

AL-QAEDA NETWORK AND ITS FUTURE IN AFRICA

Anita PEREŠIN*, Vlasta ZEKULIĆ**

* Croatian Security National Authority, Zagreb, Croatia
e-mail: aperisin@gmail.com

** Croatian Defence Academy "Petar Zrinski", Zagreb, Croatia
e-mail: vzekulic@gmail.com

Received on 17 March 2014; accepted in revised in May 2014

© Zeszyty Naukowe WSOWL

African weak central governments, undeveloped security sectors and continuing dissemination of ethnic, religious and other conflicts created fertile ground for development and strengthening of militant Islamist groups' influence in the Sahel and North Africa. Inspired by al-Qaeda's ideology, they have gained the new momentum through the formation of the formal alliances and the integration to the global jihad movement. Having in mind the geo-strategic importance of Africa, there are increasing estimates that the strengthening of the militant Islamism in Africa will additionally empower al-Qaeda and transform the continent into a new terrorist safe haven. Contrary to these assessments, this paper questions the long-term tenability of such strategies, based on the analysis of the root causes of the instability and weaknesses of the African state structures, as well as the local reasons that lead to the strengthening of the militant Islamists. We believe that due to the differences in the interpretation of jihad, as well as the historic unreliability of the African partners, al-Qaeda will not be able to permanently secure implementation of its strategies and, consequently, will not be able to dependably count on Africa as its future permanent and firm stronghold. In spite of this, Africa's security problems could impact overall international community, thus stimulating the key international actors to increase their counterterrorism activities aimed at removal of the causes that lead to the strengthening of the militant Islamism on the continent.

Keywords: Africa, al-Qaeda, jihad, Islam, terrorism

INTRODUCTION

North Africa and the Sahel are currently some of the most unstable regions of the world. During the last decades, extremism and terrorism permeated throughout Africa, without drawing much attention from the world powers, primarily focused on events in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, new insecurities and conflicts, emerging after the fall of Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi and democratically elected government in Mali, initiated additional dissemination of al-Qaeda influence and activities to the local extremist groups, making their ethnic, tribal, racial, religious and other conflicts, even more dangerous and deadly. In the changed operational and security environment al-Qaeda used rising African instabilities as the new area to employ its transformed models of operating. Constant adjustments of al-Qaeda's organization and tactics, developed as the

response to the changes in the security environment, are indicators of its major adaptability and agility, as well as complexity of its organizational network. Broadening of its activities into other regions of the world and bonding with local Islamist groups worldwide is the beginning of the new phase of transformation of al-Qaeda, leading to further decentralization of its network. However, changes in its structure do not seem to weaken it, but give it extra strength, and could enable its survival even in the case of al-Qaeda Central complete collapse¹.

Beginning with the assumption that al-Qaeda subsidiaries today might represent even bigger threat to the West than the al-Qaeda Central, this paper examines how the changes al-Qaeda underwent and implementation of its new strategy in Africa influence its efficiency. To evaluate the level of al-Qaeda's efficiency in Africa, we will use six indicators: size, nature of organizational design, secrecy, power of representation, interests it protects and cohesion². In the light of lacking serious engagement from the West and strengthening of al-Qaeda's connections with local Islamist groups, this evaluation is needed to objectively assess a possibility that the African continent in the future becomes one of the main al-Qaeda Central's bases for global jihad. Answers to the posed questions will provide guidelines for the new counterterrorist measures that should offer effective models of crisis management against these new threats.

1. SPREADING OF GLOBAL JIHAD ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

Recently, there has been an active discussion among terrorism experts on what happened with al-Qaeda after the war in Afghanistan. Numerous assumptions have been made on how its structure, models and strategies have been affected by the losses in the "global war on terror" and the elimination of Osama bin Laden. Additional deliberations were made on whether al-Qaeda's organizational structure collapsed and diminished its operational capability to conduct major terrorist attacks. It is undoubtedly true that al-Qaeda still exists, despite overall counterterrorism efforts, and that it is still the world's biggest and most dangerous terrorist organization. Al-Qaeda headquarters were moved from Afghanistan to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA region) of Pakistan and was renamed al-Qaeda Central (terms also used are *The al-Qaeda Organization*, *Core al-Qaeda*, *al-Qaeda Classic*). Although weakened, al-Qaeda Central did not give up on its major goal – creation of the pan-Islamic caliphate in the Muslim world and leading global jihad against the West.

We are also witnessing a rise of the new al-Qaeda models of cooperation – creation of formal alliances with local Islamic groups. Al-Qaeda estimated that these Islamist factions Osama bin Laden financially, organizationally and educationally supported during the 1990s in their struggle against the local regimes, could nowadays assist it in fulfilling the organizations' ideological and strategic goals. They have already sporadically joined the global jihad after the international intervention in Afghanistan by initiating attacks against the western targets in the name of al-Qaeda and according to its guidelines. The intensification of the jihadist activities in Algeria, Nigeria, Somalia and Mali, supported by the widening of the al-Qaeda influence on the African continent, is also providing new energy for the global jihadist movement. Recently, this cooperation became formalized and led to the creation of regional al-Qaeda

¹ K. Zimmerman, *The Al Qaeda network: a new framework for defining the enemy*, 2013.

² N. Benotman, J. Russell, *A New Index to Assess the Effectiveness of Al Qaeda*, 2013.

organizations: al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), al-Qaeda on the Arab Peninsula (AQAP), al-Qaeda in Yemen (AQIY) and al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). This created “al-Qaeda movement” comprising of “multiple different al-Qaedas”.

Nevertheless, experts are still in doubt³ if the al-Qaeda Central’s goal is to regroup and re-establish itself in the Sub-Saharan Africa and on the Horn of Africa (as it is under serious pressure in Afghanistan and Pakistan) or if this trend points out to the *ad hoc* cooperation with local Islamist organizations, through which al-Qaeda is trying to gain support for the creation of the pan-Islamic caliphate, as it should also encompass parts of the African continent. Regardless of which strategy proves to be correct, a common factor in both of them is that Africa is becoming a new “arena for jihad” and it is necessary to develop and timely focus appropriate antiterrorist measures on the continent. It is widely believed that the main reason for marginal success of the existing counterterrorism measures is lack of factual knowledge on relationships between al-Qaeda Central in Pakistan, regional al-Qaeda subsidiaries and local Islamist groups within its network⁴.

2. RISE OF THE MILITANT ISLAMISM IN AFRICA

2.1. Causes of instability and weakness of African state structures

Modern African countries are unique state formations influenced by the pre-colonial cultures, colonial heritage and diverse postcolonial experiences; each historic phase leaving permanent mark on African people, culture and traditions. In the contemporary context, this heritage functions as the factor of regression or progression of the development processes.

By analysing the influence of the colonial history on the African states structure and behaviour of its population, through the Alan Whaites responsive state building elements⁵, we can deduce that only those political elites, willing and capable of supporting colonizers’ demands for local resources, workforce and privileged trading, could remain in power. Such policies turned governments into repressive social actors, continuously searching for means to exploit people and their land, so that they could remain in power. Consequently, states’ expected functions, with regard to their people’s demands, were also minimal. Governments fulfilled only the most pressing requirements, and by dividing population into the security-administrative-agrarian groups, provided each group with diverse, but minimal resources, knowledge and authority to fulfil their specific tasks within that community. Even today a significant number of African societies function according to the almost exact pattern of class division and deeply rooted distrust among different tribes and entities. Often, these divisions were also religious in nature, as the most tribes of Northern Africa and the Sahel are Muslims of the Arab origin, while the so-called “black Africans” mostly adopted Christian faith. The division along religious, ethnic and tribal criteria in many countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, containing the seed of the modern militant Islamism, exists to this day.

³ V. Soria, *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, 2012.

⁴ K. Zimmerman, *The Al Qaeda network: a new framework for defining the enemy*, 2013.

⁵ A. Whaits, *States in Development: Understanding State-building*, 2008.

