Issue: The issue of ISIS in Northern Africa
Forum: African Union Peace and Security Council
Position: Deputy Chair
Name: Yoshua Wolfsen

Introduction

In our day and age, terrorism is a plague that has been spread throughout the world. The news reports constantly of the bombings and shootings occurring everywhere in the world, and the terror and violence caused by these actions that cast a shadow on our Earth. Terrorism, however, is not a new problem, and has existed for centuries. Over the last few decades its prominence in the worlds affairs has grown at an exponential rate. The Taliban and Al-Qaeda have been the most active terrorist groups in the recent decades, however lately ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) has become one of the beacons of terrorism in the world. Together with Boko Haram this terrorist group instigates violence and terror throughout Africa, with ISIL being mostly active in the northern regions of Africa.

The Jihadist militant group is only officially a terrorist group since 2010, making ISIL a relatively new terrorist organization. However, they are now known as one of the deadliest organizations on the planet. The topic of ISIL is an extremely complex one that involves many different parties and ideologies, therefore making it hard to find a solution that every party agrees on. Recently ISIL has become the richest terrorist organization, obtained from oil and the raiding of major banks and companies. Thus, they have a huge arsenal of weaponry and assets which is making them a prime force against the other main entities in the world.

Definition of Key Terms

Caliphate:
A form of Islamic office or justification that is led by a Caliph, who represents the entire Muslim population.

Jihad:
 A holy war waged on behalf of Islam as a religious duty.

Jihadist:
 People who take Jihad, which is an Islamic term for preserving their religion, as their duty.

Sharia Law:

A religious law forming part of the Islamic tradition. It is derived from the religious precepts of Islam, particularly the Quran and the Hadith. In Arabic, the term sharīʿah refers to God's immutable divine law. It has been described as "one of the major intellectual achievements of Islam". The manner of its application in modern times has been a subject of dispute between Muslim traditionalists and reformists.

Sunni Islam:

Sunni Islam is the largest denomination of Islam, followed by nearly 90% of the world's Muslims. Its name comes from the word sunnah, referring to the behavior of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. The differences between Sunni and Shia Muslims arose from a disagreement over the succession to Muhammad and subsequently acquired broader political significance, as well as theological and juridical dimensions.

Terrorism:

The use of violence, intimidation and terror to pursuit a particular ideology, in most cases for political reasons.

General Overview

ISIL is a Sunni jihadist group that has an extremely violent ideology and refers to itself as a caliphate and asserts all Muslims. First inspired by Al-Qaeda and conforming to a sector of Al-Qaeda, it was later expelled from it. Although ISIL has mostly been active in the regions throughout Syria and Iraq, it also has expanded it organization to other places all over the world and has branches in several countries on the Asian and African continent. ISIL is also active in the northern part of Africa, posing an alarming threat to stability in the region and being responsible for vile acts of terror against the military and civilians.

