

Reassessing Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Africa:

A Critical Terrorism Study

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**REASSESSING TERRORISM AND COUNTER-TERRORISM IN  
AFRICA:  
A CRITICAL TERRORISM STUDY**

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Artium  
in the Department of Political Studies and Governance

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## **ABSTRACT**

Terrorism is one of the fastest expanding fields of study today. Since the 9/11 attacks in New York, terrorism has received an increasing amount of attention from researchers, the media and the international community. Yet, terrorism in Africa is not at all a new phenomenon, neither are the ways to combat this terrorism threat. However, no sustainable way to ameliorate the threat in Africa has been found. This might indicate a need for revisiting the current approaches to terrorism and counter-terrorism. This study aims to do just that by using Critical Terrorism Study (CTS) as a theoretical anchor. The study incorporates a sceptical approach to traditional ways of doing terrorism research and challenges orthodox ways of approaches counter-terrorism. The research is conducted by looking at three of the most prominent terrorist organisations in Africa; Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab. CTS does however not reject current and traditional ways of research, but incorporates different fields of study which were traditionally seen as inapplicable to the study of terrorism. In order to try and ameliorate the terrorism threat in Africa, new approaches are necessary, and to form these new approaches, new knowledge creation must take place. By broadening the scope of the study of terrorism, it becomes clear that although the terrorist groups in this study have several characteristics in common, they also have deep-rooted and resounding differences. By uncovering these differences, be it the reaction to colonialism in Algeria, or the inherent belief of marginalisation by a certain group in Nigeria, or clan-loyalties in Somalia, it is evident that these groups cannot be grouped under the umbrella category of 'terrorism in Africa'. In this study, the historical, political, religious and even economic backgrounds of the groups mentioned – or the areas in which they manifest themselves – are examined. Upon closer examination of different fields of study either regarding the certain region in which the group is active, or the underlying beliefs of individuals within the group, connections can be found that serve either as motivation or justification of the terrorist group's actions. This variety of information is not intended to overwhelm or intimidate the leader, but should serve as a framework from which a certain terrorist organisation can be analysed. This analysis can further determine whether it is necessary to revisit the current and traditional ways of approaching terrorism and counter-terrorism. These approaches are not limited only to research and examination of these groups, but also pertains to

international interventions and assistance within the geographical areas of interest. Since international actions taken to confront these groups have over the time already developed significantly – still without any sustainable amelioration of the effects of terrorism – international knowledge creation should also be challenged. Clearly something is missing. CTS does not intend to emerge as the sudden ‘cure-all’ for the terrorism threat in Africa, but will serve as a step in a new direction of terrorism study. By broadening and simultaneously deepening the research done of these groups and the contexts in which they manifest themselves, this study hopes to open the door to the possibility of sustainable amelioration of the terrorism threat in Africa.

## **VOORWOORD**

Een van die vinnigste ontwikkelende studieveldde vandag is sekerlik terrorisme. Na die bekende 9/11 aanvalle in New York, het terrorisme al hoe meer aandag begin verkry; van navorsers, die media en die internasionale gemeenskap. Tog is terrorisme in Afrika eintlik glad nie ‘n nuwe verskynsel nie en die maniere om dit te probeer beveg en bekamp nog minder. Hoekom is daar dan steeds nie ‘n manier om volhoubare verligting mee te bring nie? Hierdie vraag dui dalk op die nood om huidige benaderings tot terrorisme en die teenkating daarvan te herondersoek. Hierdie studie poog om juis dit te doen deur gebruik te maak van Kritiese Terrorisme Studie (KTS) as ‘n teoretiese raamwerk. Die studie inkorporeer ‘n skeptiese benadering tot tradisionele maniere van terrorisme-navorsing, en daag ortodokse maniere van die teenkating van terrorisme uit. Die navorsing word uitgevoer deur te kyk na drie van die mees prominente terroriste organisasies in Afrika; Al-Kaïda in die Islamitiese Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram en Al-Shabab. KTS verwerp nie huidige en tradisionele wyses van navorsing nie, maar inkorporeer wel verskillende navorsingsvelde wat tradisioneel gesien word as ‘nie van toepassing’ binne die studie van terrorisme. Om die terrorisme bedreiging in Afrika te probeer verlig, is nuwe benaderings nodig. Om hierdie nuwe benaderings te vorm, moet nuwe kennis geskep word. Deur die huidige studie van terrorisme te verbreed, raak dit duidelik dat alhoewel die terroriste organisasies in hierdie studie ‘n groot aantal karaktertrekke deel, daar ook diep-gewortelde en beduidende verskille bestaan. Deur hierdie verskille te ondersoek - van die reaksie op kolonialisme in Algerië, die oortuiging van diskriminasie in Nigerië, tot etniese lojaliteite in Somalië - raak dit duidelik dat hierdie groepe nie onder dieselfde ‘sambreel’ van terrorisme in Afrika

geplaas kan word nie. In hierdie studie word die geskiedkundige, politiese, religieuse en selfs ekonomiese agtergronde van die groepe – of die areas waarin hulle ontwikkel – ondersoek. Die doel van die wye verskeidenheid informasie wat ondersoek is, is nie om die leser te oorweldig of intimideer nie, maar poog om te dien as 'n raamwerk vanwaar 'n sekere terroriste organisasie ondersoek en analiseer kan word. Hierdie analise kan verder vasstel of dit wel nodig is om huidige benaderings tot terrorisme en die teenkanting daarvan te ondersoek. Hierdie benaderings is ook nie beperk tot slegs navorsing en ondersoek van hierdie groepe nie, maar is ook van toepassing op internasionale intervensies en bystand binne die sekere geografiese areas. Internasionale reaksies wat al geneem is om hierdie groepe te beveg het reeds baie ontwikkel, maar steeds sonder enige volhoubare maniere van verligting van die effekte van terrorisme. Dus kan daar gesê word dat internasionale kennis van hierdie groepe uitgedaag en ontwikkel moet word. KTS moet nie gesien word as 'n skielike 'wonder-kuur' vir terrorisme in Afrika nie, maar sal dien as 'n tree in 'n nuwe rigting van die studie van terrorisme. Deur die studieveld te verbreed en terselfde tyd te verdiep, hoop hierdie studie om die deur oop te maak na die moontlikheid van volhoubare verligting van die effekte van terrorisme in Afrika.

**Key word and phrases:**

Critical Terrorism Study; Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb; Boko Haram; Al-Shabaab; terrorism; historical development; motivations; international responses; regional expansion; sustainable amelioration

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## **Bibliography**

## **List of Acronyms:**

AFISMA:	African-led International Support Mission to Mali
AFRICOM:	The United States Africa Command
AIAI:	al-Ittihad al-Islamiya
AIS:	Islamic Salvation Army
AMISOM:	African Union Mission in Somalia
ARPCT:	Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism
AQIM:	Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
AQSL:	Al-Qaeda Senior Leadership
AU:	African Union
CEMOC:	Regional Command for Joint Counter-Terrorism Operations
CNRDRE:	Malian National Committee for Rectification of Democracy and Restoration of the State
CSS:	Critical Security Studies
CTC:	Counter-Terrorism Committee
CTS:	Critical Terrorism Studies
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
EU:	European Union
FIS:	Islamic Salvation Front
FTO:	Foreign Terrorist Organisation
GIA:	Armed Islamic Group
GSPC:	The Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat
HRW:	Human Rights Watch
ICC:	International Criminal Court
ICU:	Islamic Courts Union
ICSR:	International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence
IED:	Improved Explosive Devise

IGAD:	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IGASOM:	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development Protection and Training Mission in Somalia
IR:	International Relations
KFR/K&R:	Kidnapping for Ransom
LIFG:	Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
MICEMA:	Economic Community of West African States Mission in Mali
MINUSMA:	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali
MNLA:	National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad
MUJAO:	Movement for Monotheism and Jihad in West Africa
MYC:	Muslim Youth Centre
NNPC:	Nigeria National Petroleum Company
NSF:	Somali National Forces
OPEC:	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
SFG:	Somali Federal Government
SNA:	Somali National Alliance
SNF:	Somali National Front
SNM:	Somali National Movement
SPM:	Somali Patriotic Movement
SSA:	Somali Salvation Alliance
SSDF:	Somali Salvation Democratic Front
TCC:	Troop Contributing Countries
TFG:	Transitional Federal Government
UN:	United Nations
UNITAF:	Unified Task Force
UNODC:	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOSOM:	United Nations Operation in Somalia

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

UNSMIL: United Nations Mission to Libya

USC: United Somali Congress

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1.1 Orientation**

The African continent can be described as many things; firstly, it is the 'mother continent' rich in resources and alive with wildlife and a vast cultural heritage, then there is the Africa riddled with inter- and intra-state wars, poverty, famine, protracted conflict, disease, suffering, political turmoil and, of course, the ever-present threat of terrorism and rival militant groups.

Al-Qaeda's influence in Africa is definitely increasing. From 2009 to 2011 Al-Qaeda activities have been recorded in 18 African States. Four of Al-Qaeda's organisations are currently active on the continent, and these organisations often consist of various sub-organisations. These sub-organisations include: the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Islamic Fighting Group in Libya, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (with sub-organisations, Al-Qaeda in Mali, Al-Qaeda in Mauritania, Al-Qaeda in Morocco, and Al-Qaeda in Sudan), and Al-Shabaab in Somalia (Krech, 2011).

Involvement from other terrorist groups in the area cannot be avoided, like the Nigerian Islamic group, Boko Haram. According to Pieur (2012) this group has received training in the use of explosives at Al-Qaeda camps in the Sahel region of Northwest Africa. In January 2012 alone, Boko Haram caused the deaths of more than 200 civilians and their attacks have evolved in sophistication. According to Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mohamed Bazoum, further training including AQIM and Al-Shabaab in Somalia has also been noticed.

Since January 2011 political uprisings began to have a serious effect on authoritarian regimes in countries such as Tunisia and Libya. Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram constitute the greatest threats to the Maghreb region and sub-Saharan Africa. The continuing unrest in these parts of Africa has led to significant international presence: the most recent of these are the French intervention in Mali in January 2013 and the UN mission to Libya, UNSMIL. But did these interventions have positive outcomes or did they merely rally the violence and carnage on the continent? To answer this question, it has to be taken into account that UNSMIL not only led to strengthening AQIM in terms of weaponry and influence, but also led to further destabilisation of Mali since the ejection of Gaddafi. The prevailing activity of militant groups and the presence of the



international community have had considerable consequences for regional, as well as international role-players on the African continent.

### **1.1.1 Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb**

In April 1999 approximately 700 Salafists broke away from the Algerian *Groupe Islamique Arme* (GIA) and formed the *Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat* (GSPC). Since July 2004 Abdel-Malek Drukbal acted as emir of the GSPC. In a video manufactured for the fifth anniversary of the Al-Qaeda attacks on America on September 11, 2011, the group's second-in-command (later appointed as leader), Ayman al-Zawahiri, said that he had received an order from Osama bin Laden to announce the joining of the GSPC and Al-Qaeda. The Egyptian terrorist-leader applauded the 'blessed joining' and considered it a source of sadness and frustration for the apostates of the regime in Algeria, who are the 'sons' of the previous colonial power, France (Pham, 2011). Late in January 2007 the GSPC announced that they would undergo a name change, and henceforth be known as 'Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb' (AQIM). Not long after this announcement the organisation proved that it was not merely a name change, but the start of a new offensive era (Steinberg & Werenfels, 2007: 409).

AQIM – the main source of terrorist threats in the area – was seen as well on their way to creating a truly regional Jihadist organisation. This objective was only partially fulfilled. Much like AQIM's predecessor, the Algerian-based Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), between 2007 and 2010 AQIM remained an entity with a largely Algerian leadership, membership and agenda. Even within Algeria, counter-terrorist action confined AQIM's activities to certain regions and reduced its overall operational capabilities. In spite of restrictions in the form of military intervention and international involvement, AQIM can never be described as a terrorist organisation without an arsenal – literally and figuratively – of resources, allies, and means.

### **1.1.2 Al-Qaeda and its Expansion through Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab**

Together with AQIM there are a few other actors that have increased their presence within the terrorist activities in the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa region. These groups include Ansar al-Dine, founded by Iyad Ag Ghali in November 2011, The Movement for Monotheism and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), and al-Muwaqun Bi-

Dina, founded by previous AQIM leader, Mokhtar Belmokhtar, in December 2012 (Lebovich 2013a: Internet). Other groups to be taken into consideration when analysing terrorism in Northern Africa are the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (known by its French acronym of MNLA), the Nigerian group, Boko Haram, and the Somali Islamic group, Al-Shabaab. According to the previous General of the US-Africa Command (AFRICOM), General Carter Ham, it can be said that AQIM, Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab coordinate their attacks to be in accordance to certain shared goals (BBC News, 2013: Internet).

In Northern Nigeria Boko Haram promotes the superiority of the Muslim culture. Their goal is again the implementation of strict Islamic law. In May 2010 the leader of AQIM proposed assistance to Boko Haram in terms of weapons and training. In October of the same year a senior member of Boko Haram reacted by pledging the group's loyalty to Al-Qaeda (Forest, 2011).

The Somali militant group, Al-Shabaab, translated as 'The Youth', pledged its loyalty to Osama bin Laden in January 2010. This group, which had more than 7000 members in 2011, also has a financial agreement with pirates in the Somalia area (Forest, 2011). Simultaneous suicide bombings in Uganda's capital, Kampala, in July 2010 clearly illustrated this group's ability to carry out violent attacks. This attack led to the death of 74 individuals. Al-Shabaab is active in different spheres in and around Somalia including actions against military forces of Kenya and Ethiopia. When Al-Qaeda chief, Ayman al-Zawahiri, officially welcomed Al-Shabaab as one of its allies the announcement led to growing concern about the use of brutal tactics in the region (The Telegraph, 2013).

According to General Carter Ham, Al-Shabaab can be viewed as one of the most dangerous terrorist organisations in the region. The most dangerous groups, according to General Ham, are AQIM, Boko Haram, and Al-Shabaab. Even though these groups are not monolithic, and they do not necessarily have exactly the same objectives in terms of the international Jihadi-agenda, the true danger lies in the radicalisation and synchronisation of these groups' attacks (BBC News, 2012).

It is clear that the above-mentioned terrorist groups have more in common than simply the danger of extremism and radical interpretations of ideology. In recent years there has been an abundance of research on the actions and motivations of

these groups, yet no sufficient solution has been found in various counter-terrorism activities. This could be partly due to the lack of comprehensive and in-depth research on not only the clear and known motivations and actions, but also the underlying factors such as socio-economic issues and cultural and religious influences. For this reason the Critical Terrorism Study approach is used during this study.

### **1.1.3 Critical Terrorism Study**

The recent surge of interest in terrorism and counter-terrorism has been well-documented (Pedhazur, Eubank & Weinberg, 2002: 141; Turk, 2004: 271; Gunning, 2007: 363). Within security studies, international relations and beyond, many have argued that established theories and concepts require revisiting to incorporate contemporary transformations in the character and agents of violence (Philpott, 2002; Agathangelou & Ling, 2004; Der Derian, 2004; Smith, 2004). Perhaps the best-known approach to rethinking the study of terrorism takes its cue from some of the earliest achievements and findings of the critical security studies literature. For scholars associated with the Copenhagen and Welsh schools alike, a key strategy for avoiding the orthodoxy of political realism was through extending the concept of security beyond the usual military connotation (Smith, 2005).

By demonstrating the impact of ecological, societal and economic structures on the survival of individuals and communities, discussions become more successful in broadening the political parameters of a previously narrow field of study (Jarvis, 2009: 26). For this reason the CTS approach will serve as a theoretical anchor for the study.

Critical terrorism studies (CTS) refers to terrorism-related research that self-consciously adopts a sceptical attitude towards state-centric understandings of terrorism and which does not take existing terrorism knowledge for granted but is willing to challenge widely-held assumptions and beliefs. In this sense, rather than a precise theoretical label, CTS is more of an orientation or critical perspective that seeks to maintain a certain distance from prevailing ideologies and orthodoxies. CTS is founded firstly on a series of powerful critiques of the current use of orthodox terrorism studies, including: its poor methods and theories, its state-centricity, its problem-solving orientation and its institutional and intellectual links to state-security

projects. Defined broadly, CTS is also characterised by a set of core epistemological, ontological and ethical commitments, including: an appreciation of the politically constructed nature of terrorism knowledge; an awareness of the essential ontological instability of the 'terrorism' category; a commitment to critical reflexivity regarding the uses to which research findings are put; a set of well-defined research ethics and a normative commitment to an emancipatory political praxis (Jackson, 2007a: 244).

## **1.2 Literature Review**

Finding literature on the concept of terrorism in Africa is not a difficult task. The challenge arises when referring to relevant literature – moving away from the orthodox view and study of terrorism and the effects thereof in Africa. The literature and data sources consulted for this research can be divided into five categories. Because the theoretical anchor for this study is CTS, the first category deals with the concepts of CTS and the different forms of study that led to the formation of the CTS approach.

The second category refers to literature that addresses the concepts of terrorism in Africa, more specifically the relevant regions of Africa, and explores the possible reasons for the successes of these terrorist groups on the continent. It also analyses these reasons according to a critical view and study of the relevant terrorist groups.

The third category comprises literature that traces the origins and activities of the relevant military and terrorist groups active in the region. The main focus of this category is: AQIM, Boko Haram, and Al-Shabaab. The analysis includes an exploration of the ideologies of these groups, following the CTS principles in investigating all aspects that lead to and fuel the groups' extremist behaviour.

The fourth category explores the evolution of AQIM including their growing relations with the relevant terrorist groups across the region, and the social, economic and political impacts thereof. In turn, the evolution of these groups is analysed in terms of their movement across the region and the actuality of their criminal enterprises. When analysing the criminal enterprise, research immediately leads to the modus operandi of terrorist groups in the region. These include various smuggling businesses, kidnapping for ransom (K&R) – a tactic which AQIM is well-known for – and weapons trade (which more often than not includes a few surprising international actors).

The fifth category analyses the international responses to the recent and current terrorist threat in the Maghreb and sub-Saharan areas of Africa. Since Africa is well-known for its wealth in natural resources and international investment, international involvement regarding conflict is a concept easy to grasp. This category comprises literature regarding international reactions to local conflict on three levels: national, regional and international. On national level, the reaction of governments of the plagued States will be analysed. On regional level, missions as conducted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) and the successes or failures thereof will be critically discussed. On international level, the involvement of the United Nations (UN) and their various peace-, development, and military missions will be analysed. Specific international role-players such as the United States of America and France and their involvement in the relevant States will also be discussed with regard to the relevance and applicability of their reactions to the terrorist threat. This category will also be challenged and eventually analysed in terms of CTS, to try and answer the simple question of why current counter-terrorism tactics by international actors are not as effective and sustainable as planned.

### **1.2.1 The Literature and Data Sources Consulted for This Study Include the Following:**

***Literature regarding Critical Terrorism Studies:*** Several articles from the University of Wales in Aberystwyth was used, especially work done by Richard Jackson (Jackson, 2007a; Jackson, 2007b), and analyses done by Jeroen Gunning (Gunning, 2007). Articles published by the online journal, International Relations, including those by Jonathan Joseph (2009) and Jacob L Stump and Priya Dixit (Stump & Dixit, 2012) were of significance in this study. To trace the origin of CTS back to Critical Security Studies and study the similarities and differences thereof, the work of Williams and Krause (1997) was used.

***Literature regarding AQIM and their affiliated military groups' functionality in Africa:*** There are various sources relating to terrorism in Africa, including works by Mentan (2004) and Francis (2005). Articles by Balch and Darbouche (2006) were also used to analyse background information pertaining to the dilemma of terrorism in weaker States in Africa. To provide insight on AQIM and their affiliated military groups the work of GJ Yoroms in *Civil militias: Africa's intractable security menace*

(Francis, 2005) was used. Relevant and recent terrorist attacks and events was analysed using reliable news sources such as BBC, Al Jazeera and CNN. A valuable source regarding recent activities of AQIM, Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab and the responses to these activities is the American Counterterrorism Centre, and more specifically the 2013 Counterterrorism Calendar (NCTC online, 2013). Works by the Council on Foreign Relations were used to describe the relations between AQIM and their allies, especially of John Masters (2013). Further publications by John Masters and the Council on Foreign Relations was consulted for recent information on Al-Shabaab, their leaders, turning points and objectives (Masters, 2013b). For further information on AQIM and its allies, the work of Lebovich (2013a) also proved significant.

***Literature regarding the origin and ideology of the relevant terrorist groups:***

For the formation of a comprehensive basis regarding the origin and ideology of the relevant terrorist groups, works by the American Institute for National Strategic Studies, specifically the works of Le Sage (2011a), were used. An additional data source used is the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. For the origin of and background information on Boko Haram, a Special Report by the United States Institute of Peace, written by Andrew Walker, served as critical source (Walker, 2012). The involvement of AQIM and other terrorist and violent groups in Africa were analysed by using works of Manuel and Soriano (2010) and Mendelsohn (2011). The works of Bajoria and Bruni (2011) were also used to grant sufficient attention to groups with which AQIM prefers to work. Further sources regarding an overview and perspective in terms of ideology and the relation between religion and politics are the works of Funke and Solomon (2006), Fuller (2010), and Burke (2007).

***Data sources regarding the evolution and criminal enterprises of terrorist groups in the region:***

Data sources regarding the criminal enterprises of terrorist groups in the region include the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. To trace the development of AQIM and their growing dependence on criminal activities the works of Filiu (2009a) were used. To grant perspectives on the evolution and growth of AQIM and their affiliated groups, works of the Congress Research Facility of the USA were used, more specifically the work of Rollins (2011). In literature regarding the current influence of AQIM works of significance include those of Steinberg and Werenfels (2007), Christiani and Fabiani (2011), as well as Krech

(2011). Specific articles by BBC News (2013a; 2013b) was used to analyse the recent profile of AQIM and its allies.

***Data sources regarding different international reactions and interventions in the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa regions:*** Different reports and newsletters were used regarding national interventions and the aftermath and effects thereof. These included the works of Alexander (2012), Erforth and Deffner (2013), Al Jazeera (2013b), and publications by the UN News Centre (2013). The background and mandate of various UN missions were also analysed, including the UNSMIL mandate (UNSMIL, 2013). Further documentation of UN missions and recommendations were consulted via the work of the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the Ambassador, Curtis Ward (OSAA).

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

The thought of terrorism in the Maghreb and sub-Saharan African region is premised on the problem statement that many international interventions and different forms of political resolutions were unable to work towards sustainable political and economic development. To this end, interventions and peacekeeping missions are aimed at providing states with military resources and offering a practical and feasible alternative to their current way of life. These military resources often fall into the wrong hands, and have in turn strengthened terrorist groups like AQIM. Adding to the issue of interventions and peacekeeping missions, the problem of relevant theoretical basis and analysis is also persistent. As far as this study is concerned, the problem statement is demarcated conceptually, geographically and temporally.

*Conceptual demarcation:* The analysis focuses on the inter-relationship between various international actors and the different governments in terms of sustainable political and economic development. Also to be noted are the relations between different militant groups active in the demarcated regions and all inter-relations between active role-players regarding sustainable peace and continued war-like circumstances.

*Geographic demarcation:* Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb is mainly an Algerian group, with their main focus on establishing an Islamic rule in Algeria, thus Algeria will serve as a focal point in this study. AQIM activities are not merely confined to Algeria as the Maghreb region in Africa comprises Morocco, Algeria, Mali, Tunisia,

and Libya. For the purpose of this study the main focus will draw on military- and terrorist activity in Mali, Algeria and Libya. Geographically, Boko Haram is based and mostly active in Nigeria yet, again, this group's influence and activities go beyond the Nigerian border to surrounding states. The sub-Saharan region includes the area south of the Saharan desert. Politically, it includes all countries fully or partially south of the Saharan desert, but for the purpose of this study the main focus will be on Somalia, Nigeria and Niger. The research focuses on France's intervention in Mali as an international case study, and the case studies of Libya and Algeria respectively, in terms of peace intervention missions and the aftermath thereof in Africa.

*Temporal demarcation:* The analysis focuses primarily on current and recent international interventions and peace missions and their impact on the terrorist threat in the region. Previous interventions and missions since some states' independence in the 1950s and 1960s will also briefly be taken into account where relevant in tracing developments and trends. Historical factors are thus considered when these factors have a direct bearing on the concepts or research of the problem, but it is not the main focus of the study.

#### **1.4 Research Question**

The research question that this study intends to answer is: *Will the continued threat of terrorism in Africa be ameliorated by revising current and orthodox concepts and theories of counter-terrorism?* This problem generates three subsidiary questions:

- How appropriate and effective are the current concepts and theories of terrorism and international intervention in the African context?
- Are there generic or common elements found in the actions of AQIM that will be applicable to the formulation of all military interventions and counter-terrorism missions; specifically towards different terrorist groups in Africa?
- Do international involvement and intervention have the ability to provide maintainable resolutions to the various challenges posed by the various terrorist groups?

In view of the above, the appropriateness of a critical terrorism study in the African context is addressed and the lack of progress by orthodox security studies becomes apparent. One of the fundamental problems is that the central concept of the field – 'terrorism' – remains essentially contested. To avoid legitimising or neutralising the



'terrorism' label, critical terrorism studies rely on the articulation of a relatively coherent and consistent set of epistemological, ontological, and ethical normative commitments (Jackson, 2007b: 226).

### **1.5 Aim of the Study**

The concept of terrorism and intervention in Africa has increasingly been in the centre of military and security discussions relating to the failure and successes of solving the terrorism problem and dealing with terrorist groups such as AQIM. However, it is impossible to analyse and discuss a concept, and attempt to solve a problem, when the core topic is not sufficiently researched. Thus, the aim of this study is to clarify vague definitions and indeterminate sets of ideas towards the terrorism threat in Africa while using the concepts and principles of CTS as a basis for further research. By using CTS as departure point, the research focuses in part on uncovering and understanding the aims of knowledge production within terrorism studies, the operation of the terrorism studies epistemic community and, more broadly, the social and political construction of terrorism knowledge. Such analysis can be achieved using deconstructive, narrative, genealogical, ethnographic and historical analysis, as well as Gramscian and constructivist approaches. The aim of this study includes assessing whether current international interventions and involvement lead to sustainable reconstruction and development in terrorist-stricken areas, or whether they indirectly lead to the strengthening of terrorist groups and the further failure of weak states.

### **1.6 Purpose and Significance of the Study**

During the Mali-crisis the French government decided to intervene in order to stop the continuation of the Islamic Jihad. France had approval from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), ECOWAS and the AU to deploy a military offensive. The main threat to France and other Western governments was the growing influence of AQIM in the region and the possibility of a Taliban-styled regime. According to UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, France's intervention was confined and controlled and it took place with the main objective being to protect Mali's constitutional order and territorial integrity (Kampark, 2013).

On 11 January 2013, the French military began operations against the Islamists. Forces from other African Union States were deployed shortly after. By 8 February,

the Islamist-held territory had been retaken by the Malian military, with help from the international coalition (Al Jazeera, 2013a). Terrorists from AQIM, Ansar al Din and MUJAO fled to the Ifoghas Mountains after being pushed from northern Mali by French troops (Roggio, 2013). Not only is Mali grateful to France, a member of the UNSC with the military potential to accomplish a task the Malian army has been unable to handle alone, but it has specifically welcomed the help of its former colonial power.

But not everyone welcomes France's protective stance on the African continent. The Algerian newspaper, *Liberté*, commented on France's intervention in Mali with the following statement:

*"The French military intervention has been code-named Serval. For those who don't know, the serval is an African cat of prey that has the peculiar trait of urinating thirty times an hour to mark its territory. Spot on!"* (Mounir, 2013; Erforth & Deffner, 2013).

There have been a number of similar responses from the local citizens in Mali regarding the French intervention – these responses include a vast amount of gratitude from some, indifference from others and even mocking rage from others.

From the 1980's onwards, and especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, scholars of international relations increasingly began to emphasize the need for a broader understanding of security. They argued that it was misleading to confine security analysis to traditional military threats to the territorial integrity of states (Garnett, 1996: 14). One of the most prominent attempts to widen the security agenda has been provided by Barry Buzan and his colleagues (Buzan, 1991; Buzan et al., 1998). They stress that the security of human collectiveness is affected by factors in five major sectors: military, political, economic, societal and environmental.

Generally speaking, military security concerns the two-level interplay of the armed offensive and defensive capabilities of states, and states' perceptions of each other's intentions. Political security concerns the organisational stability of states, systems of government, and the ideologies that give them legitimacy. Economic security concerns access to the resources, finance and markets necessary to sustain acceptable levels of welfare and state power. Societal security concerns the sustainability, within acceptable conditions for evolution, of traditional patterns of

language, culture and religious and national identity and custom. Environmental security concerns the maintenance of the local and the planetary biosphere as the essential support system on which all other human enterprises depend. These five sectors do not operate in isolation from one another. Each one defines a focal point within the security problem, but all are woven together in a web of linkages (Transnational Terrorism, Security & the Rule of Law, 2007: 33-34).

Taking the above-mentioned into account, there is a clear lack of sufficient research regarding the continuous terrorism threat in the Maghreb and sub-Saharan areas of Africa. There have been numerous interventions and international action-plans to confront and solve the problem – yet it persists. The purpose of this study is to fill in the blanks for future international role-players planning to ‘help out’ in Africa, by providing clear and explanatory views regarding the terrorism problem. This will neither be done by merely trying to define the term ‘terrorism’, nor by pointing fingers and identifying the guilty parties. What terrorism and security studies lack in the modern day and age is an expansive and critical approach to historical and statistical research. By using CTS as a basic framework, this study intends to maximise inclusiveness by bringing together many perspectives that have been considered to be outside of the mainstream of the discipline. These perspectives include Buzan’s five sectors of security as main issues in identifying all relevant aspects of the persisting terrorism threat.

The findings of this research could assist government officials and military decision-makers in determining whether international military intervention will indeed improve the chances of sustainable peace and stability. Furthermore, the research findings may highlight the need for more critical factors to be taken into account before the formation of policies and action plans. The research will also reflect upon the specific role of the international, regional, and local communities in not only solving the terrorism threat, but also understanding all relevant factors and sectors that require specific development in terms of effective and sustainable peace and political stability.

## **1.7 Research Methodology**

The argument for critical terrorism studies holds valuable criticisms of the traditional terrorism studies field. First, the list of methodological and analytical weaknesses, including and among others: a reliance on poor research methods and procedures, an over-reliance on secondary information and a general failure to undertake primary research (Zulaika & Douglass, 1996: 149). More criticisms include a failure to develop an accepted definition of terrorism and to formulate rigorous theories and concepts (Schmid & Jongman, 1998); the descriptive, narrative and condemnatory character of much terrorism research output; the dominance of orthodox international relations approaches and a lack of interdisciplinarity; the tendency to treat contemporary terrorism as a 'new' phenomenon that started on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 and a persistent lack of historicity (Silke, 2004: 209); a restricted research focus on a few topical issues and a subsequent failure to fully engage with a range of other important subjects.

The study is a descriptive undertaking, based on a literature study and analysis of factual data sources. A descriptive study is one in which information is collected without changing the environment (i.e., nothing is manipulated). Sometimes these are referred to as 'correlational' or 'observational' studies. The Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) defines a descriptive study as "any study that is not truly experimental." In human research, a descriptive study can provide information about the naturally occurring health status, behaviour, attitudes or other characteristics of a particular group (Nebeker, 2013: Internet). For the purpose of this study, the behaviour, attitudes and characteristics of AQIM, Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab were researched.

The concept and principles of Critical Terrorism Studies, as presented by Richard Jackson (Jackson, 2007a; Jackson, 2007b) and Lee Jarvis (Jarvis, 2009) were applied as departure points for the research. The components of the analytical framework are deductively linked and the information is dealt with in an inductive manner as basis for the analysis, leading to the premise of supplying strong evidence for the truth of the conclusion.

The deductive method of research, commonly described as the top-down approach, were used; the "top" of the research will include a broader spectrum of the

information collected regarding the relevant terrorist groups and their actions, and move towards more specific actions and effects to form a logical conclusion. Inductive reasoning (bottom-up approach) works the opposite way, moving from specific observations to broader generalisations and theories. The study begins with specific observations and measures, detecting patterns and regularities, formulating some tentative hypotheses to explore, and finally developing some general conclusions or theories.

By nature, inductive reasoning is more open-ended and exploratory, especially during the early stages. Deductive reasoning is narrower and is generally used to test or confirm hypotheses. The research for this study, however, involves both inductive and deductive reasoning throughout the research process. The scientific norm of logical reasoning provides a two-way bridge between theory and research. In practice, this typically involves alternating between deduction and induction. Initial observations in this study leads to inductively creating a 'theory' – based on the principles of CTS – of the possibility of lessening the terrorist threat and the impacts thereof. The theoretical interpretations will in turn lead to create more in-depth hypotheses and collect more observations (Babbie, 2001 & Shuttlesworth, 2008).

International involvement, regional and local actions, and undertakings that are relevant to the topic are analysed as part of the assessment. The primary unit of analysis relates to countries in which AQIM and local and regional terrorist groups are active and exert a clear influence on the sustainability of political, social, and economic development.

The level of analysis is predominantly less state-centric and focuses more on relevant international, continental and regional factors. The emphasis is on the analysis of secondary sources, although primary sources are utilised where applicable. Primary sources include official UN and AU documents, as well as relevant documents on the evolution and development of AQIM and regional terrorist groups such as Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab. These primary sources also include concepts of international intervention and the limitation of terrorist activities. The study is not based on fieldwork or questionnaires. The study furthermore consists of qualitative research and analysis, although quantitative data in some cases support the analysis.

The study is aimed at providing possible answers and solutions to address the complex and persisting threat of terrorism on the African continent. Keeping in mind the principles of CTS; elements of social, cultural, developmental, environmental and economic aspects will be taken into account. The research is also intended to be utilised to analyse the shortcomings of traditional concepts of security and terrorism, and to make recommendations and conclusions as to how these concepts could be expanded and used to achieve the desired outcomes in the affected states. The terrorist activities of AQIM, their splinter groups and affiliated terrorist groups, Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab - and the international reaction to these activities - have been selected as case studies to determine whether the concept of international intervention and involvement could be successfully implemented to improve the chances of establishing lasting peace and development.

The fact that the study is based on three terrorist groups as main case studies does not indicate the making of generalised conclusions regarding the solution to the terrorist problem. Although this may be seen as a possible risk, it does not, however, disqualify the merit of a study of this kind as the three case studies are indeed representative of some of the major international interventions and military undertakings in recent years.

### **1.8 Structure of the Research**

The study is structured in three parts, being divided into a theoretical framework, a main body, and a concluding section containing an evaluation.

*Chapter One* is of a methodological nature and provides an introduction, identification and formulation of the research theme and problem statement. This chapter demarcates the study and provides the methodology adopted in the research. The literature review that forms part of this chapter provides an overview of some of the sources consulted to undertake the study.

*Chapter Two* provides a theoretical framework of not only Critical Terrorism Studies, but also that which led to the formation of CTS. In Chapter Two, orthodox security and terrorism studies will be broadly explained, and in turn analysed according to the principles and commitments of CTS. By commenting on and setting critique to Critical Security Studies, Terrorism Studies, and different schools of security study, the importance and relevance of revisiting the study of terrorism will be highlighted.

*Chapter Three* focuses on the origins and ideology of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. The evolution of AQIM will be described with specific focus on shifting means of operation, leadership and membership. Economic and developmental impacts of the actions of AQIM will be assessed by means of the scope and application of criminal enterprises used for strengthening of the terrorist group. This chapter also questions the international action taken against AQIM, and provides a critical analysis with regard to the successes and failures of said international action and involvement.

*Chapter Four* follows the movement and evolution of Boko Haram. The chapter explores the shared ideologies and joint efforts of Boko Haram and AQIM. The evolution of Boko Haram will be discussed with emphasis on the collective goals and ideologies of local rebels, military groups, Boko Haram, and AQIM. International missions and -intervention in Nigeria and the involvement and reactions of Boko Haram will be analysed. CTS will be used to analyse the terrorist group's growth from local rebellion into a terrorist group with economic and developmental impacts.

*Chapter Five* focuses on the threat of Al-Shabaab in Somalia. In spite of the belief that the group is significantly weakened, the group remains a well-connected threat in a war-torn and politically unstable state. This chapter investigates the relations between Al-Shabaab and pirates in the Somali region as a means of sustaining and economically strengthening the terrorist group. The ideological parallel between AQIM and Al-Shabaab will be analysed in terms of the relations and support between these two groups. International missions and interventions in Somalia and surrounding areas suffering from the influence of Al-Shabaab will also be analysed in terms of success and sustainability of developmental objectives.

*Chapter Six* focuses on multi-functional international responses to the 'war-on-terror' in Africa, and discusses the applicability of current interventions and missions. The chapter discusses the use of CTS in conjunction with other social theories, and the importance of revisiting current concepts and knowledge regarding terrorism. The case studies of AQIM, Boko Haram, and Al-Shabaab will be used as a foundation for the analytical framework of CTS. In this chapter recommendations based on concepts of CTS will be made in terms of creating realistic policies and missions that will lead to sustainable and successful economic and political development. Chapter

Six also provides an evaluation and summary of key findings that address the research question posed in Chapter One. This includes an assessment of the efficiency of international involvement and intervention and will continue to present policy recommendations to be taken into consideration for future missions. This chapter then culminates in a final conclusion.

## **1.9 Conclusion**

In recent years there has been no lack of international attention to the conflict-ridden areas of Africa. Several interventions and peace missions, which at first appeared to be successful, were launched. But, after some years it seems as if sustainable development cannot be achieved in countries where there is no effective human security. The shortcoming in the confrontation of conflict and terrorism in Africa is the need for interventions and peace missions with long-term sustainable effects regarding development, peace, political stability, and the economy. Furthermore, the approach to terrorism in the Maghreb and sub-Saharan regions in Africa should be revised. Terrorism as a concept is already difficult to define, as proved by many scholars in past centuries, but modern research has indicated that terrorism as a single concept cannot be defined without the sum of its parts. For this reason increasing attention is given to the motivation behind the terrorist groups. The international community is well aware of Islamic extremism and the Jihad, and a response to that has partly been the 'Global War on Terror'. This study aims to analyse these types of responses, and identify what needs to be done to define the problem of terrorism and deal with not only the literal appearance of terrorist acts, but also the underlying factors that contribute to these groups' actions and motivations.



## **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND THE IMPORTANCE OF CRITICAL TERRORISM STUDIES**

### **2.1 Orthodox Security Studies and Critical Security Studies**

Security has long been viewed and addressed as a matter of the state, executed in the formulation of foreign and defence policies. Since the end of the Cold War, however, many security issues have become increasingly transnational. The subject of transnational terrorism is commonly perceived as one of these new challenges that cannot be countered effectively at the level of the nation-state alone, as its roots, causes, and effects are cross-bordering (Transnational Terrorism, Security & the Rule of Law, 2007).

#### **2.1.1 The Problem of Definitions**

The concept of security has evolved considerably over the years. Traditionally security was defined primarily at the nation-state level and almost exclusively through the military point of view. This focus on external military threat to national security was particularly dominant during the Cold War. It would be misleading, however, to associate the origins of security studies with the Cold War and the associated nuclear threat. The nature of security has become one of the most widely discussed elements in the intellectual ferment that has been triggered by the end of the Cold War. Optimists have declared that the end of the Cold War and of that century would usher in a new era of peace and cooperation, based variously on liberal democracy, transnational capitalism, international organisations, or a combination of the above (Russet, 1994). The more pessimistic offered warnings of an anarchic future filled with intercivilisational or ethnic conflict and weapons proliferation (Mearsheimer, 1990). Still others, less absorbed with questions of military statecraft, have focused on new threats or new understandings that require a basic rethinking of security itself (Krause & Williams, 1997: 33). It seems that even before the September 11, 2001 attacks leading to the world focusing its attention on the seriousness of terrorism and its threats, there was a dire need for re-examining the concepts of security and terrorism.

Where the history of terrorism as a tactic or strategy has produced considerable debate, the origin of this concept is typically traced more specifically to the French

Revolution (Halliday, 2002: 72; Booth & Dunne, 2002: 8). At least since the 1937 attempt at definition by the League of Nations, however, the problem of accurately, consensually or even objectively denoting this term has generated considerable academic and political interest. Although the relevant literature appears no closer than ever to resolving this problem, recent events have been interpreted as adding incentive to the need to revisit the issue of defining terrorism and security. The issue of defining a terrorist remains ultimately a political act, as Gutteridge noted in 1986: "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter." Examples of this are the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the African National Congress (ANC), once labelled and named terrorists, yet years later seen as legitimate political organisations.

Following 11 September 2001 in particular, Lee Jarvis (2009: 7) poses at least two related justifications in this context: First, the need for a coherent and consensual definition of terrorism has been identified by some as an essential foundation for better understanding, and perhaps condemning, specific attacks, such as 9/11 (Coady, 2004: 3). Denoting our concepts clearly and accurately, in this sensibility, remains essential for patient and considered academic reflection. Meisels (2006: 465) suggests that resorting to analytical tools is perhaps no more than a philosopher's means of despair, yet it is vital to understanding current events and appropriately influencing future ones. A second argument for revisiting the problem of definition relates more explicitly to the formulation of security policy. In this line of thought, the absence of any shared conception of terrorism renders cooperation on tackling the behaviour designated by the term far more problematic than necessary. With definitional contestability presented as an obstacle not only to understanding but also to praxis, resolving of definition becomes urgent on analytical and political grounds. As long as there is no agreement as to 'what terrorism is' it is impossible to assign responsibility to nations that support terrorism, to formulate steps to cope on an international level with terrorism, and to fight effectively the terrorists, terror organisations, and their allies (Ganor, 2005: 2).

For exactly the reasons mentioned above, the UNSC unanimously adopted resolution 1373, which, among its provisions, obliges all states to criminalise assistance for terrorist activities, deny financial support and safe haven to terrorists and share information about groups planning terrorist attacks. The 15-member Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) was established at the same time to monitor

implementation of the resolution. While the ultimate aim of the Committee is to increase the ability of states to fight terrorism, it is not a sanctions body, nor does it maintain a list of terrorist organisations or individuals.

Resolution 1373 has not produced any consensual definition of terrorism in national laws, nor encouraged harmonisation of national definitions. The CTC itself has even encouraged states to extend universal jurisdiction over domestic crimes of terrorism as defined unilaterally in national law (Laquer, 2002: 5). Almost half of the states worldwide have now enacted special terrorism offences, and almost all are different. Some states have deployed the international legitimacy conferred by Council authorization to define terrorism to repress or neutralise political opponents, and to conflate them with Al-Qaeda. Thus, China bluntly characterised Uighur separatists in Xinjiang as terrorists (Yardley, 2003: 7); Russia asserted that Chechen rebels are terrorists, even though many were fighting an internal conflict (Itar-Tass, 2004); and India seldom distinguished militants from terrorists in Kashmir. In Indonesia, insurgencies in Aceh and West Papua have been described and combated as terrorism, as have a Maoist insurgent in Nepal and an Islamist movement in Morocco (Reuters, 2003). Predictably, Israel identified Palestinians with Al-Qaeda, with Ariel Sharon calling Arafat 'our Bin Laden' (Pokempner, 2003: 19, 23). As a result, the Council initiated a fight not against terrorism, but 'different terrorisms'. This devolution of discretionary power is unprincipled and dangerous. Combating terrorism without defining it remained possible for as long as the word itself was not uttered. In contrast, operatively deploying the term without defining it creates uncertainty and allows states to make 'unilateral determinations geared towards their own interests'. Few states have objected to Council measures because they align, rather than interfere, with their sovereign interests (Saul, 2008: 23-24).

