

The Role of Diplomacy in Combating Terrorism: Selected International Perspectives



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Please contact the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies,
901 North Stuart Street, Suite 200, Arlington, VA 22203
Tel. 703-562-4513, 703-525-0770 ext. 237 Fax 703-525-0299
yalexander@potomacinstitute.org www.potomacinstitute.org
www.terrorismelectronicjournal.org www.iucts.org

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Alex Taliesen

Introduction

Yonah Alexander

Director, Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies and Senior Fellow, Potomac Institute for Policy Studies

Terrorism as a tool or method of random or systematic intimidation, coercion, repression, or destruction of human lives and property used intentionally by states and organized sub-state groups to create a climate of extreme fear in order to obtain avowed imaginary or realistic goals is as old as history.

In modern times there are four major acts of terrorism that are contrary to the laws of armed conflict and warfare. These concerns relate to the safety, rights, and welfare of individuals and defined communities; the stability of geopolitical structures of nations; sustained health of economic development and prosperity; and the expansion and perhaps even the survival of democracies.

Thus, the dire impact of the globalization and brutalization of terrorism on all contemporary societies will ultimately determine not only perpetual security costs in human lives and property but also the future preservation of fundamental civilized values, such as freedom and justice as well as individual and collective group rights.

The key question then is whether the international community is capable of crafting adequate responses to terrorism, diffusing expanding conflicts nationally, regionally, and inter-regionally, engaging in constructive peace processes, and striking a delicate balance between security measures and democratic value systems.

Indeed, the response to this question is most complicated, partly because each state defines “terrorism” unilaterally, based on its own domestic and foreign relations considerations. There is, however, some universal agreement as to the unlawful nature of attacks directed against non-combatants. Similarly, there appears to emerge a broad consensus among concerned nations regarding a wide range of counterterrorism structures, resources, and implementation of policies and actions. Among the utilized measures frequently mentioned are legislation, law enforcement, intelligence, scientific and technological capabilities, economic and military responses, and, finally, diplomacy and international cooperation strategies.

Sadly, embassies and their diplomatic missions around the world have continuously been targeted by a wide-range of actors, including adversarial states and sub-state movements. Some instances include the bombing outside the U.S. embassy in Saigon in March 1965; the hostage-taking of Egyptian embassy in Turkey in 1975; the Iran hostage crisis of November 1979; the Spanish embassy attack in Guatemala City in 1980; the Iraqi embassy bombing in Lebanon in 1981; United States embassy bombing in Lebanon in 1983; the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires attack in 1992; the Egyptian embassy in Pakistan attack in 1995; U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998; the Philippine consulate bombing in Indonesia in 2000; the Istanbul bombings, including British consulate, in 2003; the bombings in Hargeisa and Bosaso, including the Ethiopian consulate, in 2008; the Indian embassy bombing in Kabul in 2009; the U.S. Special Mission and Annex in Benghazi attack in September 2012; the Russian embassy in Libya was stormed in October 2013; the suicide bombing outside the Iranian embassy in Lebanon in November 2013; the car bomb attack at a hotel in Mogadishu that housed diplomatic offices, including the Chinese embassy, in 2015; Saudi diplomatic missions in Iran

stormed by protestors in January 2016; and the Russian Ambassador Andrei Karlov was shot in Turkey in December 2016.

Despite the growing dangers, these diplomats have served with courage and professionalism to pursue their mandates in combating terrorism and contributing to conflict resolutions regionally and globally.

Diplomacy: Some Perspectives

From the dawn of history “diplomacy” has been utilized as a permanent mode of statecraft in the struggle for power within and among nations during peace and war. It is not surprising therefore that an extensive literature exists on the nature and impact of diplomacy on the world’s political, social, economic, and security affairs.

Consider, for example, the following international perspectives as recorded by theologians, historians, philosophers, and practitioners from antiquity to modernity:

- “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than that taketh a city” (Proverbs, 16:32).
- “If they desire peace give them peace and trust in God” (The Koran, 8:61).
- “Diplomacy without arms is music without instruments” (Frederick the Great, 1712-1786).
- “When my profession fails, yours has to come to the rescue” (Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, 1754-1838).
- “Diplomacy is the police in grand costume” (Napoleon, 1805).
- “There are two parts to successful diplomacy: one is knowing one’s own mind, and the other is letting the other people know it” (Lord George Curzon, 1859–1925).
- “Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in public view” (Woodrow Wilson, address to Congress, 8 January 1918).
- “Influence is founded on seven specific diplomatic virtues, namely truthfulness, precision, calm, good temper, patience, modesty, and loyalty” (Sir Harold Nicolson, 1886-1968).
- “Diplomacy...embraces every phase of national power and every phased national dealing” (George F. Kennan, 1947).
- “In diplomacy, the more powerful the nation, the more amenable it should be to reason and negotiations. Such an attitude would make for peace and avoid war” (Carlos Peña Romulo, October 24, 1949).
- “All diplomacy is continuation of war by other means” (Zhou Enlai, 1954).
- “Diplomacy has rarely been able to gain at the conference table what cannot be gained or held on the battlefield” (General Walter Bedell Smith, US Army, 1954).
- “International diplomacy should be diplomacy by patience not diplomacy by slogan” (Pierson Dixon, UK ambassador to the UN, March 2, 1959).
- “You must lose a fly to catch a trout” (James J. Wadsworth, U.S. ambassador to the UN, September 2, 1959).
- “Diplomacy and defense are not substitutes for one another. Either alone would fail” (John F. Kennedy, 1961).
- “Diplomacy is strategy’s twin” (Anthony Eden, *The Reckoning: the memoirs of Anthony Eden, Earl of Avon*, 1965).
- “Diplomacy must be judged by what it prevents, not only by what it achieves” (Abba Eban, 1983).

Regardless of the foregoing divergent views on diplomacy's characteristics, *modus operandi*, and effectiveness, it is amply evident that states continuously have resorted to this dual instrument of soft and hard power purposes on national, regional, and global levels. In sum, diplomacy as a process, method, or tactic seeks to establish stable and durable relations and thereby provide alternatives to force, violence, and war. Thus, in attempting to achieve such intended conflict resolution results, diplomats conduct open and secret negotiations, employ threats and other coercive efforts, and constantly project the national interest concerns and even power whenever required.

It is expected that this traditional role of diplomacy will continue to be practiced by state actors related to a wide-range of current and future challenges, including security confrontations in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, and North Korea, to mention a few.

It is against this background that the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies (IUCTS) and its affiliated academic institutions, such as State University of New York, Georgetown's Center for Strategic and International Studies, the George Washington University, the International Law Institute, University of Virginia's Center for National Security Law, and the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, have conducted numerous activities focusing on issues related to terrorism and diplomacy.

For over half a century, the IUCTS has organized numerous seminars and conferences dealing with diplomacy and international cooperation efforts to combat terrorism. Among the topics discussed, mention should be made of the following: European, Middle Eastern, South Asia, Latin American, African, and U.S. counterterrorism strategies and strategic partnerships; NATO, EU, OSCE, and other regional organizations; terrorism captives; diplomacy and force; diplomatic security; WMD; insurgencies; and peace processes.

Additionally, research and publications relevant to diplomacy include topics such as *International Technical Assistance Experts: A case study of the UN experience* (1966); *Terrorism in Europe* (1982 and republished in 2015); *Governmental Responses to Terrorism* (1986); *International Terrorism: Political and Legal Documents* (1992); *Combating Terrorism: Strategies of Ten Countries* (2002); *Counterterrorism Strategies: Successes and Failures of Six Nations* (2006); *Partnership for Peace Review* journal; and *Terrorism: An Electronic Journal and Knowledge Base*.

To be sure, the forgoing selected academic activities could not have been initiated or implemented without the outstanding contributions of numerous ambassadors, from the United States and other nations.

Selected American participants have included Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, III; Ambassador Henry A. Crumpton; Ambassador Dell Dailey; Ambassador Gerald M. Feierstein; Ambassador James Jeffrey; Ambassador Teresita C. Schaffer; and Ambassador Kurt Volker.

Among the foreign diplomats, contributors included Ambassador Said Tayeb Jawad (Afghanistan); Ambassador Floreta Faber (Albania); Ambassador Amine Kherbi (Algeria); Ambassador Dennis Richardson (Australia); Ambassador Bisera Turkovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina); Ambassador Antonio Patriota (Brazil); Ambassador Elena Poptodorova (Bulgaria); Ambassador Michael Wilson (Canada);

Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong (China); Ambassador Carolina Barco Isakson (Colombia); Ambassador Luis Diego Escalante (Costa Rica); Ambassador Friis Arne Petersen (Denmark); Ambassador Yasser Reda (Egypt); Ambassador Pierre Vimont (France); Ambassador Temuri Yakobashvili (Georgia); Ambassador Klaus Scharioth (Germany); Ambassador Béla Szombati (Hungary); Ambassador Arun K. Singh (India); Ambassador Sudjadnan Parnohadiningrat (Indonesia); Ambassador Sallai Meridor (Israel); Ambassador Erlan Idrissov (Kazakhstan); Ambassador Vlora Citaku (Kosovo); Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan (Mexico); Ambassador Aziz Mekouar (Morocco); Ambassador Roy Ferguson (New Zealand); Ambassador Zango A. Abdu (Nigeria); Ambassador Husain Haqqani (Pakistan); Ambassador Joao de Vallera (Portugal); Ambassador Adrian Vierita (Romania); Ambassador Zac Nsenga (Rwanda); Ambassador Chan Heng Chee (Singapore); Ambassador Stanislav Vidovic (Slovenia); Ambassador Pedro Morenés (Spain); Ambassador Bernard A. B. Goonetilleke (Sri Lanka); Ambassador Cecilia Ruthström-Ruin (Sweden); and Ambassador Namik Tan (Turkey) – to name a few – as well as continued collaboration with representatives from the Council of Europe, the European Parliament Liaison Office with the U.S. Congress, the Inter-American Defense Board, the Inter-American Development Bank, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Organization of American States, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

In connection with Ambassadors' support of our academic program, the most recent publication is a report on "The Role of Diplomacy in Combating Terrorism: Selected U.S. Perspectives" (November 2017). Contributors included Ambassador Charles Ray, Ambassador Jo Ellen Powell, Ambassador Edward Marks, Ambassador Robert Hunter, Ambassador Marcelle M. Wahba, Ambassador Theodore Kattouf, Ambassador Bonnie D. Jenkins, and Ambassador Ronald Neumann.

The current report on "The Role of Diplomacy in Combating Terrorism: Selected International Perspectives" (March 2018) consists of 14 presentations by the following foreign diplomats: Ambassador Mohammed Alhussaini Al Sharif (Chief Representative of the League of Arab States), Pavel Shidlovsky (Charge d'Affaires, Embassy of Belarus), Ambassador Pjer Šimunović (Embassy of the Republic of Croatia), Ambassador Hynek Kmonicek (Embassy of the Czech Republic), Ambassador Mohamed M. Tawfik (Embassy of Egypt), Ambassador Haris Lalacos (Embassy of Greece), Ambassador Lukman Faily (Embassy of the Republic of Iraq), Ambassador Jean Kamau (Interim Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Republic of Kenya), Wafa Bugaighis (Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Libya), Ambassador Vasko Naumovski (Embassy of the Republic of Macedonia), Ambassador (Ret.) Al Maamoun Baba Lamine Keita (former Ambassador of the Republic of Mali), Ambassador Nebojša N. Kaluđerović (Embassy of Montenegro); Ambassador Rachad Bouhlal (Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco), Ambassador Maowia Khalid (Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan).

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As always, Sharon Layani, Research Associate and Coordinator at the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies, deserves special gratitude for her professional research, publication support, and management of our team of interns during the Spring 2018 semester, including Lilli Abraham (The George Washington University), Julieta Barbiero (American University), Gabriella Garrett (Wichita State University), Gabrielle Labitt (University of Massachusetts Lowell), Hunter McWilliams (Skidmore College), Samuel Ridge (University of California, Berkeley), and Abdulrahman Sane (University of California, Davis).

Selected International Perspectives

Ambassador Mohammed Alhussaini Al Sharif
Chief Representative of the League of Arab States¹

The extremes exist within almost every faith and society, but when the extremes of the few are used to judge a whole society, they lead to distortion, prejudice and unfairness.

In the last few years, religion in general and in particular the role of Islam in politics in the Middle East has become a main topic for the State Department and the U.S. Government.

The State Department has a special representative to Muslim communities or Muslim minorities abroad, and there is also a Special Envoy of the President to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The Headquarter of this OIC is in Jeddah – Saudi Arabia and is composed of 57 Countries.

On the 7th of August 2013, Secretary of State Kerry launched Office of Faith-Based Community Initiatives. This newly formed office joins the State Department's Office of International Religious freedom and the U.S Agency for International Development Center for Faith Based and community Initiatives. In addition, Foreign Service officers are now required to take classes on religion as a part of their overall training.

At the Annual National Prayer Breakfast in Washington to honor the Christian Faith, President Obama said, "Anyone who harms someone in the name of faith diminishes their relationship with God." On the same occasion, President Obama said, "Freedom of religion matters to U.S. national security, and promoting religious freedom abroad is a key part in the country's foreign policy."

The National Prayer Breakfast is hosted by members of the Senate and House of Representatives who meet each week for prayer on Capitol Hill.

Guests of the annual event have come from some 130 countries, and the guest list often includes foreign dignitaries and celebrities.

In the last few years, President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry took it as a tradition to invite Muslim ambassadors and leaders of Muslim communities for breakfast during the fasting holy month of Ramadan.

I think it is important to understand other religions and to engage with religious leaders and communities locally and abroad, as religion is an integral part of the daily life for billions of people around the world. However, I am concerned if the attention is directed towards Islam and Muslims in particular.

In my opinion, religion, any religion, has nothing to do with the problem of violence or terrorism. Judaism, Islam, and Christianity share many key values in common. One of these values is that all evil on earth is caused by man and not by God. Another is sharing a common monotheistic vision: a belief in one divine God,

¹ Intervention at a seminar on "The Role of Religion in Combating Terrorism" held on December 19, 2014 at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies.

in the transience of our earthly life, in our accountability for our actions, in the assurance of life to come and in the day after, etc.

In this regard, it is useful to quote some verses from the Holy Book for Muslims – the Quran – which reflect tolerance and justice that characterize Islam and that killing innocent people runs contrary to the tenets of Islam:

- “O mankind we created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you” (II-13).
- “speak fair to the people” (II,83).
- “invite (all) to the way of Lord with wisdom and fair preaching” (XVI,125).
- “Whoever kills a person not in retaliation of murder, nor as punishment for spreading mischief in the land, is as if he has killed all humankind. Whoever saves the life of a person is as if he has saved the life of all humankind” (32, *Surah Al Maeda*).
- “Whoever kills a believer intentionally, his reward is hell, where he shall remain forever, and God shall be angry with him and shall cast a curse upon him. He has prepared a tremendous punishment for him!” (93, *Surah Al-Nisaa*).