ISIL has gained a foothold in several northern African country, most prominently in Libya and Egypt, and to a lesser degree in Algeria and Tunisia. Libya's instability following years of civil war and unrest can be seen as a main factor as to why ISIL has been able to recruit many soldiers from Libya and gain such a strong foothold here. From there on ISIL has slowly expanded throughout the region into neighboring countries. As ISIL's position in Iraq and Syria weakens, it is even speculated that the Libyan foothold will be used as a fallback for the organization. In order to make sure that this can not happen, ISIL needs to be battled swiftly and efficiently in northern Africa.
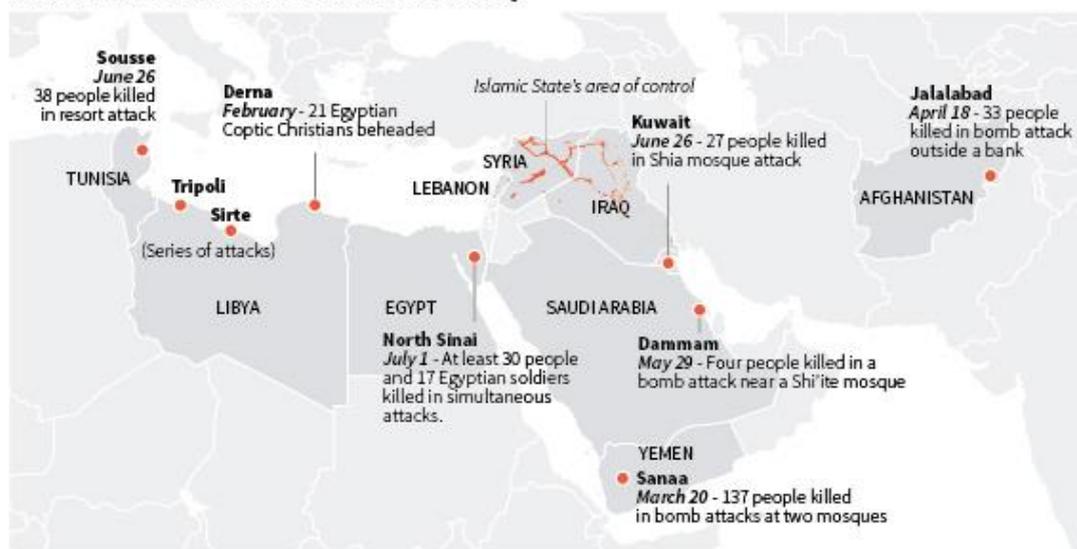
However, ISIL's presence in Africa itself is not the only issue at hand. ISIL recruits many foreign fighters from the African continent. As they return to their homeland, they can pose a danger to national security as they still are loyal to the ISIL-organization. This is a yet

unforeseen but pressing matter that can increase the unrest in the area. Reintegration of these ex-soldiers must be done very carefully, making sure that their dangerous ideology cannot pose a threat to society.

Fighters from North Africa are often socioeconomically underprivileged and come from regions characterized by a lack of access to economic and political power. This leads to the need of taking matters into their own hands in order to better their position, and as often rewards are promised when joining terrorist groups, they see joining ISIL as a better alternative than to remain in their hopeless situation. The Arab Spring and its aftermath created opportunities for jihadists to organize and mobilize on a wider scale than previously possible. Most provinces in North Africa with high rates of ISIS fighter recruitment were also economically and politically marginalized. Therefore, economic growth and political inclusion should be security priorities for North Africa.

ISIL's expansion towards Northern Africa

Major Parties Involved

Algeria

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant – Algeria Province (ISIL – AP) is a branch of ISIL active in Algeria. Their infamous kidnapping and beheading of a French mountaineering guide was all over the news and emphasized the danger this relatively small branch of ISIL poses in Algeria. Although ISIL is not as prominently active here as in for instance Libya, it is still

very important to get rid of the branch in Algeria, in order to prevent the spreading of the terror group to other northern African countries.

Egypt

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant – Sinai Province (ISIL – SP) is a branch of ISIL located in the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt. It has been around since 2011 and has since the Sinai Insurgency been responsible for unrest in the area. They have carried out several attacks on Egyptian security personnel, but also on civilians. ISIL – SP is responsible for an attack on the Italian consulate in Cairo, as well for a large-scale attack on Coptic Christians. As Egypt is one of the strongholds of ISIL in Africa, it is important for the country to be included in negotiations about the actions that need to be taken.

Libya

In Libya there are not one, but three branches of ISIL active, split up in the Fezzan Province in the south, the Cyrenaica Province in the east and the Tripolitania Province in the west. These branches were formed shortly following the Libyan Civil War, where unrest and an unstable society provided as a fertile soil for the growth of radicalism and terrorism. The branches in Libya are known to work together with other local terrorist branches to gain territory. Within their obtained territory they make use of local media outlets to spread the ISIL-ideolog, and sharia law is strictly enforced. Stadia have been used to perform public executions in, and several human rights have been reportedly violated, as state authorities do not hold control over the territory anymore. The growth of its branch in Libya is seen by ISIL and its proponents as a model for ISIL expansion outside Iraq and Syria. Therefore, making sure that ISIL loses its foothold in Libya should be the African Union Peace and Security Council's main priority.