Putting aside ruthlessness of their rule, Vandervort explains that under colonial governance African states actually functioned well⁶, as the colonizers efficiently coordinated every segment of the society, guiding it towards effective and productive execution of the imperial politics. On the other hand, the notion of “nation” and “nationality” was non-existing, since only the chosen elites and the pure ethnic connections dominated above all other relationships, even in the postcolonial period. Rivkin thus elaborates how these preconditions slowed the societies’ natural growth, increased unemployment, corruption, abandonment of public projects and education, etc.⁷ The expected functions were then furthermore neglected, initiating continuing clashes over the whole Africa. Lack of political stability weakened economy and, amplified by poor management of the national resources, resulted in the inability to regularly pay security sector members, thus negatively reflecting on the processes of professionalization⁸. A combination of low and irregular wages with the weak administrative capacities created favourable conditions for corruption among the security sector employees, who, in return, corrosively affected local, regional and international security. Thus, it is not surprising that most African states today are categorized as *fragile* or *failed*.

Two main indicators which point at a growing inability of central governments to establish and maintain security are weak and porous borders as well as numerous military interventions and coups. McLoughlin explains that the weak states become easy pray for foreign political, ideological, economic or criminal interventions⁹. Rebels, guerrilla fighters and terrorists as well as political and economic instability easily flow from one country to another, forming an inseparable relationship between fragile states, porous borders and regional conflicts. For example, the crisis in Liberia in 1991 initiated war in Sierra Leon, encouraged military coups in Gambia in 1994 and Sierra Leone in 1992, 1996 and 1997, as well as the unsuccessful coup in Guinea in 1996, also creating a serious refugee crisis in all the surrounding states¹⁰. In 1998, The Economist reported how Africa became a “continent in war” in which “nearly a third of Sub-Saharan Africa's 42 countries are embroiled in international or civil wars, and more and more African rulers are seeking military solutions to political problems: at least 13 have sent troops to neighbours' wars. Other countries are plagued by gangs of armed criminals, who can be as disruptive as political rebels.”¹¹ A more recent example of the same trend occurred in the Sahel in 2012. After the collapse of Libya, intelligence agencies tracked the movement of combatants and weaponry through Algeria to Mali,¹² where they joined local Tuareg rebels (Ansar Dine group), enforced by AQIM and Movement for Oneness and jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). Together, they conquered almost half of the Mali state, enforced Shari’a law and uninterruptedly governed for almost a year. Forced to retreat against the dominant and militarily superior French and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) troops in January 2013, rebels simply

⁶ B. Vandervort, *Wars of imperial conquest in Arica*, Bloomington 1998.

⁷ A. Rivkin, *Nation Building in Africa*, New Brunswick 1969.

⁸ T. Dempsy, *The Transformation of African Militaries*, West Point 2009.

⁹ C. McLoughlin, *Topic guide on Fragile States*, Birmingham 2012.

¹⁰ H. Howe, *Ambiguous Order: Military Forces in African States*, Boulder 2001.

¹¹ The Economist, *A continent goes to war*, 1998.

¹² The Economist, *Mali and al-Qaeda*, 2012.

moved to the neighbouring Niger, in an attempt to regroup under the protection of their Tuareg tribes¹³.

McIoughlin additionally states that the society's resilience is measured in governments' ability "to meet [their] population's expectations or manage changes in expectations and capacity through the political process"¹⁴. These changes are caused by a constant conflict over resources, both the deficient and abundant ones. An analysis shows that instability first arises when governments are unable to balance demands of society with the state's ability to provide for them, a condition consequently leading to the crisis of their legitimacy. Lack of legitimacy and transnational visibility, ruling African elites most often compensate with repression, making the population even more resentful towards them, and thus becoming what Bates calls "specialists in violence"¹⁵.

African people have been exposed to violence and distorted and possessive governance for so long. As the previous argumentation showed, the statement of the German imperial General Lothar von Troth "I know these African tribes, they are all the same: they respect nothing but the force"¹⁶ is still considered the applicable way of ruling and confirming one's authority in Africa. As a result, local warlords, single-party systems, but also so-called democratically elected governments of Africa are not hesitant when reaching for necessary means to empower themselves. In Africa, where a third of its 700 million people are Muslims, there is an increasing trend of forming power alliances with radicals and extreme Islamists.

2.2 Rising of militant Islamism in Africa

Gaub elaborates that instability in any form requires three elements before it erupts: causes, catalysts and triggers¹⁷. The causes are long-term sequences of events, usually static or slowly changing. The trigger is a one-off event that sets off social disturbance, "the last drop" such as the death of a party leader, questionable election results, or as in case of the Arab Spring, the tragic death of a young student. The causes can build up over a long period of time, the triggers are accidental and as such, hard to predict, thus the crucial element of this cycle are the catalysts. They are "agents of change" that speed up the reaction of the population against the causes. They are short-term, dynamic and difficult to identify, but have a crucial importance for the stability of the state. For example, Gaub recognized the catalysts in the Egyptians' reaction to the raise of food prices in 2010 or dissatisfaction of the Libyan population by the general living conditions after termination of the international economic sanctions in 2006¹⁸.

Additional catalysts of the social unrests in African countries Poole finds in the activities of organizations such as Muslim Brotherhood and Ga'mat al-Islamiya in Egypt, Islamic Salvation Front in Alger, Jamal Jihad in Eritrea, Islamic Union of Mujahedeen of Ogaden in Ethiopia, etc.¹⁹ They have found fertile ground for militant Islamism in Afri-

¹³ S. Elisher, *After Mali Comes Niger*, 2013.

¹⁴ C. McIoughlin, *Topic guide on Fragile States*, Birmingham 2012.

¹⁵ R.H. Bates, *When things fell apart-State Failure in Late-Century Africa*, Cambridge 2008.

¹⁶ G. Staguhn, *Knjiga o ratu*, Ljubljana 2007, p. 102.

¹⁷ F. Gaub, *Predicting the Arab Spring: What we got wrong*, 2012.

¹⁸ F. Gaub, *Predicting the Arab Spring: What we got wrong*, 2012.

¹⁹ H.J. Poole, *Terrorist trail – Backtrailing the foreign fighter*, Esmerald Isle 2006.

ca, as most of the regional Muslims, especially in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, are somewhat politically discriminated or have significant social grievances. Sometimes, even unconsciously, non-Islamic entities spread Muslim dissatisfaction, for example in Kenya. There, Christians are vigorously fighting a proposed new constitution that would give Muslims their own courts, “albeit only for marital and land issues”²⁰, providing Somali Islamic militia al-Shabaab, further motivation to continue in their fight to protect Muslim rights. Having in mind that most of the regional Islamist organizations are revolting against their legitimate state structures, they need to obtain foreign sponsors (such as al-Qaeda, Yemen or Iraq) for organizational, financial or ideological support.

Bearing in mind that 1/5 of the overall Muslim world population live in Africa, Islamic radicals could potentially have a significant impact on African affairs, but that is not the case. Reasons for that lie in the special character of African communities which provide key argumentation for our thesis: African extremist groups are very local, their movements’ ideological and religious cloak is flexible and changeable depending on which option best enables implementation of their interests. They are rarely absolutely idealistic; their complex, multilayered system of beliefs guides them in the fight for resources, for freedom and for power. There are numerous reasons for this, but we will elaborate only the two most important: strength of local interaction and dependency and uniqueness of Islam in Africa.

Bates explains that all the subjects within African states are primarily exposed and dependant on one another, regardless of what political or ideological dogma they represent²¹. They fight for the same goals, the same resources and same populace support. As we could see in Mali, Kenya, Tanzania and Somalia, local rebel groups eventually accept foreign assistance and ideological framework, sometimes after decades of struggling and fighting alone, although they are aware that nobody from out-of-Africa can ever truly understand the very core of the African needs, loyalties and cultures. Thus, under specific circumstances, when political settlements manage to establish even the most fragile balance between government, its people and available resources, stability rises. As this is a condition to which everybody yearns, even a hint of it is sometimes enough for the foreign sponsors to be eliminated and disposed of.