It is not religion that motivates us to do something evil. It is the policies of some countries vis-à-vis others whether these policies are in the form of occupation, injustices or atrocities committed against other people. A case in point is Israel’s occupation of the Palestinian territories in defiance of all international laws and United Nations Resolutions. It is these policies that create violence and instability.

Instead of blaming religion, one may put the blame on political matters, or social and economic problems.

During World Economic Forum held in New York in 2002, many Heads of State and Foreign Ministers, including American Secretary of State Colin Powell, called for a coalition against poverty that should follow the coalition to combat terrorism. Secretary Powell said in the Forum: “Terrorism really flourishes in areas of poverty, despair and hopelessness, where people see no future.”

Within the framework of International efforts to combat violence and evil acts of terrorism and atrocities, it is all the more imperative to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This is one of the major causes of instability and insecurity in the region. By resolving this conflict and achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace, we will deny those who commit violence based on the premise of achieving justice for Palestinians the right to use this issue for their own evil purposes.

I said this many years ago as a young Saudi Diplomat in London, United Kingdom. And here I am in Washington, DC and Secretary of State John Kerry said almost the same.

At a reception in Honor of Eid al-Adha, feast of sacrifice for Muslims in October 16, 2014, Secretary John Kerry said and I quote, “As I went around and met with people in the course of our discussions about the ISIL coalition, the truth is that—there wasn’t a leader I met with in the region who didn’t raise with me spontaneously the need to try to get peace between Israel and the Palestinians, because it was a cause of recruitment and of street anger and agitation that they felt they had to respond to. And people need to understand the connection of that. And it has

something to do with humiliation and denial and absence of dignity, and Eid al-Adha celebrates the opposite of all that.”

On another occasion Secretary Kerry told reporters in London on December 16, 2014 that the United States remains committed “to finding ways to help solve the challenges of the Middle East and of other places of extremism and of terrorist activity because we know too well that while it’s difficult work, it’s also the only course that has any possibility of taking us towards stability, towards prosperity, towards a future.” The secretary concluded by saying that “The United States recognizes the deeply felt aspiration for peace shared by the vast majority of Israelis and Palestinians, and we will continue to work with our friends and partners to find a path to the goal that we all share for a more peaceful and stable region.”

The United States has cast its veto power in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 42 times in opposition of urging Israel to abide by international law pertaining to ending Israel's occupation of the Palestinian (and Arab territories) it occupied in the 1967 war.

Knowing the values of the U.S. that I was taught at American universities in Lebanon and Houston, Texas, such values as freedom, justice, and peoples' right to self-determination, I was puzzled to find that only the U.S. has consistently opposed or vetoed offering these rights to the Palestinian people.

One final point and I think it is very important point is that we should focus on education. Education may either bring about positive or negative effects on the behaviors and attitudes of others.

Perhaps, we should have universal text books in schools from elementary and above. These text books should teach our children from an early age the following:

- The common visions and values that many religions share.
- That it is only through teaching mutual and deeper understanding as well as respect so that we can dispel ignorance, suspicion, and prejudice which nowadays create many dangerous attitudes, deviant behaviors and false perceptions.
- That the extremes exist within almost every faith and society, and they must be dealt with and they should not be used as basis to judge a whole society or certain religion and culture.
- That diversity of cultures and civilizations among people is a sign of God and a cause for human advancement and prosperity.
- That it is a fruitless effort to attempt to fuse religions and creeds in a melting pot on the pretext of bringing them closer together, since the adherents of every religion are deeply convinced in their faith and will not accept any alternative thereto.

Being a diplomat for about 40 years, I have been fortunate enough to come in contact with various cultures. I found out that all of us, no matter how different we feel, are products of history and geography and in many cases destiny.

As I traveled more, I grew more tolerant. Tolerance as a concept means “respect, accepting and appreciating the rich diversity of the world’s cultures, forms of expression and ways of being human.” Tolerance means that “one is free to adhere to one’s own convictions and accepts that others adhere to theirs. It means accepting the fact that human beings, naturally diverse in their appearance, situation, speech,

behavior and values, have the right to live in peace and to be as they are. It also means that one's views are not to be imposed on others.”

The universal text book or books that I am proposing to be taught in schools at an early age in all schools throughout the World, should shorten the distance of traveling from one place to another.

Pavel Shidlovsky*Charge d’Affaires, Embassy of Belarus²**Belarus’ relations with the United States*

Belarus’ relationship with the United States has had its ups and downs. But never, even at its lowest points, did our leadership downgrade the importance of maintaining a full-fledged partnership relationship with the greatest country in the world (*after Belarus of course*).

Over the last two years, we have enjoyed a period of incremental improvements in the relationship with the U.S. However, we have yet to achieve any major breakthroughs. Sadly, sanctions are still in place. That said, we are going forward, slowly but surely.

Here are a few examples of what we have achieved so far:

- Increased level and intensity of bilateral contacts;
- Public support by U.S. for Belarus’ sovereignty, independence and right to choose its strategic political and economic partners;
- Held Belarus’s first international investment forum in the U.S., Belarusian Investment Forum in New York City, with the Prime Minister of Belarus in attendance;
- Conducted expert consultations with the State Department and other U.S. Government agencies on a range of issues, including international security, nonproliferation, human rights, trafficking in persons, combating terrorism;
- Welcomed high-level U.S. delegations to Minsk from the Pentagon, USAID and human rights officials;
- Established the Institute of Honorary Consuls of Belarus in U.S. states, and had visits to the U.S. by several Belarusian business delegations;
- Built partnership relationships between Belarusian and American cities and regions;
- Hosted a recent visit of a U.S. Congressional delegation to Belarus, which included a meeting with our President and an acknowledgement of the reset in U.S.-Belarus relations. The U.S. Congressmen urged the two sides to reflect on how to further improve ties;
- Increased staffing at embassies in Washington, D.C. and Minsk;
- Removed U.S. sanctions and restrictions on Trustbank, Belarusneft, BelTechExport, and BelOMO;
- Gained opportunities for the Belarusian Potash Company and Belaruskali, a trader and producer of potash fertilizers, to do business in the U.S.;
- Expanded cooperation of law enforcement officials on prevention of cybercrime and international fraud;
- Reached an agreement on using for rail transit in Belarus as part of Northern Distribution Network for Assistance Force in Afghanistan;
- Expanded cooperation on interdicting illegal transit of radioactive material through state border.

I hope you agree with me that these examples of cooperation demonstrate that the U.S.-Belarus relationship is of mutual importance and that Belarus can sustain its status as a reliable and indispensable regional partner of the United States.

² Excerpts from presentation at an event on “Conversation with Pavel Shidlovsky, Charge d’Affaires, Embassy of Belarus” held on September 10, 2015 at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies.

Let me share with you an excellent example of joint cooperation in the area law enforcement. In 2010, after five years of exchange of data and intelligence with the FBI, the Ministry of Interior of Belarus effectively crippled the international criminal group of the so-called “carders” who stole money from credit card holders.

Our frequent and diverse contacts with the United States have shown that we have no problems of principle with the U.S. Government: we share the same values, the same vision of how Belarus should develop, and the same attitude toward protecting and promoting human rights.

Belarus values U.S. support of its initiatives in the UN, including its co-sponsorship of a Belarusian resolution on the UN Global plan of Action on Combating Human Trafficking and an initiative to interdict the trade in human organs.

We appreciate the United States’ assistance in providing security for the World Ice Hockey Championship in 2014.

Contribution of Belarus to international security

Strengthening international peace and security is one of the primary goals of our foreign policy. Belarus is and has always been a contributor to maintaining international security and has proved it on many occasions. Right after gaining its independence, our country became the first in the former Soviet Union to unilaterally renounce, and without any preconditions, the possibility of maintaining the arsenal of nuclear weapons left behind after the disintegration of the USSR.

Belarus seconded the adoption of the UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1540 (2004) to halt the proliferation of WMD and submitted to the UNSC relevant reports on measures taken at the national level. Belarus also recognizes the role of international export control regimes as an instrument to contain illicit proliferation of nuclear materials, equipment and technology.

Participating in the Nuclear Suppliers Group since 2000, Belarus adheres to NSG guidelines in making any decisions on cross-border transfers of nuclear materials. In 2010, Belarus became a member state of the Zangger Committee.

Belarus supports goals and principles of three other international export control regimes – Missile Technology Control Regime (or MTCR), Wassenaar Arrangement, and Australia Group. All provisions of these regimes have been enacted into law. Additionally, Belarus’s export control system was created with U.S. assistance and in accordance with U.S. standards.

My country has invariably supported all regimes and initiatives, aimed at limiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We were one of the cofounders of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC).

Belarus is a participant of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) launched by President Bush in 2003. We also supported efforts of President Obama to secure nuclear materials around the world. In 2010, Belarus and U.S. successfully implemented a joint project to remove from Belarus spent nuclear fuel.

Starting in January 2011 to the present, Belarus has participated in the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) that supplies the International Security Assistance Force

(ISAF) in Afghanistan. We made that decision on December 19, 2010 despite Washington's politicized response to post-election events in Belarus and despite the toughened stance of the U.S. and NATO on Belarus. Additionally, in April 2013, the Foreign Affairs Minister of Belarus and NATO Secretary General agreed to expand cooperation on transit of freight to and from Afghanistan.

Belarus is among most active members of the UN Conference on Disarmament. It is also a responsible member of the Convention for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and heeded the request of the international community, and specifically the United States, to provide assistance to Syria in its efforts to remove all chemical weapons.

Belarus consistently demonstrates a responsible approach to military and political security in OSCE region and meets all of its commitments in this area. Belarus is a party to international instruments on conventional weapons and on strengthening of measures of trust and security, like Treaty on Open Skies and Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

Belarus in the face of crisis in Ukraine

The curse of being located right on the dividing line between East and West, between the fire and the frying pan if you want, ironically provides Belarus with a blessing: we have and can use our creative potential to play a unique role in the Ukraine crisis. No other country in the region maintains such close political, economic and people-to-people ties with both Russia and Ukraine.

In February, Belarus hosted the Heads of State of Ukraine, Russia, France, and Germany to develop possible solutions for ending the crisis. Since May 2015, the meetings of the Tri-Party Contact Group are now being held in Belarus as well as its four subgroups. On September 1, 2015, a ceasefire was established and a possible agreement on pulling-back heavy weapons was discussed. Both important steps are concrete results of the Minsk agreement process and the arduous work of the Contact Group.

From the very beginning we stated that Belarus supports Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We took this position and we did not budge, despite external pressures and against all odds.

Let me be absolutely clear: we are not taking sides in the conflict in Ukraine. We will not be forced by any country to choose between Russia and Ukraine. Neither do we want to use Ukraine as any kind of PR campaign.

Since the beginning of the conflict we have received about 100 thousand refugees and forced migrants from Ukraine. We have provided these people with housing, jobs, and free education as well as free medical treatment.

Let me use this opportunity to read to you what the leaders of the U.S. House of Representative's Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia and Emerging threats, the esteemed Representatives Rohrabacher and Meeks, wrote two weeks ago in their letter to the U.S. Secretary of State Kerry:

The government in Minsk has in the last two years tried to play a major role in finding a compromise that will end the conflict in Ukraine. We should applaud such efforts and recognize President

Lukashenko's eagerness to work with us to confront some very serious challenges.

In that same letter the two U.S. Congressmen urged Secretary Kerry to restore diplomatic ties with Belarus and exchange ambassadors once again.

We believe that the U.S. has yet to play a substantive role in resolving a conflict in Ukraine. As President Lukashenko said in a recent interview to non-state media, if the United States is interested in peace in Ukraine and is ready to take certain steps in this direction, it will act as a peacekeeper and sort out the situation with Russia. The President also said that he is absolutely against the presence of any troops in Ukraine, be it Russian or American, be it mercenaries from Poland, Sweden or other countries.

Alexander Lukashenko said that there would not be an intervention in Ukraine from the territory of Belarus. *"No one will attack Ukraine from our territory unless the situation is in conflict with our interests and unless Ukraine attacks Belarus. I think this will never happen."* Nevertheless, Belarus has had to take steps to enhance its border protections due to several violations on the Belarusian-Ukrainian border.

According to the President, Russia is not considering the possibility of depriving Belarus of its independence. I quote again:

We always keep our powder dry. It does not matter who will infringe on our sovereignty and independence. The only scenario of war with Russia is if we start war. Russia will never ever fight with Belarus. First, what is the reason? None. Second, it is counterproductive, and fraught with a disaster for Russia itself. Russia is not considering depriving us of sovereignty and independence in terms of any criteria, parameters, and areas. Moreover, given the policy that we are pursuing, Belarus is the only honest, respectable and reliable ally of the Russian Federation.

Belarus' support for universal principles of international relations – equality of states, non-use of force or the threat to use force, peaceful resolution of disputes, and inviolability of frontiers – are now being put to the test by the crisis in Ukraine.

To date, we have lost almost half of our trade with Ukraine. However, we are considering every option to stay in the Ukrainian market. For example, we are using Ukrainian ports for transshipment of our exports to other international destinations. Additionally, Belarus supports cooperation with Ukraine through the EU's Eastern Partnership and other European integration processes.

Belarus' Chairmanship in the Eurasian Economic Union

Speaking about integration processes, I would be remiss if I did not mention the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), which was born less than a year ago. Nowadays, in the time of major change and major challenges, a number of countries are looking to form and consolidate regional unions. The Eurasian space is becoming such an area of consolidation. We started with the Customs Union, followed by the Common Economic Space and now the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), which in our view has been the logical development process for regional integration. The EEU now consists of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. We regard the EEU as an integration mechanism that contributes to economic and social stability

in the region, to the resilience of national economies in the face of globalization and to creating a stable world economic system.

Belarus has long since been an active participant in the integration processes in the region and was the first to assume Chairmanship in the newly created EEU. We intend to use our Chairmanship to push for the promotion of the four freedoms – movement of goods, services, capital, and labor force between member states. Belarus stands for a closer and equal engagement between the EEU and the European Union. The Eurasian integration project has already elicited interest in membership from a number of countries or in creating with joint free trade zones.

For foreign investors and business partners interested in doing business in the region, the EEU offers the following:

- Abolition of internal customs and transport controls, unification of customs procedures;
- Duty-free import of technological equipment used for implementation of investment projects;
- Common tariffs, non-tariff, technical regulations, sanitary, veterinary and phytosanitary measures;
- Legal guarantees for the investors, including the right for compensation of damage and protection from expropriation.

In its foreign policy, including in its engagement with the Eurasian Union, Belarus proceeds from its national interests. The Union offers to foreign businesses prospects to promote in the markets of member states goods produced in the territory of Belarus. Union provides advantages in setting up new industries in Belarus – «green field» projects – as they target not only the needs of the domestic market, but also of markets of the Union. So Belarus becomes a “Western gateway” for foreign businesses letting them explore the capacious 170 plus million people area of the five states.