During the September 2005 World Summit at the UN, the Security Council – meeting at the level of Heads of States or Government for only the third time in its history – adopted Resolution 1624 concerning incitement to commit acts of terrorism. The leaders also resolved to conclude work on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, including those contained in Secretary-General, Kofi Annan's, report, 'In Larger Freedom'. In this document, he called urgently for the adoption of a definition of terrorism similar to that contained in the report of High-level Panel on

Threats, Challenges and Change. This definition states “that the targeting and deliberate killing of civilians and non-combatants cannot be justified by any cause or grievance, and that any action intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants, when the purpose of such an act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population or to compel a government or an international organisation to carry out or to abstain from any act cannot be justified on any grounds and constitutes an act of terrorism.” (Annan: Internet, 2005).

Clearly the difficulty does not lie in the ability to create or formulate a definition for the term or act of terrorism. The difficulty arises with the ambiguity of the term terrorism, as mentioned earlier; one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter. Although scores of different definitions of terrorism do exist, some of which even supported by several states or actors, the concept of a universal, all-encompassing definition is difficult. As made clear by CTS, terrorism is a complex and diverse concept, including many more factors than intimidation and violence.

### **2.1.2 Why the Concept of ‘Security’ is Not Sufficient**

According to Buzan (1991:1), the concept of security is, in much of its prevailing usage, ‘so weakly developed as to be inadequate for the task’. Buzan suggests five possible explanations for what he calls ‘the persistent underdevelopment of thinking about security’. Four of these explanations are of interest for the purpose of this study. The first explanation is that the concept of security has simply proved too complex for analysts, and has therefore been neglected in favour of more tractable concepts. A second, and in Buzan’s view more convincing explanation, lies in the real scope for overlap between it and the concept of power as developed by realists. Security was often viewed as a derivative of power, especially military power. A third reason for the conceptual underdevelopment of security concerns the nature of the various objections to the realist paradigm up to the late 1970’s. Rejecting the realist model as dangerously self-fulfilling and too war-prone, many critics turned instead to the grand concept of peace. A fourth explanation for the underdevelopment of the concept of security is that, for the practitioners of state policy, compelling reasons exist for maintaining its symbolic ambiguity. The appeal of national security as a justification for actions and policies which would otherwise have to be explained is a political tool of immense convenience for a large variety of sectional interests in all

types of state. For example, many interests in the United States and the Soviet Union benefited from amplifying the level of threat which each posed to the other. Cultivation of hostile images abroad can justify intensified political surveillance, shifts of resources to the military, economic protectionism, and other policies with deep implications for domestic political life (Buzan, 1991: 7-11).

In the late 1980s and 1990s the concept of security became more prominent and in some ways better developed than Buzan claims. Garnett (1996:12) argues that security has actually become an overdeveloped concept, 'so wide in its scope that it is in danger of being emptied of meaning'. However, according to Baldwin, many works on security would not qualify as serious conceptual analysis. He argues that although none of Buzan's explanations are convincing, security should still be described as a 'neglected concept'.

"Paradoxical as it may seem, security has not been an important analytical concept for most security studies scholars. Security has been a banner to be flown, a label to be applied, but not a concept to be used by most security studies specialists" (Baldwin, 1997:9).

These calls to revisit the problem of definition already speak powerfully to the self-image of contemporary terrorism studies. Even if an objective formulation of this concept remains as deceptive as ever, the very demand for further engagement with this issue demonstrates an unmistakable desire for ontological certainty and policy relevance.

## **2.2 Critical Security Studies (CSS) – the First Step in a New Direction**

With the recent international focus on terrorism and the recent terrorist attacks in Europe and the United States, we have been given good reason to reassess the meaning of the concept of security. Simultaneously, close examination of the evolution and approaches to security studies can generate a more profound understanding of transnational terrorism as a 'security issue'.

Theories in the social sciences do not occur in a vacuum. They are tied to and developed in relation to specific socio-historical (external) and intellectual (internal) contexts in which they emerge and/or to which they are applied. In terms of intellectual context, 'critical turns' in security studies have to be understood through

the intellectual transformations occurring in social and political theory (Ashley, 1984). In the Critical Security Studies literature, what is generally referred to as 'Critical Security Studies' (CSS) is associated with scholars such as Keith Krause, Michael Williams, Ken Booth, and Richard Wyn Jones. Owing much to the vision of critical theory in IR developed initially is Robert Cox. CSS sought to make explicit the largely statist and military-oriented assumptions of traditional security studies by drawing on analytical inspirations such as the Frankfurt School, which is the original source of what is known as Critical Theory. Some of its core issues involve the critique of modernities and of capitalist society, the definition of social emancipation, and the perceived pathologies of society (Coradetti, 2014: Internet). Also consulted is the post-positivist movement in IR theory, rejecting the idea that the empiricist observation of the natural sciences can be applied to the social sciences and attempting to integrate a larger variety of security concerns, including non-state actors as well as the state.

A further development of this critical project is what has come to be known as the 'Aberystwyth School'. In the view put forward by Wyn Jones and Booth, the axis of security studies should be the emancipation of individuals. Specifically, Booth and Wyn Jones's Frankfurt School-oriented critical approach suggests that realism's military focus, state-centred and zero-sum understanding of security should be replaced by a collaborative project which would have human emancipation as its central concern (Booth, 2005a, Wyn Jones, 1999, Sheehan, 2005). It should be noted that Neo-Realists like Ken Waltz agreed that Realism as a whole was not applicable to Africa, since conceptually and practically the State (of Africa) did not really exist (Aliyef, 2011: Internet).

Since the mid-1990s, Critical Security Studies have made an impact on debates about security in IR theory. Taking the concept of security as an object of reflection rather than a given, critical approaches have problematised the dominant military and statist understanding of security. If originally the label 'Critical Security Studies' was given to denote a range of different approaches that had little in common other than a shared dissatisfaction with the orthodoxy of traditional security studies (Krause & Williams, 1997), recent years have witnessed a more institutionalized engagement with the themes of security and politics. With its own themes of research, conference panels, doctorate schools and university courses, Wæver has

argued that, at least in the context of Europe, critical innovations in security studies have materialised around the work of three schools: Aberystwyth, Copenhagen and Paris (Wæver, 2004; Van Munster, 2007: 235).

### **2.2.1 Schools of Security: Aberystwyth, Copenhagen, and Paris**

#### ***Aberystwyth/Welsh School***

Aberystwyth has been one of the most important sites for the development of Critical Security Studies. CSS is the school that has most clearly been a broader movement emerging out of many sources and many places – it is certainly not confined to Europe. The two main figures regarding this school of thought are Ken Booth and Richard Wyn Jones, but the defining work of the school, the anthology *Critical Security Studies*, was edited by post-Canadians, Keith Krause and Mike Williams. The name ‘Welsh School’ has occasionally been used regarding this approach (Smith, 2003: 321).

CSS argues that researchers should avoid seeing the world through the eyes of the state, as implied by using the concept of ‘national security’ as key concept. The state is often the problem as much as the solution, and the aim of research has to be defined in relation to human beings, not an institution, especially in the African context. The best way to conceptualise security in a way that binds it to people instead of the state, is to define it in terms of emancipation. By implication, the concept of security becomes used in a more classical sense, but on a different referent object. This is about real threats against real people, and not alleged threats as voiced by the state. In this respect, CSS sometimes seems objectivist regarding the concept of threats and security, and its political agenda comes close to classical ‘critical peace research’ of the 1970s (Wæver, 2004: 6).

The Aberystwyth School, and more specifically Ken Booth, outlines a theory of security that is structured around the conceptual triangle of security–community–emancipation. These concepts are interrelated insofar as the value of security involves the emancipation from oppressive social structures and the remaking of community. In Booth’s book, *Critical Security and World Politics* (2005), Andrew Linklater rethinks the link between security and community through the Habermasian notion of communicative rationality, which reconstructs a concept of reason which is

not grounded in instrumental or objectivistic terms, but rather in an emancipatory communicative act. This emancipation in turn leads to advances in non-repressive deliberation. The reconstruction proposes that human action and understanding can be comprehensively and successfully analysed as having a linguistic structure, and each utterance relies upon the anticipation of freedom from unnecessary domination. Habermas's works resonate within the traditions of Kant and of democratic socialism through his emphasis on the potential for transforming the world and arriving at a more humane, just and equal society through the realisation of the human potential for reason, in part through discourse ethics. Habermas in a sense distances himself from the Frankfurt School, criticising it, as well as much of postmodernist thought, for excessive pessimism, radicalism, and exaggerations (Calhoun, 2002: 352).

Linklater (2005: 120) points at two important research avenues that could further thinking about security within the Aberystwyth School; the first is his suggestion about analysing human security, not just as a shift in level of analysis – from state to individual – but as a whole different logic of security altogether – one based on the foundation of communicative rationality as opposed to that of strategic action. Secondly, the proposition that dialogue and deliberation are crucial for transforming political community opens up the possibility for linking the social constructivist agenda of the constitution of security communities to the Habermasian project pursued within the Aberystwyth School (Adler & Barnett, 1998). The persistent difficulty of CTS and the study of terrorism is unavoidable and constant ambiguity. Priya Dixit and Jacob L. Stump (2012: 207) suggest that three methodological moves could be largely beneficial to CTS scholarship, keeping in mind the different schools of security and the possible linking to constructivism. Firstly, the ontological stance taken by the researcher should be clear in identifying the relationship between the observer and the observed. Secondly, terror, terrorists and terrorism should be conceptualised as categories of analysis and categories of political and social practice and, lastly, reflective implications of a completely constructivist ontology - drawing parallel to the Frankfurt school - should be embraced (Stump, 2009: 661). The call for interpretive CTS scholars is to be more philosophically grounded, explicit and reflexive, and to adopt a practice-oriented approach to the study of terrorism. With regard to a constructivist agenda of terrorism studies the focus is shifted away



from what terrorism is, to a focus on how social actors use the category of 'terrorism' to make sense of and act during unfolding events.

Looking at Habermas's predecessors as well as his successors, Richard Wyn Jones rightly points out that the potential for emancipation in Critical Theory is to be found not just in interaction, but also in the experience of work and in the forces of production. As such, he focuses on the need for the Aberystwyth School to unpack the concept of emancipation as something more than social progression towards a normatively desirable universal state.

Emancipation has a particular history and trajectory in critical thinking. Here it is not just a synonym for social change but refers to a particular form of transformation, a form overturning the political-economic order by means of struggle. This in turn brings the question of violence into the core of the Aberystwyth School; who should be emancipated from what and by which means? Or is genuine emancipation self-emancipation? Wyn Jones shows that a more thorough engagement with the Frankfurt School theory may help the Aberystwyth School to better tackle questions of struggle, resistance, and violence that are inherently linked to any discussion of emancipation (Van Munster, 2007: 237).

### ***Copenhagen School***

Since the publication of his book, *People, States and Fear*, Barry Buzan's work (1983) has established itself as the canon and indispensable point for students of security. His book and revisions of the second edition (1991) have been the stimulus for further exploration of the security problem at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Research in Copenhagen. Together with Buzan, the collaborators have produced several publications on the security theme, sufficiently interrelated to warrant the collective shorthand, the 'Copenhagen School' of security studies (McSweeney, 1996: 81).

The Copenhagen School revolves around three main ideas; securitisation, sectors, and regional security complexes. Securitisation is what defines the school most distinctly in theoretical sense, but it is important to discuss the interrelationship between the three main ideas, as the tensions and interactions between these three explain much of the dynamics in the development of the theory. The concept of

security complexes points to the importance of the regional level in security analysis and suggests an analytical scheme for structuring analysis of how security concerns tie together in a regional formation. Sectors refer to the distinction between political, economic, environmental, military and societal security. The concept of sectors concerns the different arenas where security can be found. The list of sectors is primarily an analytical tool created to spot different dynamics. In the book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1997) list the following sectors: military/state, political, societal, economic, and environmental. As such, the Copenhagen School theory can be regarded as widening traditional materialist security by looking at security in these other sectors as well.

Part of the background for the Copenhagen School was the debate in politics and security studies in the 1970s and especially 1980s over a wide versus a narrow concept of security. The concern of traditionalists of everything becoming security was countered by the argument that with a clearer sense of what makes a security issue, it is possible to extend the net widely and look for security in all sectors and with all possible referent objects. It is necessary to be able to discriminate and separate security issues from non-security issues. Only by having a clear sense of what security really is, is it possible to open the field without losing focus (Wæver, 2004: 8). In security discourse, an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to a designated referent object, traditionally – but not exclusively – the state. The designation of the threat as existential justifies the use of extraordinary measures to handle it. The appeal of security has been the key to legitimising the use of force and, more generally, opening the way for the state to mobilise or use special power, like using conscription, secrecy, and other means only legitimate when dealing with security matters. Security is the result of a move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue as above normal politics.

The idea of securitisation describes a process in which the socially and politically successful ‘speech act’ of labelling an issue a ‘security issue’ removes it from the realm of normal day-to-day politics, casting it as an existential threat calling for and justifying extreme measures (Williams, 1998: 435). These processes can have different referent objects depending on whether they belong to an economic, environmental, political, military or societal sphere (the above-mentioned ‘sectors’). By using the idea of sectors, researchers are able to be more systematic with

respect to the general claim that, in principle, everything can become securitised. Yet, only if a claim to treat something with exceptional measures is accepted by a relevant audience, does a securitising move (the mere name, or claim) turn into a securitisation (where exceptional measures are actually taken) (Security Dialogue, 2006: 11).

A characteristic feature of the Copenhagen School is its scepticism towards 'security'. It often has anti-democratic and anti-creative implications. The usual 'critical' strategy of widening security has a problem when it accepts the underlying assumption of the mainstream approach of 'the more security the better' and extends this to still more areas. Securitising environment, identity, and religion subsume these areas under a problematic rationality. In contrast, the Copenhagen School sees security negatively, as a failure to deal with issues as normal politics. Ideally, politics should be able to unfold according to normal procedures without this extraordinary elevation of specific threats to a pre-political imminence. De-securitisation is the optimal long-range option, since it means to not have issues phrased as 'threats against which we have countermeasures' but to move them out of the threat-defence sequence and into the ordinary public sphere (Laustsen & Wæver, 2000).

### ***Paris School***

Paris has been the main site of a distinct theoretical development, mostly inspired by Bourdieu and other sociologists and a thorough commitment to detailed, empirical investigations of actual practices by various agencies – practices that often reveal patterns and processes different from those we find by studying merely the security discourse. Didier Bigo is the main figure in this development as he has published a number of important works in relation to this point of view. Jef Huysmans has also written extensively on the different new 'schools' and has clarified and elaborated important assumptions and implications of the 'Paris approach' (Huysmans, 2006)

Empirically, Bigo has among other things, shown how internal and external securities merge as agencies compete for the gradually de-territorialised tasks of traditional police, military, and customs (Wæver, 2004: 10). Also they jointly produce a new threat image by constantly connecting immigration, organised crime, and terror. Insecurity is largely a product of security discourses and security policy. Bigo starts

from a conception of a 'field' and its actors and ask what they do. If done simplistically, the actor-based approach could easily become something close to a conspiracy theory. But by now this work has evolved into a very elaborate and well-documented mapping of practices notably also at the micro level by the various agencies involved on the security field. An important advantage of this approach is that it, better than others, includes routine practices and even deviation from official policy; thus, it is less oriented to discourse and more to all practices of agencies (Wæver, 2004: 10).

For the Paris School, two convergent factors explain reshaping the concept of (in)security. The first is related to the fact that the process of securitisation by reassurance discourses and by protection techniques does not always reduce the security risk to individuals and groups. Security is not the contrary of insecurity. The definition of what security is conditions insecurity. Policing insecurity is then a mode of governmentality, drawing the lines of fear and unease at both individual and collective level (Bigo, 2005, Huysmans 2006). The second element, more difficult to tackle, is the emergence and consolidation of professional networks of security agencies that try to monopolise the truth on danger and unease through the power-knowledge nexus.

This view of security points towards a different understanding of securitisation as meaning the capacity to control borders, to manage threats, to define endangered identities, and to define the spheres of orders. It thus shifts our attention in three ways. First, instead of analysing security as an essential concept, contested as it were, the Paris School proposes treating security as a technique of government (Foucault, 1994). Second, rather than investigating intention behind the use of power, this approach concentrates on its effects (Bigo & Guild, 2003; Huysmans, 2000). Third, instead of focusing on speech acts, the Paris School emphasises practices, audiences, and contexts that enable and constrain the production of specific forms of governmentality (Ceyhan, 1998). Consequently, this approach argues that the field of security is not only determined by the sovereign power to kill but also by the discursive ability to produce an image of the enemy with which the audience identifies. All processes of securitisation are connected to a field of security constituted by groups and institutions that authorise themselves and are authorised to state what security actually is (Bigo, 2000: 195).

### **2.3 The Shift from a Sub-Field to Terrorism Studies**

As the different Schools have revealed, there are multiple extensions of security that have been analysed and discussed. These extensions can be summarised in four interrelated themes. The debate on the 'broadening' of security reveals two main types of extensions concerning the source of the security threat. First, a horizontal extension can be observed in concepts of security to include a wide range of non-military threats such as transnational terrorism, environmental degradation and international migration. The horizontal extension of security has been accompanied by a second, vertical type of extension, involving the extension of the political responsibility for ensuring security. Whereas in the traditional concept of security, state-level military forces were seen as key players in ensuring security, responsibility now splits into different directions. These directions include upwards to international institutions, downwards to regional or local governments, and sideways to non-governmental organisations, to public opinion and the press, and to the abstract forces of nature or of the market (Rothschild, 1995: 55). The concept of terrorism as a separate field of study improves on the traditional concept of security. While security was thought to be merely in and about the state, the extension and broadening of the subject inherently led to terrorism studies as a preferred method of reference, rather than the more state-centric field of security studies.

Two other types of extension can be identified with regard to the recurring object of security, that is, the sorts of entities whose security is to be ensured. Critics of the state-centric approach to security have argued for an upwards extension of the concept of security, from the security of nationals to the security of the international system, or of a physical environment. Lastly, the concept of security is extended downwards from the security of states to the security of groups and individuals. It is important to note that these themes are not entirely new. Both the multidimensionality of security and the conceptualising of security at levels other than the nation-state are not new discoveries (Baldwin, 1997: 23). Of particular interest is the fact that the multiple extensions have become increasingly dominant in academic and policy discourses. Thinking about security has been increasingly influenced by the four extensions, reshaping the more traditional concept of security into a broader and more explanatory understanding of security

(transnationalterrorism.eu). These developments inherently lead to the securitisation of transnational terrorism – and the study thereof.

Although terrorism is by no means a new phenomenon, in recent years terrorism and particularly its transnational presence has come to be appreciated as a prominent threat to Western and European security. A number of high-profile violent events sparked a wave of international media attention during the late 1960s and early 1970s. These violent acts, including murder, hijackings, hostage-takings, and other subversive actions (not much different from the terrorist activities we are familiar with today) against states or multinational organisations, were not characterised as 'normal' interstate wars. These types of violent action soon received the label of terrorism (Laqueur, 1999: 8).

#### **2.4 Critical Terrorism Study – the Necessary Alternative**

In the past few years, an increasing number of terrorism scholars have moved away from conventional terrorism scholarship's emphasis on problem-solving theory to a focus on critical scholarship. Terrorism scholarship's focus on problem-solving had meant research on terrorism was seen as outside of theoretical reflection in the discipline of international relations (IR). Previously, terrorism was studied within other related fields such as conflict resolution, strategic studies, military studies etc. IR scholars studying political violence from a critical perspective – like Critical Security Studies, mostly ignored terrorism as a topic of study and left it to other subfields. Thus, terrorism studies' place in IR was marginalized, an aspect that has now become exemplified in terms of the debates that are continuing in the subfield of security studies. Among conventional security scholars and critical scholars, such as the Copenhagen, Paris and Aberystwyth Schools' respective critiques of conventional security scholarship, have been missing in discussions regarding how terrorism *should* be studied (International Relations, 2012: 200).

Since the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 attacks, terrorism studies have been transformed from a minor sub-field of security studies to a large stand-alone field with its own dedicated journals, research funding opportunities, conferences and university study programmes. As a consequence, it is now one of the fastest-expanding areas of research in the Western academic world. This follows a growing dissatisfaction with the state of the field and its voluminous output by senior scholars, security

practitioners and sections of the public. Making the case for Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS) depends on credible and compelling critique of the current state of orthodox terrorism and security studies. One of the most fundamental problems is that the central concept of the field 'terrorism' remains essentially contested. In practice, its use is always highly subjective and politically stigmatising. To avoid legitimatising or naturalising the 'terrorism' label, many scholars denote the inherent artificiality of the term 'terrorism' (Jackson 2007: 226). CTS relies on the articulation of a relatively coherent and consistent set of epistemological, ontological and ethical normative commitments, as well as a clear research programme and future trajectory.

#### **2.4.1 Traditional Approaches to Terrorism – and the Insufficiency Thereof**

Although it is rare for authors to decide on a single solution for the problem of terrorism, existing recommendations may be broadly divided into militarising, criminalising and liberal approaches. The concern with producing policy-relevant research ensures that terrorism studies remain constituted around a restrictively narrow conception of academic responsibility: a conception tied not to critical enquiry but to problem-solving analysis.

Militarising approaches typically conceptualise terrorism as a category of unconventional warfare. Understood as such, the appropriate mechanisms for preventing this behaviour are located within the capacity of military measures. This orientation has led several to discuss the utility of preventative force as a strategy for confronting the threat (Litwalk, 2002; Schultz & Vogt, 2003: 25-26). Other discussions within the militarising context include debates over psychological warfare as a counter-terrorist instrument (Kimhi & Even, 2004: 833); calls for greater strategic clarity in military responses to terror (Omand, 2005: 109–111); and demands for further reinforcing homeland security (Pape, 2003: 356–357). In each of these accounts, terrorism as a form of unconventional warfare must be confronted as such: traditional practices of bargaining and negotiation simply cannot succeed in countering this threat.

A second approach to the problem of response treats terrorism not as a military issue, but as one of criminality (Katzenstein, 2002: 53). In its internationalist pretext, supporters of this perspective advocate international law to prosecute and deter

those associated with terrorist acts. More domestically oriented contributions include explorations into the appropriateness of intelligence-gathering as a counter-terrorist mechanism. The recent and frequently impassioned debate over balancing liberty and security in counter-terrorist policy may be approached as a discussion on the limits of this criminalising perspective, with questions of democratic torture having received particular attention in contemporary literature (Bellamy, 2006; Lukes, 2006).

Another approach may be themed liberal. These approaches differ, importantly, from each of the above-mentioned in mobilising a seemingly far deeper conception of causality. Rather than understanding terrorism as a technical problem to be countered, eliminated or managed, they typically view this behaviour as a symptom of underlying dynamics. In this sense, recommendations include increasing diplomatic efforts to resolve local sources of conflict (Haleem, 2004) and demands for the extension of democracy and human rights norms (Cotton, 2003: 167–168). Nossel (2004: 131) suggests: 'Unlike conservatives, who rely on military power as the main tool of statecraft, liberal internationalists see trade, diplomacy, foreign aid, and the spread of American values as equally important.' If these liberal approaches offer a coherent alternative to the militarising and criminalising perspectives, a shared concern with the value of counter-terrorist strategy transcends the distinctions between the approaches. Despite differing models of causality underpinning these contributions, a discernable 'problem-solving' orientation permeates them all. It is this common ambition towards policy-relevant research that opens considerable space for the emergence of a Critical Terrorism Studies agenda. While studying militant groups such as AQIM and Boko Haram, it has been clear that the current problem-solving agenda is not working. While efforts need to be made to manage and ameliorate the terrorism threat, the threat firstly needs to be better understood – with attention given to more in-depth aspects than criminality and military action. It is with this in mind that CTS fills the role in shaping a line of thought and study which occupies the space for such research and understanding.



#### **2.4.2 How to Apply CTS – and the Value Thereof**

Without discounting contributors of positivist social science, CTS rests on an understanding of knowledge as a social process constructed through language, discourse and inter-subjective practices. It can be said that terrorism knowledge always reflects the social-cultural context within which it emerges – this explains the highly gendered and Eurocentric approach of some of the more orthodox research on the subject. CTS begins with an acceptance of the basic insecurity of all knowledge and the impossibility of neutral or objective knowledge and study of terrorism.

A necessity of CTS, and this study, is to make a lasting impact on the future development of Terrorism Studies and, in doing so, go beyond critique and deconstruction and articulate an alternative, credible research agenda. CTS can be described as a call for: broadening the study of terrorism to include subjects neglected by leading scholars of the field and in its main journals, including the wider social context of political violence, state violence, non-violent practices, and gender aspects of terrorism; deepening terrorism research by uncovering the field's underlying ideological, institutional, and material interests and make the subjectivities and normative commitments of both researchers and researched more explicit; and making a commitment to emancipatory praxis central to the research enterprise (Jackson, Breen Smyth & Gunning, 2009).

By studying CTS Richard Jackson (2007: 246) asks the question; “who is terrorism knowledge for, and what functions does it serve in supporting their interests?” There are at least three practical values of this broad epistemological orientation. First, similar to the field of Critical Security Studies (CSS), CTS begins from an analysis of the epistemological and ontological claims that make the discipline possible in the first place (Williams & Krause, 1997). Its research focuses in part on uncovering and understanding the aims of knowledge and productions within terrorism studies, the operation of the terrorism studies epistemic community and, more broadly, the social and political construction of terrorism knowledge. This type of analysis can be achieved by using deconstructive, narrative, genealogical, ethnographic, and historical analyses, as well as Gramscian and constructivist approaches.

The purpose of CTS is not simply descriptive, nor is it to establish a certain study of terrorism as 'wrong' and 'correct' or 'real' and 'false', its aim is to destabilise dominant interpretations and demonstrate the inherently contested and political nature of the discourse – to reveal the politics behind seemingly neutral knowledge.

The second value of CTS research is a continuous and transparent critical-normative reflexivity in the production of knowledge (Shaw, 2003). CTS research acknowledges the impossibility of neutral or objective terrorism knowledge and demonstrates an awareness of the political uses, to which it can be put, as well as its unavoidable biases and assumptions. Thus, it attempts to avoid the uncritical use of labels, assumptions and narratives regarding terrorism in ways that would naturalise them or imply that they are uncontested. Crucial in this respect is an appreciation and acknowledgement of the gendered and Eurocentric character of dominant knowledge and discourse on terrorism. The third value of CTS research is methodological and disciplinary pluralism, basically, a willingness to adopt post-positivist and non-IR-based methods and approaches to social science over interpretive and reflectivist approaches (Price & Reus-Smit, 1998: 261). CTS accepts that constructivist and post-structuralist approaches that subscribe to an interpretive logic of understanding can create an opportunity for questions and perspectives that are foreclosed by positivism and rationalism. This stance is more than methodological; it is also political in the sense that it does not treat one model of social science as if it were absolute or the sole bearer of legitimacy (Smith, 2004: 514). One of the tasks of the CTS field is to gather all these fragmented voices and serve as a tent under whose canvas research from different disciplines can interact (Gunning, 2007).

#### **2.4.3 The CTS Explanation of 'What Terrorism Is'**

CTS is characterised by a general scepticism towards the 'terrorism' label because it is recognised that in practice the term has always been judgemental rather than analytical. Terrorism is fundamentally a social fact rather than a brute fact; while extreme physical violence is experienced as a brute fact, its wider cultural-political meaning is decided by social agreement and inter-subjective practices and research. In this sense, just as 'races' do not exist but classifications of humankind do, so too 'terrorism' does not exist but classifications of different forms of political violence do

(Sluka, 2002: 23). The inability of the UK and US governments to agree on a common list of proscribed terrorism organisations, despite holding very similar definitions of terrorism, speaks to the inherent subjectivity of applying the terrorism 'label' in the real world (Silke, 2004: 6).

CTS does not define terrorism in ways that neutralises some actors while simultaneously legitimising the use of violence to others simply because they are conducted in certain circumstances. Instead, CTS views terrorism fundamentally as a strategy or tactic of political violence that can be, and frequently is, employed by both state and non-state actors and during times of war as well as peace (Jackson, 2007: 248). Charles Tilly explains that terror is a strategy, not a creed. Terrorists range across a wide spectrum of organisations, circumstances and beliefs. Terrorism is not a single clear phenomenon (Tilly, 2004: 5). As a strategy, terrorism involves the deliberate targeting of civilians in order to intimidate or terrorise for distinctly political purposes. Like war, terrorism is also a continuation of politics by other means (Schmid, 2004: 202). The important point is that terrorism is not an ideology or form of politics in itself; it is rather a tool employed at specific times, for specific periods of time, by specific actors and for specific political goals. Groups specialising solely in terror do sometimes form, but they are extremely rare and, typically, they remain highly unstable and conditional. In reality, most terrorism occurs in the context of wider political struggles in which the use of terror is one strategy among other more routine forms of contentious action (Tille, 2004: 6; Schmid, 2004: 199).

One of the key points of CTS – and this study – is uncovering the political and strategic causes or reasons why actors choose to employ terrorist tactics, and the processes by which they abandon the use of terrorism as a political strategy in particular historical and political context. In this sense, CTS is determined to avoid universalising practices that are in fact very specific and naturalising what is actually highly conditional (Campbell, 2005: 128). Instead, CTS remains acutely sensitive to the need for historical, political and cultural context in understanding the use of terrorism as a strategy. In addition, given the central role that labelling has played within the terrorism studies field, CTS is committed to questioning the nature and politics of representation – why, when, how and for what purpose do groups and individuals come to be named as 'terrorist' and what consequences does this have?

#### **2.4.4 CTS and its Ethical Commitments**

The above-mentioned principles can be described as the epistemological and ontological commitments of CTS. CTS is openly normative in orientation for the simple reason that through the identification of ‘who the terrorist is’ – deciding and affirming which individuals and groups may be rightly called ‘terrorists’, is a routine practice in the field – terrorism studies actually provide an authoritative judgement about who may legitimately be killed, tortured, rendered illegitimate or incarcerated by the state in the name of counter-terrorism. In this sense, there is no escaping the ethical-political content of the subject.

CTS openly adheres to the values and priorities of universal human and societal security, rather than traditional, narrowly defined conceptions of national security in which the state takes precedence over any other actor. Moreover, in the tradition of Critical Theory, the core commitment of CTS is to a broad conception of emancipation – in a way in accordance with the Aberystwyth School of thought – which is understood as the realisation of greater human freedom and human potential and improvements in individual and social actualisation and well-being (Jackson, 2007: 249). CTS is determined to go beyond critique and deconstruction and actively work to bring about positive social change – in part through an active engagement with the political process and the power-holders in society. Based on an acceptance of a fundamental prior responsibility to ‘the other’ and ‘who the terrorist is’, CTS sees itself as being engaged in a critical praxis aimed at ending the use of terror by any and all actors and promoting the exploration of non-violent forms of conflict transformation. Specifically, this entails a willingness to try to understand and empathise with the mindsets and world views of non-Westerners and a simultaneous refusal to assume or impute their intentions and values (Barkawi, 2004).

#### **2.5 Conclusion**

CTS is both a theoretical commitment and a political orientation. Theoretically, it engages in permanent critical exploration of the ontology, epistemology and praxis of terrorism studies and counter-terrorism practice, and seeks ultimately to introduce alternative interpretations and understandings into an established field of study. The established field of study has made significant strides in the field of counter-terrorism, but has yet to lead to permanent and sustainable answers in regarding the

amelioration of the terrorism threat. By reconstructing the accepted view and interpretation of terrorism, this study hopes to move yet another step closer to plausible policy recommendations.

It is crucial to broaden the research agenda to include the wider social context, other forms of violence, and non-violent behaviour in terrorism research. In the next chapters of this study, this strategy to broaden the reader's view will be explicitly used. The reason for this is the insufficient understanding about the interaction between militants and non-militants, and between militant and non-militant types of action taken. The role of interaction within oppositional social movements, bystander publics, political elites, and state forces all form part of the evolution of militancy. More research is needed on the effect of participation and motivation of individuals, the effect of the media and the Internet, and the relationship between political and domestic issues and violence. In the following chapters, specific attention will be given to the mentioned areas of research to apply CTS to militant groups and reach a broader and more critical understanding of the concept of terrorism today.

## **CHAPTER 3: THE ORIGINS, IDEOLOGY, AND DEVELOPMENT OF AL-QAEDA IN THE ISLAMIC MAGHREB**

### **3.1 The Origins of Terrorism in Algeria**

Terrorism is an ever-changing, adapting organism of human existence. As explained in the previous chapter, not only does terrorism change and adapt constantly, but so does the study thereof. Today, when the word 'terrorism' is mentioned, thoughts immediately jump to the likes of Al-Qaeda, and the defining moment in history, now simply known as 9/11. But this is not, and will never be, the crux of terrorism. To fully understand and analyse the phenomenon that is so common and widely researched today, the origin and evolution of terrorism must be examined, and thus, the origin and evolution of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

AQIM is a Salafi-jihadist militant group and US-designated foreign terrorist organisation (FTO) operating in the Sahara and Sahel regions in Africa. The group traces its origin to Algeria's civil war in the 1990's, and has in the past decade become Al-Qaeda's affiliate with regional ambitions. AQIM's lineage extends back to a guerrilla Islamist movement known as the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), which violently opposed the secular leadership in Algiers in the 1990s. The insurrection began after Algeria's French-backed military cancelled a second round of parliamentary election in 1992 when it appeared that the Islamic Salvation Front was poised to win power (Laub, Masters 2014: Internet).

To understand the Algerian government's persisting focus on security, it is important to recognise the central role the army played in the construction of the Algerian State. The foundation for violence between militias and civilians traces to the 7-year independence war (1954-1962). Three years after independence from French colonialism, a coup d'état by Houari Boumedienne marked the rise and importance of the military, and the start of a one-party era. This resulted in the creation of a security state in which public order, coercion, and law enforcement measures prevailed over representative institutions. After the 1992 coup d'état, which set the state for the Civil War of the 1990s, a declaration of a state of emergency was one of the tools used to justify expansive mandates and authorities for the security sector (Cook, 2007; Ammour, 2012: 5). The war economy generated by Islamist violence in

the 1990s and the following repression of civilians did not only further the lack of transparency in Algerian governance, but also expanded corruption networks.

### **3.1.1 The Home Ground Advantage**

Islamism and jihadi ideologies, both violent and non-violent, are well established in Algeria and the countries that surround it. Elements of violent jihad are synonymous with Al-Qaeda, and have been noticeable in the GIA and GSPC respectively since the 1990s. Much of the current instability and militant activities visible in the region stem from the Algerian Civil War and the instabilities that followed the military junta.

AQIM reportedly maintains mobile training camps along the Algeria-Mali border and has taken advantage of the porous borders of the Sahel region in order to be able to move people and supplies. According to a United States House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security report (2013: Internet), AQIM has been expanding its operations into Mauritania, Mali and Niger, among other countries, in response to intensified counter-terrorism crackdowns by North African governments and their international partners. As AQIM moves south, it has expanded its operations to local militant groups, in addition to adopting new and improved techniques to generate income, such as drug trafficking.

The question can be posed: why do states allow these militant groups, especially AQIM, to flourish within their borders? The answer is no simple one. The increased activity in the Sahara and Sahel regions can be blamed on the mere fact of military juntas, or as a result of civil wars, yes, that does play a significant role. But using the CTS as a basic framework for this study, it is imperative that the states themselves are examined. Why do these weak or failed states exist, and why do they serve as safe havens for terrorist and militant groups?

Several theories point to the fact that resource-rich countries are more prone to political instability and experience lower economic growth than economies without substantial natural resources. Several factors, internal or external, can be blamed for this situation: the so-called Dutch disease, vulnerability to external price shocks and the colonial legacy, to name a few.

Algeria's macroeconomic position is strong due to high global oil and gas prices, which have allowed it to amass large foreign reserves. Yet, wealth has not

necessarily trickled down, and the pressures of unemployment, high food prices, and housing shortages weigh on many families. Public unrest over political and economic grievances has at times been evident, though other factors may have dampened enthusiasm for dramatic political change.

Algeria's foreign policy has often conflicted with that of the United States. Strains in ties with neighbouring Morocco continue, due to the unresolved status of the Western Sahara and a rivalry for regional influence. The legacy of Algeria's anti-colonial struggle contributes to Algerian leaders' desire to prevent direct foreign intervention, their residual scepticism of French and NATO intentions, and their positions on regional affairs, including a non-interventionist stance toward the uprising in Syria and an ambivalent approach to external military intervention in neighbouring Mali (Arieff 2013b: 1).

Even though different terrorist and militant groups operate along different geographic parts of an overall criminal-terrorist region, they do not operate in isolation. As has been established, these groups have complicated but significant interactions with each other, based primarily on the ability of each actor or set of actors to provide a critical service to another, while mutually profiting from the transactions. According to Farrah (2011) many of the groups operate in what have traditionally been called 'ungoverned' or 'stateless' regions. However, in many of these cases, the groups worked directly with the government or have become the de facto governing force in the areas they occupy. An excellent example of this type of cooperation could be found in Somalia, where president Muhamud's advisors were said to have helped plan weapons deliveries to both Islamist militants and criminal gangs (Pham 2014: Internet).

This is an important shift from the traditional ways of looking at stateless areas, but offers a useful way of understanding the alternatively governed regions and the threats they pose. There are traditional categories for measuring state performance developed by Robert Rotberg and others in the wake of state failures at the end of the Cold War. The general premise is that "nation-states fail because they are convulsed by internal violence and can no longer deliver positive political goods to their inhabitants" (Rotberg, 2003).



Alternatively governed spaces exist “where territorial state control has been voluntarily or involuntarily ceded in whole, or in part, to actors other than the relevant legally recognised sovereign authorities.” By applying the CTS principle and challenging the dominant interpretation of ungoverned spaces, it can be argued that these ‘ungoverned’ regions are not truly ungoverned spaces because of the fact that non-state actors, be it militant groups, rebels or ideologists, exercise a significant degree of control over the regions they occupy (Clunan et al., 2010: 3). These regions, in fact, are governed by non-state actors who have, through force or popular support, or even both, been able to impose and implement their decisions and norms, creating alternate power structures that directly challenge the state. The creation of these alternate power structures tend to be highly violent and biased, and more than frequently leads to a state being described as a weak state.

Weak states include a broad spectrum of states: they may be inherently weak because of geographical, physical, or fundamental economic constraints, or they may be basically strong, but temporarily or situationally weak because of internal instability, management flaws, greed despotism, or external attacks. Weak states typically harbour ethnic, religious, linguistic, or other intercommunal tensions that have not yet, or not yet thoroughly, become overtly violent. In this critical terrorism study, some of these tensions will be highlighted in order to form a better knowledge of the social and political construction of militant and rebel groups in the region. Urban crime rates tend to be high and increasing. In weak states, the ability to provide adequate amounts of other political goods is either diminished or diminishing. Physical infrastructural networks are deteriorated. GDP per capita and other critical economic indicators have fallen or are falling, sometimes dramatically; levels of venal corruption are embarrassingly high and escalating. Weak states usually honour rule of law precepts in the breach. They harass civil society. Weak states are often ruled by oppressors, elected or not (Rotberg, 2003).

According to Yochi Dreazen (2013) fears about Africa’s emergence as a terror haven are unlikely to subside anytime soon. Africa’s extreme Islamists are able to take advantage of the fact that many of the continent’s countries have porous borders, weak and corrupt central governments, undertrained and underequipped militaries, flourishing drug trades that provide a steady source of income to militants, and vast, lawless spaces. Those are the reasons (along with some Libyan weapons) Islamists

were able to conquer northern Mali and use it as a base for planning the strikes on, for example, the uranium mine in Niger and the natural gas-plant in Algeria (Dreazen 2013: Internet).

### 3.1.2 The Root of Algeria's Instability



(Map of Algeria; mappi.net)

Nearly four times the size of Texas and the largest country on the continent, Algeria is bordered on the west by Morocco and the Western Sahara and on the east by Tunisia and Libya. The Mediterranean Sea is to the north, and to the south are Mauritania, Mali, and Niger. The Saharan region, which is 85% of the country, is almost completely uninhabited. The French occupied Algeria in 1830 and made it part of France in 1848. Before the conquest by France, no political entity corresponding to present-day Algeria existed. What existed before were tribal domains and larger kingdoms (Infoplease, 2014: Internet).

The crisis in Algeria that we know today is not a mere consequence of the interruption of the December 1991 elections; it is also the consequence of the way in which the Algerian State began its independent existence. The creation of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria was formally proclaimed on September 25, 1962. Newly appointed premier, Ahmed Ben Bella formed a cabinet that linked the

leadership of the three power bases – the army, the party, and the government. However, Ben Bella's ambitions and authoritarian tendencies ultimately led the triad to unravel and provoked increasing discontent among Algerians. The war of national liberation and its aftermath had severely disrupted Algeria's society and economy. In the months immediately following independence, Algerians, their government, and its officials rushed to claim the property and jobs left behind by the Europeans. A new constitution drawn up by the National Liberation Front (FLN) confirmed Ben Bella as the party's choice to lead the country for a five-year term. Under this constitution, Ben Bella as president combined the functions of chief of state and head of government with those of supreme commander of the armed forces. Essentially, he had no effective institutional check on his powers. This led to a military coup d'état, led by minister of defence, Houari Boumediene. Eleven years after he took power, a new constitution was decreed and Boumediene was elected president with a 95 percent majority (One World Nations Online, 2014: Internet).

Boumediene's death in 1978 set off a struggle within the FLN to choose a successor. Chadlo Benjedid, a moderate who had collaborated with Boumediene in deposing Ben Bella, was sworn in on February 9, 1979. In June 1980, he summoned an FLN Party Congress to produce a five-year plan to liberalise the economy and break up unwieldy state corporations. However, reform efforts failed to end high unemployment and other economic hardships, all of which fuelled Islamist activism. In February 1989, the Islamic Salvation Front was founded.

### **3.1.3 The Origin of Islamism and Terrorism in Algeria**

Some analysts believe that the cancellation by the High Security Council of the legislative election of December 1991, when the FIS was about to win, has triggered the uprising still active today. Algeria has faced Islamist terrorism since 1992 and its people have suffered as a group of Islamist extremists have aimed to overthrow the ruling regime and establish an Islamic State.

The founding of the Association of Algerian Ulama in May 1931 aimed to fight social scourges and provide a moral education for the population, without any specific political purpose. In the course of colonial rule, the French banned all Islamic institutions that could serve to develop the Arabic language as a vehicle of the Muslim identity. Thus, the Algerians were left without any supporting structures,

unprotected and despised by a European minority, an alien to its own land (Fuller, 1996: 6-7). After the start of the Algerian War of Independence, the members of the Association split between supporters and opposers to the armed struggle. The Association disbanded in 1957. A new Islamic association called 'Al Qiyam' emerged in 1964, promoting Arabic and respect of Islamic values. All non-Islamic influences were banned, in 1965 they declared:

“All political parties, all regimes and all leaders which do not base themselves on Islam are decreed as illegal and dangerous” (Willis, 1997: 81).

During President Boumediene's rule a new strategy towards Islamist movements was implemented. The new government pursued a strategy combining the suppression of Al Qiyam with the selective incorporation of its programme. However, the recognition of Islam as the religion of state in 1976, and the influence of Arabic teachers, imported to compensate for the lack of suitably qualified native teachers, gave the opportunity for Islamism to grow again in Algeria. Islamists appealed openly for their agenda of application of the Sharia and invested in the universities, the schools and the mosques through which they started to spread their influence. As a result of the radicalisation of the Islamist movement, Islamists went so far as to declare hostility to the Algerian State itself (Zouine, 2002: 9)

The Algerian State's policies towards the Western Sahara can only be understood within the context of the history of its regime, and its dominance of the political landscape. For President Bouteflika and his supporters, Algerian politics has historically been subject to two ideological poles: democratisation, which has led to 'Islamisation', and instability. The Bouteflika regime, as well as predecessor governments that ruled during Algeria's civil war, have demonstrated their commitment to stability at the expense of representative democracy. In order to gain international support and bring stability to Algeria, the State has pursued a policy of supporting proxy groups in the larger Sahara and Sahel regions, particularly to their neighbours in the Western Sahara. Algeria's support for the Frente Polisario movement in the Western Sahara forms a key pillar of the strategy for Algeria to remain the prime security partner in the Maghreb. Since 1973, the Frente Polisario has claimed to represent the Saharawi people in their fight for independence from Morocco. The Polisario's explicit focus on regional territorial disputes, rejection of

transnational terrorism, and long-term dependence on Algerian support make it an ideal candidate through which Algeria can manage the Western Sahara's persistent instability. This relationship ensures, in turn, that Algeria maintains its status as a necessary security partner for the international community, and staves off outside support for domestic reforms, which the Algerian regime views as a necessary piece to its domestic and international security (Bajalia, 2014: Internet).