Arguments for this assertion are numerous, for example in the relationship between Sudan and al-Qaeda in the 1990s. The government of Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir had a significant ideological and religious connotation; it led to the implementation of Shari’a law and almost a decade long collaboration with Hassan al-Turabi and his al-Qaeda. However, in 1996 oil investors came to Sudan, and conditioned investments exclusively with the Sudan Government being democratically elected one. Al-Bashir consequently ran and won the elections, denied further cooperation with al-Turabi and expelled him together with his religious and ideological activities, thus creating favourable conditions for western investments, or at least an illusion of them. Following these events, when the negotiations and agreement was made between Khartoum and Zaghawa rebels from Darfur, USA Today published an article alluding at how the African leaders have a history of “failure to live up to (their) agreements”²².

²⁰ The Economist, *Somalia comes to Uganda*, 2013, p. 36.

²¹ R.H. Bates, *When things fell apart-State Failure in Late-Century Africa*, Cambridge 2008.

²² USA Today, *Government, Main Rebels sign peace accord in Nigeria*, 2006.

However, a far more important reason behind African fluttering loyalties is in the nature of African Islam itself. Just like Christianity, Islam has been imposed upon the African population over their traditional beliefs in animism and the spirits of their ancestors, and has never penetrated deeply into the history, culture and behaviour of the people, as it did in the Arab world. Colonial powers have also imposed secularism upon the African state structure and management as the major principle of governance. Consequently, African religious leaders have also primarily focused their guidance towards the spiritual needs of their congregations and not towards the daily – political issues, although there are exceptions (such as with Senegal *marabouts*) where the boundaries are quite blurred.

Contrary to this, a part of African Muslims still believe that the link between state and religion is necessary, as Qur'an regulates not only spiritual, but also social life of its followers. Thomson argues that for the "Islamists, religion without the authority is worthless"²³, finding the grounds for this belief in Western cultures, where separation of religious virtues from the government enforcement led to decadency, greed, crime, materialism and disregard of others. Shari'a in such sense represents a code of living for each and every Muslim, and, although there are numerous interpretations of the differences in the nature of Islamic state and applicability of Shari'a, what they all passionately believe is that religion and politics have to be one. Nevertheless, only in rare situations in Africa, Islamic movements have been politically significant. Governments of Libya and Sudan ruled part of their postcolonial history in the name of Islam, but these were uncommon hybrids of religion and nationalism, autocratic rule, socialism, etc. Only Mauritania has been an Islamic Republic since its independence in 1958, while the military stopped an attempt to Islamize Algeria in 1992. Thomson additionally stresses that today there is not a single majority demand by African governments or societies for the Islamisation of any African state²⁴.

Undeniably, there have been successful terrorist acts in Africa as well (60 killed tourists in Luxor in 1997, attacks on US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, attacks on Israeli citizens and establishments in Algiers etc.), but what is immediately noticed, from the analysis of these attacks, is that responsibility was taken by major terrorist organizations leading global jihad, and not local groups, thus indicating that they show no or little interest in such activities. In her report on the African development, Hoeffler states that in the period between 1960 and 2002, around 1.55 million people have been killed in combat in Africa, around 40% of overall world casualties²⁵. This leads to our final argument in showing why global terrorism will have shallow roots in Africa – the overall damage caused by terrorist attacks in Africa, compared to decades of African inner wars, conflicts and clashes, is in its essence insignificant.

Nevertheless, even if the imminent danger does not come from the dramatic radicalization of a single local group, it still lays in the vast and ungoverned spaces of fragile and failed states. In these un-ruled and uncontrolled territories, al-Qaeda and similar organizations can find and monopolize operational environment for their training and recruitment bases. All of this clearly indicates that the radical Islamic activities and

²³ A. Thomson, *An introduction to African politics*, London 2010.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ A. Hoeffler, *Dealing with the Consequences of Violent Conflicts in Africa*, Oxford 2008.

ambitions will occasionally find space for their operations, but they will be prevented from planting their roots deeply into African societies.

3. ACTIVITIES OF MILITANT ISLAMIC GROUPS IN AFRICA

An increasing number and influence of local Islamic groups in the region suits al-Qaeda Central as it enables it to regroup and reposition its regional headquarters onto the African continent²⁶. In these areas al-Qaeda Central sees a possibility for easy access to weapons and troops, availability of the international trading routes and clear venue of approach to the European continent, thus making Africa a continent of great interest. In this chapter we will analyse the Algerian terrorist organization *Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb* (AQIM), Somali *al-Shabaab* and Nigerian *Boko Haram*, as all three organizations formally aligned with al-Qaeda Central. For the purposes of this paper, we will analyse the advantages and shortcomings of these alliances and the level of threat they jointly represent.

3.1. Al-Qaeda in the Lands of Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)

AQIM is an Algerian jihadist group of Sunni Muslims, founded in 1998 under the name *Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat* (GSPC). At first, it was a fraction of the biggest and most active Algerian terrorist group *Armed Islamic Group*. GSPC started its activities as a traditional anti-colonial insurgent group, but after the French had withdrawn, it continued violent actions against post-colonial regimes, proclaiming that they were too pro-European. At the peak of its power, GSPC had 30,000 members, but the efficient counterterrorism measures reduced their number to under 1,000.

Since it was founded, it has primarily targeted members of the Algerian security forces and government buildings, aiming to overthrow the government and establish the Islamic caliphate. A formal alliance with al-Qaeda was established in September 2006²⁷, and in the following January, GSPC renamed itself Al-Qaeda in the Lands of Islamic Maghreb – AQIM. Although there were some reservations within the organization about this merger, it was deemed a necessary measure in order to organizationally and financially survive, recruit new members and regroup after the heavy losses caused by the antiterrorist security forces. Masters believes that GSPC did not have a choice but to find a new mission that could attract new members²⁸. They got it by formally connecting to al-Qaeda and replacing former fight against the government with the fight against the West and their interest in Africa. AQIM conducted initial attacks at the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007 against foreigners working in the energy plants in Algeria. In December 2007, they attacked UN members in Algeria, in February of 2008 members of the Israeli Embassy in Nouakchott, Mauritania, and in May 2009, AQIM claimed responsibility for the murder of British hostages and the US missionary in Mauritania. Although they did not claim responsibility, it is believed that AQIM also attacked the US Consulate in Benghazi, Libya, in 2012, killing US ambassador Christopher Stevens²⁹. Masters believes that today AQIM represents a major threat to

²⁶ V. Soria, *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, 2012.

²⁷ US National Counterterrorism Centre 2013.

²⁸ J. Masters, *Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb*, 2013.

²⁹ US National Counterterrorism Centre 2013.

northern Mali, a territory described by the former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to be as dangerous as the one in Afghanistan³⁰.

Current AQIM tactics include guerrilla warfare, kidnapping and suicide attacks on civilian and military targets. Their main source of income comes from ransoms, illegal weapons, medication and drugs smuggling or similar criminal activities. Suicide bombers and targeting of western citizens (humanitarians, tourists, diplomats, multinational corporations' employees...) are considered clear indicators that this group has assumed al-Qaeda's goals and tactics. Furthermore, al-Qaeda imprint is visible not only in the internationalization of AQIM operations, but also in the sophistication of their attacks, as they have become far more spectacular, just like al-Qaeda ones. Moreover, there is a change in the organization's rhetoric and propaganda. Soria shows that AQIM adopted al-Qaeda's media strategy, best seen in the careful propaganda of their activities and the foundation of their own media group *Al-Andalus*³¹.

