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## THE PROBLEM OF ISLAMIC TERRORISM IN KENYA IN TERMS OF REGIONAL SECURITY IN EAST AFRICA

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to present the issue of security in the region of East Africa, particularly in Kenya, in view of the development of the phenomenon of Islamic terrorism. In the last two years it killed more than 400 people in this country and the scale of organized attacks is still increasing. In April 2015 Islamic militants from the Somali group al-Shabaab attacked Garissa University College in northeastern Kenya. This terrorist attack confirmed that Kenyan authorities are not able to control the 700-kilometre border with Somalia and ensure the security of citizens and tourists visiting the country. The threat of the escalation of acts of terrorism and the spread of violence to other countries in the region are becoming a major challenge to the foreign policy of Kenya and other countries in the region. In this article the author intends to present Kenya's current actions in the fight against terrorism in Somalia and to assess the involvement of the African Union (AU) and the East African Community (EAC) – in terms of ensuring the regional security and the involvement of players from the region outside (the USA in particular) – in the context of the fight against Islamic terrorism on a global scale. Therefore the aim of the article is to attempt to evaluate the real possibility of providing effective aid to Kenya in the fight against terrorism. Despite the limited access to sources, dealing with this difficult subject of research has been justified by the fact that the awareness of the threat of Islamic terrorism against Kenya becomes necessary for the understanding of different phenomena and processes essential for the security of East African countries, and also for the fight against terrorism worldwide.

**Keywords:** Terrorism, Kenya, Somalia, al-Shabaab, regional security

## INTRODUCTION

The terrorist attack of Islamic militants from the Somali group al-Shabaab on Garissa University College in northeastern Kenya in April 2015 confirmed again that the Kenyan authorities are not able to control the 700-kilometre border with Somalia and ensure the security of citizens and tourists visiting the country.

In the last two years Somali terrorists in Kenya killed more than 400 people<sup>1</sup>. The scale of organized attacks is increasing. That is why the issue about the threat of escalation of acts of terrorism, the spread of violence to other countries in the region and about the real possibility of providing effective aid to Kenya in the fight against terrorism should be raised.

In this article the author wants to present Kenya's current actions in the fight against the acts of terrorism perpetrated by the Somali militant group al-Shabaab and to assess the involvement of the African Union (AU) and the East African Community (EAC) – in terms of ensuring the regional security and the involvement of players from the region outside (the USA in particular) – in the context of the fight against Islamic terrorism on a global scale. A brief note on basic information about the origins and goals of al-Shabaab will be presented.

The article has been written on the basis of a critical review and analysis of the available scholarly literature and press reports. Considering its chronological range – including the events from recent years and months – the bibliography consists of the Internet sources, mainly scholarly publications, press reports and web pages of the above-mentioned organizations involved in solving the conflict. Despite the limited access to sources, dealing with this difficult subject of research has been justified by the fact that the awareness of the threat of Islamic terrorism against Kenya becomes necessary to the understanding of different phenomena and processes essential for the security of East Africa, and also for the fight against terrorism worldwide.

## THE PROBLEM OF ISLAMIC TERRORISM IN KENYA

The terrorist attack of Islamic militants from the group al-Shabaab (official full name: Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahidin)<sup>2</sup>, allied with al-Qaeda, on Garissa University College, in which more than 150 people were killed and more than 80 were wounded, has been the deadliest massacre in Kenya since 1998, when al-Qaeda's attack on the U.S. embassy in the capital city of Kenya, Nairobi, took place killing 263 people and injuring more than 5,000 people<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> D. Jorgic, E. Honan, 'Kenya Says It Destroys Two al-Shabaab Camps in Somalia', Reuters, 6 April 2015, at <<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-kenya-security-military-idUSKBN0MX0EA20150406>>, 8 September 2015.

<sup>2</sup> The spelling of the names of terrorist organizations, for: 'Al-Shabaab', National Counterterrorism Center, at <[http://www.nctc.gov/site/groups/al\\_shabaab.html](http://www.nctc.gov/site/groups/al_shabaab.html)>, 9 September 2015.

<sup>3</sup> M. Pawelczak, *Kenia*, Warszawa 2004, pp. 350-351 (*Historia Państw Świata w XX Wieku*).

The assault on the U.S. embassy was not the first terrorist attack in Kenya carried out by Islamic terrorists. In 1980, on New Year's Eve, in a bomb attack on the 'Norfolk' hotel in Nairobi 15 people were killed in the revenge for the alleged support given to Israel by Kenya during the Israeli hostage rescuing operation in Entebbe in 1976 (The Entebbe Raid, Operation Entebbe, Operation Thunderball/Thunderbolt)<sup>4</sup>. The Moroccan suspected of carrying out the assassination in Nairobi managed to escape<sup>5</sup>.

Symbolically, the above-mentioned bombing began a tragic series of terrorist attacks carried out on the territory of Kenya. Their escalation coincided with the beginning of the 21st century and the global fight against terrorism.