With Algeria supporting the Polisario, the security and political threats remain and can even be said to be increasing. From a CTS point of view, the ethnographic impacts of this should be taken into account, while Bouteflika and the Algerian government are focusing on the Polisario in Morocco, instead of concentrating on local conflicts, and instability regarding Islamist militants. Ideally, it should be said that the Algerian military – and government – should first focus on ameliorating threats on their own front porch, before supporting a neighbouring organisation, physically and vocally.

### **3.2 The Predecessors of AQIM**

Terrorism in Algeria can consequently be seen as a result of decades of violent oppression of Islamism. By 1993 there had emerged a tendency represented by the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the most radical terrorist group in Algeria, to reject the idea that an Islamic State could be established by constitutional and legal means. While the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), the armed wing of the FIS created in 1994, was a traditional guerrilla group, the GIA was primarily an urban organisation. The terrorists' actions during the first years following the interruption of the electoral process and the ban of the FIS were characterised predominantly by guerrilla warfare and the individual assassinations of members of security services and by sabotage and bomb attacks against state-run and related institutions. The GIA demonstrated that it was willing to expand criminal activities in a much more extreme and sinister direction. With the knowledge of the social-religious history of militancy in Algeria and the region, CTS renders it impossible to conduct a sufficient study without incorporating inter-subjective practices, thus the history of AQIM, and the social construction of their actions and strategies should be focused on and taken into consideration when formulating an adequate response.

### **3.2.1 The Armed Islamic Group (GIA)**

The GIA was based in Algeria and founded in the early 1990s by veterans of the war in Afghanistan following the Algerian Government's ban on the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in December 1991. In 1993 the GIA began what was then described as a high-profile campaign of terrorist attacks (TRAC, 2014: Internet). From late 1994 the GIA expanded its operations internationally, hijacking an Air France flight in December 1994 and conducting a series of improved explosive device (IED) attacks in France in 1995. From 1996 the GIA entered a new phase closer to home, targeting Algerian civilians for large-scale attacks, which at times wiped out whole villages. This strategy proved to be counterproductive, contributing to a loss of support within Algeria, and from international terrorist groups, including Al-Qaeda.

By 1997 the GIA was seriously divided, support from foreign Islamist groups dwindled due to the fact that some of the activities of the GIA were described as being either un-Islamic, in the slaughter of innocent civilians, or in conspiracy with secularists in the security services. As a result, several factions broke away from the GIA. In 1998, following the internal divisions over the GIA's strategy of attacking civilians, GIA member, Hassan Hattab, broke away to found the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) which renounced attacks against civilians. Many GIA members defected to the GSPC, which rapidly overtook the GIA as the main anti-government force in Algeria (Parliament of Australia, 2014: Internet).

The GIA still regards itself as an active anti-government militant force, but its strength has been reduced to between 30 and 100 fighters, following the defections to the Salafist GSPC (who ultimately became AQIM) and other groups and successful counter-terrorism operations by Algerian and international security forces. Sayyed Imam Al-Sharif, one of the chief ideologues of the global jihad movement at the time, wrote that the leaders of Al-Qaeda praised the GIA's actions to further popularise global jihad. Ayman al-Zawahiri even provided religious justification for the GIA's violent tactics (Vriens, 2009: Internet). On the other hand, some experts say that then Al-Qaeda leader, Osama bin Laden, distanced himself and Al-Qaeda from the GIA, and instead supported the more popular GSPC. This further contributed to the GIA's decline and the rise of the GSPC.

### **3.2.2 The *Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat* (GSPC)**

“Salafi” in Arabic means ‘fundamentalist’ in the sense of going back to the original texts of Islam. Muslims around the world who refer to themselves as Salafists advocate a pure interpretation of the Qur’an and are inspired by the lives of the first Muslims. There is nothing underlying to Salafist thinking that means its adherents are likely to be militant or resort to the use of violence (BBC, 2003: Internet). However, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat could have been described as one of Algeria’s most hard-line and effective groups fighting the government.

Little-known outside Algeria, the GSPC made their entrance to the international scene in early 2003, with the kidnapping of thirty-two European tourists in Algeria’s southern desert ridges. The kidnapping was resolved after the German government reportedly ransomed the hostages. The perpetrators, led by GSPC emir, Amari Saifi, also known as Abdelrezak El-Para, were tracked down and captured in northern Chad.

The GSPC emerged from the civil disorder in Algeria, following the ban on the Islamic political party, the Islamic Salvation Front. Growing out of the left-overs of the GIA leadership, individuals including Hassan Hattab, Shaykh Abou al-Baraa, and El-Para rejected the GIA’s policy of attacking civilians, allowing only military targets. When the GSPC formed, it vowed to concentrate attacks on security forces, instead of civilians (Hafez 2000: 582-583; Filiu 2009b: 220). Hattab became the new group’s leader, al-Baraa its ideologue, and Saifi/El-Para, a field commander. Al-Qaeda and bin-Laden, gave their blessing to the GSPC. Though still pursuing the GIA’s goal of implementing an Islamic State in Algeria, the GSPC verbally embraced Al-Qaeda’s ideology of global jihad by 2000 (Schanzer, 2002: Internet). By 2002 the GSPC claimed to have over 4 000 fighters and was concentrating attacks on Algerian military convoys and bases. In September 2002 the Algerian president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, ordered a crackdown on the GSPC, to date, Algeria’s largest anti-Islam operation. The group responded with stepped-up raids, including an attack led by Saifi on a convoy near Batna in January 2003, which led to the killing of 43 soldiers (Katchadourian, 2006: Internet). From a CTS point of view, the immediate response of stepped up raids and attacks gives a glimpse of how the GSPC managed their thoughts on ideology, protection and reaction; how they interpret their ideology, and

the disdain they feel for both the Algerian president and the Algerian government. The GSPC did not simply attack because 'that's what a militant organisation does', but because of the underlying religious beliefs and constructions. It is not simply the act of a militant group set out to destroy a government, but, bearing CTS in mind, it can also be interpreted sociologically as the acts justified by fundamental beliefs and constructs.

Leadership and internal politics in the GSPC remained a constant factor in the development and operation of the group. Hattab's leadership was challenged by rival emirs such as Nabil Sahraoui, Abdelmalek Droukdel (a.k.a Abu Musak Abdelwadoud), and Saifi. These emirs felt that although Hattab was committed to a national jihad, a more internationalist outlook was necessary. In September 2003 Hattab was deposed as GSPC leader, being replaced by the more radical Sahraoui. In spite of the change of official leadership, Saifi and Belmokhtar were extending GSPC operations to Algeria's Sahelian neighbours (Harmon, 2010: 15).

In a global context, the GSPC's most threatening aspects were its links to Al-Qaeda and the expansion of its activities beyond Algeria to Europe and to the Sahelian countries. At the time of the GSPC split, Al-Qaeda wanted to disassociate itself from the GIA, and welcomed the GSPC because of its pledge to not attack civilians. Ever since the deposition of Hattab as emir of the GSPC, the group was divided between the long standing goal of overthrowing the Algerian government, or national jihad, and the prospect of global jihad, with its focus and main enemy being the Far Enemy—the Far Enemy being Algeria's former colonial power, France.

### **3.3 The Development of AQIM**

AQIM officially launched in January 2007 and is the most recently established franchise stemming from Osama bin Laden's jihadi networks, it is also the only one to have so far escaped the decline and crisis of the other branches of Al-Qaeda in the Arab world (Filiu, 2009b: 217). Following its formal alliance with Al-Qaeda, AQIM expanded its aims and declared its intention to attack Western targets. In late 2006 and early 2007, it conducted several IED attacks against convoys of foreign nationals working in the energy sector (Counterterrorism Calendar, 2014: Internet).



In the earlier period, many of the group's attacks were hostage-takings or guerrilla attacks on the Algerian government installations, attacks usually involving small bands of militants with small arms. Beginning 2007, however, AQIM carried out more frequent and more sophisticated bombings.

On April 11, 2007 three suicide bombers blew themselves up outside the Government palace, a police station and a gendarmerie post in Algiers. These terrorist attacks, which killed more than 30 people, were significant for two specific reasons. Firstly, exactly five years earlier, Al-Qaeda carried out its first attack on North African soil in Tunisia. Secondly, the attacks in Algiers happened to be the first attack to be claimed by the newly formed AQIM (Farrel, 2012: Internet). Despite being a breakaway faction of a previous breakaway faction of the defunct GIA, AQIM demonstrated its operational capacity in December 2007, when it targeted United Nations offices in Algiers and the Algerian Constitutional Court simultaneously, killing 41 individuals and injuring 170 (Ashour, 2013: Internet). But the group's strength was tested from the start. Droukdel, their leader, inherited a fragmented group from the GSPC, and, thanks to the activities of the GIA and the GSPC, successful counter-terrorism operations in many urban areas forced AQIM to regroup in the relatively isolated areas of Kabiya and the Sahel region in southern Algeria, northern Mali, Mauritania and Niger. From its base in Kibya, AQIM commanders have been able to carry out a number of attacks against members of the security forces in remote bases along the coastline in Tizi Ouzou province (Farrel, 2012: Internet).

After a rush of deadly AQIM activity in northern Algeria in 2007 and 2008, Algerian authorities gained the upper hand and were progressively able to restrict AQIM to isolated and mountainous areas east of Algiers. AQIM's battalions in the Sahel, however, expanded, as Belmokhtar and Abou Zeid began a run of kidnappings that led to tens of millions of dollars in ransom payments, money bolstered by income from cigarette smuggling and taxes from the region's growing drug trade. AQIM's southern groups also continued operations across the region, killing tourists, and conducting attacks against regional and foreign militaries and government facilities (Lebovich, 2013b: Internet). AQIM attacks largely consisted of opportunistic kidnapping of tourists and non-governmental organisation (NGO) workers in the Sahel region. Recent attacks, however, have demonstrated a greater degree of sophistication and intelligence-gathering capability. This is another clear indication of

reform needed – as suggested in Chapter Two – on the counter-terrorism front. Military action and containment simply is not enough, as AQIM, with an active and rich violent history, has long since learned how to survive and adapt.

### **3.3.1 Strategy and Ideology**

To understand the background and ideology of AQIM, it is important to firstly understand the central idea of the Al-Qaeda ideology, without which AQIM's Salafi-Jihadist insurgency cannot survive. Firstly, clarification of terms is necessary, Salafism is an ideology or movement within Islam that harks back to the 'pure' Islam of the age of the al-salaf al-salih (the Prophet's companions and immediate successors), uncorrupted by later innovations such as medieval jurisprudence and Sufism. This form of Islamic fundamentalism focuses on the classical texts and is characterised by extreme rigor. Salafism derives from writings of the thirteenth-century Hanbali jurist, Ibn Taymiyya. The word salafi or "early Muslim" in traditional Islamic scholarship means someone who died within the first four hundred years after the Prophet, including scholars such as Abu Hanifa, Malik, Shafi'i, and Ahmad ibn Hanbal. The term 'Salafi' was revived as a slogan and movement, among latter-day Muslims, approximately a century ago. Like similar movements that have historically appeared in Islam, its basic claim was that the religion had not been properly understood by anyone since the Prophet and the early Muslims themselves. In terms of ideals, the movement advocated a return to a Shari'a-minded orthodoxy that would purify Islam from unwanted masses, the criteria for this would be the Qur'an (Keller, 1995: Internet).

According to Dr Haytham Mouzahem it is important to note that Jihadi Salafism is distinct from other types of Salafism. Jihadi Salafism arises from a discontent with ordinary Salafism, which is described as a literal, strict approach to the teachings of Islam. Some Salafi scholars condemn violent attacks on Westerners in the name of Salafism. An estimated quarter of Salafis qualify as jihadis, while other types of Salafis employ strong political leanings, as seen during the Arab Spring uprisings. Some of these political Salafis have allied themselves with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and similar political entities throughout northern Africa. Salafism is not extremism, it encourages independent thinking and reasoning known as *ijtihad*, unless the follower decides to follow *fatwas*, legal pronouncements, from prominent

Salafi scholars (Mouzahem 2013: Internet). Unfortunately the notions of Islam, Islamic fundamentalism, radical Islamists, Salafists, and Muslim extremists have all been grouped together in one category, a category that simplifies the complex set of ideological motivations connected to religious militant groups.

In many ways Algeria is an ideal place to articulate a violent jihadi message. As noted in this chapter, Algerian history allows AQIM to successfully promote the same anti-government and anti-Western frame that have been successful elsewhere in the Middle East and northern Africa. The history of violent jihadi movements in Algeria has allowed for a natural continuation of violent jihad ideologies, from the GIA to the GSPC, to AQIM today. Each Algerian organisation or movement that preceded AQIM had roughly the same ideals and intentions: to remove the Algerian government, to force out any Western influence, and to create their own state systems (Mangrem, 2012: 30). AQIM did not fundamentally change its strategic goals from those of the GIA or GSPC. The fundamental goal of establishing an Islamic State in Algeria remained its top objective.

Originally, AQIM aimed to overthrow the Algerian secular military government and, of course, to establish the Islamic caliphate. But, the joining of the local GSPC with Al-Qaeda not only led to an increased intensity of their focus, but also to the joining of stratagems and objectives. AQIM's vocal support of Al-Qaeda and declaration of solidarity with Islamic extremists in the Palestinian territories, Iraq, Somalia, and Chechnya indicate a broader intent than the mere Algerian government. Adbelmalek said in an interview with the New York Times in July 2008 that their general goals are the same as 'Al-Qaeda the mother'. To reiterate that statement, the group has issued several communications that expand its targets – originally the Algerian military and France – to include the United States. AQIM has accused America of propping up the 'apostate' Algerian regime and leading a crusade against the Muslims (Hansen & Vriens 2009: 2-3). In spite of this, the acts of AQIM still resembled that their main priority would stay locally focused, in Algeria. This priority was evidenced within the 2010 US Bureau of Diplomatic Security report (2011: 1), which notes that AQIM kept its focus on Algeria. This report summarises 196 bombings and 170 other terrorist acts inside Algeria in 2010. In comparison, AQIM conducted a total of six attacks in 2010 through the beginning of 2011 across the Sahel (Mauritania, Mali and Niger) (Goita, 2011: 1).

Although it seemed as if the group's overall goal had not changed from the central message of an Islamic State within Algeria, a step up in media operations increased connection between the global jihadi community and Algerian fighters. The objective of replacing the Algerian government had fallen wayside, and other Sahelian states have proven to be easier targets and lack the resources and motive to pursue AQIM members. Droukhal's relationship with Bin Laden and Al Zawahiri was a differentiation on the previous 'xenophobic' stance of the predecessors of AQIM (Christiani & Fabiani, 2001: 3).

The goals set by AQIM have generally shifted from an Algerian focus. This is despite the fact that the leadership of AQIM is still held by Algerians. AQIM leadership has developed a global message over time since 2003 with many of its members building from experiences within Algeria, Iraq and Afghanistan. This global message has been regionally focused to neighbouring states to develop increasing partnerships with other groups to destabilise the region and contribute to AQIM's strength. While historically xenophobic, AQIM's Algerian roots have been superseded by a younger generation of jihadis who seek to join the global jihadi effort (Lowe, 2013: 13). This strategy might have initially been geared towards simply re-energising the movement without a serious intent to shift focus from the overthrow of the Algerian State. However, the end result has been an increasingly regional organisation with dreams of global jihadi victory.

In 2012, a previous GSPC and current AQIM leader did an interview with a Sahelian news agency, Magharebia (2012: Internet). This interview and public appearance with the AQIM member came not long after the uncovering of the Abbottabad documents. According to the terrorist, the GSPC suffered severe declining in numbers, thanks to the Algerian Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation. The accession to the AQSL opened a door to receive recruits from all over the world, something that at the same time reduced not only the impact of the Algerian reconciliation plan, but also the xenophobic stance of the terrorist organisation. In his interview, the terrorist leader said that the political upheaval and resultant security unrest helped the group gain a foothold in new areas, such as Mali (Oumar, 2012: Internet).

### 3.3.2 Membership and Recruitment

Much of AQIM's leadership is believed to have trained with other Arab volunteers in Afghanistan during the 1979–1989 war against the Soviet occupation. Many returned to the Middle East and North Africa radicalised. The group is divided into *katibas*, or brigades, which are often organised in independent cells. AQIM's top commanders may be rivals as much as comrades or they may operate relatively autonomously. Algerian-born Abdelmalek Droukdal has led the group since 2004, he is a trained engineer and explosives expert. AQIM declared France its primary target under Droukdal's leadership. Mokhtar Belmokhtar, a founding member of AQIM who led a battalion on the Algeria-Mali border, broke with the group in late 2012 and created his own organisation known as the al-Mulathamun Battalion. The one-eyed veteran of the anti-Soviet Afghan insurgency is believed to have masterminded the January 2013 hostage crisis at a natural-gas facility in eastern Algeria that left at least thirty-eight civilians dead, as well as twin suicide bombings in Niger that killed at least twenty-six in May of the same year (Laub & Masters, 2014: Internet).

As AQIM is expanding through the region and improving not only their terror-image and their ideal of regional jihad, AQIM sees both Mali and Mauritania as a means to recruit new members and as a base from which to destabilise the region in order to gain a foothold against Western governments. Richard Barret estimates that half of one AQIM branch comes from Mauritania, partly due to a growing pool of disaffected, unemployed youths in towns, drawn to the possibility of an ideological fight, or commercial gain and prestige (IRIN, 2010: Internet).

The popular image of Al-Qaeda is of an organisation that draws its membership from disillusioned Muslims who, infuriated by US support for Israel or intervention in the Muslim world, and captivated by the idea of a universal caliphate, go off and fight (Byman 2010: Internet). In keeping with the CTS paradigm, local frustration and grievances stemming from decades of struggle can also attribute to the acts of Muslim individuals. By representing Al-Qaeda Senior Leadership (AQSL), AQIM led the group to shift its activities from armed assaults to more terror-oriented operations such as kidnappings and bombings. Its objectives shifted to a more anti-Western and global jihad, rather than regime change in Algeria (Harmon, 2010: Internet). In Algeria, AQIM's position is relatively fixed. Although the group is still capable of

mounting successful attacks, its ideology is unlikely to resonate in Algeria where the public is weary of violence after the bloody civil war of the 1990s. In the Sahel, support comes largely from those drawn to AQIM for financial gain. The group serves as an attractive employer for impoverished desert youth, while the instability within the Sahelian countries provides AQIM with room to conduct its operations (Thornberry & Levy, 2011: 7). The degree to which AQIM can solidify connections with local communities in the region will thus be a key factor in determining its long-term impact. The recent expansion of terrorist activity into Mauritania and Mali is taking place in part because Algerian security services have put AQIM on the defensive, but also because AQIM has been unable to organise operational cells in Morocco, Libya, or Tunisia. In Morocco there is no logical counterpart with whom AQIM might form an effective relationship. Moroccan security services arrested thousands of suspects after the 2003 suicide attacks in Casablanca, effectively splintering the emerging jihadist movement (Kennedy-Boudali, 2009: 4).

### **3.4 Expansion**

Since operating under the name, AQIM, a series of large scale bombings and attacks were executed in Algiers and northern Algeria. However, under intense pressure from Algeria, it was unable to maintain a high operational tempo. AQIM has since been present and active in the broader Sahel region, spanning the sparsely populated borders of Algeria, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, and parts of Chad. Though active in various forms for many years, the strength, appeal, and reach of Islamic terrorist groups in West and North Africa have generally ebbed and flowed without achieving critical mass or momentum. However, marked distinctions have emerged between AQIM and the networks presently active in the Sahel (Chikhi, 2010: Internet). Regional socio-economic conditions, especially in Sahelian states of Mauritania, Niger, and Mali, offer an excellent environment for the growth of militant groups. Vast distances, weak states, dispersed populations, and deep poverty all leave these lands susceptible to cross-border crime and insurgency. With one of CTS's main goals being broadening the study of terrorism to include more subjects, this is a clear avenue where further research is needed to fully understand the operations of AQIM and similar groups. Opportunities for smuggling and other illegal activities are widespread, and regional powers' capacities for combating them are very limited. Some conditions also hold to the North in the Maghreb, especially in

Libya, whose post-Gaddafi state has been extremely weak (Arieff, 2013a: Internet) (Chivvis & Liepman, 2013: 6).

AQIM is said to be taking advantage of Sahelian states' inability to exercise effective control over their peripheral territory. More importantly, AQIM is able to advance its long-term strength and viability by integrating with local communities to gradually deepen its roots, grow its resource base, and develop its operational strength.

AQIM has attempted to radicalise potential recruits from neighbouring countries by pointing out events that appear to have negative consequences for Muslims or by inserting itself into local affairs (Kennedy-Boudali, 2009: 3). This strategy of integration is pursued in several ways. Marriages with locals have proven effective in developing strong ties. For example, Mokhtar Belmokhtar married the daughter of one of the chiefs of the Arab Barabicha tribe in northern Mali, thereby consolidating his growing alliances with nomadic groups in the region that run local smuggling routes (Goita, 2011: 5). AQIM is also attempting to cast itself as an ally and protector of local communities. It often fiercely condemns arrests of locals or civilian casualties resulting from government raids. Keeping with this strategy, AQIM is exceedingly careful not to inadvertently target local communities and interests in the Sahel. But again, it is important to note that no militant group is an island, and AQIM has proven itself to be capable of adjusting and adapting if circumstances leave no other choice.

AQIM's illegal activities also generate income and job opportunities for communities and individuals in the region. Reinvesting ransoms received from kidnappings, AQIM has hired local bandits and rebels in Niger and elsewhere in the region (Plasse, 2010: Internet). While many of the Tuareg communities in the Sahel have kept their distance from AQIM, several community spokespersons have noted that declining economic opportunities are driving some 'into the arms of AQIM'. Ironically, it is AQIM's low-level terrorist attacks and criminal activities that have largely contributed to the worsening economic situation in the Sahel.

### 3.4.1 AQIM and the Malian Crisis

The conflict in Mali is a complex and multidimensional mixture of long-term fundamental grievances by diverse actors and groups. David J Francis (2013: 2) explains three distinct but interrelated types of conflicts that have coalesced to produce the current crisis in Mali. Firstly, it was caused by a secessionist rebellion by Tuareg ethnic groups in northern Mali fighting for a separate, independent state. Secondly, there is a political and constitutional crisis occasioned by the military overthrow of the democratically elected government. Thirdly, the conflict is also an attempt by Islamist jihadists to militarily take over Mali and establish a terrorist state based on Shari'a law. But even before the outbreak of the Malian crisis, northern Mali had become a breeding ground and safe haven for diverse groups of Jihadists and militants led by AQIM. These groups not only exploited the fundamental grievances of the local population against the government of Mali and its repressive military and security forces, but also organised sophisticated criminal enterprises that involved drug and human trafficking, arms and cigarette smuggling, and the kidnapping of Western nationals for ransom (Marchal, 2012).

AQIM made an effort to embed itself in the local context; in northern Mali, marriages were arranged between members of AQIM and local Tuaregs. Not only did AQIM marry into the local tribes, but also took up their political causes such as secession. Tuareg groups, like the MNLA, in Mali are also likely to interact with AQIM on a commercial basis; both groups are implicated in smuggling goods across the largely unmonitored Sahara. The secular separatist Tuareg rebel group, the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), wants an independent state in northern Mali, called Azawad (Welsh, 2013: Internet). The GSPC's presence in Mali attracted international attention in early 2003, when thirty-two European tourists, mostly Germans, were kidnapped near Illize, an oasis town in eastern Algeria near the Libyan border. The hostages were released for a ransom in two groups, first in Algeria, and next in Mali. The incident revealed that the GSPC could operate with relative impunity in the desert regions of northern Mali, and had probably been doing so for some time (Harmon, 2010:17). In 2012, AQIM joined with several Tuareg groups to seize parts of northern Mali. AQIM and their Tuareg allies did not just seize territory; they took action against supposedly un-Islamic activities.



The conflict in Mali has inevitably drawn neighbouring states and other proximate states into the emerging zone of instability through the regionalisation of the civil war and the activities of Islamist extremists in the region. The influx of refugees fleeing armed rebels and Islamist extremists into neighbouring states has threatened the national security and political stability of these countries. They have thus suffered and will continue to suffer from the fallout of the crisis. The unstable political and military situation led to the formation of a transitional government of national unity in August 2012. This government included five close allies of the junta leader, Captain Sanago. This did not help the political situation and only emboldened the MNLA rebels and their Islamist allies to further consolidate their military control over the whole of northern Mali.

By September 2012 they had seized the strategically important town of Douentza and were poised to continue their advance on the government-controlled southwestern part of the country, and the seat of the government in Bamako. This imminent advance on Bamako forced the international community into action. In November 2012 ECOWAS, with the support of the AU and the United Nations (UN), agreed on a coordinated military intervention force to recapture northern Mali. This intervention was scheduled for deployment in September 2013, but as the political crisis unravelled, the Islamist jihadis and their allies attacked and captured the central city of Konna, in January 2013. The military attack on Konna changed the direction of the Malian crisis because events on the ground now dictated the nature and urgency of the response to it, shifting the focus from political dialogue to military action (Francis, 2013: 3). France swiftly changed their original plans and invaded Mali in January 2013. This intervention, supported by Malian troops and led by ECOWAS, AFISMA (African-led International Support Mission to Mali), and other Western countries, ended the Tuareg separatist rebellion, recaptured the major cities in northern Mali and dispersed the Islamist rebels in less than three weeks. France seemed to have achieved the immediate and short-term objective of the intervention; to prevent the takeover of Bamako by Islamist extremists and the emergence of a terrorist state; end the secessionist rebellion in northern Mali; and help the government of Mali to re-establish its control and sovereignty over its territories. French troops have continued to conduct security operations across northern Mali to locate and 'neutralize' suspected Islamist militants. In late February, French and

Chadian troops captured the main Malian rear base of AQIM, in the Ifoghas massif close to the Algerian frontier, killing its emir, Abou Zeïd, in the Sahara.. Reduced numbers of French forces now support Malian and African forces, rebadged in July 2013 as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) (Reeve, 2014: Internet).

While the offensive has been partly successful, the militants have not been totally defeated. The Malian army is still weak and disorganised, and the African forces deployed still face a number of challenges. Islamist militants retain a significant ability to be a major nuisance for stability operations, reconstruction and peace-building (Boukhars, 2013: Internet). While several analysts differ on AQIM's objectives in Mali, it can be argued that AQIM does not want to overtake the regime in Mali, but rather wants to retain the Northern areas in Mali as their safe haven.

#### **3.4.2 AQIM Arming itself with Libyan Weapons**

Soon after Libyans rose up against Colonel Mu'ammarr Gadaffi, Western governments and observers were on alert regarding the security situation in that country, concerned with instability, and watchful for a possible spread of Al-Qaeda in the sparsely populated, oil-rich country. Soon after the fighting had started, analysts pointed to the interest of Al-Qaeda in Libya, and the key role played by Libyans in the organisation (Benotman & Brandon, 2011: Internet).

Al-Qaeda's presence in Libya was reported in the early stages of the Revolution, probably because of the rebels' violent actions and Islamist jihadist discourse, which the Gadaffi regime attempted to attribute to Al-Qaeda. The first day of the rebellion, angry mobs attacked police stations and government buildings, and three days later, on February 20, 2012, a suicide bomber destroyed Gadaffi's security forces' headquarters in Bengazi. Gadaffi's government accused Al-Qaeda early on of instigating the rebellion, pointing to former LIFG leaders as orchestrating an Islamist insurgency to create an Islamic emirate in eastern Libya, especially in Darnah, a town famous for its exports of jihadists (Rosenthal, 2012: Internet). Gadaffi's opponents, including secular Muslims, dismissed the Libyan government's allegations as propaganda. They defended the rebels' violent tactics as a legitimate means of countering the deadly crackdown by the state security apparatus and lobbied the West for military intervention. For many, it was clear that the Libyan

uprising had an undeniable, spontaneous, and popular basis that could not be reduced solely to an Al-Qaeda-led insurgency as Gadaffi alleged. It is, however, possible that Al-Qaeda's operatives and sympathisers could have easily blended into the rebel movement without notice and gained influence in the violent and chaotic Libyan revolutionary environment, given their combat skills and ideological motivation (Library of Congress – Federal Research Division 2012: 7-8).

Although the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) moved along similar ideological routes as Al-Qaeda, it did not openly condone the group's broader strategy of targeting the West. Although the LIFG was in Sudan and Afghanistan at the same time as Al-Qaeda, the LIFG's main focus was training combatants to topple the Gadaffi regime. Prior to the anti-Gadaffi uprising, AQIM had not released any statements focusing specifically on Libya (Zelin, 2011: Internet). However, four statements were issued following the outbreak of violence; these statements warned Libyans not to trust NATO, and appealed to Libyans to become involved in jihadist activities. AQIM also made it a point to emphasise, praise, and congratulate Libyans for overthrowing Gadaffi (Anzalone, 2011: Internet).

The first indications that jihadists might be benefiting from the unrest in Libya came not long after the violence broke out, as regional leaders and press reports suggested that AQIM had gained weapons from abandoned Libyan stocks, including surface-to-air missiles. Others suggested that the group had forged connections with Libya's rebels, and that AQIM or AQSL might seek to implant itself in Libya. Robert Fowler, a former UN special envoy to Niger who was held hostage for four months from 2008-2009, said that the group's members were focused on their goal and committed to jihad, and that the security threat to Europe was still imminent, since they were suddenly equipped with large amounts of Libyan weapons such as shoulder mounted missiles, heavy mortars, artillery, and thousands of anti-tank mines. The continuing regional instability caused by weak governance, rapid population growth, interstate tensions, and insecurity were exploited by AQIM (Basar, 2012: 2). AQIM suddenly became one of the best armed Al-Qaeda franchises in the world.

In late 2011, large quantities of Libyan weapons, including surface-to-air missiles, were reported missing and thought to have been smuggled out of the country.

Similarly, in October 2011, Human Rights Watch reported on a weapons stockpile the group found in Sirte, adding to the already lengthy list of stockpiles discovered by journalists and NGOs. In November 2011, AQIM commander Mokhtar Belmokhtar confirmed that the group had benefited from the Libyan uprising, using the ensuing chaos as a chance to acquire weapons (Zelin & Lebovich, 2012: Internet). In the same interview, however, Belmokhtar explicitly denied that AQIM had played a direct role in the fighting against Gadaffi (Lebovich, 2011: Internet).

### **3.5 AQIM and Al-Qaeda Senior Leadership (AQSL)**

Since the 1990s, Al-Qaeda sought to expand its international reach by building alliances with militant Islamist groups around the world. These alliances not only extended the organisation's operational capabilities, including its ability to strike Western targets, but also strengthened its image as leader of a global movement. A central factor in these alliances is Al-Qaeda's role in helping militant groups pursue their local objectives, while advancing the view that local conflicts are components of a broader struggle between the West and Islam.

The relationship between AQIM and Al-Qaeda's senior leadership (AQSL) is difficult to analyse, the word most commonly used to describe the relationship is 'murky'. The first link between these two groups can be traced back to the GSPC – before they merged with Al-Qaeda and underwent the name change to AQIM. To re-energise its militant base and enhance its legitimacy among radical Islamists in the region, the GSPC leadership began associating their organisation with Al-Qaeda (Boudali, 2007: 2). On the second anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the GSPC released a statement on the Internet, pledging allegiance to Al-Qaeda, stating that they strongly and fully support Osama bin Laden's jihad against heretic America. In September 2006, Al-Qaeda released an online video in which the group's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahiri, accepted the GSPC's formal merger with Al-Qaeda. Al-Zawahiri suggested that the GSPC would focus more broadly on an anti-Western agenda, stating that they would then become 'a thorn in the necks' of the American and French crusaders and their allies (Whitlock, 2006: Washington Post).

Even though more recent relations between AQIM and AQSL are unclear, there are certain happenings that affect both groups, as well as their ties to one another. When Abdelmalek Droukdel took over leadership of the GSPC, Bin Laden is said to have

been reluctant to recognise and ally with the strong 'Algerianist' orientation of the GSPC. After Bin Laden's approval in 2006, and the name change in 2007, AQIM carried out spectacular attacks in Algiers, including against the parliament building, the UN and the Constitutional Court (Porter, 2011: Internet). Despite ideological affinities, AQIM's relations with AQSL are similar to those of Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), in that they do not seem to reach an overly operational level. AQIM carries out its operations without the guidance of AQSL and, instead, pursues Al-Qaeda's modus operandi and target set. In recent years there has also been a lack of evidence of Algerian fighters travelling to train in Al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan or Pakistan and then returning to fight in the Maghreb. It does not appear that AQSL has provided AQIM with financial support, but given AQIM's successful kidnap-for-ransom campaign since 2009, it has not needed any outside funding.

From 2008-2010, the ties between Bin Laden and AQIM appeared to weaken. This may have been due to a fevered debate among jihadists about the types of attacks that Al-Qaeda and its affiliates were carrying out. During this time, AQIM was challenged by a renewed Algerian counter-terrorism campaign in northern Algeria, and was forced to reorient itself geographically. Following the capture of seven employees of French mining giant, Areca, in September 2010, Droukdel made a bold statement, some believe with the sole purpose of re-invigorating linkages between AQIM and AQSL. Two months after the abduction Droukdel stated that:

“...any form of negotiations on the hostages in the future will be conducted with nobody except our Shaykh Osama bin Laden and according to his terms.” (Porter, 2011: Internet).

This was the first time AQIM made such a statement. Christopher Chivvis and Andrew Liepman (2013: 4) describe AQIM's relationship with core Al-Qaeda essentially as a marriage of convenience. The two groups can share the same basic jihadist outlook and gain from cooperation without sharing exactly the same goals or adopting the same strategies to achieve them. They share the basic idea, but have very different capabilities. The leaders of the two organisations broadly share a common jihadist ideology and theology. They adopt Salafist, anti-Western ideals;

strive towards a more pure Islamic community; and belief that violence is justified, or even a holy act while in pursuit of these goals.

When Droukdal was the new leader of the GSPC, he likely hoped that a closer relationship with Al-Qaeda would strengthen his own position with his group's rank and file. Aligning with Al-Qaeda was also good marketing, it would help recruit fighters, many of whom had been eager to fight in the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the Al-Qaeda brand name conferred a certain amount of credibility and ferocity, singling AQIM out among the region's militant groups. One of the core differences between AQSL and AQIM is the perspective coming from the GSPC, where France, rather than the United States, is seen as the Far Enemy. And in Algeria, France is perceived as the primary outside foe in the struggle to realise the dream of an Islamist State under Shari'a law. AQIM thus frequently uses anti-colonial sentiments in its propaganda (Civvis & Liepman, 2013: 4). AQSL is a globally oriented organisation with a multinational membership, dedicated to removing all regimes it considers apostate, along with any semblance of Western presence in the Muslim world. For the GSPC, and now AQIM, the dominant organising principle has always been removing the regime in Algiers.

### **3.5.1 The Abbottabad Documents**

One of the most important sources regarding the links between AQIM and AQSL became public when US Navy SEALs raided Osama bin Laden's compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, in 2011. The cache of documents found, also known as the Abbottabad documents, proved that Bin Laden personally maintained communication with AQIM's leaders, and offered advice to them. Some suggestions were general and seemingly insignificant, for example, "planting trees helps al mujahedin (fighters) and gives them cover" from satellites and drones. Other comments were quite specific; in the Spring of 2010 Bin Laden asked AQIM to shelter a jihadist named Younis al-Mauritani and to provide him with 200 000 Euros (Fisher, 2013: Internet).

*"I plan to release a statement (announcing) that we are starting a new phase to correct (the mistakes) we made; in doing so, we shall reclaim, God willing, the trust of a large segment of those who lost their trust in jihadis."*

The quote above was written by Osama bin Laden in 2010, it can be seen as a stark contrast to his previous public statements that focuses on the injustice of those he believed to be the enemies of Muslims, namely corrupt apostate Muslim rulers and their Western allies (Lahoud, et.al. 2012: 9). The focus of Bin Laden's private letters was Muslims suffering at the hands of his jihadi brothers. He was advising them to abort domestic attacks that caused Muslim civilian casualties and instead focus on the United States. Bin Laden's frustration with regional jihadi groups and his seeming inability to exercise control over their actions and public statements is one of the most unexpected findings when analysing the classified documents captured during the Abbottabad raid in May 2011.

Only a fraction of the Abbottabad documents that US forces captured have been released publicly. However, the limited released material indicates continued communication between AQSL and AQIM; this communication extended over several years – 2007 to 2011 – and survived changes in AQIM's leadership and also attrition within AQSL's ranks. Four of these documents make reference to the relationship between AQSL and AQIM.

Daveed Gartenstein-Ross (2013: Internet) analyses these documents regarding the relationship between AQIM and AQSL. In the first letter, written early in 2007, it is clear that AQIM is still a newly formed and slightly disarrayed group. AQIM states their concern over Russian Cobra helicopters and their urgent need for financial assistance in order to acquire good quality weapons. This supports the analysis that AQIM had yet to organise themselves financially, and clearly their participation in drug trade and KFR has not yet been established. The correspondence also records that AQIM had received four Libyan recruits in the past week, following a group of thirty the week before that. This precedes Al-Qaeda's formal merger with the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group by almost a year, indicating that Libyans were already joining AQIM before the merger occurred.

In the second letter, written in 2010, Bin Laden himself requests assistance from AQIM to provide shelter to Younis al Mauritani. A clear indication of the financial development of AQIM in the past three years becomes visible in Bin Laden's request that AQIM should provide Mauritani with financial support for six months, culminating in 200 000 euros. The third letter regards the morality and religious rifts in the group,

and in this letter Bin Laden provides religious guidance in the form of 'sharia research' to both AQIM and Somalia's Al-Shabaab. Bin Laden writes and implies that religious research on how to deal with the apostates would lead to the avoidance of divisions in AQIM. When criticising the traditional state-centred approach, this third letter proves to be significant when applying the CTS principles. Note that Bin Laden not only saw himself as a militant leader and 'terrorist', but also as a spiritual leader offering guidance and reassurance.

In the last letter, written in 2011, Bin Laden writes about the French hostages being kept by AQIM. At the time, France was involved in military operations against Muammar Gaddafi's regime in Libya. Bin Laden warns that French hostages should not be killed because the atmosphere following the French stance towards Libyan people does not condone killing the French. Bin Laden advises AQIM to keep the hostages until after the 2012 French elections. He does not want the negotiations between AQIM and the French government to be public, but still wants the hostage issue to remain a political liability for France (Gartenstein-Ross, 2013: Internet). It appears as though AQIM has largely handled the hostages in a manner consistent with Bin Laden's directives, though obviously it is difficult to ascribe certain behaviour to a mere letter.

Al Qaeda today is not a traditional hierarchical terrorist organisation, with a pyramid-style organisational structure, and it does not exercise full command and control over its branch and franchises. But neither is their role limited to broad ideological influence. Due to its geographically dispersed structure, Al-Qaeda operates as a devolved network hierarchy, in which levels of command authority are not always clear; personal ties between militants carry weight and, at times, transcend the command structure between core, branch, and franchises (Farral, 2011: 133). When analysing the structure and devolution of Al-Qaeda as an entire entity, and taking into account the nature of the Abbottabad letters, a few assumptions can be made: Firstly, the fact that AQIM was sending letters in the form of situational reports back to AQSL may indicate that they sought either its strategic guidance, or its approval. Secondly, Bin Laden was giving advice and assumed a position of the 'wise elder', providing guidance in terms of basic recommendations, as well as religious guidance and recommendations about hostages, he thus saw AQSL as influential enough to be in a position to provide guidance of that status.



### **3.6 Sustainable Profit through Criminal Enterprises**

Following the apparent success of French military intervention in the Sahel region, the world was shocked by the abduction and brutal killing of two journalists in November 2011, in northern Mali, by AQIM. Although AQIM suffered heavy losses, and lost its grip on some of the cities it controlled in northern Mali, the assassination of the two French journalists demonstrated that the group's main revenue stream was still very much alive and operating. From 2003–2007, AQIM averaged one KFR a year, at a rate of \$2 million per person (Brisard, 2010: Internet). According to a Swiss think-tank the number of kidnapping cases rose in the following five years, averaging four per year, while demanding ransoms of up to \$8 million per hostage – an exponential increase in AQIM's annual revenues of almost 1500% (De Graaf, 2012: Internet). Although KFR can be seen as AQIM's largest source of income, the terror organisation has a diversified arsenal of income and sources, including arms and human trafficking, and the smuggling of cigarettes and narcotics.

#### **3.6.1 Kidnapping for Ransom**

KFR is considered by many experts as an alternative source of terrorism financing. But the increasing reports of kidnappings by AQIM and their affiliates highlight a worrisome regional trend that emerged in 2003, when the GSPC/AQIM first launched a major hostage-taking campaign targeting foreign tourists. Since then, AQIM has developed a growing criminal industry that sustains itself through huge ransoms they extort and, among others, drug trafficking. It is estimated that the KFR business in the Sahel region alone, put at least \$65 million in the reserves of AQIM since 2005. More than 90% of the group's funding derives from this single financial source. The kidnapping business is so lucrative that hostage-taking in the Sahel region had risen 150% between 2008 and 2009. Since 2008, AQIM has raised more than \$25 million from ransom for foreign nationals in the Sahel region. This makes AQIM richer than AQSL, whose annual income was estimated to be between \$5 million and \$10 million (Brisard, 2010: Internet).

In December 2009, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1904 (2009) confirming that the ban on funds, financial assets, and economic resources fully applies to the payment of ransoms to individuals, groups, enterprises, or entities on the sanctions list. But, while the payment of ransoms now falls under the general

prohibition of terrorism financing, no specific measure or sanction has been implemented since then to deter the practice (Sanctions Committee, 2009: Internet). It is important to note that despite its positive aspects, Resolution 1904 (2009) only sets a principle which is easily bypassed by terrorist organisations and Western governments. This resolution encouraged terrorist organisations to innovate, by using proxies and sub-contractors in organised crime. This was the case, for example, with the abduction of French citizens in 2009 and 2010, and also the kidnapping of three Spanish nationals and two Italians in 2009. Western governments are now relying on third-parties such as private companies, insurance companies, and foreign governments that would later be compensated through national or international financial instruments in order to avoid direct payments to a designated entity and to continue claiming that they officially do not pay ransoms to terrorists (Brisard, 2013: Internet).

This resolution and its implications could pose a moral and political problem to governments that still pay ransoms, but also a legal problem to financial institutions intervening directly or indirectly in the payment process.

