bombings in London on 7 July 2005 and recent news both show, things have changed in only one way: the problem has become worse.

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[33] *The radicalisation of Muslim youth in Europe : the reality and the scale of the threat*, testimony to a hearing of the subcommittee on Europe and emerging threats, Committee on International Relations, US House of Representatives, 27 April 2005; The text of this testimony is available on the ESISC website: www.esisc.org (under "Etudes et rapports"). Also in English.

THE MIDDLE EAST 5 YEARS AFTER SEPTEMBER 11TH

by Dimitri DELALIEU, Associate Researcher for ESISC

The war on terrorism launched by the Bush administration in the aftermath of the attacks on September 11th, 2001 aimed to eradicate the international Islamic threat. The new Middle East[34], envisaged by that same administration, was to instil democracy in the countries of the region. Unfortunately, five years later, no progress has been made and we are forced to accept the fact that these efforts have resulted in total failure. It is obvious that political Islam has emerged from the confrontation stronger on almost every front: the "victory" of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt, the Hezbollah´s breakthrough onto the Lebanese political scene, but, most of all its "political victory" in the recent war in Lebanon, that of Hamas in the Palestinian territories, the absolute majority held by Islamic parliamentarians in the Iraqi Legislative Assembly and the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to the Iranian presidency are only a few examples that attest to the scale of the catastrophe.

Alongside the rise of Sunni and Shia political Islamism, the shady Al-Qaeda and its "war machine" is also making progress in the Middle East: in Afghanistan, where the movement has been reorganising its forces since 2005, in Iraq, obviously, where attacks take place on a daily basis, but also in the Palestinian territories where the movement's cells have been identified, as well as in Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Israel – the only true democracy in the region – is now more than ever conscious of its vulnerability in the face of the rise in Islamism from all sides and appears ill-prepared to deal with it. As for the international community – headed by a Europe which seems to have abdicated from its responsibilities – it appears to have resigned itself and to be adapting as best it can to a permanent Islamic threat, instead of attacking the roots of the evil. And this is where the shoe pinches, because the key issue now lies as much in the way in which the mass of the Muslim world, exasperated by Western interventionism, will react, as in the real menace of any attacks perpetrated by Al-Qaeda or its allies. Let us now go back over the main events that have marked the Middle East over the past five years, and take stock of the terrorist threat existing in the countries of the region.

1. EGYPT

We should first of all remember that Egypt is home to the historical cradle of fundamentalist Sunni Islamism, the *Muslim Brothers Movement*, created in 1928 by Hassan Al Banna. We should also remember that the Al-Qaeda ideologist, the Egyptian, Al-Zawahiri, was at the head of the *World Islamic Front Urging Jihad against the Jews*

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[34] The greater Middle-East.

and the Crusaders established by Osama Bin Laden in 1998. And finally, we should remember that the leader of *Al-Gamaa al-Islamiya*, the Egyptian, Omar Abdel Rahman, is still being held in the United States for his involvement in the first attack against the World Trade Center in 1993. This terrorist movement is also responsible for the, sadly, notorious attack in Luxor in 1997, which caused the deaths of 57 foreign tourists. Since 1999, *Al-Gama al-Islamiya* has maintained a cease-fire and appears to be concentrating instead on politico-religious proselytizing. As for the Muslim Brothers, over the past few years they have moved towards promoting a more "democratic" approach, laying claim to socio-economic reforms, although without distancing themselves from their religious discourses. This mutation enabled them to achieve significant success in the last legislative elections in December, 2005.

After September 11th, the American administration, convinced that they were either involved in terrorist activities, or that they were following radical terrorist aims, began to list all the Islamic movements in the same category. Europe soon followed them in the same practice, and also associated Islamic movements, including the Muslim Brothers, with terrorism. In 2002, the Iraqi crisis, and the differences of opinion existing between the United States and Europe, allowed the Brothers movement to renew a timid dialogue, via informal channels, with the latter. However, in the United States, even though some will claim that the Muslim Brothers are radically different from the jihadi and, because of this, deserve to be awarded certain legitimacy, this remains a minority point of view and most of the American political decision-makers, happily, make no distinction between the Egyptian brotherhood and terrorist groups. This position has been reinforced by the close links between the American administration and the Israeli government, which regards the *Brothers* as the principle driving force behind Hamas and the Islamic Jihad.

The Terrorist Threat

The reappearance of Islamic terrorism in Egypt took place in October 2004 with the attacks against the Taba hotels, which caused the deaths of around thirty people, including ten Israelis. The choice of target was not a chance one as the seaside resort is an extremely popular destination for Israeli tourists. The man who instigated the attack is a Palestinian by the name of Ayed Saed Saleh. The Egyptian forces also killed a number of suspects who were linked to the attack at the beginning of 2005.

In July 2005, it was the turn of Sharm el-Sheikh, on the Red Sea, Egypt's second major tourist centre, to receive a terrible blow. Three bombs exploded within the space of 15 minutes, bringing about the deaths of more than 80 people, including a number of foreign tourists. There were, once again, important strategic reasons for the choice of target: numerous peace conferences have been held in Sharm el-Sheikh in the past, and it is also a favourite place for President Mubarak to enjoy his holidays, along with large numbers of Israeli tourists. Responsibility for these attacks was claimed by two groups whose existence had been unknown until that time: *the Group for Egyptian Uniqueness and Jihad* and the *Mujahidin of Egypt*. During the weeks that followed, following the example of Taba, dozens of people – Palestinian or Bedouin in origin – suspected of being involved in the attacks, were eliminated by the Egyptian security forces.

Although it remains difficult to implicate Al-Qaeda of direct involvement in these attacks, it is nevertheless true that a number of elements – including the modus operandi – lead us to believe that the shady Osama Bin Laden is implicated. The final blow was the latest wave of attacks in Cairo during the month of April 2005. More disorganised and probably launched by a number of independent Islamic groups, these attacks were perpetrated on April 7th (suicide bombing) and April 30th (suicide bombing and the gunning down of a bus full of Israeli tourists by two female relations of the suicide bomber), and left 2 and 7 dead respectively. The Muslim Brothers condemned these attacks, but everything leads us to believe that more unstructured attacks of this sort can be expected in Egypt in the near future.

2. JORDAN

Jordan – where the Islamists (primarily the Muslim Brothers) helped to ensure the stability of the monarchy for a number of years –underwent a radical change in its approach after the accession to the throne of the new ruler, Abdullah II, in 1999. The king has, in effect, put an end to the prudent and ambiguous policies followed by his father and adopted concrete repressive measures, notably by closing Hamas´ offices in Amman and by arresting the organisation's activists.

In the aftermath of September 11th, both the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East (the second Intifada), and the rise of Islamism forced the Jordanian authorities to further harden their tone against the jihadists. King Abdullah is also the first Arab leader to visit George Bush since September 11th and, at a press conference he repeated his "full and unique support" for the United States. But the war in Iraq has placed slightly more pressure on the Hashemite kingdom – which supported President Saddam Hussein during the first Gulf War – all the more so because the country is an obligatory supply point for American forces based in Iraq. This makes Jordan an area of great strategic and tactical interest for the Al-Qaeda jihadists.

The Terrorist Threat

As early as 1999, terrorist operations controlled by *Abu Qatada*, the Al-Qaeda representative in London, were thwarted while Zarqawi – having been imprisoned in Jordan since 1992 – was granted a royal pardon and freed. In November 2002, during riots in Maan, armed Islamists opposed the Jordanian security forces. In that same year, an American diplomat, Lawrence Fowley, was assassinated. During the course of 2004, a number of attempted attacks were foiled, including a large-scale attempt that targeted buildings owned by the security services and the American Embassy using vehicles filled with explosives and several tons of chemicals. In August 2005, an Iraqi terrorist cell managed to cross into Jordan and finalise an operation that involved sinking two American ships lying in the port of Aqaba using Katyusha-type rockets. The operation finally failed as only some of the rockets worked and these did not manage to hit their initial targets.

The attacks on Amman in November 2005 – responsibility for which was claimed by *Al-Qaeda in Iraq* – which were a hard blow for Jordan, as well as the permanent threat of attacks on the kingdom, persuaded the king to institute a new "security" government. This is now introducing a vast programme of reforms, both in the area of security and of public freedoms. These reforms do not only aim to eradicate extremist ideas, but also to promote a moderate view of Islam, particularly through training for the Imams. Although Zarqawi is no longer in a position to cause any damage, there is absolutely no doubt that further terrorist activities will affect the Hashemite kingdom in future.

3. SAUDI ARABIA

After the September 2001 attacks, the neo-conservatives forced George W. Bush to break off relations with the royal family. Despite this, the American president continued to maintain the link with Riyadh, which had become very fragile (15 of the 19 suicide "pirates of the air" were Saudi nationals). Although Saudi Arabia provided its ally with a number of dossiers relating to the Iraqi conflict, it was still not able, or willing, to prevent some 2,500 of its citizens from going to Iraq to participate in the jihad. The regime could thereby ensure that the radicals would carry out the attacks abroad and not on its territory. According to certain sources, out of the 1,200 people arrested by the Syrian authorities from the beginning of the war in 2003 and suspected of being suicide bombers, 85% were Saudis!

After September 11th, the Saudi authorities had to face up to another challenge: to control terrorist movements that were calling for the overthrow of the regime in the name of Islam, and threatening internal security. This menace contributed to weakening the allegiance enjoyed by the al Saud family and creating a climate that was "favourable" for "reform". These political reforms included more freedom for the Saudi press, mainly due to the initiative of Prince Khaled who opened the daily, *Al Watan* to debates and social criticism and instituted national dialogue sessions – inviting civic society to enter the public debate – as well as the creation in 2004 of an organization for the defence of human rights.

The Terrorist Threat

It was really during the course of 2003 that Saudi Arabia became fully aware of the magnitude of the terrorism on its territory. In 2004, in addition to activities targeted at foreigners, 5 major attacks contributed to further weakening the security situation. In 2005, the Interior Minister was targeted by an attack from a booby-trapped car. Although the current terrorism in Saudi Arabia stems more from international jihadist ideology than political confrontation, the authorities – who are now presenting themselves as victims – are trying to put the support for a movement that they helped finance for years behind them.

Having offered an amnesty to those activists who remained at large in June 2004 and rallied a part of the non-violent Islamic opposition to its support, Saudi Arabia organised an international conference on the fight against terrorism last February. Does this signal

a real involvement in the fight against terrorism? The Saudi government invited "all those countries who have suffered from terrorism" to attend the conference, however no one was surprised to see Israel on the bench of the non-invitees. In fact the Hebrew state could obviously not be invited because the terrorism that reigns in Israel is, in the eyes of the kingdom, nothing other than *"resistance activities against occupation"* ! This is not exactly surprising when we learn that, since the start of the second Intifada in 2000, Saudi Arabia has financed half of Hamas´ annual budget!

This conference, with the participation of both Syria and Iran, was primarily a formidable marketing operation, aiming to underline the pseudo-efforts made by the kingdom against terrorism. It also contributed to hiding the shortcomings and the refusal of the authorities to control the flow of funds from Islamic charitable organizations, which finance jihad terrorism. Because it must be admitted that the Saudi "advances" in the fight against terrorism are for the most part ineffective and inadequate to combating the terrorist threat.

4. LEBANON

In the grip of numerous conflicts, both internal and with the Hebrew state, for over 30 years, the shock created by September 11th created an opening for Lebanon to show the international community that it also intended to take part in the fight against Al-Qaeda. Fertile ground for Islamic terrorism from the nineteen eighties until the middle of the nineties, Lebanon – although it had integrated the Hezbollah into its political community – wished to steer clear of the nebulous Al-Qaeda. As far as Hassan Nasrallah´s movement was concerned, it primarily wanted to preserve its hegemony. The support provided by Syria and Iran were, in any event, more than sufficient to enable the pro-Iranian Shia movement to dispense with the services of Osama Bin Laden. However, it is worth noting that for a certain period, the Hezbollah was involved in training Al-Qaeda jihadists in southern Lebanon.

After 2002, Abu Moussad Al-Zarqawi was declared persona non grata in Lebanon. In March 2003, Ahmed Mohamed Hamed, head of the *Esbat al-Ansar movement* – affiliated to Al-Qaeda – was assassinated in Lebanon, probably by the Iranian secret services. One month later, the authorities broke up the *Esbat al-Ansar* network, which was preparing to launch anti-western attacks. However, the "collaboration" in the fight against terrorism also showed its limits. The Syrian preacher, Omar Bakri Mohammed, leader of the *Al Muhajiroun* (the emigrants) movement in London, found refuge in Lebanon in August 2005. Having undergone a short interview with the authorities, he has spent the rest of his time completely undisturbed in Beirut. In March 2006, 4 Lebanese and 4 Palestinians from the *Esbat al-Ansar* movement were arrested in Lebanon having been found in possession of weapons.

Be that as it may, the recent conflict has pushed Lebanon into the limelight, albeit unwillingly, with George W. Bush going so far as to describe the country as the "third front" in the war against terrorism, alongside Iraq and Afghanistan. However, it is extremely unlikely that Al-Qaeda will be able to implant itself in Lebanon in the near future.

The Terrorist Threat

The authorities in Beirut do not appear to be able, at least not at present, to take the risk of disarming the Hezbollah while it is generally perceived – both by the Shia community and by an important fringe of the Sunni community – as being the great victor of the recent crisis. As for the UN forces, unless they are given coercive powers, they have neither the wish, nor the means to relieve the Hezbollah of its military arsenal.

Should the situation degenerate in southern Lebanon, the Hezbollah could attempt to renew its strategy of terrorist strikes against Israeli or western interests in Lebanon or abroad. However, for the time being, there is no reason to suppose that this might happen and it is highly probably that the Hezbollah would think twice before following a course of action that would risk it losing the sympathy it has acquired, both in Lebanon and abroad, during the conflict. However, the risk of seeing Syria renewing its involvement in the Lebanese political scene, particularly by means of the targeted elimination of its opponents, is, on the other hand, very high.

5. SYRIA

The Syria governed by Bachar el-Assad is obviously not that of Hafez el-Assad. However, it still represents a privileged haven for a number of terrorist movements, mainly Palestinian – we should recall that Khaled Mechal (the intellectual leader of Hamas) went into exile in Syria a number of years ago and continues his activities there undisturbed. The beginning of the war in Iraq not only made Syria into a hub for jihadists from all around, but Syria also became the obligatory stopping-off point through which all arms and military material destined for the Lebanese Hezbollah passed.

Bachar, threatened and sanctioned by the United States for his support (logistical assistance) to the jihadists in Iraq, multiplied the number of arrests and expulsions in 2004 and 2005 as a sign of good will. But international pressure was maintained after the assassination of Rafic Hariri and the probable involvement of Damascus. As a result, the Syrian authorities withdrew their troops from Lebanon after a 30-year occupation. However, Damascus´ hold on Beirut has still not disappeared.   In fact, the targeted attacks against the regime's opponents that followed during the course of 2005 were certainly prepared or sponsored by Damascus. At the same time, Bachar reinforced his cooperation with the regime of the Mullahs by meeting the newly elected Iranian president in August 2005, an occasion for Damascus and Teheran to restate their continuing support for the Hezbollah. In November 2005, the two regimes signed an agreement of mutual assistance, with the aim of protecting them against international sanctions. This also enabled Iran to transfer part of its military arsenal to Syria for the purpose of hiding it. The agreement did not, however, end there, but committed Iran to supplying military and financial aid to Syria, whose economy is in ruins. Syria is currently attempting to profit from the war in Lebanon – which it may well have

provoked – in order to emerge from its isolation and to negotiate a whole series of agreements.

The Terrorist Threat

The threat of terrorist jihad is relatively low in Syria, particularly since the country has been at the hub of the jihad movement. However, the regime in Damascus is on the verge of bankruptcy and the socio-economic situation in which it finds itself, as well as its isolation, has encouraged a number of people to challenge the regime. Since the accession of Bachar to the presidency in 2000, repressive measures against his political opponents have constantly been on the rise.   The pinnacle of this opposition was the "Damascus Declaration" of October 16th 2005 – a document signed by the opposition and the Muslim Brothers – which calls for a peaceful democratisation of the regime. Another document – calling for the normalisation of syrio-lebanese relations – was issued one month later. It hardly needs to be pointed out that the signatories of these declarations are either in prison or under close surveillance!

Finally, we can take note of the fact that the Syrian security forces have intensified their confrontations with the *Tanzim Jund al-Sham* movement, whose leader was killed in Damascus in July 2005. This obscure movement has claimed responsibility for terrorist acts against Lebanese Christians and against a leader of the Lebanese Hezbollah.

6. IRAN

In 2001, the deployment of American troops in Afghanistan marked a new departure for Iran. Tehran – officially hostile to the Taliban and supporting the Northern Alliance – adopted a pragmatic position during the conflict. This principally involved providing the Americans with strategic information on the activities of Al-Qaeda members, and by providing support to the transition Afghan government headed by Hamid Karzai. This "collaboration" was only to be a short-term one because, confronted with Iran's nuclear ambitions, George Bush declared in January 2002, that Iran now also formed part of the "axis of evil". Since then, and à fortiori, with the assumption of power by Ahmadinejad, Iran has sought out open confrontation with the West in order, on the one hand, to divert attention from its domestic problems (endemic youth unemployment, corruption, criminality) while, on the other hand, rallying the population behind its extremist ideas.

The Terrorist Threat

When war with Iraq appeared imminent, Iran officially condemned the intervention and castigated Washington's colonialist ambitions. However, a sizeable part of the Iranian elite viewed the American invasion as an opportunity to rid itself of its all-time enemy, Saddam Hussein. Because of this, Iranian leaders consented to meetings between Iraqi opposition groups based in Iran and American agents with a view to preparing the war and to discussing the reconstruction of Iraq. During the first three weeks of the conflict, Iran officially proclaimed itself "neutral", but the situation rapidly evolved, most

importantly, through the infiltration of Iraqi opposition members to Iran and of Iranian agents to Iraq. Although frequently called to order by the States, the Mullah's regime remained unshakeable. The use of sophisticated explosive devices of Iranian origin during Iraqi attacks on British soldiers was roundly condemned by London and has revived the debate over Iran's influence on Iraq.

The permeability of the Iran-Iraq border facilitates any type of infiltration, whether it be from pilgrims, intelligence agents or Iranian terrorists. Once installed in Iraq, these "Iranian agents" - who already have a large breeding ground for potential collaborators in the "dual nationality" Iraqis and the Iraqi Shias - employed either retribution or force to recruit Iraqi auxiliaries with a view to asserting their domination. As for the Iraqi police force - impotent before the scale of this movement - the only alternative it often has is to adopt a wait-and-see policy. As soon as the Iran-Iraq war was over, the revolutionary guard or Guardians of the Revolution (*Pasdaran-e Inqilab*) acquired an important role on the Iraqi political scene, both by use of propaganda well as violent acts on the ground. Shortly before the American invasion of March 2003, the revolutionary guard repositioned itself to reinforce the border between Iraq and then to occupy the space left by the fall of the regime. Operating under diplomatic and humanitarian cover (NGOs, Red Crescent, etc.) the guard provides military formation and logistical support for the Hezbollah and for Iraqi insurgents. During the past few months, this "collaboration" has involved the supply of military equipment and communication to groups of Shia terrorists such as the group run by Abu Mustafa al-Sheibani. This Iranian, brought to power by the revolutionary guard, is at the head of a network of insurgents and has committed some major attacks over the past few months, using more lethal weapons than have ever been previously used by the insurgents.

Iran is undoubtedly attempting to further complicate the task undertaken by the Americans and the British by orchestrating controlled chaos in Iraq. On the other hand, the Iranian strategy in Iraq obviously seeks to torpedo any plan to surround the country with American forces. Following the example of Iraq, the development of a "new front" in southern Lebanon has allowed Iran to divert the attention of the international community from its nuclear programme in order to win more time and to obtain a larger margin for manoeuvre before the negotiations that are due to take place at the United Nations Security Council. More alarming are the recurrent threats made by the regime against Israel and the creation of an "army" of volunteers for suicide missions.

7. THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Yassir Arafat, like most of the Arab leaders, forcefully condemned the 9/11 attacks, along with the Hamas and other Palestinian movements. Although relations between Al-Qaeda and the Palestinians have been tense, they are now moving closer together. In the past, Palestinians have never been the most important preoccupation of the movement – which has preferred to attack the Great Satan (the United States) rather than bringing their support to the Palestinians in their fight against the little Satan (Israel). For their part, the Palestinians have always refrained from any collusion with Al-Qaeda that might harm their image on the international scene. In 2002, Abu Moussab al-Zarqawi, who

was attempting to enter the occupied territories, was kindly requested by the Islamic Jihad and Hamas to turn back. It was not until the war in Iraq and, more recently, the election of Hamas, that Al -Qaeda began to take an interest in the Palestinian cause.

The Terrorist Threat

The Palestinian terrorist threat against Israeli targets remains a permanent one. Although the assumption of power the Hamas has slightly altered the situation, it still remains true to say that Hamas can play each of the armed groups against each other, before making another group claim responsibility for a terrorist attack.

During the weeks that preceded the kidnap of Corporal Guilad Shalit, not only was there an increase in the number of suicide bombings, but also of Qassam and Katyusha rocket attacks. The firing of Katyusha-type rockets from the Gaza Strip and the use of kidnappings shows the extent to which the strategy adopted by the Hezbollah in South Lebanon serves as an example to the Hamas military wing.

As for the presence of Al-Qaeda in the Palestinian territories, there is no doubt that the withdrawal of Israel from the Gaza Strip and the unprecedented chaos that followed it not only enabled large quantities of arms to move into Gaza, with the help of Egypt, but also the establishment of the Al-Qaeda jihadists. The presence of Al-Qaeda in Gaza has also been confirmed, not only by the Israelis and the Palestinian Authority, but also by Hamas members themselves. In March 2006, a dozen activists - suspected of links with Al-Qaeda – were arrested in Gaza after having delivered arms to the camp of Khan Yunes. This presence obviously represents a major challenge to the Palestinian Authority, at a time when Hamas is still trying to assert its legitimacy.

