2025: A forecast of terrorism in Africa

Yoslán Silverio González, MSc

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Yoslán Silverio González, MSc

Yoslan Silverio is professor at the University of Havana, teaching the undergraduate course "Conflicts in Africa" and the postgraduate course "Africa and international relations".

He was a researcher at the Center for Studies on Africa and the Middle East (CEAMO), 2009-2010. He holds a Bachelor Degree in History from the University of Havana (UH), and a Master's Degree in Contemporary History.

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In the last two decades international relations have been altered by the impact of terrorism, a phenomenon which has captured the attention of politicians and scholars across the world. The regions of the Middle East and North Africa, as well as Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), have been implicated. Terrorism has been politically manipulated by different actors – Western and regional powers like the United States of America (USA) or European countries – in order to promote their own interests and agendas, especially in the Middle East. For example, in Afghanistan they were supposedly fighting Al-Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden yet after that they promoted the emergence of the Islamic State (ISIS) in Syria with the aim to overthrow the government of Bashar Al-Assad and also in the Sahel region after the war in northern Mali. The problem of political Islam and the interest of Western powers in Africa and the Middle East has been analysed by the Egyptian-French economist and political scientist Samir Amin (Amin. Samir., *Mali*. February 4, 2013).

There is no consensus among specialists about global responsibility vis-a-vis the emergence and manipulation of terrorism. The security mechanisms employed by the USA and its allies, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), which "engaged" in the "search" and "capture" of possible suspects committing terrorist acts, have fostered on the one hand Islamophobia and, on the other, the rise of fanaticism in small sections of the Islamic population. That is why terrorism has been directly associated with Islam, which is an erroneous perception. The development of economic, socio-political and military events has unveiled the USA's intention to manipulate terrorism in their favour.

The study of terrorism requires not only an in-depth analysis of the historical reasons that led to its formation, development and sustainability through the exacerbation and exploitation of fundamentalism, but also an analysis of the political behaviour of this phenomenon in the short and medium term. The objective of this paper is to project the main variables that will determine the trends of terrorism in Africa. Based on a primary diagnosis of the history of these groups and its subsequent development, this paper presents a possible scenario for terrorism in SSA up until 2025. There is a set of internal and external economic, socio-political, ideological, psychological, religious, cultural and environmental variables, related to national and international interests that could explain the trends that this problem presents in SSA.

This paper is divided into a methodological and theoretical framework to explain the prospective method used and some ideas about how to understand terrorism. The second part of the paper focuses on various scenarios, taking into account the development of organisations such as Al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and its related groups, Boko Haram (BH), in the area surrounding Lake Chad, as well as Al-Shabaab (ALS) in southern Somalia and the border with Kenya. We finish with concluding remarks on terrorism in Africa and offer recommendations on how to solve this problem.

Methodological Framework: The Scenerio-Based Analysis

This study was carried out using the prospective method through the methodological tool of the Matrix-based Multiplication Applied to a Classification (MICMAC), created by Michel Godet. This tool determines the direct and indirect influences among the identified variables. It also makes it possible to identify a greater number of relationships between the variables and which of these would be the determinant ones. It's also important to underline that this paper was part of broader research that implements a combination of methodologies, not only those coming from the scenario building process but also from history, international relations and political science.

With this proposal, the definition of the variables, their nomenclature and conceptualisation were carried out in the first phase. The second phase saw the quantitative evaluation of the variables defined through the matrix of direct potential influences. A total of seven variables were determined, which contain other dimensions of each variable. The variable selection does not correspond necessarily to a theoretical conceptualisation, but to the elements taken into account for its analysis and what is to be understood by each of them. In this identification-selection-definition process, a prior diagnosis of terrorism in SSA was made. These variables are only a proposal for doing the analysis and any of them could be understood in different ways.

List of Variables (Nomenclature) and Description

1. **Dynamics of the international system (International System):** These dynamics are understood as the geopolitical and geoeconomic factors that impact the development of terrorism, as well as the regional economic and social situations that influence the evolution of terrorism.

2. **Level of institutionalisation (Institutionalisation):** How internal structures function, the capacity at which they spread to other regions, and the organisational stability of terrorist groups and organisations.

3. **Level of financing (Financing):** The self-financing capacity of the group (tax collection, bribes, or ransom payments for kidnappings) and other income resulting from its connection and / or control of transnational organised crime networks (use of drug trafficking networks, routes of migrants and weapons). It also refers to the resources coming from political and private actors, as well as for the illegal commercialisation of commodities.

4. **Recruitment capacity (Recruitment capacity):** Level of manipulation of ideological factors, including religion, to attract adherents to its cause, using media influence and / or other means to promote fanaticism. This capacity for recruitment is expressed through the exchange of information and the support of certain sectors of the population that identify with their objectives and see their affiliations to them as a means of subsistence. For these reasons they are integrated into the group.

5. **Leadership (Leadership):** Capacity of influence of their individual leaders and / or the group/organisation at a local, regional or international level.

6. **Relations between groups / organisations (Relations groups):** Dynamics of the connections and relationship between them or level of autonomy and dependence through the exchange of information, logistical support and ability to train its own members or to train terrorists from other cells.

7. **Violent actions: (Violent actions):** Availability of armaments, means of combat and military technology for the execution of their terrorist attacks and / or the confrontation with regular forces or against civil populations.

During the investigation several methodological difficulties were presented related to the nature of the studied phenomenon, the number of organisations, the geographical variety where they operate and also the possibilities offered by the prospective technique itself. There were several possibilities for addressing the issue: perform the analysis of the variables and the matrix for each terrorist organisation, do it at the level of the subregions, or the third variant, related to the general analysis of the phenomenon. Of these three possibilities, the third

option was chosen to emphasise the common elements of terrorism in each region and then indicate the general trend in the short term.

In this way, with the results offered by MICMAC, the analysis of this data was made considering the particularities of each terrorist group / organisation in their specific scenarios. It was decided the method would be applied from the general to the particular to see how each of the general tendencies offered by the method fitted the specific case or not. This implied that the results obtained after the application of this prospective tool, in relation to a certain variable, were not always in accordance with the specific evolution that the group / organisation will present. This is one of the limits that this tool could have. In spite of that, the results offered by MICMAC allowed a better validation of the main trends of terrorism in Africa.