AQIM is still expanding its activities and getting involved in other conflicts on the African continent³², which could be seen as an indicator of their midterm operational and long-term strategic goals. Sterling further states that operating in the neighbouring unstable countries such as Libya and Nigeria will enable the group's easier movement and dissemination of its influence. Cristiani and Fabiani in the same context add that this organization has previously used weak states and porous borders between Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger to establish mobile training bases and expand their "kidnapping industry"³³. In addition, Masters warns that there is also serious evidence on the AQIM cells being established in Western Europe³⁴. Especially upsetting is the fact that a significant number of AQIM members actively participated in the war in Iraq, where they received special training in suicide bombings. The same author voices his concern about AQIM connections with Nigerian Boko Haram, Somali al-Shabaab and Yemeni AQAP.

3.2. Al – Shabaab

Harakat Shabaab al-Mujahidin - al-Shabaab, known also as al-Shabaab, Shabaab, the Youth, Mujahidin al-Shabaab Movement, Mujahedeen Youth Movement, Mujahidin Youth Movement, was founded as the military wing of the Somali Council of Islamic Courts. In 2006, this terrorist organization took control over most of the southern Somalia. Although in December 2006 Somali government and Ethiopian military forces managed to suppress al-Shabaab during the two week war, it managed to regroup and continue with activities in southern and central Somalia, as well as in north Kenya. Al-Shabaab guerrilla and terrorist tactics were aimed primarily against Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFG), its allies, African Union peace operation and non-governmental humanitarian organizations.

³⁰ J. Masters, *Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb*, 2013.

³¹ V. Soria, *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, 2012.

³² J. Sterling, *Al Qaeda in Northern Africa an "Afterthought" No More*, 2012.

³³ D. Cristiani, R. Fabiani, *AQIM Funds Terrorist Operations with Thriving Sahel-Based Kidnapping Industry*, 2010.

³⁴ J. Masters, *Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb*, 2013.

Soon after formally aligning with al-Qaeda in 2008, al-Shabaab began publicly declaring its partisanship to the global jihad fighting against the West. Following the public announcement of “merger of jihad from the Horn of Africa with the one led by al-Qaeda”³⁵ in February 2010, they intensified their operations. Simultaneously with the change of focus from the national to the global goals, came the change of the attacks’ planning and targeting system³⁶. Links with al-Qaeda became visible through the abandonment of guerrilla warfare and the adoption of al-Qaeda’s main tactics – the intensified use of suicide bombers against government buildings, dignitaries, UN and African Union members and other NGOs throughout the country but also abroad. It is believed that al-Shabaab is responsible for two suicide attacks in Kampala, Uganda in June 2010, killing more than 70 people.

Since each clan within al-Shabaab has its own set of interests, this formal alliance with al-Qaeda was not unanimously supported, resulting in inner struggles between its clans. The disagreements were triggered not only because of demands to operate outside of Somalia, but also for enticing the use of al-Qaeda methods, such as suicide attacks, as it is very hard to find local fighters motivated to do it. This has negatively reflected on the group’s cohesion and disabled single, unified command. Currently, two main streams dominate al-Shabaab operations: one interested only in local fighting against TFG and resentful of the global jihad, and the other supporting alliance with al-Qaeda, adopting its ideology, goals and integration into al-Qaeda global operations. Soria thus warns that the recruitment of foreign fighters in the future could become a necessary prerequisite for al-Shabaab’s ability to conduct its operations³⁷.

The alliance with al-Qaeda undoubtedly increased popular support for al-Shabaab. Prior to 2008, it consisted mostly of local fighters, fighting for local goals and of sympathizers arriving from Somali Diaspora, primarily from Kenya³⁸. Soria shows that al-Shabaab now attracts more foreign jihadists and radicalized individuals from the Near East, Europe and the USA³⁹, further motivated by a significant media campaign run by the media wing of al-Shabaab Kata’ib Foundation⁴⁰. During their last attack in a shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya, in September 2013, the multinational component of the reinforced al-Shabaab was clearly visible. This attack was a revenge for the Kenyan military operations against the al-Shabaab in the south of Somalia and Kenya’s fight against Islamic groups. Among the attackers responsible for the death of 72 people, were citizens of the USA, Somalia, Canada, Great Britain and Kenya, supporting the claim that foreign fighters now represent an important, although still limited, source of new al-Shabaab recruits.

Soria stresses that these disagreements on the influence that the global jihad has on al-Shabaab’s operational capabilities are causing significant inner struggles, consequently

³⁵ R. Wise, *Al Shabaab*, 2011, p. 7.

³⁶ J. Rollins, *Al Qaeda and Affiliates: Historical Perspective, Global Presence and Implications for US Policy*, 2010, p. 15.

³⁷ V. Soria, *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, 2012.

³⁸ D. Shinn, *Al Shabaab's Foreign Threat to Somalia*, 2011.

³⁹ V. Soria, *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, 2012.

⁴⁰ D. Shinn, *Al Shabaab's Foreign Threat to Somalia*, 2011.

weakening the group altogether⁴¹. This assertion is also supported by Bruton and Pham, who report on the efforts of one of the al-Shabaab wings to rename the group the Islamic Emirate of Somalia, thus clearly proclaiming that their main goal is to overthrow the Somali Government and establish the Islamic state, and not to fight the global jihad⁴². Nevertheless, Rader warns that al-Shabaab is still a very dangerous organization, not just for the stability of Somalia, but potentially also for the wider security community⁴³.

3.3. Boko Haram

Boko Haram was founded in Nigeria in 2000 during the civil war between the predominantly oil rich, southern Christians and the northern poor, but bellicose Muslims tribes. The war led to the separation of the country along ethnic and religious lines. Boko Haram proclaimed their goals: overthrowing the Nigerian Government, creating a “true Islamic state” and enforcing Shari’a law. Such a rigid and determined posture earned them the name “African Taliban”⁴⁴.

Also known as *Jama’atu Ahl as-Sunnah li-Da’awati wal-Jihad* (JASDJ), *Group of the Sunni People for the Calling and Jihad* and *Nigerian Taliban*, Boko Haram literally means “Western education is forbidden.” Since its foundation, the group continuously changed and adapted, almost completely disappearing after the successful government counterterrorist measures in July 2009. However, Walker believes that the measures that the Nigerian government conducted were in the long-term counterproductive, as they caused an additional revolt in the North and increased a recruiting pool for Boko Haram⁴⁵. Encouraged by this, in July 2010, the group published a video-message announcing their return, expressing solidarity with al-Qaeda and declaring future attacks against American and western targets in Nigeria. Under the new leadership, it continued with the demonstration of power and increasing operational capacities by using improvised explosive devices against “soft targets”.

Boko Haram started using suicide bombers in June 2011, thus verifying in action the words of their deputy leader Abubakra Muhammada Shekau that their targets would be “protruding sites of western culture”⁴⁶. In August 2011, it engaged their first western target: the UN building in Abuja, attacking it with a car bomb, killing 23 and wounding more than 80 people. The attack was followed by an announcement that new assaults against American targets, government buildings and dignitaries would follow soon. Since the end of 2011, Boko Haram has intensified a full spectrum of their operations, including attacks on the Christian population, security sector members, the media, politicians, public buildings and offices. Walker sees the greatest danger to Nigeria’s stability in the attacks against the Christian regions that Boko Haram tries to depopulate and relocate the population away from Nigeria⁴⁷.

⁴¹ V. Soria, *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, 2012.

⁴² B. Bruton, J.P. Pham, *The Splintering of Al Shabaab*, 2012.

⁴³ A. Rader, *A Fine Talking Shop: the London Conference on Somalia*, 2013.

⁴⁴ V. Soria, *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, 2012.

⁴⁵ A. Walker, *What is Boko Haram?*, 2012.

⁴⁶ V. Soria, *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, 2012.

⁴⁷ A. Walker, *What is Boko Haram?*, 2012.