On 28 November 2002, in the attack on the Israeli 'Paradise' hotel near Mombasa, 9 people were killed<sup>6</sup>. At the same time two air-to-air missiles were launched from the Kenyan territory in the direction of the Israeli aircraft with 261 passengers on board. Fortunately, the missiles missed the target. Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, the alleged leader of Al-Qaeda in East Africa was suspected of organizing the assassination<sup>7</sup>.

In 2011 Somali terrorists kidnapped for ransom foreign tourists from the Kenyan city Lamu<sup>8</sup>. This attack was an act of revenge for the agreement of Kenya's participation in military operations of the African Union in Somalia (The African Union Mission in Somalia, AMISOM, created by the African Union's Peace and Security Council, PSC, on 19th January 2007)<sup>9</sup>.

On 21st September 2013 a group of terrorists took control over the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi. The terrorists freed all Muslims and opened fire to others, mainly those who identified as Christians. In exchange for hostages, they demanded the withdrawal of Kenyan troops from the Somali territory. According to the government's version and international statements, 72 people were killed in the attack (including 67 civilians and 5 soldiers of the security service) and more than 200 people were wounded<sup>10</sup>.

According to al-Shabaab, however, 137 hostages were killed by the Kenyan forces. In the statement published on Twitter, the terrorists accused the Kenyan authorities of

<sup>4</sup> The mission, originally dubbed Operation Thunderbolt by the Israeli military, was renamed Operation Yonatan in honour of Yonatan Netanyahu, elder brother of Benjamin Netanyahu, who was killed during the raid as the only Israeli casualty. 'Yonatan "Yoni" Netanyahu (1946-1976)', Jewish Virtual Library, at <[https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Yoni\\_Netanyahu.html](https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Yoni_Netanyahu.html)>', 9 September 2015.

<sup>5</sup> M. Pawelczak, *Kenia*, p. 351.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 351.

<sup>7</sup> M. Połoński, 'Al-Kaida w rok po śmierci Osamy bin Ladena', Portal Spraw Zagranicznych, 24 June 2012, at <<http://www.psz.pl/116-bezpieczenstwo/al-kaida-w-rok-po-smierci-osamy-bin-ladena>>, 8 September 2015.

<sup>8</sup> W. Jagielski, 'Kenia. Terroryści kontra turyści', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 3 August 2014, at <[http://wyborcza.pl/1,91446,16420599,Kenia\\_Terrorysci\\_kontra\\_turysci.html](http://wyborcza.pl/1,91446,16420599,Kenia_Terrorysci_kontra_turysci.html)>, 8 September 2015.

<sup>9</sup> AMISOM, 'AMISOM Background', at <<http://amisom-au.org/amisom-background/>>, 8 September 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace, *The Global Terrorism Index 2014*, at <[http://www.visionofhumanity.org/sites/default/files/Global%20Terrorism%20Index%20Report%202014\\_0.pdf](http://www.visionofhumanity.org/sites/default/files/Global%20Terrorism%20Index%20Report%202014_0.pdf)>, 8 September 2015.

the launch of missiles containing chemical substances and of causing the collapse of the building. At the rubble, neither the evidence of competence of the action nor hostages could be found<sup>11</sup>.

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta<sup>12</sup> announced the completion of the siege of the Westgate Mall three days after the attack, on 24th September. According to the President, 5 aggressors were killed and 11 were arrested, but 60 hostages were still declared missing. Therefore probably more than 120 people were killed, which means that the hostage rescue operation actually was a failure and that the government's version of events deliberately provided an inaccurate number of victims of the attack.

On 4th May 2014 2 people were killed and at least 62 were injured as a result of Nairobi bus bombings. A day earlier, two explosions shook Mombasa, killing 4 people at the bus stop. In both cases, the organizers of the attacks were probably the militants from al-Shabaab<sup>13</sup>.

On 15th June 2014 another bloody terrorist attack took place in the seaside town Mpekitoni, Lamu County, in which at least 48 people were killed according to the Kenyan authorities and the Red Cross. About 50 masked gunmen from the al-Shabaab militant group drove to the town in cars raiding the police station, taking over the weapons, and paralysing the radio communication. Then, shooting in the streets began. According to BBC reporter Anne Soy, those unable to recite verses from the Quran were killed. It is worth noticing that Mpekitoni is 90% a Christian town<sup>14</sup>.

In the same month, right after the opening of the tourist season, in tourist resorts of Malindi and Lamu, north east of Mombasa, over 100 people were killed in shooting and bombing attacks in Nairobi. In July, in Mombasa, further tourists were murdered<sup>15</sup>.

In 2015, there was an attack on the university campus. Garissa University College was founded in 2011 as a constituent college of Moi University, in the facilities of the former Garissa Teachers Training College. It was then and it is still nowadays the first and only public institution offering the possibility of receiving higher education in the Kenyan North Eastern Province. Situated at the distance of 200 kilometres from the border with Somalia it had been considered as one of the safest places in the region. However, in the brutal raid on the University Campus on 2nd April 2015 at least 150

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<sup>11</sup> 'Al-Szabab: zginęło 137 zakładników', TVP Info, 25 September 2013, at <<http://www.tvp.info/12507418/alszabab-zginelo-137-zakladnikow>>, 8 September 2015.

