RISKY AFRICA?
SECURITY POLICY IN A HISTORICAL CONTEXT

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EUROPE AND AFRICA, MUTUAL PREJUDICES

The violence in France primarily, though not exclusively in the suburbs of Paris in the autumn 2005 forced even those who deal with security policy to readjust their views. In three weeks, children and grandchildren of immigrants mostly from North and West Africa grabbed stones and petrol-filled bottles in the dreary suburbs and set on fire 8500 cars and at least a hundred public buildings. Many speak of intifada, a Palestinian parallel. It is a fact that among the rallying youngsters lack of perspective increased the susceptibility for Islam. The executive power is insecure and makes hasty judgements; even to expel those caught setting cars on fire is not simple: laws are contradictory. The ministers of home affairs, who called the riots a mob, is urging positive discrimination for immigrants, but in the meantime, he is stressing the problematic issue of their integration.

It is generally feared, that riots may also spread over countries with a significant percentage of African (and Turkish) immigrants. In the meantime, politicians and experts are trying to calm public opinion by stressing the uniqueness of the French assimilation model and the fact, that in other countries, there is a smaller social tension and thus there, it is relatively less likely the situation to explode. Yet, one of the shocking conclusions of the July 2005 London explosions is the fact, that those Somalian and Eritrean immigrants became the means of blind, destructive terrorism who having been provided with significant social allowances seemed to have successfully integrated into the society. Although the British model of multicultural coexistence and the French model of total assimilation are rather different, they are both feared to turn out to be disasters. This is what makes Africa one of the lasting risk factors for our continent. In the next months and years, the increasing dangers of immigration will surely be talked about, especially African immigration.

In parallel, by the turn of the millennium, new, so-called non-military security challenges, dangers and threats have been outlined. Traditional frontier police (border

guards) have not been prepared for simultaneous waves of mass migration. The nature of the danger itself does not make prevention possible by hierarchic, military organisations.[1]

Since immigration is still within the scope of the member states' jurisdiction in the EU, they will certainly make efforts to hinder it, even by returning to relocation programmes. One such programme has been proposed by the German Interior Minister Otto Schilly: he called for North African camps for African immigrants, because the "European ship is full".[2] So far, this proposal has supporters only in Italy. France and Spain do not accept it, due to its human rights implications. Yet, this can easily change, considering Ceuta and Melilla, the two small Spanish enclaves in Morocco, each with three-, six-meter, barbed wire defended walls. They were nearly taken under siege by refugees from sub-Saharan Africa. Germany has recently criticised Spain for having given amnesty to more than 800,000 illegal immigrants attracting even more people to attempt immigrate to the territory of the EU again. The fatal Moroccan volley has not been enough to prevent the desperate people from setting out again and again on there homemade ladders. Here, at the border of Morocco and the EU, 40,000 Africans are estimated to be striving to get into the EU at all cost. In Libya, there must be even more people, where for a long time, immigrants could venture to reach the Italian island Lampedusa in their light boats with the tacit consent of the Libyan authorities.

More recently Libyan politics, that is willing to demonstrate co-operation with the West has changed: Libyan plans to resettle the Tripoli area masses back into Ghana, Nigeria and other sender countries through airlifts. Reports in the world press try to explain this situation by showing personal ordeals to people living in the advanced part of the world. These immigrants start their journey with a few kilometres, they are usually poor and ragged. Nevertheless, they still stick to their intentions.[3] The cinematic vision of millions of Africans invading Europe can easily become reality. It is a strange irony of fate: many think, it may well happen that the colonisers will be colonised. Migratory pressure coming from Africa will be steadily present mainly in the EU countries, but it will also increase considerably in the US, where among the African American communities, those people will become the majority in the foreseeable future, whose ancestors had not been dragged into the US as slaves, but had

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[1] Deák, Péter: Aszimmetria forradalom a hadviselésben. http://bhkka.hu/eng/cikkek_m_eng.htm#top

[2] http://www.xxszazadintezet.hu/index.php?011556&d=1%20

[3] Craig S. Smith, Spain's African Enclaves Are Migrants' Portals to Europe. The New York Times, 2005. november 5.

immigrated there voluntarily. In the short run, the stabilisation of this situation will exaggerate this migratory pressure in the African crisis regions. Thus the European fears concerning African immigration are not without foundation. Yet, one must not forget that for centuries, the main source of danger for Africa and the Africans was exactly Europe and the Europeans themselves. Even today, for the Africans there are two sensitive issues that influence their picture of Europe: slavery and colonising.