Role of Belarus in combating international terrorism

Belarus fights international terrorism from the position of a full participant to all major universal treaties on the matter. Belarus strictly adheres to relevant UN Security Council resolutions, thus contributing to comprehensive global efforts to fight terror. Belarus supported the adoption by the UN in 2006 of a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Belarus supports the leading and coordinating role of the United Nations in combating terrorism and believes in importance of international cooperation in this area. We are considering expansion of our participation in international legal instruments. We welcome an expedient preparation and adoption by consensus of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

Belarus has consistently supported the international community in its efforts to prevent proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction and keep WMD out of terrorists' grasp. We take an active part in regional antiterrorism agreements, programs and other events in the framework of CIS, OSCE and Collective Security Treaty Organization.

We are a member of The Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG) which works to cut financial flows of terrorists in line

with Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations. Belarus is open to cooperation with foreign states, including U.S., their law enforcement and security services, and with international organizations.

According to our Concept of the fight against terrorism, any foreign fighters or terrorists who could potentially use the territory of Belarus for their illegal purposes are regarded as threats to our national security. We are introducing the notion of state response in our law on terrorism.

We are aware and concerned about external sources of terrorist threats and increased activity of international terrorist and extremist organizations, including the Islamic State. Belarus' geographical position is a lure to organized crime groups that consider our territory as transit corridor for illicit trafficking in arms, ammunition, radioactive, chemical, biological and other dangerous materials, as well as in drugs and psychotropic substances. Our security services strive to prevent the entry and transit through Belarus of known terrorists and potential supporters of international terrorism from anywhere in the world, particularly from certain countries.

Ambassador Pjer Šimunović
*Embassy of the Republic of Croatia*³

It is a privilege to be able to address an issue very topical for Southeast Europe, as well as for a wider community of transatlantic democracies, which are formulating the crux of their security and foreign policies through instruments we have at our disposal in the shape and form of the European Union and NATO. The region in question is full of inviting opportunities, it is a land of promises, but it also entails some dangers and some developments which may become critical if adequate attention is not paid to them.

In the very first place, when I refer to an adequate attention, I have in mind measures and policies, conducted by the countries of the region and by the relevant external actors, leading to a full European and Euro-Atlantic integration of the countries in the region, to their membership in the EU and NATO. This is the best way to get this region fully stabilized, fully at peace within itself and with the wider world. Basically, by spreading the European and the Euro-Atlantic area of stability, very much embodied in the EU and NATO enlargement process, we are establishing security and prosperity of these countries and of Europe as a whole.

Obviously, when you look at the region of Southeast Europe, or the Balkans, there are different issues at play. For the sake of our discussion today, within the limits of my short intervention, I would like to focus on a couple of critical developments worth taking note of in order to be able to address them meaningfully.

In this regard, let me say that against a background of some inherent contradictions existing in the region and stemming, very much but not exclusively, from the legacy of conflicts in the 1990s, which have left some residual traces having an unfortunate potential to degenerate, some additional factors have come into the play.

After the known upheaval of the 1990s, there was basically a decade of exemplary stabilization, normalization, reconciliation. The level of reconciliation achieved in this particular region, albeit imperfect, has been, as it still is, a remarkable achievement, this has to be kept in mind. Because in a relatively very short span of time, a number of violent conflicts has been replaced by a cross-border cooperation; the nations and individuals are not only talking to each other but cooperating economically, socially, culturally, and politically. Notably, the cooperation has always been very prominent on a project of getting into the EU and NATO, where the interests of the countries of the region have been strongly converging.

After what was almost a decade of promising normalization, of openness, of healing the wounds of war and animosity, we got a sliding back, certainly not sliding back all the way, but we have lost some dynamics of that reconciliation, normalization and cross-border cooperation. Something happened that stopped the positive trends and reversed them up to an extent.

Having said that, I would like to be absolutely clear: what we have now still remains a very remarkable achievement in relation to the background provided by the developments of the 1990s.

³ Presentation at an event on “Security Challenges in the Balkans: Quo Vadis?” held on December 19, 2017 at the International Law Institute.

We have seen that a lot of negative trends coincided with the economic crisis, which hit the countries of the region badly, before they would be able to return to economic growth, surely exacerbating a number of lingering disputes and issues, providing a fertile ground for them to come alive yet again. While the crisis has been one of the most important setbacks in its own right, depriving citizens and the countries of their planned and desired economic development, it has also brought up to the surface, it has crystalized, some residual contradictions and grievances, impacting domestic and foreign policies, undermining inter-communal relations in particular, many of them stemming from the conflicts of the 1990s, some stemming from before that. It has also been adding some new elements to that.

These residual contradictions within the region coming up to the surface have been coupled with some notable intrusions from the outside, happening on an unprecedented scale. Let me concentrate on them. These intrusions have been made possible, up to an extent, also by a relative lack of vigorous, robust engagement from the part of the West at the time. The basic lesson learned would be: if the EU, with all the instruments it has at its disposal, particularly in terms of its enlargement, and NATO, in terms of keeping its door open, are not present in the region in a credible, robust manner, then somebody and something else will be filling the gap.

Against the background of some inherent contradictions in the region, we have seen a whole range of Middle Eastern influences intruding deeply into the region, exemplified also by their most extreme expressions, by a violent Islamic fundamentalism. Some 1,000 people from the Western Balkans have joined the fight in the Middle East, have joined the ranks of Daesh/Islamic State or al-Qa'ida or other extremist groups, with a few hundred of them having lost their lives, a few hundred having returned, and a few hundred still in the Middle East. In terms of the political landscape, socially as well as security-wise, this is a very serious danger indeed. It has materialized in such a clear and present form relatively recently, but it has not come out of the blue, it has come out of a longer-term exposure and intrusion from a whole range of Middle Eastern influences, intruding chiefly, but not exclusively, into the indigenous Muslim population. This remains politically, as well as security-wise, one of the major concerns in the region.

The other concern worth addressing stems from the policies of Russia – Russia is present in the region in some unprecedented proportions. It can be observed using all the instruments at its disposal to exercise and extend its influences and gain leverage, be it though diplomacy, intelligence, propaganda, investments, defense cooperation... Russia establishing such a prominent foothold in the region in pursuit of its interests works against the idea of integrating the whole region into the European Union and NATO.

In such a situation we may look at the region as being very much 'a contested battleground', with different forces fighting for the soul of the countries in the region and for the future of the region, whether it will be more in Russia's camp, whether it will be more linked to different Middle Eastern forces, or it will become a fully integrated part of the EU and NATO.

My final point, when it comes to proposing a realistic and favorable way forward, would be to emphasize yet again the importance, and a renewed urgency, of European and Euro-Atlantic integration as the best, proven and available instrument of stabilizing, enriching and reconciling the region of Southeast Europe.

Ambassador Hynek Kmonicek
Embassy of the Czech Republic⁴

My topic is “Czech Republic-U.S. Strategic Partnership.” You would probably expect the typical ambassador speech on the Cold war, communism, revolution, new democracy, and what to do with it and everything is rosy. Nothing like that. It would be way too predictable and way too boring. So I decided to give you a little bit bolder, more academic thinking about the Czech and U.S. partnership and strategy. About why this strategy is working, why it is good for both sides, what can be changed, and how it can or need not be limited. Because when we talk about strategy, strategy is basically a military term associated with security. And your security is dictated by two factors: who you are and where you are.

Let me start with a little bit about who the Czechs are and what it dictates to Czechs given the place where we Czechs are on the map.

First of all, every time you think of our role or the center European role in history, a look at the map gives you the first clue. The Czechs moved to the territory of center Europe, what we call today center Europe, somewhere between the sixth and ninth century – basically 1,100 years ago. And we moved to the territory where everybody around us, in modern terms, was and is German. If you look at my country on the map, it is like a small Slavic island, surrounded by two-thirds of the German speaking elements and German culture influence.

This was the first thing which the Czechs, given the geopolitical place where they are, had to face throughout most of their history. If we go a little bit deeper into who are the Czechs, so theoretically, language-speaking Czech people are people who classify themselves as a Western-Slavic people.

Now if you are Western-Slavic, it does not make much sense. If you are a Slavic you are supposed to be in the East. If you are in the West, you are not supposed to be Slavic unless you emigrated to the West. But we are, for 1,100 years, a western-Slavic nation, dancing the diplomatic dance which dictates the following script – we want to be Western, but without ending up as being ethnically Germanized or ending up as another Bavarians. And we have tried for 1,100 years to stay culturally Slavic but without ending up being eaten by Russians.

So, West-Slavic people are neither German nor Russian, but they reside in the territory which is historically, strategically, and security-wise super sensitive. It is the territory which Timothy Snyder would call “bloodlands,” and the territory which gave the origin of two World Wars only in the 20th century.

So, for the Czechs, it meant basically something for their identity. If we really, really simplify the history of Europe post-Thirty Years’ War, it seems to be all the time the same story. One of the European nations claimed the leadership of Europe and the only way to prove you are the biggest country, biggest boy on the block, is to go East. You must claim your part of the Russian wars, which usually means you go through the Czech territory. From Napoleon to Hitler, it was the same story. Usually, it ends up the same: you defeat Russia, and the Russian winter defeats you, and you go back.

⁴ Presentation at an event on “Czech Republic-U.S. Strategic Partnership” on November 13, 2017 at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies.

From the point of the Czech national identity it means that it is very hard to say who is Czech by his or her ethnicity because we are the children of the children of all those armies that went from West to East and then East to West. As we usually joke, they had the first child on the way to Moscow and the second child on the way from Moscow. And we are the ethnic mix of all these children of the children of all the invading armies who went through our territory. If you really go deeper into our history, I usually claim we and the former African country of Zaire are the only two countries who were ever really occupied even by Belgian soldiers. We had the Belgian Flemish occupation in the 17th century.

Practically everybody in Europe occupied my country over the last hundred years. And practically everybody liked it. That is why they never destroyed it. It had its influence on the Czech ethnicity. It had its influence on our history. Because mentally speaking, we take as a Czech person anybody who speaks Czech, irrespective of his or her ethnic background. In that way we sometimes joke that we are more a language club than an ethnically identifiable nation. If anyone of you here speaks Czech you will be Czech for me and probably for any other Czech you would meet.

The result of this is that for Czechs security was every time the first political pre-occupation. Because if you want to stay who you are – Western-Slavic – without ending up as German or Russian, and if you want to stay where you are on the map, simply a separate entity surrounded by the huge historic German influence, it is clear you will have to have quite an elaborate strategy to survive on your own in the place where you are based. This East-West dance basically starts for us around the year 950, where we already got Christianity from the East, actually from Byzantium, and then we claimed our allegiance to the German Bishop in Regensburg, in the West. And in that moment, it was clear that we are not East, neither West, we are balancing both, being somewhere in the middle.

Over the years, we went through a complicated history of our own kingdom. Then we were for 300 years part of the Austrian Habsburg monarchy – I skipped that part quickly. And in 1918 with the end of the First World War, the concept of Czechoslovakia as a new country appeared from the ruins of the Austrian Habsburg monarchy.

We will soon celebrate 100 years of Czechoslovakia which was shaped by our first President Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. But it was Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, as the founder of the state, who wrote in the year 1916, two years before he became president of the new Czechoslovakia, that he is totally against the concept of Czechoslovakia. I will loosely quote, “I am totally against the dissolution of the Austrian Habsburg Monarchy, because the result will be so vulnerable that we could have just choose if we want to be influenced by German or Russian influence. And it would be the only real choice we would have.” And basically, that is how he correctly predicted what has happened. For the next 100 years of Czechoslovakia, we were “visited” and occupied by Germans and Russians. Still we were every time able to come back as an independent state with its own independent characteristics.

If you have all of that in mind, it should be more or less clear what the Czech strategy in any relation, including strategic partnership with the United States, should and must be based on. Theoretically, our biggest asset and enemy is our geopolitical position, which makes us, given our size, vulnerable to all the influences from the West and from the East. And the best solution, which we are trying to find for the last 100 years, is to have the military assurances of our national existence

based on the national interests of the partner who would be outside of Europe. Because the best friend is the friend who is far away.

The result is that probably the perfect summary of the Czech strategic thinking was said at a different occasion by a surprising source, Lord Hastings, the first Secretary General of NATO. He said that, "All of what NATO is about is to keep Americans in, Russians out, and Germany down." It was not a Czech quote. It is a British quote, of the British first NATO Secretary. And that basically summarizes everything of what central Europe was about for centuries. We had to solve how not to be the victim of the two biggest machineries of Europe, France and Germany and that was solved through the vehicle of the European Union. Because for the first time we are all allies in one economic merger. And we had to solve our military security vis-à-vis especially the dangers from the East – Russia – and that was solved with our entry to NATO and strategic partnership with the USA.

If you look at it from the Czech perspective, it is more or less clear why we are a part of the European Union, why we are a part of NATO, and why we feel both as a part of our strategic choice, which secures us staying on the map as who we are and where we are. It is a little bit hard for me to take the other side that should be taken by Americans, but for tango you need two, so Czech-American strategic partnership should be about both perspectives. So, I can give you a glimpse of how we think that you think.

The basic problem of Central Europe is that from the American point of view, we are not interesting. We are too small, too far away, insignificant for your national interests. So, the only reason why you care is that further east is Russia, and Russia is what you take seriously. So, it is because of Russia that we are in your game. And we believe that this perception from the American side will dictate even for the future your interests about our part of the world. Obviously, we can speak about the shared values, about having the same type of civilization, about mutual support for human rights. We can speak a lot of the things of which politicians speak but in the realpolitik of the Kissinger-type usually what applies is the egoistic national interests. We know that strategic partnership with the USA is good for us, and we believe it is good for you also. You need allies in this part of the world because you look for your own national interest further East.

Our usual problem is that sometimes it is hard to find a real American Central European policy. If we look at the current stage of it, we can go back to the basic thing, which is President Trump's speech in Warsaw during his first visit of the area where for many Europeans his basic message was that it is now the Eastern part of Europe, which is fighting for keeping Europe European in the upcoming culture battle. We can say that President Trump was not too far from the ideas that we hear in countries of our region. And most vocally those type of ideas come from the countries which are later punished for having them. It is not the case of the Czech Republic, so I will not comment on it, but again, it was a little bit puzzling of what the Americans really expect and want from our part of the world. Once you speak almost identically to the president of the USA, you can expect the State Department to be knocking on your door with questions -- Just a small example how much clear defined policy in the area is needed.

We believe together will be able to clarify it and find it. Why? Because it is crucial for Czechs. I go to back to the geopolitical point of view. It is good to be a Center European. It is much more dangerous to be an Eastern European. And if we are Center or Eastern European, it is geopolitical decision that will be done, but not just

by us. It is done by the USA and Russia. If you look at the map and you imagine Europe without the Russian Federation, then we are at the Eastern border of Europe, and we are an Eastern nation. If you imagine Russia with European aspirations and European obligations and behavior of Russians as the European nation, then we are the center of Europe.