<sup>12</sup> Born in 1961, the current President of Kenya, since 2013. 'His Excellency, Uhuru Kenyatta C.G.H.; Official Government Website, at <<http://presidency.go.ke/index.php/2013-12-18-15-53-46/presidency/2-uncategorised/43-his-excellency-uhuru-kenyatta-c-g-h>>, 21 August 2015.

<sup>13</sup> 'Nairobi: dwa autobusy wyleciały w powietrze', TVP INFO, 5 May 2014, at <<http://www.tvp.info/15064265/nairobi-dwa-autobusy-wylecialy-w-powietrze>>, 21 August 2015.

<sup>14</sup> 'Kenia: Celowe ataki na chrześcijan', Open Doors, 23 June 2014, at <[https://www.opendoors.pl/prze-sladowania/wiadomosci/2014/05\\_maj1/3194123/](https://www.opendoors.pl/prze-sladowania/wiadomosci/2014/05_maj1/3194123/)>, 21 August 2015.

<sup>15</sup> W. Jagielski, „Nieustające od roku ataki somalijskich dżihadystów wyludniły plaże wokół Lamu i Mombasy, boleśnie godząc w kenijską turystykę”, *PAP*, 3 August 2014, at <http://www.rp.pl/artykul/1130617.html?print=tak&p=0>, 24 August 2015.

people were killed, including 142 students, 3 soldiers, and 3 policemen. 587 students managed to escape and more than 80 were injured<sup>16</sup>.

According to al-Shabaab, which controls vast territories of Southern and Middle Somalia, it was another act of revenge for the participation of Kenyan forces in the operation of the African Union peacekeeping forces in Somalia which support the authorities in the capital city of Somalia, Mogadishu<sup>17</sup>. At the same time, one should be aware of the fact that Garissa is the capital of the region of Kenya which historically belongs to Somalia, and where the biggest number of Somalis live. Therefore the assault on Garissa University College was a kind of message from al-Shabaab that this territory should belong to the Somalis<sup>18</sup>.

## THE GOALS OF THE MILITANT GROUP AL-SHABAAB

The Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahidin, commonly known as al-Shabaab is the armed wing of the Somali Council of Islamic Courts, which took over most of Southern Somalia in the second half of 2006. Since that time, despite the group's defeat by Somali and Ethiopian forces in 2007, it has been trying to control strategic points in the area using the guerrilla warfare and terrorist tactics against the Somali Federal Government (SFG), the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeeping forces and non-governmental aid organisations.

In 2013 AMISOM together with the Ethiopian forces took control over the capital and at the same time the biggest city of Somalia, Mogadishu, and other key regions in the country. Their success came at the time of inner conflicts within al-Shabaab resulting from contradictory goals of al-Shabaab's senior leaders and the representatives of different clans. In contrast to al-Shabaab's leaders affiliated with al-Qaeda in East Africa (who use Somalia as a place to organise training camps, plan attacks and as a safe shelter to hide), most of its fighters are predominantly interested in the nationalistic battle against the federal government (SFG) – that is in inner goals – and do not support global jihad.

Al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility for many terrorist attacks in Somalia targeted against state officials and federal government allies, among others the attack

<sup>16</sup> 'EALA Wants Partner States to Infuse Mechanism for Speedy Implementation of Peace and Security Decisions in the Region', East African Community, 24 May 2015, at [http://www.eac.int/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1890:eala-wants-partner-states-to-infuse-mechanism-for-speedy-implementation-of-peace-and-security-decision-in-the-region&catid=146:press-releases&Itemid=194](http://www.eac.int/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1890:eala-wants-partner-states-to-infuse-mechanism-for-speedy-implementation-of-peace-and-security-decision-in-the-region&catid=146:press-releases&Itemid=194), 21 August 2015.

<sup>17</sup> The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is an active, regional peacekeeping mission operated by the African Union with the approval of the United Nations. It was created by the African Union's Peace and Security Council on 19th January 2007. The aim of the peacekeeping mission was to support the peace process and the final completion of the internal conflict, which began in 1991. AMISOM, 'AMISOM Background'.

<sup>18</sup> B. Popławski, in 'Masakra po zamachu na uniwersytet w Kenii. Nie żyje nawet 150 studentów', Polskie Radio, 2 April 2015, at <<http://www.polskieradio.pl/5/3/Artykul/1413254,Masakra-po-zamachu-na-universytet-w-Kenii-Nie-zyje-nawet-150-studentow>>, 27 August 2015.

on the United Nations compound in Mogadishu (June 2013)<sup>19</sup> or the presidential palace (February 2014)<sup>20</sup>. Since 2013 al-Shabaab has been using terrorist tactics outside its own country. Apart from the above-mentioned attacks in Kenya, the bloodiest ones, in the chronological order, are two twin suicide attacks in Kampala (Uganda, July 2010, 70 people killed) and the attack on a famous restaurant in Djibouti (May 2014)<sup>21</sup>.