8. ISRAEL

On June 24th, 2002, George Bush made a first reference to a three-stage plan that would allow the Israelis and the Palestinians to "*live side by side in peace and security*". In April 2003, the *Quartet* officially adopted the document, which was then sent to the governments of both sides. At the beginning of 2004, when the Security Council endorsed the road map in its Resolution 1515, nothing had really changed on the ground and the vicious circle of violence was continuing even more than before. In August 2005, Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip, which was almost the only concrete step taken in accordance with the objectives set out in the road map.

At the same time, during the period from 2001-2006, a number of attacks that appeared to be linked to Al-Qaeda were made against Israeli interests, including the attack on the Ghriba synagogue in Djerba (Tunisia) in April 2002, the attack on a hotel used by Israelis and against an Israeli charter flight in Mombasa (Kenya) in October 2002, the suicide attack by British bombers of Palestinian origin at the "Mike's Place" bar in Tel-Aviv in April 2003, attacks on the hotels in Taba in October 2004, the attack in Cairo on a bus of Israeli tourists in April 2005, and, finally, the rocket attack (see the Jordan section) that hit Eilat airport in August 2005.

The Terrorist Threat

Since 2001, as we have seen, the Hebrew State has constantly been at the mercy of the threat of terrorist attacks from Palestinian movements that neither the security wall nor the Israeli intelligence services have been able to prevent. Alongside the Palestinian menace, security was massively tightened in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, notably in the area of protection of buildings (Azrieli Towers, Shalom Tower, City Gate, etc.) against possible air attacks.

The reopening of a front in South Lebanon and the surprising force of the Hezbollah obviously represents a new threat for Israel, which now has towns like Haïfa, Tel-Aviv or Jerusalem within range of the missiles launched by the pro-Iranian Shia movement. This leaves aside the threat represented, and so often repeated, to the Hebrew State by the Iranian regime, whose long-range ballistic missiles cover the entire territory of Israel. This also ignores the most recent threat by the Syrian president, Bachar el-Assad who, during an impassioned speech after the end of hostilities between Israel and the Hezbollah, declared that, "Future generations of the Arab world will find a way of destroying Israel". Let us end with the threat embodied in the presence of Al -Qaeda jihadists in the Palestinian territories.

These threats are all the more difficult for the Israeli population to accept because they follow a series of withdrawals from the occupied territories (the withdrawal from South Lebanon in May 2000, withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in August 2005, and other withdrawals from the West Bank are also planned by the authorities in Jerusalem). For the time being, it has to be concluded that these pullbacks have not only exacerbated Hezbollah´s armed fight and weakened the moderate Palestinians, but, above all, it has shaken the dissuasive power of the Tsahal. Israel is now desperately searching for an alternative means of eradicating these threats, all the more so since its military strength has seriously been brought into question since the Lebanese crisis.

Conclusion

It is still too early to say whether the prophecies made by Samuel Huntington will come about and whether the world will have to face up to a "clash of civilisations" in the years to come. One thing we can be sure of, is that the tendencies that began in the aftermath to September 11th will continue. As we can see from this analysis, all over the Arab world and all over the Middle East, both political Islam and the strength of the terrorist movements are on the rise. One thing is certain, and that is that the American dream of imposing democracy in the Middle East is fast disappearing; the reforms that are needed cannot be imposed by force.

Political Islamism has been able to evolve; cleverly abandoning its purely religious speeches to deal with the social and political problems of the Arab peoples by proposing reforms and playing the democracy game, it has undergone a profound pragmatic change. It now represents a credible alternative to the immobility and the negligence

shown by a number of Arab governments. (As an example, while we are writing these lines, the Hezbollah is distributing large financial compensation to those Lebanese families who saw their homes destroyed during the conflict.)

Terrorism, whether or not it is linked to the Al-Qaeda movement, still has a bright future ahead of it and the - largely inadequate - efforts that have been deployed by the west to eradicate it appear to have been in vain. Perhaps we need a second September 11th to force us to become aware of the threat hanging over our democracies and finally to deploy the measures needed to defeat terrorism. These efforts should include a complete review of the way in which we see our relations with the Arab world, as well as a reflection on the measures we are prepared to adopt in order to help the Islamic world make a real transition to democracy.

THE WAR ON TERROR: THE MOTHER OF ALL WARS?

by Alain CHOUET

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The "global war on terror" declared by the United States on 12 September 2001 has now been going on for five years, or about as long as the two world wars that scarred the 20th century. However unlike those wars, whose end was at least conceivable by the fifth year, today's war seems to have no end. Marked by uncertain and short-lived "successes" and by unforeseen and unexpected catastrophes, by collateral damage and by tactical, strategic and moral doubts, carried out against a nebulous adversary who seems to benefit as much from his failures as his successes, the war is degenerating into a dubious confrontation where it's hard to know which side is the side of the angels – something that seemed so clear in the days following September 11.

America has fallen into the classic terrorist's trap where the adversary is led to strike indiscriminately, and despite being the victim of the initial aggression, has now shifted shape bit by bit to stand before us, today, as the torturer. Bringing up the rear, Western allies unable to resist America's initiatives or suggest alternative approaches, embarked albeit reluctantly on a counter-productive Crusade – which only serves to increase the violence that pits the Muslim world against the West, bringing recruits to the jihad and raising barricades of hatred and incomprehension. All of which, doubtless, were among the goals of those who brought 9-11 about.

But, at the edges of this uncertain and apparently endless conflict, the US has confirmed its position in those five years as the world's only superpower. In the name of a Just War, they dictate laws, rules and procedures to all those who, whether allies, non-aligned or adversaries, will be designated as terrorist sympathisers if they refuse to go along. Overturning the world order they themselves helped create in the post-1945 world, the US has pushed international institutions to the margins, as for example the "too neutral" United Nations, to the advantage of institutions that Washington easily dominates, like Nato and the G8.

Finally, as a consequence of the "geological scandal" that placed three-quarters of the world's oil under Islamic territory, the US of George W. Bush and his administration of Texas oil-men find themselves in the position – in the name of a necessary fight against Islam-inspired terrorism – of being able to intervene at any moment to bring pressure on local governments, to keep the market under tight control and to maximise the revenues of the American oil giants. The political, diplomatic, economic and commercial benefits the US can draw from this situation are such that there has been no shortage of conspiracy theories accusing Washington of causing – or at the very least doing nothing

to prevent – the cataclysm of September 11 in order to harvest its fruits. Similarly, Franklin D. Roosevelt was suspected of allowing Pearl Harbour to happen as a means of convincing a reluctant Congress to enter World War Two.

The allegation is unfair and groundless but the US, having paid the price in blood, can argue it is justified in reaping any benefit accruing from its reaction, even if the cost is an endless war abroad. The upside is fragile, however, resting as it does on a "phoney war" with no limit and no end in sight, prosecuted without convincing results against a phantom enemy continually renewing himself, against ungraspable strategies and with frequent "mistakes" which discourage the US's allies and strengthen the hatred felt by its adversaries.

Conceptual errors

In fact, the "war on terror" started badly because it was based on three major errors of conception. The first mistake was to consider the attacks of September 11 as the start of a global offensive on the part of Islamist terrorism, of a new era of violence in North-South relations because America had been hit for the first time on its own soil. It was no such thing, no more than Pearl Harbour was the start of the Second World War. The attacks took place on a continuum of actions begun by Islamist extremists in the 1980s to cut the Muslim world off from the rest of the planet so as to take over power without the risk of provoking external intervention. The fact that this continuum was not taken into account led to an unsure response and the establishment of a permanent suspicion weighing on the Muslim world as a whole – though the Muslim world is in reality the primary victim of fundamentalist violence.

It also led to the past being ignored, together with the personality and methodology of the enemy, thus exaggerating the target and enlarging the field of combat well out of line with its real scale.

The second mistake was to declare a "war on terror" – which is about as pertinent as declaring war on evil or anger. And that's not just a semantic quibble. In declaring war on an unquantifiable abstraction like terror, and putting the action about the actor, we lose sight of the fact that terrorism is what terrorists do: people with a past, a history, motives, means, networks of solidarity and collaboration.

This mistake led the American security apparatus to mystify its adversaries and to walk right into the classic trap set by all terrorists – to bring the enemy to strike back indiscriminately and disproportionately, to feed the vicious circle of repression and violence. And declaring war on an abstraction does not allow one to set the "war aims" that are vital to the proper functioning of any military organisation looking to determine its objectives. Was the intention to liquidate bin Laden and punish Al Qaeda? To bring down this or that regime that supports terrorism, and if so, outside of the Taliban, on the basis of what evidence? Was it to reduce the influence of Islamic fundamentalism, and if so how? Or perhaps to bring democracy to Muslim countries, but then which ones, and by what right? Was the aim to remodel the "Greater Middle East"? But why and to whose

benefit? And so the questions go on. None of these points was ever clearly addressed in the rush to respond, thus leaving the way open to every kind of improvisation, and every kind of blunder.

The third mistake had been to opt for an almost exclusively military response using overwhelming means. Even if the attacks of September 11 were seen as a declaration of war – which they were not, as the fundamentalist offensive against the West dates back to the 1980s – they were first and foremost a criminal act committed by a small group of sociopaths working together. It should have been simple to think of a multi-disciplinary, multi-form response to a defiant gesture that could not remain unpunished, but also to the psychological and socio-political consequences.

In the jihadists' terrorist logic, an act of violence is not an end in itself, and its value is only partially dependent on its success. A terrorist act, which always translates as an act by the weak on the strong, never really succeeds (no matter its scale) unless it provokes a disproportionate and inappropriate response on the part of the enemy. The terrorist movement concerned acquires its importance and its audience as a function of this (over)reaction. Mobilising the full resources of the most powerful army in the world against Osama bin Laden's group is tantamount to giving currency to his nuisance value, his representative worth and his importance, an image out of keeping with the reality.

Finally, the role of the military is to destroy an objective without too much thought to ancillary considerations more in the purview of politicians. They are not to be criticised for that. But designating them for the sole managers of a situation involving a mix – often fantastical – of the most complex ethical, diplomatic, political, economic and social problems in a region suffering particularly from internal problems and from its relations with the West, can only lead to the most enduring "collateral damage".

On a methodological level, the combined effect of these three mistakes led the entire Western security apparatus to question *how* the September 11 attacks could have happened, rather than to find out *why*, which would have been more pertinent and more useful, but would have required the time and the effort for reflection. It is true that American public opinion, understandably moved by the scale of the attack, demanded retribution right away, and had to be satisfied. But the answer to the question "how", even if one is found, offers very little in the way of operationally worthwhile solutions, since it is rare for terrorist operations to work the same way twice at the same place according to the same scenario. All the more so in this case, as the search to find out "how" was immediately polluted by the unprecedented scale of the terrorist action.

The horror of the strike had been too strong, and the blow to the credibility of Western defence too severe, for the US to admit they had fallen victim to a small group of psychopaths hardly better-organised than the ones who usually attack foreign tourists or US embassies in Muslim countries. In the eyes of America's leaders, the organisation capable of such exploits had to be an entity of "global reach" with ultra-sophisticated and practically limitless resources, conventional and non-conventional, at its disposal.

To any experts who at that time were expressing doubt as to the capacity of this group, based on their experience of violent Islamist movements active since the assassination of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, the government replied that "crying wolf" was necessary to the consensus created by the attacks and the need for precaution. The press in the US, closely followed by Europe's media, described bin Laden's nuclear, bacteriological and chemical arsenals in great detail, as well as his Command and Control Center located in the Afghan mountains of Tora Bora as if it was right up there on a par with the headquarters of Strategic Air Command. An anthrax attack in the US, which later turned out to have originated locally, was immediately blamed on Al Qaeda, and the press echoed the director of the CIA's warnings of an imminent attack, possibly nuclear, expected at Thanksgiving, then at Christmas, New Year and on to the Fourth of July. Up to and including an industrial accident on the outskirts of Toulouse in France, the fingerprints of Al Qaeda were sought. The clean-up of the organisation's refuge in Afghanistan showed a different reality: a decidedly rustic set-up, rudimentary military capacity, no sign whatever of non-conventional weapons. Some 500 dazed and confused Taliban militants, abandoned and knowing next to nothing of Al Qaeda, were imprisoned at the US base at Guantanamo Bay, while the head of the Taliban himself made good his escape on a motorbike.

The Mirror Effect

The fall of the afghan fundamentalist regime and the disappearance of the "grey area" where they offered a territorial shelter and an operational base to the jihadists was certainly an important development. But intelligence gathered on the ground as to the real operational capacity of the terrorists ought to have led the American security community to rethink its strategy in order better to face a threat that was more criminal than military. No such rethink took place.

Keeping on with the search to find out "how" the attacks happened, the US services concludes that if Al Qaeda had no global operational resources of its own sufficient to explain the scope of the September 11 attacks, it must have borrowed them from an organisation or a regional power who did possess them – and who would in consequence also have to be brought down. For reasons we won't go into in depth here, the choice fell on Iraq, the black sheep of the Middle East in the eyes of the US and the international community ever since the first Gulf War. For anyone who knows a little about the Arab and Muslim world, the hypothesis involving collaboration between Saddam Hussein and the violent Islamists was laughable, despite the confident assertions of American diplomats and security services.

Events would later show this to be the case by demonstrating the lack of any link between bin Laden and the Iraqi regime, as well as showing how it would have been impossible for the regime to supply weapons of mass destruction to a terrorist organisation, since it did not possess any itself. There can be no doubt that, in the words of President George W. Bush, "the world is a better place without Saddam Hussein," (it would be better still without certain other totalitarian and intolerant regimes of the

region) but, in the matter of terrorism and political violence, the world is not safer after the American intervention in Iraq – in fact, the reverse.

In deploying their entire military and security arsenal, and in mobilising (often reluctantly) their allies and satellites and declaring a "global war", the US largely contributed to the mirror effect which gave the enemy an aura and a global dimension he absolutely did not merit. All research before and after September 11 shows that bin Laden's organisation consisted of a few hundred people, more or less equal parts international volunteers and veterans of the Afghan resistance to the Soviet occupation, and banned militants of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt and some other Middle Eastern countries. Detailed portraits can be found in Marc Sageman's excellent study *Understanding Terror Networks.* They are, it is true, fanatical psychopaths, but together they were more like the London streets of *Oliver Twist* than the hidden lair of Doctor No.

Spectacular as it undoubtedly was, the attack of September 11 was neither very sophisticated nor very expensive. Its originality lay in having been perpetrated by unarmed civilians rather than professionals of violence. Their success was ensured largely by the hijackers' kamikaze determination, and only partly by the lax security which then characterised US domestic flights. Since their target was the world's one hyper-power and its most visible symbols that these attacks were labelled as a manifestation of global hyper-terrorism. But they were a manifestation of wounded pride rather than clinical logic, and had the immediate consequence of strengthening the Salafist, jihadist tendency beyond all expectation. Although reduced to basics and forced into hidden isolation by the Western military response on Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden's organisation was glorified in an almost mythical way by the exaggerated and inappropriate scale of the American response, and as a result went on to reproduce elsewhere.

In the collective unconscious of the Third World and in particular the Muslim world, the "bin Laden method" has proved itself by forcing America to engage all its forces in the battle, without however being able to show one decisive result, and without bringing an end to a cycle of violence that displays itself in spectacular fashion, here or there, two or three times every year. It is useful then for any activist to borrow bin Laden's discourse and his methods. Any Muslim malcontent, wherever he may be and whatever his motives or convictions, would do well in future to make clear his ideological and personal proximity to the mythical organisation of Al Qaeda, adopt its vocabulary and its way with jihadist violence, if he wants to be recognised by his peers, and if he wants his message to be heard and paid attention to. Thus it is that political opposition to the Muslim establishment in Indonesia, Kashmir irredentism in India, ethnic unrest in Pakistan, the social malaise of expropriated Moroccans, difficulties in integrating among immigrant minorities in Europe – all phenomena with no connection one to the other, either at a structural or a personal level – all translate nowadays into manifestations of political violence using the language and the banners of Al Qaeda.

In the meantime, governments in Muslim countries who face political, social and economic opposition have discovered the benefits of making out their opponents are

members of Al Qaeda and jihadist zealots. This is the surest way to dismiss their opponents, to cut them off from any international audience and, in most cases, to obtain security or financial assistance from the US and the West. The model for this rather transparent strategy could be seen in Chechnya, but we have also seen manifestations in the Central Asian republics, and in several Arab countries.

A combination of these two kinds of approach has contributed in the space of five years to the construction of a veritable planetary fundamentalist war machine in a place where before there were only dispersed and uncoordinated spin-offs from Jamaa Islamiyyah, the violent extremist wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, who were losing influence at the end of the 1990s but who found a real audience in the same way, as seen by their recent political successes in various Arab countries, as well as the extension of their influence on émigré communities in the West.

The confusions of a "simple" war

By means of trying to find terrorists where there are none, by naming an "Axis of Evil" as something coherent where there are the most diverse threats, the enemy is given the picture of the posture he needs to adopt to be recognised and taken seriously. The subjugation of the entirety of American foreign policy to the imperatives of the "War on Terror" have produced the most devastating effects in the centre of the Arab world where the result has been to see the language and practice of Islamic terrorism introduced and given currency. The Middle East is a complex ensemble of religious, linguistic and cultural minorities who feel themselves under threat, often with good cause. America's management of the Iraqi transition after Saddam Hussein has brought once again to the fore a sectarian approach to regional problems which the pan-Arabism of Nasser or the pseudo-laity of the Iraqi and Syrian Ba'athists and left-wing Palestinian organisations had more or less pushed into the background.

The threat which today weighs on the Sunni minority in Iraq, the Alawite minority in Syria, the Christians, Druze and Shiites of Lebanon, is bound to force these communities into violent self-defensive reactions. It is not possible to brutally install a Western-style democracy on the one man-one vote principle in societies whose very basis is the collective membership of an ethnic community. Not, that is, without taking care also to install the means of protecting the rights of minorities, for want of which the majority community will snatch all of the power and all the wealth.

The Sunnis of Iraq are now reflexively defending themselves against the likelihood of an all-powerful Shiite community in the country. To widen the audience for their resistance, and to obtain the military and political support of their Sunni "brothers" in the rest of the world, they need to give their struggle a larger context, on an international if not global scale: that of Salafist jihadism, alone able to wound or humiliate the United States. Who would care about their fate otherwise? So it is that Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who was not an Iraqi, and who was no more than a small-time gang boss in disgrace with Al Qaeda before the American invasion of Iraq, when he became a Robin Hood figure. So

it is, also, that the cause of Iraq's Sunnis can hope for international support, including from the apprentice jihadists of Europe looking for adventure.

Identical scenarios, already in operation in Somalia when the ill-fated American intervention there broke down the local society and left nothing in its place, can be seen at work in Syria, Lebanon, Pakistan and of course Palestine. If the victory of Hamas was largely thanks to the inability of Fatah to ensure the transition from liberation movement to governmental organisation, it was also largely due to the image of fundamentalist political violence as he only way to "move" America and the West, to force them to take some interest in the situation and to break out of an unequal stand-off with Israel. The central place of the Palestinian problem in the collective Arab and Muslim imagination makes it into an example and a role-model. Hamas is undoubtedly a terrorist movement, violent and backward, and opposed to all forms of negotiation for the simple reason that its very existence depends on its nuisance value. If some of its leaders are realistic enough to go in search of compromise, they will soon face an uprising form a small minority bent on ruining their efforts by an escalation of violence which is considered legitimate in the Arab world to the extent that it is seen as obsessional by the US, Israel's main supporter.

In fact, one of the major effects of the "global war on terror" is to have globalised – that is, to have linked to each other – political, economic and social problems that had nothing to do with one another before, and to have made them impossible to solve other than on a case-by-case basis. By designating an "Axis of Evil" linking problems of international coexistence as varied as those of Iraq, Iran and North Korea, American foreign policy effectively cut off its last margin of manoeuvre to treat each case in a focused and suitable way. Since in every "war" one must choose one's camp, by accusing any state that would not sign up wholeheartedly to its "crusade" of support for terrorism, America ostracised countries which, often having nothing else to lose but their pride, now run a real risk of finding themselves in the camp of the partisans of violence.

The "big fish" ignored

In its obsession with investigating the "how" and its responding to the threat with exclusively military means, American strategy only targeted the perpetrators of the violence, and not its instigators. It tackled only the effects and not the causes of Islamic terrorism. There are doubtless some "madmen of Allah" among the perpetrators, since you have to call on some seriously unstable individuals if you want to find kamikaze volunteers. But political violence dressed up as Islam in an attempt to find legitimacy is neither a pathological phenomenon nor an aberration of Islamic culture. Like any strategy it has its objectives, tactics, ideologues and sponsors.

The personality, the discourse and the actions of the known protagonists of Salafist violence indicate without a doubt their collective adherence to Jamaa Islamiyyah, the armed wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, which arose in Egypt in the 1930s and which has spread its roots ever since throughout the Muslim world. The Brotherhood's strategy is to attack the power; to use violence to provoke a historic rupture between Muslim

lands and the rest of the world by making Muslim countries hateful and hated so as to be able to seize the power and the wealth without running the risk of an external intervention on the side of the regimes in place[35].

As the only structured Sunni organisation operating internationally, the Brotherhood has benefited since the early 1980s from financial resources coming from the Saudi desire to defend their control on a world Islam threatened by the Shia Iranian revolution, as well as from operation military resources that became available as US and Western services manipulated fundamentalist religious movements in their struggle against the Soviet Union and communist parties in Third World nations. The Brotherhood today uses this capital to take to itself a monopoly on interpreting the Quran and to turn any political or social crisis within a Muslim country – or between a Muslim country and the West – to their own ends. Their activism is carried out, depending on the area in question, via volunteer organisations, and within militant organisations representing a range of causes from quietism (Tabligh) to social and political militancy (Union of Islamic Organisations) all the way to unfettered violence (Takfir wal Hijra, Jamaat) and local versions from Morocco to the Philippines, including Al Qaeda, which was never more than a sub-group, and certainly not the over-arching organisation.

The "war on terror" takes a purely military expression, targeted on (mainly) armed perpetrators, and we remember little more than the most aggressive, pathological behaviour. It pays no attention to the ideologues who instigated the violence and who finance it. We're not talking here of the financing of operations and actions, which are anyway not expensive and against which a considerable arsenal of national and international regulatory measures – albeit not very effective ones – have already been taken. We are talking about the financing of everything else surrounding publicity, recruitment, membership, training and putting to work the hundreds of thousands of young Muslims throughout the world from whose ranks the Brotherhood will, when the day comes, select the next candidates for violent action.