In 2010, AQIM kidnapped four French mineworkers in the uranium-mining town of Arlit, Niger. The government and the workers' employers (the nuclear giant Areva, and Vinci, a construction firm), said that no ransom was paid. But the French newspaper, *Le Monde*, claims French spies used a secret fund to pay a \$27 million ransom to a group in the town of Kidal in Mali. Most Western governments dismiss such payments. In June 2013 the ministers of the G8 agreed to crack down on the practice, claiming that paying ransoms fuels instability and emboldens would-be kidnappers (The Economist, 2013: Internet). In the summer of 2013, the phenomenon of KFR again made international headlines. The final communiqué of the G8 summit in Northern Ireland referenced KFR prominently. This emphasised that ransom payments to terrorist groups in the Sahel had contributed to the mass hostage-taking in Algeria at the beginning of the year, in which 39 foreigners were killed. The leaders of the top eight industrial nations expressed alarm at the increasingly fragmented and geographically diverse threat posed by terrorist groups, including Al-Qaeda and its affiliates, and at the threat posed by kidnapping-for-ransom terrorists. They also rejected unequivocally the payment of ransoms to terrorists. The leaders of France, Italy, Canada, and Germany all endorsed the no-

ransom agreement, but all of those countries have either paid out ransoms for their kidnapped citizens, or let payments be made by businesses and NGOs (Dettmer, 2013: Internet).

Among the general public, kidnappings are frequently conceived as a series of individual tragedies. In reality, however, kidnappings of foreigners have long become a lucrative business, having developed from a criminal phenomenon mostly confined to Latin America into a global problem. Islamist terrorist groups in particular use extorted ransom funds to finance a significant share of their expenses. AQIM is alleged to have collected a total of \$89 million in KFR revenues between 2003 and 2012 (Nünlist, 2013: 2). The extortion of millions of US dollars through kidnappings has become a new security policy challenge for the States. Terrorist groups use the ransom funds to recruit new members, to fund the maintenance of training camps, for the procurement of weapons and communications tools, and for organising and executing terrorist attacks. AQIM and their affiliates can now easily 'buy' recruits' loyalty, rather than using religious and ideological stances to lure supporters. The Sahel is regarded as one of the hotspots of this type of terrorism funding.

### **3.6.2 The Contraband Trade**

While the US is the main destination of cocaine, marijuana, and heroin from Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela, and other South and Central American countries, Europe follows in a close second. Before 9/11 and terrorist attacks in London and Madrid, Latin American cartels shipped their products directly to European ports and airports, but with increases in Europe's security measures, dealers had to find new routes. Meanwhile, North and West Africa experienced a boom in the smuggling of cigarettes, subsidised fuel, and illegal migrants. As smugglers built alliances with military leaders, custom officials, and politicians, informal networks replaced traditional trade routes and import controls, creating a culture of complicity among those responsible for combating trafficking. Producers and distributors from Latin America have capitalised on these networks, illegally transporting their products by air and sea to West African states, notably Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Nigeria. Narcotics are then transported through Nigeria, Mali, and the Western Sahara, into the North African countries of Algeria, Libya, and Morocco, from where they are smuggled into Europe (Kustus, 2012: Internet).

The full extent of the growing links between jihadist and Latin American cartels became evident when military officials located a burned Boeing 727 in the remote north-eastern desert of Mali in 2009. According to UN officials the plane landed in the area with a load of cocaine and other illegal goods from Venezuela. It then unloaded its cargo and was destroyed. The UN's Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) first announced that it had crashed and caught fire after take-off. Investigators later confirmed that it had been set alight, probably by the traffickers who had fetched the lucrative load (Daniel, 2009: Internet).

It is clear that the current trans-regional trafficking of drugs, arms and other illicit trade goods is fuelling greater insecurity and instability across Africa, and impacts other parts of the world. In December 2012 the UNSC expressed concern over the increasing links between cross-border narcotics trafficking and other forms of transnational crime in West Africa and the Sahel. According to UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, West Africa is no longer just a transit route for drug traffickers but a growing destination, with more than a million users of illicit drugs. Rising consumption aggravates an already challenging public health environment and threatens socio-economic development (Luna, 2014: Internet).

While local and Western intelligence has are yet to officially link AQIM to the organisation of the trans-Atlantic drug trade, there has been evidence that the jihadists are profiting by charging smugglers a fee for safe passage through lands under their control, particularly Northern Mali. A group of Mauritanian traffickers recently detained by Algerian security forces reported that a convoy of hashish – another drug transported through the region – would have to pay up to \$50 000 to pass through AQIM-controlled territory. While such payments are much less than profits made from KFRs, they represent a more consistent source of income as the drug trade grows in the region (Kustus, 2012: Internet).

### **3.7 Regional and International Response**

The security situation in Mali underwent a serious deterioration in January 2013, when members of Ansar al-Dine and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa advanced southwards with the help of AQIM. They clashed with the Malian army north of the town Konna, some 680 kilometres from Bamako, forcing soldiers to withdraw. Terrorist and other armed elements also advanced in the West, taking

control of the town of Diabaly on 14 January. The capture of Konna by extremist groups led the Malian transitional authorities to request the assistance of France to defend Mali's sovereignty and restore its territorial integrity. In response, military operations against terrorist and associated elements were initiated under Operation Serval, led by France. As a result of the French and African military operations alongside the Malian army, the security situation improved. By the end of January, state control had been restored in most major northern towns. Most terrorist and associated forces withdrew northwards into the Ifoghas Mountains while others blended into local communities (UN, 2013: Internet).

Despite these improvements, serious peace and security issues remained, including continued terrorist activities and military operations in some areas. The need to restore the sovereignty of Mali's territory and ensure the physical security of communities in the North continued to be a central priority. Even when, and if, territorial sovereignty is restored, risks and issues regarding drug trafficking, weapons proliferation, and other criminal activities will remain.

### **3.7.1 The Failure of Algeria's CEMOC**

Despite its Algerian origins, Algerian authorities deny the existence of a connection between Algeria's domestic terrorist groups and AQIM. Rather, they see AQIM as a new type of terrorist organisation driven by its extremist ideology. Sahelian states, in contrast, stress the criminal nature of the group, with its heavy engagement in drug and arms trafficking, as the most dangerous aspect of this regional threat.

The inability to even define the enemy is at the root of the fragmented regional response. This divergence is punctuated by frequent disagreements and a major power imbalance that shapes how each state approaches the threat. As Algeria possesses superior military capabilities in comparison to those of the Sahelian states, Algeria considers its approach to take precedence. The Sahelian states, however, oppose Algeria's one-dimensional military focus that neglects the economic, social and political considerations that Sahelian countries see as intertwined with the instability in the region. They reason, and rightly so, that if the Algerian army has been unable to eliminate terrorism on its own soil over the past two decades using force alone, then why would such an approach work regionally?

The creation in 2010 of the Regional Command for Joint Counter-Terrorism Operations (CEMOC) in Tamanrasset in southern Algeria, with the participation of Mauritania, Mali, and Niger was a major regional step taken to combat AQIM. However, CEMOC fell short of achieving its objectives due, in part, to Algeria's refusal to grant other countries the right to pursue AQIM fighters in its territories (El Jechtimi, 2014: Internet).

In March 2013, army chiefs from Algeria, Mali, Niger and Mauritania concluded that CEMOC needed a tighter sub-regional cooperation. They stated that they should prevent the sub-region from sinking into never-ending conflicts that threaten social cohesion. In preventing the further decline of the region, CEMOC accepted help from the UN, and the US-Africa Command, AFRICOM, in the same month. General Carter Ham, the then head of AFRICOM, visited Tamanrasset and attended a presentation on CEMOC's organisation and operations (Middle East Online, 2013: Internet). After initially hesitating, the US has backed the French-led action in Mali with logistical support, sending transport planes, surveillance drones, and refuelling tankers to boost the campaign.

Until now, confronting AQIM through military operations alone has not yielded the proposed and sorely needed results. AQIM and its affiliates continue to emerge, recruit, and engage in terrorist and criminal activities and, in doing so, threaten the security of sovereign states. Therefore, AQIM poses multidimensional threats that require multidimensional responses, which should start with genuine regional cooperation at the intelligence and military levels, a goal that cannot be realised as long as relations between Algeria and the Sahelian countries remain strained.

### **3.7.2 ECOWAS and the AU Partnership**

The Mali coup d'état elicited condemnations from ECOWAS and the larger international community, which were followed with targeted sanctions by the AU and ECOWAS against members of the junta and their allies. The sanctions imposed by ECOWAS on 27 March 2012, included the suspension of Mali's membership of ECOWAS, a travel ban on members of the Malian National Committee for Rectification of Democracy and Restoration of the State (CNRDRE) and their associates, the recall of ECOWAS Ambassadors from Mali, and the closure of the borders with ECOWAS member states. Sensing the possible harsh effect of the

sanction, the military junta agreed to hand over power to a transitional government, and on 6 April, ECOWAS lifted the sanctions (Voice of America News, 2012: Internet). In spite of the initial success of the ECOWAS sanction, security threats in the Sahel continued to emerge and manifest in different and multiple forms. There was still an urgent need for collaborative engagements between various organisations, particularly the UN, EU, AU, and ECOWAS. As the guarantor and advocate of world peace, the UN has the primary responsibility to address emerging threats in the Sahel. Both Article 53(1) of the UN Charter 37 and Article 17(1)38 of the Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, stress collaboration in the pursuit of global peace and security. On its part, Article 3(d) of the 1999 ECOWAS protocol for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security clearly proclaims the organisation's commitment to "strengthen cooperation in the areas of conflict prevention, early-warning, the control of cross-border crime, international terrorism and proliferation of small arms and anti-personnel mines" (ECOWAS Protocol on the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, 1999).

These legal frameworks provide the basis for collaborative engagements to address both old and emerging security threats that have the tendency to undermine peace and security in the Sahel. But more important is the ECOWAS collaboration with the AU as these organisations have the spatial control over the broader Sahelian region. (Aning, Okyere & Abdallah, 2012: 6).

ECOWAS's approach to the Malian crisis came under increasing pressure as extremists in the North took advantage of the lack of clear political leadership in Bamako to extend their control. Although it advocated for a military mission – the ECOWAS Mission in Mali (MICEMA) – this idea did not realise; the organisation did not have the political clout nor financial resources to go ahead without international assistance, but donors were reluctant to back the proposal because they were sceptical the ECOWAS forces would not be equal to the task regarding the conditions in northern Mali (Willis, 2013). The following June, MICEMA was transformed into the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), thereby making it an African, rather than a West African initiative.

In theory, AU and sub-regional peacekeeping missions that are well planned, funded, manned, and executed seemingly limit the need for eventual UN or foreign power intervention. Yet, recent responses on the part of the AU and sub-regional organisations have been compromised by a lack of combat readiness, insufficient manpower and funding for the scope and scale of interventions, and limited bandwidth to address the simultaneous crises.

ECOWAS's original motive for intervening in Mali stemmed from the threat to West African stability that the conflict was thought to pose – with the potential to spill over into Niger and the possibility of stronger relations developing between Islamist extremist groups in Mali and Nigeria. ECOWAS was able to align these concerns with those of powerful Western states, and demonstrate a willingness to work with UN mechanisms. With the support of the French, ECOWAS called both for political negotiation and military intervention, initially in the form of MICEMA, and later AFISMA. However, key states outside of ECOWAS – Mauritania and Algeria – blocked these efforts, and the UN was also reluctant to provide logistical and financial support. Reservations about the intervention centred on the weakness and illegitimacy of the administration in Bamako that it would be supporting, doubts about its longer-term security strategy, concern around ECOWAS's tense relations with the political leadership in Bamako, and the fact that AFISMA did not have the necessary equipment or military experience (Loeuillet, 2013).

Preparations for planned regional troop deployments in Mali were accelerated in the light of France's earlier intervention. UNSC Resolution 2085 authorised for one year an external military intervention in northern Mali (AFISMA) to help reunify Malian territory and combat extremist and criminal groups. The ECOWAS/AU proposal for the force envisioned a 3 300-person deployment in support of a Malian military contingent of 5 000 troops, which would lead the operation. In this context, the European Union (EU) was assisting in training missions to help restructure, reform, and build the capacity of the Malian security forces (Arieff, 2013a: 11). It took nine months after the collapse of the Malian State for AFISMA to deploy. The deployment was in reality accelerated by the jihadists' push south and the French intervention in January 2013 (Warner, 2014: 23).



### **3.7.3 The UN and MINUSMA**

On 1 July 2013, MINUSMA would take over the authority from the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), subject to further review by the Council of the security situation in Mission's area of operations. MINUSMA would comprise up to 11 200 military personnel, including reserve battalions capable of deploying rapidly within the country as and when required, and 1 440 police members (comprising formed police units and individual police officers).

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) was established by Security Council resolution 2100 of 25 April 2013. Under the terms of the resolution, the mission would support the political process and carry out a number of security-related stabilisation tasks, with a focus on major population centres and lines of communication, protecting civilians, human rights monitoring, the creation of conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance and the return of displaced persons, the extension of state authority and the preparation of free, inclusive and peaceful elections (UNSC Resolution 2100 2013: 4-6). The Mission would operate under robust rules of engagement with a mandate to use all necessary means to address threats to the implementation of its mandate, which would include protection of civilians under imminent threat of physical violence and protection of the United Nations personnel from residual threats, within its capabilities and its areas of deployment. This could include the conduct of operations on its own or in cooperation with the Malian defence and security forces. French forces deployed in Mali were also authorised to intervene in support of MINUSMA when under imminent and serious threat upon request of the Secretary-General (UN 2013: Internet).

Despite the UN mission, and regional actors' ambitious objectives the security situation in northern Mali has still been unstable, with several violent clashes between armed groups. Four peacekeepers were killed in two suicide attacks in Tessalit (23 October 2013) and Kidal (14 December 2013). In November 2013, two French journalists were kidnapped and killed near Kidal in a claimed AQIM attack. On 16 December 2013, at least two mortar shells exploded in the vicinity of a MINUSMA camp in Kidal (Security Council Report 2013: Internet). Following a 12 December briefing on the implementation of MINUSMA, the council reaffirmed its

commitment to “address the complex security and political challenges in this region, which are interrelated with humanitarian and developmental issues as well as the adverse effects of climate and ecological changes” (Statement by the President of the Security Council, 2013). The statement highlighted the continuing threat of terrorist attacks and called on states from the region to develop inclusive and effective strategies to combat in a comprehensive and integrated manner the activities of terrorist groups, to prevent the proliferation of all arms, and to fight against transnational organised crime.

A year after the initial success of Operation Serval, Islamist activities are again flaring up. Islamists have pressured families hostile to their presence to leave their homes. Since September 2013 and February 2014 AQIM has murdered several people who helped the French military in Mali, in particular Tuareg members of the MNLA. There is also growing concern at the repeated attacks by suicide bombers or with mines and small arms on French, Chadian and Malian forces despite the presence of 6 000 troops from MINUSMA on the ground. Pierre Boilley, a specialist on the Sahel, is of the opinion that the jihadists "have just changed their organisation". "The biggest source of concern," he adds, "is the political deadlock in negotiations between the government in Bamako and movements in northern Mali, which facilitates the jihadists' return. Time is on their side, too." (Follorou, 2014: Internet).

Tensions continue between former rebel groups, Islamic militant groups, and the government. Ineffective containment, a lack of progress in national peace talks, and the absence of clarity regarding the conditions for such dialogue have contributed to the increased and prolonged instability. Among the several areas in which groups like AQIM are active, the Mali crisis has demonstrated the ability of regional organisations to respond to emergencies, as well as clearly highlighting their limitations in security, financial, and political spheres. This shift in leadership from ECOWAS to the AU and eventually the UN has highlighted tensions in how these organisations relate to one another.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

When trying to ascertain on why AQIM's influence and impact on the Sahel area has not yet been totally abolished, the principles of CTS can be applied in several instances. Firstly, as noted in Chapter Two, it is an important factor to establish who is doing the research on terrorism and for whom. Terrorism as we know it today did not spontaneously come into existence with 9/11, it is something with a rich underlying history and copious amount of background stories and influences that need to be taken into consideration. The continuous phenomenon of temporary successes in the Sahel region is not bad luck, or merely a coincidence; one cannot remove a plant, without removing the roots as well. The sudden and temporary successes, or even immediate failures of counter-terrorism regarding AQIM, should be analysed critically, taking into consideration a few fields of study that have been set aside for too long.

CTS requires a type of analysis that can be achieved using genealogical, ethnographic, and historical approaches as well. In this chapter the history of Islamism in Algeria was researched, in the hope of understanding the impossibility of objective terrorism knowledge. What we, and the West, believe to be fundamentally wrong and cruel, some believe to be historically justified. In the CTS view, terrorism as a strategy or tactic of political violence can be, and frequently is, employed by rebels and non-state actors, as well as state actors. The failure of regional approaches to the AQIM threat is difficult to attribute to one single factor. But, it is of paramount importance to keep in mind the Eurocentric character of current and dominant knowledge and discourse regarding terrorism. The history and development of AQIM, how they recruit their members, how they come by their funds, and their relationship with AQSL are analysed in this chapter to try to understand why actors choose to employ terrorist tactics, and the processes by which they use terrorism as a political strategy.

In this chapter, the aim was to remain sensitive to the need for historical, political, and cultural knowledge of AQIM, and to thereby determine why there is a recurring difficulty in ameliorating the threat posed. The application of CTS does not lead simply to the outlining of historical facts and the analysis of cultural and religious commitments, since that will only lead to more storytelling and less actual

amelioration. During the rest of the study knowledge obtained about AQIM, together with their affiliates, will be used to try and make policy recommendations that will not only lead to temporary but impressive solutions to a long-term problem, but to hopefully be able to make valid suggestions to policy makers and role-players in the Sahel region. The hope is that these suggestions will not only lead to a more comprehensive understanding of these militant groups, but also to positive action – be it military or not – that will lead to long-term, if not permanent amelioration of the continuous terrorist threat.

By keeping to the principles of CTS this study aims to form a deeper, encompassing understanding of what can be done to ameliorate the terrorism threat in Africa. Orthodox studies are widely available and have been conducted by many researchers on various terrorism-related issues but, still, there has been no sustainable plan of action on how to go about the issue. CTS combines a variety of different fields of study, as can be seen in this chapter, to form a broad understanding of the historical context; in this case, the decades of struggle and frustration of Islamists in Algeria, the ethnical context, taking into consideration the beliefs and traditions of local civilians, and the significance of marrying ‘into’ a certain tribe or local clan. The sociological context is examined - that which leads an individual to become a militant fighter, be it religious extremism, protection, monetary guarantee, or being raised in an environment where practising a certain religion or way of life has always been challenged.

## **CHAPTER 4: THE EVOLUTION, DEVELOPMENT, AND INFLUENCE OF BOKO HARAM**

With the increasing presence of terror, Islamic extremism and radicalism in Africa, linkages between militant and terror groups cannot be overlooked or underestimated when studying the phenomenon. AQIM and their affiliated splinter groups' ever present activity in North and West Africa combined with unsettling terror in Nigeria makes for this chapter's importance in the study at hand. Since this region's emergence as a hub for international terrorism, Boko Haram, a largely domestic group in Nigeria, has become one of the main players on the terror-front. Although Boko Haram's grievances are rooted in cultural cleavages, and a sense of injustice regarding identity affiliation, the international community have become very familiar with, and apprehensive towards the group. This can all be attributed to a recent event, which in the context of the group's history and operations is not necessarily a new phenomenon. The kidnapping of young girls in Nigeria has suddenly racked the international media's attention, raising issues regarding Boko Haram which have been issues long before the social media increased awareness, especially by using the very popular #bringbackourgirls handle on social media site, Twitter.

The conflict in Nigeria can be described as a conflict between different identities in the country. It is, however, important to remember that a variety of identities do not necessarily lead to conflicts. The fact that a country has several ethnic or religious groups does not make conflict inevitable, it is only when mobilisation around identities occurs or they are politicised that they constitute the bases for conflict (Osaghae & Suberu, 2005: 14). This is applicable to Nigeria, as it was applicable to Algeria in the previous chapter. In keeping to the theoretical framework of CTS, the history and the process by which identity diversity is transformed into conflicts should be examined to get a historical and encompassing view of what leads Boko Haram - and similar groups - to act in the way that they do. By minimising the state-centric approach and focusing not only on the development of the militant group at hand, but also the development of economic, religious, and cultural frustrations CTS examines external and underlying factors that influence different aspects of terrorism, especially in the African context.

#### **4.1 Nigeria – the Warning Signs of Colonialism and Amalgamation**

The country that we know today as Nigeria existed as a number of independent and sometimes hostile national states with linguistic and cultural differences until the year 1900. The Governor General of Nigeria between 1920 and 1931, Sir Hugh Clifford, described Nigeria as “a collection of independent Native States, separated from one another by great distances, by differences of history and traditions, and by ethnological, racial, tribal, political, social, and religious barriers.” The building of Nigeria as a multi-national state began in 1900 with the creation of Northern and Southern Protectorates along with the colony of Lagos by the British government. Further effort at unification and integration was made in May 1906 when the colony of Lagos and the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, which had existed separately, were amalgamated to become the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria (Atofarati, 1992: Internet).

In spite of historical attempts at unification of the different nations and states of Nigeria, the country can still be described as a divided country in so many ways, be it down ethnic, religious, geopolitical, social, or economic lines. One of the problems besetting Nigeria is the divide between the Northern and Southern parts of the country. Dating back to the days long before independence in 1960, the country was brought together by amalgamation in 1914, and the citizens have since co-existed under one common central government, but not under a common nationality. The use of the word ‘divide’ is not just a twofold division; it connotes more or less exclusive segments, better described as opposing or contradictory areas and citizens. The effect of the 1914 amalgamation is to dichotomise the country from its origin; to keep the Northern and Southern segments apart by an imaginary, artificially created boundary line, and consequently to disunite them in interest, attitude, outlook, and vision (Nwabueze, 2013: Internet).

Modern Nigeria emerged through the unification of two British colonial territories in 1914. The amalgamation occurred mainly because the British desired an adjoined colonial territory stretching from the Sahel to the Atlantic Coast. It made practical administrative sense to have one coherent British colony rather than two. It also made sense to merge a revenue-challenged colonial territory – Northern Nigeria – with a prosperous colonial neighbour – Southern Nigeria – so the latter can subsidise

the former. From there on, the amalgamation made little sense otherwise and, in retrospective view, the implications caused by this amalgamation could have been predicted, anticipated, and prevented. Nigerians view the amalgamation as the foundation of the unstable relationship between the two regions, and religions, of Nigeria. Northern Nigeria is largely Muslim, it was the centre of a precolonial Islamic empire called the Sokoto Caliphate, and its Muslim populations generally look to the Middle East and the wider Muslim world for solidarity and socio-political example. The South is largely Christian, the major socio-political influences there are Western and traditional African (Ochonu, 2014: Internet). These differences have been a source of political disagreements and mistrust between the two regions since colonial times. Added to the already delicate political situation are the ethnic and religious minorities within each region, who also harbour grievances against ethnic and religious majorities who they interpret as oppressors.

The historical social influences accepted in colonial Nigeria, are the same factors that Nigeria considers to be the root of instability and violence today. Unfortunately, orthodox terrorism and security studies often overlook the historical and socio-political factors influencing the shaping of terrorist organisations. When studying the development of Nigeria and Boko Haram under the umbrella of CTS, it is crucial to – even if it is only temporary – see the military factor as a symptom and result of the other variables, which will still be discussed. In this regard it is not, as some orthodox studies will suggest, found in the state-centric, militaristic causes, but it should be examined with regard to the impact made by colonialism, and the incapability of foreseeing and predicting the sociological and socio-political impacts of colonialism and the subsequent amalgamation. What Boko Haram today views as a Holy War, is a war that has been waged for more than a century before the international community and media raised their eyebrows about issues like Boko Haram, jihad, and the creation of an Islamic State.

#### 4.1.1 The Politicisation of Religion



(Map of Nigeria: OnlineNigeria.com)

Like many African countries, Nigeria is an artificial structure created by colonial powers. Ethnically, Nigeria was divided into three main regions, with over 300 different ethnicities in the country. To label conflict in Nigeria as conflict merely between two religions would be to misinterpret the phenomenon completely. These three regions were composed of three major groupings of people: the Igbo (Ibo) of south-eastern Nigeria, the Hausa-Fulani of northern Nigeria, and the Yoruba of south-western Nigeria. As different ethnicities would entail, these groups had a wide variety of different customs and values, and so historically remained fairly separated from one another. Something that was not considered when colonial powers divided Africa into different countries and colonies.



The Hausa-Fulani of the North were traditionally ruled by a strict Islamic hierarchy. Leaders were to be obeyed without question; the main function of the system was to uphold conservative Islamic values. The Yoruba of the south-west were ruled by a series of monarchs that were less autocratic than those of the North. The social and political system of the Yoruba provided for greater upward mobility. The Igbo of the south-east lived in stark contrast with the other groups, and were seen as autonomous and democratically organised communities. The Igbo placed much value on personal achievement, free will, and democratic principles (Tarleton-Markov, 2010: Internet).

Religious identity played a crucial role in the development of Nigeria, and the conflicts that followed. Among Nigeria's two largest ethnic and religious groupings, the Yoruba were considerably more prone to define themselves ethnically, and the Hausa-Fulani chose rather to refer to themselves religiously. Religious identities in Nigeria are usually classified into three groups; Christian, Muslim, and Traditional. The traditional religion grouping refers to ethnic groups and individuals who subscribe to animist beliefs like ancestor worship. Of the three, traditional religions is the least politically active. Christian and Muslim identities have been the main players of religious differentiation and conflict, with Nigerian Muslims much more likely to display religious identity than their Christian counterparts (Lewis & Bratton, 2000: 5). According to Osaghae and Suberu the politicisation of Christianity has been largely dependent on moves made by Muslims and interventions of the state (2005: 11).

Following the Iranian Islamic revolution of the 1970s, there was a surge of radical and fundamentalist activities. Fundamentalists within the Muslim religion can be Shiite, as mostly found in Iran, or Sunni Wahhabi like Boko Haram, and especially Muslim youths. This was the context within which some fundamentalist Muslim sects, notably the Maitatsine, Izala movement, the Muslim Brothers or Shiites, and most recently the Taliban, emerged to demand purist Islam based on Sharia law; the eradication of heretical innovations; and, the establishment of an Islamic State or theocracy. The activities of these sects were a major factor in the religious conflicts that appeared in the Northern political landscape in the 1980s and 1990s. Most of these involved conflicts between Muslim and Christians, with clear ethnic undertones. Factors that have accentuated the politicisation of Muslim sects and

identities include: state policies and interventions; the attempts to extend Sharia law to the federal level; and the adoption of Sharia law as the basic law by a number of states (Osaghae & Suberu, 2005: 11-12). In 1978 when many Northern Nigerian Muslim delegates to a constitutional conference sought to extend Sharia beyond the realm of family law, Christian delegates protested, and the Sharia debate almost disrupted the entire conference. A compromise allowed states with majority or significant Muslim populations to set up Islamic courts but Sharia's application was restricted to inheritance and family law.

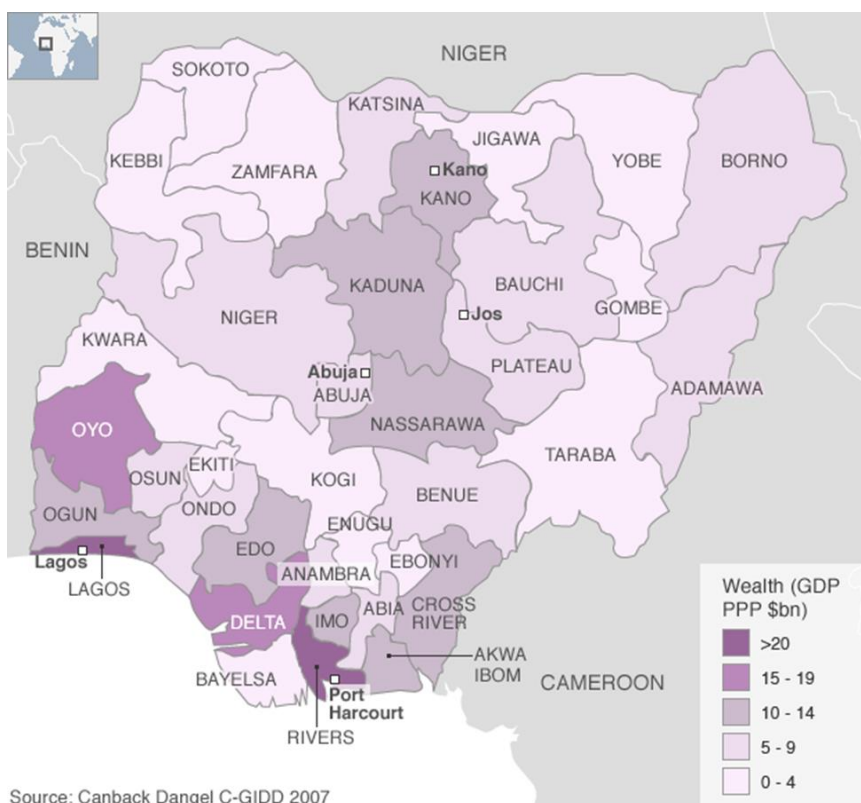
Suddenly religion became a major topic of national political debates, with each religious community promoting their own increasingly oppositional agendas. In Northern Nigeria, clashes between Muslim groups, mainly Hausa and Fulani, and Christian and Traditionalist communities became a regular scene, with horrific consequences. Again looking through a 'CTS-lens', it is important to bear in mind that ethnic, regional and religious identity are mutually enforcing, so divisions tend to run deeper, with more personal effects. In this politically and religiously loaded environment, conflicts over resources, cattle, land and political positions often had religious undertones, with Muslims and Christians pitted against each other. This led to the targeting of members of Christian ethnic groups in Northern Nigerian cities, mainly by Muslim mobs, and Muslim Northern Nigerians being targeted as a response, and act of revenge in Southern Nigeria.

It would be presumptuous to blame colonialism alone for the tensions and conflicts between Christians and Muslims, but it did make them worse. Within the framework of CTS it is imperative to look at more factors regarding this deep-rooted conflict. The influences leading to religious tension did not spring up out of local conflicts, it started to develop as relatively non-violent tensions and could not be labelled as 'the start of terrorism' as some security studies would suggest, it was rather the start of a whole new development regarding the social-construct of civilians. The British colonial policy of Indirect Rule was a divide-and-rule system that required sharp ethno-religious differentiation among Nigerians, and led to religion and ethnicity becoming the primary markers of identity. As a result, in Northern Nigeria, minority ethnic groups, mostly Christians, defined and still define themselves against the Muslim Hausa-Fulani majority, under the political rubric of Middle Belt, which is usually a stand-in for 'non-Muslim' (Ochonu, 2014: Internet). Colonialisation did

establish the basis for using identity politics as a means of acquiring political and economic resources, and the religious differences that followed worsened political crises, and have been implicated in major national conflicts such as the Nigerian Civil War (1967-70). In this war the Biafran separatist movement, initiated by the predominantly Christian Igbo people, was obliterated by a Federal Nigeria which used blockades and starvation to exact victory. Religious animosities only grew from that tragic episode of Nigerian history.

## 4.2 Northern and Southern Nigeria

### 4.2.1 Economic Development



(Map of Nigerian Economic Development: Nairaland Forum, 2011)

Before Nigeria was colonised, the various ethnic groups that currently make up Nigeria were largely agricultural people. They were food self-sufficient and produced a variety of commodities that were exported overseas. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the abolition of the slave trade paved the way for expansion of trade in agricultural produce from Africa to Europe, particularly palm oil from the West African coastal areas. The coastal area of Lagos became a British colony in 1861, a hub for expansion of British trade, missions, and political influence. Late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Lagos was also home to a significant amount of educated West African elites, who were to play prominent roles in the development of Pan-Africanism as well as Nigerian nationalism.

In Northern Nigeria, Muslim reformer and empire builder, Uthman dan Fodio, established the Sokoto Caliphate in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century over the Hausa trading states. A predominantly Fulani aristocracy ruled over the majority of Hausa-speaking civilians. Expansion of agriculture, trade, and crafts made this area probably the most prosperous in tropical Africa in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, engaged in trade both to the coast and through the traditional routes over the desert to North Africa. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Britain began aggressive military expansion in the region, partially in order to counter competition from other Western countries and to break down monopolies that local traders had established in commodities such as palm-oil, cocoa, and peanuts (Effoduh, 2014: Internet). Britain declared a protectorate in the Niger Delta in 1885 and sponsored creation of the Royal Niger Company in 1886. A protectorate was declared over Northern Nigeria in the year 1900. Despite the loss of sovereignty, however, the strong political and cultural tradition of these societies initially enabled many to accommodate nominal British rule with little change in their everyday way of life (The Historian, 2014: Internet).

Oil was discovered in Nigeria in 1956 at Oloibiri in the Niger Delta after half a century of exploration. The discovery was made by Shell-BP, at the time the sole concessionaire. Nigeria joined the ranks of oil producers in 1958 when its first oil field came on stream producing 5 100 barrels per day. After 1960, exploration rights in onshore and offshore areas adjoining the Niger Delta were extended to other foreign companies. In 1965 the Environmental Assessment (EA) field was discovered by Shell in shallow water south-east of Warri. In 1970, the end of the Biafran war coincided with the rise in the world oil price, and Nigeria was able to reap instant riches from its oil production. By the late 1960s, oil had replaced cocoa, peanuts and palm products as the country's biggest foreign exchange earner. In 1971 Nigeria was the world's seventh-largest petroleum producer and joined the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). In 1977 Nigeria established the Nigeria National Petroleum Company (NNPC); a state-owned and -controlled company that is a major player in both the upstream and downstream sectors (Romanova, 2007: Internet).

The oil boom that Nigeria experienced in the 1970s helped the country to recover rapidly from its civil war and at the same time gave great drive to the government's programme of rapid industrialisation. Many manufacturing industries sprang up and the economy experienced a rapid growth of about 8 percent per year, which made Nigeria, by 1980, the largest economy in Africa (Pinto, 2013: Internet).

One should think that the success story of Nigeria's economy and localised policies reserving some investments for Nigerians alone should have a growing positive effect on everyday life in Nigeria. Yet, in keeping with the principles of CTS, we need to examine the effects of economic development on the local civilians of Nigeria – both Northern and Southern. Terrorism and violent acts do not come to exist because of the unhappiness of a few individuals. On the contrary, as proven in the previous chapter, these violent acts stem from decades of inequality, discrimination, corruption, and eventually frustration. Nigeria's economy has grown by an average of 6.8 percent annually since 2005. The country, as stated above, is rich in oil, with about 37 billion barrels of proven crude reserves. But this has become something of a liability – the capital-intensive energy sector does little for employment and broad-based growth, leaving an unemployment rate of a least 23 percent (Fortin, 2013: Internet).

Nowhere is this more evident than in the North, a majority-Muslim area that has benefited far less than the South when it comes to development and infrastructure. The allocation of government revenues per capita in the North is about half the rate for the South, and about three fourths of the northern population live in absolute poverty, as compared to about two thirds for the country as a whole.

#### **4.2.2 Federal Balancing and Power Sharing**

Federal balancing in Nigeria has been an issue since the country became a federation in 1954, and is still an issue worth discussion. Since the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern provinces in 1914, there have been accusations of marginalisation and domination from one province to the other. The colonial masters have been blamed by some analysts but, as CTS demands, the influence of colonialism and the lasting effects thereof have been discussed. Should the colonial masters be the sole bodies to blame for the situation, it can be argued that if the South was left alone and vice versa, the current problem would possibly never have

arisen. However, realistically it can be argued that the British merely did what was deemed most beneficial for them at that time. Prior to Independence in 1960, the North was complaining of marginalisation by the South especially from the time of federalism in 1954. This fear of domination prompted the refusal of the North to agree with the South to demand for independence in 1956 (Ozoiogbo, 2008: 1). Yet, ironically, since independence the South is accusing the North of domination. The domination of the North should be considered with the fact that the military came largely from the North, and would stage coups to dominate the whole of Nigeria. Though, since the return of civilian rule in 1999, it can be argued that the South has been dominating once more, leaving the North to again feel marginalised.

Given the territorially portrayed cleavages in Nigeria, and the historical legacy of divisions among ethnic groups, regions, and sections, the federal goal was so fundamental that even military governments attached importance to the continuation of a federal system of government. The federation began as a Unitarian colonial state but disaggregated into three and later four regions. In 1967 the regions were abolished and twelve states created in their place. The number of states increased to nineteen in 1976, and to twenty-one in 1987. In addition, in 1990 there were 449 local government areas that had functioned as a third tier of government since the late 1980s (Metz, 1991: Internet). 'Civilian federalism' and 'military federalism' corresponded to civilian government and to military government respectively. According to federal theory, civilian federalism was the true and intended form of federalism. It entailed government based on a constitutional sharing of power between the federal and state governments, including local governments, by using the principle of decentralisation of power. It was marked by party politics, which determined the nature of the federation, the configuration of powers, and the prevalence of the rule of law (Heywood, 2007: 165-171). The major elements of military federalism included the suspension and modification of the constitution; the supremacy of the Supreme Military Council (SMC) at the centre and, therefore, the existence of only one decision-making level of government; and the ban on all civilian political activities. Because military federalism had been more common than civilian federalism at the time, this model made the federal government the 'master' in relation to the 'dependent' state governments.

At independence, largely autonomous regions possessed the residual powers in the federation and functioned almost independently. Even before the First Republic collapsed, the federal government was asserting greater powers. In particular, it controlled the national economy and possessed emergency powers to intervene in any region where law and order had broken down, as it did in the western region in 1962. Relative to the powers of the states in 1990, however, the regions were very powerful; they had separate constitutions, foreign missions and independent revenue bases (Metz, 1991: Internet). The allocation of federal revenues was a problematic aspect of fiscal federalism because the states were unequally endowed and were virtually dependent on allocations from the federal government. Several revenue allocation commissions were set up, among them the National Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation, and Fiscal Commission established during the 1980s. The major problem arose from disagreements over the criteria that should be used in allocations – descent, population, need, equality, or minimum government responsibility.

The issue of state creation derived from the very nature of the federation. From three regions in 1960, the number of constituent units had increased to the present twenty-one states and the Federal Capital Territory. It was likely that a few more would be created. The increasing number of states was a direct response to the demand and frustrations of groups that were not satisfied with their positions in the federation. Initially, it was the minorities who demanded more states, but in 1990 the need for states had changed. They were no longer needed to protect groups' identity and autonomy. Any groups that wanted a share of the national entity or that wanted to maximise its share of the entity demanded more states, although states were not designed to have an ethnic basis. Again CTS can be consulted here; the focus on state formation and federalism were not the main cause of unhappiness, but the occupants of these states felt forced to use state formation to articulate a need for representation and form a new sense of belonging. This being said after their initial sense of belonging was minimised by exactly the same thing they are using to try and reignite it: state focus and state formation. An example thereof was the Igbo, who constituted the majority in only two states, Anambra and Imo; the other major groups, the Hausa/Fulani and the Yoruba, represented majorities in about five states each. The Igbo had persistently pressed for equality with other major groups by demanding new states. Realising that the creation of states could go on endlessly,

the federal government tried to bolster local governments as another way of meeting the demands. The subordinate status of local governments, however, coupled with the continued use of the states as units for distributing national resources, made demands for more states a recurrent theme in the development of Nigerian federalism.

The recurrence of the unhappiness regarding federalism and the effects thereof is clearly one of the motivational issues regarding Boko Haram, as Abubakar Shekau, leader of Boko Haram from 2009 to September 2014, stated in 2012:

“We are optimistic that we will dismantle President Jonathan’s government and establish Islamic government in Nigeria. Let the federal government and its agents do what they can, and we in return, would do what we can. We are calling on all Muslims in this part of the world to accept the clarion call and fight for the restoration of the caliphate of Usman Dan Fodio which the White Man fought and fragmented. The White man killed prominent Islamic clerics and emirs and replaced the white Islamic flag with the British Union Jack flag. We now want all our people to come together and restore our lost glory” (Ndigbo, 2013: Internet).

The federal-character principle emerged as a balancing formula in the 1979 constitution to forestall the domination of the government or any of its agencies or resources by people from one of a few states, ethnic groups, or sections (Metz, 1991: Internet). The uneven rates of development among the states and sections were largely responsible for the tension and controversy associated with the application of this principle, complicated by the patterns of distribution of the major ethnic groups.

Given Nigeria’s size and diversity, managing the complex web of interests and identities has challenged governance for decades. In general, control of the state has been accomplished through various forms of power sharing. Within the ruling People’s Democratic Party (PDP), from 1999 to 2011, Nigeria elites reached an informal agreement, often referred to as ‘zoning’. It provided for the rotation of the presidency between the North and the South. When the president was a Southern Christian, the vice president was a Northern Muslim, and vice versa. It was the South’s turn with Olusegun Obasanjo from 1999 to 2007, and it was supposed to be



the North's until 2015. However, following Northern President Yar'Adua's death in office, his Southern Vice President, Goodluck Jonathan became president and secured the PDP presidential nomination in 2011, drawing on the power of his incumbency. With Jonathan staying in office, probably until 2015, Northern Nigerians fear political marginalisation, which means reduced access to the oil revenues and patronage that fuel Nigeria's political economy.

The economic and social imbalance between North and South makes political power sharing a sensitive issue. The South is much richer and boasts far better socio-economic indicators than the North. Extensive oil reserves are located in the Niger Delta, and the South has Lagos, the commercial and media capital of the country as well as one of the largest metropolitan areas in the world. While there are numerous ethnic groups, the two largest, the Yoruba and the Igbo, make up the majority of the Diaspora that provides increasingly important foreign exchange remittances from abroad. It is true that Christians are a majority, but there is a significant Muslim population in Yorubaland and across the South. Local conflict tends to be based more on ethnic differences and competition for access to resources, especially in the oil-rich Delta, and very rarely do the clashes have a religious component (Campbell, 2011: Internet). Given the history of inequality between the two regions, southerners often dismiss the North as backward. By contrast, the North's population is probably larger, but much poorer than the rest of the country, with some of the world's worst health and economic statistics. Its economy is in decline because of deindustrialisation and lack of investment in agriculture and infrastructure, and a much smaller percentage of its population has access to education than in the South.

#### **4.2.3 Religious Rule**

With a population of over 160 million people, Nigeria has been described by Archbishop Teissier of Algiers as "the greatest Islamo-Christian nation in the world" (Onaiyekan, 1992: 48). By this he means that there is no other nation where so many Christians and Muslims live side-by-side. Nigeria provides a rich context for understanding the cultural, social, economic, and political issues that are involved in the Christian-Muslim encounter. Relations between Christianity and Islam over the centuries have ranged from conflict to concord, from polemics to dialogue, and from

commercial cooperation to open confrontation (Akinade, 2002: 1). Christian-Muslim relations – however they manifest - constitute a phenomenon that affects the future of multitudes of people. With Christians and Muslims accounting for sixty percent of the world's population, relations between the two religions and the terrorism demand serious analyses.

Religion is often confused with ethnicity and regionalism in Nigeria. Even though it can be referred to as the 'Muslim North' and the 'Christian South', this can be perceived as a misconception. In the North, although Muslims are overwhelmingly the majority, there are communities of non-Muslims. Similarly, in the South, while Christianity has a very strong followership, Islam also has a huge following among the Yoruba in the south-west and some followers in the south-east. The classification of some legal systems as 'religious' is problematic at the global level. A problem to be noted with regards to Critical Security Studies and orthodox terrorism studies is the small amount of attention given to relations between religions. CTS need to prove that relations between religions are not always deemed as the root of conflict, and can exist in non-violent atmosphere. The negative connotation that terrorism studies has put to Islamism are clearly challenges by this CTS-based study. Religion itself and the diversity thereof is not the problem, the politicisation and misinterpretation thereof – by followers and academics – plays a more crucial role.