THE HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY OF EUROPE

The relationship between Africans and Europeans started long before the great geographical discoveries. Among the soldiers of the Roman legions there were many black ones; annals from the 9th century speak of "blue men", black slaves, the Vikings dragged along from North Africa. In Portugal, from the 15th century, initially they were brought to courts and later to noble families. Although they were sometimes blamed for witchcraft, the general European attitude toward them was not hostile until the 19th century, the time of the appearance of racist ideologies. Slave trade and slavery itself that flourished in the 17th-18th centuries influenced the African image in Europe. Both the slaveholder and the slave formed negative opinions of each other, yet the former had a far greater role in forming the public opinion. The contempt for the indifferent slave, together with the fear installed by occasional slave-revolts created such a malignant picture of the Africans in the Europeans, that it contributed to the birth of racial theories.

In the arguments of European colonisers, one of the central theses was the white man's civilizing mission in Africa; he could not give up this mission, because "otherwise the African tribes would exterminate each other".[4] The colonisers of the social-Darwinist era were convinced that the social development in Africa could only start with external support and Europe should lend a helping hand in this. Since the Europeans regarded the Africans mentally and morally inferior, nobody, except the American Indians, Australians and Tasmanian aboriginals thought that black people were endangered by extinction. On the contrary, Europeans learnt exactly in the injurious West African climate, that their physical and biological resistance lagged behind that of the Africans. Until the beginning of the 20th century, the foreigners' death rate remained extremely high in tropical Africa. Since it was not characteristic

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[4] Ross, Robert (ed.), Racism and Colonialism. Essay on Ideology and Social Structure. Leiden University Press, Leiden, 1982, p. 6-58.

of those born there, West Africa was nicknamed "the graveyard for white man". This biological disadvantage certainly helped, subconsciously even strengthened European fears and therefore racial theories. Although statistics did not prove biological differences between the white and the black; 46% of the white men in Sierra Leone died within the year of their arrival, but resettled, liberated black slaves from America had largely the same death rate.[5] Colonial authorities saw the solution of the problems in segregation, similar to (although in the reverse) modern ghettos in the dim suburbs of big cities.

Contrary to expectations, decolonisation did not prove to solve the problem automatically. In July 2001, at the international anti-racism conference in Durban, South Africa, the African countries and many non-governmental organisations demanded that the European countries apologised for slave trade and colonisation. The affected countries were not wiling to fulfil this request fearing that an apology might create a precedent for the legal ratification of possible compensatory claims. This issue is still kept on the agenda of many African politicians and organisations, although without much promising outlook. In 2005, even the British government, which is indeed doing a great deal for Africa, consecutively leaves out its ancestors' historical responsibility from the list of arguments is uses urging support for the continent. Instead it tries to expand this responsibility to Europe, on the whole, at least to EU member states. Earlier, with the French "precaree" and francophony pushed into the background, a similar turn happened with the Africa policy of France.

THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY FOR AFRICA

Africa is the only continent that is not only behind the other ones, but also behind itself in many aspects. The phenomenon of "state failure", the non-functioning state appeared first on this continent. This drove whole regions into anarchy leaving the population defenceless against violence and poverty. Somalia, Rwanda, Liberia and many other African countries are examples of how a crisis can destabilise neighbouring countries as well. Many think that globalisation made Africa face bigger problems than ever before in history: colonialism and neo-colonialism were innocent foreplays of the social tragedies caused by globalisation. Liberalisation and the structural conformation programme further deepened the continent's economical problems without any lasting

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[5] Balogh, A., Rostoványi, Zs., Búr, G., Anderle, Á.: Nemzet és nacionalizmus. Ed. Balogh, András. Budapest, 2002. p.64.

progress. Globalisation helps the double denationalisation of the state especially in Africa by weakening its institutions and thereby its potential. This effect adds up to the long inherited structural weakness of Africa e.g. missing ownership rights, the state elite's levying the incomes, political instability, "informal value patterns", etc.