Therefore the inner crisis within al-Shabaab, although it gives hopes about the weakening of the structures of the group in the future, currently does not influence the effectiveness of terrorist attacks carried out by its fighters. On the contrary, in the last two years, the scale of the al-Shabaab attacks is not decreasing but it increases. The main target is Kenya, blamed not only for supporting the Somali Federal Government and participation in military operations of the African Union in Somalia, but also for the support of counter Islamic terrorism of the USA in the Horn of Africa.

### KENYA'S CURRENT ACTIONS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

In the next part of the article, the question in what way and how Kenya is able to protect its territory and prevent it from further terrorist attacks is going to be answered. It is the key question, especially after one of al-Shabaab leader's words from 4 April 2015, when he said that al-Shabaab is going to start *a long gruesome war* in which Kenyan cities will *run red with blood*<sup>22</sup>?

Unfortunately, so far despite all the efforts, the Kenyan government is not able to stop the al-Shabaab gunmen who enter the country's territory via the 700-kilometre-long border with Somalia in an effective way.

The first military action against the attacks carried out by the Kenyan authorities on its territory was held on 16th October 2011. It took place after the series of bombings from Somali terrorists on tourists visiting Northern Kenya. Kenya Defence Forces entered the territory of Southern Somalia for the first time then. The Kenyan troops were later formally integrated into AMISOM on 22 February 2012. Presently within AMISOM there are 3664 Kenyan forces<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> UN, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, 'Statement Attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on Attack on UN Compound in Mogadishu, Somalia', 19 June 2013, at <<http://www.un.org/sg/STATEMENTS/index.asp?nid=6919>>, 8 September 2015.

<sup>20</sup> 'Somali Militants Launch Assault on Presidential Palace in Mogadishu', *The Guardian*, 8 July 2014, at <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/08/somalil-militants-attack-presidential-palace-mogadishu>>, 8 September 2015.

<sup>21</sup> 'Al-Shabaab', National Counterterrorism Center.

<sup>22</sup> 'Kenia rozpoczyna żałobę narodową po rzezi chrześcijan. Islamiści straszą: "Nic nie zapobiegnie kolejnemu rozlewowi krwi"', wPolityce.pl, 5 April 2015, at <<http://wpolityce.pl/swiat/239832-kenia-rozpoczyna-zalobe-narodowa-po-rzezi-chrzescijan-islamisci-strasza-nic-nie-zapobiegnie-kolejnemu-rozlewowi-krwi>>, 26 August 2015.

<sup>23</sup> AMISOM, 'Kenya – KDF', at <<http://amisom-au.org/kenya-kdf/>>, 9 September 2015.



One of the biggest and familiar actions of Kenya Defence Forces was the air operation in the night from 5th to 6th April 2015 when the Kenyan missiles targeted the army camps in Somalia 200 kilometres from the border with Kenya. The operation was the direct revenge for the assault on Garissa University Campus. After the attack, President Uhuru Kenyatta announced the fight against terrorism and punishing those responsible for the massacre. The government in Kenya offered the reward of \$215,000 for capturing al-Shabaab's leader suspected of organizing the attack in Garissa, Mohamed Mohamud<sup>24</sup>.

In the Kenyan presidential system it is President Uhuru Kenyatta who is responsible both for the country's security and the failure of counter terrorist operations as counter actions against planned attacks and effective operations in critical situations. The failure of the hostage rescue operation during the siege of the Westgate Mall has already been mentioned. Błażej Popławski in his radio talk with Dariusz Rosiak recalled that the counter terrorist forces were getting to Garissa from Nairobi for half the day, which is the proof of the lack of fast and effective anti-terrorist brigades.

The authorities should not have been surprised by the attack in Garissa. In the times when al-Shabaab has been bombing Kenya regularly for two years and the Islamists have been announcing the escalation of attacks, the state's lack of readiness is crucial. Among all the potential reasons for the present *status quo* there are the following ones: the lack of people responsible for forming the army and a very high level of corruption connected with the low level of loyalty of civilians addressed to the state. On the basis of tribal affinity, which is still present in Kenya and much stronger than the national identity, the issue of the motives of determination to risk one's life in the light of the country's protection should be essential here<sup>25</sup>.

Moreover, sending the Kenyan forces to Somalia as the African Union peacekeepers is a kind of dangerous political and military bond: the Kenyans want to secure their northern border and discharge their obligations with regard to being an ally, which at the same time results in bad consequences for them all.

Błażej Popławski also points to the logic of choosing the targets of attacks carried out by the Islamists: in 2013 the terrorists bombed a shopping mall, in 2014 tourist resorts and other popular among tourists places, in 2015 the university. It is clear then that their main target are predominantly the symbols of secularity of European culture<sup>26</sup>.

This clear observation, however, does not reflect the complexity of the analysed problem. It has already been mentioned that 90% of the people attacked in Mpekitoni were Christians. Thus, they were the main target of the bombings, which in fact are ad-

<sup>24</sup> 'Kenia wypowiada wojnę islamistom. Lotnictwo zbombardowało obozy Al-Szabab', tvn24, 6 April 2015, at <<http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-ze-swiata,2/atak-na-kampus-w-kenii-lotnictwo-zbombardowalo-obozy-al-szabab,530903.html>>, 21 August 2015.