The notion of 'religious law' is based on Western perceptions of religion, but there are differences between Western and Islamic conceptions of religion (Gunn, 2003: 189). While in the West, religion is largely a system of beliefs, in Islam religion it is both a system of belief (iman) and a way of life (minhaj) (Mawdudi, 1984: 9). While in the West, 'religious law' is limited to canon law, which is now merely the law regulating the Church, Islamic law is a full-fledged legal system in the same manner as common and civil law. In the Islamic law context, 'religious law' would refer only to the laws relating to worship (ibadat) as distinct from the laws relating to human interactions (muamalat) (Yerushalmi, 2008: 89). This 'religious law' would exclude marriage, which is viewed legally as a secular contract notwithstanding its religious aspects, whereas before the secularisation of the West, in line with Christianity, marriage was viewed as a sacrament. The failure of the Nigerian State, out of Boko Haram's point of view, is seen as a failure of the secular law and state – thus they argue that Sharia law can be more effective and serve the people better

In the subordinate courts of Northern Nigeria, Sharia courts administer Islamic law exclusively while the magistrate and customary courts administer customary law. In other northern states, area courts administer both customary and Islamic law. In the southern states, there are no Sharia Courts of Appeal; thus, only customary and magistrate courts exist as subordinate courts. In these magistrate and customary courts, customary rather than Islamic law is applied to Muslims as personal law (Tabiu, 1991: 54). The South has arbitral panels to resolve conflicts among Muslims, the awards of which are recognised in some states' formal courts. The Lagos State Independent Sharia Panel, established by the Supreme Council for Sharia in Nigeria – a voluntary civil organisation – in 2003, has in addition to the usual family law matters such as divorce, maintenance, and child custody, heard other matters. In one case, a prospective couple wanted the panel to act as a bride's marriage guardian because the bride's family members refused. The panel solemnised the marriage guardian after appointing a member of the panel as her guardian. Additionally, a man troubled by a fornication he had committed wanted the panel to inflict the hundred lashes prescribed by Islamic law as the canonical punishment for his sin. The panel declined to enforce the punishment because its jurisdiction is limited only to civil matters and only a sovereign Muslim leader can inflict or order such punishment. The panel has also heard cases relating to contracts and land disputes. The range of cases filed before the panel indicates an urgent need for the establishment of official Sharia courts in Southern Nigeria (Oba, 2011: 13). It is this 'need for Sharia courts and a legal system more effective than the secular 'federal' systems in place, which in part led to the frustration synonymous with the formation of Boko Haram. Mohammed Yusuf, Muslim sect leader, and leader of Boko Haram until his death in 2009, stated this clearly in the early years of Boko Haram activity:

“We want to re-emphasise that our main objective is the restoration of the Sharia Legal System in line with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. We want the Nigerian Constitution to be abrogated and Democracy suspended and a full-fledged Islamic State established. We want to emphasize that trouble started in this part of the world when the white men came, colonised our land, chased away the Emirs and righteous leaders and then replaced the system with Western Legislative, Judicial, and Executive procedures. They also changed our pattern of learning and upbringing to the detriment of moral

teachings; that was exactly what prompted the establishment of our organisation” (Campbell, 2014: Internet).

Nigeria cannot be understood without Islam. The areas of intersection between Islam and politics are significant. First, the government’s failure to promote development or enhance living standards will continue to make Islam an alternative ideology to organise change and seek better or alternative solutions to a range of problems. In general, as in the history of Nigeria, Islam has expressed itself as a radical religion and political ideology. Second, tensions will continue to mount in the country, and they will take various forms, including what we presently see happening in Nigeria regarding inter- and intra-religious conflicts. Within Islam, the Sufi and anti-Sufi conflicts are unlikely to disappear and different political parties and interest groups will seek to gain political power to further specific interests. These can even be expressed as communal clashes as in the case of religious riots. Ethnic groups that migrate, such as the Igbo, have experienced a number of communal and religious conflicts outside of their homelands. Economic decline can promote such tensions and the political class can manipulate them to its advantage. Third, Islamic leaders and Muslim organisations are very efficient and astute at building regional and international solidarity networks to push their claims and gain strength in greater numbers (Falola, 2009: Internet).

### **4.3 The Development of Boko Haram**

Boko Haram is viewed as the most active terrorist group in Nigeria. The jihadist organisation threatens not only the stability of Africa’s largest oil producer, but also the political, economic and security interests in Africa (Pham, 2012: Internet). Recent events seem to indicate that the group is expanding its activities into Niger, and may be active in Cameroon and Mali. Poor social and economic conditions in the North, weak state control, and heavy handed security measures have enabled Boko Haram to flourish, recruit, and build its support base. An additional factor behind its rise has been its increasing interconnectedness to foreign terrorist organisations like AQIM. The rise of Boko Haram illustrates how local radical Islamist groups, once internationally networked, can rapidly transform into a major threat in regions where governance is weak. These dynamics demand further research and analysis if West African nations are to counter this new threat to regional security, stability, and

development. Afghanistan, Somalia, Yemen, and most recently Mali, illustrates how radical Islamist organisations combine terrorism with social justice narratives to challenge and erode the authority of the state (Crowley & Wilkinson, 2013: 100). The combination of terrorism with social norms and narratives is something that can, according to traditional terrorism studies, be seen as a relatively new phenomenon. But, when analysing the phenomenon according to the frameworks of CTS, that is the influences of socio-economic, socio-political and religious factors, as discussed previously in this chapter, it is clear that it is no new phenomenon, the study thereof and the awareness of these influences are what can be deemed as 'new'.

The roots of Boko Haram lie in the Islamic history of northern Nigeria, in which for about 800 years powerful sultanates centred on the Hausa cities close to Kano and the sultanate of Borno (more or less the region of the states of Borno and Yobe together with parts of Chad) constituted high Muslim civilisations. These sultanates were challenged by the jihad of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio, who created a unified caliphate stretching across northern Nigeria into the neighbouring countries. Dan Fodio's legacy of jihad is one that is seen as normative by most northern Nigerian Muslims (Hiskett, 1994: 12). The caliphate still ruled by his descendants, however, was conquered by the British in 1905, and in 1960 Muslim Northern Nigeria was federated with largely Christian Southern Nigeria.

#### **4.3.1 The Initial Formation of Boko Haram**

In its early years, the group was popularly and locally known as the 'Nigerian Taliban' due to its shared anti-Western ideology and its willingness to use violence in an effort to impose a strict form of Sharia law. Likely founded in the mid-1990s as a religious study group, Boko Haram did not begin to transform into the insurgent group it is today until a young and charismatic Nigerian Islamic cleric named Mohammed Yusuf assumed control. Calling them the Nigerian Taliban, Boko Haram adopted a 'live-off-the land' lifestyle and established a camp in a remote area of north-east Nigeria, which the group dubbed 'Afghanistan'. (Sani, 2011: Internet).

From its independence until 1999, Nigeria was ruled largely by military rulers, a number of whom were Northern Muslims. During this period, Nigerian Islam was fragmented with doctrinal debates between the Sufis and the Salafists, unaware of the fact that Christians were heavily evangelising throughout the country, especially

in the region of the Middle Belt. The growth of Christianity was reflected in the 1999 election of Olusegun Obasanjo, and the continued Southern Christian domination of Goodluck Johnathan. The Muslim response to the Christian political ascendancy was the move during the period of 2000–2003 to impose Sharia law in the 12 northern states in which they predominated. For the most part, imposition of Sharia brought the previously disagreeing Muslim groups together, and there was no further use of takfiri (Peters, 2003: 17). Takfiris have been classified by some as violent offshoots of the Salafi movement, yet Salafism is seen as a form of fundamentalist Islam; it is not an inherently violent movement that condones terrorism. Takfiris, on the other hand condone acts of violence as legitimate methods of achieving religious or political goals (Olivet, 2002: 45). While the imposition of Sharia satisfied the official manifestation of Islam in the North, it is clear that radicals who were takfiris doctrinally – such as members of Boko Haram – were left outside.

Relations between Boko Haram and other Nigerian radical groups are unclear. Although most observers state that the group's name is actually Jama'at ahl al'sunna li-da'wa wa-l'qital, and that it is the descendent of the group who in 2002 was referred to as the Nigerian Taliban, it is not absolutely certain that these are the same groups. What can be stated with certainty is that the charismatic figure of Muhammad Yusuf, who was killed in July 2009, was the one who initiated Boko Haram's first ascent. The first mission of Boko Haram was mainly focused upon withdrawal from society – following the example of Dan Fodio – and establishing small camps and schools in remoter regions of the Borno and Yobe states during the years 2002-2005. As police pressure against these smaller groups began to grow, the groups morphed into more of an urban phenomenon practicing al-amr bi-l-ma'ruf wa-l-nahy'an al-munkar (enjoining the good and forbidding the evil). From such operations, usually against consumption of alcohol and other non-Islamic practices, the groups began to shape its identity (Cook, 2011: Internet). Again, the entire methodology is very much according to the example of Dan Fodio.

What made Boko Haram stand out among other Nigerian radical groups were its operations against the police that began in 2004. In 2009 Yusuf's followers once again clashed with security forces. They army shelled Yusuf's compound, and as Yusuf predicted, he was arrested and killed without trial. Surviving devotees went

into hiding, some travelled abroad for training with other militants, and some regrouped in Kano around Abubakar Shekau, Yusuf's deputy (Verini, 2013: Internet).

Boko Haram's initial enthusiasm was significantly reduced after direct confrontation with the Nigerian police and military, which culminated in the Nigerian military assault upon Yusuf's compound, associated mosques, and his judicial murder. Hundreds of members of the group were killed with him, and it is clear that one of the lessons learned by Boko Haram was to avoid having public bases. Before 2009, the group did not actively aim to violently overthrow the government. Yusuf criticised Northern Muslims for participating in what he saw as an illegitimate, non-Islamic State and preached a doctrine of withdrawal. But violence between Christians and Muslims and harsh government treatment, including pervasive police brutality, encouraged the group's radicalisation. Boko Haram's hundreds of followers, also called Yusuffiya, consist largely of impoverished Northern Islamic students and clerics, as well as university students and professionals, many of whom are unemployed (Johnson, 2013: Internet).

#### **4.3.2 Ideology and Motivation**

The philosophy of Boko Haram is rooted in the practice of orthodox Islam. In their interpretation orthodox Islam abhors Western education and working in the civil service. This explains why the sect is popularly known as Boko Haram, some sources stating that it literally means 'Western education is sin' (Onuoha, 2012: 2).

The organisation attributes the campaign of ethnic cleansing of Hausa and Fulani people in the region. Boko Haram believes that the government of northern Nigeria has been infiltrated by false and corrupt Muslims. Their ideological mission is to overthrow the Nigerian government and impose strict Sharia law (Walker, 2012: 3). The phrase 'Boko Haram' suggests that Western civilisation is prohibited, not specifically Western education. Mallam Sanni Umaru corrected the incorrect assumption in a statement:

"Boko Haram does not in any way mean 'Western education is a sin' as the infidel media continues to portray us. Boko Haram actually means 'Western Civilisation' is forbidden. The difference is that while the first gives the impression that we are opposed to formal education coming from the West...

which is not true, the second affirms our belief in the supremacy of Islamic culture (not education), for culture is broader, it includes education but not determined by Western education” (Onuoha, 2010: 56).

The sect frowns at the media’s description of it as the Boko Haram. Instead it prefers to be addressed as the Jama’atu Ahlissunnah Lidda’awati wal Jihad, meaning a ‘People committed to the Propagation of the Prophet’s Teachings and Jihad’. Although the sect’s name has changed over the years, its ideological mission stays quite clear, namely to overthrow the Nigerian State and impose Sharia law in the entire country (Onuoha, 2012: 2).

Injustice and poverty, as well as the belief that the West is a corrupting influence in governance, are some of the root causes of both the desire to implement Sharia and Boko Haram’s pursuit of an Islamic State. The emergence of Boko Haram can signify the ripening of long-festering extremist impulses that run deep in the social reality of northern Nigeria. But the group itself can be described as an effect and not a cause; it is a symptom of decades of failed government and elite delinquency finally culminating in social chaos (Johnson, 2013: Internet). The reintroduction of Sharia criminal courts was originally proposed by the governor of the state of Zamfara in 1999, but the proposal quickly became a grassroots movement that led to its adoption in twelve states. Experts say there was widespread ‘disillusionment’ with the way sharia was implemented, and that Boko Haram has tapped into this dissatisfaction, promoting the idea that an Islamic State would eliminate the inconsistencies.

Driven by the deeply-rooted anti-Western ideology, Boko Haram rejects all aspects of Western civilisation. The group’s positions were informed for many years by the extreme views of Muhammed Yusuf, who rejected evolution and scientific explanations for natural phenomena such as rainfall. Today, Boko Haram’s leadership insists that its name encompasses a rejection of Western civilisation in its entirety, including rejections of women’s and gay rights, democracy, and the consumption of alcohol. The reason for referring to Boko Haram as the ‘Nigerian Taliban’, especially in its early years, traces to its shared anti-Western ideology, and its use of force as a means of imposing a stricter form of Sharia law than that which was being implemented in northern Nigeria through government reforms. As a



demonstration of its esteem for the Taliban, Boko Haram at one time flew the Taliban's flag at its headquarters. Leaders of Boko Haram have also indicated publicly that they subscribe to Al-Qaeda's ideology. In a statement issued in the wake of Yusuf's death, Sanni Umaru, who claimed leadership of the group, declared that:

“Boko Haram is just a version of the Al-Qaeda which we align with and respect. We support Osama bin Laden, we shall carry out his command in Nigeria until the country is totally Islamised which is according to the wish of Allah” (Anti-Defamation League, 2014: Internet).

Consistent with Boko Haram's anti-Western views and support for terror groups that target Western interests is a deep hatred for the US and Israel. The group has indicated that it views both countries as enemies and, accordingly, as potential targets. During a media interview in 2010, a Boko Haram spokesperson claimed that the United States is the number one target for its oppression and aggression against Muslim nationals and its blind support to Israel (Anti-Defamation League, 2014: Internet).

According to Pew poll data, 88% of Nigerian Muslims want Islam to play a large role in politics; 58% self-identify as 'fundamentalist' Muslims; while over 50% support harsh Sharia punishments for adultery, theft, or apostasy – converting to another religion from Islam. Furthermore, over a third of Nigeria's Muslims say suicide bombing is 'sometimes' or 'often' justified (Pew Research Centre, 2010: Internet). In light of the high degree of Nigerian Muslim support for fundamentalist Islam, it is not hard to understand how Boko Haram operates with such ease in large parts of the country (Furnish, 2014: Internet).

Yusuf's call to restore the model of the Sokoto Caliphate and true Sharia resonates with many Muslims in Africa and, in fact, elsewhere in the Muslim world. The international response suggested by CTS must be more than hashtags, media coverage, peace missions, and drone strikes. Although the latter may prove sufficient in killing wanted terrorists, it does little to understand and confront the Islamic justification for jihad.

### 4.3.3 Membership and Recruitment

Boko Haram's message has resonated with a number of Muslims in northern Nigeria. A mixture of social, economic, and historical factors preceded its emergence. Those often referred to include socio-economic grievances, such as income inequality, and political marginalisation. Others believe corruption, inadequate public services, a mistrust of security forces, and a sense of alienation from the central government contributed to an environment conducive to terrorist radicalisation and recruitment.

The importance of applying Critical Terrorism Study to the correlation between membership of a terrorist organisation and economic benefit indicates the severe lack of critical and analytical thought on the matter. The immediate assumption to be made when using orthodox security and terrorism studies will be that the members consist of Muslim Nigerians, merely fighting their Holy War to implement Sharia. Although that is not completely wrong, it is not the whole story.

There is little hard evidence that Boko Haram, like other Islamist militant groups, pay its members a wage. But during an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) a member of a gang in Niger mentioned that Boko Haram Islamist militants from Nigeria "regularly come across the border, looking for recruits". The gang members, in their 20s, said they were paid \$3 085 to join the insurgency and since they were unemployed, they were willing to take the cash, but with no interest in protecting or implementing Sharia law. The youths said they were paid either to follow the militants to Nigeria, or to serve as informants in Niger:

"When they come, we inform them about what's going on, what the security forces are up to. We have no jobs; some of us are still at high school, but we need money. Violence has become a form of work for us."

These confessions were revealed in a BBC documentary in April 2014 after Thomas Fessy, a BBC reporter, visited the Diffa region in Niger. When Fessy asked if they agreed with Boko Haram's reason for fighting, they answered in unison: "No. We only do it for the money" (Agbambu & Gesinde, 2014: Internet).

Further transnational recruitment has been reported in Cameroon's Far North Region, according to residents and local government officials. More than 100

suspected Boko Haram fighters and preachers have been arrested in the Far North Region since 2012, but many have been released due to a lack of evidence. Ibrahim Haman, an Islamic preacher and elder in the Mora District in the far North, said: “There are many Muslim brothers coming from Nigeria with the aim of preaching to the youths. The government has warned against this practice, but they still reach out to the young people because they make them promises and give them money”. A seventeen-year-old boy from Cameroon recounted to the Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) how he was brought back home to Cameroon blindfolded after failing to cope with the insurgents’ military training. He had been taken to Nigeria by a preacher. According to the boy:

“I was the youngest among eight other boys who told me they came from towns of Banki, Kolofata and Ngeshawa (in Cameroon) and Maiduguri (in Nigeria). Before I was taken, they told my father that I would come back rich and a great Muslim, so he allowed me to go. We were reading the Qur’an and they would preach to us about fighting for the Muslim faith” (IRIN, 2014: Internet).

Again, to prove the importance of using CTS, this clearly indicates how financial rather than ideological and religious motivations can explain the group’s attractiveness and prosperity. A lack of economic prosperity and development, along with porous borders, seems to have contributed to Nigeria’s national security issues.

Yet it should be noted that Boko Haram does not solely consist of cross-border youths paid to work with the groups. Both Pham (2012: Internet) and Campbell (2012: Internet) believe that the organisation is composed of a number of different actors: Islamist militants, opportunistic criminals, and thugs linked to certain Northern political elites. Some of the more devout Nigerian members of the sect are motivated by the conviction that the Nigerian State is filled with social vices and corruption, thus ‘the best thing for a devout Muslim to do was to ‘migrate’ from the morally bankrupt society to a secluded place and establish an ideal Islamic society devoid of political corruption and moral deprivation’. In this view, non-members are therefore considered as kuffar (disbelievers; those who deny the truth) or fasiqun (wrong-doers). Boko Haram’s hundreds of followers, consist largely of impoverished Northern Islamists and clerics, as well as university students and professionals,

many of whom are unemployed. Some followers may also be members of Nigeria's elite. It is alleged that members wear long beards, red or black headscarves and reject the use of certain modern (supposedly Western) goods, such as wristwatches and safety helmets (Onuoha, 2012: 2).

In July 2009, Boko Haram members refused to follow a motorbike helmet law, leading to heavy-handed police tactics that set off an armed uprising in the northern state of Bauchi and spread into the states of Borno, Yobe, and Kano. The incident was suppressed by the army and left more than eight hundred dead. It also led to the televised execution of Yusuf, as well as the deaths of his father-in-law and other sect members (Johnson, 2013: Internet). In the aftermath of the 2009 unrest, and the deaths of so many, the irony is that although the uprising was rooted in the use of 'Western' helmets, Boko Haram does not reject or refuse the use of technological products such as motorcycles, cars, cellular phones, and AK-47 guns, and other benefits that are derived from Western civilisation.

The exact numbers of Boko Haram's members are not known, although it draws followers across the 19 states of Nigeria, Niger Republic, Chad, Cameroon, and Sudan. Its members are mainly disaffected youths, unemployed graduates, and former Almajiris. The phenomenon of Almajiri (or Street Children) is a popular old practice whereby children are sent to live and study under renowned Islamic preachers in some cities in northern Nigeria. These Almajiris live and study in very appalling conditions, thereby making them vulnerable to recruitment into extremist sects like Boko Haram indoctrination. As of 2010, Nigeria hosts about 9.5 million Almajiris, with over 80 percent concentrated in northern Nigeria. Beside Almajiris that form the bulk of its foot soldiers, the sect also has as members some well-educated, wealthy, and influential people such as university lecturers, business contractors and politicians who are the major financiers. However, the militant group has added bank robbery to its sources of funds for meeting different needs: helping the less privileged; sustaining the widows of those who died in the Jihad; giving alms to the poor and needy (Zakat); and for the prosecution of Jihad (Onuoha, 2012: 3).

Jacob Zenn identifies four main factors that affect the attraction of recruits:

Firstly, financial incentives; some members join because Boko Haram pays them to kill Nigerian government officials, steal cars in Boko Haram's name and sell them to

businessmen or government officials, or to rob banks. This is clearly seen in relation to immigrants of neighbouring countries, as explained previously in this section.

Secondly, kinship; some northern Nigerians, including politicians, may affiliate with Boko Haram because they are related to members, or to some of the followers of killed leader, Yusuf. This point falls directly into context with the use of CTS as a principle. Proving that in spite of the importance that orthodox security studies places on the state as a role-player, and religion being the main motivation, there are more sociological factors that should be considered when analysing the membership and loyalty of Boko Haram and its supporters.

Thirdly, interreligious and government violence; the history of violence between Muslims and Christians in the Middle Belt and civilian deaths during battles with Boko Haram likely led some people to seek revenge against Christians or the Nigerian government through Boko Haram.

Lastly, radicalisation; some Boko Haram members may have been radicalised by Nigerian imams. Dr Ibrahim Datti Ahmed led the anti-polio vaccine and anti-beauty-pageant campaigns in northern Nigeria. Ahmad Gumi, in a sermon, called Nigeria's role in the French-led military intervention against Islamists in Mali a Christian-led 'crusade'. Ibrahim Zakzaky, an Iranian-backed Shia leader, who organises anti-American protests, such as those against the 'Innocence of Muslims' film, The above mentioned imams are some examples of radicalised imams (Zenn, 2013a: Internet).

These imams create acceptance in mainstream Muslim society for many of the issues that Boko Haram use to appeal to recruits. Indeed, Boko Haram has attacked polio workers and a media agency that associated the Prophet Muhammad with beauty queens; but a more tolerant acceptance has already been shaped in the mind of non-radical Muslims. Zenn's first three recruitment factors might be addressed by tackling Nigeria's corruption, ensuring the nation's resources get to the people who need them most, and impartially prosecuting government officials and Boko Haram members who break the law. This, however, is not something that can be easily done. It only paves the way for Nigerian policy makers to consider first tackling local governance issues, which may lead to eventually ameliorating the continued loyalty to Boko Haram, and the constant need for local communities to feel that the only way they will have an effect on governance is by the use of radical techniques.

#### **4.4 Affiliation**

Analysing the influence of transnational terrorist organisations and their links to one another is crucial when using the theoretical anchor of CTS. No terrorist organisation exists in a vacuum, and external influences are often overlooked when referring to traditional and orthodox means of studying terrorism, especially in a complex network such as Africa. In July 2010, Boko Haram declared its allegiance to Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. This served as a crucial turning point in the development of the group. The earliest signs of a relationship between Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, and AQIM came in October 2010, when Boko Haram used AQIM's media division to release an Eid message that praised Al-Qaeda's affiliates in Somalia, Iraq, Pakistan, and Yemen, and rejected the legitimacy of the Nigerian government. Although there is little hard evidence that Boko Haram has converged organisationally with any other groups, reports suggest that Al-Shabaab and AQIM have helped the organisation, with AQIM helping to finance it. This linkage has contributed to Boko Haram's transformation, from a closed sect to a major terrorist threat. The group's most high-profile attack to date occurred on 26 August 2011, when a suicide bomber rammed a vehicle laden with explosives through the gates of the UN headquarters in Abuja. This was its first major attack on a high-profile international target. The timing of the UN attack and manner in which it was claimed suggests that Boko Haram has evolved from a local issue group, to one whose tactics, rhetoric, and ambitions had become more in line with Al-Qaeda and the wider jihadist movement (Crowley & Wilkinson, 2013: 105).

##### **4.4.1 Boko Haram Learning from Al-Qaeda**

According to Binneh Minteh and Ashlie Perry's (2013) comparative analysis of Boko Haram and mainstream terrorist networks on the global political landscape, it is quite evident that the locally based terror group has more in common with Al-Qaeda than immediately meets the eye. The comparative framework stems from similarities in strategies and techniques in terms of operations, and the nature or type of operation carried out by both groups. Even though Boko Haram operates at a local level in comparison to Al-Qaeda's international platform, a fundamental driving force for these similarities largely derives from the ideological forefront characterising the two

groups; one purely based on religious factors geared towards saving the soul of Islam at all cost.

With the ideological component linking Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda, it is no historical accident to see a common approach in strategy and technique between the two groups. In general terms, Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda have used bombings – both suicide and car bombs – targeted assassinations, and arson attacks against perceived enemies. Al-Qaeda's first World Trade Center attempt in 1993 was through a car bomb attack. Similarly, in an attempt to undermine US efforts in Iraq, Al-Qaeda has claimed responsibility for several car bomb attacks between 2003 and 2009. The same was true for Boko Haram, when it used car bombings in both the August 2011 attack on the UN compound in Abuja, and the November 2012 attack on the St. Andrew Military Protestant Church at the Jaji barracks in Kaduna State. The use of kidnapping is another fundamental strategy for both Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda. Its affiliate group, AQIM, has long used the kidnapping of diplomats and tourists for ransom. For the first time, Boko Haram has similarly carried out kidnappings demanding ransom, either for French nationals, international journalists, or even local schoolgirls. With regard to the kidnapping of a French family in 2013, a Nigerian government report stated that Boko Haram was paid more than \$3 million before releasing the family of seven. With the French-led military operations against Al-Qaeda affiliate groups that occupied Northern Mali, Boko Haram's receipt of a ransom and release of the French family brings to light the strong linkages to Al-Qaeda. In a video released to the Press and on YouTube, a spokesperson for the group said that the kidnapping was due to the French military intervention in northern Mali, where its troops were fighting with Malian soldiers against Islamic extremists, and religious groups (Minteh & Perry, 2013: Internet).

#### **4.4.2 Boko Haram and AQIM**

There is no firm evidence that Boko Haram has ambitions beyond Nigeria, though its campaign has spilled into parts of Cameroon and Niger. Boko Haram's main target has always been the Nigerian government, seen as corrupt and 'anti-Muslim', as well as the implementation of strict Sharia law. However, as previously mentioned, no terrorist organisation exists in a vacuum. Links and possible relationships with other militant and extremist organisations cannot be overlooked. It would also be foolish to

overlook the benefits a local militant group would enjoy when investing in expanding international connections. Jacob Zenn (2013a: Internet) writes that some leaders are uniquely capable of expanding Boko Haram's international connections to AQIM, Al-Shabaab in Somalia, and other militant groups. According to Zenn, Mamman Nur, the alleged mastermind of the UN bombing in Abuja, has trained with Al-Shabaab. Another senior figure, Adam Kamar, became the leader of an AQIM training camp, before being killed in 2012 (Lister, 2014: Internet).

An active partnership between Boko Haram and AQIM, which operates in close proximity to Nigeria in Mauritania, Mali, Niger, and Algeria, could explain the increased sophistication of recent Boko Haram attacks, including the use of car bombs and IEDs. It could also mean an increase in cash flow for Boko Haram. A link with AQIM will also heighten fear in an already-tense Nigeria. The benefits for Boko Haram in teaming up with AQIM might be an influx of money and expertise – but also an international profile that would give it credibility as it attempts to recruit more followers (Leigh, 2011: Internet). Although a significant Al-Qaeda influence in the actions of Boko Haram can be noted, analysts believe that AQIM's contribution is most likely to be in tactics and expertise, with Boko Haram fighters taken out of Nigeria for training. Boko Haram has made the transition from sub-state terrorism to international terrorism by, on some fronts, sharing a common cause with other jihadists on the continent. Previous AFRICOM commander, General Carter Ham, has commented that the most worrying issue at hand is a clearly stated intent by Boko Haram and AQIM to coordinate and synchronise their efforts (Johnson, 2011: Internet). Boko Haram has already claimed that it has sent its members via AQIM for further military training to Afghanistan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Iraq, Mauritania, and Algeria. The training received at such camps would account well for the growing sophistication of Boko Haram's attacks.

While Boko Haram recruits are being trained by groups like AQIM and Al-Shabaab, it should also be noted that they are exposed to Al-Qaeda's global ideology, and that this also influences the organisation as a whole. Such an external influence over Boko Haram is witnessed in the choice of targets. In August 2011, the groups targeted the UN headquarters in Abuja – until then, Boko Haram had largely focused its attacks on local targets such as Nigerian government officials and police stations. This change in target might suggest that Boko Haram is shifting some of its focus to



a more international goal. Similarly in 2006, AQIM attacked the UN offices in Algiers (Solomon, 2013: 436).

A Boko Haram video released in November 2012, suggested that Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau may be in northern Mali. The video emerged one month after Nigerian President Goodluck Johnathan discussed Shekau coordinating attacks in northern Nigeria from northern Mali. In contrast to Shekau's first five video statements of 2012, the November video is the first to show Shekau not seated in a room wearing traditional Islamic dress, but green camouflaged military fatigues instead while training in a desert with heavily armed and veiled militants. He did not speak in Hausa, the predominant language of northern Nigeria, but spoke entirely in Arabic, and he praised the "brothers and shaykhs in the Islamic Maghreb" and "soldiers of the Islamic State of Mali". In the video, Shekau appealed to Al-Qaeda by paying homage to "martyred" leaders such as Osama bin Laden, Abu Yahya al-Libi and Abu Mus'ub al-Zarqawi. He recited five of the ten suras in the Qur'an that are most commonly quoted by Al-Qaeda, and he called the United States, the United Kingdom, Nigeria, and Israel "crusaders" and warned them that jihad has begun (Alade, 2012: Internet). Even if Shekau is or was not in Mali at the time, it is unlikely that he was in Nigeria. In contrast to Mali's and Niger's vast desert regions, where AQIM has hosted training camps since the mid-2000s, that Boko Haram members have attended, north-eastern Nigeria's desert is not known to have terrorist training camps and is not particularly remote or uninhabited. Shekau and the other militants would have also placed themselves at unprecedented risk to train in Nigeria in broad daylight, as seen in the video, only days after Abuja announced a \$320 000 reward for information leading to Shekau's capture and lesser rewards for 18 Boko Haram Shura Committee members (Zenn, 2013b: Internet).

Boko Haram militants could have joined the insurgency in northern Mali in alliance with MUJAO and AQIM, and Shekau and his commanders may have found refuge in northern Mali or Niger to escape the Nigerian security forces' crackdown on Boko Haram in north-eastern Nigeria. It is, however, of paramount importance to remember that the purpose of this study is to critically examine the phenomenon of terrorism in this region of Africa. According to various sources and research, there are still too many uncertainties to decisively conclude the nature of Boko Haram's relationship with AQIM. The fact that these two groups have some sort of

relationship has been established, but it is not enough to determine a plan of action that 'fits all' groups. Although there are similarities to be found in ideology, strategy, and operation between AQIM and Boko Haram, CTS demands that this group must still be examined individually, taking into account sociological and historical factors as well.

#### **4.4.3 Boko Haram and Support from Al-Shabaab**

Another group linked to Boko Haram, especially in terms of training and techniques, is Al-Shabaab. Both Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram share an ideology that is embedded in radical Salafism and their adherents are influenced by the popular Qur'anic phrase: "Anyone who is not governed by what Allah has revealed is among the transgressors." Group members view it as their necessary duty and goal to engage in a violent struggle against the "enemies of Islam", both at home and abroad. Its members see the overthrow of secular government as justified since their rulers are viewed as accepting or leaning towards the ways of Islam's enemies.

When Boko Haram kidnapped nearly 300 schoolgirls in April 2014, it sent shockwaves throughout the world, and drew widespread condemnation. The large-scale kidnapping did, however, receive one show of definite approval; from Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab, who also has a tradition of forcefully abducting children and conscripting them to fight, voiced support for the Nigerian group's actions through its official Radio al-Andalus Facebook page. In a series of posts starting in May 2014, Al-Shabaab argues that the abduction is justified as a result of the Nigerian government's abuses against Muslims and that Boko Haram "rescued" the young girls from these injustices. Al-Shabaab also attempted to justify Boko Haram's actions by saying that they are less inhumane than the government's mistreatment of Muslims in Nigerian jails. Sheikh Said Sheikh Mohamud Sheikh Abdirahman, head of justice affairs for Ahlu Sunna wal Jamaa in Guriel, was not surprised that Al-Shabaab's media outlet would exalt the actions of other terrorist groups. According to Abdirahman it is to be expected from the group, to whom beheading and suicide bombings are normal, to glorify the kidnappings of a terror group who shares the same ideology (Thomas & Ahmed, 2014: Internet).

There is strong evidence of Al-Shabaab involvement in training of members of Boko Haram. Claims of involvement in training suicide bombers in Nigeria are supported

by Al-Shabaab and local observers in Somalia, as well as AMISOM, Boko Haram itself, and the Nigerian authorities. It is interesting that Boko Haram seems to mimic Al-Shabaab in several respects, with suicide attacks and the increased use of web forums. The Nigerian police claimed that Mamman Nuur, alleged ringleader of the attack against the UN building in Abuja, as well as Mohammed Abul Barra, the suicide bomber, were graduates from Somalia; Nuur going to Somalia as early as 2009 and returning in 2011 (Hansen, 2013: 136). The frequent threats from Boko Haram emphasising training in Somalia makes this a credible claim, as do eyewitness reports of contact with Nigerian Al-Shabaab fighters inside Somalia.

#### **4.5 Boko Haram's Sustainability**

Since the death of Boko Haram founder, Mohammed Yusuf, the global threat of Boko Haram has grown in leaps and bounds. Boko Haram's operational complexity and lethality keeps Nigeria's security efforts reeling. Conversely, Boko Haram seemingly adapts and adjusts effortlessly to Nigerian efforts. The more sophisticated tactics and weaponry suggest that Boko Haram can acclimate so quickly thanks to a steady and constant flow of cash.

Shortly after Boko Haram was founded; it drew the majority of its funds from people in surrounding communities who supported its goal of imposing Islamic law, while ridding Nigeria of Western influences. But because of the weak economic status of civilians in Nigeria, that means of fundraising was inherently limited. In more recent times, Boko Haram has broadened its funding by drawing on foreign donors, and other ventures such as fake charity organisations, extortion, and deals with global drug cartels. Its most recent feat – the kidnapping of 176 schoolgirls to sell on the black market – is merely the outgrowth of a coherent strategy to find funds for expansion through whatever means necessary (Caulderwood, 2014: Internet).

It can be said with absolute certainty that Boko Haram is very well funded; without a constant and increasing cash-flow, the organisation would have fizzled out to an ember a long time ago. Government and private intelligence organisations believe that Boko Haram is sponsored mostly by foreigners, along with Nigerian expats and locals. The American Foreign Policy Council's *World Almanac of Islamism* indicates that Boko Haram has received funding with the help of AQIM, and from organisations in the UK and Saudi Arabia. A Boko Haram spokesman claimed with a degree of

reliability that Boko Haram leaders met with Al-Qaeda in Saudi Arabia during the lesser *hajj* in August 2011. By successfully launching spectacular operations throughout the Maghreb and Sahel regions with worldwide media coverage, and providing advance training and financing to groups like MUJAO and others, AQIM's value to Al-Qaeda in Pakistan and the jihad cause has also grown and significantly spread its influence beyond its Algerian base. AQIM has become the premier Al-Qaeda franchise that everybody wants to buy into, including Boko Haram (TRAC, 2012: Internet).

#### **4.5.1 Acquiring Weapons**

The Nigerian military recently captured from Boko Haram a cache of formidable modern weapons, including anti-aircraft guns and a number of machine guns, a clear indication of how well-financed the Islamic insurgency is. The cache of weapons was discovered in a burnt-out church – the result of previous Boko Haram attack – in Nigeria's Northern Borno State. While north-eastern Nigeria is considered one of the world's poorest regions, the weapons indicate that Boko Haram at least is very well funded. A captured Boko Haram member led the police to the cache, and explained that it was for the purposes of staging an assault on communities across the border in Cameroon. How the group is getting sufficient financing to purchase such weapons is another indication of the group's expansion, and increasing relationship with cross-border militant groups. Some of the funding is believed to be international, possibly including support from AQIM, but this does not appear to be Boko Haram's main source. The group is also proven to have links to pirate organisations, such as the above-mentioned Al-Shabaab. As for generating the income themselves, Boko Haram also engages in drug trafficking and bank robbery. Another factor working to Boko Haram's advantage is the unrest elsewhere in Africa and the Middle East, a situation that has made acquiring weapons increasingly easy and cost-effective (Schultheiss, 2014: Internet).

The procurement of weapons from abroad has been described by the Nigerian police as a worrisome development. Such weapons include rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) with a 900 meter range for attacking hardened targets from long distances and IEDs for ambushing military and police convoys (Ogunseye, 2012: Internet). There is also concern that Boko Haram could use Libyan-made man-portable air-

defence systems (MANPADS) to shoot down commercial airlines flying into Niger, Chad, and Nigeria – a tactic employed in 2002 by an Al-Qaeda-linked Somali terrorist cell on a Mombasa-borne Israeli El Al Airlines flight. The threat of a Boko Haram attack on aviation prompted Nigeria to place all airports in the country under 24-hour security surveillance during the Christmas holiday in December 2012. The weapons in Boko Haram's 'upgrade' often enter the country through illegal or unmanned border crossings and sometimes with the collaboration of immigration officials. Boko Haram attacks on border posts, such as a 50-man attack at Gamboru-Ngala on the Nigerian side of the border with Cameroon in December 2012, are often intended as a diversion to smuggle weapons through other border areas (Zenn, 2013b: Internet).

Boko Haram does not only acquire these weapons from allies across Africa, another aspect to be taken into account is the thriving black market in Central Africa. Another factor that Boko Haram has in common with AQIM is benefitting from the collapse of Libya, and the availability of large weaponry in nearby conflict zones. Michael Leiter, former director of the National Counter-Terrorism Centre and now an NBC News analyst, says Central Africa is brimming with weapons, a situation made considerably worse when the Libyan arms depots were looted during the 2011 Arab Spring (Windrem, 2014: Internet).

#### **4.5.2 Kidnapping**

Probably the best-known source of income, although considered relatively new, is kidnapping for ransom. In 2013, armed men on motorcycles entered a national park in Cameroon, near the Nigerian border, and swiftly abducted a family of vacationing tourists – a husband, wife and their four children, along with their uncle. Two months later, the kidnappers released the hostages along with 16 others in exchange for \$3.15 million. The transaction was made by French and Cameroonian negotiators (Caulderwood, 2014: Internet). This meant a steep cash infusion into the reserves of Boko Haram. Through the use of kidnapping as a tactic this group has gained worldwide infamy with the recent kidnapping of schoolgirls in northern Nigeria.

The Chibok kidnapping and the raid that killed about 300 villagers in Gambarou-Ngala put Boko Haram on the front pages of the international media for the first time. This probably came as a shock to Boko Haram because it has been carrying out

these types of attacks and kidnappings since late 2011. In January 2012 Shekau ordered an assault on government buildings and churches in Kano, northern Nigeria's largest city, which killed nearly two-hundred Muslim civilians as collateral damage and led to the formation in Kano of a then rival faction, Ansaru (Jones, 2013: Internet). Ansaru saw itself as an alternative to Boko Haram that would focus on kidnapping foreigners and attacking Christian churches while avoiding killing Muslim civilians.

In May 2013, Boko Haram attacked the town of Bama on Nigeria's border with Chad and killed fifty-five people, including dozens as collateral damage in shoot-outs with security forces, while looting vehicles and property, destroying government buildings, and kidnapping twelve wives and daughters of security officers. Shekau appeared on a video with these women and warned that they would become his slaves if the Nigerian security forces "do not release Boko Haram's wives and children," including those of Shekau and several sub-commanders. Two weeks later the Nigerian government released ninety Boko Haram members from prison, including family members of militants, from prison, and also reportedly paid a ransom to Boko Haram. Throughout the rest of 2013, Boko Haram accelerated kidnapping-for-ransom operations in north-eastern Nigeria and northern Cameroon, targeting mid-level government officials, foreign tourists and priests. Boko Haram coordinated these operations with some Ansaru militants, who previously carried out kidnappings with AQIM in the Sahel but returned to Boko Haram's fold under Shekau. By the end of 2013, a precedent was set: Boko Haram KFR operations could far surpass bank robberies and become the militant group's most lucrative local funding source (Zenn, 2014: Internet). Hostage exchanges, similarly, could lead to the release from prison of Boko Haram militants and their family members, the latter often jailed without any suspicion of involvement in militant activities.

In spite of the massive ransom payment for, among others, the French family in 2013, payment of ransom is a fairly routine matter for a number of governments. Yet, the US is strongly opposed to this practice. This view is primarily based on a view that such negotiation encourages more kidnappings and even larger pay-outs. Yet Boko Haram, ever-adapting as the group is, does not merely demand ransom in terms of monetary value. The militant group controls the fate of the kidnapped schoolgirls and this immediately increases Shekau's bargaining power to pressure

the Nigerian government. With international pressure growing by the day, a ransom is likely to be paid, and additional action might also be taken. Shekau will probably also negotiate for the release of dozens, if not hundreds, of Boko Haram members imprisoned in Nigeria, Niger, and Cameroon. Shekau simply justifies his actions by once again quoting the Qur'anic Surah 47:4, which, according to some interpretations, permits Muslims to accept ransom or prisoner exchanges for 'infidel' hostages.

#### **4.6 Regional and International Action**

Boko Haram poses a real and serious challenge to security, stability, and development in Nigeria, and for Nigeria's neighbours. The temporary closure of Nigeria's borders with Cameroon in 2012 – following the suspected Boko Haram activity in border towns – had a negative effect on these economies. The Islamist insurgency in Nigeria has already displaced hundreds of thousands of people and had a significant effect on the North's already stagnant economy. Measures introduced to contain the violence, such as roadblocks and curfews, have further damaged northern economies. Escalating violence has discouraged private sector investment and hindered humanitarian operations (Crowley & Wilkinson, 2013: 106). It is crucial to understand that the threat from extremist groups like Boko Haram and AQIM is different from that of past rebellions and thus requires specific interpretation and approaches. It also means recognising that the risks are not just local issues, but transnational ones.

##### **4.6.1 The (delayed) African Response**

The largest body in Africa that can have an impact on security measures is undoubtedly the African Union (AU). When initially established the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) set up certain foundations: In July 1992 OAU Heads of State met in Dakar, Senegal and adopted Resolution 213 which aimed to curb extremism. This was further strengthened during the June 1994 Summit when the Assembly of Heads of State rejected fanaticism and extremism. This was important given the context of the Algerian civil war being waged at the time. The July 1999 Algiers Convention made it clear that terrorism was not to be tolerated, and Article 4 of the Constitutive Act of the AU echoed these sentiments. Since its inception the African Union's main concern has been to reinforce and implement existing counter-terror

instruments and promote coordination between states and the regional organisations. The AU also sought to serve as an interface between the continent and the international community, especially the UN. It can be said that the AU sought to provide guidelines and strategies for collective and individual state action against terrorism, but left the state itself to remain the primary instrument to combat terrorism (Solomon, 2012: Internet). More than two decades later, with thousands of soldiers' and civilians' lives being lost, the effectiveness of this strategy can be seriously questioned.

A renewed sense of unity has taken shape between African leaders regarding Boko Haram. At a recent summit in Paris, African leaders pledged to wage 'total war' against Boko Haram. This renewed sense of responsibility toward the African continent was reignited due to the recent kidnapping of schoolgirls in Chibok. The French president, Francois Hollande, who was the host of the talks, said that Boko Haram is a major threat for all of Western Africa and now Central Africa with links to AQIM and other terrorist organisations. According to Idress Deby, the President of Chad, there is determination to tackle this situation head on and to launch a war, 'a total war' on Boko Haram (Williams, 2014: Internet).

In this rare display of unity, the leaders of Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, Chad, and Benin pledged cooperation, including joint border patrols and intelligence sharing to find the kidnapped girls. Goodluck Jonathan, Nigeria's President, described Boko Haram as a "terrorist organisation" and said that it was part of an Al-Qaeda operation. The US department of defence suggested that the Nigerian army was not capable of confronting Boko Haram alone. Alice Friend, the department's African affairs director, stated:

"The division in the North that mainly is engaging with Boko Haram has recently shown signs of real fear. They do not have the capabilities, the training or the equipment that Boko Haram does, and Boko Haram is exceptionally brutal and indiscriminate in their attacks" (Willsher, 2014: Internet).