This whole progress is indeed very expensive, and takes place within associations, clubs, schools and mosques run by members of the Brotherhood with money 90% of which comes, we know very well, from public or private "generous donors" in the petro-monarchies. The operations in New York, Madrid, Bali and London could not even have been imagined without this ensemble, which the "war on terror" nonetheless ignores. In a public hearing in front of the US Senate on 8 November 2005, the author of the Treasury Department report criticised the situation whereby four years after September 11, numerous Saudi donors continued to give substantial support to the ideological and operational infrastructure of the violent fundamentalist movement. This cold and clinical statement by a bureaucrat who could hardly be accused of polemic was not picked up or commented on by the Western press, and led to no concrete measures by diplomats or by anti-terror executives and decision-makers.

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[35] See the article *The Association Of Muslim Brothers: Chronicle of a Barbarism Foretold* by the current author on the site of ESISC – www.esisc.eu.

Some claim to see in this incoherency the signs of the duplicity of the US government, unwilling to sacrifice its special relationship with the Gulf monarchies, who provide the guarantee of US energy, to the collective interest. But it is clear that such a Machiavellian calculation on behalf of a few profiteers, however cunning they may be, would not be conceivable for long in a democracy. The history of the United States shows that if such had been the case, someone would by now have stepped outside the system to denounce it with the full support of a media ever avid for the scoop of an error on the part of the Executive.

In fact, these incoherencies are a logical result of the conception of the "war" along conventional lines, against an adversary whose military capacities have surely been overestimated in order to cover for the US's original embarrassing defeats.

The uncertain successes of an unsuitable approach

It would have been difficult, clearly, to explain to the average American tax-payer that the billions of dollars invested in the most powerful defence system ever conceived was not enough to stop a small band of fanatical extremists from sowing massive death and destruction on US soil within the space of a few minutes and hours. As is normal under such circumstances, blame for failure to foresee the catastrophe was cast on the intelligence services. But the act of placing blame was also implicit recognition that the attack was a matter of their jurisdiction, meaning it would have been a good idea to rethink the defence system and adapt it to the needs of a world where strategic threats are now more criminal in nature than military (terrorism, trafficking, money-laundering, industrial espionage). Instead, the US executive opted for an intensified and more sophisticated military approach, which since it was not suited to finding its target and subjected to the need for results, came down indiscriminately on everything suspect or strange-looking to the North-American security culture, resulting in the outbreak of new hatreds, new grounds for complaint and new conflicts.

The results could appear less than entirely negative for the foreign policy of the US, and the policy of dominance. Domestically, the restrictions imposed by the "war on terror" have allowed the federal authorities to tighten controls on the states of the Union, and make people recognise the security problems they paid little attention to before, from a position of insularity, the territory of the US being separated from the conflict zones of Old Europe and the Middle East. But the result was only obtained at a cost of severe strains on the principles of transparency and civil rights that are at the basis of American democracy. The country has now been "bunkerised" with the risk of provoking a backlash that would make it even more vulnerable to non-military attacks in future.

In terms of foreign policy, the results seem considerable at first glance. The "war on terror" and the need for everyone to choose a camp have allowed Washington to mobilise its allies and marginalise opponents to its policy. Friends who signed up for the war have been forced to undergo a standardisation and unification of military and security procedures which go as far as passport formats, and a shared global list of "suspects". This has been all the less effective as the designation "Arab" remains uncertain and

ambiguous. Faced with a consensus, the less enthusiastic partners like France and Germany – who until the end of 2002 has expressed reservations on the validity of the concept, and had reason to value their own results, obtained by more subtle and more carefully-adapted means – found themselves obliged to "get in line". And to win pardon for their reluctance, to give signs of submission – one might almost say servility.

Most Arab regimes, shamed by manifestations of happiness on the part of public opinion that had greeted the exploits of bin Laden, were unable even to discuss the options of US policy in their own part of the world. One country submitted after another, often with the sort of rancour that never bodes well for the stability of an alliance. The United Nations, the bête noire of the US foreign policy establishment for the way it places member states on a basis of equality, thus denying the hyper-power its privileges, found itself essentially rudderless in the face of a situation which concerns national authorities only indirectly. Dreamed up as a means of harmonising relations between mutually-recognised sovereign states, the UN had no grasp of problems caused by transnational, more or less clandestine, criminal enterprises.

It was therefore easy to marginalise the UN and replace it, in the context of the "war", with Nato, a military organisation where the hegemony of the US is uncontested. One that principle had been accepted, it was to Nato that the call then went out in situations concerning the states, and where the UN would have had the competence to intervene (Afghanistan, Lebanon, Central Asia, the Caucasus). But the problem here too is that Nato is set up to provide a military and political treatment to the problems of states and armies facing each other overtly or covertly, and not to the activities of more or less structured criminal groups. Nato's effectiveness in the anti-terrorist fight has still to be demonstrated.

The mother of all battles?

Five years after it was launched, the "war on terror" has shown various but unconvincing results. Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq and now Lebanon are turned into human and material ruins where there are more "terrorists" – or at any rate violent fundamentalists – than ever. Ad even though the Pakistani secret services have tried, in the face of a certain political and financial opposition, to sell Al Qaeda off piece-meal to the US authorities, bin Laden and Mullah Omar are still at large. From his inexplicably impossible-to-find lair Ayman Zawahiri, a historic member of the Brotherhood freed from prison in Egypt after insistent pressure from American humanitarian organisations, acting head of Al Qaeda and the brains behind September 11, continues to pour vitriol on the US and call down vengeful fatwas upon Westerners, "Jews and Crusaders".

Every four or five months, or the length of a news cycle in the Western media, Jamaa Islamiyyah or one of its local franchises commits a spectacular and bloody attack in a Western or West-friendly country (Madrid, London, Mumbai) or in the Muslim world (Karachi, Bali, Casablanca) reminding the world of its presence and thereby increasing its influence and its fame.

By amalgamating his intervention in Iraq with the "war on terror"; by crushing the army of Saddam Hussein without much heroic effort, the United States gave proof for the second time in ten years of how vain it is to defy the West on its own territory with its own arms. But, on the other hand, and in fulfilment of the prophesies of Saddam Hussein when he spoke of the "mother of all battles", they also made it clear that only terrorism on a grand scale can reach them. The lesson is one to be meditated upon by all those – states, political groups or armed bands – who have, or think they have, a complaint against America and her Western allies.

Because it committed itself rashly and at great cost, in human, financial and image terms, in a military, political, diplomatic and strategic *terra incognita* without being in full possession of the facts, the American army will leave Iraq, sooner or later, and leave behind it – as it did in Cambodia, in Somalia and in Afghanistan – a grey area of ruins, with no social framework remaining, delivered up to the whims of local warlords and adventurers. Jamaa Islamiyyah will find a territorial base for itself there, and the manpower needed for new terrorist attacks against the "infidels" who are the reason for their very existence.

All those who have had anything to do with it know that the anti-terrorist struggle is not a matter of the laws of war or a military approach, but a multifaceted approach involving intelligence methods, undercover preventative operations, political interference, police investigations, maintenance measures and repressive legal actions. It also involves an improved understanding of and treatment of social, cultural and economic problems which lead to clashes between Third World and the West, and between them and often unsavoury local governments upheld by the West out of concern for "regional stability" – a concern that the growth of fundamentalist violence renders illusory.

In these conditions it seems that the essential fight against violent Islamist activism can only be collective and global, and not subordinated to the vengeful or geostrategic aims of any given state. At the risk of losing legitimacy and, more important, efficacy, it cannot be a pretext for settling other types of conflict, upholding allied regimes or bringing down adverse regimes often no less respectable than the others. Beyond the necessary emergency reactive measures, it cannot be only reactive.

To uncover and neutralise the "unforeseeable" it has to be proactive, far in advance of the act of violence itself, at the stage of recruitment, at the stage where the perpetrators are taken in hand, at the training stage, the financing stage, and the stage where networks of solidarity are being created. It requires a far greater knowledge of the activist phenomenon, its culture and its players, so that the inevitable "rush to judgement" involved in prevention – by definition prior to the violent act – can be carried out against justifiable targets and not turn into a global combat against Islam, Arabs or Muslims – the objective sought by activists in the classical terrorist cycle of "provocation-repression" of which the War on Terror, looking more and more like an Endless Crusade, is proving, unfortunately, to be the perfect illustration.

JIHADISM: A NEW FORM OF TOTALITARIANISM?

by Farid JEDDI, Project manager for ESISC

Opening a newspaper, listening to the radio or watching television is to be faced every day with the terms terrorism and Islam, Jihadism and Islam. These terms are now usually associated by ordinary people, despite the constant reminders to be careful. They are terms that do not necessarily go together, but the current world situation makes them inseparable.

It is therefore imperative, given the importance of the phenomenon of Islamic terrorism and its unforeseen results, to try to see a little clearer.

I. Emergence of a new terrorism: Jihadism

Without going into detail about the many varieties of terrorism that have existed in the past, such as that of the anarchists at the end of the 19th century or that of the extreme right between the two world wars, we are going to focus especially, at a time when we remember the tragic events of 09/11, on Islamic terrorism, or to be more precise and avoid confusion, on Jihadist terrorism.

Beyond the different political and ideological interpretations evoked by the concept of Jihadist terrorism and the numerous definitions of it suggested by the press, political literature or the many pseudo-scientific analysis, we are going to try to understand Jihadism, making a distinction between the phenomenon as such, its causes and its effects.

With Jihadist terrorism we are faced with a new sort of international threat and an enemy until now little known who uses terror and mass destruction in the name of a so-called ideology religiously inspired.

This Jihadist « ideology », was proclaimed for the first time in 1998. Indeed, in February of that year, from their headquarters in Afghanistan, Oussama bin Laden and Ayman Al Zawahiri, drafted and announced to the world their first Fatwa which was to give birth to a new form of world-wide terrorism.

Unnoticed at the start, this Fatwa calls for the murder of all Americans all over the world because, according to its authors, that is « the individual duty of all Muslims who can do it, no matter in which country where that is possible."

The attacks of 09/11 appeared clearly to have been a direct result of this Fatwa. Jihadism had begun a war against the West by deviating four civil aircraft. More than 3000 people perished inconceivably and generally unexpectedly.

It was a new situation that not a single serious analyst or politician had foreseen.

Turning to Islam to justify the terror shocked the Western world and aroused fear of an international Islamic conspiracy. Resorting to mass violence ceased to be the monopoly of States and for the first time a handful of Jihadists had made as many victims in the United States as the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour during the Second World War.

A powerless world had discovered an enemy that did not hesitate to use terror and organised mass destruction, under the appearance of a centralised and hierarchically organised cluster appealing to franchised partisan or sub-constructed organisations whose sole objective is to destroy first American interests, but also European, Asian, Australian, Arab interests, everywhere in the world. This list is not restrictive and becomes longer and longer every day.

II. Jihadism, a real threat for the world

Since that dramatic date, the world is faced with a wave of terror without precedent in contemporary history. The U.S. State Department published its annual report on world terrorism on Friday April 28 2006. This report specifies that there were 11,111 terrorist attacks in the world in 2005[36]. A little over 14,600 persons lost their life, of whom 56 were Americans. In Irak, 3500 attacks killed 8300 persons and in the rest of the world 25,000 persons were injured and 35,000 kidnapped in 2005 in terrorist attacks. In view of these numbers it's clear that the situation is more than alarming and the threat omnipresent.

Why is Jihadist terrorism regarded today as the main international threat, when dozens of armed conflicts ravage the planet and make more victims than terrorism?

Why does the Jihadist threat appears today as more serious and high-priority when in fact international terrorism has always existed in all philosophical allegiances and in all continents?
Is there really a bigger danger today than yesterday?

In spite of an unprecedented mobilization in western countries in order to eradicate this phenomenon, the vast number of attacks carried out in the world now carry the signature of Jihadist groups. Though al-Qaeda has been weakened, its leaders captured or forced to live clandestinely, its logistic and financial means dismantled, this organisation remains a permanent danger and continues to prepare attacks in America and elsewhere. Recent studies on Jihadism make evident the emergence of a new assortment of small Jihadist groups with unverifiable and undetectable motifs. More and more small cells, isolated individuals, benefit from modern technologies and globalisation tools; they organise themselves and are active everywhere preparing and carrying out terrorist acts. These small Jihadists groups no longer get any outside directives and they are capable of carrying out cheap but spectacular attacks. The real

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[36] LESER, Eric, in *Le Monde* Dossiers & Documents N° 355, July-August 2006, p.1

challenge facing Europe and the Western world now is to locate and suppress these skilled Jihadist cells.

III. The different varieties of Jihadism

Describing Jihadism as an international movement it is absolutely necessary to be very cautious in its analysis. In spite of the fact that it appears universal, Jihadist terrorism falls into three categories which differ by their nature and motif:

- transplanted Jihadist terrorism (transnational)[37]
- implanted Jihadist terrorism (national)
- western Jihadist terrorism

This part of the analysis will allow us to understand the sort of Jihadism confronting the West now, in order to try to find appropriate ways to fight it.
In concrete terms, where is the difference to be found among those who practise Jihad in Palestine, Iraq, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Madrid or London?

a. *Transplanted Jihadism (transnational)*

It is a terrorist movement using violence as a sacred act and a duty, justified by the divine will. Al-Qaeda, which falls into this category, considers violence as an aim and uses it against crusaders and unbelievers to make Islam and the kingdom of God triumph in order to install a caliphate over the Arab world, from the Philippines to Morocco, based on the Charia (Islamic law). This objective is both unrealizable and inaccessible. Al-Qaeda is engaged in a fight without mercy against the "satanic empire" and its allies. Its members are fascinated by the Apocalypse and don't have anything to negotiate in the framework of any political project. They want to die as martyrs to make Islam live.

b. *Implanted Jihadism (national)*

Contrary to the kamikaze jihadists of the al-Qaeda type, implanted Jihadism does not consider violence as an aim in itself. Its actions are governed by the geopolitical realities of a country. It is the case of the Lebanese Hizbollah, Algerian FIS, Egyptian Jihad, Tunisian Ennahdha, Palestinian Hamas, which all want to gain power by causing the fall of governments or winning at the ballot box, or "fight the occupation and create a national State" (e.g. Palestine.)
The strategy of implanted Jihadism is worked out according to the local realities and therefore it is not based on the logic of a global Islamism.

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[37] The distinction is by KADHER, Bichara, *Terrorisme islamiste localisé, Terrorisme islamiste globalisé : Un essai de définition,* in Cahiers du CERMAC, Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur le Monde arabe contemporain, Louvain-La-Neuve, 2005

At the end of the 70s and beginning of the 1980s, the theorician of the group that assassinated President Sadat, Abdel Salam Farag[38], talking about Egypt, made it clear that it was necessary to attack in the first place the near enemies pledged to the crusaders and foreign powers, because if Jihad was carried out against a faraway enemy, the local despot would reap the benefit. For Abdem Salam Farag, it was necessary to establish in the first place an Islamic State in Egypt, then deal with Israel, "the distant enemy."

But the admitted failure of Jihadism implanted in the Arab countries lead certain Jihad theorists to opt definitely for a transplanted Jihadism. It was the case of Ayman Al Zawahiri[39] who after having fought in Egypt became the inspirer of transplanted Jihadism. He declared in the early 80s in an Arab daily: "We have failed to mobilize the masses. We haven't succeeded in making them understand our message, the masses have turned away from us and it is necessary to wake them up by spectacular operations, by operations involving martyrdom." That finished by convincing bin Laden of the need to change strategy and turn to distant spectacular actions on a big scale, which "would be more impressive and would mobilise the believers".

c. *Western Jihadism*

From 1992 we note the presence in Afghanistan or in Bosnia of more and more young Jihadists uprooted from their country of origin in the West. We will find some of them later in Guantanamo. Their most famous representative is the French Zacarias Moussaoui, condemned to life imprisonment in the United States. These young people can come from Islamic communities established in Europe sometimes for several generations, whose ancestors were immigrants from ancient European colonies and who came to establish themselves in the mother country for economic reasons. We note also the growing popularity of Islamic ideas among groups of young people *a priori* not much concerned about the religious Islamic message: Indians, Chinese or Africans.

Other recruits are young Europeans recently converted to Islam. For example, among the suspects recently arrested in London, are found three new converts: Stewart Whyte, 20 years-old, renamed Abdul Wahid, Brian Young, 28 years-old, alias Umar Islam, and Olivier Savant, 25 years, alias Ibrahim.

Paradoxically, these Western Jihadists are generally more radical than the average Muslim believer. They are, for the most part, educated and often well integrated and interpret the events of September 11 as a revenge for the humiliation that they feel in their daily life.

It is a new fact of major importance that we must take into account from now on, because it has been verified and confirmed at one and the same time by the attacks of September 11 in New York, those of July 7 2005 in London and then the recent attempts on August 10 2006 in Great Britain. These Jihadists, in the case of young people of Muslim origin, have cut themselves off from the Islamic world that they pretend to protect and, contrary to their parents, no longer have any or not much contact with the mother country of their elders, have not received any religious education and generally

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[38] KEPEL, Gilles, *Du Jihad à la Fitna,* Ed. Bayard, 2005, p.53
[39] KEPEL, Gilles, *Du Jihad à la Fitna,* Ed. Bayard, 2005, p.51

are totally ignorant of the realities of the Arab and Muslim world. Their radicalization is born of the fact that they feel lonely and marginalised by western society, because of their origin. They are not determined fanatics but rather lost idealists.

In the 1970s these young people would have certainly joined the violent far left, but today they adhere to what they find in the world-wide ideological market. They are an easy target for the recruiting agents of Jihad and the pseudo imams who incite to violence in the mosques and the suburbs. Their recruitment is quick and does not require any theoretical training. Once recruited and given a war name, they are immediately transferred to a country where Jihad is practised (Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chechnya, Iraq). European jails are also catalysts, "these are places of indoctrination, prayer and conversion, where those that have been condemned for terrorist acts are glorified. Under cover of a positive message – to bring back the young to the right path – preachers use extremist language that finds an echo in the individuals without roots and without references. Jihad appears to them as a redemptive means as well as an end to anonymity and mediocrity."[40]

The evolution of Jihadism in the West is dependant on the integration policy of the countries in which it is implanted and not all the Muslim in Europe have the same approach. From a poll carried out in the spring 2006 by the polling institute Pew Research Centre about Muslims in the world, it is evident that there is a great difference between British and French Muslims. 81% of British Muslims declare themselves Muslim before citizens of their country as against only 46% of French Muslims.
The recent revolts in the French suburbs have clearly demonstrated that young French Muslims, while protesting against the State and authorities, demand integration. It is worth noticing that one of the positive consequences of these riots has been the massive registration of these young protesters on the electoral roles. Among British Muslims the young confirm the lack of integration and live completely within their own communities. Their integration policy, for a long time praised as a model of tolerance, has only exacerbated the tensions by isolating a community withdrawn and made more sensitive to Jihadist propaganda and theories, thus placing Great Britain, according to Home Secretary, John Reid[41], in "a state of danger never known since the second World War."

IV. From Islam to Jihadism

We are now going to look into the connection of al-Qaeda with the Muslim religion to better understand the system of beliefs out of which bin Laden created his "ideology" and also to better understand his and his organisation's appeal to the Islamic and Arab world.
The history, culture and system of beliefs from which al-Qaeda has worked out his Jihadist and terrorist ideology are largely unknown. In fact, the movement is based on

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[40] STROOBANTS, Jean-Pierre, *Les terrorismes franchisés d'Al-Qaïda,* in Le Monde Dossiers & Documents N° 355, July-August 2006, p.1
[41] ANDREANI, Frédérique et WEBER, Olivier*, Londres : un complot de cauchemar*, in Le Point, N°1770, 17 August 2006, p.34

the failure of the myths of the founders of Arab nationalism and on the symbols of the glorious past of Islam.

a) *The failure of the founding myths of Arab nationalism*

It is undeniable that the Arab world experiences today a feeling of humiliation and despair. The latest events in Lebanon have shown the world the image of an Arab nation unable to find a common position faced with the state of affairs in Lebanon now. Arab public opinion continues to suffer an uneasiness that has nothing to do with Islam but which is due to the successive crises that the Arab world has known. These crises provoke a feeling of frustration, of humiliation and of oppression. Added to that, the realities of everyday life encountered by the majority of Arab countries (rise of unemployment, emigration of staff, impoverishment of the masses in spite of the wealth of the countries, social injustice, corrupted governments and total absence of democracy) cannot but breed traumatism.

Several events were there at the origin of this traumatism of the Arab nation. Among them:
- colonialism
- the Palestinian problem
- the military defeat of several Arab States by Israel
- the failure of all attempts to unite the Arab Nation.

Facing the different problems analysed and brought forward by all the specialists in the Arab world (to which we will not address ourselves here once more), many Muslims think that the century that followed the revelation of the Prophet Mohamed remains engraved in their memory and their collective conscience as being the one of the golden age of Islam.

b) *Evocation of Islam's glorious past*

During this period, Islam, glorious and triumphant, dominated the Arab Peninsula, the Middle East, North Africa and even Europe. This feeling of nostalgia about the glorious past of Islam is the fundamental factor of Arab nationalism as its mere evocation continues to mobilise the Arab masses today and gives them the will to want to live together inspired by the glorious example of the past.

At the time of the recent conflict in Lebanon, Hezbollah made references to this glorious past. The Party of God calls for the restoration of the dignity of the Muslim Nation and asserts that its resistance represents the effective materialisation of its revenge and the return to this glorious past.

Bin Laden refers to this past of the Islamic World and present himself as "the new Messenger". He intends to act as the rallying point of the entire Muslim "Umma" and pretends to be the new caliph at the head of an army of volunteers, "the Martyrs of Islam", who lead the just battle of "international Jihad" against the crusaders, to destroy America and the West, enemies of the Arab Nation, in order to make Islam triumph in the present world.

c) *The perception of the September 11 events by the Arab masses or the failure of Jihadist strategy*

Prey of a common feeling of unease due to the disappointing and bitter experience as well as the powerlessness of their leaders, the Arab masses lived those events in an ambiguous manner than can be summed up as: "not to cry for the United States nor to stand for bin Laden and al-Qaeda". Surveys carried out in Muslim countries after September 11 reveal that the vast majority of Muslims think that the United States war on terrorism is justified. Very few of them supported al-Qaeda"[42].