Table: Matrix of Direct Influences (MDI)

	International System	Institutionalisation	Financing	Recruitment Capacity	Leadership	Relations	Violent Actions
International System	0	2	3	2	2	3	3
Institutionalisation	1	0	3	3	3	2	3
Financing	2	3	0	3	3	3	3
Recruitment Capacity	2	2	3	0	3	2	3
Leadership	2	3	3	3	0	2	3
Relations	3	1	3	3	3	0	2
Violent Actions	3	3	3	3	3	2	0

After selecting the variables, the next step is to complete the Matrix of Direct Influence (MDI), which describes the relationship between the variables defined in the system. Influences range from 0 to 3, with the possibility to identify potential influences. In this case 0 means no influence, 1 is weak, 2 is moderate and 3 is strong.

These values were adopted after several meetings with a group of experts. The scholar had to question him / herself about how variable 1 influences variable 2, and so on for the rest of the variables. Of course, the level of influence of one variable over itself is 0, that's why you can see a diagonal line only with 0. Each specialist is supposed to fill in their own table and after that select the one that is most
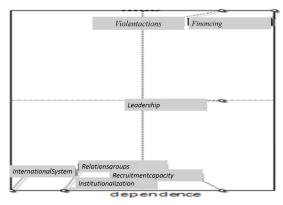

Figure: Potential direct influence/ dependance map

represented. This process does not allow one opinion to prevail over the others.

The MICMAC programme shows a graph in which the variables are located in a plane of influence / dependence, which allow the analysis to be carried out based on the relationships between the variables and their importance within the object of study. According to this graph the variables of violent actions, financing and leadership are the most influential (that's why they are located at the top of the graph), meanwhile the rest of the variables are located at the bottom. This means that this variable does not have an influence over the system and that they are highly dependent.

Taking these results into account, an analysis of each of the interrelationships of these variables was proposed, according to the trends that the three most active terrorist organisations in the region will be present by 2025: AQIM, BH and ALS. In this work only one of the multiple variants that the MICMAC can offer is shown. It is important to note that this result can't be taken literally, because each group behaves in different ways. This graph is only a general proposal according to the values that the experts adopted and it can be modified depending on the context.

Table: Three main African terrorist organisations and their correlation with the variables

	Al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)	Boko Haram (BH)	Al-Shabaab (ALS)
Dynamics of the International System	Do not have a direct impact on the rise of AQIM, except in certain contexts from which it has benefited, for example after the intervention of NATO in Libya in 2011. Politics in the subregion has greatly influenced the development of this organisation.	The dynamics of the international system do not have a direct influence on the development of terrorism.	The subregional geopolitics of the Horn of Africa has a remarkable influence on the evolution of terrorism, because of the actions of the governments in the area.
Level of Institutionalisation	Low level of institutionalisation.	Faces greater fragmentation and deinstitutionalisation but this process will not mean the group disappears.	ALS presents serious difficulties in how its structures function. It is not in a position to externalise these structures outside Somalia's borders. The group does not have organisational stability.
Level of Financing	Comes from the control of transnational crime networks, kidnapping of Western citizens and ransoms.	BH depends on the control of international trafficking networks – arms, drugs, people and other resources coming from political and private actors.	Self-finances from the collection of taxes and bribes. Also receives other income from the Somali diaspora and the control of other transnational criminal activities.
Recruitment Capacity	Based on economic factors and not so much on ideological conviction of its new members.	Social support has considerably reduced which translates into the need for this group to forcibly recruit from the civilian population through kidnapping, compulsory marriage and the use of women and children as "suicide bombers."	Characterised by the combination of voluntary and compulsory factors. For many people ALS is an alternative for their economic subsistence: receiving a salary, social status and even a wife.
Leadership	Exercised fundamentally by leaders of Arab origin, although there is an increase in the emergence of black African origin leaders, especially in the smaller cells.	The physical elimination of leaders does not mean the group has been weakened since they are replaced immediately.	The capacity of influence of its new leaders is very weak, as well as at local and subregional level.

Table: Three main African terrorist organisations and their correlation with the variables

	Al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)	Boko Haram (BH)	Al-Shabaab (ALS)
Relations between Groups/ Organisations	• Al-Qaeda • Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) • Ansaroul Islam • Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) • Macina Liberation Front (MLF) • Ansar Al-Dine • Al-Mourabitum • Support Front to Islam and Muslims (Jama'at Nusrat Al-Islam Wal Muslimin, JNIM) • Boko Haram	• Islamic State (ISIS) • Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA) • Ansaru – Vanguards for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa, when it was separated from Boko Haram in 2012.	• There has been a reduction in the dependence of ALS on Al-Qaeda. • Relations with Al-Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) are stagnant. • The Islamic State (ISIS) has created fissures within the group but ALS execute those it considers pro-Islamic State.
Violent Actions	Operate in the Trans-Saharan region: Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso. There has been an increase in the actions of some of its cells in the bordering areas of Mali and Burkina Faso. They use car bombs, improvised explosive devices, ambushes, mines and attacks against checkpoints.	Take place in the area surrounding Lake Chad: northern Nigeria, Borno State, and bordering countries. There has been a reduction in their military operations and they have lost effective control of territories and towns.	Active in southern Somalia and the border with Kenya against AMISOM and Kenyan forces in the Gedo and Upper Juba regions. Use car bombs and improvised explosive devices.

Theoretical Framework: Understanding Terrorism

The so-called war on terrorism is presented, by Western countries, as a method of "protection and salvation" against terrorists' actions. This propaganda omits the true causes behind its rise including poverty, insecurity and social inequalities caused by the application of structural adjustment programmes in Africa. This phenomenon began to affect African countries in the last two decades. Regions like the Horn of African and the Sahel, which includes territories of West and Central Africa, have become key areas and central axes in the so-called fight against terrorism on the continent, due to the actions of extremist groups such as ALS (since 2006), AQMI (since 2007), and the Movement for the Uniqueness of Jihad in West Africa MUYAO (since 2012) in Western Sahel and BK in northern Nigeria (since 2009).

The actions of these organisations are focused on the governmental institutions of the countries of the area, against the national populations – the civilian victims – and in the same way, against foreign interests, mainly European. They also carry out acts of sabotage against properties belonging to transnational companies and kidnap European tourists. Every political-military movement that arises in the region is almost automatically classified as a terrorist group if they do not respond to the interests of extra-regional or regional powers.