So, basically the question of if my country is Center European, Eastern European, Center-Eastern, or where the hell we are, it must be answered again by the Kremlin. It is not our decision on which place of the map we are because it depends where Europe, where the standards of Europe, from political to economic ones, will really end. And we all know that is the discussion where the Americans for their own national interest will be involved in the future as well. That is why it is a question to be solved on U.S.-Russian link.

Let me end up with the classical ambassador summary of what the Czech Republic is about now. The Czech Republic now feels that we have a very strong NATO alliance where the United States still has, and we hope will have, the leading role. We believe you are right if you ask us to pay more for our own defense and we have to go there. We feel that we now have economically good times which should translate into a little bit more thinking about who we are and where we go. To give you an example, Czech Republic with ten million people is now 0.26 percent of GDP of the world, which tells you almost nothing, but it is the 15th richest country of the European Union. We have the lowest unemployment rate in the European Union, 2.9 percent, which means that basically the only real problem we have now is the shortage of labor. We avoided the migration crisis, having 4.3 percent of foreigners, which is the European average, but at this time we are the sixth safest place on this planet. And if you look who is safer, they are the countries like Monaco and Iceland. And we have 4.7 percent GDP growth, which is really high given the standard of the European Union. Basically, Czechs are now having a happy time which gives us the luxury to think more about the future. And we believe that in the future that we must keep the NATO obligations of all sides really strong and we must be engaged much more in the discussion about what type of European Union we are building because these two things, security-wise and economy-wise, will influence our lives the most in the next ten years.

So you can see that we moved a lot since the time of the Cold War. I will end this part with a classical Czechoslovak joke from the Cold War. During the Cold War, the Czechoslovakian economy was still fairly good for a long time and was usually categorized as being ahead, then comparable to Austria until 1968. So even from the Soviet perspective, we were something like the Switzerland of a socialist camp. And based on that, we used to have a joke: what is the difference between former Czechoslovakia and Switzerland? Basically none. Both countries have freedom of speech. But in Switzerland there was freedom even after the speech, which was not the case of previous socialist Czechoslovakia.

Let me summarize the basic ideas of this speech. We are Western Slavic of Central Europe; neither German nor Russian. We are on the security-sensitive place of the map. Our reply to the challenge of that geopolitical position is having a democratic society which is part of the Western culture as we have been for more than 1,000 years. To secure it we are part of the EU and Union development will be our main preoccupation to secure a political stability and economic growth as we want to have. Security-wise, a strong NATO is crucial for us and we need to keep NATO strong as we might expect new challenges in the years to come.

Ambassador Mohamed M. Tawfik
*Embassy of Egypt*⁵

I will focus on the Egyptian experience and the kinds of challenges we are facing, but before doing that there are a number of points that I still need to repeat because we need to remind ourselves of them.

Number one, terrorism is something that happens in all cultures. It is not limited to any particular religion or particular culture. The fact that I am going to talk about the kind of terrorism I will be talking about is one related to some beliefs regarding Islam which I believe are completely wrong does not preclude the fact that this is not an Islamic phenomenon. This has nothing to do with the religion. As a matter of fact, I think that the vast majority of Muslims are completely opposed to this kind of ideology.

The other thing that we also need to remind ourselves of is that when we are dealing with a terrorist incident, it is the culmination of very large networks that leads to these actual incidents. It is not just someone who blows something up, but you have a whole network of people recruiting, people propagating, propaganda, people financing, people training and providing different types of logistics. And you need to deal with all these aspects at the same time.

The other thing that is important that we remind ourselves is that this very wide network is not necessarily limited to a specific country. So it is physically impossible for one country, on its own, to deal with them. You really do have to work together in order to be able to effectively deal with this very serious threat.

Today, January 24, 2014, as many of you have heard, Egypt has been a victim of multiple bombings and a number of people have been killed. We are still trying to grapple with the exact number of casualties and the exact amount of damages. We know that a number of people have been killed; many people have been injured. We know that at least two very important historical sites have been damaged, and all this comes within the framework of a political process that is ongoing in Egypt.

Less than a week ago the results of a referendum on the new constitution were announced, and it is very clear that there are elements in Egypt who are doing their very best to stop this political process from going on. The referendum we had was, despite all the threats to people not to participate, and despite the fact that the day the referendum started with one bomb exploding and another bomb being diffused in different parts of the country, and in yet a third part of the country you had people on a rooftop shooting randomly at people who were going to vote, despite all that, we had the largest number of Egyptians to ever participate in history in a referendum. And the fact that they went, despite these kinds of threats, really demonstrates that at the end of the day the public will choose to have a peaceful future and will challenge such attempts at intimidation.

Unfortunately, in the past few months, there has been a rise in the number of terrorist attacks in Egypt. This has happened starting from June 2013, and that month basically was characterized by millions of people taking to the streets in opposition to the Muslim Brotherhood government who was in charge at the time.

⁵ This presentation was delivered at the 16th annual event on “International Cooperation in Combating Terrorism: Review of 2013 and Outlook for 2014” on January 24, 2014 and previously printed in a report on “The Current Security Challenges in Africa” (October 2014).

And the first response was to try to scare these people so that they would go back home, so that's when the first explosions happened. And then, when it became impossible to scare the people away, and when you had millions and millions demanding the removal of that government and when that government was removed, then you had an intensification of attacks.

We had some very serious attacks in the Sinai, and talking about the Sinai, during the year in which the Muslim Brotherhood ruled Egypt. There were presidential pardons issued for over four hundred people who had been convicted of terrorist offenses. Some of the people who received pardons were actually at large. They were not even incarcerated, but it showed a political direction. And, many of the people who had been released, they moved to the Sinai where they joined forces with other extremists, again there was an attempt to make it easier for foreigners, foreign extremists, to come into Egypt. After one year of Muslim Brotherhood rule, we ended up in a situation in which we had at least six al-Qa'ida related groups functioning in the Sinai region. This is something that has been unprecedented for Egypt, but it is something we have to contend with right now.

During the one year which the Muslim Brotherhood ruled Egypt, the army had requested more than once to be able to act against those groups in the Sinai, and those requests had been denied by the President at the time. In one incident, in which a number of Egyptian soldiers had been captured by extremists, the Egyptian presidency issued one of the strangest statements ever to come from any president in the world, which said "we are keen to preserve the lives of both the kidnapped soldiers and the kidnapers." Again, another clear political indication of what that regime was all about.

Anyway, from that point on, there has been a very serious effort in Egypt to do two things. On the one hand, to start a political process, to rebuild the country, to try and gather the people again around a political objective. And in parallel with that, to deal in a very robust way with the actual infrastructure that supports these militants, particularly in the Sinai. This has been a costly operation. We know that many Egyptians have lost their lives. At least 350 Egyptian soldiers and policemen have lost their lives. In the process, 1200 extremists were either captured, killed, or wounded, which shows you the magnitude of the effort that has been ongoing. Over 80 percent of smuggling tunnels crossing the borders between Sinai and Gaza have been destroyed. We have evidence that those were used not only to smuggle weapons and people from Egypt into the Gaza, but also to allow militants in Egypt to go to Gaza and train and then come back into the Sinai. The issue of dealing with the tunnels has been extremely important.

Also, in December 2013, the Egyptian Army killed Abu Suhaib, who is one of the very dangerous leaders of the Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, which is an extremist organization that by the way claimed responsibility for some of the bombings today. In addition to that, over 190 people have been arrested in connection with attacks on churches.

So, you do have this very serious effort to deal with the threat; however, dealing with a terrorist threat is not limited to just combating the terrorists. You need to deal with a whole range of issues, starting from developmental issues, starting from marginalization of groups. For example, you find that a very large-scale program has been started in Egypt for job creation. Among the areas identified for very quick development in Egypt has been the area around the Suez Canal and also the area called the Golden Triangle in the south of Egypt, which is one of the most poverty-

stricken parts of the country. So, I will give you an example about some of the things we consider to be very important. We think it is very important to encourage the role of women in society. We feel that this is a role in the overall fight against terrorism. We feel that when women are more involved in society they do have an influence in reducing levels of violence, and one of the main components of the constitution that has been just passed by Egyptians was stressing the role of women, stressing the rights of women that in the previous constitution by the Muslim Brotherhood had been very seriously threatened and curtailed.

It is important within this context for women to be more involved in law enforcement and for women to be more involved in the judiciary, and again, these kinds of issues dealing with the social issues we feel are very important. We do have a robust plan for the development of the Sinai. Again, it is important to deal with the social and economic factors that are effective in this sort of thing.

Another important element is the ideological element. Basically, these extremists are motivated by ideological concerns, by their ideological beliefs, and it's important to clarify to the overall population how far away from the teachings of Islam these people are. And we have Al-Azhar, which is the leading university and Sunni institution that's playing a very active role. That role is not only limited to Egypt. If we look at the Sahel area, south of the Sahara, you find that we have been very interested in sending hundreds of Al-Azhar scholars to, again, help these countries to counter the mistaken beliefs from the ideological and religious perspective, which we feel is very important.

Regarding Egypt's efforts in international cooperation to combat terrorism, we have been very active in intelligence, intelligence cooperation with the different countries in the world. We have been very active in the global counterterrorism forum, which is also one of the important points where countries meet together and deal not only with the direct threat in a military way but also with all the surrounding areas that need to be dealt with, and in this regard Egypt and the United States co-chair the working group on criminal justice and the rule of law.

It is important in this context also to establish the rule of law. You will notice that the resurgence of terrorism in many parts of the world has been linked in a way to security vacuums, and getting not only the effective presence of law enforcement, but also the effective acceptance by the population that justice is really being meted out and that people are treated fairly, this is a very important element of the whole thing.

Finally, I will just reiterate the importance of dealing with the issue of terrorism in a comprehensive way, and the importance of dealing with it together. As far as Egypt is concerned, I have no doubt that the Egyptian people will prevail. The Egyptian people will not allow themselves to be intimidated by extremists for whatever reason, and the Egyptian people will proceed to build the future that they have always wanted, a future that is more democratic and that is fairer and more just for everyone in the country.

Ambassador Haris Lalacos
*Embassy of Greece*⁶

The National Security Strategy presentation made by President Trump on December 18, 2017 was mentioned earlier. The first thing that I did when we had the transcript was to go through it very quickly and see if the word Greece was in it and then if the names of neighboring countries, countries of direct importance to us were there; and they were not, despite the fact that other countries, perhaps bigger countries, were named repeatedly. A staff member actually made a list of how many references were made of China, Russia, Iran, etc. I do not know if this is a good sign or a bad sign, I would tend to think that it is a positive.

In the 1990s, I am sure that many of the countries in our region would have been named there by name. So I am not terribly upset that we were not named in this 58 page document. Perhaps this is for the better. Also, perhaps, in a way it is positive that the Balkans, as a region, is not a tier one concern for the Washington foreign policy and security establishment as it used to be certainly until the late 1990s and maybe until September 11th. Things changed then. I was in Washington back then as well and I was covering for the embassy as a counselor the Balkans and other things, but the Balkans were the bulk of it. It was very important, especially for a Balkan country like Greece. Then, after September 11th, things changed.

But things changed also for another reason. There was considerable progress in the Balkans. There are things that we should not forget or play down marked improvements that have occurred and have taken place in the Balkans since.

Again, when we are talking about the Balkans, definitions vary. Which countries are we talking about? When I was growing up in Greece, in the 1960s for instance, when we talked about the Balkans that was - starting from the south - Greece, Turkey which has a European part in the Balkan Peninsula, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Albania, and Romania. And we had Balkans games in all sports and Balkan festivals. The Balkans for us was the first measure of comparison as a country; not the European Union, not NATO. These are our immediate neighbors, those are the countries with whom we are related, despite the fact that politically we belonged to different groups and camps.

And then after 1991, again people would start to talk about Southeast Europe because Balkans became almost an obscene word at the time. I never believed that we should abandon our terminology for the sake of political correctness. And hopefully this is gone for good now.

But when we talked about the Balkans in the 1990s and later on, we included more or less the entire peninsula. Now, when we talk about the Balkans, we mostly refer to the Western Balkans six countries, sometimes grouped under the W6 heading, which again, I am not sure if it is desirable to do, but it reflects a shifting configuration with respect to Euro-Atlantic integration.

I would think that the fact that the Balkans is not a number one priority is certainly good. However, we do see in Washington lately a relative resurgence of interest about the Balkans, mostly about the western Balkans, the six countries which are not yet fully integrated into the Euro-Atlantic structures. And this

⁶ Presentation at an event on "Security Challenges in the Balkans: Quo Vadis?" held on December 19, 2017 at the International Law Institute.

discussion, this concern about the Balkans is almost always security related and, almost exclusively, there is a defensive approach to it, especially in this capital. Interest in the Balkans goes hand-in-hand with concern about possible growing influence by Russia in the region. Of course, the operational conclusion of this discussion is nearly always the same: that we have to advance Euro-Atlantic integration. This is a premise that I think is widely accepted, and certainly accepted by my country. However, I need to stress, that often it is used as an excuse by not only certain governments in the area but by friends of the Balkans of certain countries outside the region to forego the full compliance with the responsibilities and criteria that NATO and EU membership entail. Both organizations have what is called conditionality and again, we believe that it is the future of all the countries to be fully integrated in NATO and the EU, provided that they fulfill the criteria.

We believe that there is more stability now in the Balkans than in the past, although the situation is certainly not at the desirable level. And I think that what has mostly contributed to this improvement is the process of European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

However, security challenges still exist and should not be overlooked. Because the Balkans is such a vast, diverse, and dear topic – especially for people from the region, and certainly for me - I could talk for a long time. Let me try to limit myself to the security challenges in the region, which is the topic of this meeting.

First of all, we have inter-ethnic tensions in the Balkans, I do not have to elaborate on that. They are always a source of concern. Also, there is a problem with the maturity of political institutions in some countries. We have nationalist rhetoric, which never completely subsided, and we have nationalistic political platforms groups, which are very dangerous in a region that is burdened first of all by a living memory of conflict – conflict in the region was recent – but also it is a region burdened with a heavy historical load.

There are narratives of unfinished business. And although this is understandable from an intellectual or romantic point of view, in almost all of the countries and in almost all the ethnicities in the region and perhaps outside the region as well, when it comes to being a guiding principle for policy, this is a problem. We have to make sure that this stops being the case.

When we talk about immediate security challenges in the region, perhaps number one is extremism – political extremists and fundamentalist extremists – and second is organized crime.