Soria uses Boko Haram as an example of an obvious new trend in Africa: the interconnection of local Islamic groups⁴⁸. Pham also confirms this by showing that Boko Haram did not develop its own media wing, but is using AQIM's *Al-Andalusa* to communicate with the public⁴⁹. On the other hand, Soria believes that the very absence of independent and organized propaganda based on the al-Qaeda's model, is a clear sign that this group is still not mature enough: it is unaware of the importance of propagating their goals for recruiting new members, as it still thinks and acts locally⁵⁰. Additionally, Soria also points out that Boko Haram faces inner turbulences between its fractions, unable to collectively adopt a future strategy. Just like within other described Islamic groups, one fraction supports the continuation of exclusively local operations, while the other leans towards the strengthening of their alliance with other jihadist groups in the region, under al-Qaeda's leadership.

3.4. Importance of local strategic alliances and establishing connections with al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda Central decided to use regional insecurity and weak African states to expand its operational reach by forming alliances with local Islamic groups⁵¹. Soria similarly suggests that as the African instabilities spread towards the East, so will al-Qaeda operatives, as these areas become fertile ground for their recruitment, reorganizing and reinforcement needed to fight future battles of global jihad. Currently, al-Qaeda is focused on local actions through its affiliates, providing them with tactical support in achieving their main goals (overthrow of local regimes), consequently buying their loyalties in order to pull them into the global terrorist campaign. This process of 'luring' African Islamic groups is ongoing as there is still significant inner resistance among their members towards al-Qaeda and the global jihadist movement. Soria believes that they are still trying to find the right balance between their local objectives and internationalization, provided by al-Qaeda⁵².

The very first alliance al-Qaeda formed on the African territory in 1998 with Algerian GSPC and foundation of AQIM warned many experts that it could be the opening of a new international jihad battlefield. Further consolidation of north-African Islamic groups does not represent only a security challenge for North Africa, but also for Europe, especially its Mediterranean part. Celso believes that these alliances are al-Qaeda's answer to the organizational and ideological problems caused after massive antiterrorist campaigns in the aftermath of 9/11 events⁵³. Al-Qaeda needed new recruits, new spaces for their training bases and new groups to influence. Thus, the same author believes that alliances between al-Qaeda and the local African Islamic groups are a symbol of al-Qaeda's successful recuperation and its core resilience. These alliances have proven beneficial for both sides: al-Qaeda has gained entry to new areas, ideal for planning and preparing operations against their targets in Europe, while local Islamists have gained reputation and power provided by the world's most dangerous terrorist

⁴⁸ V. Soria, *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, 2012.

⁴⁹ J.P. Pham, *Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to US Homeland*, 2011, p. 7.

⁵⁰ V. Soria, *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, 2012.

⁵¹ J. Sterling, *Al Qaeda in Northern Africa an 'Afterthought' No More*, 2012.

⁵² V. Soria, *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, 2012.

⁵³ N.A. Celso, *Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb: The „Newest“ Front in the War on Terror*, 2008.

organization. Observing these events from the aspect of counterterrorism, it is necessary to stress that expanding and strengthening al-Qaeda's influence in Africa is also caused by still significant antiterrorism engagement against al-Qaeda Central in Pakistan.

4. THE FUTURE OF TERRORISM IN AFRICA

4.1. The coming of al-Qaeda 3.0

By analysing al-Qaeda activities in Africa, some authors announced the rise of the third generation of al-Qaeda, the so-called 'al-Qaeda 3.0'⁵⁴, different in character and methodology from the previous two generations. As Riedel explains, the first generation created al-Qaeda and carried out the 9/11 terrorist attack. The second generation emerged during the intervention in Afghanistan, and was characterised by the resurfacing of al-Qaeda's activities in Pakistan and Iraq, and then across the Muslim world. The third generation emerged after the death of Osama bin Laden and exploited the Arab Awakening. It opened portals to new unstable regions of the world, where al-Qaeda could create safe havens and new operational bases. Even though many authors consider the new generation of al-Qaeda as the most deadly yet, it is safe to assume that it does not act independently, but still receives strategic guidance from al-Qaeda Central and Ayman al-Zawahiri.

Local Islamic organizations we analysed had been active before the Arab Awakening as well, but their operations, focused on the creation of Islamic states based on Shari'a law, were mostly financed by criminal activities. After the fall of dictators in some Arab states, new regimes underestimated the threat coming from the desert areas of Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Mali. This former well-known smuggling zone became a recruiting, training and planning area for both local Islamists and foreign fighters. From the perspective of the counterterrorism activities, the international community is becoming aware that in a wide front from Somalia in the East to the Mauritania in the West, a new ground base for "jihad warriors" is created. Since the radical militant Islamists favour unstable and unsecured regions, we can expect them to continue raising tensions among Muslims and Christians in multi-confessional states, such as Sudan, Ethiopia, Chad, Kenya and Ivory Coast.

Due to different strategic goals and internal divergences between local Islamic groups on the models and the range of their activities, we consider their ability to create more connected networks and to coordinate their activities more efficiently, especially those that could exceed the local framework, as still quite low. However, if the necessary counterterrorism measures fail or threats from Africa are ignored, there is a serious danger that these instabilities will develop beyond control and become impossible to disrupt. Bearing in mind the complexity of hybrid threats these new circumstances form, analysts compared the situation in Africa with the one in Afghanistan and introduced the term "Africanistan". Militant Islamists from that area do not only consist of religious fanatics, but also of different criminal groups engaged in political and criminal activities, such as smuggling and kidnapping. They attract uneducated and needy young men, mostly revolted by social injustice and corruptive regimes. The contours of this new Islamic wave are supranational and are not limited by any state

⁵⁴ B. Riedel, *Al Qaeda 3.0: Terrorism's Emergent New Power Bases*, 2012.

borders. Although they declare similar statements and ideals, these organizations are actually poorly connected, and the conflicts they lead stay local. Metz considers as reasonably plausible the local Islamic groups' ability to increase tensions and conflicts in the Saharan part of Africa and to additionally weaken or even overtake weak governments⁵⁵. The same author finds their attempt to imperil the oil production and distribution quite obvious, as it is extremely important for the North African and European economies. He expects that each new success they achieve will attract new sympathizers and new partisans for violent extremist operations. An effective solution against the further development of "Africanistan" would be military assistance from the West, especially in the states with active terrorist movements, before they fail any further. Additionally, it would also be beneficial to activate other programmes of sustainable development.

4.2. Influence of the activities in Africa on the effectiveness of al-Qaeda's global goals

The spreading of al-Qaeda's influence and operations on the African territory is a clear indicator of the transformation al-Qaida 3.0 has initiated. Having that in mind, the main goal of our analysis is: (1) determining the impact al-Qaeda's connections with local African Islamic groups have on the effectiveness of its global jihad strategy, and (2) verifying whether the regionalization of al-Qaeda's activities is a sign of the strengthening or weakening of its core network. We performed an assessment of al-Qaeda's effectiveness through six indicators, introduced by Benotman and Russel: size, nature of organizational design, secrecy, power of representation, interests it protects and cohesion. This index will also show us the potential of al-Qaeda's future growth, information relevant for creators of the future counter-terrorist strategies⁵⁶.

Al-Qaeda has kept its main headquarters, led by bin Laden's successor Aymann al-Zawahiri, in Pakistan. Additionally, it multiplied the number of its regional headquarters and created a network of its affiliates. Such connections significantly increased the number of partisans⁵⁷, now several hundred thousand around the world, in comparison with several thousand formal members. The *size* of al-Qaeda, being determined by the number of partisans and members, is a key element of the effectiveness evaluation and represents a great success of al-Qaeda's new strategy.

The second important element, *nature of organizational design*, assesses al-Qaeda's organizational structure and its leadership's ability to create a satisfactory relationship between partisans and formal members and between al-Qaeda Central management and the leaders of its local affiliates. The present organizational structure enables progression of al-Qaeda global goals and, owing to the fluidity of its network, fast and easy adjustment of its operations in various locations worldwide. Taking into consideration the benefits rising from mutual cooperation, we can conclude that it is crucial for the success of al-Qaeda's global strategy. By applying the tactics of

⁵⁵ S. Metz, *Containment Should Guide U.S. Approach to al-Qaida in Africa*, 2013.