If it would be quite naïve to imagine that this Jihadist attack against the United States could really create in all Muslims a feeling of conceit and unreserved adherence to the Jihadists and their ideology, the trap set by this affair of September 11 is nevertheless dangerous because it generates great terminological confusion. Indeed, it puts on stage for the Arab masses the "ideal culprit", the United States, punished at last and defeated by the Islamic fundamentalists. Most spectators of these events would quickly associate the terms Muslim and Islamic Jihadists, Islam and terrorism.

Referring to a perverted and simplistic interpretation of Islam and deliberately creating terminological confusion between it and Jihadism, they recruit from those groups in the population that feel themselves excluded by the society in which they live, be it in the Middle East or in the West, and who share the same violent and false perception of Islam.

Once over this stage and with Jihadism (which takes over from terrorism) well defined, we are forced to make clear that a fundamental difference exists between Island and "Jihadist terrorism". Generally speaking behind each definition is hidden an ideological position or a stand that influences the perception of the problem by the political world, the media and public opinion. An amalgam between al-Qaeda and Islam must not be done systematically under pretext that the terrorists of September 11 were Muslims and that 15 of the 19 terrorists involved in the operation were Saudi Arabians. To talk of Islam instead of Jihadist terrorism is a simplistic and a risky shortcut.

And yet the idea of Jihad is found in the very heart of Islam inside which germs can give rise to more fanaticism than elsewhere.

According to the islamologist Bernard Lewis[43], Jihad is one of the fundamental duties passed on by the Prophet Mohamed to the Muslim community. The concept of Jihad appears frequently in the Koran, in several verses, but it lends itself to different interpretations according to circumstances.

The political economist Jean-Paul Charnay distinguishes between three different meanings which he refers to as a:

- dynamic overtaking of the being

- war enterprise in the strict sense

- spiritual ascent

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[42] *Rapport final de la Commission nationale sur les attaques terroristes contre les États-Unis,* document, Ed. des Équateurs, 2004, p.434

[43] SPITAELS, Guy, *La triple insurrection islamiste*, Ed. Luc Pire/Fayard, February 2005, p.310

Max Rodenbeek regrets that the concept of "Jihad = Holy War" has infected western understanding. Indeed, the majority of Muslims understand Jihad as a step to surpass oneself in the search for virtue. And as Gilles Kepel[44] has written, "The achieved Jihad will be that of a man who has reached the top of his islamism."

The meaning of the word Jihad does not cease to create controversies between the partisans of a positive and universally accepted definition of Jihad and those who think that the concept must be understood in the extremely restrictive sense of a call to a holy war and conquest. The latter, with a view to use Islam for political aims, restrict themselves to the military definition "Jihad = Holy War". This is how Jihadism is born.

V. Al-Qaeda: a Jihadist organization?

The task know is to try to analyse the characteristics of the Jihadist organization. Is it really a unique international organization or are there varieties of this movement?

Bin Laden, the founder of Jihadist terrorism, in his own terminology, refers to a Fatwa in the name of a "world-wide Islamic Front." He sees himself as leader of an international organization without frontiers, whose objective and sacred mission would be to spread Jihad all over the world. This leads him to found in Sudan "the Islamic army of Shoura." This army is going to allow him to manage and coordinate the different terrorist groups and organizations with which he will have a pact and to forge alliances with small groups all over the world. He will incorporate in it representatives of other autonomous organizations, and even entirely independent ones.

Ben Laden and his organization named « al-Qaeda » recruit[45] members from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Algeria, Morocco, Somalia, Libya, Iraq, Oman, Eritrea, and establish connections "although less formal" with other extremist groups from African countries such as Chad, Mali, Nigeria, Uganda, as well as with certain States of South-East Asia, such as Burma, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.
Al-Qaeda finances and supplies equipment and military training to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the Philippines, to the group Abou Saïef, to the Indonesian Jemaa Islamiyah (JI), whose cells are active in Indonesia, in the Philippines, in Malaysia and Singapore.
The Jihadist organization al-Qaeda appears as a real cluster. It has thrived also in the United States through an organization known as Al-Kaifa which has several tentacles among them the famous Mosque Farouk of Brooklyn.

Al-Qaeda is present as well in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago and Tucson. The American organization Al-Khifa is very active and recruits American Muslims destined to fight in Afghanistan. These members took part in terrorist operations on American territory in the 1990s. Also outside the United States, as in the attacks against the Embassy of the United States in East Africa. The organization is also present in the Muslim

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[44] KEPEL, Gilles, *Du Jihad à la Fitna,* Ed. Bayard, 2005
[45] *Rapport final de la Commission nationale sur les attaques terroristes contre les États-Unis*

communities in Europe. Contrary to the results of the first inquiries, the last attacks in Madrid and London seem to have been guided by Al-Qaeda.

Nevertheless we cannot talk of a unified command guiding the activities of a transnational network. If "to approach the Jihadist phenomenon from al-Qaeda had really the advantage of reducing the threat to a unique source, which once dried up, would cause the disappearance by dryness of all the rivers", recent studies of Jihadism have denied the idea of the menace from a single source and have underlined the existence of several Jihadist actors in the shape of local cells "which will continue to appear all over the world for years" and which "undoubtedly will join less and less such organizations as al-Qaeda. These cells will be able to carry out violent actions when they think it legitimate without outside coordination and without getting involved in a campaign on a large scale.[46]"

VI. In conclusion: Jihadism and Islamism, a new form of totalitarism

Since the 1930s, at the very time when Nazism was on its way in Europe, another totalitarism was being bred in the Orient, on the River Nile, more precisely in Egypt. Hassan El Banna[47], the founder of the movement Muslim Brothers, imagined already that an Islam inspired movement, sufficiently well organised, could see that one day: "the flag of Islam waves again in the wind and really high, in all the lands which have had the luck to welcome Islam during a certain time."

Youssef Al-Quaradhawi[48], he also believes in the possibility of conquering Europe by proselytism: "Islam has entered Europe twice and has left it twice… maybe the next conquest, Allah willing, will take place by prediction and ideology."

The victory of totalitarian Jihadism will depend to a degree on the resistance, or lack of it, that it will encounter in Europe. Each day, it witnesses, almost helplessly, the advance of Islamic incursions. The Muslim communities living in the West become more and more radical and discover Islamism as an identifiable refuge.

We are witnessing demands for reform of western laws and traditions to conform them to Muslim beliefs. In France, for instance, a country which advocates secularity, new prayer places (mosques) are appearing in work places (case of Roissy airport), Italy is creating on its beaches bathing zones reserved for women only, and in Belgium some members of the Muslim community demand hours for women only in municipal swimming pools to avoid mixing of the sexes. A passionate debate is taking place in hospitals, community clinics and medical surgeries regarding the right of women to auscultation by women doctors only.

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[46] STROOBANTS, Jean-Pierre, *Les terrorismes franchisés d'Al-Qaïda*, in Le Monde Dossiers & Documents N°355, July-August 2006, p.1

[47] EL BANNA, Hassan, *Epître aux jeunes* (text translated into French and relayed by an Islamist website, www.islamophile.org)

[48] FOUREST, Caroline, *La tentation obscurantiste*, essai, Ed. Grasset, p. 151

Islamism gains ground in all civil society areas. That is worrying numerous moderate Muslims and the Western world in which they live. Abdelwahab Meddeb[49], professor of literature in Paris-X-Nanterre, writes: "I have found a note by the French writer Georges Bataille who, analysing the proliferation of fascism in Europe in the 1930s, made a surprising detour to Islam. When politics make demands from an heterogeneous place, that is not that of mankind, they are capable of the worse excesses. . . When Islamic fundamentalists interpret a famous verse from the Koran asserting that "power is with God" as including politics, we are no longer talking metaphorically: it is God Himself who dictates policies. From this point of view, theoretically, Islamic Fundamentalism is the most uncompromising fascism created by human thought."

Why has it been necessary to wait until September 11 for public opinion in occidental democracies to suddenly realise that the Jihadist threat and political Islamic Fundamentalism risk to generate a new totalitarianism in the West in the 21st century?

Without dramatizing we can unquestionably state in conclusion that Islam and the West are hostages to Islamic Fundamentalism.

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[49] MEDDEB, Abdelwahab, interview, in Le Point, N° 1770, 17 August 2006, p.34

INDONESIA, ISLAM AND TERRORISM

by General (CR) Jean-Paul HUSTÉ,
Associate Researcher for ESISC

In the year 2000 Muslim militias, formed into expeditionary forces to help out their co-religionists in clashes with Christians that had been going on in the Molucca Islands since the year before, destroyed the image held in the West of Indonesia as the home of a tolerant form of Islam. On 12 October 2002, one year, one month and one day after the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, a double suicide attack took place in Bali, killing 202 people and giving Indonesia the tragic honour of the most murderous act of terror since September 11, and confirming the arrival of international Islamic terrorism on Indonesian soil.

The results of investigations into these attacks and those that came later[50] brought home this reality to Indonesians, together with the logic linking it to the evolution of Islam in their country down the decades of its existence as an independent state. That logic deserves to be examined in some detail.

The expressions of radical Islam in Indonesian society, like its chances of succeeding as an instrument of political conquest, are connected to a series of national and international factors. These have to be taken into account when evaluating the risk of seeing more Indonesian Muslims give in to the temptations of radicalism, and the chances of the 190 million of their co-religionists assume the consequences of the growth of such an activist minority.

1. Indonesia and Islam

The evolution of the relationship between Indonesian Islam and the government, of its influence on society and of its links with the rest of the *Ummah* (the worldwide community of believers) and particularly with international Islamism, were all directly affected by the country's social and political climate.

While Islam arrived and grew in Indonesia over the centuries far from the original home of the religion in the Middle East, and was never until now in a position to exercise any control over the affairs of state, the political upheavals of the *Reformasi* that grew out of the 1997 economic crisis gave Islam the opportunity to become a major force in Indonesia at the beginning of the 21st century.

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[50] 2002: October, US consulate and two night clubs in Bali, 202 dead.
2003: August, Marriott hotel in Jakarta, 14 dead.
2004: September, Australian embassy, 11 dead.
2005: October, three restaurants in Bali, 23 dead.

At the same time, relations had already been growing between local radical Islamist militants and the international Islamist movement, the most visible expression of which was the engagement of Indonesian volunteers in the Afghan *jihad*.

1.A. From the beginning to independence

It's worth remembering at the outset a few features of the spread of Islam in Indonesia, if only to be able to measure its growth over recent years against a historical background.

The late arrival – in about the 8th century – and the peaceful spread of Islam in the region were brought about by communities of merchants from cultures as varied as the Near East, India and China. The Islamisation of what was to become Indonesia happened slowly over centuries, with orthodox Islam until recent years finding an accommodation with the wide variety of religious beliefs spread across the archipelago.

Despite its geographical distance from the Islamic centres of the Middle East, Islam in Indonesia nevertheless kept in touch with the main currents of reform that affected the *Ummah*.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Indonesia saw the appearance of reforming Islamist organisations of a radical tendency, among them *Muhammadiyah* (created in 1912) and *Persis* (*Persantuan Islam* or Muslim Union, created in 1923).

The years prior to independence in 1945 saw Indonesian reformist Islam splitting into multiple groups around charismatic leaders with ambitions in both religious and political fields.

Thus, the rupture with *Muhammadiyah* and *Persis* saw the emergence of other reformist groups like *Nahdlatul Ulama* (Rebirth of the Ulema from 1926).

At the other end of the spectrum were the lay-groups who considered religion as something that ought to be kept private. The *Indonesian Nationalist Party* (PNI, formed in 1927) of Sukarno brought together a number of organisations of this tendency, forming an alternative political option to the religious tendency, on the basis of a nationalist platform.

That tendency, under Sukarno, would take the fore at the time of independence and would keep a lid on the political ambitions of militant Islamism on the national stage in the fifty years that followed.

1.B. From independence to the verge of the *Reformasi*

From 1945 to 1998, from the arrival of Sukarno to the resignation of Suharto, Indonesian Islam suffered many tribulations and underwent many frustrations, which have essentially given it the form it has today.

Relations with the regime fluctuated between alliance and rupture, by way of manipulation. It avoided the temptation to close in on itself out of ideological rigidity and opened up to international Islamism, and never gave up its ambition to play a major political role within the largest Muslim country in the world.

On 17 August 1945, after four years of struggle against the Dutch, Ahmed Sukarno and Mohammed Hatta proclaimed the independence of the Indonesian Republic on the basis of the 1945 Constitution which is still in force today. In December 1949 Sukarno became president and Hatta vice-president. From 1959 on, Sukarno suppressed the Parliament and imposed what he called "*managed democracy*".

From 1945, Sukarno promulgated *Pancasila*, the national philosophy of the future republic, whose five principles are still in force today: nationalism, internationalism (openness to the world), democracy (search for consensus), prosperity (of the state) and faith in a single god. Five monotheistic religions were officially recognised: Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Catholicism and Protestantism.

During that time, Muslims tried in vain to win a role in the first rank of politics. In 1945 the Muslim party *Masyumi* was formed to defend a platform of Islamic democracy along reformist lines close to Nahdlatul Ulama. But they could not wring from Sukarno his ratification of the compromise contained in the Jakarta Charter, which provided for an amendment to the Constitution obliging Muslims to obey Islamic law.

In 1949 the backlash appeared in the shape of the radical Islamic movement *Darul Islam* (Land of Islam) calling for the establishment of an Islamic state and the application of Sharia law. That period also saw the rise of guerrillas in Aceh province, in the west of Java and in southern Sulawesi, calling for secession on religious grounds – a trend that only started to be reversed in 1963.

The *Masyumi*, rejecting Sukarno's managed democracy, supported a rebellion in Sumatra which was put down by force, leading to the banning of this democratic Muslim party in 1960.

Thus, under Sukarno, attempts to Islamise the Indonesian republic all failed, coinciding with the retirement from the political scene of *Darul Islam* – put down militarily – and *Masyumi*.

In 1968, General Suharto replaced Sukarno as president. on the domestic political scene the "left" was wiped out and the military took over numerous posts in politics and in the world of business. This was the "New Order" imposed by Suharto, who also created his own political party, the *Gologan Karya* or *Golkar*.

Despite the help Muslims had given in eradicating Communism, the Suharto regime, aside from several minor openings, resisted any advance of Islam in the country's social and political life. The traditionalist tendency reacted by a hardening of its doctrine which affected former members of *Maysumi*. Faced with the impossibility of achieving a political role by institutional channels, the survivors of *Darul Islam* went underground

just as many militant Muslims opted for the path of *dakwah* (preaching). This new direction led to the creation in 1967 of the *Council for the Preaching of Indonesian Islam* (DDII) which called for more Quranic schools (*pesantren*) for the education of future jihadists and other members of Islamic militias of the Laskar Jihad, who would go on to become notorious in 1999 in the Moluccas.

Among the most radical were those of the Ngruki founded by former members of the Indonesian Islamic Youth Movement (GPII): Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Bashir, considered the inspiration behind the attacks of recent years.

Both men were sentenced in 1978 for complicity with *Darul Islam*, and imprisoned until 1982. On his release, Bashir became involved with setting up *urosh*, clandestine cells working according to Muslim Brotherhood methods considered nowadays as the cradle of Indonesia's *Jemaah Islamiyah*. When the justice system came after them again in 1985, the two men went to Malaysia and preached Salafist ideas in religious schools which in turn, years later, produced the future leaders of *Jemaah Islamiyah*.

But the domestic situation in Indonesia in the 1970s and 1980s was not the only think that helped produce a generation of Salafist Islamists more radical than their forebears. On an international level, two events coincided to send shockwaves through the Ummah: Israel's defeat of Arab forces in 1967, and the oil shock of 1973.

The first event caused not only humiliation, but also a profound sense of being surrounded among Arab nations, and consequently a radicalisation of political options. The second gave Saudi Arabia the financial means to spread Wahhabist propaganda across the world, largely through scholarships for students from the Middle East, Pakistan and Malaysia. Many young Indonesian Muslims, forced to flee their homeland because of their links with *Darul Islam*, or who had come into contact with radical circles during their studies abroad, took part in the first international jihad, against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

1.C. From the birth of the "New Order" to date

The end of the Suharto years saw a turning-point in Indonesian Islam's relationship with the regime, and thus also with society, beginning in the last years of the 1980s. The time of the *Reformasi*, from 1997, was to bring Islam a freedom of expression, influence and action never before seen. The Indonesian republic would try to present two faces to a watching world: that of the world's largest Muslim nation, and that of the world's third largest democracy.

Carried along no doubt by the worldwide wave of Islamic religious revival which also affected Indonesia, the Suharto regime in the late 1980s took a series of measures in various areas, now more repressive, now more liberal, which bit by bit added up to a greater presence of Islamic law.

Relations with *Nahdlatul Ulama* improved while Yusuf Habibie, a close ally of Suharto, quit as technology minister in 1990 in order to set up the *Association of Indonesian*

Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI). At the head of the Indonesian army, with its double political/military function dating back to the days of the independence struggle, there appeared a rift between those generals loyal to the idea of nationalism over religious beliefs, and a group of religious generals who rapidly imposed their influence on the political sphere.

The opening up of the regime to the increased influence of Islam led in 1995 to violence resulting from the ICMI's sectarian position regarding non-Muslims.

Then came the economic crisis of 1997 which led to the fall of Suharto in May 1998, sending the country into months of chaos and violence fed by the manipulation of public opinion by the Islamists. The popular rage turned against the ethnic Chinese community in early 1998.

We might here make an aside to point out that in fact the tone was now set for the next ten years: as the country tried to organise its new liberty via an orthodox democratic process, Islamist radicals worked to upset the fragile national social cohesion.

During his brief time in power, Habibie passed a series of important measures: the organisation of free elections, a referendum on independence in Timor, a law on regional autonomy, the restoration of press freedom and freedom to set up political parties. The two last of these were put to good use by the supporters of radical Islam.

The 1999 elections, the first free elections for 40 years coming after 34 years of the Suharto regime, allowed 140 million voters to choose a government that would work according to the principles of the 1945 Constitution. Despite the disappointments of the governments of president Abdurrahmann Wahid, known as "*Gus Dur*" (1999-2001) and Diah Permata Megawati (2001-2004) the people still went to the polls in large numbers (80% turnout) in 2004. Votes in the legislative election on 5 April went largely to *Pancasila*-tendency parties. Only the PPP (8.15%) of the traditional Indonesian Islamic tendency of Hamzah Haz managed to squeeze into the top five.

The presidential very clearly elections confirmed that trend. When president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono took office in October 2005, more than 410 of the 550 seats in the House of Representatives were held by members from non-Islamic parties. Nevertheless, the president owed his victory in part to the support of the Justice and Prosperity Party (PKS) which emerged out of the *urosh* of young Islamist students. Its leader, Hidayat Nur Wahid, was rewarded with the chairmanship of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR).

2. Recent developments in radical Islamism

In this context, against a background of the orthodox and formal practice of democracy that the most worrying, most sectarian and most criminal actions of radical Islam have shaken Indonesia, with the arrival of the conditions and environment it needed to flourish.

With the arrival of the *Reformasi*, radical movements associated with worldwide Islamism made advances, while the economic and political crises post-1997 saw the proliferation of organisations and parties, all pushing for the installation of an Islamic state to varying degrees, but all agreed on the need to impose Islamic law.

These "local" movements came to the fore during clashes between Christians and Muslims that caused 8,000 deaths between 1998 and 2002, as well as the displacement of tens of thousands of people in the Moluccan islands and Sulawesi. The origin of the clashes was not religious, but linked to a breach in the traditional balance caused by the immigration of Muslim populations in provinces where Christians had been in the majority. And it was the political demands of these newcomers that led them to become more radical, encouraged by the Council of the Ulema (MUI) and the ICMI, and led to the outbreak of violence on ostensibly religious grounds.

Some 3,000 *Laskar Jihad* militants organised the spread of jihad into these provinces, where they joined up with the local militia (*Mujahidin Kompak*) and the fighters of *Jemaah Islamiyah*. They appear also to have benefited from the generous "neutrality" of the Army. The conflict went on until early 2002 and the signature of peace accords between the communities. However the situation remains very tense even today. New murderous attacks on Christians took place at Poso in 2004, and three young Christian girls were beheaded there in late 2005.

Local militias attached to so-called "fronts" like the *Islamic Defence Front* (FPI) or the *Hezbollah Front* appeared in 1998. They took it upon themselves to "police" the population's morals, based on their own interpretation of Islamic law. These movements prospered among a population that still looks kindly on what they see as a sort of self-policing by the people. The movements are especially active around the time of Ramadan, and together with the *Hizbut Tahrir* "liberation" party (HTI) are behind all demonstrations in "defence" of Islam. So they are regularly out on the streets, getting the attention of the media and public opinion, and making demands on local authorities and the government of the republic. Some of those demands are met: a ban on the sale of alcoholic drinks, for example, or the compulsory wearing of the veil by female civil servants.

These same agitators are also behind attacks and criminal acts which held stoke an atmosphere of tension between the communities in the country. So for example attacks and sectarian demonstrations grow in number against Christians and against the Muslim sect *Ahmadiyah*. Several prominent Islamic moderates and members of moderate groups have received death threats.

These violent actions originate in part in the spread of fatwas by the Indonesian Council of the Ulema (MUI) – the supreme Islamic authority recognised as such by the state – condemning pluralism and liberalism, their decrees being picked up and spread by preachers.

Such groups of extremist zealots recruiting in the different sectors of society such as among Javanese students or criminal fringes, whether or not they are linked to the

radical *Darul Islam* movement, are capable at any time of turning to physical aggression and crime. They seem for the time being not to have achieved a capacity for large-scale coordinated action, handicapped as they are by their sectarianism and their poor organisational structures. But that latter characteristic could also be their strength if they had to face a possible campaign of repression.

Any discussion of radical movements linked to international Islam has to turn to *Darul Islam* and especially to *Jemaah Islamiyah*. That group, in the form we now know it, was founded in 1993 by Abdullah Sungkar, a long-standing confederate of Abu Bakar Bashir at a time when the first Indonesian international jihadists – the 272 Movement – were returning from Afghanistan to refuge in Malaysia. Some of those fighters joined Darul Islam, but most turned to JI, thought to be more committed to the fight for Islam.