Everybody knows about foreign fighters from Balkan countries who ended up fighting in Syria and Iraq. And they are perhaps the best example of growing fundamentalist extremism in the region. It is a complex phenomenon. We have to see its causes. But at first glance, it is a curious thing that people from the Balkans, from this part of Europe, a corner of Europe but still European, they would leave their countries and go to fight for the so-called Islamic Caliphate in Syria or Iraq. Why should they do that? Of course, money is part of it but it should not be seen as the only explanation. It is not only an economic reason, there are other reasons. There is infiltration by other countries, not from the region, among segments of the population. There is an ideological element there in the minds of many people. And let us not forget that we are basically talking about foreign fighters who, almost all of them, come from the part of the Balkans which was most of the time, until the emergence of modern states, under Ottoman rule. And in the Ottoman Empire, you

had the millet system. It was system where your religion largely, if not exclusively determined your affiliation, your identity, what became an ethnic identity along the way. I am not saying this is good or bad, but it is something that exists here and has not been fully eradicated from the collective mindset of the people in the region. So, it is important to keep all of these things in mind when trying to explain why you have hundreds, perhaps 500 people from different countries in the region leave and go to Syria or Iraq and fight with ISIS or al-Qa'ida formations.

What happens with them now that ISIS has been largely defeated militarily in the region, is that many of them are returning, some of them are returning with families, and certainly indoctrinated. Who knows what they will be doing once they are back? We saw that ISIS operatives are not limiting their war in the Middle East, they are bringing the war in the form of terrorism, terrorist attacks in Europe, in North America, and in many other countries. It is something to be concerned about.

Also, organized crime. Organized crime started in the region and is becoming a real factor after 1991. At the beginning it was a way to fill in a vacuum, especially a vacuum in the security apparatus of some countries – in some countries more, in other countries less. And of course, there is always corruption, that was not a post-1991 phenomenon only, but it is certainly there. Organized crime is a concern also because it is more and more linked to extremism, terrorism, inter-ethnic tensions. Groups exchange funds, weapons, logistical support, etc.

Challenges are regional, challenges are transnational in the Balkans, and we have to follow the regional approach, but work has to start at home. It is important not to use the regional approach as an excuse to postpone or sidestep needed reforms in each and every country. The European integration and the criteria provided by the European Union are certainly important in this respect, but they are not a panacea. The work has to start at home and the element of ownership is extremely important here.

To overcome the shortcomings, we need to have solutions in a number of areas. Solutions that should be bilateral, trilateral, or wider region-level. And for that to be successful, we absolutely need to see the establishment and sedimentation of a culture of compromise and a culture of dialogue in the region. The reassuring factor that we see is that all nations want the same thing: future stability and prosperity, rule of law, democratic institutions. They see that as best being served within the Euro-Atlantic framework. There is a growing realization that current security challenges are common to all the countries, to all the people who live in the area. There is a growing regional cooperation to counter these threats. There are many regional groupings, some older and some newer. Just to give you an idea of growing regional cooperation when it comes to security, only yesterday there was a meeting in Thessaloniki with the chiefs of police of four countries. It was a Greek initiative going back a couple of years ago. The other three are the three northern immediate neighbors of Greece. This started as a meeting of the foreign and interior ministers and it has become more specific now, with operational work at the levels of chiefs of police. We have challenges from migration also.

Ambassador Lukman Faily
*Embassy of the Republic of Iraq*⁷

As I was preparing for the event, I was not sure, do I focus on ISIS and Iraq specifically, or do I look at the challenges from a global perspective? I concluded that I will talk about the global challenges, because I believe what we face in Iraq is a manifestation of a global problem. There is always a question of nature vs. nurture, but what we face in Iraq and in the region is an interplay of various actors, factors, dynamics, and various visions colliding with each other. It is not a matter of clashes of civilizations; it has more to do with power than anything else. I will talk specifically about the global challenges, the specific challenges in the Middle East, and maybe also about two other factors – the military aspect and international cooperation – and later about specific issues in relation to ISIS or Iraq.

There is a number of challenges from a global perspective. There is always, in this day and age, an issue of the global players' roles, whether it is Russia, China, regional players like Iran, and so on. People always try to understand how they interact with each other and what are the impacts of those actors, and how do they relate to the U.S., for example. There is also a global challenge regarding international jihadists, which has clearly become a 21st Century problem. There is a specific challenge that ISIS, ISIL, or "Daesh" as a global problem, because it is seeking to become a global player and is impacting global issues. There is also a nuclear race issue, a cyber issue, a technology issue; these are all factors. There is a global challenge in trying to comprehend, interact, and align with the U.S.'s global role as well. Does its allies interact with it, understand it, and align themselves with it or does the U.S. take this into account? If there is a misalignment then that creates its own challenges. More importantly, in our day and age of technology and globalization, there is an immediate impact of one factor on another. So we are on real time. You do not have a delay of a problem in one area where it reaches a ripple effect—it is all in real time. And that is another factor as well. You have to take these myriad factors into account. That is what you might call a global level.

If you move on to the international order, that is another challenge. Globally there is a challenge to the international order. The international order currently, primarily under the nation-state concept, is based on respect for sovereignty, rejection of territorial conquests or, as we have seen what Saddam tried in Kuwait and others have done as well, annexations of other countries, open trade, and encouragement on human rights issues. These are the large, big international orders, which are being challenged. In the Middle East specifically, the challenges are in relation to the struggle of power within states, a contest between states, a conflict between ethnicities and sectarian groups and so on, and a breach of international borders and systems which leads to either failed states or ungovernable states, and that in itself creates another problem.

We can look at the ISIS situation as an example. Why is it a problem for us? Why is it unique? Why did I not link it to the al-Qa'ida problem? Because it is transnational, and it has hardened fighters who are determined and ideological. It is allowed and encouraged to think outside the box. So the normal paradigms of states, how they operate, and theaters of operation, and the rules of engagement are not there. Certainly they are ruthless, and do not confine themselves to any rules of engagement. Unpredictability, viciousness of their attacks and atrocities, and so on.

⁷ Presentation at an event on "Combating Terrorism: Strategic Assessments, the Military's Role, and International Cooperation" held on May 14, 2015 at Potomac Institute for Policy Studies

They are perfectionists in their approach of riding on pre-existing divisions of sectarianisms and other problems.

In that context, there are a number of strongholds for them. The reasons for these strongholds are – and these were clear in the Arab Spring manifestations as well – political instability in that region, economic and social injustice, the social contract is being redefined, bad governance in rich countries and others, and what you might see by the way is a country with a \$90,000 GDP per-capita versus \$4,000 next door – both Arabs and so on – and demographic explosion. In my own country, we have growth rate of 3 percent every year, which is about one million in a population of 33 million – that is a tremendous amount of throughput for a country to deal with. Also, there are deep-rooted political issues that have not been resolved, such as the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. These are factors that have contributed. None of these factors alone are the predominant factors. In combination, they are lethal and confuse the picture. Unfortunately, for those who do not want to confront it, they may find it easier to only focus on one issue, such as this is sectarian or this is Shi'ite-Sunni or others. It is a combination. With globalization, it has allowed the environment and the tools for them to interact with each other.

With ISIS, for example, the United States has tried to challenge it and seek it in what you might call a five-layer approach. First was the cyber/social media; trying to challenge the social media aspect of it. By the way, that in itself is a challenge because of freedom of expression and other types of human rights and global values. They are best utilizing that. How do you deal with that? Also, when someone sends you a threat. It is a fine line when you approach Twitter and Facebook and say this is a page that needs to be addressed. You have to go to legal issues. There is also an approach of the military defeat of ISIS on the ground. Here, the United States sees Iraq as its key partner and first partner; a player it can work with. There is also an issue of funding for these terrorist organizations – drying that well has become a problem. One of the key challenges we have is that sometimes funds come in from those who are from royalties but they are not members of government. Where do you draw the line there? That is another challenge as well. Ideology of takfiris is global challenge. Every Friday sermons in itself are a contributing factor in strengthening or damaging harmony and social cohesions in that region. Lastly is transnational fighters and recruitments – this is a key challenge. What we saw in Europe, Canada, Belgium, and elsewhere is a result of that. These are all five layers in which we support the United States.

Each one of them can be a significant factor. Each one of them alone will not be the determining factor; it has to have a cohesive approach. Getting the buy-in of 67 countries plus is a good sign, but that in itself is not what you might call good enough to address the core roots.

The other challenge we have is the factor of time. The throughput of recruitments versus the throughput of the fight against ISIS; how equitable is it? Are you able to destroy their root cause, specifically if they say we have a *Khilafa* and we have Nineveh, Mosul as its capital? So this time, the ISIS situation is not a control of an ideology and a concept or a value globally, no, in addition to that it is in actual control of property or a land. However, they do not want to invest in development of that land. So to them – and this is another threat – it is that they do not think that it is their responsibility to look after the whole state: welfare, education, schools, roads, and infrastructure. And, as a result, they do not need a lot of funds to destroy. And that is another challenge. And, the other problem is any destruction they do, for example the destruction of another ethnicity, sect or religious minority and others;

sometimes it might be irreversible to deal with that. How do you deal with IDPs who have gone to other continents, how do you bring them back? Or heritage sites that have been destroyed permanently? That is an issue as well.

What we have in Iraq is, although you may be surprised to hear that, is that our immune system to terrorist attacks has been tremendous. We have been able to cope with it – certainly this is no longer the myth, it no longer is an area untouchable. We have people resolved enough to address it. However, their objective is to destroy you and your way of life as well. And to disrupt your daily life. Disrupting daily life is still on, nobody's denying that; car bombings and suicide bombings and so on. Destroy our way of life? No way. Because normalities, people have stood up to it. And the daily normalities of life – marriage, trade, commerce, and others – are staying on. You see that. Clearly you see it in Pakistan, you see it in Iraq, you see it in Lebanon. And these are what you might call thick-skinned countries in dealing with terrorism. And that is a key aspect to watch out for – is to support it, for it to become a quick example for others to not put up with terrorism. And that is another important aspect of it.

Also, I would like to say that to define any strategy we need to connect the ends. We need to understand where do we want to go and our strategy should lead us there, not vice-versa. And as a result of that we need to find the ways and means to get there. That is another important thing. It is not the concept of “I have such a large budget, what can I do with it?” That will not do. It is “what is your strategy and how much of a budget do you need for it? What is your strategy, how much military cooperation, international orders, UN conventions and others to deal with it?” However, the challenges we also face is that the standard parameters of control we have with the UN and other bodies was done in a post-Second World War order. Is it good enough to deal with current challenges, which are transnational, global, and the other factors I talked about? We need to re-look at that. What are the global tools, whether it is legal or technical or other tools we have where global players will work with each other in addressing these global challenges? You cannot deal with ISIS as a state player; they may seek to be, they may want to be, and they may project to be, but certainly they are not and certainly they do not want to only stay within that. They would not want to go to, for example, any international courts and go to judiciaries and others; they do not want that because they do not believe in that order. And therefore your countermeasures have to address that.

Finally, I will just talk about the international cooperation needed for it. One thing is clear is that no single country alone can deal with it, even the United States, it cannot. It requires a tremendous amount of outreach, forgetting the small issues and differences we have to focus on that. That is one thing. No single mean, as well, whether it is military, cyber, intelligence, and others, alone can defeat it. We need to have that as well. It is a multifaceted approach and requires economic, cultural, ethnic, religious, and other types of cooperation. There is also a natural realization which we in the region have to address, and this is that there are regional, what you might call religious factors which play a part. We need to own up to that. We cannot say that “well this is non-Islamic, and therefore just deal with it as the others.” No, it has been packaged and dealt with and marketed as that problem, we need to own up to that challenge. Not to say that this is only our problem, but we are a determinant factor in resolving that as well. That needs to be realized as well. The other issue is what are the preconditions for cooperation? That is where real dialogue has to take place. And we need to look at the bigger interests rather than the small differences we have. Certain countries we may not agree on, whether it is values or even interests, but in relation to the specific challenge—for example, the ISIS

problem, or al-Qa'ida, or other challenges, cyber for example—we need to own up to that challenge. Otherwise we will cancel each other, and rather than have a win-win we will have a zero-sum game.

Ambassador Jean Kamau*Interim Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Republic of Kenya*⁸

I would like to share with you a few points about the challenges for security in Africa with a specific focus on the lessons we can draw from regional insecurity in the East Africa region.

I want to start by stating that the stability of any nation is really paramount to safeguarding its security. What we know from experience in the East African region is that the effective management of the election cycle in a country will have a bearing on that countries stability and security. Our own experience in Kenya through several multi-party elections since 1992 has tested our ability to maintain our stability and security and also to transition peacefully from different governments. The test lies in the ability of constitutional offices to play their part and provide the necessary leadership to ensure that stability and security is maintained. Therefore, the electoral body and security agencies must work together to provide this assurance. This also builds confidence in the electorate and political leadership that the process will be fair and security is guaranteed.

Within the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region, and under the African Union, there is specific interest in any of the member nations' electoral circle. Each of these agencies will work closely with a nation's electoral agency to support preparations for a peaceful election through observer missions and regular consultations. The African Union works with its member states to ensure peaceful elections and transitions because the result of a poor election and any emerging conflict during the electoral cycle, affects the whole region. The 2007 general elections in Kenya and the aftermath proved this fact. The impact of the violence that was witnessed in Kenya affected the stability and economic activity in the East African region. So it is important to always look at the governance and political processes in order to assess if there is a risk of tension and instability that could result in or to insecurity in the region.

The economy of a Nation and the ability of the Government to deliver the electoral promise of is very important for ensuring stability and security. Some of our previous speakers have talked about the need for strong economic developments within different countries as a contributor to stability. This is an important point. In East Africa, we are steadily moving to an integrated economic model, in order to enhance trade and facilitate the movement of people. In addition, we are pursuing regional infrastructure projects that will significantly contribute to the development of all our countries. This effort is made due to the fact that we face similar social economic challenges that require common solutions. By working together we stand a better chance of succeeding and pulling our resources and opportunities. Some of these projects include an ambitious single gauge rail link that will improve the transport network between Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan and Rwanda, in addition the Lamu Port and Lamu South Sudan Ethiopia Transport Corridor (LAPPSET) that will open up the northern part of the country and enhance regional integration and cooperation with South Sudan, Uganda and Ethiopia. All of these factors help contribute to stability and enhance economic activity leading to job creation, sustained economic development and improved livelihoods for all the peoples in the region. Progressive economic planning and implementation of transforming activities

⁸ This presentation was delivered at the seminar on "The Current Security Challenges in Africa" on March 27, 2014 and previously printed in a report on "The Current Security Challenges in Africa" (October 2014).

will give impetus to the government's efforts to deliver on its promise and generate wealth and economic empowerment for citizens.

Let me now turn to terrorism and its impact in the region. The threat posed by al-Shabaab presents challenges for peace and security in the East Africa region. The instability in Somalia since the early 1990s has been a huge concern to us in Kenya and the East Africa region. We have monitored and watched how this Nations instability has continued to threaten our own security. Kenya has played host to Somali refugees. In addition, the Kenya government has played a pivotal role in facilitating peace talks leading to peace and stability in Somalia. However, the emergence of al-Shabaab, a terrorist group that has pledged allegiance to al-Qaida is not only alarming but presents a real and present retreat to peace and stability in Somalia and the region. The threat posed by al-Shabaab has significantly impacted Kenya national security priorities, security planning and resources to ensure that we can respond to the threat it presents and maintain the safety and security for our citizens.