This problem has led to the adoption of institutional initiatives within the framework of the UN, where the Counter-Terrorism Committee was created, based on the provisions of Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005). Its objective was to strengthen the capacities of member states to combat terrorist activities within their borders and in all regions. The Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate were responsible for monitoring the implementation of Security Council resolutions. Subsequently, the UN Secretary General established in 2005, the Special Team for the Fight against Terrorism and on September 8, 2006, the General Assembly approved the Global Strategy against Terrorism. It was the first time the states agreed on a global framework to face this scourge.

Under the auspices of the United Nations and other intergovernmental organisations, 16 universal legal instruments have been developed and approved, namely 11 conventions, four protocols and an amendment. Most of these instruments are in force and constitute the legal framework for the adoption of multilateral counter-terrorism measures, as well as the criminalisation of specific acts of terrorism, including the diversion of airplanes, the taking of hostages, bombing and the financing of attacks[1].

In this context, Western powers began to categorise certain countries as "sponsors" of terrorism to justify international pressure and intervene in the internal affairs of governments that did not have the capacity to deal with these groups. Through this they could achieve certain objectives, such as changes in government, for example, in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya. Similarly, they developed lists of organisations classified by them as terrorists, which ignited debate between academics and politicians about how to define what terrorism is.

For Cuban professor Elsie Plain Rad-Cliff, terrorism is the application of indiscriminate violence that can be extended to the entire population and in most cases civilians are the target of their attacks. Their actions are unpredictable and the surprise element of the attacks contributes towards instilling terror and produces unnecessary suffering by hitting the most vulnerable areas of society. Among the most commonly used methods are indiscriminate physical violence against civilians, torture, kidnapping, extrajudicial execution or disappearance. They also carry out attacks with explosives or other incendiary means for the destruction of private and public goods (Elsie Plain Rad-Cliff, 2011, p. 101 – 115). A terrorist is an individual who acts against civilians using illegal methods to achieve a political goal.

All this has evidently become complicated with the 19 conventions against terrorism and resolutions adopted by the Security Council, with the exception of resolutions 1269 (1999) and 1566 (2004) where it is indicated that, whatever their motivation, no terrorist act is justifiable. Here it can be understood how complex it is to establish a definition on terrorism, due to the lack of consensus

on the part of the international community and the fact that it depends on who is assessing it. This problem has also served to increase the level of conflict in international relations and at the same time, its militarisation, due to the increase in military budgets to "confront" the actions of groups hostile to the interests of developed capitalist countries and its regional allies.

For its part, the AU and its subregional organisations did not lag behind, rather, they were pioneers in the implementation of legal mechanisms to combat terrorism. One year after the attacks on the US embassies in Nairobi (Kenya) and Dar Salaam (Tanzania) in East Africa, in 1998, the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) adopted, at its 35th summit held in Algiers (Algeria) in July 1999, the Convention on Prevention and the Fight against Terrorism. This document was a milestone, as it was the first piece of legislation to confront terrorism.

This 1999 convention was followed by the OAU Protocol for the prevention and fight against terrorism (Protocol of the OAU Convention on the prevention and combating terrorism, 2004, p.2.) The next steps that were evidence for the African commitment to the fight against terrorism were expressed at the Dakar Summit in Senegal in October 2001, where the Dakar Declaration against terrorism was adopted. Then, the Action Plan for the Prevention and Combat of Terrorism was approved, at a high-level intergovernmental summit developed in Algeria in September 2002. In 2002, the newly created UA adopted the Action Plan on Prevention and Fight against Terrorism, and subsequently with the implementation of the Peace and Security Council, as the governing body for conflict issues, the institutional apparatus was strengthened in the fight against terrorism. An important step was the creation of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) whose headquarters are in Algiers, Algeria.

For the purpose of this paper, we are going to adopt the concept of terrorism approved by the OAU in 1999 in Algiers, which constitutes the first instrument in understanding terrorism in the region. This principle was also embraced by the AU after its creation in 2002. The main contribution of this concept was a broad definition of terrorism without the Islamic element and the differentiation between terrorist acts and the actions developed by groups in their struggle for self-determination. According to the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, a terrorist act is:

"Any act which is a violation of the criminal laws of a state party and which may endanger the life, physical integrity or freedom of, or cause serious injury or death to, any person, any number or group of persons or causes or may cause damage to public or private property, natural resources, environmental or cultural heritage and is calculated or intended to: intimidate, put in fear, force, coerce or induce any government, body, institution, the general public or any segment thereof, to do or abstain from doing any act, or to adopt or abandon a particular standpoint, or to act according to certain principles; or disrupt any public service, the delivery of any essential service to the public or to create a public emergency; or create general insurrection in a state" (OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, 1999, p. 2 y 3).

An exact definition that characterises the actions of the groups that operate in Africa is that offered by the Spanish professor Fernando Reinares in his concept of transnational terrorism. Reinares states that transnational terrorism: "Is one that in one way or another crosses state borders, basically because those who execute it maintain organisational structures or develop violent activities in more than one country, usually including territories over which [the authorities] have no jurisdiction (…) This means that acts of violence involve more than one country and often individuals of two or more nationalities, both in terms of terrorists and their victims" (Fernando Reinares, 2005, p. 48).

Terrorism in Africa: Future Trends

Terrorism in SSA is very different from terrorism in the Middle East. In this sense the most extreme variants have been perceived as foreign elements, exogenous to Africa, and thus they have had an almost generalised rejection from the population and have not been able to spread to other regions, except by way of force. For these reasons it is not possible that certain cells in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in northern Mozambique could intensify military action. It should be noted that a distinctive element between the radical groups that act in the Middle East from those that operate in SSA is the fact that those in SSA were not, in the beginning, terrorists.

This means that groups like BH and ALS started out as groups that made political and socio-economic demands to the local governments and later became radicalised. In the case of AQIM, its Saharan branches were controlled by Algerian Arabs and black Africans were excluded from the leadership roles although years later the situation began to change (Filiu, Jean Pierrre., 2012) and (Furuhashi, Yoshie., 2012). This organisation was presented as a non-genuine organisation of the sub-Saharan region and this caused contradictions between different factions or katibas. Among other differences are the fact that they have not been financed by Western powers or regional governments as they have been in the Middle East. Their prominent interethnic character has been a factor that limited the greater propagation of its networks towards other areas.