⁵⁶ N. Benotman, J. Russell, *A New Index to Assess the Effectiveness of Al Qaeda*, 2013.

⁵⁷ Partisans contribute to Al Qaeda's aims and subscribe to its ideology. This populace encompasses individuals, cells, groups and criminal networks and operations, who are perhaps fully-fledged members of their own groups but are not official members of al-Qaeda. Members are individuals who give *bayah* (religious oath) to al-Qaeda leaders and to the group. *Ibid.*

regionalization, al-Qaeda has shown its ability to transform into a more effective form. However, the analysis of African Islamic groups has shown a high level of unwillingness to blindly follow al-Qaeda's guidelines and to fully implement its tactics, as it contradicts their traditions and beliefs.

From the aspect of *secrecy*, al-Qaeda has recognised the importance of media for promoting its goals and for attracting new followers. However, the increased number of partisans and members also has negative impacts. As local criminals, gangs and tribal militias join the al-Qaeda's ranks, they diminish the pureness of their goals and lessen their operational capabilities and ability to attract new virtuous members, needed especially for suicide bomber missions. Terrorist organizations need media promotion to justify and rationalize their goals, but on the other hand, too much openness could endanger the security of the organization itself. A significant number of distinguished al-Qaeda members killed by drones show an insufficient balance between the principles of secrecy, protection and propaganda. By being too open and insufficiently selective in its recruitment, al-Qaeda made a significant amount of important information on its leaders and key locations available to its enemies. AQIM has a somewhat different tactics that include a high level of secrecy and very little communication, but this model is also flawed, especially for the group's cohesion and the recruitment of new members. Any isolation from the wider public has a negative side effect for the implementation of "fighting for the masses" strategy.

Benotman and Russell highlight that al-Qaeda has an adequate *power of representation* in very hot conflicts, but is otherwise very ineffective in this regard⁵⁸. Thus, we can conclude that the strategy of regionalization is, in terms of power of representation, ineffective on both regional and global levels. Even though al-Qaeda Central and its affiliates can share common *interests*, it is obvious that sometimes they have different views on the methods of achieving them. Each attempt to impose means or tactics that are not fully acceptable or follow different religious interpretations could lead to alienation from al-Qaeda Central and consequently decrease its power. Such discrepancies could have a negative impact on al-Qaeda's effectiveness.

Cohesion and integration are very important for the effectiveness of the terrorist campaign. Regionalization is challenging al-Qaeda's ability to achieve a functioning balance between partisans and formal members' interests and ambitions and coordinate operations efficiently. Traditionally, some terrorist organizations, such as al-Shabaab or AQIM, rarely accept foreign fighters in their ranks. This inherited distrust negatively affects al-Qaeda's intent to achieve the desired level of integration among its followers on the African continent. It is generally very hard to integrate the different elements of each organization with the central command, but it is even more demanding for al-Qaeda's affiliates in Africa, as they have their own regional commands and different political, social and historical dynamics, methods and goals. Such a decentralized strategy and organizational structure puts al-Qaeda under constant pressure to adjust in order to remain operational. From the example of African Islamists cross-networking, we can deduce that an ability to efficiently integrate regional affiliates into its global network is one of the crucial elements for evaluating al-Qaeda, but in this case it has proven to be a factor of its instability.

⁵⁸ N. Benotman, J. Russell, *A New Index to Assess the Effectiveness of Al Qaeda*, 2013.

Finally, we can conclude that the regionalization strategy is a clear indicator of al-Qaeda's ability to adjust to the changes in its operational environment, and it could pose a new threat to the international security; alliances with the local African groups which draw power, technical and personnel support from cooperation with al-Qaeda can cause regional instabilities and crises, and a possibly feasible threat to the Western populace and interests in that part of the world. However, we concur with Benotman and Russell's assessment that the impressive image of al-Qaeda terrorist network, from the micro-management's point of view of its relationships between individuals, groups, regional affiliates and al-Qaeda Central⁵⁹, could actually cause significant problems to the organization, as it attempts to plan and execute their operations from Africa. By analysing the effectiveness index of al-Qaeda, we support the previous authors' opinion that al-Qaeda suffered several strategic defeats, such as insufficient openness in the post-Arab Spring environment that called for more transparent communication within the society, an inability to achieve balance between different local interests, deficiency in integration of al-Qaeda Central operatives among local radicals, and failing to achieve cohesion between regional African groups within its overall global network.

4.3. World's response to the strengthening of militant Islamism in Africa

The inability of African states to protect their borders and prevent rebels, smugglers and terrorists from using their territories for illegal activities, the affinity for economic expansion, preventive strikes or disagreements with the political decisions of the neighbouring countries are just some of the reasons for the interstate interventions in Africa and a growing European and American concern on the impact these events could have on the global security.

4.3.1. US response

Al-Qaeda activities in Sudan and terrorist attacks in Kenya and Tanzania changed Africa from the continent of low importance for the US foreign policy to the priority region of American economic, political and military interests⁶⁰. US presence on the African territory has been intensified in 2003, when it assisted ECOWAS mission in Liberia. Based upon the mistakes and recognized lessons learned from that and previous African engagements, in 2008 the US founded *African Command* (AFRICOM). AFRICOM is tasked with building African defence capabilities, responding to crisis, deterring and defeating transnational threats in order to advance US national interests and promoting regional security, stability and prosperity⁶¹.

Next to AFRICOM, the US have initiated numerous other initiatives, partnerships and programmes for financially aiding African security sectors, strengthening counterterrorist capacities of individual African states, and enhancing international cooperation⁶². The most significant projects are: *The Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnership* (founded in 2002 to increase border security in the Sahel and strengthen counterterrorism measures); *African Partnership Station* (founded in 2007, aimed to provide support to the Navies of the West African states and increase harbour security,

⁵⁹ N. Benotman, J. Russell, *A New Index to Assess the Effectiveness of Al Qaeda*, 2013.

⁶⁰ B. Schaefer, *Creating an African Command: Bush Administration Makes the right call*, 2006.

⁶¹ M.D. Kellerhals, *U.S. Africa Command Seeking Sustained Security Engagement*, 2009.

⁶² L. Ploch, *Countering Terrorism in East Africa: The US Response*, 2010.

command and control in maritime operations), *Joint Combined Exchanged Training* (program aimed to assist in conducting joint military counterterrorism exercises); *The African Centre for Strategic Studies* (founded in 1999 as one of the five regional strategic studies centres for fighting ideological support to terrorism and strengthening cooperation with US security sectors), *The African Coastal and Border Security Program* (financial aid program to African security sectors), etc. The initiated activities show that the USA have recognized the need for deeper involvement in the African matters through strategically planned military, political and financial aid programmes for African failed and fragile states, threatened by the continuous strengthening of militant Islamism.

Regardless of the provided assistance, the US military presence on the continent is still considered mostly unwanted. This calls for continuing long-term assistance strategies primarily to the African security forces, so that they could develop a satisfactory level of combat efficiency against local Islamic groups. On the other hand, financial and other forms of assistance to the population are also of crucial importance, as they reduce their dissatisfaction and enable fulfilling their basic needs. If this flow of assistance ceases, people may turn to local militants for shelter, food and security governments cannot provide, thus initiating another cycle of instability.

4.3.2. European Union response

Since its formation, the EU has not shown any significant interest in Africa. Its policies were inconsistent and primarily linked to the development programmes, promotion of democracy and protection of human rights, while the issues of African socioeconomic development remained unanswered. This became visible in the mid-1990s when the European Union showed almost no interest in stopping African ruthless and bloody conflicts. It is believed that this was a result of the non-existing functional EU foreign and security policy.