The Westgate Mall incident of September 2013 was a turning point for our security as al-Shabaab was able to carry out a terrorist attack on a mall within the capital city. The consequences of the Westgate attack were of course 67 people died, the disruption of the economy, and to property as well. However, it is important for me to stress that this is not the first terror attack in Kenya. Kenya has faced several attacks attributed to al-Qa'ida. For example, the attack on the U.S. embassy in August 1998 and an attempt in 2002 where al-Qa'ida linked terrorists tried to bring down an Israeli charter plane in Mombasa. Although they failed to bring down the plane, they were successfully in attacking a hotel where many local people died. Subsequent to these attacks, Kenya has remained under constant threat from terrorist groups but the vigilance and effective policing effort has secured the countries security. Threats and actual criminal acts from al-Shabaab resulted in the Kenyan Defense Forces (KDF) entering Somalia in October 2011 as a way stopping the threat. Since the Kenya Defense Forces joined the African Union Mission to Somalia (ANISOM) forces in Somalia, there has been relative peace and an end to threats along the Indian Ocean and parts of Kenya Somalia border. However, al-Shabaab has changed tack and is now focused on attacking Kenya directly. In the north of Kenya, in Garissa, Wajir and Madera counties al-Shabaab has attacked towns in these counties by carrying out raids, using improvised explosives, kidnapping government officials and causing disruption to the local economy. It is not just Kenya that al-Shabaab targets, Uganda which also contributes soldiers to ANISOM, has faced terrorist attacks.

Al-Shabaab remains a threat for the East African region. There are several issues and challenges that this threat presents. Firstly, al-Shabaab is attracting foreign fighters from the United States and Europe who have joined the groups as fighters. This creates new challenges and opportunities for closer collaboration and partnership between law enforcement agencies to work together on intelligence and counterterrorism efforts. Closer collaboration is especially necessary with the U.S. because where there were former Somalia refugees now U.S. citizens are some of the fighters who lead al-Shabaab and contribute immensely to its strategy and ability to be a disruptive force. It is important to also establish who is financing of al-Shabaab as this is what enables the group to remain relevant and disruptive. This is an issue that Kenya is keenly focusing on and directing our energies towards.

Another source of instability is the challenges posed by hosting a refugee population. As has been mentioned by other speakers, having a refugee population

again can be a cause of instability. Recent acts of terror in Kenya point to the refugee camps in the northern part of Kenya as a point of planning and transfer of arms and weapons. This development requires closer policing within the refugee camps. The Kenya government in collaboration with the Somalia government is pursuing the resettlement of Somalia refugees back into Somalia. Closing down the refugee camps is a key objective of the Kenya government. There are sections of Somalia that are relatively safe and secure and can accommodate the returning refugee community. This exercise will be undertaken in full compliance of international obligations and will be done on a voluntary basis and working very closely with the government of Somalia to try and address the closure of these camps, which have been open for almost 20 years. The stability of Somalia is critical for this effort to succeed. Without a stable Somalia, we will continue to have instability in the region. This effort requires a global effort to support and compliment the efforts of the African Union and United Nations.

Another issue is the effect of natural disasters on security. Disasters, natural disasters, man-made disasters, really need a concerted effort to integrate effective resilience and response into our planning. Some of the common disasters we have witnessed include famine, earthquakes, drought and floods. For example, if we have drought in Kenya and pastoralists move into Ethiopia this may result in tension and conflict over grazing lands. A similar situation occurs regularly between pastoralist communities along the Kenya Uganda border. From these disasters emerges insecurity, and repeated disasters then create a cycle of opportunities for instability and insecurity. Having disaster risk reduction strategies that incorporate resilience in the planning is very important to mitigate against the risk presented by disasters. This touches on our ability to address emerging risks and the impact on peace, stability and security in the region.

The last issue I will mention is South Sudan. South Sudan is a young democracy. All countries in the IGAD region contributed immensely to the establishment of South Sudan. We hosted refugees, facilitated the peace talks and contributed resources and support the creation of new country. The ongoing internal conflict in South Sudan is a tragedy and a huge disappointment. The instability on South Sudan creates a challenge for all the IGAD countries and this is why they are all at the forefront of finding a solution. As previous speakers have said it is not a military solution that will resolve this crisis, but a negotiated solution where all parties respect the peace agreements and cessation of hostilities. It is really important that South Sudan succeeds because the consequences of a broken South Sudan are very bad for the region.

Finally, I think the presentations that have been made about the importation of terror across the region present new challenges for securing peace and security in Africa. I agree that some of the solutions mentioned on sharing integrated approaches and strengthening cooperation, partnerships, and networking is needed to address the problem of terror groups such as al-Shabaab.

Wafa Bugaighis*Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Libya⁹*

As I stand before you, young men are being recruited into joining extremist groups and shipped across borders to come and create havoc in my country, Libya.

Right now, young men in my country are dying while trying alongside our military troops, with minimal support and resources, to fight back this new evil that is trying to steal away our dreams, our values, our culture, our history, and our wealth.

Weapons are being delivered to terrorist groups. Funds are being provided across borders to buy them more weapons to fight democracy and prosperity. To fight tolerance. To disrupt and send wrong messages about our peaceful and tolerant religion. To fight the same human rights in the international conventions and charters that we are all in this room signatory to; to reverse the right to life, the right to freedom, the right to good living, to good education, and the right to be free from oppression, submission, and coercion.

Today, as we look at what is going on in the world, we realize that terrorism knows no religion, and doesn't restrict itself to borders nor to morals. Terrorism is the same anywhere and is committed by the same persons across the globe. However there do exist certain communities and societies where terrorism has a bigger risk to thrive and do harm. It is those communities that are undergoing political instability and change. Societies where citizens have been deprived from their basic rights for too long. Countries like Libya where tyranny and oppression ruled for over 43 years. Where empowerment of women and youth is not a priority, and where economic rights have been abused for too long.

We know today the importance and impact of reforming the global economic systems so that all people have access to better living standards and opportunities for all equally. We know now that reforming the educational systems is paramount to teach core human values, tolerance and respect of all humans to one another. Deprivation and lack of political will to enforce social justice is one of the most important reasons for making countries fall into the web of terrorism and radical movements.

The attacks carried out by terrorist groups on governmental and civilian in states, the executions of Libyan activist, military personnel, and foreigners in Libya, the attacks on oil fields, airports and ports in Libya and the spread of extremism will not only affect Libya. But the whole region, and we fear, as Libya is a gateway to Africa, Europe and the Middle East that those acts of terrorism will spill into the region.

We feel that a global task force needs to work on a proposal to produce an international charter that deals with radical movements and terrorism. Laws have to change in order to control the spillage of weapons and funds into the hands of the terrorists. Nations have to stop their support to rouge groups with fundamental thinking. Time is running and our existence in this world as neighbors with common goals and mutual interests is at risk.

⁹ Presentation at an event on "International Cooperation in Combating Terrorism: Review of 2014 and Outlook for 2015" held on March 30, 2015 at the National Press Club.

We need to work together to enforce order and keep our world a safe and stable place for the future generations to live in. It is our responsibility as world policy makers and the responsibility of the world leaders to work on common goals and to put together a global charter that regulates the flow of arms, drugs, money, and radicalism. To leave fighting terrorism to countries which are weakened by it, to NGOs and communities alone is not enough.

In Libya we are committed to work with the world leaders and policy makers to end corruption and make sure human rights are not violated.

We are committed and persistent in the pursue of an economic stability in our country that will lead to better living standards to our people and that will not impact negatively on the region and the globe.

Libya amongst other nations is fighting a vicious war against terrorism and radical thinking groups. This is not a threat to Libya alone and to its people and future prosperity and progress, but to the whole region and to the neighboring European countries and to the economy of European countries that rely on our oil and gas and on Africa and this will impact negatively on the strategic interests of the United States of America.

We invite and will support strongly all research work and civil work to further shed light on the precursors of terrorism in order to find the best ways to contain and fight it.

We have a difficult fight to endure that requires putting all of the resources and efforts to make the outcome a winning one for the sake of humanity and history. The history of the world is filled with agonizing encounters but let us today change this history forever.

Our children, your children and all the world's children deserve that much of an effort.

Ambassador Vasko Naumovski
Embassy of the Republic of Macedonia¹⁰

The few issues that are mentioned for this program on “Security Challenges in the Balkans: Quo Vadis?” include organized crime, Islamic terrorism, the refugee crisis, political turmoil, and economic instability. I would say that these are only additional issues to the existing concerns that have been alive in the Balkans for the past years or even decades. The issues that we are reviewing today are in fact only additional concerns that can destabilize the region. We do have concerns which have been security challenges, like inter-ethnic issues in the Balkans, religious issues, border disputes, certainly historical debates, etc. All these issues, as I said, are completing the picture of concerns in the Balkans.

Nevertheless, we should not look to the past and instead look to the future to see how to overcome these concerns and at the same time to deal with new threats. Islamic terrorism and the refugee crisis are probably the two issues that have defined our concerns in the past few years, especially the refugee crisis. We are all aware that more than one million refugees have passed through the Balkans in the past two years, although the Balkans and the countries in the Balkans have not been the final destination for them. But it was up to us to deal with this problem. Final destinations include Germany, Scandinavian countries, and other countries in Western Europe. Nevertheless, it was the countries from the Balkans, starting from Greece and all the other countries in the north, that had to deal with this issue.

I must say that especially in the first months, there was not enough awareness in Western Europe about this issue and not enough cooperation between the countries and their agencies and governments. After all, the reasons for these refugees coming into Europe were not part of the activities of the countries in the Balkans. Or, if you want to put it more directly, the Balkan countries did not create the mess in Syria and that region. Nevertheless, we are the ones who are suffering the consequences.

The refugee crisis brought to light different concerns, like the terrorism threat. Unfortunately, having the terrorist attacks in Nice, Brussels, and Paris, we were able to see that part of the individuals who were committing those attacks infiltrated into Europe through these waves of refugee crises, disguised as refugees. They were able to enter the European countries and later commit terrorist attacks and this only emphasized the need for greater cooperation between the security and counterterrorism of the European countries. We still need to stay alert and prepare for the potential crisis in the future.

Also, there is the threat of Islamic terrorism, as it was mentioned before. There is part of the population in the Balkans that is of Islamic religion and we do face a problem of so-called foreign fighters. So, citizens of the countries in the Balkans are fighting in the battlegrounds of the so-called Islamic State. It is a significant problem for us knowing that most of them have already returned or will return in the coming months or years. So that is why we need to increase the cooperation between the countries in this area, too, and be aware that our countries may also become targets of these terrorist attacks.

¹⁰ Presentation at an event on “Security Challenges in the Balkans: Quo Vadis?” held on December 19, 2017 at the International Law Institute.

Also, I would like to just mention some other areas of concern which pose security challenges for our countries. Some of them were already mentioned in the previous discussions, like the influence of Russia and the potential to destabilize the region. Although, most of the Balkan countries have never been formally part of the Soviet bloc and have never had especially close relations with the former Soviet Union, there is a tradition of cultural links between Slavic countries. Unfortunately, some of our countries have been targeted in order to be destabilized. Very often the targets include areas of society that are able to destabilize the whole country or region. For our country, it was, for example, inter-ethnic relations or the political relations. Fortunately, we have been able to overcome these threats but we are not sure if they will stop in the future.

An issue that is related to this is the NATO enlargement and the still unclear role of NATO in the Balkan, or if you want to say also globally. So the hesitation of NATO for the enlargement process and also the current process of the European Union enlargement, which is not existing in the past years. The European Union has even renamed its own commissioner which used to be named Enlargement Commissioner and now it is called Commissioner for Enlargement Negotiations. Meaning that we can negotiate for enlargement, but there is no enlargement. And until the end of the current European Union Commission term, there will be no enlargement for new member states. So, it creates additional frustration for the people in the nations of the Balkans knowing that the European or the Euro-Atlantic future is not fully secured. And it is also creates an atmosphere where other centers of influence may be invited to come into the region.

The rise of nationalism, which is still another concern, is not only a problem for the countries of the Balkans, it is a problem for Europe in general. But, given the history and traditions in the Balkans, it is always something that is a continuous threat for our region. It is often said that the Balkans are producing more history than we can consume. So we do have history for export. Very often historical disputes have the potential to create instability in the whole region. And if you look at the bigger picture, the European picture, we see a rise of nationalism and extreme right-wing political parties in many European countries.

It was somewhere in the mid-1990s where some of the Western European academics were trying to create a process in order to Europeanize the Balkans, before Europe is Balkanized. I am afraid that leaving the Balkans outside the European Union and NATO for too long, not only creates a potential to create new instabilities in the region, but also spreads the "disease" to other countries in Europe.

So, overall it is a picture of different challenges, most of them related to the security. But I would say that with greater cooperation between the governments in the region, greater involvement of the European Union and NATO, and greater involvement of the United States, we will be able to overcome these challenges. The role of the USA has varied in the past decade, unlike the period in the 1990s where we were able to see clear involvement of the United States in the region. In the last decade we are not seeing much of it as if the U.S. has delegated this responsibility to the Europeans.

Ambassador (Ret.) Al Maamoun Baba Lamine Keita
Former Ambassador of the Republic of Mali¹¹

An unknown sage once said “one should follow effective action with quiet reflection. From the quiet reflection will come even more effective action.” This is an excellent opportunity to have an insightful analysis of 2013 in terms of combating terrorism, and to create a projection for 2014.

The remainder of my remarks has three parts. First, I briefly discuss the Regional and International Context. Second, I discuss Africa's State of Security. Third, I present the International and African New approaches in combating terrorism-2014.

I. Regional and International Context

African terrorism situation

Over the past year, the threat of international and regional terrorism has become more dangerous and more lethal, and disseminates geographically.

Al-Qa'ida affiliates groups have grown in strength, size and influence at an alarming rate across the Middle East and Africa, and it is projected to grow in 2014.

In Algeria, Egypt and Mali, a clear shift could be observed from the ‘traditional’ political or ethnic armed crisis, like insurgency of Islamist groups or rebels, towards activities aimed at terrorizing the civilian population, such as bombings and kidnappings.

The establishment of safe havens for those terrorist groups linked to transnational terror networks in Northern Mali and earlier Somalia demonstrates the nature and potential scale of the phenomenon as well as the often very fragile nature of national governments, regional and international arrangements to deal with these crises.

African terrorism situation in 2013 presented following features:

- First, the mode of terrorist attack changes from sporadic ones to serial ones will have larger targets and impacts.
- Second, scattered terrorism forces tend to alliance, leading to attacks with organization and unified leadership.
- Third, the terrorism situation features in durability.
- Fourth, terrorist activities show features of complexity and multiple dimensions.
- Fifth, religious extremist forces rise to be the main power of African terrorist attacks in 2013.

With fragile governments in North Africa and unrest elsewhere on the continent, al-Qa'ida-linked groups have increasingly exploited porous borders, political vacuums, local grievances, socioeconomic stresses, and diminished focus on counterterrorism to pursue their deadly objectives.