<sup>25</sup> 'Zamach w Kenii. "Brak narzędzi do walki z terrorystami"', Interview with B. Popławski, Polskie Radio. Dwójka, 8 April 2015, at <<http://www.polskieradio.pl/8/3660/Artykul/1416371,Zamach-w-Kenii-Brak-narzedzi-do-walki-z-terrorystami>>, 24 August 2015.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

dressed by Islamists against Christianity worldwide. Simultaneously, the attack was also targeted against the members of the tribe known as Kikuyu in order to provoke the authorities' revenge both against Muslims and against the political opposition formed by the members of the Luo tribe. Kikuyu and Luo are the most significant tribes in the political life of Kenya. The Luo lost their privileged position with the colonial period, for years accused Kikuyu that dominated political life in the country.

Indeed, President Uhuru Kenyatta blamed the Luo opposition and its leader Rail Odinga for the bombings first. The escalation of the ethnic conflict between the Luo and Kikuyu tribes, which would be passed upon the religious conflict between Muslims and Christians, might be a real threat to the stability and peace of the country.

The attack on seaside resorts was not only the protest against the influence of secular European culture but it was also the effective act aiming at the breakdown of the money-generating tourism sector. As a result of attacks, appropriate warnings against travelling to Kenya have been issued in western countries at the governmental level (among others in the USA and the UK), followed by travel agencies (among others TUI and Thomson). The number of tourists visiting Kenya in the summer 2014 drastically decreased: in the middle of May, after a series of bombings in Mombasa, their holidays in Kenya were postponed by about 1000 tourists from the UK. The killing of tourists from Russia and Germany in July 2014 in Mombasa effectively sustained the declining trends in tourism. In the same month, due to security reasons, the U.S. Peace Corps withdrew their co-workers from Kenya<sup>27</sup>.

#### FORMAL AND LEGAL REGULATIONS OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, THE AFRICAN UNION AND THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY IN TERMS OF COOPERATION IN PREVENTING AND COMBATING INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AND ENSURING REGIONAL SECURITY

Since the Kenyan government is not able to single-handedly prevent the attacks of al-Shabaab, what becomes crucial is the policy of regional organisations—the African Union and, when it comes to this part of Africa, the East African Community – that entails giving aid to Kenya, as a member of both organisations, as well as ensuring the regional security.

The East African Community (EAC) is a regional, intergovernmental organisation established on 30th November 1999. It currently consists of: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania. The EAC is not a military organisation, and its main objective is to achieve political and economic integration of its member states. Due to the current geopolitical situation, collective work against Somali terrorism and ensuring security in the region have also become important goals for the organization. The *EAC Protocol on*

<sup>27</sup> W. Jagielski, „Nieustające od roku ataki somalijskich dżihadystów wyludniły plaże wokół Lamu i Mombasy, boleśnie godząc w kenijską turystykę”, *PAP*, 3 August 2014, at <<http://www.rp.pl/artykul/1130617.html?print=tak&p=0>>, 24 August 2015.



*Peace and Security* is currently awaiting ratification by the member states. The Protocol urges the EAC Council of Ministers to support introducing decisions taken to ensure peace and security, and to strengthen the region's potential with regard to effective preventing, fighting and eliminating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as preventing terrorists from purchasing any weapons of mass destruction and blocking all means of transporting such a weapon. This resolution calls on the member states to seal any loopholes related to funding acts of terrorism, and to denounce using modern technologies, especially the Internet, as means of recruiting terrorists<sup>28</sup>.

Talks are being held with the Somali Federal Government with regard to developing further collaboration, and giving aid necessary to reinforce the government's position in the war-shattered country.

A stable situation in Somalia would guarantee peace alongside the East African Community's north-eastern borders; it would also provide the Community with a valuable economic partner with a long shoreline.

The governments of Somalia and South Sudan are therefore receiving offers of closer cooperation with a view to extending the Community's border in the future. If it becomes possible to admit both countries to the Community, it will produce measurable economic effects (e.g. Sudanese oil) and strengthen the political position of the whole region. However, introducing such ambitious plans requires making the first, necessary step – providing peace and stability in the region<sup>29</sup>.

The actual contribution to restoring stability in Somalia is made by the peacekeeping forces of the African Union that operate on the basis of, among other things, the Convention of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) adopted by the 35th OAU Summit in Algiers, Algeria, in July 1999. The Convention is concerned with preventing and fighting terrorism (*Protocol to the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism*); the Convention gave rise to The Peace and Security Council (PSC) that is responsible for harmonizing and coordinating the efforts to prevent and fight terrorism on the African continent: *Gravely concerned at the increasing incidence of terrorist acts worldwide, including in Africa (...) determined to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and any support thereto in Africa (...) convinced that acts of terrorism cannot be justified under any circumstances (...) Reiterating our conviction that terrorism constitutes a serious violation of human rights and a threat to peace, security, development, and democracy; stressing the imperative for all Member States of the African Union to take all necessary measures to protect their populations from acts of terrorism and to implement all relevant continental and international humanitarian and human rights instruments*<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> 'EALA Wants Partner States...'