Jeoffe believes that the rising number of security threats (terrorism, fragile and failed states, civil and international wars), especially since the terrorist attacks on the USA and some European states, increased European fear and accordingly amplified the need to protect European southern borders⁶³. The EU used the complex security situation in Africa to develop and test its *Common Foreign and Security Policy* (CFSP) and secure for itself the status of relevant and valuable global security actor. To augment these foreign policies, the Union created deployable European Battle Groups (EUBG), it dispatched 16 missions and operations to Africa, nine of which are still active and one is being formed, and in 2007 it founded *the African Peace Facility*, a financial instrument to support the formation of the African Union's peace support operations capacities.

Primarily, the EU decided to institutionally connect with Africa, through its partner organization: the African Union. This institutional bond is visible through resolutions and agreements from the three previous Euro-African Summits (Cairo in 2000, 2007 in Lisbon and 2010 in Tripoli), which gathered members of 53 African and 27 European countries. European and African Unions signed a number of significant joint documents, but the most important ones are: an agreement on *African-EU Strategic Partnership* from 2005 and the *Strategy for Development and Stability of Africa* from

⁶³ G. Jeoffe, *The European Union, Democracy and Counter-terrorism in the Maghreb*, 2008.

2007. Both of these documents contain measures that can influence states but also their populations, and in the first place is a set of measures that enable peace and security. The EU directly invested more than one billion Euros to support the implementation of the African peace and security architecture (such as the *Continental Early Warning System* – CEWS, defining and implementing disarmament policies and fight against terrorism, operationalization of the *African Stand by Forces* – ASF, enabling training centres, etc.). Also in 2005, the EU and the AU signed the *Action Plan for Fight against Terrorism*, and in 2006 founded the *Capacity Building Programme Against Terrorism* – ICPAT, with its headquarters in Addis Abeba. Roell believes that this established an effective strategy of employment based on the four main missions: prevention, protection, pursuit and effective response⁶⁴.

From this, it is visible that the EU chose a *human security approach* to engage African terrorism, which is quite different from the American primarily military approach. The EU emphasised the need to detect and eliminate root causes leading to radicalization of individuals, formation of Islamic militias and eventually to terrorism. The EU strategy begins with the premise that the reduction of poverty, just distribution of resources and protection of human rights and freedoms will decrease the reasons that push people towards radicalization and extremism. With African security indicators in mind, it is safe to expect the creation of long-term and thoroughly planned international engagement. It would be most beneficial if a synergic interaction of the US, the EU, the UN and the AU could be achieved to interconnect their strategies and resources for Africa and jointly engage them against the sources of the African instabilities, which represent a threat not only to the regional but also global security.

CONCLUSION

The intensified activities of the local Islamic groups in North Africa and the Sahel show beyond doubt that the global jihad led by al-Qaeda is spreading to the African continent, proving once again al-Qaeda's remarkable capacity to adapt to new conditions and to use crisis hot-spots for its purposes. Al-Qaeda's interest in formal alliances with the followers of its ideology and their inclusion into a global terrorist network should be considered an integral part of the vigorous al-Qaeda's third generation strategy (the so-called al-Qaeda 3.0) to create new bases for the global jihad. Such a partnership is quite natural, since thousands of militants from Africa previously fought for al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Iraq. With these formal alliances, al-Qaeda gave the global jihad a new importance, making Africa its new arena. Geographically, in Africa Al-Qaeda found a new territorial stronghold for spreading its global activities, while organizationally these alliances led to changes of its global terrorist network.

With the rise of Africa's central governments inability to achieve and uphold the desired level of security, control weak and porous borders, manage underpaid security sectors and contain frequent ethnic, religious and other conflicts, Africa became accessible territory for Islamists. Strengthened and stimulated by the increased regional presence of the al-Qaeda after the Arab Spring and rearmed after the fall of Gadhafi's regime, the Sahel turned into fertile ground for the development and increasing activities of oppressed militant Islamists. Al-Qaeda became primarily focused on supporting local radi-

⁶⁴ P. Roell, *The European Union and its Fight against International Terrorism*, 2011.

cal rebels in their attempts to further destabilize the failed of failing states by guiding their attacks against Western targets in the region.

At first glance it seems that by providing guidelines and diverse assistance to its local affiliates al-Qaeda strengthened its ability to conduct terrorist attacks on the local level, but also its own resilience. However, the weakness of this new partnership lays in the reliability of the African allies and their commitment in the realization of joint, long-term, jihadist strategies that could turn Africa into a permanent Al-Qaeda stronghold. If we assume that the genuine al-Qaeda's potential lays in the capability and strength of its local affiliates, then we must notice how much growing internal contradictions within local ranks endanger the organization itself. Each time al-Qaeda absorbs one of the local groups, its leadership and members, it also takes in their inner discrepancies in opinions, ideologies, and tactical or strategic visions. Aligning with African militant Islamists meant also accepting that they are unreceptive of the fundamentalist interpretation of Islam as al-Qaeda advocates it, and that they do not have global ambitions. Additionally, we assessed that local Islamist groups are not willing to make stronger interconnections and to coordinate their activities, especially those beyond the local framework. This leads to the conclusion that in the long run, al-Qaeda can not base its global jihad strategy on the cooperation with its African affiliates and consequently on Africa as its permanent stronghold.

Still, there is no doubt that al-Qaeda's presence in Africa could cause additional regional instabilities and continue to threaten Western targets in that part of the world. Thus, terrorist activities on the continent should be considered serious security threat to the whole international community, forcing it to implement new counterterrorist measures to fight the root causes of militant Islamism. Although it is unclear how long al-Qaeda will remain an inspiration to its regional partners, the absence of timely implemented preventive measures could enable further advances of the radical Islamic movement, making it hard to disrupt or restrain in the future.

The fact that the regional al-Qaeda groups attack western targets does not imply the need to militarily engage each area where local franchises operate. On the contrary, what is required is an overreaching global counterterrorist strategy that could be adjusted to the local level with the aim of fight against al-Qaeda as a whole. There is no doubt that Africa becomes an ever more strategically important arena for the global fight against terrorism, although its weak governments present one of the main reasons why radicalism spreads so fast and easily throughout the continent in the first place. Because of that, we believe that the most efficient counterterrorist measure is providing financial aid to African national governments in building functional state infrastructure and assisting national security sectors in the fight against Islamic extremist groups. By providing better for their citizens, governments will altogether reduce their support to Islamists.

REFERENCES

1. Bates, R.H., *When things fell apart-State Failure in Late-Century Africa*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008.
2. Benotman, N., Russell, J., *A New Indeks to Assess the Effectiveness of Al Qaeda*, September 12, 2013. [Available: 20.09.2013.] Available on the Internet:

- <http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/a-new-index-to-assess-the-effectiveness-of-al-qaeda.pdf>
3. Bruton, B., Pham, J.P., *The Splintering of Al Shabaab*, Foreign Affairs, February no. 2/2012.
 4. Celso, N.A., *Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb: The “Newest“ Front in the War on Terror*, [in:] “Mediterranean Quarterly”, vol. 19, no. 1., 2008. [Available: 03.02.2013.] Available on the Internet: http://muse.jhu.edu/login?auth=0&type=summary&url=/journals/mediterranean_quarterly/v019/19.1celso.pdf
 5. Cristiani, D., Fabiani, R., *AQIM Funds Terrorist Operations with Thriving Sahel-Based Kidnapping Industry*, [in:] “Terrorism Monitor”, Jamestown Foundation, vol. 8, Issue 4, 2010. [Available: 20.09.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://www.temoust.org/archives/aqim-funds-terrorist-operations,13171.html>.
 6. Dempsy, T., *The Transformation of African Militaries*, Understanding Africa – a Geographical Approach, Center for Strategic Leadership US War College, Carlisle, 2009.
 7. Elisher, S., *After Mali Comes Niger*, Foreign Affairs, 12.02.2013.
 8. Gaub, F., *Predicting the Arab Spring: What we got wrong*, Jane's Defense Weekly, 08.02.2012.
 9. Hoeffler, A., *Dealing with the Consequences of Violent Conflicts in Africa*, Centre for the study of African Economiers, University of Oxford, March 2008.
 10. Howe, H., *Ambiguous Order: Military Forces in African States*, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, 2001.
 11. Joeffe, G., *The European Union, Democracy and Counter-terrorism in the Maghreb*, [in:] “JCMS”, vol. 46, no.1., pp 147-171, 2008.
 12. Kellerhals, M.D., *U.S. Africa Command Seeking Sustained Security Engagement*, May 13, 2009. [Available:10.02.2014.] Available on the Internet: <http://www.africom.mil/Newsroom/Article/6640/us-africa-command-seeking-sustained-security-engag>.
 13. Masters, J., *Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb*, Council on Foreign Relations, January 24, 2013. [Available: 19.03.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://www.cfr.org/north-africa/al-qaeda-islamic-maghreb-aqim/p12717>.
 14. McLoughlin, C., *Topic guide on Fragile States*, The Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, University of Birmingham, 2012.
 15. Metz, S., *Containment Should Guide U.S. Approach to al-Qaida in Africa*, World Politics Review, January 23, 2013. [Available: 25.02.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/12657/strategic-horizons-containment-should-guide-u-s-approach-to-al-qaida-in-africa>.
 16. Pham, J.P., *Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to US Homeland*, Evidence to the US House of Representatives, p. 7., November 30, 2011. [Available: 20.09.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://homeland.house.gov/sites/homeland.house.gov/files/Boko%20Haram-%20Emerging%20Threat%20to%20the%20US%20Homeland.pdf>