Remember that the aim of the founders of JI had been the creation of a theocratic Muslim state bringing together Muslims from Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei, Indonesia and the southern Philippines.

The JI members are thought to have left Malaysia in 1995 for the southern Philippines were members met and found support from the *Moro Islamic Liberation Front* (MILF). On their return to Indonesia they saw the upheavals of the end of the Suharto regime in 1998. As mentioned previously, jihad in the Moluccas and Sulawesi not only gave the JI an opportunity to return to Indonesian soil but also to recruit, train and prepare their young fighters for war through a period of three years of violence.

Although initially set up in Malaysia, the JI had from the start a strong Indonesian flavour, influenced by returned Afghan veterans. The head of operation was the Indonesian Riduan Isamuddin, known as *Hambali*, and his spiritual advisor was none other that Abu Bakar Bashir – who denies any link with the JI – following the death of Sungkar in 1999. Also at Hambali's side from Afghanistan through to Malaysia was Mohammed Iqbal Rahman, known as *Abu Jibril*.

The trend was to continue in the following years, as the Indonesian Aris Sumarsono, alias *Zukarnaen*, took over from Hambali on the latter's arrest in Thailand in August 2003 by US intelligence services. The job of spiritual adviser was passed along to the Indonesian Abu Rusdan when Bashir was arrested weeks after the Bali attacks of 2002. But while numerous officers and soldiers were Indonesian, the JI goes on recruiting in SE Asia, as seen by the involvement of Filipinos and Malaysians in the Bali bombings and in the attacks on the Australian embassy in September 2004.

This organisation only in fact came into the glare of publicity at the time of the first attacks carried out in Indonesia: a series of bomb attacks on churches at Christmas 2000, followed by Bali in 2002. Bashir went back to preaching in the *Al Mu'min pesantren*, and set up the *Indonesian Council of Mujahidin* (MMI) in Yogyakarta in 2000. That organisation is very involved in promotion of the application of Sharia and according to some experts is part of the JI's operational wing. The part played by the "emir" of JI in the attacks of recent years, for some of which he has been charged, have not been clearly recognised by the Indonesian justice system, which has conducted the

case with "prudence", or as the US and Australia would have it, with weakness, to judge by the fact that a first sentence of four years in prison in 2003 was reduced to three years and then led to the suspect's release in 2004, when he was immediately re-arrested for belonging to a terrorist organisation. Having had his sentence reduced on the National Day in August 2005, Bashir only served 26 months in prison and was released on 14 June this year to the cheers of the faithful. Not surprisingly he claimed his arrest was the result of a plot by "*others*" (meaning Westerners, Christians and Jews) against Muslims. That may in part explain the weakness of the Indonesian authorities, who seem to want to keep under control Indonesian public opinion, which in the international context of recent years has tended to see the government's anti-terrorist actions, and particularly those aimed at familiar public figures, as aggression aimed at the Muslim community as a whole.

Be that as it may, Bashir's past record gives him a major and undoubted moral responsibility in the rise of crimes attributed to extreme-radical Islam in this part of the world, and in Indonesia in particular. His release is worrying in that some of the bomb-makers responsible for the attacks are still at large. But his audience is restricted to the most radical circles, mentioned above. Despite frequent contacts with representatives of *Nahdlatul Ulama* and of *Muhammadiyah*, those major organisations of Indonesian Islam will never agree with his ideological direction, especially following the blind attacks of recent years.

"*Because his combat is the true combat in support of Islam, I support the struggle of Osama bin Laden, but not terrorism: the terrorists are America and Israel*," stated Bashir in October 2002. The question of links between the JI and Al Qaeda is an important one, but must be approached cautiously in the context of the global war on terror. Do such links even exist? Without a doubt, if only because we have here two organisations of the same spiritual community. In addition, investigations carried out after the attacks in Indonesia provided plenty of evidence, if not quite proof or confessions, of the existence of a connection.

It is certain that "assistance" has been offered by one organisation to the other over the last ten years, and not only in connection with the Indonesian attacks. But that does not prove there are permanent links, and in particular a relationship of dependency.

The first contacts took place during the Afghan jihad, in the Pakistani training camps, and seem to have concerned only a limited number of people, which is only logical consideration the need for secrecy.

Among those people was *Hambali*, who seems to have become *Al Qaeda's* representative for South-East Asia after his time in the Pakistani training caps, before becoming head of operations for the JI. Another Indonesian veteran of the Afghan fighting, and a secret and important member of the JI, Abu Dujana alias *Sorim,* who is currently being sought by Indonesian police in connection with the Bali bombings, is said still to maintain links with *Al Qaeda*.

In the end, given our current state of "open" knowledge of these terrorist movements, and at the risk of adopting a simplistic point of view, it would be rash to assume that Jemaah Islamiyah is no more than a South-East Asian branch of *Al Qaeda*.

In conclusion, recent movements in radical Islamism in Indonesia show that there is a real potential for extremist violence, and not only from the *Jemaah Islamiyah* faithful. JI has been severely affected by the efforts of the Indonesian police and justice system, but retains the capacity to strike in Indonesia and elsewhere in the region, as it has over the last five years. With its combat-hardened and committed militants, able to find resources and support from within the Salafist tendency – the jihadists of the *Pembela* front, *Hezbollah* or *Hizbut Tahrir* – the organisation is a latent threat capable of rising up in the short or medium term, whatever may happen on the national and international scenes. It is nevertheless certain that JI's freedom of action, like the growing influence of radical Islam in Indonesia, depend on a number of factors which have to be identified and qualified.

3. Some factors in the overall development of the situation

The identification of factors likely to have influenced Islam's place in the social and political life of Indonesia, and in particular the importance of the fundamentalist tendency, comes with recognition of the fact that it is first of all a question of human perception, both individual and collective, of the whole living environment.

Indonesians have only had full democracy and free expression for less than ten years. The same goes for contact with the rest of the world and with the daily lives of that part of most concern to most Indonesians: the *Ummah*.

3.A. Economic growth

Economic growth has a direct impact on the level of a society's development. Indonesian society has several built-in factors tending towards instability, and the country's economy is not in a state to counter these. While adherence to radical Islam is not explained only by the level of well-being of the people, those Muslim countries where governments do not give priority to the social aspirations of the people are the ones who have seen the "Islamists" gain ground and increase their influence in political affairs.

A population of some 242 million is continuing to grow at a rate of about 1.45% a year, while life expectancy has risen to 69 years. The active part of the population, with 29% aged below 15 years and 66% aged between 15 and 64, is growing at a rate far greater than the economy. The workforce is still largely dependent on agriculture (42%) with only 16% employed in industrial activities. Indonesian society is for the most part poor, with enormous variety in ethnicity, religion (even if 88% are Muslim), race and culture.

The juxtaposition of these two realities, to which we might add the territorial discontinuity of the national archipelago as well as the huge difference in population

density between Java (7% of the area and 60% of the population) and the other islands, presents a formidable challenge, not to speak of a threat to the unity of Indonesia.

Indonesia has been able to reclaim a certain financial stability since the Asian crisis of 1997, largely by implementing healthy fiscal policies. However some major handicaps cast a cloud over the future of economic development, while the economy is suffering the effects of terrorism, epidemics and natural disasters which put pressure on tourism, an important economic resource.

The first of these handicaps relates to the character of the Indonesian population and society mentioned above. Next, as a consequence of anxiety arising out of a climate of sporadic violence, Indonesia has not benefited from a fund of confidence sufficient to attract the investments needed to improve infrastructure and restore competitivity to its aging industrial base.

Despite proven reserves, Indonesia has become a net importer of oil as a result of reduced production. The country therefore derived no benefit from the oil price rise, and has seen its resources undercut by imports as much as by State support for the sale-price of petrol. We should also complete the picture by mentioning the regular devaluations of the rupee, inflation ever on the point of taking off and a fragile banking system.

Growth, despite all that of about 5.5% in 2005, has done nothing to help bring about the cut in unemployment planned by the government, and growth of around 7% will be required in 2006 for the economy to mop up 350,000 new people arriving on the workforce. For this year, the experts' forecasts are cautious: 5.3% GNP growth, inflation continuing on its current path, and domestic consumption limited. However budgetary discipline will carry on, with policies of extreme austerity while indebtedness comes under control. At the beginning of the second half of 2006, however, and as a result of oil prices, the government reviewed its budget forecasts downwards.

In the social area, an effort should be made to finance the education system, but in 2006 that will only half the budget deemed necessary for the targets it has to reach. Elsewhere, serious problems continue to weigh on the public health system, including avian flu and the reappearance of polio. Three million Indonesians suffer from malnutrition, with many infants dying of malnutrition every year.

Finally, the official unemployment rate fluctuates around 10% with no hope of a significant reduction in the near future. On the other hand, radical Indonesian Islamic organisations have organised their own resources to support the *pesantren*, offering jobs and wages to the faithful.

This view of the handicaps of Indonesian society and economic performance leave no room for optimism in the short and medium term as far as an improvement of the living conditions of the immense majority of Indonesians is concerned.

3.B. The actions of the government in three areas

Since the coming of the *Reformasi*, successive governments have apparently adopted the posture of the ostrich, or have been powerless in the face of the most excessive manifestations of the radical Muslims, while at the same time allowing the values of Islamic law to make steady progress not only in people's minds but actually in local and national legislation.

While those responsible for attacks and other forms of violence since 2000 have been prosecuted and punished severely, the government still seems to be hesitant to take the initiatives necessary to regain control of the situation and combat the problems caused by the followers of radical Islam. This is all the more surprising for a Western observer in that the results of the elections of 1999 and 2004 (see above) show that the great majority of Indonesians have not gone so far as to "vote Islam", while major organisations such as *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdlatul Ulama* have come out in opposition to the introduction of Sharia to the Constitution. The population as a whole, one sees, is a strong supporter of public morality, but at the same time – as far as the Muslim majority is concerned – is calling for recognition, in Indonesia as elsewhere in the world, of its specific character.

Faced with this split, three areas for government action could have an influence on the slippage of society and its rules into the grasp of a radical activist minority. An examination of each of these areas will show how much of an effort is required to regain control of the situation.

- **First, the fight against corruption**

Officially categorised as a national problem from the time of the end of the Suharto regime, corruption is an aggravating factor in the socio-economic context, and acts as a brake on any type of reform. Business circles as much as public administrations and the armed forces are riddled with this "traditional" sickness.

In his *Medium-Term National Development Plan* for 2004-2009 (RPJM), President Yudhoyono included the launch of a "National Movement to Eradicate Corruption". The fight against the problem is the aim of a very active campaign. Several hundred cases have been uncovered and tried. Prison sentences have been tough, and important public personalities have not been spared. But critics continue to argue that government promises have had little effect on a better enforcement of the law to date. The Supreme Court itself is accused of having covered up numerous cases of the corruption of judges in 2005.

At the same time, the *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdlatul Ulama* have recalled that corruption is considered a major sin by the Quran. At the beginning of July the two organisations jointly published two books: "*NU Against Corruption: An Exegetical and Juridical Study*" and "*The Islamic Jurisprudence of Anti-Corruption*".

- **Second, respect for the five pillars of *Pancasila***

A move toward the preponderance of Islam, seen for many years but particularly since the *Reformasi,* has the result of daily sectarian excesses, in the functioning of the state as elsewhere, seen for example in the drafting of laws, with the increased risk to the cohesiveness of the republic. Before the *Reformasi,* polygamy and legal alms had already been institutionalised.

A higher level was reached with the resolution of the Aceh question, with the authorities of the rebel province being given the power to legislate and apply Sharia in a certain number of cases from 2001. The example of Aceh was sure to spread: other local, municipal and provincial authorities (22 so far) have passed laws inspired by Islamic law that affect public order and people's lives.

Elsewhere, the irredentist tendencies from which the country was born (four separatist conflicts between 1946 and 1963 and later in Papua, the Moluccas and Aceh) are in danger of being amplified by the state's speeding up of decentralisation: locally elected provincial governors, freedom for schools to choose their own syllabus, governors allowed to decide on the constitutionality of local laws inspired by Sharia etc.

All of this provides a context conducive to the rupture on many fronts of Indonesia's fragile cohesion based on *Pancasila,* which the government has vowed to protect. But the observer who watches them in action from day to say could be excused for doubting their real attitude.

- **Last, the prosecution of criminals and other trouble-makers**

The battle against Islamist terrorism is energetically carried out under the authority of the chief of the national police, General Sutanto, who graduated from military academy at the same time as the president. *Special Detachment 88* (SD88) of the police, created with American aid in 2003, lays claim to the capture or killing of more than 200 "*terrorists*". A judicial police unit was also formed, this time with Australian aid, while French influence means that the offence of *criminal conspiracy* is due to be placed on the statute book.

The last major success due to the efforts of the police was the death in November 2005 of Azari ben Husin, one of two Malaysian bomb-makers responsible for the Bali attacks in October that year, and suspected of involvement in the attacks of 2002. His accomplice, Noordin Mohammed Top, is still being sought after the discovery of JI arms caches pointed towards particularly virulent Indonesian Islamist cells. The arrests of suspects and the discovery of further arms caches followed in the course of recent months.

It now seems that the police are also now putting a great deal of effort into identifying and pursuing those responsible for sectarian offences not directly linked to the JI. The sentences handed down to those found guilty of bombings and crimes of violence are

severe, from years in prison to the death penalty. The clemency shown to Bashir is notable by its rarity.

This new will, also mentioned above, is supported by the West and in particular by the United States and Australia.

Indonesia was "rewarded" in November 2005 with a re-establishment of military cooperation with Washington after 14 years of arms embargo. The fight against terrorism and marine piracy are the first beneficiaries of this new relationship and of the financial aid it brings for defence and security. However cooperation with the Indonesian police started immediately after the first Bali bombings to allow the Indonesian police to increase their capacity for fighting terror (initiated with SD88) and especially tracking terrorist financing. The police also received technical assistance on signing up for an anti-terror initiative centred on border controls. SD88 received $6 million in 2006 through an anti-terrorist aid programme.

Cooperation with Australia against terrorism has become especially close since the first Bali attacks, when a bilateral intelligence and information team made up of members of the Australian federal police and the Indonesian national police was formed. Similar moves were made in 2004 (the attack on the Australian embassy) and in 2005 (the second Bali bombing). And the Australian government also provided generous aid to Indonesian victims. These initiatives followed the signature in February 2002 of a *Memorandum of Understanding* on fighting terrorism between Canberra and Jakarta, which since 2004 has also involved aid funds worth US$15 million. The main aim of the cooperation is an improvement in the Indonesian police's overall capacities, in particular via the *Coordination Centre for the Fight against Transnational Crime*, with the aim of providing better technical assistance in battling money-laundering, in border control and in cargo security. In February 2004 Australia and Indonesia jointly presided over a regional ministerial meeting devoted to the fight against terrorism.

The future of cooperation on counter-terrorism with Great Britain was the subject of talks in March this year between UK prime minister Tony Blair and Indonesian president Yudhoyono.

We should note that the government in general and the president in particular only rarely mention successes in the fight against terrorism. However in recent months pressure from the majority and from Muslim moderates has led Mr. Yudhoyono to speak out in condemning the actions of radical militias, and arguing for the merits of the *Pancasila*.

4. The image of "The Other"

It is not necessary to go too far into this subject, when one realises how the mass of Muslims regards every event worldwide which, one way or another, has an effect on Islam and on the *Ummah*. The ban on the wearing of the Islamic veil in French schools, to the conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Middle East, are for many Indonesian

Muslims today proof of a conspiracy against Islam on the part of *America, Christians and Zionists* together. That is, at any rate, what any of them would be likely to say in public.

Considering the international news, it would be hard to be optimistic about the future image of "*the other*" and the West given to and received by the Muslim masses in Indonesia, nor about the durability of that image in people's minds and judgements.

An extract from an editorial in the *Jakarta Post* of 17 July on Israel's military action in Lebanon illustrates the point perfectly:

"What is perhaps even more dangerous is the "offshoot" of this crisis. While we can all understand the anger spilling onto the streets of Jakarta and other places around the world, what Olmert and his friends in Washington may not realize is that the blatant violence they are perpetrating is brewing hostility and zealousness among the average man on the street. While the overwhelming majority of people will remain within the fine line of public decency, the events transpiring in the Middle East are giving latitude for a misguided few to convert ignorant individuals to violence."

Ten days later, the head of the Islamic Youth Movement Saib Didu announced the departure of some 200 jihadists to "fight Israel" in Lebanon.

5. The outlook for the future

The country remains mired in a difficult social and economic situation, while the arrival of democracy, and with it freedom of expression and association have allowed Indonesian Islam to adopt a major political role unprecedented in the nation's history, and hard to credit given the tensions surrounding international relations. The cohesion of this archipelago nation, ill-starred since its inception, seems these days rather fragile given some aspects of how the country is administered, which permit autonomous legislation, while placing locally-elected personalities at the head of provincial governments.

The authority of the state could weaken as a result of this overall situation, a risk intensified by the population splitting along existing religious and ethnic fault-lines, shaken up by recent events now becoming more commonplace, and by the actions of radical Muslim movements against whom the government seems to have no clear line of action, let alone the power to implement one.

The successes of the fight against terrorism, which still have to be weighed against the test of time, have allowed Indonesia to pick up its peaceful and profitable relations with Western countries and regional neighbours. Current efforts will probably be intensified out of a sense of strategic importance both for Indonesia and her allies, who all have something to fear in the possible loss of all or part of the world's largest Muslim nation to radical Islamism.

That terrifying outlook would not solely be a result of the blind, criminal actions, devoid of any political sense, of the *Jemaah Islamiyah*, which clearly would not merit the adherence of the vast majority of Indonesians. But it is a foreseeable outcome, given the growing attraction among the younger Muslim generations to a sort of "new moral order" informed by religion which could, given time, break through the "traditional" Indonesian framework for Islam.

Five years after "*9/11*" it is not reasonable to think that drama had a direct effect on domestic developments in Indonesia, except that like many other countries Indonesia was called upon to play its part – under pressure, it is true, from its own "*bad guys*" – in the fight against international terrorism. In fact Indonesian Islam had been caught up for years before in the dramatic evolution of relations between the *Ummah* and the rest of the world. And it is caught up now more than ever.

ISLAMISM IN EAST AFRICA:
A GAIN IN STRENGTH THAT MAY BE RECENT,
BUT APPEARS INEXORABLE

by Olivier BERGEVIN, Associate Researcher for ESISC

Although Muslim NGOs and the jihad movements have always been very involved in the east coat of Africa and around the Indian Ocean, we have to accept the fact that, since the turn of the century, a significant evolution has occurred with political Islam gaining in strength until it is now in a position to take over the leadership of a number of countries, either by democratic means or by force.

To take up the distinction made by islamologist, Olivier Roy[51], political Islam or Islamism refers to *"aspirations for power"* whereas organized Islam *"is similar to neo-fundamentalism"* in its focus on the family and religious centres. The first will tend to organize and structure itself to take over political power and the prerogatives that pertain to it. The second, although it may exert pressure on the State, is not really interested in assuming political power; the *"neo-fundamentalists"* are more concerned with *"creating their own miniature versions of an ideal society"*.

Islamism may be the prerogative of a political party that attempts to impose its views by legal and democratic means (social planning, participation in elections, campaigns, etc.), but political Islam can also stem from jihadism, which is, by definition, openly violent and offensive. Although the nihilistic nature of the jihad movements is undeniable, this does not mean that their political aspect should be ignored. The aims of jihadism that have been identified may include the wish to propagate orthodox Islamic values by force, to attack the interests of enemy nations on a particular territory, to terrorise populations and/or to shake regimes they feel are pro-occidental or anti-Islam, but certain movements would not hesitate to include exaggerated territorial and societal claims, allowing them to present themselves as political actors, capable of seizing power by force.

However, connections between the political and jihad movements are sometimes extremely close and the politicians can work with the jihadists to achieve a common goal, such as placing an Islamic power at the head of a given territory (a country or simply a region through a process of autonomy or independence).

Five years after September 11th, while the countries that wield substantial influence in this area of sub-Saharan Africa (the US, France and Great Britain) are becoming more and more preoccupied with orthodox Islam, the increasingly entrenched presence of political Islam in East Africa is well-placed to trigger off tensions both at an internal level (the radicalisation of the machinery of State, pressurizing populations or rejecting

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[51] ROY Olivier, *L'échec de l'Islam politique (The Failure of Political Islam)*, Seuil,1992, 255p.

various freedoms) as well as externally (a potential rise in tension between neighbouring states or a radicalisation of relations with the Western powers).

I. Political Islam in the Horn of Africa and the Comoro Islands: Review

The reality of a political Islam fully asserted itself in these regions of Africa at the beginning of the twentieth century.
In order to identify those elements that are likely to encourage the rise and implantation of Islamism, we need to make a review of the current situation.

1) Over Ten Centuries of Islamic Presence

The Muslim presence took effect at the end of the 7th century when Arabs from the Arab peninsular occupied a strip of coastal land extending from southern Eritrea to Somalia.
Arab-Muslim expansion continued towards the south with the creation, in the 9th century, of Sofala in Mozambique, through Zanzibar, the Comoros and part of Madagascar. Arab-Muslims reigned supreme in this region of Africa until the first western incursions began at the beginning of the 16th century, ensuring a permanent presence by creating city-states such as Zeila, Mogadiscio, Malindi, Mombasa or Kiloa. Nonetheless, this presence was restricted to the coastal areas and any penetration into the interior remained limited.
It was only from the first half of the 19th century that the Arab-Muslims began to explore and to exploit the East African hinterland (mainly to find candidates for the slave trade). By then this new cultural and commercial area had expanded to encompass southern Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, the eastern part of the Congo, Tanzania, Zanzibar, Mozambique, Malawi and East Zambia.
These areas of influence and, above all the Arab-Muslim cities, were drastically reduced by the end of the 19th century under the assault of the huge European colonial conquests, until at the end they were concentrated around the Sultanate of Zanzibar.