Al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb in the Trans-Saharan Region

How permanent terrorist activities will be in 2025 still remains a particularity of the Sahel-Saharan zone. Although the stabilisation attempts of governments such as Algeria, Mali and Niger, could gain recognition and effectiveness in the area, the relative autonomy of this organisation suggests that insecurity and instability will continue to be a condition desired by groups that maintain their control over the main vulnerable zones.

Although it is not possible to deny the traditional impact of the dynamics of the international system, even in SSA, these have not had a direct impact on the rise of AQIM, except in contexts from which it has benefited, as those that occurred after the intervention of NATO in Libya in 2011 (Amin. Samir., Mali. February 4, 2013). In this sense, the political realities in the subregion have influenced the development of the organisation, because the greater or lesser coordination of the governments of the area that will enable their weakening or strengthening. If policies are maintained by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) the possible scenario will lead to a reduction of this group. This tendency points to a greater articulation of the counter-terror policies of the governments of the area to confront this transnational group. On the other hand, relations between the different terrorist groups that operate under the AQIM's umbrella will remain diffuse. However, the great fragmentation experienced by the organisation in recent years corresponds more to a strategy adopted by them than to a greater weakening, since the constant recomposition of its internal forces hinders its effective eradication.

Therefore, the organisation will continue to lead a broad and increasingly volatile group of cells and terrorist groups operating in the wider Trans-Saharan region. In turn, it will maintain the line established by Al-Qaeda, while the split between leaders linked to the remnants of the Islamic State (ISIS) is deepening. Only in this sense can it be understood that the level of institutionalisation and leadership of the organisation work as very influential variables in the development of terrorism in the Sahel.

The leadership within this group is dispersed, as the organisation is fragmented. Most members are of Arab origin, although there is an increase in the emergence of leaders of black African origin, especially in the smaller cells. This fragmentation shouldn't be confused with a low level of institutionalisation, since each one of the cells will continue to respond to the central command

of AQIM that is still located in the Algerian mountains of the Kabylia region (Oumar, Jemal and Bakari Gueye., 2013).

Likewise, the recruitment capacity of the organisation has little influence. The units that make up AQMI seem to subordinate recruitment to the needs of expanding its membership as a result of the military offensives launched by the governments of the area that have undoubtedly affected their activism. Recruitment depends on economic factors and not so much the ideological conviction of its new members. This means that Islam, contrary to popular belief, will not be the main factor for recruitment. The socio-economic crises in the regions where it operates remains the main reason why potential new recruits are linked to AQIM networks, as a form of "work" and to obtain an "income" because of its link with other transnational crime networks.

Terrorism around Lake Chad: Boko Haram

The security landscape in the Sahel zone looks to remain very unstable in 2025 due to the continued actions of terrorist groups, most of which have reconfigured as a result of the governments which are directly or indirectly affected by their actions. One of the nerve centres will continue to be located around the area of Lake Chad with an epicentre located in northern Nigeria and with specific ramifications for the bordering countries. In the case of the Sahel region, the dynamics of the international system do not have a direct influence on the development of terrorism, because its solution is not a priority for Western powers, despite France and the US' rhetoric regarding the "war on terror."

Despite the adverse socio-economic situation in these regions, this variable will not have a direct influence on the development of this issue due to the fact that the local populations reject them due to the negative consequences of their actions in recent years. This economic context does not allow them to extend to other regions to "legitimise" their "anti-system" political discourse. Their social support is considerably reduced and they can't "satisfy" the demands

of the populations in economic terms. The discourse of the leaders of BH has failed to recruit new followers. They can do that only through coercion.

In this sense, the MICMAC programme showed that recruitment capacity is a strongly dependent variable, which translates into the need for this group to perform forced recruitments of the civilian population through kidnapping[2], compulsory marriage and the use of women[3] and children[4] as "suicide bombers." Their inability to recruit is also related to the loss of social support, as was mentioned before. Nevertheless, the group will maintain this tactic of forced recruitment, which will have an indirect impact on the future evolution of terrorism. The use of mercenaries, fueled by external actors as another way to enter terrorist cells, is not common in BH, nor is the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) to foment religious fanaticism or strengthen the "support" of other sectors of the population. The broad social bases formed around this group have been dismantled and it does not have the same characteristics as it enjoyed in the initial years of its creation.

The MICMAC showed that relations between the groups and the level of institutionalisation are autonomous variables that have an indirect influence on the development of terrorism, especially the case of institutionalisation. This is explained by the fact that, in most cases if the group is fragmented and supposedly "disarticulated," it will be more difficult to implement accurate policies for their final eradication. This fragmentation within the group – of which BH has also appropriated – responds more to a strategy to operate with a greater capacity than being a sign it is weakening.

The links between the organisations (Boko Haram-Islamic State or ISIS, Boko Haram-AQIM) in terms of information exchanges, logistical support and ability to train terrorists from their cells have not been effective and therefore were not a guarantee for the success of their actions. This fact reaffirms the tendency that, in the face of a greater fragmentation and deinstitutionalisation of the group, these links will fade further and will be more on the level of discursive rhetoric. The different cells that make up BH have reached a greater level of

autonomy which has led to the "disintegration"[5] of the group, but this process will not mean that it will disappear.

The dispersion of terrorist cells hinders control over the group. According to the Nigerian professor Kyari Mohammed of the state of Adamawa, BH is a group of cells operating under a single banner and the fractures within the group correspond to the way they operate (Hilary Matfess, 2016, p.1). This trend will continue, so the "factionalisation" of the group has a negative impact on the possibility of completely eradicating them. This is due to the fact that the emergence of rival factions also causes confrontations between them and between these and the regular forces. Apart from the challenge of dispersion, factional fighting is an additional problem, especially if an attempt is made to produce a negotiation process. Hilary Matfess, American researcher on issues of governance and security in SSA, poses three scenarios related to the process of division within Boko Haram:

1. Development of violence between factions (Shekau vs. Barnawi). Contrary to what is thought, these contradictions will not mean the end of the "insurgency" but will mean more deadly clashes for the civilian population.

2. Greater division before its complete elimination: This scenario is the fate of Ansaru – Vanguards for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa – when it separated from Boko Haram in 2012. In April 2016, the Nigerian government announced the capture of Khalid Al-Barnawi (Watkinson. W., 2016, p.1), after several years when there were no major terrorist operations, so it was assumed it would be the end of their activities.

3. Coexistence and duality in the terrorist insurgency: In this scenario the faction linked to the Islamic State consolidates as a group and develops its capacities to carry out military and terrorist actions (Hilary Matfess, Ob. cit., p.1).