17. Ploch, L., *Countering Terrorism in East Africa: The US Response*, Congressional Research Service, Washington, November, 2010.
18. Poole, H.J., *Terrorist trail – Backtrailing the foreign fighter*, Posterity Press, Esmerald Isle, 2006.
19. Rader, A., *A Fine Talking Shop: the London Conference on Somalia*, RUSI, February 22, 2013. [Available: 15.03.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://www.rusi.org/analysis/commentary/ref:C4F46C3CD21920/>.
20. Riedel, B., *Al Qaeda 3.0: Terrorism's Emergent New Power Bases*, The Daily Beast, December 3, 2012. [Available: 15.02.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/12/03/al-qaeda-3-0-terrorism-s-emergent-new-power-bases.html>.
21. Rivkin, A., *Nation Building in Africa*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 1969.
22. Roell, P., *The European Union and its Fight against International Terrorism*, [in:] "ISPSW Strategy Series: Focus on Defense and international Security", no. 168/2011.
23. Rollins, J. (5 February 2010). *Al Qaeda and Affiliates: Historical Perspective, Global Presence and Implications for US Policy*, Congressional Research Service, p. 15, February 5, 2010. [Available: 15.02.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/R41070.pdf>.
24. Schaefer, B., *Creating an African Command: Bush Administration Makes the right call*, The Heritage Foundation, 2006. [Available: 10.09.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2007/02/creating-an-africa-command-bush-administration-makes-the-right-call>.
25. Shinn, D., *Al Shabaab's Foreign Threat to Somalia*, Orbis, p. 209, Spring 2011. [Available: 15.02.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://www.fpri.org/docs/al-shabaab.pdf>.
26. Soria, V., *Global Jihad Sustained Through Africa*, UK Terrorism Analysis, April 2012. [Available: 15.01.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://www.rusi.org/analysis/commentary/ref:C4F7BDEE390DBB/>.
27. Staguhn, G., *Knjiga o ratu*, Mozaik knjiga, Ljubljana, 2007.
28. Sterling, J., *Al Qaeda in Northern Africa an "Afterthought" No More*, CNN, February 1, 2012. [Available: 20.02.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://security.blogs.cnn.com/2012/02/01/al-qaeda-in-northern-africa-an-afterthought-no-more/>.
29. The Economist, *A continent goes to war*, 03.09.1998.
30. The Economist, *Mali and al-Qaeda*, 10.11.2012.
31. The Economist, *Somalia comes to Uganda*, 17.07.2013.
32. Thomson, A., *An introduction to African politics*, Routledge, London, 2010.
33. USA Today, *Government, Main Rebels sign peace accord in Nigeria*, 08.05.2006.
34. US National Counterterrorism Center, www.nctc.gov.

35. Vandervort, B., *Wars of imperial conquest in Arica*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1998.
36. Walker, A., *What is Boko Haram?*, United State Institute of Peace, May 2012, [Available: 26.03.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://www.usip.org/publications/what-boko-haram>.
37. Whait, A., *States in Development: Understanding State-building*, Department for iNternational Development, 2008., [Available: 1.12.2013.] Available on the Internet: <http://tna.europarchive.org/20081212094836/http://dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/State-in-Development-Wkg-Paper.pdf>.
38. Wise, R., *Al Shabaab*, [in:] "Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Case Study" no. 2, p. 7., July 2011. [Available: 15.02.2013.] Available on the Internet: http://csis.org/files/publication/110715_Wise_AlShabaab_AQAM%20Futures%20Case%20Study_WEB.pdf.
39. Zimmerman, K., *The Al Qaeda network: a new framework for defining the enemy*, September 2013. [Available: 20.09.2013.] Available on the Internet: http://www.criticalthreats.org/sites/default/files/pdf_upload/analysis/Zimmerman_the_al_Qaeda_Network_September_2013.pdf

AL-KAIDA I JEJ PRZYSZŁOŚĆ W AFRYCE

Streszczenie

Słabe rządy w Afryce, niewystarczająco rozwinięte sektory bezpieczeństwa oraz dalsze rozprzestrzenianie się konfliktów etnicznych, religijnych i innych stworzyło podatny grunt dla rozwoju i umacniania wpływów przez zbrojne grupy islamistyczne w Sahelu i Afryce Północnej. Zainspirowane ideologią Al-Kaidy, zyskały one nowy impet poprzez tworzenie formalnych sojuszy i integracji z globalnym ruchem dżihadu. Mając na uwadze geostrategiczne znaczenie Afryki, pojawia się coraz więcej szacunków, zgodnie z którymi wzmocnienie wojującego islamu w Afryce dodatkowo wzmocni pozycję Al-Kaidy i przekształci kontynent w nowe bezpieczne schronienie dla terrorystów. W przeciwieństwie do tych ocen, niniejszy artykuł kwestionuje możliwość długoterminowej obrony takich strategii. Zostało to dokonane w oparciu o analizę przyczyn niestabilności i słabości struktur państw afrykańskich, a także lokalnych przyczyn, które doprowadziły do wzmocnienia wojujących islamistów. Uważamy, że ze względu na różnice w interpretacji dżihadu, a także historyczną niezetelność partnerów afrykańskich, Al-Kaida nie będzie w stanie wdrożyć swoich strategii, a tym samym nie będzie mogła liczyć na Afrykę jako swoją przyszłą stałą i trwałą twierdzę. Pomimo tego, problemy bezpieczeństwa w Afryce mogą mieć wpływ na całą społeczność międzynarodową, tym samym zmuszając kluczowych aktorów na arenie międzynarodowej do intensyfikacji działań antyterrorystycznych mających na celu usunięcie przyczyn prowadzących do wzmocnienia wojującego islamu na kontynencie.

Słowa kluczowe: Afryka, Al-Kaida, dżihad, Islam, terroryzm

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

ANITA PEREŠIN – finished her PhD at the University of Zagreb, with the thesis “Transformation of terrorism and the Security Sector Reform”. As an Assistant Professor at the University of Zagreb, her research focuses on new trends in terrorism and counterterrorism strategies. She has published a number of papers on the transformation of terrorism, relations between the media and terrorism, security sector reform, information security and critical infrastructure protection.

VLASTA ZEKULIĆ – finished her PhD at the University of Zagreb, with thesis ”Challenges of the Security Sector Reform in Africa.” As a military officer of the Croatian armed forces, she has held numerous command, staff and instructor positions in the country and abroad, and has published scientific and professional papers on military and police peace support operations, the transformation of the modern armed forces, African instabilities and crisis and security sector reform.