This statement cannot be regarded as shocking, since this is not the first time that Nigeria has been in a serious security situation with regards to Boko Haram. The fact that Nigeria's difficulty in handling the threat is only being addressed now is



something that should raise some concern among the international policymakers. In May 2013, the Nigerian President imposed a 'state of emergency' in three states in an attempt to curb the increasingly violent attacks by Boko Haram. The decision came after a spate of attacks on security forces and government targets by Boko Haram in its north-eastern stronghold. The state of emergency was declared in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states, in an attempt to restore public safety and security (Al Jazeera, 2013: Internet).

Exactly one year after Jonathan's declaration, Nigeria is once again criticised over their response, or insufficiency thereof, regarding their campaign against Boko Haram. According to Delaware Senator, Chris Coons, the Nigerian government took too long to respond to the girls' abduction. It took too long for the Nigerian government to accept offers of assistance from the United States, the United Kingdom, France and China, and once accepted, it took too long for that assistance to be fully implemented (Willsher, 2014: Internet). The UK foreign secretary, William Hague, said that forging better relations between Nigeria and Cameroon was essential, and that neighbouring countries could provide practical help to search for the schoolgirls. When analysing the history of extremist violence in Nigeria, it is clear that 'practical' help is sorely needed. Condemning the actions of Boko Haram and pledging support without practical and immediate action being taken has proven to be insufficient. Nigeria and its neighbours pledged to reinforce security measures for those living in areas targeted by Boko Haram, carry out bilateral patrols and share operational intelligence to find the kidnapped girls and others snatched by the Islamist group.

At a regional level, policy responses will require a paradigm shift in how countries work together to understand the threat and respond to it. Transnational risks are inherently complex and require regional cooperation, trusting relationships of interest, and shared investment to manage, in particular, security and development issues. At a minimum, joint border security initiatives will help stem the proliferation of weapons and reduce the ease with which terrorists can move across the region. Some initiatives already exist, as well as Joint Committees on Security. Improving intelligence gathering, analysis, expertise, and information sharing will also be crucial, as will learning from the experiences of other countries, like Algeria, in informing responses. As Boko Haram transitions from a localised insurgency to a

wider regional threat, only intelligence sharing and cooperation among nations where it operates will help prevent its advance (Crowley & Wilkinson, 2013: 107).

Boko Haram is no longer merely a local rebellion or regional threat and the focus should be shifted to defeating Boko Haram more broadly. Although the sudden interest and outrage regarding the abduction of the schoolgirls can be described as too little too late, it can hopefully lead to a more effective and sustainable regional effort in ameliorating the threat of Boko Haram.

#### **4.6.2 International Action**

In August 2013, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) indicted Boko Haram, saying that there is reason to believe that crimes against humanity have been committed in Nigeria, namely murder and persecution by the sect. Located in The Hague in the Netherlands, the ICC is an independent, permanent court that tries people accused of the most serious crimes of international concern, namely genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes – if national authorities with jurisdiction are unwilling or unable to do so genuinely.

A report issued by the Office of the Prosecutor, Farou Bensouda, found that the group has, since July 2009, launched a widespread and systematic attack that has resulted in the killing of more than 1 200 Christian and Muslim civilians in different locations throughout Nigeria (Abubakar & Emmanuel, 2013: Internet). With conclusion of further investigation by the ICC, early in 2014, the ICC Prosecutor found clearly that Boko Haram has “attacked religious clerics, Christians, political leaders, Muslims opposing the group, members of the police and security forces, ‘Westerners’, journalists, as well as UN personnel. The group has also been accused of committing several large-scale bombing attacks against civilian objects, including deliberate attacks against Christian churches and primary schools.” The ICC Prosecutor concluded that these attacks, along with Boko Haram’s calls for genocide, amount to crimes against humanity under the Rome Statute, i.e. “(i) murder under article 7(1)(a) and (ii) persecution under article 7(1)(h) of the Statute” (Jubilee Campaign, 2014: Internet).

This report could serve as encouragement to the thousands of families affected by Boko Haram’s activities, or it could be handled with a ‘so what?’ attitude. The threat

continues to grow, and still continues to threaten families in Nigeria and across the region. And similarly to regional and international governments 'condemning' the actions of Boko Haram, it does not lead to a plausible, sustainable solution to the threat.

The most recent international activity towards Boko Haram is the UNSC's approval of the addition of Boko Haram to its list of individuals and entities subject to the targeted financial sanctions and the arms embargo set out in paragraph 1 of Security Council resolution 2083 (2012), adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. The Committee approved the addition of Boko Haram to its list of individuals and entities subject to the targeted financial sanction and the arms embargo. The Committee stressed the need for robust implementation of the Al-Qaeda sanctions regime as a significant tool in combating terrorist activity, and argued all Member States to participate actively by nominating for listing additional individuals, groups, undertakings, and entities which should be subject to the sanctions measures. As a result of the new listing, any individual or entity that provides financial or material support to Boko Haram, including the provision of arms or recruits, is eligible to be added to the Al-Qaeda Sanctions List and subject to the sanctions measures (Security Council Al-Qaeda Sanctions Committee, 2014: Internet). In this regard, the use of CTS immediately forces criticism on the UN in treating Boko Haram more like a state, on which economic sanctions can be placed, and not like a group of individual characters with different social, political, religious, and economic motivations.

The action of the UN was received with mixed reactions. Boko Haram is probably beyond the reach of global sanctions, but attempts to curb the group's activities are a clear indication of growing international commitment. The UNSC's designation of the extremist group as an Al-Qaeda-linked organisation clearly cemented suspicions of ties to the global terror movement. But with sanctions designed to cut off overseas funding and support for Boko Haram, there are doubts about the physical impact they might actually have in practice on the ground. According to Jacob Zenn of the Jamestown Foundation think-tank in the US, Boko Haram has for several years existed beyond the formal parameters where an arms embargo or asset freeze would affect the group.

“Its funding comes from kidnappings for ransom, which are already illegal, and also non-state actors like AQIM and likely state actors that avoid the global financial system to transfer money... Arms come from raiding Nigerian armouries or smuggling networks, such as those from Libya via the Tuareg region of Mali.” (Business Day Live, 2014: Internet)

The US and several Western countries have previously blacklisted Boko Haram but that has done little to stop the cycle of violence which has continued to increase this year. Elizabeth Donnelly cautioned against overstating Boko Haram’s current reach, and defended the action of the UN, in describing the sanctions as ‘largely symbolic’. She added that Boko Haram is not truly an international organisation yet, and given what little solid information there is about both the scale and source of the group’s resources, it will not have much immediate impact. But it is an important international signal to both the Nigerian State and Boko Haram (Business Day Live, 2014: Internet).

Although this can be described as a step in the right direction for the international community, the fact of the matter is that an immediate impact is sorely needed. Nigeria has until recently held off requesting international assistance to tackle Boko Haram, so it can be argued that the international community’s hand were tied. Yet, Boko Haram is no new threat to the region in Africa, and the fact that the girls’ abduction served as a tipping point is unfortunately just what the Nigerian government needed to admit that the criticism of their responses towards Boko Haram can be justified, and that a more sustainable, practical response is needed.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

In spite of most of the world only recently becoming aware of the terrorist threat in Nigeria, it is proven that this threat has a long developmental history. The region today known today as Nigeria has been described as a collection of independent states with diverse histories, traditions, and social structures since before the formation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates and the 1914 Amalgamation. When applying the theoretical framework of CTS, keeping perspective is crucial to a critical study. Most of the states in Africa have proved that colonial powers cannot simply divide nations and groupings as they like and expect them to function. Traditional terrorism studies can be criticised for adding too much value to the state-

centric approaches to terrorism, while one of the root faults were made centuries ago. This chapter not only examined Boko Haram and their development, but worked according to effective CTS analysis, and looked in-depth at the structural, historical, and economic development of the Nigerian State. This was done in order to critically analyse the impact that historical factors have on the development and operation of terrorist groups like Boko Haram. Historic frustrations stem from the 1800s, and may lead, as discussed in Chapter Three, to extremists doing what they deem fundamentally right. CTS calls for the whole application of the terrorism label to be re-examined in this regard. Along with historic frustrations are the economic factors that equally lead to individuals and groups trying to shape the state according to their own wants and needs. Nigeria has a healthy economic history, first the success of agriculture, and later the oil fields and the economic strength that goes along with being one of the world's largest oil producers. Yet, the civilians, especially in the North, feel they are being treated unfairly, marginalised, and dominated; and all this after being amalgamated with the South for economic reasons. Once again a finger can be pointed in the direction of historical, and now, economic development, decades before Nigeria became a terrorist hub, and home to one of the most effective militant insurgencies Africa has seen.

Another factor that has been under-analysed by traditional terrorism studies is the failed application of Western models of governance to African states. In trying to improve the economic stance and status of some groups in Nigeria, a federal form of government was implemented. This led to the distribution of resources serving as a balancing formula. Yet, uneven rates of development and tension - be it religious or ethnic - led to the failure and distortion of federalism in Nigeria. Lack of effective governance in terms of development and living standards force civilians to look for alternative forms of government and, in Nigeria's case, it was the application of Sharia law. The problem with practicing religious law is that it cannot be followed moderately. It is an all or nothing type of rule. What several analysts of Boko Haram tend to overlook, is that this was where Boko Haram saw the gap to promote Sharia law. CTS forces this analysis to take this into account, since the historical and socio-political factors in terrorism can no longer be under-analysed or overlooked. What made Sharia law so appealing to several Northern Nigerians was Boko Haram's ability to promote this religious rule as the solution to the secular government of

Nigeria's failures. What began as a deeply religiously motivated enterprise got somewhat misshapen by the need for soldiers and members of the sect, and the financial aspect that goes with it. Because of the application of CTS, the socio-economic, and more importantly the sociological influences of the members of Boko Haram has been examined in this chapter. CTS can criticise the media, and orthodox terrorism studies' strict use of the religious label on Boko Haram. In fact, Boko Haram's religious credibility can be questioned when taking into consideration the pay-offs made to 'members' to serve as informants or foot soldiers. These paid 'members' sometimes do not even believe in the Holy War, or care much for the implementation of Sharia, yet they are crucial to the success of Boko Haram's enterprises.

The new found interest by the international community is something that was sorely needed, although it can be considered shameful that we are only now giving Nigeria and Boko Haram the attention it deserves. The UN finally listed Boko Haram as an Al-Qaeda affiliate, something that has been suspected for years before the kidnapping of the Chibok schoolgirls. There are scores of similarities that can be found between AQIM and Boko Haram, so it could be concluded that some shared measures could be taken to ameliorate the threat in the region, and not just in Nigeria alone. Yet, there is so much that has been overlooked by the international community and policy makers. Boko Haram should still be analysed and researched using an encompassing, inclusive theoretical framework like CTS.

The advisory role of regional actors, like the AU, should be reconsidered. CTS can criticise the state-centric value that regional bodies like the AU place on the Nigerian government. Yes, sovereignty is a sensitive issue, but the safety and stability of the region should also be considered. A lack of sufficient action led to the militant threat of Boko Haram increasing by the day. Hopefully the new found interest of the international media and community will continue to place pressure on international actors to do more than condemn Boko Haram and use hashtags profusely.

## **CHAPTER 5: SOMALIA'S INSTABILITY AND THE CONTINUING THREAT OF AL-SHABAAB**

Somalia can easily be described as one of the most unstable states in Africa, with a rich history of conflict, and no foreseeable amelioration of the various conflicts in the region. As it has been noted in the previous chapter, terrorism does not exist within a vacuum, and when applying CTS to the case of Al-Shabaab in Somalia, the root of the cause for extremist terrorism should be considered. No single cause can be pinpointed to be the root of all evil in Somalia. All things considered, Somalis have been through a series of unstable and uncertain situations since Egypt occupied towns on the Somali coast in 1875. This was followed by occupations, protectorates and colonial powers varying from France and Britain to Italy. Border disputes, clan factionalism, drought, and a continuing civil war added to the developing chaos. The international community became aware of the severity of the situation in Somalia with the failed US mission to the country, and the film 'Black Hawk Down', depicting some of what was happening in the Horn of Africa. Inevitably some form of extremism was to be expected, firstly among the pirates and their vigorous activities off the coast, and later emerging from the Islamic Courts Union. This Union was a welcome sight at first, thought to be just what was needed to unify the Somali people, but their military wing, Al-Shabaab, soon came to be the bane of many Somalis' existence.

As the purpose of this study is to assess whether revising the current forms of counter-terrorism would lead to mitigation of the threat, it is important to note that with the extreme changes taking place within the conflict in Somalia, the international community is also changing. CTS claims that traditional, state-centred, military intervention and action have been the go-to method for the past few decades, yet the threat of terrorism in Africa is continuing to grow. Clearly something is not working, and CTS uses a more holistic approach to finding alternative courses of action. Part of this holistic approach is determining what factors in the history of a state like Somalia led to the instability we see today. This study aims to find a more plausible treatment for the terrorism-sickness in Africa, as it is clear that merely treating the symptoms is no longer a viable option.

## 5.1 Somalia – the Cold War ‘Pawn’

During the Cold War the Horn of Africa was seen as a strategic location, and Somalia was soon turned into a pawn. The geographical importance, directly at the southern end of the Red Sea, across the Arabian Peninsula, and conveniently close to major oil-lines, constituted a prime spot to project power, control politics, and provide advanced military support in the Middle East and Persian Gulf region (Lefebvre, 1991: 15). With this proximity, the US began to increase its presence on the Horn, which was deemed necessary to support and stabilise pro-Western governments, control the sea route, ensure the economic security of the West, and restrain the possibility of a Soviet blockade of oil lanes. Additionally, the US intended to keep the Red Sea and Indian Ocean open for Israeli shipping (Schwab, 1978: 7). These strategic advantages were in direct contrast with Moscow’s attempt to permanently include post-colonial societies politically and militarily into its own communist vision. Significantly, during the 1950s and based on the intensified East–West confrontation, political changes on the Horn became apparent. The US’s increasing interest in shielding and protecting Third World countries from socialist influence led to explicit financial and military support in Ethiopia. To further prevent any Soviet enlargement on the Horn, the US tried to cooperate with the Somalis as well. The Eastern Bloc issued a similar deal, offering what Somalia wanted and needed most: military hardware. In 1963 a Russian military aid agreement was established, including the training and arming of Somalia’s army. While Somalia integrated the Soviet-led communist bloc, the situation was strengthened when Siad Barre systematically overthrew the democratically elected government of Somalia and established what was known as “scientific/Islamic socialism” (Birnbaum, 2002: 59). An official Somali government slogan even proclaimed, “Tribalism divides where Socialism unites” (Mohamed, 2009: 6).

This situation corresponded perfectly with political transformations throughout the African continent in the decade between 1969 and 1979 with socialist-motivated governments, assisted by the Soviet Union. There was also a need to emphasise that both Somalia and Ethiopia were anxious to benefit from the international political situation by threatening their allies to change sides in case of inadequate support. Accordingly, the Soviet Union extended its military aid and approximately doubled Somalia’s armed forces. This collaboration grew towards a significant military



alliance. On the political level, Somalia was the first African State to sign a Friendship and Cooperation agreement with the Soviet Union in 1974 (Schulz, 2011: Internet).

When making use of CTS as a framework, the significance of Somalia's role during the Cold War should be taken into consideration. The increasing trend in Africa of an anti-Western mindset cannot be attributed to a common origin. While CTS advocates for academic work lessening the focus on the state, it also emphasises the need for a more comprehensive base of study and the incorporation of historical factors. It can be supposed that the Cold War also indirectly affected Somalia's development. In 1969, Gen. Mohammad Siad Barre took power and established a communist government after elected President Abdirahid Ali Shermarke was assassinated. Barre was initially supported by the Soviet Union, but after the Soviets sided with Ethiopia during the 1977 Ogaden War, Barre courted the United States. Though Somalia was a communist country at this time, the US provided Barre with weapons and money to counter Soviet-supported Ethiopia and in doing so kept him in power and halted the democratic development of the country (Rashid, 2014: Internet). Barre was eventually overthrown in 1991 at the start of the long Somali Civil War.

### 5.1.1 Colonialism and its Legacy



(Map of Colonial Somalia: SomalilandPress, 2013: Internet)

Prior to European colonial arrival, Somalis did not have a central state in the sense of a Western, bureaucratic state. However, they used home-grown conflict resolution mechanisms of Heer (traditional law) and Islam for resolving disputes among individuals and groups. Socio-economically, Somalis have depended on livestock and farming and many are pastoral-nomads (Lewis, 1994: 15). Colonial countries partitioned Somalia into five parts. Great Britain took two parts while France, Italy, and Ethiopia divided the remaining three among themselves. In response to the partition and the colonialisaton that followed, Somalis fought back.

The first uprising against colonialism occurred when Somalis sought to push the Ethiopians out of the Ogaden region but then expanded to target European colonists as well. The Dervish State, headed by Mohammed Abdille Hassan, an Ogaden himself who the British referred to as the “Mad Mullah”, conducted a religious-based war of resistance against the Ethiopians and British from 1899 to 1920, resulting in the death of nearly one third of northern Somalia’s population. Italy maintained control of Italian Somaliland as a part of its African empire – including Ethiopia and Eritrea – until 1941. During WWII Great Britain also took over these areas and ruled them as military protectorates until 1949, at which time the newly formed United

Nations granted Italy a trusteeship over most of present-day Somalia. The British maintained a trusteeship over what is the self-declared State of Somaliland today. While the Italians dedicated significant effort towards developing their colony, Great Britain took a more hands-off approach to governance, leaving more responsibility in the hands of local leaders, but also providing less by way of infrastructure (Zapata, 2012: Internet). These distinctions are often cited as underpinnings of the incompatibility that would arise between the two areas. This colonial history, in addition to other dynamics, is also seen to play a role in the subsequent, contrasting levels of stability of Somalia and Somaliland. This highlights the value of CTS, incorporating not merely the modern and recent events and developments, but examining historical influences of which colonialism is only one.

### **5.1.2 Somali Clans, Factions, and Civil War**

Popular histories of Somalia are prone to a few generalisations: one is that the Somali people have historically formed one unified nation that was only divided by colonisation; the second is that Somali clan-based violence is a manifestation of an ancient, primordial tribalism. On examination, especially when making use of the CTS framework, both accounts are inaccurate.

Spread throughout the Horn of Africa, the Somali people are comprised of numerous clans and sub-clans. Traditionally, Somali society has been marked by nomadic-pastoralism in the North and agricultural pastoralism in the South. Lacking a unitary government, the Somali 'territory' was partitioned by the European colonial powers after the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. There were stark differences in the colonial economic policies of Italy and Britain, which tended to amplify regional traditions. While Italy developed a comprehensive economic plan for the more agrarian Southern Somalia, the largely nomadic British Somaliland remained neglected. This situation produced lasting disparities in wealth and infrastructure. Under this colonial economic order, the clans evolved into political identities tied to economic benefits or disadvantages. Rivalry was inevitable, particularly once the end of colonialism produced the first unified Somali State (Besteman, 1999: 2).

Ethnic Somalis are divided into six major clan families: the Dir, Darood, Isaaq, Hawiye, Digil and Rahanwayn, each with smaller clan groups. While no central authority existed, each clan was governed by a committee of elders. Clan allegiance

was of primary importance and temporary alliances to achieve certain goals were deemed normal. Although a central government was formed with independence, this structure continued to guide Somali relations and interactions (Mansur, 1995: 123). Outside urban centres, different clans competed for resources such as water, livestock and grazing land. In the past Somali nomads have fought over the ownership of camels because of their utility for survival in Somalia's harsh environment. In this context, clan identity is useful because to obtain and keep a large number of camels one needs to rely on the support of one's clansmen. The importance of something such as camels and grazing land is something that once again supports the importance of CTS while studying the ever-increasing instability in states like Somalia. At first sight it does not seem important or even relevant to the unstable environment, but yet, upon examination within the framework of CTS, a few trends can be noted with regard to present-day clan identities. After urbanisation, the type of assets seen as important changed. State power, weapons, jobs, and foreign aid became important resources for which clans and other groups competed (Mansur, 1995: 123). To access these, again one had to rely on the relationships that clan identity provided.

During the first round of the civil war, between 1988 and 1992, militias were organised along the major clan lines, and major cities frequently changed hands. Militias from Hawiye clans expelled other Somali clans from Mogadishu and other towns in the central and southern regions. Militia groups that belonged to the Darod clan also controlled the Lower Jubba and Puntland regions while Digil and Mirifle took charge of the Bay and Bakool regions. Soon this changed, and the sub-clans of the major clans began to compete for the control of major cities. In Mogadishu, Habar-Gidir and Abgal militias fought for four months and destroyed what was left of the city of Kismayo. The Marehan and Harti sub-clans' forces have also fought over the same issue. These examples were repeated as the militias of Digil and Mirifle clans fought over control of the city of Baidoa. Even the break-away region of Somaliland was not spared from this intra-clan warfare – the militias of Isaaq clans fought a bitter civil war in northern Somaliland (Elmi, 2011: Internet). The loyalty to clans is a factor that is getting increasing attention by academia studying Al-Shabaab and their origins. The political history given is not meant to merely provide a large amount of information but rather to create a general understanding of as many as

possible roots of Somalia's instability. Peace among all Somalis is not something that was ever 'taken away' by Western powers; it would be bold, but plausible to say that is it something that never completely existed. As already discussed, colonialism is one of the factors that can be blamed for this eluding peace, yet a more local factor – clan rivalry and loyalty – should not be overlooked.

With the assistance of the Ethiopian government, the UN facilitated two peace and reconciliation efforts in Addis Ababa in January and March 1991. Fifteen factions attended the two national reconciliation conferences and produced the Addis Ababa Accords. In late 1992, following intense media coverage, the United States decided to join continued international efforts in Somalia, and lead what it termed "an international humanitarian intervention" in Somalia. It came under the name, Unified Task Force (UNITAF), later code-named 'United Nations Operation in Somalia' (UNOSOM I and UNOSOM II), when the nominal command was transferred from the United States to the United Nations. The UNOSOM intervention force was created on the basis of Security Council Resolution 751 and was mandated to undertake a peacekeeping mission with the consent of the Somali factions (Farah, Hussein & Lind, 2002: 328).

Despite UNOSOM efforts, the Somalis were not able to re-establish traditional means of social control and administration of justice. The clans and sub-clans that had dominated all important aspects of life, lost influence to a variety of political factions and armed militias. Large numbers of people remained displaced and continued to live in fear for their lives and property. By late 1994 the Somali leaders still had not carried out commitments entered into under the Addis Ababa Agreement and the Nairobi Declaration. The UNOSOM goal of assisting the process of political reconciliation was becoming ever more elusive, while the burden and cost of maintaining a high level of troops were proving increasingly difficult to justify. The presence of UNOSOM troops was having a limited impact on the peace process and on security in the face of continuing inter-clan fighting and lawlessness.

The Hawiye clan's United Somali Congress (USC), which controlled much of southern and central Somalia, including Mogadishu, remained split between General Mohammed Farah Aideed of the Somali National Alliance (SNA) and Alo Mahdi Mohammed of the Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA). Attempts to reach reconciliation

failed. In the extreme South, where Darod clans were strong, remnants of Siad Barre's Somalia National Front (SNF) vied for control with other groups, including a divided Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM). The Isaaq-dominated Somali National Movement (SNM) continued to control the north-western 'Somaliland' area, and in the north-east, the divided Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) controlled the traditionally Majertain homelands. In both areas, violent intra-factional conflicts developed during the last months of 1994. The fighting in Hargeisa, capital of the Somaliland region, was particularly intense and resulted in numerous casualties and the suspension of almost all humanitarian assistance programmes (GlobalSecurity, 2013a: Internet). The large amount of these political groups can be attributed to the strength and evolution of the Somali clans. Like Al-Shabaab, these clans realised that military strength alone cannot be relied upon to achieve their particular goals. The use of CTS in this study requires these histories and developments to be taken into consideration. As can be seen later in this chapter, the formation and development of Al-Shabaab has a lot in common with the political development of the clans and clan loyalty and power continues to play a vital role in the operations and affiliations of Al-Shabaab. This again points to the fact that not all militant and terrorist groups can be treated as a universal problem. Each militant and terrorist group in this study has unique factors, the importance of which might have been underestimated by traditional means of terrorism study.

## **5.2 Political Transition in Somalia**

After Somali President Siad Barre was overthrown, the country was left in total chaos. Since then, Somalis have been through years of civil strife and one of Africa's longest civil wars. One opinion of the country's perceived 'weakness' is the clear division between the clans. The natural responsibility of loyalty towards clans, has possibly led to a lack of a unified sense of nationhood among Somalis. The importance of clans, a lack of a sense of nationhood, and a clear division between individuals who are referred to as 'Somalis', but who prefer to be recognised firstly according to their clan membership, immediately points to the importance of CTS as a tool in examining terrorism and unrest in this country. The sociological, ethnic, and religious aspects are taken into consideration, not only to have a more all-encompassing view on the topic of terrorism, but also to form an evaluation of the current methods of counter-terrorism. As could be seen in the previous two chapters,

historical and, more specifically, political-historical factors are often some of the key underlying issues to consider when analysing the topic at hand. The Somali people, along with international actors, tried and tested many attempts at relieving civil conflict and transition to sustainable peace. Some of these attempts have led to temporary amelioration of the living circumstances and unrest, but a more permanent and sustainable approach is still sorely needed.

### **5.2.1 The Somali Transitional Federal Government**

In 2004 an attempt at national governance was made by the formation of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Somali delegates formed a parliament, dividing most of the seats between the Dir, Darood, Isaaq, and Hawiye clans. They elected Abdullahi Yusuf, a Majeerteen, as the interim president as the Hawiye had split their votes between two other candidates. President Yusuf and his Prime Minister Mohamed Ghedi then formed a cabinet that strongly represented Yusuf's clan, and had very few Hawiye members (Harris & McBride, 2010: 10). Although negotiators who established the TFG tried to give fair representation to each of Somalia's clans, there were still groups that felt they did not get their fair share. Clan affiliation remained the main position for most political allegiances in Somalia, but these loyalties are often obscured by a complex web of sub-clans and sub-sub-clans. Clan membership is genealogical, and some of the smaller sub-clans may be little more than large extended families. Warlords are powerful members within a clan who maintain a militia. They often use these militias to promote the interests of their clans, but it can be said that they are just as likely to pursue their own business interests or territorial struggles (Hanson & Kaplan, 2008: Internet).

Operating until 2012, the TFG worked to stabilise Somalia and prepare the country for a new government and constitution. As warlords were very much responsible for the creation of the TFG the first administration was filled with key players within Somalia's warlords. The more powerful the warlord, the higher the post he received. Almost all of Mogadishu warlords were placed in ministerial posts. It later became apparent that few of the warlord-ministers were interested in moving the TFG to government headquarters in Jowhar and later Baidoa. Muse Sudi, a Mogadishu warlord, gave hint of the warlord mentality when he said that then-Somali president Yusuf was "putting on shoes that were bigger than him", alluding to the fact that the

Mogadishu warlords were not very happy about someone from another clan being president (Mubarak, 2012: Internet). These Mogadishu warlords were ousted when Mogadishu had mostly fallen to the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in 2006 and while their influence in Somali politics faded, the influence of Islamic warlords grew. These transitions of power and influence every so often lead to policy makers and academia starting their research on Somalia's militant groups and terrorism at exactly this point: the rise of the ICU. Yet, all the factors discussed above; colonialism, clan loyalty, and warlords all lead, in some way, to the ideas and values of Al-Shabaab. It is impossible to fully understand the behaviour of the group without taking into consideration individual members' personal histories, beliefs and motivations – as will be done later in this chapter.

The growing internal rifts and factionalism within Somalia's Islamic movements risked plunging the country even deeper into violence and bloodshed, with dangerous implication for the wider region. These divisions were also aggravating the political crisis by polarising groups further along ideological, theological, and clan lines. Limited opportunity had arisen for Somalia's political actors and the international community to capitalise on these divisions and re-alignments to reach out to the increasing number of domestic militants disillusioned with the growing influence of foreign jihadis and extremist elements. The divisions remained more or less hidden, largely because of the unifying factor of Ethiopia's military presence since December 2006 (International Crisis Group, 2010: Internet). But the Ethiopian pull-out in early 2009; the formation of a coalition government led by a prominent Islamist, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed; and the adoption of Sharia caught military insurgents and groups, especially Al-Shabaab, off guard. Thereafter, they had to justify their existence and continued armed opposition to the Sharif government. Personality and policy frictions escalated within the movement, and the rift widened between those open to some form of a political settlement and those loyal to Al-Qaeda inspired notions of a permanent global jihad.



### 5.2.2 The Islamic Courts Union

The collapse of Siad Barre's regime in 1991 created a power struggle between local Somali warlords and Islamic militia leaders. Since the collapse, the rule of law had mainly been maintained by various Islamic courts, instituting Sharia law. They banned anything associated with Western culture and influence, such as music and movies. Violators had been known to be publicly executed. These Islamic militias gained popularity among their separate clans in Somalia by providing educational and medical services that became unavailable without a central government. In 2000, 11 of the clans that held these courts decided to consolidate their power. They formed the Supreme Islamic Courts Union (ICU). Their stated goal was to make Somalia a peaceful and stable Islamic State. The ICU was a creation of al-Ittihad al-Islamiya (AIAI), a group formed in 1984 from al-Jamma al-Islamiya and Wahdat Al-Shabaab al-Islam. The latter groups were created in the 1960s during the rise of Sayyid Qutb and his radical anti-Western writing about militant Islam. For decades these groups had carried out cross-border attacks against Ethiopian forces. The ICU was established in 2000 after AIAI suffered significant losses during direct confrontation with Ethiopian forces. AIAI was believed to be a supporter of Al-Qaeda and was designated as a FTO by the US State Department (GlobalSecurity, 2013b: Internet).

The unification of the different Islamic courts was an attempt to enforce decision-making across clan lines rather than just within clans. Former Somali Armed Force Colonel Sheikh Dahir Aweys and Sheikh Alo Dheere led the Sharia Implementation Council, responsible for unifying the courts and their consolidation under Islamic law. Together the Islamic Courts fought robbery, drugs, and tackled major crimes in northern Mogadishu (Peck, 2007: Internet). Although the courts claimed to be a unifying factor for Somalia that valued Islam over clan allegiance, the Hawiye clan ruled 10 of the 11 courts. The ICU attempted to overcome this challenge by having each court try members of their own sub-clan.

In 2006, the ICU took over control of Mogadishu and unified it for the first time in 16 years. By October 2006, the group reigned over the majority of Southern Somalia and fought the TFG. The Arab League attempted to reconcile differences between the Ethiopian-backed TFG and the ICU but negotiations failed and Ethiopia invaded

Somalia in December 2006. (Rand, 2009: Internet). The ICU primarily relied on foreign assistance for its operation. However, according to Somali President Yusuf, the ICU also enjoyed foreign support from radicals in Afghanistan, Chechnya, Arab nations, and Europe. (Roggio, 2009: Internet).

At its peak, the ICU controlled most of Somalia's strategic points between the South and North such as the port city of Kismayo, Beletuein, Mogadishu and the UN-recognised TFG base in Baidoa (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009: Internet). Overall, ICU efforts were focused on internal affairs and neighbouring areas where Somalis were the predominant group. Shortly after the ICU came to power, Somalia had 16 terrorist training camps, which helped train and staff foreign volunteers. The ICU made use of suicide bombings, mortar attacks, ambushes, and shootings to target the TFG. In addition, the group launched mortar attacks against AU peacekeepers, Ethiopian troops, and government officials. Such tactics were not confined to the region and suggest that the Islamic Courts were importing tactics from both Al-Qaeda and Hezbollah. For example, evidence did exist that the explosives used in ICU's first suicide bombing in Baidoa were tested and refined by Al-Qaeda and Hezbollah in Chechnya, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009: Internet).

The ICU opposed the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT). The ARPCT was an alliance of secular warlords. Though it was thought to be backed by the US as a counterweight to Al-Qaeda's growing influence, the ARPCT was defeated in June 2006. The ICU seized hold of the warlord's ammunition and absorbed the militias to take over Mogadishu (Roggio, 2007: Internet). The ICU maintained an affiliation with Al-Qaeda during its existence. The group regularly released propaganda videos through Al-Qaeda's media branch (MSNBC, 2006: Internet). Furthermore, as the ICU rose to power, international jihadist leaders such as Osama bin Laden attempted to leverage the Islamic group for its goals. In a tape filmed in 2006, Bin Laden stated:

"We will continue, God willing, to fight you and your allies everywhere, in Iraq and Afghanistan and in Somalia and Sudan, until we waste all your money and kill your men, and you will return to your country in defeat as we defeated you before in Somalia."

This served as a direct reference to the rise of the ICU. The US accused the ICU of sheltering three Al-Qaeda operatives that were responsible for the 1998 US embassy attacks in Kenya and Tanzania. These same members are believed to be culprits of the 2002 suicide bombings of an Israeli-owned hotel in Kenya, along with an attempt to shoot down an Israeli airliner that was flying over Kenya (MSNBC, 2006: Internet).

The ICU improved security for Somalis compared to the previous chaotic rule of warlords. Because the ICU provided a certain sense of security and stability, the group was supported by the Somali business community and was also popular among many Somali residents who enjoyed ICU-provided education and medicine (GlobalSecurity, 2012: Internet). Reports stated that the ICU reopened airports and seaports and cleaned up certain cities, which increased the ICU's popularity in the eyes of young boys and refugees that wanted to return to a stable Somalia. This support was clear when the Ethiopian government invaded Somalia to topple the ICU. Somali men in the diaspora considered this a threat to the newfound stability in Somalia and returned to the country to fight (Elmi, 2013: Internet). The ICU also enjoyed the legacy of the social infrastructure left behind by the AIAI. According to Simon Robinson (Robinson, 2006: Internet) "much as Hamas in Gaza or Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Islamists spent years winning support among the Somali public by running medical clinics, schools, and courts. Ten years on, much of the leaders of the AIAI now help run the Islamic Courts Union." Though not all agreed with the Islamic rule, Mogadishu residents claimed they would rather live under Islamic preachers than under warlords who have treated the city as looting grounds.

Upon their ascension the ICU implemented Sharia law, punishing thieves by cutting off their limbs, and sentencing murderers to death. While some perceived the Courts as a 'broad mosque', others described its ideology as political, ranging from Quttubism to Wahabism, and producing violent rhetoric against the West. From a CTS point of view, similarities can immediately be drawn not only to Al-Shabaab and their ideology, but also to Boko Haram and AQIM. The interconnectedness of these networks, of which not all are terrorist or militant organisations, goes to highlight the complexity of the terrorism and extremism threat in Africa.

### 5.3 Al-Shabaab

Al-Shabaab, or 'The Youth', is an Al-Qaeda-linked military group and US-designated FTO fighting for the creation of a fundamentalist Islamic State in Somalia. The group is also known as Harakat Al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen, and its Islamist affiliates once had control over Mogadishu and major portions of the Somali countryside, but after a sustained AU military campaign, the group has been considerably weakened. In spite of the damage the group sustained, it remains the principal threat in the politically volatile, war-torn state of Somalia. Al-Shabaab's terrorist activities have mainly focused on targets within Somalia, but it has also proven an ability to carry out deadly strikes in the region, including coordinated suicide bombings in Uganda's capital in 2010 and a deadly raid on the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi in 2013 (Masters, 2013: Internet).

Many Somali communities see a relationship with Al-Shabaab as more predictable than one would have been with the TFG or Ethiopian troops. A BBC report in 2012 stated that Mogadishu residents thought life under Al-Shabaab was strict, and often brutal, but was "less corrupt and more secure, so long as you stayed out of politics" (BBC 2012, Internet). In a broader context, this could say more about the incompetence and corruption of the TFG than Al-Shabaab's capabilities as a legitimate authority. Although Al-Shabaab attacks more than often result in civilian deaths, the group has tried to maintain a certain sense of civilian support through initiating service projects such as the construction of water wells in Buulo Barde (Somalia News Room, 2012: Internet).

While the international community takes a more military approach to stabilising Somalia, its operations lack a social component that involves engagement – and often reconciliation – between and within Somalian communities and clans. This is a consideration that this study hopes to promote within the international community. As long as the grassroots effort eludes the international and domestic actors involved in Somalia, groups like Al-Shabaab will continue to have a significant influence on the social, political, and security landscape in the country.

### **5.3.1 Al-Shabaab's Predecessor - AIAI**

Somalia has seen a number of radical Islamist groups during its long-lasting political instability. The group cited as Al-Shabaab's precursor, and incubator of many of its leaders, is Al-Ittihad Al-Islami (AIAI), a militant Salafi extremist group that peaked in the 1990s after the fall of the Siad Barre military regime (1969-1991) and the outbreak of civil war. The AIAI worked to create an Islamist emirate in Somalia. It was, in part, funded by former Al-Qaeda leader, Osama bin Laden. AIAI, in turn, sprang from a band of Middle Eastern educated Somali extremists. Many of its fighters fled the country and fought in Afghanistan in the late 1990s after being pushed out by the Ethiopian army and its Somali supporters. The group was designated a terrorist organisation by the US State Department in the days after the September 11, 2001 attacks (Watkins, 2013: Internet).

AIAI began as a nationalist movement to rid Somalia of the dictator Siad Barre and create an Islamic State. The Ogaden War (1977–1978), in which Somalia fought to emancipate the Ogaden region from Ethiopia, helped incite Islamist groups and increased recruitment of those who supported the war and believed that Ogaden was wrongly taken from Somalia during Somalia's colonialist period (Center for Defence Information, 2005: Internet). The two most prominent Islamist groups that were active in the war united in 1984 to form AIAI: Wahdat Al Shabaab A Islam (Unity of Islamic Youth) and Al Jama'a Al Islamiya (Islamic Association) (Marquardt, 2005: Internet). Wahdat Al Shabab Al Islam was created by religious leaders in repulsion to Western values and worked to attract Muslim youth. Similarly, Al-Jama was formed as a reaction to the West and was comprised of numerous Islamic organisations in northern Somalia (West, 2006: Internet). Barre's policies inadvertently helped radicalise Somali Islamists, creating a basin of religious opposition from which AIAI leaders could form the groups and draw support. AIAI leadership and members disapproved of Siad Barre's attempt to introduce scientific socialism in government, and disapproved of his accepting Western economic aid (Loewenstein, 2010: Internet).

In 1991, the AIAI overthrew Siad Barre. Upon his ousting, AIAI concentrated its efforts on emancipating Ogaden from Ethiopia. The group established training camps and launched attacks against Ethiopia with the help of the Ogaden National

Liberation Front (ONLF), an organisation comprised of Somalis in Ogaden, Ethiopia. This alliance, along with the AIAI's move of their capital to the Gedo region, which borders Ethiopia, signalled a threat to the Ethiopians who then acted to dismember the group (Page, 2010: Internet).

The AIAI was seen asof having strong ties with Al-Qaeda. This connection was established in 1993 when Osama bin Laden financially supported AIAI, with the aim of creating an Al-Qaeda base for operation in Somalia. Some contend that Bin Laden donated up to \$ 3 million to support the formation of an AIAI administration (Page, 2010: Internet). The money also went to funding the AIAI military, while Al-Qaeda gave the AIAI advice on establishing social services to win over the local population. According the UN, the AIAI shares ideological, financial, and training links with Al-Qaeda and has fostered contact with Al-Qaeda associated entities in North Africa and the Middle East, including Algeria's Armed Islamic Group; Egyptian Islamic Jihad' *Le Groupe Salafiste pour la Predication et le Combat*, the Libyan Islamic Group; the Islamic Army of Aden; the International Islamic Relief Organisation; and Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (Stanford University, 2012: Internet). Most of the above-mentioned groups should be recognised from the previous chapters of this study. It shows once again the overreaching extent of these militant or extremist groups, and again emphasises the need for holistic study and an encompassing approach to the study of terrorism.

The exact time and place where AIAI's decline began is unclear. Overall, they lacked internal cohesion and suffered from fighting between factions. On this topic, CTS can be used to draw certain similarities between most organisations formed in Somalia, where clan and faction loyalty tend to pose a continual threat to internal cohesion and cooperation. Moreover, the AIAI had attacked Ethiopia several times, which led Ethiopian forces to enter Somalia and retaliate against AIAI. The group was once again weakened in fighting against the Somalia Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), a separatist group based in the autonomous Puntland in the northern region of Somaliland. Such confrontations drained AIAI. By 1997 the group's operational capabilities were greatly impaired and AIAI members resettled back into their former clans or joined the emerging ICU (Marquardt, 2005: Internet).

In 2003, a rift erupted between AIAI's old guards, who were seeking to establish a new political front, and its younger members, who wanted to establish fundamental Islamic rule (Watkins, 2013: Internet). That led the younger members to ally with the ICU – who was also seeking to impose order over a landscape marked by feuding warlords in Mogadishu. These younger members of AIAI came to be known as Al-Shabaab and served as the ICU's youth militia in the battle to conquer Mogadishu's rivalling warlords. Al-Shabaab and the ICU wrested control of the capital in June 2006, a victory that stoked fears of spill-over jihadist violence in neighbouring Ethiopia, a majority Christian country.

### **5.3.2 Al-Shabaab's Initial Evolution**

Al-Shabaab goes by many names, among these are: Al-Shabaab Al-Islam, Al-Shabaab al-Islamiya, Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen, Hisb'ul Shabaab, HSM, The Popular Resistance Movement in the Land of the Two Migrations, The Youth, and many more. Initially the group was the militant wing of the former ICU, which had taken over most of Southern Somalia in the second half of 2006. In December 2006 and January 2007, Somali government and Ethiopian forces routed the Islamic Court militias in a two-week war. Al-Shabaab's objective is the establishment of an Islamic State in Somalia, based on Islamic law and the elimination of foreign 'infidel' influence. In pursuance of this objective, Al-Shabaab has conducted a violent insurgency against the TFG, and foreign forces supporting the TFG. Al-Shabaab seeks the creation of an 'Islamic Emirate of Somalia', to include Somalia, Somaliland, Puntland, north-eastern Kenya, the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, and Djibouti. After the end of 2006, Al-Shabaab and disparate clan militias had led another violent insurgency, using guerrilla warfare and terrorist tactics against the Ethiopian presence in Somalia and the TFG of Somalia, and subsequently the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeepers (GlobalSecurity, 2014: Internet).

Ethiopia invaded Somalia in December 2006 and ousted the ICU from Mogadishu with little resistance. The intervention, which came at the request of the TFG, had a radicalising effect on Al-Shabaab. After much of the ICU fled to neighbouring countries, Al-Shabaab remained and retreated to the South, from where it began organising asymmetric assaults, including bombings and assassinations, on

conventional Ethiopian forces. Some experts say it was during these years that the group morphed into a full-fledged guerrilla movement and gained control over large pieces of territory in central and southern Somalia. The intervention by Ethiopia was said to be a reluctant response to calls by the ICU for a jihad against Ethiopia and renewed territorial claims against both Ethiopia and Kenya. The intervention was supported by the United States and the African Union, among others (Masters, 2013: Internet).

New Islamist-nationalist fighters inflated Al-Shabaab's ranks from around four hundred into the thousands between 2006 and 2008. This was also a period when the group's ties to Al-Qaeda began to emerge. Al-Shabaab leaders publicly praised the international terrorist network and condemned what they characterised as US crimes against Muslims worldwide. Al-Shabaab was declared an FTO in February 2008. Two years later, the group vowed to:

“...connect the horn of Africa jihad to the one led by Al-Qaeda and its leader Sheikh Osama bin Laden.”

However, it was not until February 2012 that Al-Shabaab's leadership formally declared allegiance to Al-Qaeda (Masters, 2013: Internet).