<sup>29</sup> 'EALA Speaker and Somalia Parliament Counterpart Hold Talks in Kampala,' East African Community, 9 Juni 2015, at [http://www.eac.int/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1900:eala-speaker-and-somalia-parliament-counterpart-hold-talks-in-kampala-&catid=146:press-releases&Itemid=194](http://www.eac.int/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1900:eala-speaker-and-somalia-parliament-counterpart-hold-talks-in-kampala-&catid=146:press-releases&Itemid=194), 21 August 2015.

<sup>30</sup> 'The Protocol to the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism', 8 July 2004, pp. 1-2, at <[http://www.au.int/en/sites/default/files/treaties/7787-file-protocol\\_oau\\_convention\\_on\\_the\\_prevention\\_combating\\_terrorism.pdf](http://www.au.int/en/sites/default/files/treaties/7787-file-protocol_oau_convention_on_the_prevention_combating_terrorism.pdf)>, 22 August 2015.

## THE INVOLVEMENT OF PLAYERS FROM THE REGION OUTSIDE (THE USA IN PARTICULAR) – IN THE CONTEXT OF THE FIGHT AGAINST ISLAMIC TERRORISM ON A GLOBAL SCALE

The United States' global-scale policy against Islamic terrorism is a significant support for the African Union in its struggle to restore stability in Somalia. In 2008, the US Government designated al-Shabaab as a Foreign Terrorist Organization and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist entity. In 2012, the United States offered rewards for the capture of al-Shabaab leaders.<sup>31</sup>

The necessity of providing peace in this region was discussed by the African Union and the United States even before terrorist attacks intensified in Kenya<sup>32</sup>. The cooperation between the two is carried out by means of the United States Africa Command (U.S. AFRICOM) – one of the six Combatant Commands of the U.S. Department of Defence, answering to the Secretary of Defence. U.S. AFRICOM is responsible for military relations and peacekeeping cooperation with African countries, the African Union and the African regional security organisations<sup>33</sup>.

Moreover, since May 2003 the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) has been stationed in Africa. It is a unit established by the United States in October 2002 in reply to the 9/11 terrorist attack and the bomb attack on the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. CJTF-HOA is based in Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti and its main aim is to combat extremist organisations and defend U.S. interests in the region, e.g. by strengthening defence abilities of the partner countries<sup>34</sup>.

CJTF-HOA's immediate operational area covers territories of 10 countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Djibouti and Seychelles). The area that CJTF-HOA is interested in operation-wise covers territories of 11 neighbouring countries (Yemen, Mauritius, Madagascar, Mozambique, the Comoros, Chad, Egypt, Sudan, South Sudan, Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo).

CJTF-HOA's operational activities in partner countries aim primarily at helping to build and develop the civil-military operational abilities and defence system. Apart

<sup>31</sup> 'Al-Shabaab', National Counterterrorism Center.

<sup>32</sup> 'Africa Union and United States Government in Talks to Support AU Peace and Security Efforts', 10 February 2011, at <<http://www.au.int/en/pressreleases/24180/africa-union-and-united-states-government-talks-support-au-peace-and-security>>, 22 August 2015.

<sup>33</sup> U.S. AFRICOM's first operation started on 1st October 2007; a year later, 1st October 2008, U.S. AFRICOM was acknowledged as an independent Command. The unit employs around 2000 people: servicemen as well as civilian federal workers. Around 1500 of the employees work in the unit's headquarters in Stuttgart (Germany), and the liaison officers hold key posts in the African regional organizations, e.g. the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). United States Africa Command, 'About the Command', at <<http://www.africom.mil/about-the-command>>, 10 September 2015.

<sup>34</sup> CJTF-HOA: Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, 'About the Command', at <<http://www.hoa.africom.mil/about>>, 10 September 2015.

from that, through specialist training (strictly military as well as legal-- in military law), the unit supports better management, building civil society and general development. Those goals are achieved, for instance, by building and rebuilding medical and schooling facilities, or introducing new technical solutions<sup>35</sup>. One example of CJTF-HOA's involvement would be setting up a new weather system at the Kenyan Military Airport in Nairobi in December 2013. The new system provides information on current weather conditions to Kenya Defence Forces and, additionally, supports partner nations, such as Kenya, in military-to-military engagements aimed at combating violent extremist organisations in East Africa<sup>36</sup>.

Camp Lemonnier remains the only U.S. military installation in Africa, which proves how significant this region is for the U.S. defence policy.

The importance of the region was also emphasized by Barack Obama's visit in Kenya and Ethiopia in July 2015. The President participated in the Global Entrepreneurship Summit and discussed the regional security issues (civil war in Somalia, crisis in South Sudan and, first of all, the expanding danger of terrorism) with the leaders of both countries.

The United States help Kenya fight terrorism not only by military but also financial support. Due to the expanding danger of terrorism, the engagement of the United States is growing year by year. Despite the financial support received by Kenya to combat terrorism (\$141 million in 2010 to 2014), there was a rapid increase in the number of terrorist attacks in East Africa (data provided by the Global Terrorism Database – GTD): from 11 in 2010 to 115 in 2014<sup>37</sup>. As a reaction to the increasing danger of terrorism, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry announced in May 2015 that the USA decided to give Kenya \$100 million in 2015, so that the country can fight terrorism more effectively (163% more than in 2014 when Kenya received \$38)<sup>38</sup>.