In all three scenarios, the idea of fragmentation and the reconfiguration of BH itself, as well as the cells or factions linked to the group, is present. None of these three scenarios suggests the end of terrorist actions around Lake Chad. Therefore, it will continue to be a security problem for the area. The level of institutionalisation – understood as the correct functioning of internal structures and organisational stability – is a variable that has a strong relationship with the financing of the group, because it allows the creation of new structures and the strengthening of existing ones. Although its leaders have managed to reverse this process of group regression in organisational matters, this variable will not have a strong influence on the evolution of terrorism, because institutionalisation, per se, is not a guarantee of success. Similarly, BH does not have the capacity to export its organisational structures, that is to expand its network to other regions beyond its traditional areas of operation.

The tendency in terms of financing terrorism in the Sahel zone points to the continuity of its dependence on the control of international trafficking networks – arms, drugs and people. In the case of BH, its resources have been reduced in order to maintain its military and logistical capabilities, but this does not mean that they do not yet have the capacity to "self-manage"[6]. Resources coming from political and private actors, related to their tactics, are not as high as in the initial years of the group. This situation will also have repercussions in the decrease of their recruitment capacities or in the increase in desertions, which have already taken place. They have also been promoted by the authorities[7].

Leadership, understood as the ability from its leaders to influence, is another of the driving variables and depends on the charisma of the people who are in charge of the cells that make up the group. If this component is maintained, BH leaders will continue to have a strong influence on the development of the group, despite the internal interest struggles that are a result of personal opinions. Therefore, leadership is exercised at different levels. For example, at the local level, it is very small, while at the regional and international level it is practically non-existent, even with the "disclosure" of the videos showing their actions and the postulates of their political programme. At the same time,

there are still strong contradictions between the leaders of the different BH factions. The physical elimination of the terrorist leaders does not mean the group has been weakened since the tendency indicates that they are replaced immediately.

Violent actions strongly depend on the military capabilities of the group and have a considerable influence on their positioning – control of villages and areas – through military action. With respect to Boko Haram, the reduction of its military operation's theatre and the loss of effective control of territories and towns will continue to take place. The group will maintain its tendency to retreat and disperse. In the near future they will lose capacity for a confrontation against regular forces from Nigeria[8] and other local armies coming from the neighbouring countries such as Niger[9] or Cameroon. They will also lose their ability to carry out large-scale operations in the areas recovered by the national armed forces.

This situation has led them to increase attacks against easier targets, like civilians, through the use of suicide attacks, avoiding direct confrontations against regular forces. Therefore, it can be argued that the military offensives of local governments have reduced their capacity to carry out conventional armed actions against the security forces. The transnationalisation of their actions is increasingly small and sporadic, proof that they have retreated. Despite this, and the inevitable process of internal fragmentation, they have maintained their military power.

The Horn of Africa and Al-Shabaab

By 2025 the Horn of Africa will continue to be under threat of terrorist actions by the Somali organisation Al-Shabaab (ALS). The most affected countries will be Somalia, where the bulk of the organisation is concentrated, and Kenya, one of its main focuses. The situation in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Eritrea is substantially different, but in the case of Ethiopia, although ALS have not carried out attacks on their territory, the group remains a challenge to their

national security. The geopolitical environment of the subregion will continue to face terrorism and the instability that comes from this.

Similarly, subregional geopolitics will have a remarkable influence on the evolution of terrorism, because the actions of the governments here contribute on one hand to its eradication, but on the other, towards legitimising the discourse of combating external interferences in the area, as the group affirm. One of the ideologies promoted by ALS is the "struggle" against foreign troops, including from Ethiopia and Kenya as part of the African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM). Therefore, contrary to the result offered by the MICMAC regarding the variable related to the international situation, subregional political dynamics is of paramount importance in the evolution of terrorism.

Something that has been characteristic of these types of groups is "swearing" allegiance to larger organisations, such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS. However, ALS' relations with central Al-Qaeda by 2025 will not be strong enough to "boost" the organisation and increase its subregional projection. Al-Qaeda itself is going through a period of institutional crisis and has suffered a loss in leadership, which will have a negative impact on its ability to unite other groups such as ALS. There will be a reduction in ALS' dependence on Al-Qaeda, as well as the ability to carry out information exchanges and logistically support and train members of their cells. Relations with Al-Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) are stagnant, especially in terms of mutual support in training members, as was the case before.

On the other hand, relations with other groups or organisations are equally weak, precisely because terrorism in the region is declining. ISIS hasn't managed to incorporate ALS into its axis of influence but it has created fissures within the group[10]. In this sense, ALS has been forced to achieve a greater degree of autonomy in terms of its "strategy" as the only way to "strengthen" its political programme and not to give the impression it is excluded or marginalised within terror networks.

There is evidence that there may be more supporters of ISIS in southern Somalia, but the control exercised by ALS means they are not openly so.

This indicates the inability of ALS to neutralise ISIS' supporters within the organisation. To this end, ALS' "secret services" – *amniyat* – have been "arresting" members of the group on suspicion of having an inclination towards ISIS. The amniyat performs intelligence work through a wide network of supporters, informants and spies that are scattered throughout the country. They are also able to infiltrate government structures, as well as the Somalia National Army (SNA) (Danish Immigration Service, 2017, p. 10).

ALS have executed the people it accuses of being pro-Islamic State[11]. There is no clarity over whether this faction will continue to evolve, nor on the number of members. As is often the case, the links with ISIS in the Middle East are not direct, but are part of the rhetoric to attract international attention. This weakness in its international "projection" is also a reflection of the problems within the group. ALS continues to present serious difficulties in the functioning of its management structures due to the struggles among its leaders regarding strategies, methods and objectives to be followed by the group. Nor is it in a position to externalise these structures outside Somali borders, precisely because of the policies adopted by the main regional actors in their fight against terrorism: Ethiopia and Kenya. On the Kenyan border, and due to the strong presence of Somali refugees, they have managed to establish cells and support networks, but they are not significant either. As a consequence, the group does not have organisational stability, which is evident in the continuous transformation of its commands and leaders, and as a result of the fact that they are eliminated by selective drone attacks carried out by the United States, and by the actions of AMISOM[12].