Throughout 2007 and 2008, using hit-and-run attacks, IEDs, assassinations and bombings, Al-Shabaab thwarted the Ethiopian advance to the South (Menkhaus & Boucek, 2010: Internet). This success emboldened Al-Shabaab who was by then acting independently from ICU control. Calling for an expulsion of the Ethiopians and the formation of an Islamic State in Somalia, Al-Shabaab rallied considerable support for its cause among the South-Central population. It transformed itself into a major military movement that exercised control over a significant portion of the country, including the important port city of Kismayo (Harnish & Zimmerman, 2010: Internet). After the Ethiopian invasion, battle lines within Somalia remained relatively stagnant. Though Ethiopian troops were able to push Al-Shabaab into the South of the country, they failed to eliminate the group.

Although Al-Shabaab has been moulded by a variety of external forces, its initial period of evolution, militarisation, and radicalisation could be attributed to a reaction on foreign intervention, specifically the Ethiopian invasion. While the Ethiopians



quickly succeeded in routing the ICU, the invasion failed to achieve Ethiopia's goal of stamping out Islamic radicalism in Somalia and, in fact, was a primary driver behind the rise of Al-Shabaab. The Ethiopian occupation of Somalia, from December 2006 to January 2009, would fuel the development of Al-Shabaab's ideology, recruitment, operational strategy, and partnerships, transforming the group from a mere militant wing to a powerful and radical armed faction.

### **5.3.3 Goals and Ideology**

As can be deduced from this chapter, Al-Shabaab is an ever-evolving organism. Their goals and objectives have also changed as the group continued to gain strength in Somalia. The increasing global militant Islamist undertone is an ever-present factor within their operations. The message of Al-Shabaab's published statements has conveyed the transition in Somalia's political situation from a nationalistic struggle against the Ethiopian occupation, to broader conflict within the context of global jihad (Curran, 2011: Internet). Al-Shabaab's statements also indicate the evolving knowledge and application thereof, especially when understanding the value of propaganda, which the group has used in order to gain support among the Somali people in their fight to uproot the Somali government and replace it with an Islamist State. Closer examination of this evolving rhetoric concerning goals, operations, and ideology suggest that Al-Shabaab's tactics and strategy continue to shift, and while the establishment of an Islamist State in Somalia remains its top priority, the desire to participate in the global jihad cannot be overlooked. To refer back to CTS, it is important to note the insufficient attention given to the various issues and unique underpinnings of ideology. Merely using a generic view of 'Jihad ideology' has proven to be inadequate.

Al-Shabaab's stated goals have undergone a significant shift since the group began to release statements in 2007. Between 2007 and early 2009, when Al-Shabaab was fighting to rid Somalia of the Ethiopian presence, its stated goals were nationalistic: to return to a Somali state ruled by Somalis. By the end of 2010, Al-Shabaab had moved to a more global focus. The expulsion of the foreign 'infidels' from Somalia and the establishment of Sharia within the country remain Al-Shabaab's main priority, while participation in global jihad is the main part of its long-term ambition.

Al-Shabaab employed the call of nationalism to gain Somali popular support during its fight against the Ethiopians. Official rhetoric repeatedly states:

“Defeat the Ethiopian crusaders and their apostate brothers.”

Al-Shabaab’s evolving rhetoric already employed a more international Islamist awareness by 2008. In February of 2008 Al-Shabaab introduced its goal of establishing the:

“...Islamic Khilaafah from East to West after removing the occupier and killing the apostates.”

And a September 2008 statement read:

“Any peace agreement that contradicts Islamic Sharia is not worth the ink that wrote it” (Curran, 2011: Internet).

This alludes to the group’s refusal to accept an alternative to Sharia. In their rejection of any form of governance other than Sharia, the view of CTS can again be emphasised in the fact that mere military and problem-‘solving’ actions taken are not enough, and desperately need to be revisited.

With regard to Al-Shabaab’s ideological goal-oriented development, the historical content thereof needs to be taken into consideration and examined. Al-Shabaab emerged from two previous Somali Islamist groups, The Islamic Union (Al-Ittihad al-Islamiya, AIAI), and the Islamic Courts Union. According to Daveed Gartenstein-Ross (2009: Internet) there are three strands of evolution from the AIAI to the ICU and finally to Al-Shabaab. The first is ideological, in which the groups go through a funneling process and slowly become less ideologically diverse. Though all three strove to implement Sharia, a significant faction of AIAI and ICU leaders had a vision that focused on the Somali Nation itself – that is, inside the borders of Somalia and in neighbouring territories where Somalis are the predominant ethnic group, such as the aforementioned Ogaden region in Ethiopia. In contrast, key Al-Shabaab leaders are committed to a global jihadist ideology. They view the group’s regional activities as part of a broader struggle.

The second strand speaks to the groups' relations with Al-Qaeda. Bin Laden's organisation has long had a presence in Somalia. Trainers were sent to liaise with the AIAI prior to the 1993 battle of Mogadishu where eighteen US soldiers were killed (Mingst & Karns, 2006: 100). Despite that connection, some scholars have questioned how deep the ties between Al-Qaeda and the AIAI really were (Menkhaus, 2004: 65). In contrast, after Al-Shabaab emerged as an independent entity, its leaders reached out to AQSL and its chief military strategist openly declared his allegiance to Bin Laden (Grace, 2008: Internet). Al-Shabaab's relationship with Al-Qaeda will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter, but it should be noted that the relationship did not just form out of the creation and official 'naming' of Al-Shabaab, but has – as many other influences – a more historical element. Thus the forming of goals and shaping of ideology have been the result not only of fundamental and sometimes extremist beliefs of Somali locals, but also of influences stemming from the AIAI and their affiliates.

The final strand is the groups' opportunity and ability to govern. Since all the precursors, and Al-Shabaab itself, have been dedicated to implementing Sharia, they would ideally like a governing apparatus through which to apply Islamic law. The AIAI could not control any territory for a sustained period apart from the town of Luuq. In contrast, the ICU and Al-Shabaab came to control broad swaths of Somalia, and the governing strategies they put in place indicate that both groups thought hard about how to maintain and expand their power (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009: Internet). To the average realist, this would not have any connection to the forming of goals and ideology, since the main goal could be seen as merely acting to maximise power. But as previously stated, CTS does not accept this state-centric approach to militant and extremist groups. While similarities can be drawn, and the realist approach could be used, and have been used, it has not presented any form of sustainable amelioration of the threat. A more holistic understanding not only of the inner workings and development of Al-Shabaab as a militant group, but also of the development of their ideology, and the reasons behind their goal-setting agenda is what is needed, and what this study hopes to achieve.

### 5.3.4 Godane's Death and the Way Forward

On Monday, September 1, 2014, a US airstrike targeted two vehicles near an arboreus area in the Lower Shabelle region of Somalia, an area used by Al-Shabaab to train its military forces. The strike made headlines by killing Ahmed Godane, the elusive emir of Al-Shabaab, upon whom the United States had placed a \$7 million bounty in June 2012 (Quinn, 2012: Internet). The US government officially confirmed Godane's death on September 5, 2014 (Smith, 2014: Internet). Godane's death, already a significant event, came at a sensitive time for Al-Shabaab. The group is facing continuing offensives from AMISOM and the Somali federal government. There are also the persistent rumors of internal dynamics within Al-Shabaab. There is little hard, verifiable information about the situation within the group's leadership structure, from the top level to the regional and district-level administrators and field commanders. The death of Godane, who only succeeded in consolidating his control of the group by killing or driving out his major critics and potential rivals within the past year, has led to renewed predictions that Al-Shabaab will split into different factions bickering over power and control of the group's remaining manpower, territories, and resources (Blair & Jorgic, 2014: Internet). Al-Shabaab announced Godane's immediate successor, Ahmad Umar, within a week of his death and a day after the Pentagon confirmed that Al-Shabaab's leader had been killed. Known as Abu Ubayda, Umar reportedly played an instrumental leadership role in the purge of dissidents from the group in 2013 (Anzalone, 2014: 19).

The fact that Al-Shabaab immediately named their new leader, calls into question the rumours about the infighting in the wake of Godane's death, since the group claimed that the vote had been unanimous. Al-Shabaab also reaffirmed its commitment to Al-Qaeda, and vowed revenge. "By the permission of Allah, you will surely taste the bitter consequences of your actions," it warned in a statement directed at the Somali government, regional armies in Somalia, and the Americans (Allison, 2014: Internet). The death of Godane was seen as a major triumph in the international arena, but in keeping to CTS, it is important not to personalise the feat. While his death is certainly important and definitely served as a blow to Al-Shabaab, it does not influence the underlying structural dynamics that have been fuelling Islamist insurgencies for hundreds of years.

#### **5.4 Al-Shabaab's Regional and International Presence**

Despite the group's apparent defeat by Somali and Ethiopian forces in 2007, Al-Shabaab has continued its violent insurgency in Southern and Central Somalia. As already discussed, the group has exerted temporary and, at times, sustained control over strategic locations in those areas by recruiting, sometimes forcibly, regional sub-clans and their militias. They used guerrilla warfare and terrorist tactics against the Somali Federal Government (SFG), African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeepers, and non-governmental aid organisations. As of 2013, however, pressure from AMISOM and Ethiopian forces have largely diminished Al-Shabaab's control, especially in Mogadishu but also in other key regions of the country (Counterterrorism Calendar, 2014: Internet).

Despite this recent military surge against Al-Shabaab, a conclusive 'defeat' remains elusive. The most likely scenario, according to the International Crisis Group (2014: Internet), is that its armed units will retreat to smaller, remote, and rural enclaves, exploiting entrenched and ever-changing clan-based competition; and at the same time, other groups of radicalised and well-trained individuals will continue to carry out assassinations and terrorist attacks, including increasingly in neighbouring countries, like Kenya. This again strengthens the already made point that a breakthrough against the group cannot be achieved by force of arms, even less so when foreign militaries are in the lead. A more politically focused approach is required.

In what can be considered one of Al-Shabaab's 'successful' attacks, on the Westgate Mall in Kenya in 2013, Al-Shabaab's ability to generate international attention and fear was illustrated. Somali President, Hassan Sheikh, Mohamud said in an interview with The Guardian (Smith, 2013: Internet) that there was no evidence that the Westgate Mall attack had been planned within Somalia or carried out by operatives from there, suggesting that Al-Shabaab had common cause with allies across borders.

"Al-Shabaab is an organisation that is based on certain ideologies and the ideology has no citizenship. This is the nature of this organisation: it's not domestic, it's not Somali only, this is an international regional organisation and its crimes have impacted at international and regional level..." (Smith, 2013: Internet).

As aforementioned, some analysts interpret the Kenyan atrocity as a sign of weakness, but it also indicated that the group is evolving, recruiting members more quickly than it loses them, and, in the words of Muhamed, becoming “an extended hand of Al-Qaeda” (Smith, 2013: Internet). As the Somali government and, by extension, the Somali National Army (SNA) have been more alert to Al-Shabaab activities, Muhamed’s point about ideology having no citizenship is increasingly important. Al-Shabaab has adapted to operate not only on a regional scale, but also internationally, with increasing presence abroad and recruits from as far as the USA.

#### **5.4.1 Al-Shabaab in Kenya**

Like many of the groups discussed in this study in their respective countries of origin and operation, Al-Shabaab has been finding it relatively easy to operate in Kenya. It can be considered a fertile breeding ground for support created by the growing feeling of marginalisation of Kenyan Muslims. The Kenyan-Somali border is also porous and easily negotiated and Kenyan intelligence and police are seen by their own citizens as being largely incompetent.

Usually, Kenyan leaders cast terrorism as a foreign threat, a Somali problem. But in response to the quickening tempo of Al-Shabaab bombings, the Kenyan government announced ‘Operation Usalama Watch’, a crackdown on Somali immigrants and refugees in Kenya. Under the campaign, which means ‘Operation Safety Watch’ in Swahili, over 4 000 Somalis and Muslim Kenyans were detained at the MOI International Sports Centre in Kasarani, a suburb of Nairobi (Findley, 2014: Internet). The sports grounds were used as a mass jail, before people were cleared and released by police, sent to impoverished refugee camps, or deported back to war-torn Somalia. In May 2014, Linda Thoman-Greenfield, US Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of African Affairs, expressed “strong concerns” about the operation, questioning its rectitude after Human Rights Watch (2014: Internet) reported people dying during brutal round-ups, children becoming separated from their parents, and police officers beating people and soliciting hundred-dollar bribes (Thomas-Greenfield, 2014: Internet).

It can be argued that Operation Usalama Watch presumes that most terrorists in Kenya are solely of Somali origin. This presumption is a clear manifestation of the decades-long discrimination against Somalis and other Muslims in the country. The

discrimination plays into the hands of Al-Shabaab, which uses stories of Muslim oppression in Kenya to recruit members and justify attacks in the country. Al-Shabaab's foreign operation arm is heavily populated by members of non-Somali ethnic background; this makes it easier, operationally, to insert these individuals into Al-Shabaab targets in neighbouring countries (Mubarak, 2014: Internet).

On 15 June 2014, Al-Shabaab gunmen allegedly attacked the town of Mpeketoni in Kenya, killing around 60 people. There have been reports of the Kenyan government's denial about Al-Shabaab involvement. While the Kenyan government seemed to have been caught off-guard and unprepared, Al-Shabaab had warned of an impending attack weeks before it took place. In mid-May, the Emir of Al-Shabaab, Ahmed Godane, called on Muslims in Kenya to rise up and fight the State. He also addressed the Kenyan government, saying that it had made a historic mistake by attacking Al-Shabaab territory in Somalia. This had led to insecurity in Kenya, the bloodletting of the Kenyan army, and the resultant weakening of the Kenyan economy (Tres, 2014: Internet). He continued, saying that Kenya should not do "a second stupid thing" by harming Muslim honour and blood in their country, because "The Westgate Operation is not far off from you" (Tres, 2014: Internet).

This kind of pre-attack warning falls within the Al-Shabaab practice of publicly referring to such events before they take place. Godane released audio messages warning of both the Kampala attacks in 2010 and of the Westgate attacks last year (Lister & Cruickshank, 2013: Internet). The message was a clear warning of an impending high casualty attack and of an escalation of the insurgency in the Somali part of Kenya.

On 19 May 2014, Al-Shabaab ambushed Kenyan troops near Mandera in Kenya, taking light arms and vehicles from security forces. Following the ambush, on 20 May, Al-Shabaab spokesman, Sheikh Ali Dhere, said that the Kenyans would be spared attacks in their country if they withdraw troops from Somalia. On 22 May, speaking at a rally in Bardhere town in Gedo region where weapons taken from the Kenyans in the Mandera ambush were being displayed to the public, Sheikh Faud Mohamed Khalaf – a senior Al-Shabaab member – called for Somalis and other Muslim people in Kenya to take up arms against the Kenyan State for its

suppression of Muslim rights. Sheikh Faud justified the killing of Kenyan civilians because their troops are killing Muslim civilians in Somalia:

“The Muslim people in Kenya should take up arms; Kenya should be attacked, its state should be destroyed. As is written in the Qu’ran when the disbelievers oppress by killing children and women... Allah has said if they punish you or hurt you, do to them like what they did to you. By God’s permission, we will fight Kenya; we will concentrate our efforts in Kenya...” (Mubarak, 2014: Internet).

Sheikh Faud also mentioned that most Al-Shabaab members operating within Kenya are of Kenyan origin and are victims of its government’s policies towards Muslims.

“We are training Muslim boys from Kenya who had been oppressed there, and we return them back there. The ones that we sent and killed your troops are these; the ones we are going to send your way are much more than the ones we have already sent, by the permission of Allah... I end this by saying that we will move the war to Nairobi – and it is a promise we made to Allah” (Mubarak, 2014: Internet).

The above statements reinforce the previous statement regarding the prejudice against Al-Shabaab and its members being mostly of Somali origin. Again the point is made that Al-Shabaab has also adjusted and adapted concerning its original and local goal of implementing Sharia law and creating an Islamic State in Somalia, to generating regional fear and achieving regional and eventually global jihad. Yet again the point is made by implementing CTS – a state-centric approach is not enough to sustainably lessen the terrorism threat. Understanding the regional impacts and the historical and ethnic prejudice is just as important as firstly holistically understanding the threat, and then working towards amelioration.



## 5.4.2 Regional Attacks and Recruitment



(Map of Al-Shabaab linked attacks: Miller, 2014: Internet)

In November 2010, Al-Shabaab’s al-Katib Media Foundation released a 35-minute recruitment video, “Message to the Umma: And Inspire the Believers,” featuring nine named foreign fighters from different countries. Six of the foreign fighters were from East Africa, three from Kenya, and the other three from Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Sudan (Anzalone, 2012: Internet). The video was subtitled in both English and Swahili, suggesting that its target audiences are potential recruits from abroad. Ali Rage, Al-Shabaab’s spokesman, ended the video by specifically inviting East African foreign fighters to join the Somali insurgency, finishing his comments by saying, “to our people/family in East Africa we say, ‘welcome to Somalia, hakuna matata’ (there are no worries)”, using a famous Swahili phrase. Swahili speakers have also subsequently been featured in a number of other official Al-Shabaab videos, including the movement’s video celebrating the formalisation of its affiliation with Al-Qaeda central, which was released in April 2012, and a video released in February 2012 documenting a battle between insurgents and Kenyan-backed Somali militias (The Year of Unity, 1433: 2012; Battlefield EI-Wak: Against the Kenyans’ Agents: 2012.).

In the first video, a Kenyan identified as Abu Hajer-al-Kini commended Kenyans to join the frontline of fighting in the ‘land of jihad, the land of Somalia,’ and recited

Swahili poetry in praise of Al-Shabaab's emir, Ahmed Godane. Abu Hajer promised to launch attacks, including 'martyrdom operations,' inside Kenya while standing in front of a banner that declared, "Terrorism is a duty in Allah's religion." (The Year of Unity, 1433: 2012). In the latter, another Kenyan foreign fighter, identified as Abu Ahmad, showed an al-Kataib cameraman weapons, ammunition, and other supplies, including several trucks, allegedly captured by Al-Shabaab in a surprise dawn attack in September 2011 on the border city of El-Wak in the Gedo region of Somalia (Battlefront El Wak, 2012). Al-Shabaab's use of Swahili and the featuring of Swahili-speakers in its media productions are indicative of the insurgent movement's desire to attract more recruits from East Africa, where Swahili, the language of an estimated 35 million people, is widely spoken. Swahili is a lingua franca in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and parts of Somalia (Anzalone, 2012: Internet).

Al-Shabaab's first major international attack was in July 2010, when they carried out twin suicide bombings in Kampala, Uganda (Harnisch, 2010: Internet). The absence of a second major attack and the start of a major offensive against Al-Shabaab in 2011 led many to dismiss the Kampala bombings as a once-off strike and to assess that Al-Shabaab had been significantly weakened. The group had lost control of territory and announced that it would focus on asymmetrical attacks, rather than holding land. Its continued threats against the regional troop-contributing countries (TCC) and the Peacekeeping Mission in Somalia appeared to be ambitious at best (Miller, 2014: Internet).

The very public attack on the Westgate Mall in Nairobi in 2013 can be seen as Al-Shabaab's second major international attack (Cruickshank & Lister, 2014: Internet). Al-Shabaab had a significantly cultivated Kenyan network before the Westgate attack, thus established partnerships with Kenyan extremist networks were in existence. Key partners such as al Hijra, a group comprised primarily of indigenous Kenyans, provided Al-Shabaab with an extensive fundraising and recruitment network in Nairobi and along the Kenyan coast (Nzes, 2014: Internet). The growth of these networks allowed Al-Shabaab to declare a pivot to Kenya on May 22, 2014, encouraging Muslims to take up arms against the Kenyan government. Since then, Al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility for killing as many as ninety people in a series of attacks along the Kenyan coast in June and July 2014 (Jorgic, 2014: Internet).

Al-Shabaab has also continuously focused its efforts on other TCCs. Of the six primary countries, Al-Shabaab has attempted attacks in four over the past year. Two Al-Shabaab operatives attempted, but failed, to bomb an October 2013 World Cup qualifying match in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Ethiopian authorities announced the arrest of five Somali conspirators on December 19 (Maasho, 2013: Internet). Uganda remains a target. The US Embassy in Kampala has issued several terror warnings in the past year for Uganda, most recently citing a specific threat to Entebbe International Airport on July 3, 2014 (US Embassy Kampala, 2014: Internet). Although not all of Al-Shabaab's attacks have been successful, its growing operational reach and regional influence is evident.

Al-Shabaab's recruitment in the East African region and countries such as Kenya have been greatly aided by the presence of both sympathisers, such as influential religious preachers, and allied organisations, chief among them Kenya's Muslim Youth Centre (MYC). The MYC's leader was a Kenyan preacher named Ahmed Iman Ali. Known for his charisma and financial generosity, Ali successfully recruited hundreds of young Kenyans to travel to Somalia and help Al-Shabaab in its efforts to take control of the country (Meleagrou-Hitchens, 2014: Internet). In 2009, Ali himself travelled to Somalia to take command of a force of Kenyan and other East African Al-Shabaab members. When Kenyan forces entered Somalia in October 2011, Ali's sermons started calling for direct attacks on Kenyan targets:

“So many of our brothers suffered and others were oppressed by the Kenyan government. Their recent invasion of Somalia is clear evidence of their enmity towards Islam and Muslims...” (Meleagrou-Hitchens, 2014: Internet).

Based on fieldwork done by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) in Kenya, about half of the people interviewed were motivated by financial rewards. The other half were taken in by the teachings of Ali and other jihadist preachers. Youth unemployment in Kenya is currently at 75%, and even higher among Muslims. Al-Shabaab recruiters promise monthly salaries of 40 000 Kenyan Shillings (500 USD), which many see as an opportunity to earn quick money. Equally important, the culturally transcendent jihadist ideology of Al-Shabaab has offered Kenyans an alternative identity, which many have embraced after growing weary of old tribal tensions. Recruiters like Ali claim that Somalia is a

battleground for the very survival of Islam, and teach that Kenyan Muslims have an obligation to take part in the fight (Meleagrou-Hitchens, 2014: Internet).

To prove once again the importance of using a CTS framework when studying different aspects of Al-Shabaab, more than just the ideological motivation is used to recruit members. A straightforward orthodox approach cannot be judged as sufficiently analysing the complexity of Al-Shabaab. It would be dangerous to assume that recruits join Al-Shabaab simply because of their inherent belief in Sharia and the waging of a holy war. As proven in this section, Al-Shabaab makes use of much more than ideological motivation. The extravagance of their attacks in the region not only draws the West's attention, but also the attention of locals, who are more susceptible to be influenced by something that might lead to monetary welfare or status. CTS tries to incorporate these issues, and the fields of study they consist of, to create a deeper, holistic understanding of Al-Shabaab.

#### **5.4.3 Western Recruitment and the use of Alternative Media**

As mentioned earlier in this study, no militant group functions in a vacuum. Al-Shabaab has not only realised this, but successfully adapted their modus operandi to resonate with more than just impoverished Muslim youths. Al-Shabaab has become increasingly clever in producing material that Western followers and possible recruits can relate to; this material serves mainly as an alternative to mainstream media. The group relies heavily on the use of digital video and social media platforms such as Twitter. This reliance on media and technology makes up a crucial part in their day-to-day operation – in spite of the group labelling almost everything Western as a sin.

The group projects itself in an image of an effective and united force, carrying out the will of God by implementing Sharia and fighting the enemies of Islam (Geller, 2014: Internet). Twitter provides the opportunity to the group to promote their image in real time, offering supporters instant interpretations of events and rebuttals of critiques. At its core, Al-Shabaab has a much evolved communications strategy aimed at reaching and influencing Muslims living in the West. This strategy combines culturally relevant material that resonates with members of the Somali diaspora with positioning Somalia as a key battleground in the struggle between Islam and the West (Geller, 2014: Internet).

Al-Shabaab's media production group is called al-Kataib, and it employs a professional production value used in many jihadist videos. These videos aim to present the group's version of events, motivate recruits, and establish an alternative narrative; where the mainstream media might report losses, Al-Shabaab records victories. As well as short news reports, al-Kataib has also begun to produce longer, documentary-style films which follow a London-accented reporter as he demonstrates how Al-Shabaab's implementation of Sharia has improved sections of Somali society. In one of these documentaries, "Under the Shade of Shari'ah", Al-Shabaab troops are presented as the saviours of the city. Footage of bullet-riddled, desperate slums taken after the capture of the city of Baidoa 2009 is contrasted with more recent footage of bustling street markets and improved infrastructure. Locals claim that business is not only booming, but Sharia has ensured that crime is virtually non-existent (Al-Kataib Media, 2012: Internet). Al-Shabaab's engagement with Western Muslims also occurs through the production of English press releases. These releases are sent to Western journalists and researchers who are known to follow the group and include reports from key battles or information on individuals who have been 'martyred' by AMISOM forces. It offers the leadership of Al-Shabaab a unique channel through which it can react to current events which concern Somalia and the global jihad (Meleagrou-Hitchens, Maher & Sheehan, 2012: 29 – 30).

Al-Shabaab's 2013 attack at the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya demonstrated its understanding of the media's power in recruitment. During the attack, the group used its Twitter handle - @HSMPress – to broadcast its version of events and emphasise the role of American foreign fighters in the operation. Following the actual attack, Al-Shabaab released a 58-minute video, "Woolwich Attack: It's an Eye for an Eye," that explicitly called for Western Muslims to conduct singular attacks to support global jihad. The sophistication of both the Westgate attacks and the accompanying virtual recruitment campaign demonstrated Al-Shabaab's mounting capacity (Geller, 2014: Internet).

In September 2011, the head of the United Kingdom's MI5, Jonathan Evans, warned that the country faced an imminent terrorist threat from British residents trained by Al-Shabaab. He stated that he was "concerned that it's only a matter of time before we see terrorism on our streets inspired by those who are today fighting alongside Al-Shabaab" (Norton-Taylor, 2010: Internet). This alarm was not without foundation.

The past years have witnessed a number of UK-based Somalis and other Muslims travelling to the region to train and fight for the Somali jihadists. In October 2007, an unnamed British-Somali was among the first Western-based jihadists to die for Al-Shabaab when he detonated a suicide vest at an Ethiopian army checkpoint in the town of Baidoa, killing himself and around 20 soldiers (Rugman, 2009: Internet). In his suicide video, he had a message for fellow British Muslims:

“I am doing this martyrdom operation for the sake of Allah. I advise you to migrate to Somalia and wage war against your enemies. Death in honor is better than lie in humiliation... To the Somalis living abroad, are you happy in your comfort while your religion, your people are being attacked and humiliated?” (Rugman, 2010: Internet).

In the US, the problem is equally serious, with some American Muslims either joining or providing material support to the militia. Among the first to become involved was American convert, Zachary Adam Chesser (also known as Abu Talha al-Amriki), who in February 2011 was convicted of providing material support to the terrorist group (Meleagrou-Hitchens, 2012: Internet). Another example is Somali-American Shirwa Ahmed, who travelled from Minnesota to Somalia where he conducted a suicide bombing in October 2008. Clearly Al-Shabaab’s appeal to Westerners is not a new phenomenon.

In early November 2011, Al-Shabaab claimed that Abdisalan Hussein Ali, an American-Somali from Minnesota wanted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), took part in an October assault against AU forces in Mogadishu. He was apparently one of the two suicide bombers involved in the attack (Kron, 2011: Internet). Ali is among a group of at least 11 Americans wanted by the FBI in connection to their association with Al-Shabaab. Ali is the third American suicide bomber. The first, Shirwa Ahmed, carried out a suicide bombing at the Ethiopian Consulate and the presidential palace in Hargeisa, killing 24 people in October 2009. The second, Farah Mohamad Beledi, carried out a suicide bombing on May 30, 2011, targeting a military base outside Mogadishu, the Somali capital, killing two AU peacekeepers and a Somali soldier. The identity of the third attacker has never been confirmed, but there are reports of an American being involved in a suicide attack in Mogadishu in 2009 (Anti-Defamation League, 2012: 1-2).

Al-Shabaab made a specific effort to promptly release the audio of a 'martyrdom' sermon (in which Al-Shabaab claims are delivered by Ali) on jihadist web forums following the October operation. One can argue that the intention, as with all Al-Shabaab media aimed at Westerners, was to use Ali's story to awaken militant jihadist feelings among American Muslims (Meleagrou-Hitchens, 2012: Internet). Al-Shabaab has put together numerous additional videos with the goal of recruiting Americans. In a video released in August 2013, the focus is specifically on the large Somali-American populations of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Titled, "The Path to Paradise: From the Twin Cities to the Land of the Two Migrations," it presents a standard Islamist narrative of the obligation to fight and then focuses on the importance of leaving the US to join Al-Shabaab, including personal narratives by different individuals who have made the trip. One of the featured jihadists, named Muhammed, tells viewers, "this is the best place to be, honestly... if you guys only knew how much fun we have over here – this is the real Disneyland." (Anti-Defamation League, 2012: 4).

Efforts to recruit fighters for Al-Shabaab have taken place in other countries as well. For example, an Al-Shabaab recruiter at a youth recreation center in Stockholm, Sweden, reportedly showed YouTube clips that encouraged young people to sacrifice themselves for their beliefs. Approximately 20 individuals from Sweden have been recruited by Al-Shabaab, according to the Swedish security service. Other foreign recruits come from Australia, the United Kingdom, South Asia, and the Middle East (Anti-Defamation League, 2012: 5).

CTS can be approached with reference to recruitment in the West by ever-changing means. One of the major critiques of traditional terrorism studies, and the separation of different fields of study with regard to terrorism, is the fact that the 'solution' to the problem was ascribed to the idea of bargaining and negotiating. These traditional practises would be laughed at in today's evolving world of militant groups, terrorism, and especially recruitment. CTS would suggest that the military, state-centric focus should shift in this context to one of criminality. Using a more internationalist approach, international law could be applied more efficiently to deter individuals in contacting the specific terrorist groups. Groups mentioned in this study, especially Al-Shabaab, have learned to use evolving technology to their advantage, even while operating in Third World, underdeveloped countries. Would it be unreasonable to

expect First World, developed countries, with state-of-the-art technology at their disposal, to always be one step ahead?

## **5.5 Al-Shabaab and Affiliates**

The three terrorist organisations discussed in this study have a lot of elements in common. A great deal has been discussed in earlier chapters, each focusing specifically on elements relevant to the specific chapter. Al-Shabaab is a unique group with its own unique foundations and features. Once again the importance of CTS is highlighted, and some attention can be given to the research questions of this study. Is there a 'one-size-fits-all' pattern on how to address the continuous threat of Al-Shabaab and its affiliates? There might be some coinciding characteristics in terms of ideology and global objectives, but the threat cannot merely be put under a 'terrorism in Africa' umbrella. This view will be further discussed in the next chapter. With regard to Al-Shabaab and its strongest assets, to name a few; its international image; the ability to project a certain image across the world; and their increasing shrewdness when it comes to utilising modern technology to its own benefit, it would not be bold to assume that this group has established relationships with other groups. These relations might be either for means of learning and/or teaching techniques and practices, or financial, military, moral, or public support.

### **5.5.1 Al-Qaeda**

In February 2012 Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda announced their formal merger in a video distributed online. In the video, Ahmed Godane (also known as Mukhtar Abu al Zubayr), the cofounder and then emir of Al-Shabaab, pledges his organisation's allegiance to Al-Qaeda, and Ayman al Zawahiri, emir of Al-Qaeda, accepts.

"O our beloved Emir, on behalf of my brothers in Al-Shabaab al Mujahideen Movement, commanders and soldiers, I say: We give allegiance to you to follow the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, to listen and obey in good and bad, to have altruism and not dispute with people in their fields except when we see clear unbelief that is proven in the revelation from Allah as much as we can," Godane says in his address to Zawahiri. He adds: "Lead us on the path of martyrdom and jihad, on the steps drawn by our martyred Imam Usama (Bin Laden)" (Zelin, 2012: Internet).



Zawahiri responds in the video, and claims that the jihadi movement is growing, in spite of a renewed and fierce campaign by the West against Muslims (Joscelyn, Roggio, 2012: Internet). Zawahiri continues:

“Today, I have pleasing glad tidings for the Muslim Ummah that will please the believers and disturb the disbelievers, which is the joining of the Shabaab al Mujahideen Movement in Somalia to Qaedat al Jihad, to support the jihadi unity against the Zio[nist]-Crusader campaign and their assistant among the treacherous agent rulers who let the invading Crusader forces enter their countries” (Zelin, 2012: Internet).

The announcement was hardly seen as surprising, since there have been links between Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab before the formal announcement. During an interview in December 2011, Godane highlighted the role Al-Qaeda has played in Somalia since the 1993 Battle of Magadishu (Roggio, 2011: Internet). Al-Qaeda has praised Al-Shabaab and its predecessor, the ICU, for years prior to accepting Al-Shabaab into the fold. Also, for years Al-Qaeda has helped produce propaganda for the Islamic Courts and Al-Shabaab, and had addressed the group in its own propaganda tapes (Joscelyn & Roggio, 2012: Internet). Osama bin Laden endorsed the ICU in a speech in 2006 (Roggio, 2006: Internet).

During 2008, Al-Shabaab sought to formally join Al-Qaeda. By the end of that year, Al-Qaeda had indicated that it supported Al-Shabaab as its official affiliate in East Africa (Joscelyn & Roggio, 2012: Internet). In September of the same year, Al-Shabaab formally reached out to AQSL in an effort to integrate better with the network and its strategic connections across Africa and the Middle East. The effort came in the form of a video that featured Saleh ali Saleh Nabhan, who served both as an Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab leader (Grace, 2008: Internet). In the video, Nabhan declared an oath of loyalty on behalf of Al-Shabaab to bin Laden and Al-Qaeda and encouraged fighters to train in Al-Shabaab-run camps. He also promoted the fight against the TFG, Ethiopian forces, and African Union peacekeepers. Two months later, Zawahiri acknowledged the group in a propaganda video by calling them “my brothers, the lions of Islam in Somalia.” (Grace, 2008, Internet).

When studying the relationship between these two groups, the motivation from especially Al-Shabaab’s side is immediately brought into question. As has been

discussed in this chapter, Al-Shabaab's main goal is to establish Sharia law within Somalia and for all Somalis in the region. Yet, verbally it promises to take part in the idea of global jihad, as promoted by Al-Qaeda. Obviously once there is a formal connection with Al-Qaeda, which can be described as the 'mother ship' of extremist organisations, a group's global image improves considerably. It was already established in this study, especially while making use of the framework of CTS, that Al-Shabaab is one of the terrorist organisations who is most concerned with global 'image'. While recruitment is definitely something that takes place on a global scale, it could be considered that the relationship with Al-Qaeda is not only for religious reinforcement, but for self-gain as well.

Al-Qaeda's agenda is ideological, religious, and political in nature: it includes unifying the Islamic world under a puritanical interpretation of Sunni Islam, the rejection of both secular rule, and the institution of the nation-state in the Muslim world. This is intended to lead to the overthrow of all existing Muslim countries and the integration of all Muslim societies into a Caliphate, the liberation of Muslim territories from foreign occupation. The Holy War will bind Muslims together and lead them through a 'clash of civilisation' that will rid the Muslim world of non-Muslim cultural and political influence (Agbiboa, 2013: Internet). The combined ideology that emerges after a formal alliance like the one between Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda makes little distinction between targeting local enemies and targeting global ones and has a one-size-fits-all solution – jihad. Thus, it could be said that Al-Qaeda affiliates like Al-Shabaab are only required to expand their focus, not abandon their own, local agenda (Agbiboa, 2013: Internet).

### **5.5.2 Boko Haram**

It has been mentioned that the previous Commander of AFRICOM linked Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram, and claimed that Boko Haram was financially sponsored by Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab. He also alleged that both jihadist groups shared training and fighters with Boko Haram. He described the linkage as "the most dangerous thing to happen not only to the Africans, but to [Americans] as well" (Doyle, 2012: Internet).

Since terrorist and organised groups in Africa have approached one another on the basis of ideology, there may be clearly defined indications establishing the linkages

of Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram. The linkage between these two groups is rooted in the ideological efforts of fighting for the core of Islam; a typical platform of the post-independence era, characterised by post-colonial North African regimes reacting to the threat of terrorism in the cause of political change (Minteh & Perry, 2013: Internet). The common ideological forefront has ensured the establishment of a sort of liaison between Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram, particularly in the recruitment and training of young men in Al-Shabaab camps.

Following the 2011 bombing of the UN building in Nigeria, security officers confirmed that the man responsible for planning the operation, Mamman Nur, returned from Somalia shortly before the bombing. He was also known to have ties with Al-Qaeda (Eboh, 2011: Internet). Boko Haram's linkage to Al-Shabaab is largely driven by a clearly defined common ideological base of protecting Islam. The two groups are involved in the reinforcement of a common agenda through inter-exchanges of resources and training to boost operational capability across the global political landscape (Minteh & Perry, 2013: Internet).

According to Jacob Zenn, expert on Boko Haram, and co-author of "*Northern Nigeria's Boko Haram: The Prize in Al Qaeda's Africa Strategy*", worrying signs have emerged regarding communications and shared tactics between these two groups. The death toll caused by Boko Haram and Nigeria's under-funded security forces, themselves subject to allegations of human-rights abuses, is estimated to more than 20 000 since mid-2011 (De Vos & Smith, 2014: Internet). According to Zenn, Boko Haram has seized the opportunity to exploit the economic and factional divisions – and evolved to become more like Al-Shabaab. He said the former likely received training from their east-coast brothers to carry out their first suicide bomb attack in 2011. More recently, Boko Haram's bombing of a venue airing a match of the Football World Cup that killed 14 people in July 2014 mirrored deadly attacks attributed to Al-Shabaab in Uganda and Kenya. There are signs that such interactions are going both ways, with Al-Shabaab copying Boko Haram's kidnapping strategy by taking girls in Kenya (De Vos & Smith, 2014: Internet).

When analysing the possible relationship between Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram, one should be careful not to step into the exact trap that CTS warns against: using a generic model to assess and analyse terrorist groups. The fact that these two groups

have similar ideologies does not necessarily mean that they have an active inter-relationship. When studying extremism, especially Islamic extremism, it is noted that there are numerous coinciding characteristics that can be identified in more than one group. Yet, as CTS suggests, in creating a deeper understanding of terrorism, each case should be treated as a unique study, bearing in mind the similarities, but not drawing hasty conclusions.

## **5.6 International and Regional responses**

The continuation of the Somali conflict can be linked to the country's historical development and its sociocultural history – as was discussed at the beginning of this chapter. The political climate and the struggle for power in Somalia highlight the difficult split between tradition and modernity. This rift has led to a legitimacy – and inherently leadership – vacuum, which has made it difficult for the warring parties to find enough common ground for a compromise. Furthermore, external influences, at both regional and international levels, have contributed to the fragmentation of the political arena, due notably to the emphasis on the use of force as the principal tool for acquiring or maintaining power (Marangio, 2012: 1). Within this ever-changing crisis, regional pressures and rivalries, international interventions, economic and strategic interests as well as piracy, corruption, and the threat of Al-Shabaab all play an interlocking role. In view of this, the complexity of the situation is clear, and a new approach to the crisis is desperately needed. Regional and international actors such as the AU and the UN should rethink their current approaches, and consider whether a change in intervention, peacekeeping, and aid would actually lead to a more sustainable amelioration of the threat.

### **5.6.1 AMISOM**

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is an active, regional peacekeeping mission operated by the AU with the approval of the UN. It was created by the African Union's Peace and Security Council on 19 January 2007 with an initial six month mandate. AMISOM replaced and subsumed the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Peace Support Mission to Somalia, or IGASOM, which was a proposed Inter-Governmental Authority on Development protection and training mission in Somalia approved by the African Union in September 2006. Originally IGASOM was proposed for immediate implementation in March 2005 to provide

peacekeeping forces for the latest phase of the Somali Civil War. At that time, the ICU had not yet taken control of Mogadishu, and most hopes for national unity lay with the TFG. By May 2006, the situation was radically different, as the ICU had recently engaged the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism or ARPCT and was fighting for control of Mogadishu in the Second Battle of Mogadishu. In February 2007, the UNSC authorised the AU to deploy a peacekeeping mission with a mandate of six months. The aim of the peacekeeping mission was to support a national reconciliation congress and requested a report within 60 days on a possible United Nations Peacekeeping Mission (AMISOM, 2014: Internet).

AMISOM was launched in Somalia in the context of protecting the TFG, which, at the time, represented an important, but embryonic opportunity for a new government for the whole of Somalia. Among its core activities, AMISOM was tasked with supporting the TFG in its efforts at stabilising Somalia and enabling further dialogue and reconciliation. One of the key problems for AMISOM was that, even though the TFG had been established as the result of a peace process, there really was no peace for AMISOM to keep (Wiklund, 2013: 12). The Islamic courts had been defeated, but out of their ashes grew new opposition to the government. The TFG was not based on a legitimate, inclusive process involving all relevant stakeholders such as Somaliland, Puntland, the clans, or organisations like Al-Shabaab. The establishment of AMISOM in order to defend the TFG was considered by some of the key stakeholders as just another foreign invasion. This notion was reinforced, as the TFG increasingly proved to be corrupt and weak, failing to achieve significant and timely progress on key transitional objectives (International Crisis Group, 2011: Internet).

By early 2010, despite remaining ill-equipped and understaffed, AMISOM managed to re-capture and secure a number of areas around Mogadishu where life was relatively normal (Wiklund, 2013: 19). With AMISOM's support, the Somali national forces evicted Al-Shabaab from most major urban centres in southern Somalia, including Mogadishu, Baidoa, and the port cities of Marka and Kismayo (Segui, 2013: Internet). AMISOM developed the techniques and tactics that have enabled it to score military successes against Al-Shabaab in the capital. With these successes, it should be kept in mind that asymmetric attacks and intimidation of locals in some areas remain a reason for concern. AMISOM's military successes in those areas

remain unpredictable. In 2011 a major turning point can be noted when Al-Shabaab lost control of Mogadishu. After months of intense military operations by both AMISOM and the Somali National Security Forces (NSF), Al-Shabaab was forced to abandon positions it had held in the capital for over two years (Wiklund, 2013: 20). Staff within the AU have hailed AMISOM as a success for Africa, arguing that it was the first time that African forces have been used in an African intervention to enforce peace (Meleagrou-Hitchens, Solomon, 2012).

From a military and security perspective, AMISOM has been a success, clearly contributing substantially to the changes in the situation in Somalia. Although Al-Shabaab suffered the military defeats as mentioned above, its temporary loss of offensive operations can be attributed to non-military related factors as well – such as a reduction in the organisation’s popular support, the mishandling of the 2011 drought, and internal divisions within the organisation (Meleagrou-Hitchens, Solomon, 2012). In 2011, Eastern Africa suffered a severe drought that was considered the worst in a generation. Although much of the region was affected, it was only in the areas of southern and central Somalia, which were controlled by Al-Shabaab, where the drought also led to a devastating famine. International humanitarian relief organisations were ready to assist, but Al-Shabaab decided to maintain its policy of refusing foreign aid, which it considers a toll of Western propaganda (Wiklund, 2013: 37). The way Al-Shabaab handled the situation forced starving Somalis to flee Al-Shabaab-controlled areas. It also made it difficult for Al-Shabaab to continue to present itself convincingly as the provider of order and justice, which had been its major selling-point since its days as part of the ICU in 2006 (Meleagrou-Hitchens, Solomon, 2012).

Al-Shabaab’s apparent decline in capacity and the successes of AMISOM’s efforts might have led AMISOM forces to reduce their awareness for possible attacks. In February 2014, AMISOM forces faced severe critique after an attack on Villa Somalia, the presidential compound and one of the most defended areas in Mogadishu. A car bomb exploded at the perimeter of the complex and a group of Al-Shabaab militants penetrated the compound (Mohamud, 2014: Internet). Two suicide bombers died and security forces killed seven attackers. The ability of the attackers to bypass compound security stunned Mogadishu residents and left many wondering how the security breaches occurred. Abdullahi Hassan Shirwa, director of

Mogadishu based non-governmental organisation, Somali Peace Line, said the attack on Villa Somalia was the result of poor cooperation between Somali security agencies and AMISOM troops.