In comparison to previous years, in 2015 the focus has been placed on supporting the Kenyan army more effectively in their combat against al-Shabaab; \$95mln, which makes up 95% of the aforementioned \$100 million amount, will go straight to the Kenyan troops. It is a tendency that has continued since 2013 –more and more financial support is granted to the army, and less is provided to the police forces.

Military help provided by the U.S. is supposed to increase the participation of Kenyan Armed Forces in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and in the military operations against al-Shabaab. Out of \$95mln that will go to the Kenyan army, about \$59mln will be received by the Kenyan troops operating as part of AMISOM in

<sup>35</sup> '10 Things about CJTF-HOA', U.S. Africa Command Blog, 1 June 2012, at <<https://africom.wordpress.com/2012/06/01/10-things-about-cjtf-hoa/>>, 28 August 2015.

<sup>36</sup> R. Martie, 'New Weather System Enhances Mission Capability of Kenyan Defense Forces', United States Africa Command, 5 December 2013, at <<http://www.africom.mil/newsroom/article/11530/new-weather-system-enhances-mission-capability-of-kenyan-defense-forces>>, 25 August 2015.

<sup>37</sup> Global Terrorism Database, 'Overview of the GTD', at <<http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/about/>>, 4 September 2015.

<sup>38</sup> 'U.S. Counterterrorism Aid to Kenya', Security Assistance Monitor, 21 July 15, at <[http://www.securityassistance.org/fact\\_sheet/us-counterterrorism-aid-kenya](http://www.securityassistance.org/fact_sheet/us-counterterrorism-aid-kenya)>, 3 September 2015.

order e.g. to support effective border protection, intelligence, logistics, as well as effective prevention and quick reactions to potential terrorist attacks. Moreover, specialist military training will be available as part of the Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program.

It is worth mentioning that the Kenyan police forces, despite receiving a much smaller amount of money (\$4.75million from the State Department's Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining and Related Programs – the NADR fund), will receive more financial support than any other sub-Saharan country. Neither Nigerien nor Malian police forces will receive financial support from the United States, although both Niger and Mali are facing the danger of terrorism. The support granted to Kenya will enable building the potential of Kenyan police when it comes to enforcing border security law, reacting in emergency situations, and acquiring knowledge necessary to operate according to international conventions on human rights<sup>39</sup>.

Since 2005 the African Union has also received various forms of support from NATO. In 2005 the support was granted to AMIS – the AU mission in Darfur, Sudan. Since September 2007, it has been granted to the AU mission in Somalia – AMISOM. The support reaches the AU in the form of professional help, training (e.g. courses at the NATO School in Oberammergau in Germany), providing planning and strategic air- and sealift, as well as assistance in developing long-term peacekeeping capabilities, in particular the African Standby Force (ASF) brigades. Based on advice from NATO's military authorities, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) is the body that agrees to provide support to the AU<sup>40</sup>.

Kenya receives not only help of military character; the country's development, in its broadest sense, is supported as well. This topic will not be discussed in detail as it is beyond the scope of this article.

However, it is worth mentioning that one of the most important donors for Kenya is USAID, the leading U.S. government agency, whose main aim is to lessen global poverty and to enable expansive democratic societies in developing countries to fulfill their potential. Among the countries receiving help from USAID, Kenya holds a special place. The interactive map available on USAID's website shows that out of 1919 aid projects which are now being realized in Sub-Saharan Africa (statistics as of 17th August 2015), the most, 119, are being realized in Kenya<sup>41</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

Growing help granted to the government of Kenya comes at the time when there is serious anxiety about the ability of Kenyan defence forces to prevent escalation of vio-

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> NATO, 'Assistance to the African Union', 16 March 2015, at <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_8191.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_8191.htm)>, 1 October 2015.

<sup>41</sup> USAID, 'Where We Work. Africa. Interactive Map', 17 August 2015, at <<http://map.usaid.gov/?l=regional&cw=SUB%20SAHARAN%20AFRICA>>, 3 September 2015.

lence perpetrated by Somali terrorists. External help, especially from the United States, is given to Kenya, because of, among other things, its valuable geopolitical location – Kenya is a safety barrier for the Sub-Saharan countries against Islamic extremists from the Horn of Africa. The United States (but also Israel and Western Europe countries) need Kenya as a local *gendarme*, guarding East Africa against the growing influence of Islamic extremists and the outcome of internal conflicts that occur in less stable neighbouring countries, especially in Somalia and South Sudan.

Help provided to Kenya by the United States has its positive as well as negative sides. Kenya is accused by terrorists from al-Shabaab of keeping its troops in Somalia and actively supporting U.S. interests in the Horn of Africa.

There are two opposite attitudes among politicians in Kenya. The opposition calls for withdrawing the troops from Somalia in order to keep peace in the country and repair relations with Muslims. On the other hand, President Uhuru Kenyatta seems to believe that the only guarantee of safety is sending as many troops as possible to Somalia and building a frontier wall<sup>42</sup>.