One of the problems ALS continues to face is that of desertions mainly among the younger militants as part of growing discontent with the leadership, especially from non-Somali militants, the so-called foreign fighters. The group needs these members to give greater legitimacy to their "jihadist" struggle (Kriel. R., and Duggan. B., 2017, p.1). Those who leave the group also do so under amnesties, which have been implemented by the Somali government to dismantle them[13], however, ALS retaliate against all those who resign from the group[14]. The institutionalisation process in the country after the 2012 and 2016

elections also reduced the number of ALS members[15]. This also will contribute towards the consolidation of the local and regional authorities.

It is important to consider how the complexity of the clan and sub-clan framework affects relationships and alliances. As part of ALS' support networks, they also have relations with the heads of minority clans and their respective militias, mainly in the southern part of the country. These links allow the group to advance and access supplies and recruitment. At the same time, there are militias that oppose the military presence of ALS; therefore, this element must be considered region by region and will be modified with the passage of time. There are indications that the contradictions between these actors will not be eliminated in the short-term and these also act as an element to stop further progress of ALS in certain regions, although their military strength remains, being superior to these militias that have a local character and smaller "national" scope.

MICMAC indicated that leadership is a driving variable due to its levels of influence. In the specific case of ALS, it is necessary to say that the capacity of its new leaders' influence is very weak at a local and subregional level. This translates into their inability to serve as a "reference" to other smaller organisations. At the international level they have no impact, since their military potential does not allow them to carry out cross-border actions beyond the subregion in which they traditionally operate. In this way, the reduction in leadership has a positive effect on the decline of the group in the short and medium term, but even so, it has the support of important sectors of the population.

Their social base has not reduced and a lot of people see ALS as an alternative for their subsistence. A large part of the population in rural areas under their control "prefer" the "security" that is offered by ALS, since they manage to "organise" social structures according to their own ideas and not the legal vacuum offered by regional and "federal" authorities. The level of coercion the group exercises in the areas they control will also continue to play a fundamental role. This is related to the recruitment process, which

is characterised by the combination of voluntary and compulsory factors. A reduction in their leadership does not necessarily imply a decrease in their recruitment capabilities. The adverse internal socio-economic context in Somalia, where 64 per cent of young people between 14 and 29 are unemployed, is both exacerbated by ALS' actions, and attracts new adherents to their cause[16].

The manipulation of ideological factors, including religion, through the use of a well-structured network of propaganda and dissemination – radio, social networks, internet and other media[17] – are effective in the recruit of new combatants. One of the incentives for recruitment is receiving a salary, social status and even a wife in the territories they control. Another method of recruitment takes place in mosques and through inter-clan rivalries. ALS uses these rivalries to integrate members of minority clans with the promise of a higher status (*South and Central Somalia Security Situation, Al-Shabaab Presence, and Target Groups. Ob. cit.*, p.20).

Forced recruitment will remain characteristic of areas that are completely under their control. If a person refuses to be recruited, he must pay compensation. Refusing to do so often has negative consequences. The phenomenon of the use of children as combatants also takes place within ALS. In 2014, it was reported the group had 437 child soldiers and in 2015 there were 555. In 2016 there were about 1,560 reported cases (ibid, p. 21). The average age for recruitment is between 14 and 25 years. ALS also continues to recruit women for logistics work, to serve as wives, to attract other women, collect information and use them as suicide bombers because they can move from one place to the other (ibid, p. 22).

Financing remains the most influential variable within the system for the continuity of groups and their programmes. ALS self-finances through the collection of taxes and bribes. In the same way, it continues to receive other income because of "donations" from its Somali supporters in the diaspora or from those who are involved in transnational criminal activities (drug trafficking and weapons networks). The group's funding is taken using the tax system and

through sharia courts. The system of tax collection is part of the administrative order in the region that is considered "fairer" than the government. At the same time, they manage a judicial system based on sharia and due to the malfunction of the legal system in the country, many people turn to ALS courts when they are not satisfied with a ruling administered by a governmental, secular court (ibid, p. 11).

Despite its organisational problems, the group still has weapons, means of combat and military technology to carry out terrorist activities and confront the regular army and AMISOM troops or the local security militias and the SNA. Their military action will continue to be focused on attacking AMISOM's facilities, bases and convoys and Kenyan forces in the Gedo and Upper Juba regions (BBC, 2017). Their civilian objectives are concentrated on the assassination of political figures, local leaders and clan leaders (elders or clan elders) who support the federal government. Part of the attacks against the civilian population have been reprisals by ALS for "collaboration" with foreign military forces. In this sense, there have also been retaliatory actions by AMISOM troops, the SNA and the ENDF (Ethiopian National Defence Force) when they have retaken a village or area (*South and Central Somalia Security Situation, Al-Shabaab Presence, and Target Groups*. Ob. cit., p.20). This is a factor that further influences ALS' support in certain areas where they are seen as "guarantors" of "security."

Its modus operandi will be maintained through the use of car bombs, improvised explosive devices, ambushes, the placement of mines and attacks against checkpoints on roads[18], hotel facilities and government buildings. In general, they will continue to avoid direct confrontation with military forces and instead utilise asymmetric warfare. In particular, the regions of Kenya, along the border with Somalia, will be the most affected[19].

After a period of clear withdrawal from the group, the trend suggests that ALS will continue to gain ground in the south-central areas of the country[20] in a war against the forces of AMISON and the SNA. Therefore, the presence of ALS in south-central Somalia will be consolidated, despite the actions of AU

peacekeeping troops, which only control certain areas during the day, while at night, ALS can move easily. It's difficult to exactly pinpoint the military situation due to the number of advances and setbacks that take place, the capture of various towns and villages, the clashes between militias and clans that rival ALS and also want control of the same regions, for example in Lower Shabelle and Jubaland.

The security situation in the capital continues to deteriorate. Although the group can't regain control of Mogadishu and establish military bases, the city remains under constant threat from ALS. Most of the attacks are still centred in the capital. Despite being "expelled," they still have the ability to continue collecting taxes and to participate in legal disputes. For its part, in the Lower Juba region, ALS is in control of the rural areas, while the Jubaland administration is "effective" in urban centres. The port of Kismayo is still controlled by AMISOM and SNA forces. In Middle Juba, ALS controls the entire territory.