“AMISOM has not done half of what it was expected to accomplish, which was to train and improve the Somali forces and help them with equipment. It seems AMISOM is carrying out operations on its own and the Somali forces are on their own, and they only come together when something happens” (Mohamud, 2014: Internet).

It is difficult to formulate a definite answer when asked whether AMISOM’s presence in Somalia is a success or a failure. AMISOM has helped stability in Somalia a great deal - that much cannot be denied. But as with most things, opinions may differ as different perspectives are taken into consideration. CTS requires as many as possible perspectives to be taken into consideration, to lead to comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand, before trying to address or ‘solve’ them.

The latest joint offensive from government troops and AMISOM is ‘Operation Indian Ocean’. It was launched early in September 2014 and is designed to retake territory from Al-Shabaab and allow humanitarian access to civilians in Al-Shabaab-controlled areas. Participating troops will undoubtedly be encouraged by Al-Shabaab’s perceived weakness, especially after Godane’s death. There is also a hopeful expectancy that the efforts of Operation Indian Ocean might achieve more than just keeping in power the highly criticised interim government in Mogadishu (Allison, 2014: Internet).

Then there are some criticising AMISOM’s new bold objectives, claiming that they should look into problems on their own front. In early September 2014, Human Rights Watch (HRW) released a report into sexual abuse and sexual exploitation committed by AMISOM soldiers against Somali women at AMISOM bases in Mogadishu. The AU soldiers, relying on Somali intermediaries, have used a range of tactics, including humanitarian aid, to coerce vulnerable women and girls into sexual activity. According to Human Rights Watch (2014: 45) they have also raped or otherwise sexually assaulted women who were seeking medical assistance or water at AMISOM bases. HRW interviewed 21 women and girls who described being raped or sexually exploited by Ugandan or Burundian military personnel serving with

the AU forces. The report also warns that this is just the tip of what could prove to be a very damaging iceberg. Of course, rape and pillage have been the soldier's 'right' for centuries, but things are supposed to be different, especially when AMISOM is hailed as one of the first successful African approaches to peacekeeping. Mistreating civilians, the very people AMISOM is supposed to be protecting, is bad for the AMISOM and the dependability of the AU as a whole. As the Daily Maverick (Allison, 2014: Internet) reports: "It makes the good guys look bad, it gives Al-Shabaab a highly effective recruiting tool and it will likely keep AMISOM in dangerous action in Somalia for even longer".

### **5.6.2 United Nations Involvement in Somalia**

Following the eruption and escalation of the civil war in Somalia in 1991, the UN and the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU) strived to lessen the suffering that was caused as a result of the high-intensity conflict. Over half of the Somali population were in severe danger of starvation and malnutrition-related disease, mostly in the drought-stricken rural areas. The UN was engaged in Somalia from early in 1991 when the civil unrests began (United Nations, 2003: Internet). On 24 April 1992, in response to a recommendation of the Secretary-General, the UNSC adopted resolution 751 (1992), by which it decided to establish a United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM). The Council also asked the Secretary-General to pursue consultations with all Somali parties towards convening a conference on national reconciliation and unity. It also called on the international community for financial and other support for the Secretary-General's 90-day Plan of Action for Emergency Humanitarian Assistance to Somalia (United Nations, 2003: Internet).

UNOSOM I, with 50 troops, was dispatched to Somalia in April 1992 to monitor the ceasefire in Mogadishu between the two main factional forces and escort deliveries of humanitarian supplies to distribution centres in the city and its surrounding areas. It can be said that Boutros-Ghali, UN Secretary-General at the time, was increasingly concerned about the inability of the UN to respond to the crisis. This prompted him to suggest that for the UN to respond to global crisis in future, it needed to have a standing military wing and necessary resources to protect global peace (Pkalya, 2006: Internet). As lawlessness still prevented aid from reaching desperate Somalis, UNOSOM deployed its first military forces in July 1992. It soon became clear,



however, that UNOSOM needed more muscle, and in December 1992, the UN authorised the Unified Task Force – Somalia (UNITAF). This 37 000 strong multinational force was US-led and about two-thirds American in strength. In terms of achieving its objectives, UNOSOM was somewhat of a success, enabling the distribution of aid (Baker, 2013: Internet).

After the deployment of the UNITAF force there were generally some positive developments. For instance, it had a positive impact on the security situation in Somalia and on the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance. Nevertheless, UNOSOM had some shortcomings: for example, the Secretary-General had made two conditions in relation to how and when the transition to continued peacekeeping operations could be made. Firstly, UNITAF should take effective action to ensure that the heavy weapons of the organised factions were neutralised and brought under international control and that the irregular forces and gangs were disarmed before UNITAF could withdraw. Secondly, UNITAF's authority should be exercised throughout Somalia. None of these conditions were accomplished when the Americans withdrew at the time of transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II. Although there were many humanitarian actors, the delivery of humanitarian relief was not equitable throughout the country (Teferra, 2011: Internet). Despite the small-scale successes, UNOSOM/UNITAF was considered to be too limited: incidents of violence continued and there was still no effective functioning government.

The mandate of UNOSOM II was distinct from UNOSOM I. It carried two heavy burdens on its shoulders: the first one was that the mandate was too broad in the sense that, unlike UNOSOM I, UNOSOM II's mandate included not only peacekeeping elements, but also peace-building elements. It was directed to keep and build peace, manage and continue stability efforts started by UNITAF, and also assist the Somali people in rebuilding their economy, social and political life, re-establishing institutional structure, and achieving reconciliation (Lambert, 1999: 19). Secondly, UNOSOM II, as a military operation, had to remain as strong as UNITAF led by the most powerful army in the world and had to cover the whole Somalia. In November 1994 the UNSC voted unanimously to withdraw all forces in Resolution 954. It could be argued that the general feeling was that UNOSOM II's 1 900 troops had failed in their peace-making efforts. UNOSOM II's mandate ended in March 1995 (Brune, 1999: 19). Clearly the framework used by the UNSC to formulate these

missions can be called into question. As mentioned earlier in this study, by using CTS as a framework, a more holistic understanding to ameliorating the instability in weak and failed states could be formed. The apparent inefficiency of UNOSOM I, UNITAF, and UNOSOM II clearly serves as a call for revised approaches to the problem.

Acting on a recommendation of United National Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, the UNSC decided on May 2 2013 to establish the United National Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) by June 3<sup>rd</sup> for an initial period of 12 months, providing the United Nations 'good offices' function – and a range of strategic policy advice – in support of the Federal Government's peace and reconciliation process. Unanimously adopting resolution 2102 (2013), the Council decided that the mandate of UNSOM – which it intended to renew as appropriate – would include the provision of policy advice to the Federal Government and AMISOM on peace-building and state-building in the areas of: governance, security sector reform, and role of law (including the disengagement of combatants), development of a federal system, and coordination of international donor support (UNSOM, 2014: Internet).

UNSOM was established amid much-improved security conditions and followed considerable political progress in Somalia, which have brought renewed hope after nearly two decades of lawlessness and conflict. This renewed hope was found amid the establishment of a representative Government in 2012, and the apparent weakening of Al-Shabaab. The UN mission is mandated by the Security Council to work with the Federal Government of Somalia to help create and sustain an environment in which stabilisation and peace-building can succeed (UNSOM, 2014: Internet). Hopefully this is the beginning of change of reference system in terms of international intervention. It has been proven that the direct military approaches have been less successful. By approaching the problem from a sustainable point of view, hopefully more long-lasting amelioration will be seen in future.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

Like the countries discussed in the previous chapters of this study, Somalia is a sState with a turbulent past. It received some notice from the broader international community in the film 'Black Hawk Down'; the message was sent that Somalia is not just another country in Africa, but one with serious matters that cannot easily be

resolved. These 'issues' cannot be attributed to a single thing, the same as the case of Nigeria in the previous chapter. Of course, colonialisation served as an amplifying factor to already existing regional tensions, but CTS calls upon the researcher not to settle with the easiest explanation. Another political-historical factor is undoubtedly the Cold War and the strategic placement of Somalia at the horn of Africa. Yet again, more anthropological issues are brought to light that might be missed when conducting a conventional terrorism study. The fact that Somalia can be described as a 'pawn' in the Cold war leads one to realise the vulnerability of this state. The vulnerability was not caused solely by colonialisation, or even the 'tug-of-war' being played with Somalia by the Soviet Union and the West. Yet, it was definitely among the vast amount of contributing factors. Bear in mind that these tensions and weaknesses came into being even before the threat of Al-Shabaab became a reality. Again CTS leads us to take into consideration yet another factor – this time a sociological one. Clan rivalries could be seen as the natural state of being in Somalia. The clans formed a system of government, where the elders of the clan were seen as the decision-makers. These elders were respected and promoted clan-loyalty in such a strong sense, that wars were fought according to clan-loyalty. In critique to orthodox terrorism, clan-relations have been marginalised after terrorism became the more glamorous and public issue. When studying Al-Shabaab another aspect of importance arises in the form of the Islamic Courts Union. The ICU can also be regarded from different perspectives. Firstly, the aim of the ICU was to promote a peaceful and stable Somalia, and to address the inter-clan rivalry. This rivalry would be addressed through the one thing most of Somalia has in common: Islam. On paper, the ICU looked like a perfect solution to the problem in Somalia. Since applying a Western form of governance proved to be ineffective, why not use the shared religion to unite the country? Yet, again this perspective can be critiqued by CTS were the problem cannot be 'solved' if the problem is not fully understood. The second perspective of the ICU leads to the necessary understanding. The ICU, with its idealistic goals and objectives, already had a standing relationship with Al-Qaeda. Again, this factor might have been overlooked by the international community because of the focus on resolving clan-rivalries, and possibility that the ICU might have the recipe for a peaceful Somalia. Could it be that the possibility of the effectiveness of the ICU led involved actors to turn a blind eye to the existing Al-Qaeda alliance?

The apparent effectiveness of the ICU and the subsequent formation of Al-Shabaab led to massive amounts of civilian support. Since the ICU, and Al-Shabaab, were seen in some areas as a more effective governing body than the existing government, it was favoured by large swathes of Somalia. The favour possibly also stemmed from a more social and psychological aspect: Al-Shabaab was less-Western and more Somali-oriented, and preferred by Somali loyalists who took offence to the Western influence of the TFG, and the Ethiopian troops. A statement used earlier in this study is applicable here: "One man's terrorist, is another man's freedom fighter". Al-Shabaab was initially seen as the latter.

Another question that CTS raises in this study is whether Al-Shabaab should be treated as a global or regional threat, and if there is even a difference between the two. Al-Shabaab's initial objectives were to implement Sharia law in Somalia, get rid of Western influence and invading Ethiopian troops, and wage a local, or more regional, holy war. But as has been explained extensively in this study, the connection with other militant organisations, and especially Al-Qaeda led Al-Shabaab to adopt a more global perspective. This global perspective is strengthened by the use of media and technology. Al-Shabaab has learnt to adapt – so should the approach to dealing with the phenomenon. The United Nations initially went to Somalia to try and alleviate some of the tensions found between the clans, in an attempt to prevent a civil war. The circumstances of the intervention varied tremendously from the circumstances found in Somalia today. Some of the lessons learnt, however, should still be taken into consideration when trying to address the current issue in Somalia. As CTS suggests, a broader view is needed, taking more into account than colonisation and terrorism. There needs to be a shift away from applying Western 'models' for intervention to any and all African countries that need intervening. It might be that the increased locality of AMISOM might be a step in the right direction, since one of the main grievances is the external and Western influences. Al-Shabaab is a unique militant group, with a unique background, development, and future trajectory. The international community should treat it as such.

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

### 6.1 Critical Terrorism Study as the Next Step in the Study of Terrorism

One of the biggest challenges of this study is the continued use of a critical and even sceptical attitude towards widely held beliefs and assumptions. As CTS refers to exactly that type of mindset, it is important to keep in mind that being sceptical of accepted knowledge and beliefs does not mean this knowledge is completely discounted. One of the most powerful critiques by CTS of orthodox terrorism studies is the problem-solving mindset of these studies and research. CTS relies on the ability to stay aware of the politically constructed nature of terrorism and the responses thereto. The thought of continuing terrorism in the Maghreb- and sub-Saharan African region is settled on the problem statement mentioned early in this study: that many international interventions and different forms of political resolutions were unable to work towards sustainable political and economic development. The key phrase here is: *sustainable*.

As can be seen in all of the case studies used in this study, the historical information provided clearly shows that terrorism did not develop the day that the Twin Towers were struck in New York in 2001. It is by no means a new phenomenon, and the Western reactions to terrorism are also by no means a new war being fought. Yet, in spite of the historical development and rise of terrorism in some African countries since colonialism, no efforts have led to a sustainable, equitable amelioration of the terrorism threat. Clearly this indicates that current concepts and studies of security and terrorism should be revisited. In spite of the research field regarding terrorism and security growing in leaps and bounds in the past decade, we are still missing the mark in terms of peacebuilding and -keeping in the terrorism-prone states of Africa.

Yet, it would be wrong to assume that all forms of study and research in terms of security and terrorism have been off the mark, and that CTS is the new wonder-cure to this historical and sustained threat in Africa. CTS refers to terrorism-related studies – not merely terrorism-focused studies – that self-consciously adopt a sceptical attitude towards state-centric understandings of terrorism. Existing terrorism knowledge is not taken for granted, but as can be seen in this study CTS is more than willing to challenge widely held assumptions; since one of the aims of this study is to uncover and better understand orthodox and some current knowledge

production within terrorism studies. To achieve this aim, genealogical, ethnographic and historical information were used in each of the case studies to form a more social and political construction of terrorism knowledge. Disciplinary pluralism served as one of the core methods in this study, and is embraced by CTS. Again, a broader, more pluralist call for research in the security and terrorism field is not a new challenge. Early signs of a need for development of the research agenda regarding security emerged soon after the Cold War, with Mearsheimer (1990) warning of an anarchic future with intercivilisational or ethnic conflict and weapons proliferation. Unknowingly, he predicted the nature of much of the current conflict found in Africa. Krause and Williams (1997) called for refocusing on new threats and new understandings of security; both parties unknowingly starting to move in a new and broader direction.

One of the most prominent attempts to widen the research agenda, which can also be merged with some of the principles of CTS, is the work of Barry Buzan (1991, 1998). As made clear throughout this study, CTS adopts a more philosophically grounded approach, moving away from the strict state-centric approaches of orthodox security and terrorism studies. Buzan stressed that human collectiveness should also be considered, and that the security of human collectiveness is affected by factors in five major sectors – not only by the state. These sectors, as mentioned in Chapter One are military, political, economic, societal, and environmental. These sectors were all examined in the case studies used, under the banner of CTS, highlighting the fact that no social theory exists in a vacuum. As the militant organisations in this study influence one another, so does social theory and social science. Even though CTS is used as the theoretical anchor in this study, it should by no means be used or understood exclusively. For Buzan, political security referred to the organisational stability of states, systems of government, and the ideologies that give them legitimacy. Here CTS differs from Buzan, regarding his idea that security is dependent on the structure of the state. It is very important to remember that in the African context the concept of ‘the state’ was constructed by Western colonial powers and, in all case studies in this study, brought with them more instability and war than security. In retrospect the model of a Western, bureaucratic state was a poor fit for African realities from the start. Military security, according to Buzan, concerns the two-level interplay of the armed offensive and

defensive capabilities of states, and states' perceptions of each other's intentions. Again, CTS can agree and disagree with this view. Militant activity in the areas regarding this study has evolved to include so much more than the state; in this study, while using CTS, these evolving factors were examined. But Buzan was not completely off the mark when mentioning perceptions. So much of the extent of terrorism in Africa is unclear, and with that the strength of the terrorist groups examined. As could be seen with all examined groups, especially Al-Shabaab, they make sure that the perception that the international community has of them is one of growing strength and capability. With the use of propaganda videos, extravagant attacks, and intimidation, these terrorist groups try their hardest to stay in control of the perceptions that the international community and the states that they operate in have of them.

Critical Security Studies already expanded the research agenda regarding terrorism by using largely military-oriented assumptions and analytical aspirations such as different schools of thought. The biggest critique of CSS is the exclusion of the possibility of terrorism as a stand-alone field of study. Security principles of CSS can be applied to terrorism, but terrorism itself is never confronted directly and is only seen as one of the many threats towards security. Within CSS, as with the work of Buzan, there are certain points that can be critiqued by CTS, and certain factors that can be used within CTS. Within the Aberystwyth School, Wyn Jones (1999) and Booth (2005a) highlighted the importance of the emancipation of individuals. In accordance with the framework of CTS used, this critical approach suggests that the military, state-centred understanding of security should be replaced by a collaborative project with human emancipation at its core. CTS agrees with this point of view by minimising the state-centricity of critical approaches, yet human emancipation cannot be at the core of any form of study until the underlying factors causing the insecurity are examined and understood. This falls into the same sector of some research in Copenhagen, and the thinking of the Copenhagen School. Buzan and more collaborators in Copenhagen further expanded security research by looking at the different sectors of security, and the will to extend research widely through the concept of 'securitisation'; a process by which the physical act of labelling something as a security issue casts it as a threat and justifies extreme measures taken. Although the Copenhagen research had its scepticism towards the

concept 'security', it failed to introduce a more all-encompassing concept, which might have deepened the study of the different sectors of security. Some of the techniques and research methods used can be applied to CTS, but the main issue here is the continuous focus on *security*, and the lack of acknowledgement of *terrorism*. The Copenhagen School further proves why revisiting the traditional and current concepts is so important. These schools of thought and research, while expanding their specific area of research, still failed to acknowledge and take into account a unique tactic and phenomenon such as terrorism. Another approach that can be both criticised and used in CTS is the Paris School. An advantage of this approach is that it includes routine practices and deviation from official policy – something it has in common with modern day CTS – it is less inclined to strictly military and state-oriented approaches, and more to all practices of agencies. Didier Bigo has shown how internal and external securities merge as agencies compete for de-territorialised tasks of traditional police and military customs (Huysmans, 2006). They also jointly produce a new threat image by connecting immigration, organised crime, and terror. Once again this can be drawn parallel with CTS and applied to the case studies used, especially Al-Shabaab and their forms of propaganda used in Somalia. Critique of the Paris school will be minimal, only critiquing the problem-solving agenda, and the continued focus on security and insecurity. The focuses on security can be successfully applied to the current terrorism threat. CTS can be used in this regard, and furthermore serve as a framework not only for research in the terrorism field, but also to future policy makers.

Also according to Barry Buzan (1991) the concept of security simply proved too complex for analysis. In a way this can be applied to the concept of terrorism as well, and is exactly why this study critiques orthodox research's way of merely adding terrorism to the 'security pool'. With a concept so wide and complex, surely more focused study and research is justified. By using the theoretical framework of CTS throughout this study, some of the complexities 'behind' terrorism were examined. But future analysis of the terrorism threat in Africa will require more re-examination of current and orthodox concepts and theories as well as contributing factors regarding the inner workings of the groups examined. As CTS can be married to some current theories and ideas of security study, so can most all forms of studying the terrorism threat. Once again, these theories do not exist in a vacuum, but are tied to certain



contexts in which they are manifested. The difficulty arises with the need to treat each of these contexts as individual cases. While there are overlapping features in different militant and terrorist organisations, their backgrounds most definitely differ, and might play a bigger role in their current modes of operation than previously thought. Revisiting the current and orthodox concepts and theories used to study terrorism – like the theories and schools of thought as mentioned above – will lead to a more holistic understanding of the threat. Something that is desperately needed before amelioration can be considered.

## **6.2 General Overview of Case Studies**

The case studies used in the course of this study served not necessarily to only broaden the scope of the study, but rather to deepen the knowledge regarding the more ‘popular’ terrorist threat we know today. The case studies have many factors in common, but the differences are of enough importance to justify the condemnation of casting all terrorism in Africa under the same net. As the terrorism threat in Africa is changing and evolving daily, some recent terrorist activities might have been omitted if they are not relevant to the purpose of the study.

### **6.2.1 AQIM**

Within the first case study used, the importance of historical and social factors that can contribute to a specific militant group acting in the way they do is clear. The organisational structure of AQIM can be traced to the Algerian Civil War in the 1990s. However, Algeria’s continued focus on security – or the lack thereof – predates the Civil War and could be associated with the Independence War from 1954–1962. In spite of the continued critique of state-centricity in orthodox and traditional studies, the Algerian State itself should still be examined as it served as the breeding ground for one of Al-Qaeda’s most prominent and active cells. The history and development of the Algerian State as discussed in this specific case study, serves to expand knowledge creation and understanding of the historical and ethnic influences of AQIM and their predecessors.

One of the factors that all the case studies used has in common is the difficulty of obtaining independence, and the transition from colonialism to an independent state. An important fact to bear in mind in this study is the banning of all Islamic institutions

by French colonialists. Taking into consideration colonialism and Algeria's Independence War, it is natural to understand the Algerian State's disdain towards France. Economic hardships and unemployment fuelled Islamist extremism to take shape. Hostility towards the Algerian State itself was common place since the 'state' itself was created by the French and seen as a Western construct. Islam suddenly became a possible alternative form of government, and coincidentally a steady form of income to impoverished desert youths. This falls directly to suit with what was mentioned earlier regarding CTS and the Paris School. Spaces that are traditionally referred to as 'ungoverned' or 'stateless' are not necessarily spaces of an anarchic nature, and can be referred to as 'alternatively governed' spaces. Where leadership vacuums existed, the organisations like GIA were ready to fill the space, and it could be argued that the Muslim majority were willing to accept the non-Western leadership.

After the ban of the FIS it could be said that the Muslim majority of civilians were willing to accept a form of leadership they were more familiar with, and a form of leadership that claimed to represent their needs that have been oppressed for decades. But in terms of the Algerian State's unruly past, civilians were wary of violence, especially after the brutal Civil War of the 1990s. This support was quickly withdrawn when the GIA started targeting the very civilians who initially supported them. The GSPC in turn formed from the civil disorder and verbally embraced Al-Qaeda ideology and the implementation of an Islamic State. With support from Al-Qaeda Senior Leadership (AQSL) it was easier for the GSPC to rally after serious crackdowns by the Algerian government. The rallying and adaptation as seen in the actions of the GSPC should have served as a lesson to regional and international policy makers that these groups can operate even in relative isolation. Actions taken by the GSPC could also easily be justified by extreme Islamists and attributed to the historical frustrations and fundamental beliefs that they are indeed fighting a holy war. The psychological justifications of such groups are one of the many fields within the study of terrorism that needs more attention. CTS requires these motivations to be examined as well; before trying to convince these types of groups that they are wrong and evil, we need to understand *why* they consider their actions justified and even holy.

After the formation of what we now know as AQIM, and Al-Qaeda again shifting its support from the GSPC to AQIM the incorporation of Western targets became even more prominent. When belonging to the Al-Qaeda franchise, this expansion is a necessary move to make. The direct influence of Al-Qaeda could not only be seen in the name change, but also in the way that AQIM chose to operate. Suddenly hostage-takings of tourists and NGO workers became an important tactic for AQIM, along with suicide bombings and the increased use of IEDs. This change in tactics is something that all three groups in this study have in common; the difference, however, is that AQIM is the only group with definite confirmed and direct contact with AQSL, which occurred through the Abbottabad documents. While Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab might share training camps, some ideology and tactics with Al-Qaeda, the specific nature of those respective relationships remain unclear. Once again CTS can be called on to critique and challenge the current premise that if a terrorist group shows signs of common ideology, and tactics with Al-Qaeda, they must be allies. Along with the perception of allies, the international and policy responses to such groups are also considered generic.

AQIM's involvement in the Malian crisis proves the adapting contexts in which this group is able to operate, as well as the nature of relationships with similar regional groupings such as Ansar al-Dine and MUJAO. Within AQIM and the Malian crisis, the involvement of the French can once again not be overlooked. AQIM verbally confirmed France to be a definite enemy, and with the continued French involvement in the region, France can be described as a multi-dimensional enemy of members of AQIM. On this point CTS together with some of the work of Buzan can be consulted. Buzan confined military and security perceptions to states and their perceptions of one another, but within this study, and with the use of CTS, the perceptions of an organisation (AQIM in this regard) and a state (France) should be further examined. Upon further examination it will possibly become clearer if the continued French involvement in interventions in AQIM's area of operation is applicable and appropriate or counter-productive.

### **6.2.2 Boko Haram**

Boko Haram is currently one of the most infamous terrorist organisations. Unfortunately, for them to get the necessary attention of the international community a large-scale kidnapping had to take place. What the international media fail to portray is that the kidnapping of the Chibok girls is not a new phenomenon – not for Nigeria, and certainly not for Boko Haram. The recent events around the Chibok kidnapping has, however, made some issues regarding Boko Haram and the international community quite clear; never underestimate the power of the media, and specifically social media. It would be bold but justifiable to say that thanks to international attention, social media site, Twitter, and involvement of internationally acclaimed celebrities, political action was taken with a much bigger sense of urgency than before. Unfortunately this frenzy only lasted until the international obsession quieted down.

Nigeria is a vast territory, with more than 300 ethnic groupings within its borders. Naturally these different ethnicities, religions, and traditions would clash. As with all case studies consulted in this study, colonialism needs to be examined in order to determine the extent of historical injustices and grievances. It has already been established that colonial powers never fully considered the extent of their actions when deciding on borders. Nigeria is a prime example in proving that drawing artificial borders around a certain geographical area does not mean the individuals within that area consider themselves a nation. To say that attempts at unifying Nigeria, and creating more of a nation happened along with the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria, would be unrealistically idealist and incorrect. The fact of the matter is that Western colonial powers merely amalgamated these two regions because it made economic and administrative sense. Nigerians view the amalgamation as one of the foundations of the unstable relationship between the Northern and Southern regions. Historically Nigeria can be described as having three major groupings of people: The Igbo in south-eastern Nigeria, the Hausa-Fulani in northern Nigeria and the Yoruba in south-western Nigeria. These groupings remained fairly separate from one another – until colonialism. Within Nigeria religious identity plays a much larger role than in the other case studies examined. Within this study, the negative connotation attached to Islam and terrorism has already been criticised. This connotation is not something that can be blamed on traditional and

orthodox research, but rather something that can be influenced by newer and broader forms of research.

More radical behaviour from fundamentalists within the Muslim religion began after the Iranian Islamic revolution of the 1970s. This was the context in which some fundamentalist Muslim sects emerged to demand purist Islam based on Sharia law, the eradication of heretical innovations and the establishment of an Islamic State. Once again the historical influences on Boko Haram's ideology and motivation might be overlooked by orthodox and traditional research. Within this study, the CTS framework proved that more factors regarding the deep-rooted conflict should be examined, since some of the influences leading to religious tension do not always spring up out of local conflicts and discontents.

Adding to the already strained political and religious atmosphere in Nigeria was the uneven economic development of the regions, and the Western models applied to try and handle the situation. Thanks to the oil boom in the 1970s Nigeria became one of the largest economies in Africa. Localised policies were supposed to help Nigerians to recover from the Civil War, and have a positive effect on everyday life in Nigeria. Yet, it did not. The North felt increasingly marginalised, yet again not feeling any positive effects from colonisation and grouped into the same 'state' as the wealthier South. To try and balance this instability out, and relieve some of the historical legacies of divisions, a model of federal balancing and power sharing was implemented. The Federal System started out with 12 states, but gradually increased to 21 states in 1987, and more than 400 local government areas. Allocation of federal revenues became a problematic aspect of fiscal federalism in part because of states' unequal endowment. Again more problems were created than resolved. The issue and ideal of state creation were misused by groups who wanted a larger share of the national entity and demanded more states. One of the sub-questions of the research question of this study can be addressed regarding the application of federalism. The appropriateness of a Western model (Federalism) can be called into question in this context. In an African state like Nigeria, with already deep-rooted conflicts and sensitivities, the applicability of a modern state-system to try and 'solve' the issues of inequality and distribution failed miserably. Not only did it not have the planned effects, but also served as a motivational issue to Boko Haram, who saw the

federalist character of the state as a fragmentation of their Muslim Caliphate by the West.

Another issue that can be criticised regarding orthodox and traditional studies of security and terrorism is the confusion between religion, ethnicity, and regionalism in Nigeria. Although it is referred to as the Muslim North and the Christian South, it can also be perceived as a misconception. Little to no acknowledgement is given to the communities of non-Muslims in the North, and non-Christians in the South. The importance of religion, specifically this case study, is of paramount importance, since large parts of Nigeria were at one time able to operate relatively successfully with the use of Sharia courts. As it has been mentioned that the concept of 'the state' is a Western construct, the same can be said of 'religious law'. Since the Islam religion is both a system of belief (iman) and a complete way of life (mihaj), the connection of 'law' and the Western perception thereof is problematic. The failure of the Nigerian State to administer successful law and order, from Boko Haram's point of view, was an opportunity to promote Sharia, for the necessary effectiveness and to better serve the people. The advantage of using CTS and its broad approach as a theoretical framework allows research to incorporate issues of ethnicity, religion, federalism, etc. without losing focus on the study hand.

Boko Haram's first mission was a passive one of withdrawal from society and establishing small camps and schools in remote regions of Borno and Yobe states. What made Boko Haram stand out among other Nigerian radical groups were its operations against the police that began in 2004. In 2009 the then leader of the group, Mohamed Yusuf's, compound was shelled. This event can be seen as the tipping point for Boko Haram, leading them to incorporate violently overthrowing the government into their motivations and goals. Along with their adapting motivations came the shared Al-Qaeda ideology. The ideological link does exist, as well as similarities in strategies and techniques in terms of operations. There has been a lack of clear evidence in determining exactly what the relationship between Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda is. There have been numerous reports of possible financial and organisational help, and it is obvious that admitting a linkage to Al-Qaeda can serve as a good recruitment tool, but exact nature and scope of the relationship is still unclear. A possible observation to be made is the change in Boko Haram's targets, moving all the more to an international agenda. This is similar to the

behaviour of AQIM, and could mean a more direct link with Al-Qaeda. Simply put, this speculation is not enough. The same can be said of the possible link with Al-Shabaab. Both groups share an ideology that is imbedded in radical Salafism and both groups vocally condemn any 'enemies of Islam' both locally and abroad. But the guesswork regarding the linkage between Boko Haram, AQIM, and Al-Shabaab is still too much for policy makers to try to use the same tactics and strategies for all three groups. The similarities may be very clear and obvious but it might be the more indistinct differences that need to be taken into consideration when formulating agendas to confront these groups.

### **6.2.3 Al-Shabaab**

Using Al-Shabaab in Somalia as one of the case studies turned out to be a very daunting challenge. Extreme changes take place daily regarding Al-Shabaab, whether it is political changes, or activities and attacks. However, as can be concluded from the previous two case studies, each terrorist organisation has its own rich history. In this study Al-Shabaab was examined in terms of Somalian history, and the political, historic, and social influences that have an impact on Al-Shabaab, even today. In this study, Somalia is referred to as the Cold War 'pawn'. Partly because of its strategic location on the African continent, and partly because of the support received from the Eastern Bloc. This support rallied Somali president Siad Barre, to go as far as to establish 'Islamic Socialism'. The situation correlated with transformations on the African continent with socialist-motivated governments. It could be argued that Somalia realised their important location, and took charge of the situation by threatening their allies with changing sides in case of inadequate support. Thus, the Soviet Union extended its military aid and approximately doubled Somalia's armed forces. This situation in Somalia and the beneficial relationship with international actors is relatively unique to this specific case study. Once again proving the point that the underlying, historical factors within the context of terrorist organisations in Africa differ so immensely, it would be foolish to try and treat all terrorist groups with the same formula.

However, in spite of the above-mentioned beneficial relationship, Somalia also felt the effects of colonisation. Prior to colonisation, Somalis did not have or need a central state in terms of the Western, bureaucratic state. They relied on mechanisms

of traditional law and Islam to resolve disputes among individuals and groups. The colonialism that Somalia experienced differed from the colonialism seen in the other two case studies. In the cases of Algeria and Nigeria, colonialism came from Western powers alone and it made the West, or a specific state in the West, an easy target and scape goat for later conflicts and discontent. In the case of Somalia, however, colonialism came in various forms; Britain, Italy, France, and Ethiopia. Britain maintained trusteeship over most of present-day Somaliland, and took a more hands-off approach to governance, leaving more responsibility to local leaders, but providing less by way of infrastructure. Another colonial power, Italy, dedicated significant effort towards developing their colony. These differing approaches are often cited as one of the main contributing factors of uneven development – which is also seen in the context of Northern and Southern Nigeria – and the incompatibility of the two colonial areas. These stark differences in colonial approaches not only led to uneven rates of development, but also lasting disparities in wealth and infrastructure, which in turn influenced clan identities within Somalia. The six major clan families in Somalia did not make use of any central form of authority. Each clan was governed by a committee of elders, and clan allegiance was of primary importance to achieve certain goals. Under the colonial economic order, clans evolved from traditional competition for resources such as water, livestock and grazing land, to more political identities tied to economic benefits. Urbanisation, which came along with colonialisation, changed the type of assets that were considered important. Suddenly state power, weapons, jobs, and foreign aid became the resources that were competed for. CTS requires incorporation of a pluralistic point of view with regard to analysing and understanding the terrorism phenomenon, thus, a chain reaction type of conclusion can be alluded to here. Colonialism led to evolving grievances of the clans, and the clans were powerful actors in terms of warlords and governance; the very foundations out of which Al-Shabaab indirectly formed.

To view Al-Shabaab as the root of instability in Somalia would be a misconception. Peace in Somalia was never eradicated by Al-Shabaab, or even by Western powers alone. It could be concluded that peace in Somalia never truly existed, but simply manifested in different forms over the decades. UN efforts in Somalia go as far back as 1991, long before Al-Shabaab even existed. This again points to the uniqueness



of each of the groups discussed in this study. Unrest in Somalia continued after Siad Barre was overthrown and the country was left in chaos. Another difficulty arises when discussing Somalia as a country as opposed to a nation. The lack of nationhood in a country so divided by clan loyalties is one of the factors that might have been overlooked in traditional research, where the state-centric nature of research acquires the research to merely examine the Somali State. In spite of the formation of the TFG in 2004 and an attempt at national governance, clan affiliation remained the main position for most political allegiances in Somalia. These clans often made use of militias to promote their interests. Something that modern-day Al-Shabaab might have learnt from clan groupings and loyalty.

The TFG operated until 2012 and worked to stabilise Somalia for a new government and constitution. Warlords were very much responsible for the creation of the TFG, and thus already biased toward certain clan loyalties. The ever-present internal rifts and factionalism within the governing structures risked opening the doorway to more violence and instability. A power-vacuum was created, and Islamic militias were willing to fill that vacuum. Islamic militias gained popularity among their separate clans in Somalia by providing educational and medical services that became unavailable without a central government. This links directly to the point raised earlier regarding what the West describes as 'ungoverned spaces', which are often just 'alternatively governed' spaces. The formation of the Islamic Courts Union started to provide to citizens what the Western model of government failed to – and were thus better supported. The appropriateness of the ICU could have been immediately questioned, since the ICU formed from the more radical anti-Western, AIAI. In spite of the ICU providing in ways that were sorely needed by the Somali people, Somalia had 16 terrorist training camps shortly after the ICU came into power. The ICU improved security for Somalis compared to the previous rule of warlords. The provided sense of security and stability led the group being supported by business communities and many Somali residents. The fact that the ICU was using tactics similar to Al-Qaeda was easily overlooked when weighed against sufficient education and medicine. It could be concluded that for the Somali people, the ends justified the means.

Although Al-Shabaab has been, in a way, moulded by the variety of external forces mentioned above, its initial period of evolution, militarisation, and radicalisation could

be attributed as a reaction on foreign intervention, specifically the Ethiopian invasion. The apprehension towards Ethiopia is another element that makes Al-Shabaab different from the other groups discussed in this study. Al-Shabaab has a stronger sense of regional apprehension. While the Ethiopians succeeded in removing the ICU, it did not stamp out radical Islamism in Somalia as planned and in turn served as strong motivation for the rise of Al-Shabaab. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was launched in Somalia in the context of protecting the TFG, and to 'keep the peace'; in retrospect the simple question can be asked; 'What peace were there to keep?' After the Islamic courts had been defeated new opposition to the government came into existence, and AMISOM was seen as yet another foreign invasion. AMISOM did, however, help in terms of stability in Somalia, with regard to military defeats and a reduction in popular support for Al-Shabaab. But as has been proven many times, Al-Shabaab can successfully adapt and change to overcome military setbacks. To continuously criticise the international response to Al-Shabaab and the situation in Somalia would be narrow-minded. The United Nations' use of UNOSOM I and II proved that evolving policies is possible, and do have positive effects. After UNOSOM I's difficulty to operate successfully, it became clear that the peacekeeping elements and humanitarian relief might only be treating the symptoms of a much more serious disease. UNOSOM II's mandate eventually included peacekeeping as well as peace-building elements, to assist the Somali people in rebuilding their economy, social and political life, and re-establishing some institutional structure. The reaction and change in policies in terms of AMISOM, UNISOM, and eventually UNSOM proves the point that a less state-centric approach, evolving with the times and changes in the threat they try to confront, might lead to more sustainable amelioration of the terrorist threat.

One of the clearest similarities between the three groups discussed in this study is their goals and ideology. It is these parallels that in some cases cause researchers and policy makers alike to place these groups under the same umbrella. Goals and objectives change as a group's political situation changes. Al-Shabaab changed from a nationalistic struggle against the government to a struggle against the Ethiopian forces, to broader conflict within the context of global jihad. Daveed Gartenstein-Ross (2009) identifies three strands of evolution within Al-Shabaab. These three strands can be in some way applied to AQIM and Boko Haram as well. The first is

ideological, as has been discussed above. The second strand speaks to the groups' relations with Al-Qaeda. It is seen in all three case studies that as soon as some kind of alliance with Al-Qaeda is formed, the groups subscribe to a more global ideology. This can possibly be analysed as a response to the financial and social gain of having an Al-Qaeda alliance. Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab, however, have proven themselves to be capable of acting as independent entities. The final strand is the groups' ability to govern. This is again seen especially in the cases of Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab, who dedicated themselves to the implementation of Sharia, and proved themselves capable governing bodies where leadership-vacuums come to exist.

In keeping with the statement made earlier about 'ungoverned spaces' and 'alternatively governed spaces', Al-Shabaab evolved into a very opportunistic group. A prime example of this opportunistic disposition can be seen in Kenya. The Kenyans tried to confront the Al-Shabaab threat through 'Operation Usalama Watch', a strategy that revealed to have its own questionable humanitarian issues. It can be said that the Kenyan did the exact thing that this study tries to warn against; labelling all Somalis as terrorists, and assuming that most terrorists in Kenya are of Somali origin. This discrimination played directly into the hands of Al-Shabaab, who in turn used the issue of Muslim oppression in Kenya to recruit members and justify their attacks in the country. It is exactly these types of policy-mishaps that can be avoided when using a broader scope to analyse the internal workings of a group like Al-Shabaab. By using a broader scope, and the framework of CTS, this study established the broad range of Al-Shabaab recruits and members. This organisation is not just a guerrilla-style group with barbaric attacks and members. It has evolved to appreciate and use modern technology – in the form of their al-Katib Media Foundation - to assert their international presence and recruit around the world. As Al-Shabaab changed their modus operandi, to resonate with much more than impoverished and unemployed youths, and so should the international community.

### 6.3 Possible Further Research and Recommendations

Within each of the case studies discussed, it is clear that there is still much room for future research – not only regarding the internal workings of terrorist groups, but also in terms of how to treat the situation. CTS proved a valuable framework from which to renew alternative forms of research on the subject, but as mentioned earlier, should not be regarded as the new ‘wonder-cure’ for terrorism-related instability in Africa. Rather, instead of using a single theory and exclusively applying it to all terrorist organisations, it should be used in conjunction with contributing social theories. In this study, CTS challenged the processes of knowledge production within terrorism studies. It can be concluded that should these processes broaden and deepen; the understanding of the terrorism threat might differ considerably – leading to a change in how the threat is addressed as well.

Even though terrorism is considered one of the fastest expanding fields of research today; it is by no means over-researched, or even fully researched. At the beginning of this study, the development of security was analysed. It became clear that a lot of concepts used to develop the understanding of the term ‘security’ can be applied to further develop and understand the term ‘terrorism’. Buzan described the term ‘security’ as ‘too complex for analysis’, this description can be applied to ‘terrorism’ as well. Throughout this study, this ‘too-complex-for-analysis’ mindset was considered – hence the large amounts of historical, social, and political research. Terrorism evolved out of *something*, and more research can still be done regarding what exactly that *something* is made of. As established in this study, the phenomenon of terrorism in Africa consists of multiple contributing factors, thus research is needed from multiple angles of analysis. This research should then in turn be used by international policy makers and counter-terrorism developers. Multidimensional threats obviously need multidimensional responses. Current approaches have their own strengths and faults, but a realistic, sustainable approach to the threat is still needed. Within the development of security, CSS took the concept of security as an object of reflection rather than a given, once again policy makers could only benefit from handling the concept of terrorism in the same way. Terrorism is currently viewed as a criminal occurrence – why not start viewing it as a tactical approach? By merely applying that small change to the means of knowledge creation on the subject, a whole floodgate opens up with possibilities for further

research. The international community should take care to not only view terrorism as a military phenomenon, and start discussing non-military aspects in more detail as well – something that this study tried to incorporate when analysing the specific terrorist organisations.

The apprehension and distrust of communities and organisations towards their specific states should be further analysed to determine why these groups choose to specifically use terrorism as a tactic. Within this study, some of these motivations leading to terrorism were analysed, with terrorism mostly viewed as a *modus operandi* and certain way of life – rather than a chosen tactic. The same can be said in the context of the understanding of ‘Jihad’, it has been made clear in this study that even though there are clear similarities and even relationship between the three discussed terrorist groups, the differences are just as resounding. All groups discussed share a similar ideology of Jihad, yet it manifests in different forms. When analysing religious motivation for extreme militant action, it should be kept in mind that religion is a personal conviction, and the likelihood of these groups sharing the exact same conviction is very low. The very labelling of these groups’ actions as ‘radical’ and ‘extremist’ indicates the need for more extensive research into the personal convictions of these groups.

The study at hand also highlighted another topic that could certainly gain from further research on the subject; the application of Western political models to African states and communities. Within all three case studies, the apprehension towards Western states – especially former colonial powers – became very clear. It is only natural then for the affected communities to have a historically motivated distrust of Western and international interference. Within this possible field of study, research should take a more enquiring stance, rather than the immediate goal of the research being finding a solution.

A possible way of lessening the general apprehension of the discussed groups towards international involvement and intervention might be something as simple as developing regional cooperation. Regional missions to the affected areas are an ideal, since the ‘Western’ element is minimised. Regional missions and actions taken thus far have proven to be less than sufficient, yet the possibility of merging Western powers with regional ones has proven more digestible to communities within the

affected areas. Continued interference of Western and especially former colonial powers have led civilians to trust terrorist organisations more than their own governments. A prime example being in Somalia, where some civilians preferred to live under the strict rule of Al-Shabaab rather than the disorganised and corrupt attempt at governance by the TFG. The incompetence of the TFG led to civilians accepting alternative and eventually radical forms of government. Clearly this indicates one of the prime areas where more attention is needed. The terrorist organisations discussed throughout this study rely heavily on support from civilians, by minimising that support, the strength of the organisations might be compromised. This links once again with the statement made earlier in this study of not treating only the symptoms of the disease, but the disease itself. Less bargaining and negotiation should be done, with more groundwork to look into why current themes of counter-terrorism may be providing only temporary relief. This study might have opened the door to look into more deep-rooted, festering issues first, in order to try and avoid these groups feeling compelled to resort to extreme measures to make their voices heard.

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