2) The Situation Country by Country

It seems quite clear that political Islam can only claim to be in a position to decide the destiny of a country if the majority of its population, or at least a considerable number of its members, share the Muslim faith. It is also obvious that internal problems (economic and social crises, tribal and/or religious clashes, ethnic and autonomist claims, etc.) and a tense geo-political situation (antagonistic relations with neighbouring states, wars for regional influence, foreign uprisings, etc.) are all factors that could encourage the flowering and dominance of Islamism.

A review of the different national and international geopolitical facts and the potential for political Islam in the countries of the Horn of Africa to the Comoros.

a) The Horn of Africa

- **Eritrea:**

In this tiny country of 117,600 km² for a population of 4.4 million inhabitants, Islam is definitely the majority religion (46% of Muslims as against 45% of Christians, most of whom are Orthodox). Relations between Muslims and Christians are good, mainly because of a common alliance has existed between them for 30 years in their battle for independence. This fight against Ethiopia has given rise to a strong sense of patriotism which allows present-day Eritreans to overcome religious and ethnic differences.

Some jihad movements operate in Eritrea, although these are very limited in their influence (these include the *Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement*[52] and the *Eritrean Islamic Salvation Movement*[53]).

On the international front, the lives of Eritreans keep tune with the crisis with Ethiopia. The Eritrean-Ethiopean conflict began in 1998 when the two countries were contesting a border area around the town of Badme. After a particularly murderous war, a peace agreement was signed in 2000, a buffer zone created and a United Nations mission sent in to monitor the situation (the UNMEE). In 2002, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) found in favour of Eritrea. Since that time, the situation has remained stable between the two countries, with Ethiopia contesting the decision of the ICJ. This makes for a particularly volatile situation in the region.
Since May/June 2006, a rapprochement between Asmara and Somalia's new leaders has accentuated the crisis and it seems more than likely that the conflict will be resumed.

This means that Eritrea has moved closer to the Somali Islamic Tribunals [54] in diplomatic terms, while also renewing relations with Sudan (broken off in 1995)[55]. Finally, Asmara´s wish for closer relations with China has now become clear, to the detriment of the United States which has been accused by President Afewerki of supporting Ethiopia.

Eritrea is therefore locked into an alliance with two countries that are clearly controlled by radical and violent Islamism. This situation is even more problematic for Asmara as Washington, spurned by the Eritrean regime, is very wary of its move towards countries that are so tolerant of jihadism.
Uncontested on the political front, the only party in power (the *People's Front for Democracy and Justice*) can divert the attention of a poor and undeveloped population, which remains fixed on the conflict with Ethiopia, by means of the growing and sustained militarisation of the society. The situation is even more resistant to any

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[52] UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE. *Terrorism in the Horn of Africa*, Special Report n°113, January 2004, http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr113.html#eritrea
[53] HAGOS, Asgede. *Why U.S. should not align with Ethiopia against Somalia on the War Against Terrorism*, USA Africa Online, http://www.usafricaonline.com/hagos.ethiosomalia.html
[54] PANAPRESS. *Ethiopia accuses Eritrea of destabilising the Horn of Africa*, June 28th, 2006.
[55] XINHUA. *Asmara and Khartoum to resume diplomatic relations*, June 13th, 2006.

possible rising tide of political Islam as there are no religious rifts and the few Eritrean jihad movements have very little support from the local population.

- **Djibouti**

In this city-state with fewer than one million inhabitants, Islam is by far the majority religion (96%), but religious conflict is almost inexistent with the government subsidising 20% of the costs of Catholic schools and providing protection for non-Muslim religious buildings.

The remarkable fact about Djibouti is that the country has become a strategic zone, as much for France as for other nations (headed by the United States) who use Djibouti as a zone for training and military protection. The presence of these various military forces provides Djibouti with 70% of its budget, but also, and most importantly, contributes to the maintenance of a stable internal structure and acts as a dissuasive force vis-à-vis external treats.

Although Djibouti remains resolutely within France's orbit of influence, the country runs its own diplomacy, profiting from the presence of different occidental powers on its territory and proving susceptible to the siren calls from China. The cultural influence of Arab-Muslim countries also finds fruitful soil in Djibouti.
Therefore, although Djibouti possesses a number of ingredients that could make it fertile ground for political Islam or the jihadists, (few individual liberties, the presence of foreign armed forces, the proximity of Somali and Yemeni fundamentalists and the presence of thousands of refugees, etc.), the country has only ever experienced two terrorist acts and remains impregnated by moderate Islamism. We can add in to this mix the cordial relations that exist between the populace and the French armed forces and the absence of Islamist political parties, to conclude that Djibouti does not appear likely to become a potential voting constituency for political Islam.

- **Somalia**

Despite the efforts of the international community, Somalia was, until the recent past, a territory without a State, abandoned to the warlords and degenerating, since 1991, into total anarchy. Its 640,000 km² have become a training ground and refuge for various terrorist groups or for terrorists on the run[56] (some of whom are affiliated to *Al-Qaeda*[57]).

Since June/July 2006, after a lightning military offensive[58], most of Somalia (the capital, the centre and a large part of the south) came under the control of jihadist bands (that

[56] This was notably the case of the Comorian, Fazul Abdullah Mohamed, one of the most wanted terrorists in the world. Michaëlla COOSNAPEN. *Maurice was the target of an Al-Qaeda terrorist*, 5-Plus, n°686, July 13th 2006, http://www.5plusltd.com/new/archive/2003/juillet/13_07_2003/alqaida.htm
[57] BOUKHARS, Anouar. *Somalia: Africa's Horn of Anarchy*, The Jameston Foundation, Terrorism Monitor, Volume 4, Issue 1, January 12th 2006, http://jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2369864
[58] RODIER, Alain. *Somalia in the process of becoming Talibanised?*, CF2R, Current news n°43, June 2006, http://www.cf2r.org/fr/actualite/notes_actualite_43.php

grouped together to become the Union of Islamist Tribunals or UIT). At the end of July 2006, the UIT became the Supreme Islamic Council of Somalia (SICS) with Hassan Dahir Aweys[59] as president. This fundamentalist, former head of the military wing of the Al-Ittihad Al-Islami movement, is suspected by the United States of maintaining relations with *Al-Qaeda*. The creation of the SICS *"has resulted in the marginalisation of the Federal Transition Government in Somalia (FTG) from the president Abdullahi Yusuf. Established in 2004 with the support of the United Nations, the FTG has only ever been able to control its headquarters, Baidoa, a small town in the centre of the country, and even that has presented problems. Devoid of an army, or almost, and worn down by internal disputes, the FTG appears ready to fall"*[60]. The military wing of the SICS is said to be headed by the redoubtable Aden Hashi Ayro[61], who is considered to be the spiritual son of Hassan Dahir Aweys[62]. This assumption of power is inevitably accompanied by the beginnings of political organization. As the SICS in fact represents the true government, it has progressively taken on all the attributes this entails and wields the political power it needs to install *Shari'a* law in Somalia[63].

Other jihadist organizations exist alongside this embryo political Islam, such as *Al-Itihaad Al-Islaami* (a Somali group essentially active in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya) or the Somali branch of *Al-Takfir Wal-Hijra* (an Egyptian organization). But these entities do not really have any political potential, as they are essentially neo-fundamentalist. However, they can definitely contribute to providing public support for political Islam and do play an auxiliary role.

Created in 1984, *Al-Itihaad Al-Islaami*[64] has defined its aim as the creation of a large Muslim union in the Horn of Africa. The organisation, listed by Washington as an organization associated with international terrorism (links with *Al-Qaeda* have been

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[59] For more information on Hassan Dahir Aweys : INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, *Counter Terrorism in Somalia : Losing hearts and minds*, Africa Report n°95, July 2005, http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/horn_of_africa/095_counter_terrorism_in_somalia.pdf and BERTHEMET, Tanguy. *Somalia: Islamists hit hard at Mogadiscio*, June 28th 2006, http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/20060628.FIG000000053_somalie_les_islamistes_placent_un_dur_a_mogadiscio.html

[60] BERTHEMET, Tanguy. *Ethiopia puts pressure on Somalia*, Le Figaro, July 22nd 2006, http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/20060721.WWW000000265_somalie_ethiopie_le_spectre_dune_nouvelle_guerre.html

[61] For more information on Aden Hashi Ayro : INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, *Counter Terrorism in Somalia : Losing hearts and minds*, Africa Report n°95, July 2005, http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/horn_of_africa/095_counter_terrorism_in_somalia.pdf and INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP. *Somalia's Islamists*, Africa Report n°100, December 12th 2005, http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/horn_of_africa/100_somalia_s_islamists.pdf

[62] ROGEZ, Olivier. *The Islamist Tribunals, on the rubble of the State*, RFI, June 21st 2006, http://www.rfi.fr/actufr/articles/078/article_44568.asp

[63] WEST, Sunguta. *Somalia's ICU and its Roots in al-Ittihad al-Islami*, The Jameston Foundation, Terrorism Monitor, Volume 4, Issue 15, July 27th 2006, http://jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2370083

[64] For more information on *Al-Itihaad Al-Islaami* : INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP. *Somalia's Islamists*, Africa Report n°100, December 12th 2005, http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/horn_of_africa/100_somalia_s_islamists.pdf

established[65]), entered the limelight during the nineties by leading destabilisation activities against the regime of Siad Barre and by attacking Ethiopian positions in Ogaden in an attempt to regain the region for Somalia. It was accused of participating in various attacks in Ethiopia throughout the nineties. Two raids by the Ethiopian army in 1996 and 1997 against *Al-Itihaad Al-Islaami* training camps in Somalia put an end to its activism. Since then the organization has continued to function, but has lost much of its power to harm because of its internal divisions. Despite this, *Al-Itihaad Al-Islaami* continues to maintain links with the SICS, which is composed of several former members of *Al-Itihaad Al-Islaami* (one of whom is Hassan Dahir Aweys, the current President of the SICS, and its former general coordinator[66]) and its ideological direction has always been close to that of the SICS. This geographical proximity could easily turn into an association, with *Al-Itihaad Al-Islaami* regrouping its forces and becoming the armed and international wing of the SICS.

As for the *Al-Takfir Wal-Hijra*, this is one of the most radical of the jihad movements. Created in Egypt in 1967, *Al-Takfir Wal-Hijra* is sectarian in its approach and advocates an unusually violent jihad[67]. The Somali branch of the movement runs a training camp for terrorists in the Raas Kaambooni region[68] and American and Kenyan intelligence services have discovered that *Al-Takfir Wal-Hijra* maintains relations with *Al-Qaeda*[69] and the Iraqi organization that used to be led by Abou Mousab Al-Zarqawi[70]. It operates in territory lying between Somalia and Kenya[71].

The SICS, which is essentially jihadist, is turning into a true political movement and therefore preparing for the imminent institution of political Islam in Somalia. However, the reaction of Ethiopia, which feels in real danger faced with this eventuality[72] and which has been established by the United States as "the regional rampart" against Islamism and jihadism in the region, will be crucial in terms of ensuring stable and lasting Islamism in Somalia. The Somali neo-fundamentalist jihad movements could

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[65] US DEPARTMENT OF STATE, *Country Report on Terrorism 2005*, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, April 2006, http://www.mipt.org/pdf/Country-Reports-Terrorism-2005.pdf ; US DEPARTMENT OF STATE, *Patterns on Global Terrorism 2003*, April 2004, http://www.mipt.org/pdf/2003PoGT.pdf

[66] TAMBI E. John, HOLT E. Melvin, LI Changsheng and SALEK Joël. *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1558*, United Nations Security Council (S/2005/153), March 8th 2005, http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/SOMALIA%20S2005153.pdf

[67] MILI, Hayder. *Jihad Without Rules: The Evolution of al-Takfir wa al-Hijra*, The Jameston Foundation, Terrorism Monitor, Volume 4, Issue 13, June 29th 2006, http://jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2370047. Voir aussi : www.rotten.com, A*l-Takfir Wal-Hijra*, http://www.rotten.com/library/history/terrorist-organizations/al-takfir-wal-hijra/

[68] INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP. *Somalia's Islamists*, Africa Report n°100, December 12th 2005, http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/horn_of_africa/100_somalia_s_islamists.pdf

[69] *Al-Qaeda´s number 2*, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, is a member of *Al-Takfir Wal-Hijra*.

[70] INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP. *Somalia's Islamists*, Africa Report n°100, December 12th 2005, http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/horn_of_africa/100_somalia_s_islamists.pdf

[71] Idem.

[72] PRIER, Pierre. *Ethiopia is concerned about the new Somali leadership*, Le Figaro, June 26th 2006, http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/20060626.FIG000000159_l_ethiopie_s_inquiete_de_la_nouvelle_donne_somalienne.html

then prove themselves to be important allies for the SICS in maintaining terrorist pressure on Ethiopia and in rallying Ethiopian Muslims to resist the "infidels".

- **Ethiopia**

As the largest (1.1 million km²) and most populated (77 million inhabitants) country in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia would appear to be the regional power of this geographical grouping. However, Ethiopia is more like a giant with feet of clay, with an economy that, despite a double-figure growth rate in 2004 (13.4%) and a respectable one in 2005 (6.5%), remains fragile and dependent on foreign aid (its trade deficit is enormous: $2.6 billion in imports as against only $601 billion in exports in 2005). Agriculture is dependent on the whims of the climate and self-sufficiency in food is a utopian dream[73]. Finally, since the independence of its Eritrean "brother enemy", Ethiopia no longer has access to the sea, which forces it to depend on the port of Djibouti for its trading needs.

Ethiopia is seen as a "Christian kingdom", but Muslims still make up 45% of the population. Ethiopian Muslims are mainly to be found among the Oromo (an ethnicity that also includes Christians) in the centre and south-west and the Somali in the Ogaden.

The Oromo represent around 40% of the Ethiopian population (the country's largest ethnic group) and have been striving for emancipation for over 30 years now, through the efforts of violent groups such as the *Oromo Liberation Front* (OLF) which was created in 1973, or the *Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia* (IFLO), established in 1986[74]. Although the OLF has launched and continues to launch attacks against the Christian populace, it would appear that it is ethnic reasons rather than religious ones that lie behind the violence[75].
In contrast, the IFLO is openly jihadist and has links with the Somali *Al-Ittihad Al-Islami*[76] organisation.
At present there is no real confrontation between the Christian and Muslim Oromo, although possible interventionism from the new leaders of Somalia could change the situation. Also, *"Among the Oromo leaders are Christians who want a relatively democratic and pro-Western Oromo State, and then others who are fundamental Muslims who would like a kind of Islamic Republic that the other Oromo could not*

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[73] 10 million Ethiopians still depend on international food aid. In the event of drought, this would rise to over 20 million.

[74] For the history of these Oromo movements, see particularly: JALATA, Asafa. *Ethiopia and ethnic politics: The case of Oromo nationalism*, Asafa Jalata, Springer Netherlands, 1993; *Ethiopia: What about the Oromos*, New African, November 1992 et http://www.angelfire.com/ak/sellassie/politics/parties.html

[75] *« The Oromo people are followers of three major religions: Islam, Christianity and traditional Oromo religion. The OLF respects religious equality and pursues secular policies. It opposes religious domination and religious extremism of any kind. The composition of its members and supporters among the Oromo people, irrespective of religious divides, is a clear testimony to the organization's correct democratic policy on religion ».* http://www.oromoliberationfront.org. Gregory R. Copley, President of *The International Strategic Studies Association* believes that the movement does not even have a majority of Muslims. (COPLEY R., Gregory. *Collapse Of US-Supported Somali Warlords Poses Strategic Challenges For Washington, And The Horn*, The Somaliland Time, n°229, June 10th 2006).

[76] BOTHA, Anneli. African Commitments to Combating Organised Crime and Terrorism A review of eight NEPAD countries, *http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/Other/ahsi/Goredema_Botha/Contents.html*

tolerate because they are Christians"[77]. It remains to be seen whether, in the event it achieves autonomy, independence for the Oromo territory or the overthrow of the current regime, which of these tendencies will gain the upper hand.

As regards the Somali secessionist movement in the Ogaden, it has been recurrent since the nineteen sixties. The Ogaden rejects Ethiopian rule and claims close relations with the Somalian Somalis. The impulses of this far eastern region, bordering on Somalia, are primarily expressed by jihadist movements such as the *Western Somali Liberation Front* (WSLF), created in 1963, or the *Ogaden National Liberation Front* (ONLF), created in 1984.

The WSLF is supported by *Al-Ittihad Al-Islami*[78] as is the ONLF, which appears to be an Ethiopian extension of this Somali group[79]. Links between the two movements are extremely close and bridges have existed between the WSLF and the ONLF since a cooperation agreement was concluded in 1991. At present, the ONLF, which has been reinforced by a number of WSLF officers, is the more active of the groups.

The ONLF and the WSLF are fighting the central government for the right to self-determination for the Ogaden. They wish to install an Islamic State in the Ogaden or to attach it to Somalia.

All of these Islamic or jihad movements appear to be organised into politically coherent entities which would be capable of politically governing a territory should the need arise. But, although they do pose a problem for those presently in power, they do not appear to be in a position to overthrow them as long as their actions are not coordinated around a common Islamic ideal. The various claims for regional independency are far more important than religious assertions, which would be only way to push Ethiopia into Islamism. American and Western support for Addis-Ababa is also a factor not to be ignored[80]. However, the evolution of events in Somalia should be monitored. Its lack of governance, just as in Eritrea[81], and its potential influence over the various Ethiopian separatist movements could be enough to give rise to a strong jihad coalition, which would then present a real threat to Ethiopian unity and the ruling powers.

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[77] PRUNIER, Gérard. *«The day we see a State in Somalia, it will have come about through the progressive fusion of regional administrations in fifteen to twenty years, and it will be a serious State »*, April 2000, http://www.lesnouvelles.org/P10_magazine/15_grandentretien/15013_gerardprunier.html

[78] DARLING, Dan. *ICG report on Somalia, Part 1*, windsofchange.net, September 2005, http://www.windsofchange.net/archives/007574.php

[79] COPLEY R., Gregory. *Collapse Of US-Supported Somali Warlords Poses Strategic Challenges For Washington, And The Horn*, The Somaliland Time, n°229, June 10th 2006, http://www.somalilandtimes.net/sl/2005/229/08.shtml

[80] The American administration does not hesitate to present Ethiopia as a rampart against terrorim and a Christian power to preserve against Islamism. AYAD, Christophe. *The Somali contagion threatens the Horn of Africa,* Libération, June 22nd 2006, http://www.liberation.fr/actualite/monde/187844.FR.php

[81] AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, Regional synthesis on Eritrea, http://web.amnesty.org/report2006/eri-summary-fra

b) The East African coastal region

- **Kenya**

Of all the countries in east Africa, or sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya has certainly paid the highest price for jihadism. The attacks on the American embassy in Nairobi on August 7th 1998 (291 dead and almost 5,000 injured)[82], a hotel in Mombasa on November 11th 2002 (18 dead) and against an Israeli plane that same day (although this failed)[83] still remain a vivid memory.
This makes Kenya the eye of the jihad cyclone in sub-Saharan Africa[84].

In this country of 34 million inhabitants, Muslims made up 10% of the population (concentrated in the north[85] and in the coastal towns), and are Somalis, Swahili or Digo. Muslim Kenyans are extremely responsive to radical Islamic issues, because they feel excluded from Kenya's economic dynamics[86], as shown by the lack of investment in regions having a majority of Muslims[87]. This sense of frustration has been manipulated, since the nineteen eighties through the intervention of foreign Muslim powers, such as Iran, Libya and Saudi Arabia[88].

The destinies and frustrations of the Kenyan Muslims are managed by the *Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims* (SUPKEM) and the *Council of Imams and Preachers in Kenya* (CIPK). The structure of and the activities led by these two movements are similar to those of a community political party, but also to those of potentially violent organizations[89]. The SUPKEM and the CIPK have set themselves up in opposition to the central government, consistently criticizing Kenya's pro-Western stance, the country's support for the fight against terrorism, acceptance of food aid from USAID, etc[90]. These

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[82] GLOBAL SECURITY. *Attacks on US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania*, globalsecurity.org, http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/ops/98emb.htm
CHEPKWONY, Grace. *Orphans of terror*, Magazine of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent movements Rouge, n°3, 1999, http://www.redcross.int/FR/mag/magazine399/31999_5.asp
[83] BORREL, Anna. *Anti-Israeli attacks in Kenya*, afrik.com, November 29th 2002, http://www.afrik.com/article5339.html
[84] An attack on the new American embassy was avoided in 2003 (US DEPARTMENT OF STATE, *Country Report on Terrorism 2005*, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, April 2006, http://www.mipt.org/pdf/Country-Reports-Terrorism-2005.pdf)
[85] Since the latest trouble in Somalia, a large number of Somali refugees (almost 20,000) have arrived in the already over-crowded Dadaab camp in north-east Kenya. This very insecure camp is now housing over 200,000 people, most of whom are Somali.
[86] 5% growth, GDP/hab. $460, over 50% literacy and school attendance, HDI 0.474 (154th position).
[87] An isolation that dates back to the colonial period.
[88] MC CORMACK, David. *An African Vortex: Islamism in Sub-Saharan Africa*, The Center for Security Policy, Occasional Papers Series, n°4, January 2005, http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/Af_Vortex.pdf
[89] THE BARNABAS FUND. *Jihad Threatened If Muslim Demands Are Not Met*, domini.org, April 30th 2003, http://www.domini.org/openbook/kenya20030430.htm
[90] TERDAM, Moshe. *Islamic Banking in Kenya: A Victory for the Islamists?*, sofir.org, July 2nd 2006, http://www.sofir.org/sarchives/005657.php#three.   The last great opposition between the Muslims and the central government occurred at the end of 2005 during the campaign for a constitutional referendum. HASHIM, Abdulkadir. *Muslim-State Relations in Kenya after the referundum on the constitution*, AASR Bulletin, n° 24, November 2005,

different actions are also relayed by the *Islamic Party of Kenya* (IPK), an unregistered Islamic party.

The Somali organisation, *Al-Ittihad Al-Islami*, which was probably responsible for the Mombasa attacks[91] (possibly in collusion with the CIPK[92]) is also active in Kenya. This organisation has important business concerns in the north-east of the country[93]. Responsibility for the 1998 attack in Nairobi was claimed at the time by the Islamic Army for the Liberation of the People of Kenya, an *Al-Qaeda* cover organisation[94], as well as by the Kenyan branch of the Saudi NGO, the *Al Haramain Foundation*[95].