In the Hiran region, where confrontations between different clans take place, the group is less active. In the bay region the main urban centre, Baidoa, is under the control of AMISOM and SNA. In the Galguduud region, the situation is less clear due to the number of actors involved: Galmudug Regional Forces, Al-Shabaab and the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama militia (ASWJ). In the Mudug area there are clashes between ALS and local forces (*South and Central Somalia Security Situation, Al-Shabaab Presence, and Target Groups*. Ob. cit., p.11-16). The security situation in general has not improved, but this insecurity can't be attributed solely to the actions of ALS because there are other militias fighting for control of the land or for political power.

Conclusion

In spite of the fact that there has been an increase in terrorist activities in the border areas of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, the territorial dispute over terrorism will weaken in the short-term, as well as its dominance and mobility in SSA. It could be forecast that in 2025 there will be a drastic reduction in the operating capacity and the areas these groups are in if the current policies adopted by the AU continue to be implemented. Everything seems to indicate that the joint international offensive that takes place within the framework of the fight against terrorism is forcing them to carry out more covert attacks. Therefore, we are going to witness their systematic eviction from the territories they occupy. This will force them to change their strategy and tactics by organising themselves differently and in smaller groups, which are not concentrated in the same territory, which will significantly reduce their military strength, force them underground, and to regroup into smaller cells.

In terms of leadership, the systematic elimination of "emirs" affects the internal structure of the groups in that new figures brought in at a lower level but recruited from top leaders will create friction within the organisation. Leaders who are trained to exercise power but have little charisma and religious and political control will affect their legitimacy.

The group's organisation and institutionalisation are not determinant variables in the evolution of terrorism, because in the first case what has happened is more a declaration of principles between both structures than a real collaboration in practical terms. This is influenced by the geographic separation that exists between the areas in which they operate. In the second case, the weakening of institutions can contribute to a greater dispersion of the groups and increase how difficult it is to eradicate them. International terrorist organisations such as the Islamic State and Al-Qaeda continue to rival each other in Africa to achieve supremacy within different groups, whether or not they are linked to them.

These antagonisms will be expressed in the ideological, propagandistic and territorial domain. This will cause a constant reconfiguration of the alliances between these organisations and groups, as well as the internal fracturing of

the smaller groups. Although the relationships between them are starting to crack, this does not go beyond rhetoric. Geographic distance and counter-terrorism prevent contact between these organisations and groups, as well as strategies to carry out joint tactical operations of greater impact. Both organisations also face financial problems that make it difficult to extend their logistical "support" to the vast network of cells that are operating in Africa, and they have lost contact with some of them. In this sense, the influence of the Islamic State in the region has weakened, however some cells linked to ISIS will continue their activities in the Sahel.

Paying homage to organisations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS becomes a strategy for those leaders with less influence and who seek to break relations with their immediate leaders and thus achieve greater international legitimacy using the media to attract attention to build their own leadership. According to the behaviour of the different terrorist organisations, it can be observed that relations established between them are not positive, which is why there is a lower level of cooperation among the different groups.

These groups are moving towards a recomposition of alliances and inter-terrorism influences, because of the setbacks they have suffered in the military and propaganda fields. Despite the few links that exist between them, they maintain an apparent degree of autonomy and military capacity to be able to continue with their political agendas through the use of force and to resist the counter-terror measures adopted by the international community. An international policy of double standards by some powers in the treatment of this problem, as well as their antagonistic positions on how to eliminate terrorism, still tend to work to the advantage of these groups.

The most influential variable and, in turn, the most dependent, is the level of financing and the ability of each group to attract new financial resources to buy armaments and military technology for the execution of their terror attacks.

The level of financing and resources obtained by these organisations depends on the security mechanisms of their respective countries and their ability to confront terrorism. However, their capacities for obtaining resources through

organised crime remain and will continue to be one of the main ways terrorism is financed. In particular, the groups that operate in the Trans-Saharan corridor are among those that most rely on smuggling networks. For that reason, one of the most important preventative measures must be cutting all of these sources of financing.

Regarding the progressive failure of Al-Qaeda's performance, the situation has been somewhat different due to its attrition for more than a decade due to the confrontation with Algeria's forces, which leads the fight against terrorism in the subregion, and whose special troops and security agencies have systematically eliminated them. Despite this, AQIM remains the organisation most dispersed due to the fact that all national, regional and international forces are pursuing them. The organisation has become more and more decentralised and integrated into different, dispersed groups. They also lack a fixed headquarters and have to move constantly because of the military's response to them.

In the rest of the area BH continues to be the main terrorist actor in comparison with other groups that acts almost autonomously in northern Mali and Niger, and is not institutionalised. In East Africa and the Horn area, the Somali organisation ALS represents the most potent threat to security and the leading exponent of terrorism in this part of the continent. In Somalia, ALS has the greatest amount of control in the south-central territories of the country and will carry on with its actions against regional actors present militarily in the country. In particular, the Kenyan region of Garissa in the northeast and especially the counties of Dabaab, Wajir and Mandera are the most direct targets of their cross-border actions (Cummings. R. 2017, p.1).

Trends point to a decrease in the violent actions of terrorist groups in SSA, which is verified by the reduction in the number of civilian victims[21], as well as the low intensity and systematic nature of the terrorist attacks. However, BH and ALS remain the most lethal in their respective subregions and their attacks are concentrated in a larger geographical area. The phenomenon of terrorism will continue to affect the African continent, directly or indirectly, through indiscriminate violence, forced migration, and the increase and use of transnational, organised crime.

Recommendations

- Governments in the region must identify the most conflicted territories to be able to concentrate their efforts and all the necessary resources in these areas to combat recruitment into these groups.

- Local development programmes must continue to be implemented to counteract recruitment.

- Encourage greater integration of young people into jobs to discourage the process of radicalisation and recruitment.

- Redouble intelligence efforts in order to counteract terrorist acts.

- Increase levels of coordination among national security agencies, following the experiences of the Joint Multinational Task Force in the areas surrounding Lake Chad to strengthen cross-border military and counter-terror actions by mutual agreement.

- Incorporate civil society organisations in the fight against terrorism.

- Strengthen financial mechanisms to identify money laundering, illegal transactions and organised crime which are used to finance terrorist networks.

- Continue studying terrorism to raise public awareness of its negative consequences.