Tunisia

The ISIL-insurgency in Tunisia started with the infamous Sousse Bombings, killing multiple tourists near a beach resort, and has been raging on ever since. Although ISIL is not very big in Tunisia, it is seeking to gain territorial claims in the country. The group has previously targeted mainly tourists, militants and other Tunisian security personnel, both through the method of suicide bombing and armed conflict.

Timeline of Key Events

Timeline of events in reverse chronological order leading up to present day.

Date	Description of Event
January 25, 2011	Marking the start of the Sinai Insurgency
October 23, 2011	The end of the Libyan Civil War

September 5, 2014	USA forms an anti-IS coalition, including Britain, France, Canada and numerous Arab nations.
September 22, 2014	The kidnapping of a 55 year old French mountaineering guide by ISIL-AP
November 13, 2014	Marking the founding of ISIL – SP branch on the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt
February 15, 2015	21 Egyptians beheaded on a beach
March 12, 2015	Boko Haram makes an alliance with ISIL
June 26, 2015	Sousse bombings are carried out, killing 38 people
December 26, 2018	ISIL claims responsibility for attack on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tripoli

Previous attempts to resolve the issue

The issue of ISIS in northern Africa has been generally overlooked in earlier attempts to solve the issue of ISIS, as most of the advancements towards a solution have been focused on the battle in Iraq and Syria. However, it is important to nip the ISIL-insurgence in northern Africa in the bud, so that the terrorist group cannot gain more territory on the African continent.

The African Union has held several assemblies on the topic of the spreading of ISIL throughout Africa, and the United Nations has developed a global strategy on combatting terrorism. The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy has been adopted by the UN in 2006.

Possible Solutions

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy needs to be carefully applied to the whole of northern Africa. Therefor, the African Union should work together with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), that will help the countries taunted by terror with implementing the four pillars of the Global Strategy;

1. Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism;
2. Measures to prevent and combat terrorism;
3. Measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in that regard;
4. Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism.

A temporary measure in order to buy time would be to organize peace talks with the leaders of the different ISIL branches within northern Africa, and to establish a ceasefire between military entities and the terrorists.

Extremism in northern Africa is caused by largescale socioeconomic underprivilege and lack of access to economic and political power. Most provinces in North Africa with high rates of ISIL fighter recruitment were economically and politically marginalized. They had high rates of underemployment, lack of political representation and poor access to social services compared to their national contexts. The geographic origins of ISIS recruits from North Africa suggest the group took advantage of long-standing frustrations in marginalized communities to mobilize fighters. Most recruited ISIL fighters come from areas with little to no employment. The implementation of a social safety net would help better the socioeconomic position of the unemployed youth, and would provide people in a hopeless situation with support, which would decrease the chance of them turning to an extremist grouping for economical purposes, or to increase their standard of life, Also, polling stations should be accessible to each and every civilian, and the UN needs to make sure that voting takes place in all fairness. Economic growth and political inclusion will have to be the main focus in northern Africa in order to take down this problem at its roots.

The reintegration of former ISIL-fighters into society should be taken very seriously and should be handled very carefully. Therefore, these returnees should be presented with psychiatric assistance to help process the traumatizing experiences they have been through and the horrible things they have seen. On top of that, they should be presented with a reintegration course, mainly focusing on the essence of the Islam; that this is a peaceful religion offering love to all and does not approve of blatant crime and murder. It would also be recommended to have these ex-fighters under surveillance for a certain period of time after their return, to make sure that they disconnect all ties to ISIL and to be able to stop any attempts of attacks on time.

Appendix

APPENDIX A:
https://content.sciendo.com/view/journals/kbo/22/1/article-p10.xml

APPENDIX B:
http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/826

APPENDIX C:
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