The declared aim of the SUPKEM, the CIPK and the IPK to separate the Muslim community politically from the rest of the Kenyan population is clearly part of a process that aims to create a Muslim region run under *Shari'a* law in the heart of the Kenyan Republic[96]. This could be a step towards an autonomous Muslim region and, therefore, a real opportunity for the establishment of Islamism in Kenya at a regional level.
Kenyan Muslims are ambitious, but their lack of numbers remains an important limiting factor in their opposition to the central government. This situation explains their aggressiveness and keeps Kenya under intensive threat from the jihads. The massive influx of Somali refugees, the permeability of the border with Somalia and the new political constellation in that country, could all play a role in the aspirations of Kenyan Muslims, to the detriment of Kenyan unity.

- ▪ **Tanzania**

During more than 40 years of its history, Tanzania has been an exception in an Africa undermined by all kinds of crises. Created in 1964 out of a union between the former Tanganyika and the island of Zanzibar, the country has since lived in a certain type of political and ethnic stability. It would therefore be understatement to say that 1998 came as a hugely traumatic shock. On August 7th of that year, when an attack on the American embassy in Dar Es-Salam resulted in 10 dead and 77 injured[97], Tanzania woke up to the reality of jihadism.

http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=118.See also:

[91] CNN. *Islamic group suspected in Kenya attacks*, cnn.com, November 29th 2002, http://archives.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/africa/11/29/somali.group/index.html

[92] INTELLIGENCE ONLINE. *Wahhabi networks in Mombasa*, Intelligence Online, n°442, May 12th 2002.

[93] SII'ARAG, Duale. The Birth and Rise of Al-Ittihad Al-Islami in the Somali Inhabited Regions in the Horn of Africa, wardheernews.com, 13 November 2005, http://www.wardheernews.com/articles/November/13__Alittihad_Sii'arag.html

[94] MARCHESIN, Philippe. *The rise of Islamism in East Africa*, Géopolitique Africaine, 2003, http://www.african-geopolitics.org/show.aspx?ArticleId=3525

[95] AFROL NEWS. *Kenyan, Tanzanian "financiers of terrorism" named*, afrol.com, January 22nd 2006, http://www.afrol.com/articles/10803. US DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY. *U.S.-Based Branch of Al Haramain Foundation Linked to Terror*, treasury.org, September 9th 2004, http://www.treasury.gov/press/releases/js1895.htm

[96] SPERLING, C. David. *Islam and the Religious Dimension of Conflict in Kenya*, University of Georgia, http://payson.tulane.edu/conflict/Cs%20St/SPERLFIN5.html

[97] GLOBAL SECURITY. *Attacks on US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania*, globalsecurity.org, http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/ops/98emb.htm

Tanzanian Muslims make up 35% of the population and are mainly concentrated in the Zanzibar archipelago (99% Muslim). The feeling of exclusion has been strongly felt since the beginning of the nineties and actions and an increasing level of violence, while remaining peripheral, can be charged to their account[98]. 1998 therefore represented a turning-point in the relations between the Muslim community and the central Tanzanian government.

Since that time, tensions have seriously risen and Tanzania has become aware of the fact that it was targeted by the international jihad. The 1998 attack organised by *Al-Qaeda*[99], with the help of local networks, such as the Tanzanian branch of the Saudi NGO, the *Al Haramain Foundation*[100], or Tanzanian citizens[101] in jihadism, came as a revelation.

It is currently the situation in the Zanzibar archipelago that is the most problematic.

For several years now, the former sultanate has been in the grip of a fervent independence movement with jihadist tendencies.

Zanzibar already enjoys a status that affords it a great deal of autonomy, but its different religious movements aspire to more. This is notably the case of the radical Muslim group *Islamic Propagation and Awareness* (UAMSHO in Swahili) which wants to subject Zanzibar to *Shari'a* law[102]. The jihadist nature of the UAMSHO has been evidenced by a number of violent acts[103], as well as by the welcome afforded to Saudi, Kuwaiti and Pakistani missionaries who use the UAMSHO network to promote the jihad and to recruit volunteers on behalf of *Al-Qaeda*[104]. UAMSHO has also distributed texts and training videos for the jihad and called for the assassination of secular Tanzanian politicians or those who reject the institution of *Shari'a* in Zanzibar[105].

There is also an Islamic party, the *Civic United Front* (CUF), which can be considered as a regional Muslim party. This political party has taken on the role of permanent confrontation between the central government and the *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM),

[98] MARCHESIN, Philippe. *The rise of Islamism in East Africa*, Géopolitique Africaine, 2003, http://www.african-geopolitics.org/show.aspx?ArticleId=3525

[99] HIRSCHKORN, Phil. *Deliberations in bombings trial head for 7th day*, cnn.com, May 12th 2001, http://archives.cnn.com/2001/LAW/05/17/embassy.bombings.01/index.html

[100] AFROL NEWS. *Kenyan, Tanzanian "financiers of terrorism" named*, afrol.com, January 22nd 2006, http://www.afrol.com/articles/10803. US DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY. *U.S.-Based Branch of Al Haramain Foundation Linked to Terror*, treasury.org, September 9th 2004, http://www.treasury.gov/press/releases/js1895.htm

[101] THE JAMESTOWN FOUNDATION, *Tanzania: Al Qaeda's East African Beachhead?*, Global Terrorism Analysis, Terrorism Monitor, Volume 1, Issue 5, November 7th 2003, http://jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=23398

[102] THOMAS, George. *Muslims Kidnap, Force Christian Girls to Convert*, cbn.com, http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/060516a.aspx

[103] RISK SERVICES INTERNATIONAL. *Alert Notices 2000-2006*, http://www.securisk.com/alerts/alertdisplay2.asp?Country=TANZANIA#top

[104] KENDAL, Elizabeth. *Zanzibar: Church attacked as Islamist zeal and anger rises*, evangelicalalliance.org, 26 March 2004, http://www.evangelicalalliance.org.au/rlc/WEADetail.php?ID=390

[105] COPASS. *Zanzibar Churches on Guard Following Attacks*, odusa.org, April 5th 2004, http://www.odusa.org/ArchiveDisplay.asp?ID=D9270B61-B555-44F0-B175-6AE3CE9EA97E&Category=News

the party in power, both on the continent and in Zanzibar[106] where it enjoys a large audience[107]. Feelings of exclusion and persecution by the Muslims are continually reinforced in the archipelago, particularly before election results are announced (where the results favouring the CCM are regularly contested by the CUF, often with the use of violence and threats)[108]. For its part, the central government does not hesitate to use and misuse force against the militants and CUF sympathisers[109]. This means that a situation of conflict, political in nature, but based on religious dissensions, is now well established in Zanzibar.

Nonetheless, despite these violent actions, similarities between their speeches and the allegations made against the central government, relations between the CUF and the UAMSHO remain difficult to establish[110].

In the same way as Kenya, Tanzania remains traumatised by jihadism. The strains between continental Tanzanians (mostly Christian) and Tanzanians from Zanzibar are now very obvious, with religious differences outweighing political ones. Jihad activities launched by the UAMSHO, activism from the CUF and violent repression by the central government are bound to exacerbate this state of affairs.

The ambitions of the CUF and the UAMSHO are obvious in their wish to install *Shari'a* in Zanzibar[111] and to turn the archipelago into a separate state, independent of continental Tanzania, despite their already high level of autonomy. Interference by foreign powers (Iran, Saudi Arabia)[112], with traditionally aggressive ramifications, should not be overlooked in this affair, which could have violent consequences for Tanzania.

c) Indian Ocean

- **Comoros**

On this 1,862 km² archipelago with its fewer than a million inhabitants (98% of whom are Muslim), Islamism has been on the verge of taking political power since 2001 when a new constitution was written containing a number of references to Islam[113]. This

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[106] PINR. *Intelligence Brief : Tanzania*, pinr.com, November 15th 2005, http://www.pinr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=398&language_id=1

[107] The CCM can only maintain power in Zanzibar by manipulating the electoral results: MAS, Monique. Amani Abeid Karume declared re-elected in Zanzibar, RFI, October 29th 2005, http://rfi.fr/actufr/articles/070/article_39487.asp

[108] BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND LABOR. *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2005*, March 8th 2006, http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61596.htm

[109] Idem.

[110] TARIMO, Judica. *CUF says not connected to Uamsho*, ipp.co.tz, March 22nd 2004, http://www.ipp.co.tz/ipp/guardian/2004/03/22/7541.html

[111] NGOWI, Rodrique. *Zanzibaris Adopting Stricter Form of Islam*, Associated Press, July 4th 2005, http://www.tharwaproject.com/node/2435

[112] TAHERI, Amir. *Iran and Saudi Arabia, two Islamist zeolots*, african-geopolitics.org, http://www.african-geopolitics.org/show.aspx?ArticleId=3347

[113] Comorian constitution dated December 23rd 2001: Preamble (*The Comoran people solemnly affirm their will to : draw from Islam, permanent inspiration for the principles and rules that govern the Union* [...]) ; Title III Article 13 (*Before taking on their functions, the President of the Union and the Vice Presidents swear an oath before the Constitutional Court that states the following in Comoran,: « I swear before Allah, the Kind and most Merciful, to faithfully and honestly carry out the duties imposed on me, only to act in the common interest and with respect for the Constitution »*).

situation was further reinforced with the victory of Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi at the last presidential elections in the beginning of 2006. This rich businessman, a former parliamentarian, owns a radio and a television station as well as a number of factories and declares himself to be a moderate Islamist. Nicknamed *"Ayatollah"*, he presents himself as a theologian and a fervent believer. The question remains as to whether Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi will be the one to turn the Comoros into a true Islamic state.

There are several factors that encourage us to believe this could happen. Starting with his education, particularly his training at the University of Medina, which is considered to be a stronghold of Wahhibi Islam, its main purpose being the propagation of that dogma[114], followed by the Sudan, before ending at the *Hawzat al-Qaaim* Koranic school in Iran. His various past activities have also always had religious connotations, whether he was working as a preacher or a politician[115]. And, finally, his declarations are always very ambiguous, particularly on the subject of the institution of *Shari'a* in the Comoros. On May 26th 2006, during his investiture speech, he said, *"I implore the Most Powerful Lord, for his benevolence and his blessing to make my mandate, which commences on this day, Friday, May 26th 2006, an efficient instrument of His will that social peace, national unity, political stability and the well-being of all Comorans should reign here in the Comoros"*. His most controversial statements were made during an interview with RFI on May 16th 2006[116]. At the very beginning he claimed to be prepared to *"...institute justice. I believe that above all we must have a system of justice that will act as a guardian for all... "*. This reference to justice should not be lightly dismissed because it is a recurrent theme in Islam[117] and political Islam (the Party of Justice and Development – AKP – in Turkey, the Party of Justice and Development – PJD – in Morocco) because *"justice is the base of the government and of the Islamic state"*[118]. Finally, coming down more precisely on the theme of Islamism: *"I fully believe that the Islamic regime is a good regime, but for the moment I do not believe...it is possible that*

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[114] Charter of the University of Medina, May 1st, 1962 : *« Islam is the religion that has come to organise human and social life for ever (...). Although we can witness several nations that call themselves « Islamic nations», (we must conclude that) this is not the case, because, in reality, they do not only follow the dogma of Islam and do not pass judgement in accordance with its commandments and restrictions (...) Therefore, they are not Islamic in a full and true sense. But it is exactly this sense that distinguishes today´s Muslim states from the Muslim states of the past.(...) For all these reasons, the Islamic University of Medina was created (...) with the aim of renewing Islamic dogma. Muslims from all Islamic countries are invited to come to Medina to study Islam (...) and then to return home to teach and to guide others »*.

[115] Condemnation of the «Satanic Verses» in 1988; in 1989, at a meeting of Comorian ulemas, he declared, *«We will leave it to the politicians to run the country, but if they fail in their mission, we will go down into the arenas to defend the interests of the Comoran people »* ; Mobilisation of funds for the Bosnian Muslims in 1993 ; Opposition to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Comoros and Israel in 1994; Refusal to participate in a prayer at the Mosque of Anjouan that bore the French flag in 1997.

[116] Interview on RFI with Christophe BOIBOUVIER on May 16th 2006. http://www.rfi.fr/actufr/articles/077/article_43735.asp

[117] Frequent presence of the term « Justice » in the Coran (ex. : *« O believers! You must be strict observers of justice... »* IV-134 ; *« Be just: justice is close to piety.»* V-11 ; *«Allah rules justice and benevolence ... »* XVI-93. See also: Charles LE GAI EATON. *The Concept of Justice in Islam*, The Book Foundation, http://thebook.org/tbf-articles/article_55.shtml. GNFCW. *The Concept of Justice in Islam*, GNFCW, http://www.gnfcw.com/conceptofjustice.htm

[118] ALTWAIJRI, Abdulaziz Othman. *Political education in Islam*, ISESCO publication, http://www.isesco.org.ma/pub/FR/Educationpolitique/edupol.htm

after the two terms, the Comoran people will demand it". This is a very enigmatic sentence, which clearly shows the political preferences of Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi and which could foreshadow a referendum on the institution of an Islamist regime over the short or medium term.

As a pragmatist, the new President of the Union of the Comoros wants to reassure his principal partners and he knows very well that the imposition of Islam in the archipelago would cut the Comoros off from its present environment and from the precious western subsidies. However, he is still not closing the door on the institution of a true political Islamic state in the Comoros over the long term. The possibility of direct financial assistance from foreign powers such as Iran or Saudi Arabia[119] and the activism of movements[120] that are favourable to this type of regime, could prove decisive. The return to the Comoros of students who left to train in the Sudan or Iran and *"worked over by the activists"* from these countries[121] and the question of the reintegration of Mayotte into the Union, are all elements that would favour the "natural" arrival of political Islam in the Comoros.

II. Conclusion

The review we have undertaken above leads us to the following conclusions, which revolve around two axes regarding the future of political Islam in east Africa:

- The *zoning* of Islamism, from the Horn of Africa to the Comoros;

- The consequences for the stability of the countries concerned and for the international community.

1) *Zoning of Islamism*

It is now possible to break this down into three major areas in function of the degree of political Islamisation of the countries concerned.

- ***Effective Implantation of Islamism:***
  The case of Somalia is symbolic. Political Islam already rules the lives of Somalis in the areas under the control of the SICS. Only the pocket around the region of Baïdoa, where the phantom transition Government is located, supported by the western powers and protected by Ethiopia, still remains unaffected. The question is whether the SICS will be able to maintain its influence over time and space.

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[119] Iran financed Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi´s campaign (see HOFNUNG, Thomas. *Comoros: an Islamic wave over the urns*, Libération, March 15th 2006.) and Saudi Arabia made an intellectual impact on the life of «Ayatollah » Sambi.

[120] Although the Comorian branch of *Al Haramain Foundation* had ceased to operate under pressure from the former President, Assoumani Azali, in 2005, it still maintained a number of supporters and its networks. We also should not forget that the assumed brain behind the attacks on Nairobi and Dar Es-Salam, Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, is a Comoran recruited by *Al-Qaeda*. Therefore «the Base» probably also had connections within the Union.

[121] HOFNUNG, Thomas. *Comores : Islamic wave over the urns*, Libération, March 15th 2006.

- *Potentially decisive influence of Islamism:*

Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and the Comoros are all cases in point. Nonetheless, the Comoros are slightly separate and can be considered to be an intermediate case.

Although the three countries first cited are mainly threatened by jihadism, the means employed to impose political Islam, the same does not apply to the Comoros. Another point is that only specific regions of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania are susceptible to support for Islamism, leading to fears of possible separatist urges. The situation in the Comoros is completely different because political Islam is already in a position to govern the whole Union.

And finally, Islamism in the Comoros is really at the gates of the archipelago with a prepared Constitution and a leader who believes *"very much that the Islamic regime is a good regime"*[122] and were it not for too great a dependency on its western backers, political Islam would be a reality in the Comoros in the very short term.

- *No ascendancy of Islamism:*

This is the case of Eritrea and Djibouti. For different reasons, which have been explained above, political Islam remains very distant from the everyday life of the populace concerned, just as it is distanced from political life in Eritrea and Djibouti.

2) Implications of the rise of Islam

- *At a national level :*

Just as any political regime that draws its ideology and social planning from religious dogma, Islamism is first of all anti-liberties and anti-democracy. The first to be affected by political Islam is therefore the local populace. Somalia is a perfect example of this[123].

Then, the situation in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania shows that the tenants of political Islam do not necessarily focus on overturning the central powers. The Islamists are perfectly "satisfied" to administer the regions, thereby acquiring greater autonomy from the central powers (Kenya), demanding a process of self-determination (Ethiopia) or seceding (Tanzania). In all these cases, the country's unity and its security are threatened by the fact of the close relations existing between jihadism and political Islam.

- *At an international level :*

It is clear that a takeover by an Islamic regime can have destabilising consequences for the international relations of the countries concerned. This can affect both neighbouring states and countries that are much more distant with the "Islamised" country becoming a central location or referents, or support, for those aspiring to political Islam.

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[122] Interview on RFI with Christophe BOIBOUVIER.
http://www.rfi.fr/actufr/articles/077/article_43735.asp
[123] MORISSET, Magdaléna. *Somalia: the reign of terror of the Islamic Tribunals*, aleloo.com, July 10th 2006, http://www.aleloo.com/journal/index.php/2006/07/10/224-somalie-le-regne-de-la-terreur-des-tribunaux-islamiques

The example of Somali is symptomatic. The arrival of the SICS Islamists has drastically altered the geopolitical situation in the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia, which already had enough to deal with given the Eritrean situation, found itself threatened by an Islamic Somalia which is organising itself militarily. This opens up a second front in the region. In addition to this, whereas the United States had "put pressure" on Addis Ababa to push the regime of Meles Zenawi towards democracy, the events in Somalia forced Washington to put aside these democratic ambitions by placing Ethiopia in the role of "policeman" and a rampart against jihadism in the region.

An Islamic Somalia could also serve as a model and, above all, take on the role of supporting all the different jihad movements and Islamic parties active in east Africa. This could be achieved through the intermediary of *Al-Ittihad Al-Islami,* which is already well-implanted in this part of sub-Saharan Africa. This perspective would certainly usher in new outbreaks of violence in the countries concerned (Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania).

THE DOCTRINE OF DEPLOYMENT OF SPECIAL FORCES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM: WHAT CHANGES SINCE SEPTEMBER 11?

by Frédéric MOSER, Director of European Affairs, ESISC

1. Introduction

"*With most armed conflict taking unconventional or irregular forms—such as humanitarian interventions and operations designed to root out terrorist home bases -- rather than conventional state-to-state warfare, the principles covering resort to, and use of, military force will increasingly be called into question*"[124]. Unlike the Cold War, which involved nation states as adversaries opposing each other according to similar systems of logic, terrorism is more like guerrilla war: a form of non-conventional, asymmetric and non-conventional conflict[125]. Thus, on the other side of the barricade, counter-terrorism (the prevention of terrorist acts) and anti-terrorism both require similar non-conventional means, better-suited to the job, namely intelligence services and special forces.

Terrorism is not new: it is present in almost all societies and throughout the history of the world has constituted a form of warfare against the system in place. The attacks of 11 September 2001 on the *Twin Towers* and the Pentagon profoundly affected the history of the beginning of the 21st century, bringing about profound psychological, political, legislative and economic effects. In a certain sense, they also shaped the period of change that inevitably followed the end of the polarised world of the second half of the 20th century. Under the influence of the United States, regime-change in Afghanistan and Iraq, the evolution of security measures across the world, shifting positive and negative relationships between states and, particularly, the rise of Islamist radicalism are among the consequences of 9/11. "*On an operational level, the battlefield has given way to the 'operational space' which can be defined as the theatre in which military and security operations are carried out. That includes traditional three-dimensional space where operations are physically carried out, but also the 'ether' – the territory of the electronic war; cyberspace, where digital information circulates; the infosphere where opinions are manipulated; and the human space, where subtle interactions are at the heart of modern security problems*"[126]. Since the attacks of September 11, it is also interesting to note that in the US the very definition of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) not only covers chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, but also aircraft,

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[124] National Intelligence Report, *Mapping the Global Future*, available for download at www.foia.cia.gov/2020/2020.pdf.

[125] *How Wars are Won: The 13 Rules of War from Ancient Greece to the War on Terror*, Bevin Alexander, Crown Publishers, New York, 2003.

[126] *La guerre asymétrique ou la défaite du vainqueur*, Jacques Baud, Editions du Rocher, 2003.

vehicles and vessels used in creating major casualties. Some writers even argue that the attacks ushered in "*a new type of war in the sense that no combatant in any war in the past has ever used an aeroplane filled with passengers and jet fuel*"[127]. Others argue that this constitutes the most ancient kind of war – terrorist strikes being comparable to "*ambushes, a tactic that has been used since the Stone Age*"[128] .

If the strikes of the 19 terrorists of September 11 reshaped the start of the century and "invented a new kind of war" then what are we to make of the war against terrorism? In this study, we will not be concerned with intelligence, a capital preventive tool in counter-terrorism; or with the highly specialised elite units of police and gendarmerie like the GSG-9 (Germany), RAID, GIGN and GIPN (France), DSU (Belgium), and SWAT teams of the US; nor even with the action services of intelligence services who carry out clandestine operations. Instead we will concentrate on the action and the operational means downstream of terrorist acts. More specifically, we will try to define the role of special forces[129] in the fight against terror and to determine in what way the doctrine of special forces deployment has – or has not – changed since the attacks on the US on 11 September 2001.

2. Definition of concepts

To begin with, it would be useful to define the terms "doctrine" and "special forces". In the broad sense, a doctrine is the collected beliefs, opinions and principles of a religion, or a literary, artistic or philosophical school of thought, a political or economic system and so on. In a military sense, a doctrine serves to define the fundamental concept of a policy, while the means deployed for its application are the expression of the doctrine. "*A principal doctrine gives rise to derivative doctrines established from it: for example the doctrine of use of strategic nuclear weapons, the doctrines of use of pre-strategic nuclear arms, the doctrine of use of a weapons system or a force*"[130]. In the French army, the centre for the doctrine of the use of forces takes the definition suggested by Marshall Foch: "*the doctrine of the use of land forces gathers together all of the rules governing the engagement of forces in a theatre of operations, or a 'common way of seeing things'*"[131].