End Notes

1. These instruments are complemented by the following General Assembly resolutions: (A / RES / 49/60, A / RES / 51/210 and A / RES / 60/288) and the Security Council: S / RES / 1267 (1999), S / RES / 1373 (2001), S / RES / 1540 (2004), S / RES / 1566 (2004) and S / RES / 1624 (2005). See: United Nations actions against terrorism. Available at: http://www.un.org/spanish/terrorism/strategy-implementation.shtml

2. According to Human Rights Watch, Boko Haram has kidnapped 2,000 girls and women since 2009, who have been subjected to rape, forced labour and marriage. However, these figures are only approximate because it's impossible to determine how many have been kidnapped. According to the Foundation for the Defence of Democracies (FDD), since 2014 there have been at least 123 female "suicide bombers" linked to BH, most of them forced. See: The women of Boko Haram: Driven to extremism. Available at: http://www.dw.com/en/the-women-of-boko-haram-driven-to-extremism/04

3. A United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) report indicates that the number of children who are used by Boko Haram as suicide bombers has increased between 2014 and 2015. As of February 2016, one in five bomb attacks have been carried out by a child – 19 per cent – while 18 per cent have been carried out by women. The report also gives an account of the problems related to the treatment of women who have been raped, abducted or forced to marry a member of the group. These women are rejected in their communities when they try to rejoin their daily activities. (Duvillier, 2016, p. 2, 3-4).

4. According to the UNICEF report, BH is employing more and more children as suicide bombers. In the first quarter of 2017 the figure tripled compared to the same period of the previous year, to reach 27, according to Marie-Pierre Poirier, UNICEF regional director for West and Central Africa. During the past three years, 117 children were employed to carry out bomb attacks in the Lake Chad basin. Around 80 per cent of the attacks were carried out by girls. (Cubadebate, 2017, p.1)

5. Boko Haram called itself Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP) in 2015, as proof of its links to the Islamic State. At the beginning of August 2016, the Islamic State nominated Abu Musab Al-Barnawi as the new "wali" of the group, "replacing" Abubakar Shekau. This created a deep division inside the group over the matter of leadership and two antagonistic factions emerged.

6. According to a report presented to the United Nations Security Council, the two main BH factions are having serious financial difficulties and are not in a position to "pay" their fighters their monthly "salaries." Most of the recent attacks have been motivated by the need to purchase supplies, including food. The report concludes that the group as a whole is facing a severe financial crisis. See: Gaffey. C. (2017). Boko Haram Factions 'Cannot Pay Fighters' Salaries: UN.

7. The Nigerian Army launched the Operation Safe Corridor with the aim of allowing repentant BH militants to enter the rehabilitation camps as part of a programme to reintegrate them into society. See: Gaffey C. (2016). Boko Haram: 2,000 Captives Freed by Regional Force as Nigeria Launches Rehabilitation Programme.

8. The Nigerian armed forces have increased their presence in the Sambisa Forest area in Borno State and have dominated the area since December 2016.

9. Military successes by national armies continue to occur. One of the examples was the defeat of BH in April 2017 by the Niger Army in the southern region of Diffa on the border with Nigeria, where as a result of the army's counter-offensive, 57 BH members were eliminated and a large military park was seized. The Minister of Defence congratulated the Security Forces. See: Sridharan. V (2017). Niger forces kill dozens of Boko Haram Islamists in counteroffensive.

10. On October 25, 2015, Abdiqadir Mumin, who was one of the "spiritual leaders" of ALS, left the group to pay homage to ISIS. This new franchise led by Mumin has its operations centre in the Galgala Mountains in the Puntland region in northeastern Somalia, outside ALS' traditional zone of influence. In April 2016 they became official as Jahba East Africa and in October of the same year they carried out their first major attack against Qandala, a port city in Puntland. See: Reid. G. (2017). Militants Rising: Islamic State's East African Ambitions.

11. Sheikh Hussein Abdi Gedi was a veteran ALS commander and "governor" of the Lower Juba region who was killed after trying to recruit ALS militants and form a pro-IS militia in the Kismayo area. See: Platt. S. (2017). Al-Shabaab update: February 2017.

12. According to AMISOM reports, several ALS leaders have been eliminated. See: Reuters. (2016). AU mission says several Al-Shabaab commanders killed in Somalia.

13. One of the ALS leaders, Hussein Mukhtar, surrendered to the Somali National Army in Baidoa in March 2017. See: Agutu. N. (2017). Al-Shabaab top leader Hussein Mukhtar surrenders to Somali army.

14. Defectors are one of the main targets of the group and ALS uses all its informant networks to locate and eliminate those who leave the group, even if they relocate to areas controlled by AMISOM and the government.

15. The last Somali presidential elections took place between November 2016 and February 2017, when the 328-member parliament elected former Prime Minister Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo as president of Somalia. Farmajo won the presidency by 184 votes against 97 in favour of Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, who had been president since 2012. See: Nor. O., Sevenzo, F., & Masters, J. (2017). Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo elected Somalia's president.

16. 50 per cent of ALS dropouts have declared joining the group for economic reasons. See: South and Central Somalia Security Situation, Al-Shabaab Presence, and Target Groups. Ob. cit., p. 20.

17. Shahada News Agency is the name given to the news agency belonging to ALS through which they transmit their statements to the media.

18. Over the course of 2017 – until April – some 337 people were killed or injured as a result of 87 explosive incidents. Civilian victims have increased by 50 per cent since 2015. See: Somalia: 337 civilians killed and injured in Al-Shabaab attacks in 2017. (2017).

19. In April 2017 the Kenyan government was forced to decree the curfew until June 28 in the border region of Mandera and within a radius of up to 20 kilometres from the Somali border, including the towns of Mandera, Omar Jillo, Arabia, Fino, Lafey Kotulo and Elwak. See: Somalia: Kenya Extends Curfew in Border Over Al-Shabaab Attacks (2017).

20. ALS has been carrying out a strong offensive in the centre-south area of the country since mid-2016, which caused the part withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from several towns. There is no clear demarcation of which areas are under the control of ALS and the clan militias, while there are other areas which are under the control of more than one organisation. In several regions of this part of the country, ALS controls the main supply routes by charging taxes to people who pass through checkpoints. See: South and Central Somalia Security Situation, Al-Shabaab Presence, and Target Groups. Ob. cit., p. 6.

21. BH's civilian victims have reduced from 11,519 in 2015 to 3,455 in 2016. In the first six months of 2017, these two groups experienced a 29 per cent reduction in the number of victims. In the first half of 2017 there have been 1,831 ALS victims. See: Africa Centre for Strategic Studies (2017). Setbacks and Realignments: The Continuing Evolution of Militant

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