¹¹ This presentation was delivered at the 16th annual event on “International Cooperation in Combating Terrorism: Review of 2013 and Outlook for 2014” on January 24, 2014 and previously printed in a report on “The Current Security Challenges in Africa” (October 2014).

They are becoming more diffuse and entrepreneurial, and have demonstrated an ability to undergo various reincarnations when necessary. They also exhibited a capability to re-emerge despite apparently efficient counter-terrorist campaigns by national, regional and international actors.

Beyond the threats posed by al-Shabaab, AQIM, Ansar Dine, Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, Boko Haram, Ansaru, and other sleeper cells in West Africa, the gradual infiltration and expansion of al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Hezbollah into Eastern and West Africa are emerging concerns.

Self-Radicalization phenomenon

On the wider scene, another Global al-Qa'ida strategy is in work that could have a devastating impact on the populations of the West and could pose a more imminent threat.

There is good reason to be extremely concerned in Europe and U.S. about self-radicalization which is not going away and is likely to increase. Tens of thousands Europeans who have left to train and fight in Syria, Sudan, Somalia, and Egypt, and Mali, an exodus spurred by local imam's and influenced by extremist propaganda and recruiters. And, the number is growing.

Recruits from Britain, Europe, and the U.S. are being brainwashed, indoctrinated in extremist anti-Western ideology, trained as "jihadists", and sent home by al-Qa'ida to start new terror cells, and launch attacks there instead.

The European Union is proposing new measures to fight radical Islam. They come amid concerns about the exodus of young people joining terror groups overseas.

Britain's intelligence services estimate that around 500 British fighters are currently in Syria, and fear they will return radicalized. The MI5 has had to allocate more and more resources to tackling the danger in the past six months.

Top U.S. law enforcement officials are also increasingly concerned about efforts to recruit and radicalize American citizens by drawing them to the restive region and sending them back to this country to carry out terrorist attacks.

II. Africa's State of Security

The last year has underscored once again the real threat that al-Qa'ida, and its affiliated groups pose throughout this vulnerable region.

Further complicating the security landscape is the increase in the outbreak of transnational organized crime (TOC) that feed into the so-called terrorist loop in West Africa.

From Mauritania to Egypt, and from the Horn of Africa in the East and across the Sahel to the West, the terrorism threat is more diffuse, decentralized, and geographically dispersed than ever before.

Military gains against Islamist fighters in places like Mali and Somalia were followed by major terrorist attacks in neighboring countries. Such events demonstrated how complex and strong the threat remains.

Kenya, Somalia, Algeria, Mali and Nigeria were the scenes of major terrorist attacks in 2013.

The Sahel and West African region has become a hideout for terrorists and drug traffickers whose destabilizing influences are a real threat to regional security, even as the international stabilization force and presidential elections in Mali have helped restore some order.

Terrorist acts and transnational organized crime in the region, particularly following the resurgence of Boko Haram, Ansaru, as well as the occupation of northern Mali by al-Qa'ida affiliated terrorist groups in 2012, Ansar-Eddine and MUJAO, have alarmed not only West African countries but also the broader international community.

In Nigeria, Boko Haram has proven to be an increasing threat to the Nigeria's national security and the Sahel stability. Ansaru maintains operational and logistical bases outside Nigeria, possibly in neighboring countries such as Niger and Cameroon, and its threat could extend to Nigeria's eastern states of Adamawa and Taraba from where the group may launch attacks from its purported strongholds in Cameroon.

In Mali, eleven months after they were scattered across the Sahara by waves of French air strikes, Islamists in Mali are making a comeback – naming new leaders, attacking U.N. peacekeepers and killing two French journalists.

Seemingly defeated, fighters from both AQIM, Ansar al-Dine, and MUJAO made their way into southwest Libya. They are building up links with like-minded jihadists in northern Libya, especially in eastern coastal cities such as Derna and Benghazi, and preparing for new attacks.

In the Eastern Africa region, conditions appeared to be improving in Somalia at the beginning of last year. Kenyan and African Union troops had forced the militant group al-Shabaab from several cities. But in September, a small number of al-Shabaab fighters attacked a shopping center in the Kenyan capital Nairobi. They killed more than 60 people. The attack uncovered weaknesses in Kenyan security and intelligence agencies.

This phenomenon developed a transnational component often under the cloak of Global al-Qa'ida and the Global Muslim Brotherhood, and their ideology of Jihadism including ridding Africa and the Middle-East of Western influence seems to be shift away from directly attacking western targets towards support for local insurgencies where Islamist groups fight the government.

In such a climate, the emerging wave of ideologically-motivated terrorism and violence in Africa pushed the necessity to address innovative combating terrorism comprehensive approaches to new heights in 2014.

III. The Road Ahead: International and African New approaches in combating terrorism in 2014

To date, more attention has been paid to the 'traditional' counter-terrorism approach, which relies on the use of intelligence agencies, the police, and the judiciary. This is traditional approach is consistent with efforts to enhance security by protecting citizens while also preserving national values, norms, rules and

institutions, and relatively less attention has been paid to understanding, preventing, and mitigating the key drivers that lead to violent extremist acts on the continent.

A. Africa Approach-2014

What Africa can do in combating terrorism?

On the African Union summit in 2013, participating countries admitted that the African terrorism situation shows signs of deterioration.

The imperative of addressing security challenges has inspired the adoption of several regional mechanisms and instruments for enhancing security and combating terrorism.

The challenge therefore has not been the regional lack of frameworks and instruments to respond to these threats, but rather the failure to address the underlying factors contributing to the outbreak of these crimes as well as the complex linkages between them.

In fact, combating the multifaceted threat of terrorism in Africa, resolution or even management is a work in progress and requires a multidimensional response. While a new approach does not necessarily mean ignoring the lessons we had learned, it requires developing an integrated antiterrorism approach by African governments, regional organizations and the international community, and most importantly the African communities engagement.

This is not just in the context of terrorism but its possible links to transnational organized crime such as money laundering, trafficking in human beings and arms as well as the production of and trafficking in illicit drugs which forms part of a complex set of new security challenges.

In order to deal effectively with the threats of terrorism and TOC, there must be a broad approach that integrates the following factors:

First, African governments must strengthen trust between communities and ethnic groups. Trust is the foundation for any societies, especially multi-religious, multi-racial ones like in Africa. It underpins social interactions and helps build resilience.

Second, African governments must also build strong operational capabilities. The most critical factor in enhancing the security of the region is strong intelligence and operational cooperation between our security and intelligence agencies and their regional and international counterparts.

Third, African governments need close international security cooperation. Terrorism is a global threat, and terrorist groups do not respect international borders. Therefore counter-terrorism forces must also collaborate internationally.

International cooperation also includes sharing experiences at events like these.

This integrated approach for Africa would be based on security, good governance, political and economic empowerment, social justice, development, creative institutional designs to alleviate ethnic and other social tensions, and capacity building.

What is required is greater actions in a number of specific areas:

- Strengthening bilateral and regional cooperation to maintain the region's peace, security and socio-economic development
- Pursuing programs for sustainable development to improve people's living conditions, and especially to ensure the social and economic integration of young people
- Combating terrorism and criminality by winning the support of local populations
- Bolstering judicial cooperation and the monitoring of illicit financial flows, and
- Improving coordination among the military high commands of the continent countries.

This enables Africa to deal with those issues on which terrorist groups attempt to build their support. Alienation, marginalisation, widespread poverty, underdevelopment, injustice and conflict provide the context for terrorists to establish support systems and recruit their followers.

What is also required is to evolve a more powerful counter-narrative to combat incitement and Self-radicalization. We need to inculcate values among African young minds that promote tolerance and respect for diversity and different cultures.

B. International Military Approach in Africa-2014

France

France is reorganizing its deployment in Africa to be more reactive about potential political crises in Africa, and to better fight the terror threat from extremist groups in the Sahel region.

France is moving toward a new regional counterterrorism approach in Africa's turbulent Sahel region which will involve creating specialized posts such as for logistics, intelligence-gathering and fighter planes.

Under the plan, France is going to reinforce Abidjan, Ivory Coast, as an entry point, a logistical support post. Chad's capital, N'Djamena, will be a hub of French air power in the region and a base for Rafale and Mirage fighters. A site in Niamey, Niger's capital, will be equipped with unmanned aircraft such as France's Harfang and the U.S. Reaper surveillance drone.

U.S.

First, though AFRICOM handles training and humanitarian duties in various parts of the continent, more urgency has been placed on response times to threats and crises affecting American interests along the Mediterranean-North African region.

Recent events in Mali and Libya have partly motivated the U.S. move to expand Rapid-Reaction Forces for Africa. In that context, U.S. has asked Spain if it can expand an already 500-strong Marine rapid-reaction force for Africa by a minimum of 50 percent, along with extending its presence at the Marines stationed at the Morón de la Frontera air base by another year.

Second, U.S. is also moving forward in the Sahel region where Military service members from African, European and North American countries will gather in Niger in February for the next 'Exercise Flintlock'. The two-week Exercise Flintlock is designed to foster regional cooperation to enable African partners to stabilize regions of North and West Africa, reducing sanctuary and support for violent extremist organizations.

The international operation also tends to the humanitarian needs of local communities, in the form of medical assistance for residents of areas where the exercise takes place.

Conclusion

The international community and Governments are fighting terrorism using a multiple set of strategies and tactics, and none of them operates to the exclusion of another. Similarly, none of them has been singularly effective. In other words, on strategies and tactics used in responding to terrorist threats, no one approach should be selected or even preferred over the others.

Terrorism must be strategically tackled through long-term measures that would deny terrorists the ideological space to operate, long term development perspectives, education, inter-cultural dialogue, and criminal justice are equally essential elements in countering terrorism.

As we are aware, the threats posed by terrorism are very real and indeed far-reaching; every effort must be made to sustain our proactivity in the fight against that which threatens our existence and peaceful way of life.

Our cooperation is essential to effectively combat terrorism, and no action against terrorism would be sufficient unless all major determinants of international, regional and national policymaking are attuned to the threat posed and committed to dealing with all aspects that affect the fight against terrorism.

Let us remain vigilant and strengthen our defenses against terrorism, and work together to keep our world safe.

Ambassador Nebojša N. Kaluđerović
Embassy of Montenegro¹²

We have the title “Balkan Security Challenges: Past Lessons and Future Outlook.” If we want to talk about past lessons, that would be really an endless story. If we want to talk about security challenges: so many of them. And if you want to talk about future outlook, there are a variety of them. But I think that we can agree that all of the lessons that we learned from...let us start from the dissolution of Yugoslavia. You know every country in the Western Balkans has its own narrative. And we all have our most important historic dates, which is sometimes difficult to be confirmed in reality, and I dare say that there is no single historical moment that all of us cherish that could be a starting point for a common future outlook. But the processes that we have been through after the dissolution of Yugoslavia and all of the wars that we have been through unfortunately really draw some lessons that we have to take into account while thinking about our future.

The ambassador of Kosovo said that she had five passports, explaining, you know, the region. If I tell you that I lived in four countries and I represented three of them, that I thought really could never have happened 30 years ago, it simply explains by itself the complexity we lived and that we are now and even more in the future that we are facing.

Well, I think that there is something that we have now in common. And based, I would say, on the lessons learned, and that is a European, Euro-Atlantic future of the region. We think in Montenegro that is the only answer to most of the challenges that we have been facing today. And there are, as I told you, quite a lot of them.

Speaking about my own country, Montenegro has managed to become one of, in the meantime, one of the most economically developed countries now in the region. Let us say maybe one would not agree with this, but we consider that we are leaders in the processes that are taking place. As a matter of fact, out of 33 chapters that we are negotiating in the European Union, we have opened 30 of them, two of them closed. We hope that we will open all of them this year and start the process of closing of specific chapters.

How demanding that process is, let me just remind you when Croatia started negotiations in 2005, I was ambassador in New York and a colleague of mine from Croatia was just appointed as a Chief Negotiator and he went to Croatia and he told me that “those guys in Brussels invented some benchmarks for us.” And that was really the first time that the European Commission, the European Union asked Croatians to put some benchmarks in certain chapters. So they started. Several years after that, when we opened negotiations with the European Union, if I tell you that we have Montenegro in only two chapters, 22 and 23, that generally deal with the rule of law, that we have 83 interim chapters – not opening nor closing ones – interim chapters that we need to fulfill to go towards the process of closing the most important ones, I would say that simply shows how complicated and how demanding that process is.

I was the national coordinator for NATO for three years and we went through similar processes of reforms, adopting standards. I can really tell you that was not

¹² Presentation at an event on “Balkan Security Challenges: Past Lessons and Future Outlook” held on March 1, 2018 at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies.

an easy task, that it was not at all an easy task. But where there is a will there is a way, and you must have really clear and strong leadership to go towards that.

So, in the meantime we succeeded last year in becoming a member of NATO. Let me just tell you that in the end of February 2018 we had an excellent meeting at the level of minister of defense – my minister Predrag Boskovic and Secretary of Defense Mattis – as the first one of that kind in the capacity as a new member of NATO.

Our next imperative goal is European Union integration, which is, as I said, really more demanding because there are so many things that we need to go through and some of them are really painful. It goes together with all of the countries in the region regardless of the level of negotiations where they are now.

So, the challenges facing every single country have been, I would say, totally described in the strategy for Western Balkans published months ago. We had recently, a visit of Mr. Juncker, he visited the whole region, and there was a meeting today in Bulgaria, in Sofia, and I will try to finish my statement with that.

Let me put it this way, I am not going to talk about my own thoughts and understanding of the strategy because I would be rather critical with regard to some aspects, but in general terms, we are encouraged by the recently published EU strategy. Though, we believe that the will from the side of the European Union to cherish individual results is something that we need to take care of. Every country, in our view, needs to be judged by its own merits. And we have shown that this is a system that works, throughout negotiations of Montenegro in regard to NATO. We are the only country now admitted to NATO – the only one before us was Spain, it happened you know when. Although we could have really different thoughts about the time framework, 2025. But when Juncker a couple of years ago said that no one would be admitted to the European Union by 2019, that provoked so many reactions in the region, you know, saying you do not really need to say it that way because we need to have perspective on political points of view, psychological, whatever. And now, the other way around, I said, “Okay, guys, you might think about 2025.” And then the critics would say, “Why do we really need to put that? We need to ask the people and the countries to go through all the reforms and when they are ready then we will think...” But I think it is good, no one confirms that but it is an idea that if we go through all the reforms that we are all going through, we might get there.

We strongly, therefore, believe that our membership in NATO has largely contributed to the stability in the region. We have chosen NATO as a security umbrella. Among other things you know, throughout recent history, we have unfortunately not been able in the region to formulate, to establish regional security arrangements. So, the only way for us was towards NATO and the European Union.