In reality, very few states truly have a doctrine on the use of their special forces. Those who do are the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, France and Israel. In addition, their documents are not in the public domain, and it is hard to learn what they contain. However it is reasonable to divine information from the general mission assigned to special forces, as well as their particular characteristics (see below) to

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[127] *How Wars are Won* op cit.
[128] Ibid.
[129] We will be using the generic term "special forces" although the US makes a distinction between "*Special Forces*" (the Green Berets) and "*Special Operations Forces*".
[130] Dictionnaire de la défense et des forces armées : les hommes, les moyens, les missions, ouvrage collectif, Librairie Larousse, 1988.
[131] French Defence ministry, Centre for the doctrine on the use of forces, www.cdef.terre.defense.gouv.fr/cdef/presentation.

conclude that the chiefs of staff use these units in clandestine missions involving in-depth intelligence, politically sensitive or aimed at targeted destruction.

The concept of "special forces" is difficult to pin down, especially as it does not cover the same sort of reality on the two sides of the Atlantic, as well as the facts that the rules of engagement of special forces differ widely from one country to another, and that there are no officially laid-down official definitions. Neither TTA 106, the French army's glossary, nor Nato's equivalent AAP-6, offers a definition of special forces, although they do specify the concepts of "special operations" and "special operations forces"[132].

- **Special operations forces**: *a force comprising groups of specially selected military assets offering Nato particular capacities in the areas of special reconnaissance, direct action and military assistance during difficult, dangerous and sometimes politically sensitive operations carried out for commanders of the theatre.*
- **Special operations**: *military activities carried out by specially designated forces organised, trained and equipped for the purpose, using operational techniques and methods not common to conventional forces. These activities are carried out across the range of military operations, independent of conventional forces or in coordination with them, to attain political, military, psychological or economic objectives. Political-military considerations could necessitate recourse to undercover or clandestine techniques and the acceptance of a level of physical and political risk not compatible with conventional operations. These operations utilise small-scale and highly specialised modules either to attain objectives of high strategic or operational value, or to modify the forces' environment*[133].

Despite the lack of an official definition, it is possible to synthesise the elements that characterise special forces and make them particular:

- furtive action;
- capacity to carry out operations to gain tactical or strategic advantage;
- special training and equipment;
- a high degree of specialisation;
- an increased level of adaptability;
- mobility, and the capacity to carry out operations independently;
- a relatively small number of men;
- the capacity to work in three dimensions (air, land and sea.

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[132] Heracles magazine, No. 15, May-June 2006.
[133] Ibid.

3. The traditional missions of special forces

The US military leadership, together with several authors, see the missions of special forces as being relatively broad, and consider that they ought to be able to carry out missions of various types:

- Raids and timely combat actions;
- psychological operations, or Psy-Ops;
- civil actions;
- training of foreign armies ("multiplication of forces");
- search for and exfiltration of prisoners;
- medical assistance;
- acquisition of intelligence from behind enemy lines;
- identification and marking of targets;
- anti-terrorist actions.

This wide spectrum of missions inevitably entails an inflation in the number of men designated as "special forces". And there is a major difference of conception between the US and Europe both in terms of that number and in terms of the missions they are assigned. That difference in conception is a result, partially at least, of the difference in conception of terrorism itself. "The fight against terrorism," explains a researcher from the Institute for International and Strategic Relations (IRIS) in Paris, "*is for the United States a real war that could lead to a high-intensity campaign, whereas more and more European states have ruled out the possibility. The EU's security strategy in 2003 envisioned the fight against terrorism as a compound of prevention (by the police, among others) and stabilisation as well as possible pre-emptive attack*"[134]. Within the US Army, the *United States Special Operations Command* (USSOCOM)[135] takes care of what are known as *low-intensity operations*, managing about 50,000 men from the three forces – land, air and sea – whereas European (mainly British and French) armies have much more limited units at their disposal -- SAS, Commando Hubert, 13th RDP etc – assigned to a more limited spectrum of missions. Commenting on the position and role of the brigade of special land forces BFST[136], which gathers together the 13th RDP, the 1st RPIMA and the light aviation detachment of the Army, the Centre for the doctrine of use of forces of the French Army seems to be perfectly aware of the futility "*of tiring oneself out trying to do what some conventional units are perfectly capable of doing [...] Other units, sections or services have the know-how that would complement our capacity on*

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[134] "*Total Forces » against « Long War*", *Premières analyses vues d'Europe*, Sylvie Matelly, Notes de l'IRIS, 2006.

[135] With the USSOCOM, the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) carries out clandestine military operations. "*While not official acknowledged by DOD or USSOCOM, JSOC [...] is widely believed to command and control what are described as the military's three special units -- the Army Delta Force, the Navy SEAL Team Six, a joint unit allegedly designed to conduct clandestine operations, as well as the 75th Ranger Regiment, the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment and the Air Force's 24th Special Tactics Squadron*". CRS Report for Congress, 17 April 2006.

[136] The operational commanders of the BFST are Special Operations Command (COS) for the 1st RPIMA and DAOS together with the Director of Military Intelligence (DRM) for the 13th RDP.

the ground"[137]. America's *Special Forces* comprise units like the Green Berets and the Rangers whose assignments and missions correspond better in Europe with those of paratroop regiments or the French Foreign Legion. In Europe, it is considered that the very specificity of special forces limits their applicability to a reduced number of missions, in essence:

- The gathering of intelligence far behind enemy lines;
- Highly targeted raids and other military actions;
- The organisation and training of foreign anti-guerrilla and special forces units;
- The fight against terrorism.

Jacques Baud, meanwhile, considers that he basic mission of special forces is "*operational and strategic reconnaissance deep within enemy territory. Mobility, together with the precision of weapons (guided bombs, missiles, artillery etc) and their range necessitate a very precise detection, identification and selection of targets. In fact, the means of technical reconnaissance can only offer approximate and ad hoc results, and do not lend themselves to surveillance of the enemy's sectors or approach routes.*"[138]

4. Evolution of the doctrine of use of special forces

Since 2001, special forces deployed in the field of the fight against terrorism have mainly been present in two theatres of operations: Afghanistan and Iraq. Many countries, such as the United States, France, Great Britain, Canada[139], Poland, New Zealand, Australia and others sent relatively large contingents of special forces to Afghanistan. It is generally agreed that French special units active in Afghanistan in the Spin Boldak region on the Pakistani border have done "excellent work". In Iraq, the British *Special Air Service* (SAS) has carried out many targeted operations such as the one in July 2005 in which 16 men attached to *Task Force Black* (TFB) – a secret unit of American and British special forces based in Baghdad – killed three terrorists who were preparing to blow themselves up[140]. Many more such examples could be cited. In the United States, USSOCOM has undergone an "*unprecedented transformation*" in the last three years *from a force provider to a combatant command with global responsibilities leading the War on Terrorism[141]*. With the support of the Congress and the Defense Department, USSOCOM has undoubtedly gained some muscle: political support has allowed it to increase its resources and personnel, to improve training and increase its capacities. In Russia, special forces saw their mission greatly reoriented towards the war on terrorism, essentially against Chechens and Islamist movements. One more dubious change is the

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[137] www.cdef.terre.defense.gouv.fr/a_la_une/juin_2006/place_BFST_PRINT.htm.
[138] Encyclopédie du renseignement et des services secrets, Jacques Baud, Lavauzelle, 1998.
[139] *Canadian Task Force 'JTF2' to hunt al-Qaeda in Afghanistan*, Globe and Mail, 15 July 2005.
[140] *Snipers' head shots had to kill terrorists simultaneously to prevent explosions*, Daily Telegraph, 20 November 2005.
[141] *Posture Statement 2006*, USSOCOM, 2006.

option recently given them to operate legally abroad[142]. Some weeks before that measure was passed, President Putin had ordered them to eliminate the assassins of four Russian diplomats executed by terrorists in Iraq. But is it possible to state that special forces are being used in a totally different manner, according to a new doctrine?

A. Globally, no marked change in doctrine

While special forces were widely deployed in the Afghanistan campaign, to the point where it is generally accepted they played a major role, the question has to be answered in the negative. "*In terms of an evolution in the doctrine of use of special forces, one cannot say one has noticed the appearance of new doctrine, or the modification of the existing doctrinal corpus,*" according to Joseph Henrotin, head of research at the Centre for analysis and forecasting of international risks. "*We are simply making use of what have been called the specific characteristics of special forces: their flexibility, the furtiveness, their adaptability and reactions etc. But as far as the underlying principles are concerned, nothing much has changed*"[143]. It is worth noticing, all the same, that there has emerged a certain permeability (in the United States, at least) between special forces and some other units, the best example being the closer relations between the Marine Corps and USSOCOM. Established in 2003, the *USSOCOM-Marine Corps Board* illustrates this change perfectly: "*The Board is a forum for the exchange of ideas between the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) and deploying Marine Expeditionary Unit staffs, to establish and continue a dialog between Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOC) and deploying MEU staffs, and to coordinate USSOCOM and USMC warfighting developments."*[144]

B. Operational developments

While there has been no clear doctrinal evolution in the deployment of special forces, the special characteristics of the Afghan and Iraqi theatres – topography, nature of the resistance etc – forced American commanders to adapt their units and their methods of fighting to be able to "score points"[145]. Two changes, which do not amount to a difference in doctrine, have nevertheless been seen in recent years:

- an increase in numbers of special forces personnel
- the creation of small units with the job of finding and arresting top terrorist leaders.

1. Increase in personnel

The changes are seen most clearly within the American armed forces. After pressure from the Bush Administration, and in particular from Defense Secretary Donald

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[142] *Lawmakers back Putin's right on anti-terrorism operations abroad*, RIA Novosti, 5 July 2006.
[143] Personal interview on 20 July 2006.
[144] *Joint Special Operations Command*, http://globalsecurity.org/military/agency/dod/jsoc.htm.
[145] At the beginning of May 2006, the Afghan Lt-General Sher Karimi stressed the importance of creating a special forces unit within the Afghan army, trained for anti-terrorist missions and able to unseat the Taliban from their hideout in Waziristan, on the border with Pakistan.

Rumsfeld, special forces now play – and are likely to play increasingly in the future – an increased role in the conduct of war and anti-terror operations, to the extent that part of the foreign press considers the change in the conduct of war and the fight against terrorism to have revitalised special forces, by placing them in the front line instead of being merely a support for conventional forces. This is seen as a real "*political victory for Donald Rumsfeld*"[146], whose plan foresaw an increase in numbers to 14,000 men and a budget of $7 billion for 2007[147]. Several observers noted that American special forces had played a preponderant role in overthrowing the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. In 2003, the Pentagon announced a major reinforcement of special forces, with an increase in their budget and an expanded role in the *Global War on Terrorism*[148]. The following year President Bush and the Defense Secretary took the further step of handing *the lead in the Global War on Terrorism[149]* to USSOCOM. That trend was continued later in official documents, suggesting it was more of a fundamental change than a PR exercise. "*Special Operations Forces,*" we read in the Pentagon's *Quadrennial Defense Review 2006*[150], a sort of road-map for the armed forces, "*will increase their capability to carry out more and more demanding and specialised missions, of long duration; indirect and clandestine operations in politically-sensitive environments and inaccessible areas*". The document also proposes that:

- special forces battalions be increased by 15%
- Psy-Ops and Civil Affairs units receive 3,500 additional men, an increase of 33%
- special forces' ability to track "*high value targets*" be improved
- the ability to carry out global non-conventional and long-term war missions be increased
- US special forces be able to train foreign special forces units in non-conventional techniques in a dozen countries simultaneously, and so on.

Meanwhile in Europe, the British defence minister has also decided to create two new special forces units in order to be able to "respond to demand". In April 2006, defence secretary John Reid confirmed to the House of Commons the creation of the *Special Forces Support Group* (SFSG), an elite unit based in St Athan and made up of elements of the *Royal Marines*, the *Parachute Regiment* and the *RAF Regiment*. The SFSG will provide additional support to anti-terrorist units. Some months previously, another special unit, the *Special Reconnaissance Regiment* was also created. Even the SAS was ordered at the beginning of 2004 to increase its numbers by 60 to 80 extra men and to set up a fifth squadron to combat Al Qaeda and Islamic terrorism[151]. This wave of change, unseen previously in the course of the last 50 years, was made possible by a very substantial increase in the budget allocated to special forces, of around £1.5 billion. In

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[146] *Moving Targets*, The New Yorker, 15 December 2003.
[147] *Rumsfeld Aims to Elevate Role of Special Forces*, Wall Street Journal, 18 February 2006.
[148] *Pentagon beefs up US special forces*, 8 July 2003, BBC News.
[149] *Posture Statement 2006*, op cit.
[150] *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, Department of Defense, 6 February 2006, *US Special Operations Forces (SOF): Background and Issues for Congress*, CRS Report for Congress, 17 April 2006.
[151] *SAS creates a new squadron to counter threat from al-Qa'eda*, Daily Telegraph, 7 March 2004.

France, while it was generally admitted that "*critical mass has now been attained*"[152], the law on military programming 2003-2008 also provided for an increase in the capacities of special forces "*with the creation of a new unit at brigade level*"[153]. The creation of a new unit in Canada[154], the *Canadian Special Operations Regiment*, announced at the beginning of this year, will add to the capacities of the *Canadian Special Operations Command*, which should take in the existing *Joint Task Force Two* (JTF2). The latter has real experience of combat, particularly in Afghanistan. In short, the majority of nations involved in one way or another in the Global War on Terrorism have been tending to increase the resources of their special forces, and in some cases have created entirely new units from scratch. Which may, of course, give rise to a certain amount of apprehension and criticism relating to the operational capacity of these new units.

2. **Creation of small, very specialised units**

Conscious of their failure in Afghanistan and Iraq to locate and capture not only Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein, but also terrorist leaders being sought by more conventional means, intelligence services and special forces got together to set up small, secret and especially effective structures – so-called *Task Forces* – allowing them to bring down the barriers between civilian and military structures, to reduce delays in processing intelligence to several minutes, to make information easier to obtain and to improve its implementation. Thus *Task Force 121*[155], for example, made up of elements of the *CIA*, *Delta Force*, the *Navy Seals* and the *Air Force* [156], located and arrested Saddam Hussein on 13 December 2003, who had been hiding for months in a rough shelter in his home town of Tikrit. After that success, the US Department of Defense confirmed that *Task Force 121* had turned towards other targets in Afghanistan, the main ones being Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar. *Task Force 145*[157], which replaced *Task Forces 626 and 121*, was given the job of hunting down priority target Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who was finally killed on 7 June 2006. The special unit put in place in 1996 within the CIA – known under the name of *Alec Station*[158] - to arrest bin Laden and his lieutenants, more or less according to the same principle, has been dismantled in 2005, after ten years of existence.

Nevertheless, an objective analysis of the events, the results obtained and the failures of the American civilian and military authorities since 2001 argues in favour of a change in the way the United States sees the future of the global war on terror. "*The United States has a more worldly vision of global jihadism now, less mechanistic and less centred on*

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[152] Appearance by General Benoît Puga, Commander of Special Operations (COS), Armed Forces National Defence Committee, report of proceedings No. 31, 11 April 2006.

[153] National defence, www.ambafrance-us.org/fr/ambassade/defense/defense8.asp.

[154] Radio Canada International, 10 January 2006.

[155] *New U.S. effort steps up hunt for bin Laden*, New York Times, 29 April 2004. See also *The hunt heats up*, Newsweek, 15 March 2004 and *US forces order of battle*, www.globalsecurity.org, 18 November 2003.

[156] Task Force 121 was created after the departure of Task Force 5 (active in Afghanistan) and Task Force 20, operational in Iraq.

[157] *SpecOps unit nearly nabs Zarqawi,* www.armytimes.com, 28 April 2006.

[158] *C.I.A. Closes Unit Focused on capture of bin Laden*, New York Times, 4 July 2006.

Al Qaeda, as far as the representation of networks and local groups is concerned"[159]. It is no longer a question, as it was in 2001, of a rapid war against Al Qaeda, an organisation led by one man, bin Laden, and considered to be the head of a world jihadist network. "*As a result, the United States are moving closer to some European opinions, in the mixture of prevention, public diplomacy, anti-terrorist policing, cultural intelligence targeted special operations and concrete civilian/military stabilisation efforts in an integrated strategy, but then with incomparably more resources. In short, special forces and other operational services, the Lawrence of Arabias that the American forces have, aware of cultural intelligence, have done much to increase the value given to information*"[160].

5. Is a slippage in the use of special forces under way?

The clear increase in the resources of special forces, justified by the greater number of theatres of operations and the permanent nature of the war against Islamic terrorism, has led to what is called a "*dilution of excellence*". Some observers in the US and Europe, criticise this change harshly, arguing it is not a change in doctrine, but a veering off course. And it is the fear of such loss of effectiveness and a thinning down of operational capacity that led the SAS to refuse outright to see its numbers increased[161].

In the United States, the military community does not speak with one voice, faced with pressure from the State Department and the Department of Defense. Some people, like American expert Philip Coyle, stress the "worrying" inflation of resources of special forces, "*U.S. special operations has gotten big. It is now as big as the whole Canadian army,*" Coyle said. "*The problem is when institutions become big they become more bureaucratic and lose the entrepreneurial spirit.*"[162] On the current use of special forces, Eric Denécé, director of the French centre for research into intelligence (CF2R), speaks candidly of "slippage". "*By assigning them to missions that could perfectly easily be carried out by paras or the Foreign Legion, their high level of specialisation is quite simply being wasted*"[163]. He estimates that barely a few thousand men of the 50,000 members of American special forces are up to the standard of European special forces. "*Those are the black units like Delta Force, the SEALs and certain secret helicopter units capable of carrying out dangerous, highly targeted, clandestine missions. A great many of the missions assigned to the Green Berets, who are part of special forces, are very general in nature*".

After the fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan, in which the SAS took a major part, the commander of an SAS squadron complained of the poor use that had been made of his unit, especially after an operation against a camp where members of Al Qaeda and the

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[159] *La QDR 2006 et la lutte contre le terrorisme : discours de mobilisation à une certaine prise en compte de la réalité du terrain?*, note by the Foundation for Strategic Research, Jean-Luc Marret, 10 May 2006.
[160] Ibid.
[161] *SAS creates a new squadron to counter threat from al-Qa'eda*, op cit.
[162] Quoted in *Softer side of war*, Fayetteville Observer, 3 August 2006 at http://tinyurl.com/p3utk.
[163] Personal interview on 16 August 2006.

Taliban were hiding out. A company of infantry "*could have done better [than us],*" he said[164].

Furthermore, the desire of Defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld to increase the role, budget and missions of special forces, as well as their intelligence capability[165] in the war on terror – to the detriment of the CIA, caused a certain amount of tension across the Atlantic, in the intelligence community in particular. Partisans of a greater anti-terrorism role for the military point out the reduced resources of the CIA – some 600-700 *covert operators* – compared with the 10,000-strong Special Operations force of the Pentagon. The CIA, on the other hand, responds that is has had successes in Afghanistan, and that only it has the background, the local contacts (especially within intelligence services) and a polyglot staff accustomed to local customs, to carry out missions like these. The *Company* also stresses that every one of its planned operations, even if it is clandestine, passes through various filters and levels of control, within the Agency and all the way up to the National Security Council (NSC) and even the White House – which is not the case, or is less often the case, for operations carried out by the military, whose operational decisions are taken in relatively brief time-frames, and internally to that service[166].

6. Conclusion

In the last five years special forces have become an indispensable tool not only in the hands of army commanders but also in the hands of political authorities, who appreciate their efficiency and discretion in all senses of the term: the dispatch of these troops or the increase of their presence in a given theatre of operations does not necessarily require to be justified before the legislature, public opinion or the media spotlight. Used seriously, special forces "*allow military, diplomatic and political gains to be recorded beyond their numbers. They are worth it*"[167]. Their intrinsic qualities and the results they achieve, together with the uncertainties of asymmetric and non-conventional war, the increase in low-intensity and inter-ethnic conflicts and the perception by the US that they are in a "*Long War*"[168] against terrorism, ensure that the special operations community will be deployed more often in the future and will constitute "*the future of fighting*", in the expression used by an American adviser on matters of terrorism[169].

Another point worth noting: special forces have gained muscle, are more visible and present more often than in the past. To the extent of taking over from conventional forces? "*It is clear that they are not merely auxiliary to traditional operations. A recent*

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[164] *SAS creates a new squadron to counter threat from al-Qa'eda*, op cit.
[165] At the beginning of 2005, the American press revealed the existence within the Pentagon of a new "human intelligence" unit, the Strategic Support Branch, trespassing on the traditional territory of the CIA.
[166] *The Rise of the Shadow Warriors*, Foreign Affairs (www.foreignaffairs.org), March-April 2004.
[167] *Les forces d'opérations spéciales : congruentes, prêtes et précises*, by Lt-Col Jamie Hammond, *in* Revue militaire canadienne, Autumn 2004.
[168] *The United States is a nation engaged in what will be a long war, Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 6 February 2006.
[169] *SAS creates a new squadron to counter threat from al-Qa'eda*, op. cit.

internal report by a Commonwealth army went so far as to suggest that roles be reversed, and that the main job of traditional forces in future will be to back up special forces"[170].

Finally, as current-day characteristics of Islamic terrorism – polymorphous, transnational, structured, asymmetrical and non-conventional – prevent the emergence of a new doctrine for special forces, those characteristics will see special forces become a supreme tool in the fight against terrorism. But let us leave the conclusion to Richard Marcinko, commander of the US Navy and founder of Seal Team Six, a man of combat: "*Right after 9-11, we said that Al Qaeda trainees were in 60 countries, worldwide. Now we know they are in far more. They're all dirty warriors. They don't wear uniforms. They don't fly flags. They can blend in wherever they are. They can outwait us. So this war is not something we can write an exit strategy on, or predict that in 2009 the last pistol shot will be fired*"[171].

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[170] *Les forces d'opérations spéciales : congruentes, prêtes et précises*, op cit.
[171] Interviewed in Military Week, 16 June 2005, available at www.reportingwar.com/wts061605.shtml.

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