Opinions concerning Kenya's current security policy differ. The common impression is, however, that the policy is ineffective. Experts' opinions differ when it comes to assessing the true shape of the Kenyan army and security forces, and identifying the reasons for their weakness. The assessment of Kenya's capabilities comes off differently depending on whether it is compared with the Western countries, their military potential and operational capabilities, or with other African countries.

Paweł Tarnawski, a former expert of the United Nations Security Council in Africa, claims that the Kenyan special forces should be assessed positively; they were trained by foreign advisors (from the USA and other countries), and, if necessary they can receive support from Americans, Israelis or the British soldiers. The military operations they have carried out so far are professional and supported by advisors from the West. Tarnawski emphasizes that none of those military operations resulted in war crimes and genocide accusations<sup>43</sup>. This is an important statement, especially in view of many other military operations conducted by military forces of other African countries, e.g. Central African Republic (CAR) or The Republic of The Sudan. As mentioned above, Tarnawski had a chance to witness the development of the conflict in the Eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo in the last two decades<sup>44</sup>.

By contrast, the abilities of the Kenyan special forces were assessed negatively by the defence experts from the United States, especially after the terrorist attack in the Westgate Mall, where some of the Kenyan soldiers took advantage of the spreading chaos and robbed the shops.

<sup>42</sup> 'Zamach w Kenii...'

<sup>43</sup> 'Dlaczego terroryści zaatakowali w Kenii? Kto i jak będzie pomagał ofiarom ataku w Nairobi?'. Interview with P. Guła and P. Tarnawski, Wojskowy Instytut Medyczny, at <<http://www.wim.mil.pl/aktualnoci-topmenu-19/medycyna-w-mundurze/1476-dlaczego-terroryci-zaatakowali-w-kenii-kto-i-jak-bdzie-pomaga-ofiarom-ataku-w-nairobi>>, 2 September 2015.

<sup>44</sup> J. Bar, 'Polityka państw Wspólnoty Wschodnioafrykańskiej wobec kryzysu w regionie Wielkich Jezior', *Forum Polilogiczne*, Vol. 17 (2014), pp. 259-278.

There are data showing a high level of corruption in the army. Coalition forces under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Western countries funding the war effort are said to be “very frustrated” with a Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) black market racket that helps al-Shabaab profiteer from illegal charcoal and sugar smuggling, as the report by Journalists for Justice alleges<sup>45</sup>.

Instances of violating human rights against Muslims and members of Somali minority in Kenya, are not only a crime from the legal perspective but can give rise to pro-Islamic sympathies and encourage new recruits willing to join terrorist groups.

Opinions and recommendations related to improving the effectiveness of safety policy in the region and in Kenya itself, are mainly concerned with the need to decrease the level of corruption in the Kenyan government, and with increasing the effectiveness of the uniformed services by training them in emergency management and by providing them with organizational support and necessary equipment<sup>46</sup>. Another significant issue is the psychological motivation to fight for one’s country; in Kenya, as in many other African countries, the sense of national identity remains weak, whereas the sense of ethnic affinity is quite strong. Civil society is still a new phenomenon and it remains part of the government’s official rhetoric rather than the citizen’s everyday life. The African people tend to give priority to their tribal, clannish or familial identity over national identity. Creating the sense of national identity is, after all, a long process, taking years or even decades and requiring suitable national policy and favourable external conditions.

Building national unity above ethnic and religious divisions should be a process that takes into account the rights of national minorities; in the case of Kenya that would mostly mean the Somali minority. There are about 2.5 million Somalis in Kenya at the moment, which means that, more or less, every twentieth Kenyan has Somali origins. Al-Shabaab is not the only Somali organization destabilizing Kenya; there are others that are created on the basis of political and clannish bonds, e.g. as a protest against treating the Somali people in Kenya as second-class citizens. The Kenyan authorities should not forget about the claims laid by members of ethnic groups; not only by the most widely-known ones, like the Luo, but also, e.g. by the Oromo people who are also fighting for their rights.

The first step towards defusing the existing tension could be holding impartial inquiry into reports on misusing the defence forces against ethnic minorities in Kenya. The next step could be suitable, cautious policy of respecting equal right of Muslims and minorities, including the Somali minority in Kenya; it should be a constant attempt at dialogue and reducing tensions, so as not to cause radicalization of unceasingly smouldering religious and ethnic conflicts<sup>47</sup>. Such a policy, carried out alongside

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<sup>45</sup> T. Analo, ‘KDF Black Market Thrives in Somalia, Funds Al Shabaab – Report’, *The EastAfrican*, 14 November 2015, at <<http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/KDF-black-market-thrives-in-Somalia-funds-Al-Shabaab/-/2558/2956848/-/fkwl4f/-/index.html>>, 4 February 2016.

<sup>46</sup> ‘Dlaczego terroryści...’

<sup>47</sup> ‘U.S. Counterterrorism Aid...’



attempts to increase operational abilities of the Kenyan army in order to defend Kenyan borders more effectively, seems to be the only solution promising security and social stability in this country.

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