The challenges that are present there – I really do not want to be repetitive – but our position in regard to Macedonia is that we would like to see them as soon as possible in NATO and hope that the negotiations that are taking place regarding the name issue will be resolve. And resolving that will allow Macedonia to grow further. It is a complicated situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We would like to see more institutional changes that would allow Bosnia and Herzegovina to go towards the negotiating process both in NATO and the European Union. We see new perspectives for Serbia and Montenegro as well within the context of the European Union integration, and I would share thoughts but with Stanislav about the possibility of NATO integration for all the countries in the region.

Therefore, my message for this panel is actually an invitation to both the European Union and NATO to keep an open eye. I do not want to go into the recent past, but you know once this country was not very much interested in some events when the dissolution of Yugoslavia started, but when they jumped into that in 1995, they were able to at least stop the war. And in some other cases, it is important to have the United States of America and European Union present there. The synergy of two of them is welcome as well.

We all know the famous sentence by a wise man. I would really like to see my region, at least for the time in my life, producing history that we can easily consume. And that is a task that we think should be made throughout the European Union and Euro-Atlantic integration processes.

Finally, let me just share with you a couple of things. I got some information from the capital that today there was a very important meeting organized by the Bulgarian Presidency in Sofia. President Borissov hosted a meeting with all of the leaders from the Western Balkans and Mr. Juncker, Commissioner Hahn, and Mogherini, and the first impressions were really positive ones regarding the future of the region.

I forgot to mention one particular aspect and that is good neighborly relations of the countries in the region. We do have a lot of problems, as you know, we have some issues with neighboring countries. Two of them are regarding demarcation and some border issues – I would call them issues rather than problems – and we hope that the first one is going to be resolved very soon with Kosovo, and we did our best and we really did try to help even some internal problems to be resolved in the best possible way.

So the ideas now are on reforms and we all need to go through additional reforms, as I said some of them are not really easy to go through; good neighborly relations; and to try to get closer to each other, building infrastructure. Stanislav mentioned the ideas and forums that we are all participating in and I hope that we will get soon some concrete results.

And the main message regarding this important strategy that was published recently, or messages are two-fold. First, it shows a kind of clear perspective for the Western Balkans and I close that clear and said renewed perspective of the Western Balkans towards the European Union that is really the perspective is there and we know that. And the second one is that the European Union has again an enlargement policy, I do not want to say high on their own agenda, but again, I would say higher than a couple of years ago. We all know what the problems are in the EU. Nobody knows how the European Union will look in five years from now or ten years from now, in 2025. We hope they are going to be there. Strengthen maybe institutional changes to a certain extent. It is important for the European Union to be there. And finally, to have the whole Western Balkans truly become a part of the whole of Europe. Otherwise, I am afraid we will keep on talking about “Balkan Security Challenges: Past Lessons and Future Outlook.”

Ambassador Rachad Bouhlal
*Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco*¹³

Let me say that I am far away from being an expert on terrorist issues. We are diplomats, we try to deal with everything and speak of everything, but I am not sure that among all these experts we will be able to enlighten your ideas about what is happening.

Let me start by saying that having suffered from terrorism ourselves, Morocco is well aware of the scope of the phenomenon and its complex nature and its cross-border dimension. Terrorism is not the product of isolated action, but it is the unfortunate manifestation of a violent vision of extremist groups, which for misleading ideological purposes, exploit religion for political purposes. That is why Morocco is privileged to have a structured and methodological vision, opting for an inclusive approach, combining human resources development, economic development, and security. This proactive approach integrates as well regional and international cooperation based on an effective solidarity and active commitment with all partners.

This approach includes measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; to prevent terrorist recruitment, through comprehensive counter radicalization policy, especially through the creation of socioeconomic conditions to prevent young people from falling into extremism; reform of the religious field in order to combat the extremism narratives and to promote an open and tolerant Islam; build state capacity to prevent and combat terrorists; and finally, ensure respect for human rights and rule of law as a fundamental basis of the fight against terrorists.

Although the implemented strategies at the national level are essential to reduce the risk of terrorist actions, these strategies cannot produce their full effect in the lack of a sustained regional and international cooperation. This is why Morocco remains committed to strengthening the role of the United Nation system, promote international cooperation and adherence to all international conventions and all United Nation Security Council resolutions related directly or indirectly to terrorism, and promoting awareness of the newly emerged threats, such as cybercrime, child abuse and exploitation, money laundering, identity theft, fraud and kidnapping. Moreover, Morocco's mandate as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council in 2012-2013 enabled it to elevate the cooperation in terms of security as one of the main issues, especially with its close neighborhood, the Sahel and Sahara region in particular.

Aware of the link between terrorism and all kinds of human trafficking, Morocco has been actively involved in drafting a common vision aiming at fighting illegal immigration. In this regard, Morocco has adopted a new national migration policy. This new policy takes into account the major mutations occurring in the migration phenomenon at regional and international levels and the new national realities related to the issue of migrants and refugees. This policy is as well in line with Morocco's long-standing relations with Africa and its steadfast commitment for human development, consolidation of peace and security, and promotion of humanitarian actions in Africa.

¹³ This presentation was delivered at the 16th annual event on "International Cooperation in Combating Terrorism: Review of 2013 and Outlook for 2014" on January 24, 2014 and previously printed in a report on "The Current Security Challenges in Africa" (October 2014).

This will bring me to the situation in our neighborhood. The Sahel region faces many challenges related to the socioeconomic and security situation prevailing in the continent. The precarious situation in the region constitutes a real threat to peace, security and stability. It is in this spirit that the Kingdom of Morocco has always been committed to the success of the initiatives aiming at stabilizing the region in the respect of state sovereignty, territorial integrity and the specificities of the region. Apart from Morocco's efforts as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, especially during Morocco's presidency of the Council in December 2012, Morocco called for an interregional cooperation and coordination, especially among regional organization such as ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), CEN-SAD (Community of Sahel-Saharan States), and the Maghreb.

Aware of the security challenges that could emerge from the situation in Mali, Morocco has been committed since the beginning of the crisis to contribute actively to the international community effort devoted to this matter. Along with these efforts, Morocco played a very significant and constructive role in supporting the political process in Mali in order to generate a national consensus for the management of the transition, preparation of elections, and regain control of the north of the country.

His majesty's visit to Mali and Morocco's offer to train 500 Malian imams, will contribute not only to the stability of a close country in the region, but shows as well Morocco's approach, that as his majesty stressed during his visit, any coordinated international action which does not attach the necessary importance to culture and religious aspects would be doomed to failure; adding that the partnership that the kingdom is offering in the physical and spiritual reconstruction of Mali is firmly rooted in that philosophy. This partnership aims at promoting the values of peace and tolerance against the horrors of terrorism and extremism. We have now received 100 Malian imams who are now being trained in Morocco. I think this is an important move that we have been doing in trying to help fighting all kinds of dogmatism and terrorism.

Ambassador Maowia Khalid*Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan*¹⁴

Africa has through the years, attracted a lot of attention in Washington and from different U.S. administrations. Just recently, President Barack Obama launched an initiative calling for a summit of leaders of the U.S. and Africa to convene this coming August in Washington D.C. We appreciate and commend this initiative and even though my country has not been invited to the summit, we look at it as being a very important event and are fully confident that those who participate will speak on behalf of all their fellow Africans including those who like Sudan, are not invited.

The deterioration in the security conditions in Africa today is evidenced by the numerous conflicts that have galvanized the continent. But the reality is that most of these disastrous conflicts in the continent are a direct result of certain conflicting demands and motives, which are more prevalent in Africa than in any other place. We can cite as an example, the dispute over land ownership as being one of the most important sources of conflicts in Africa. In many African countries the tribal and communal conflicts or may I say wars, which have erupted because of conflicting claims over limited land and water resources have resulted in massive numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). As you all know, my country has suffered a lot from such tragic events especially in the region of Darfur where the disputes between nomadic herders and sedentary farmers over land ownership and land-use-rights do constitute the major cause for the conflict.

Sudan, its neighbors and other countries in the region also suffered from the tragic consequences. The refugees and IDPs themselves became a security challenge due to the demand they had created for essential needs such as shelter, water, food, sanitation, and other service as well as for security and safety. Unfortunately, the camps for refugees in neighboring countries and for IDPs in Sudan became safe havens for criminals who were involved in arms selling, human trafficking, child soldier recruitment, drug trafficking, banditry, and other serious crimes. This is definitely adding a new element of security challenge in Africa.

Ethnicity and religion have been at the heart of much of the recent conflicts in Africa and as such they represent a grave challenge to the security of the continent. The recent crisis in the Central African Republic is a case in point. The fighting there reflects very negatively on Africa and exacerbates the overall security situation. The region of Darfur for one is being further burdened by the influx of refugees from that neighboring country.

Border disputes are also part of the security challenge. Some of the significant examples include the two border disputes between Ethiopia and Eritrea and between Sudan and the new country of South Sudan. In the case of the latter, the issue of border demarcation is not yet settled but we are going through a different type of negotiations to resolve this issue. I would like here really to commend the essential role of our partners, the countries members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), especially Kenya, who hosted one of the longest and very complicated negotiations in the recent history, which ended in a comprehensive peace agreement. The agreement as you all know, led to the secession of South Sudan as an independent country. However, a few small issues such the border

¹⁴ This presentation was delivered at the seminar on “The Current Security Challenges in Africa” on March 27, 2014 and previously printed in a report on “The Current Security Challenges in Africa” (October 2014).

disagreement between the two countries remained unresolved. So, border disputes are indeed a type of security challenge in Africa.

The rise of armed insurgent or rebel groups is one of the most significant components of the security challenges facing Africa today. Yes, there are some legitimate and acceptable kinds of demands from different groups in Africa today but taking up arms against governments as a means of realizing these demands, is not acceptable. Yet, at the end of the day, these demands must be addressed peacefully. We can say confidently that wars do not resolve problems. Only agreements that are reached peacefully at the negotiation table, such as the comprehensive peace agreement between Sudan and South Sudan, can lead to some kind of good conclusions.

We are still suffering greatly from those rebel groups who are attacking villages, towns and cities nearly every day and causing more casualties among civilians. But governments have a responsibility to protect their civilian population and the territorial integrity of the country. Unfortunately, civilian casualties always come as a result of attacks and counter attacks and through such kinds of terrorism activities.

Terrorist and other militant groups in Africa such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, and anti-Balaka in the Central African Republic represent a very big challenge right now to our safety and our security. Sudan is cooperating with the regional efforts to combat those groups and we have designated all of them as terrorist organizations.

We are also being negatively impacted right now by the situations that have transpired in the wake of so called "Arab Spring" in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. Fortunately, Tunisia is following a good path of national dialogue, which makes the democratic process a little bit more successful. However, Libya and Egypt are still suffering a lot from the negative ramifications of the Arab Spring. In my country Sudan, there are still some problems regarding the different political forces in the country; some of them armed groups, some peaceful civilian opposition parties. My government has recently launched a new initiative of national dialogue to address the issues of concern and the demands, which are raised by different political parties and ethnic groups in the country so we may all come to a conclusion of dealing with our issues peacefully. We undoubtedly, need regional and international support to help make these kinds of initiatives and peaceful mechanisms work.

Generally, in order to address the root causes of these security challenges in Africa, I could say very briefly that development is the most effective measure for dealing with these threats. That is because a viable and sustainable nation-state will only come about through development. Here too, the U.S. can play a significant role in eliminating the dependency syndrome through trade enhancement rather than continuing to provide aid to African countries. Some studies show that terrorist networks are more successful recruiting in poor areas and the poorest of the youth rather than among those who enjoy a little bit of good life.

Another effective measure for dealing with the causes of the security challenges is cooperation on different areas and levels among the African countries themselves and between them and the U.S. in order to combat terrorism. Without cooperation, terrorists and armed rebels will continue to threaten our lives.

Regional and sub-regional organizations also need to be energized and empowered to be able to address this issue. They need to be able to fulfill their duties of maintaining peace and security in Africa more effectively. We can also draw valuable lessons from the experience of IGAD in Sudan and South Sudan. In fact, IGAD right now is engaged in the same process of trying to resolve a most unfortunate situation, which is the internal conflict in South Sudan. Also, the African Union (AU) through the chairmanship of President Mbeki has been working diligently to try to broker a peace agreement between the Republic of the Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Movement North (SPLM/N) who has affiliation with the Government of South Sudan.

Creating political stability is also essential for combating the root-causes of the security challenges facing Africa today and it can only occur through the promotion of democracy, human rights, good governance, transparency, accountability, and the rule of law.

Readdressing the notion and objective of the sanction regime is also very crucial in this effort. The calls to build leverage that could be used timely and effectively is in my opinion, something that can come through engagement. Right now we see that sanctions are hurting ordinary peoples more than the ruling parties. Just imagine that at this time in the 21st century people are dying from not getting antibiotics because of sanctions and that because of sanctions, so many young people do not know what even credit cards mean. Those same people today cannot look at America as the land of opportunities or the land of dreams. Instead, they will look at America as the power of suppression and aggression. I think they would be emotionally more vulnerable to manipulation by terrorist networks. Therefore, I think this is something that should be readdressed.

This can give another dimension of combating terrorism and other criminal networks because after 9/11 and despite some differences in the past between Sudan and the U.S., Sudan began a huge cooperation program with United States in the area of counterterrorism. In return, we got nothing from that cooperation. I am not the one who can tell you but I think, most of you, especially those who are affiliated with security agencies, can understand very well what the significance of that cooperation is. In addition, al-Qa'ida was expelled from Sudan in 1996, and has since never returned. However, we still suffer from small pockets of militant youth groups who may be affiliated with jihadists in the area and we are taking the responsibility of fighting them. However, this also needs some sort of cooperation between Sudan and the U.S. Some politicians may ask, "why do we continue cooperating with the U.S. on security issues and fighting terrorism while this cooperation is not reflected in the political and bilateral relations between the two countries?" I just want to say here that the top leadership in Sudan, the presidency and the foreign affairs, really understand the essentiality of this cooperation and that this is something that should be continued and not be jeopardized by any kind of interference from the political side.

I want to mention another issue of importance to us and it has to do with U.S. capacity building training programs. When you leave some countries out somebody else may take them in. In the case of Sudan, we will be forced to depend on ourselves. But with limited knowledge and knowhow and with very small capacity, Sudan's possibilities to be an active partner in counterterrorism will shrink. So, building capacity, sharing intelligence information and cooperation can enhance the ability and capabilities of Sudan and some other countries to combat those same threats,

which we are discussing right now. I just wanted to link the capacity building issue with the notion of cooperation.

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Established in 1994, the activities of IUCTS are guided by an International Research Council that offers recommendations for study on different aspects of terrorism, both conventional and unconventional. IUCTS is cooperating academically with universities and think tanks in over 40 countries, as well as with governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental bodies.

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Please contact the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 901 North Stuart Street, Suite 200, Arlington, VA 22203. Tel.: 703-525-0770 Email: yalexander@potomacinstitute.org, ICTS@potomacinstitute.org