While European public opinion is willing to accept historical charges, even taking on the implied moral responsibilities and giving support, few can see the situation today as it really is. Generally it is believed, only Africa presents a threat in the relationship between the two continents. But Europe still holds risks for Africa; the situation is not a one-way street of security politics, e.g. "brain drain", environmental hazards, dumping of dangerous waste materials, flood of used cars and clothing items or the bird flu carried over by migratory birds this weeks. Because of malnutrition and low resistance, due to the spread of HIV among the adult population, the H5N1 virus can cause an extreme epidemic. This, together with health systems collapsing or already collapsed are risks to be taken seriously, yet neither those affected by the situation, nor the international media pays enough attention to this issue.[6] Yet the biggest outer risk is the legal and the illegal trade in arms, focused on the continent in the shadow of armed conflicts. Even today, considerable amount originates from the former "mother countries" and other European states, often as support, or disguised as aid, or in co-operation with criminal groups in exchange for smuggled diamonds, drugs, rare tropical trees and other prohibited goods. In addition, munitions industry and army trade companies dealing with large amount of money instigate and strengthen corruption from outside, which is one of the main internal problems anyway. They force military and civilian projects on poor countries, which do not need these at all. A disintegrated society can easily become the hotbed of international terrorism by sheltering internationally wanted persons, providing training and supply bases and creating possibilities for recruitment. Weak states cannot even hold their own territory under control, yet small groups, that can move easily across borders and use cutting edge technologies would necessitate regional, or even continental co-operation and control.

Globalisation has also increased the risk of global epidemics. In Africa, the repressed state of immunisation can help diseases, believed to have been combated, spread and this uncontrolled situation may lead to the outbreak of new epidemics. In the last fifty years, the population growth in Africa has had the quickest rate among all continents. This acceleration is even more remarkable in the historical context: the

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[6] http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=30843

continent's population was practically stagnant around 100 million for three centuries (1600-1900), while there was a considerable population growth elsewhere. At this period, the population of sub-Saharan Africa was fluctuating between roughly 50 and 70 million, meanwhile its proportion compared to the world population slowly, but steadily decreased. A spectacular turn occurred after WW2 In the 1980s the population growth reached and in some years even exceeded the annual 3% in the sub-Saharan area. This trend started to change only in the 1990s; Africa was the last among the continents, where the number of births and the rate of population growth started to slow down. According to present forecasts, Africa will be the last continent, where the population growth will stop. It means that the present population of 719 million (World Bank data, 2004)[7] in the sub-Saharan region will increase to 1500 million in a hundred years.

In the next centuries, besides the Indian subcontinent, Africa will be the region where poverty and unsanitary conditions will become stable due to population growth. At the same time, the sub-Saharan Africans have minus 14 years in life expectancy compared to the next, second poorest region, South Asia and exactly minus 30 years compared to that of the citizens of the developed world. In Africa, in 1960, the average age was 40 years. This increased to 52 by 1990, and in the 1990s it started to decrease. By the turn of the millennium it was estimated to 48 years, and in 2003, it stabilised around 45-46 years, the same number measured by statistics 24 years before, around 1980.[8] The biggest problem is AIDS. Africa is the most infected continent. Three quarters of the 40 million HIV infected people live here. AIDS take women in their twenties and men in their thirties, decimating the most able-bodied age groups of the whole continent. The health systems do not have the money for those medicines with which the life expectancy of AIDS patients could be extended by ten years. Apart from losing its most able-bodied people, taking care of the orphans is a huge social problem, especially where only children and old people survive. Also among those who rush to immigrate to Europe, the ratio of HIV infect people is growing steadily.

TERROR THREAT FROM AFRICA?

To put an equation mark between international terrorism an Islam makes no sense. Yet, it regularly happen that in the sub-Saharan region, in connection with the threat

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[7] http://devdata.worldbank.org/external/CPProfile.asp?SelectedCountry=SSA&CCODE=SSA&CNAME=Sub-Saharan+Africa&PTYPE=CP

[8] Ibid.

of terrorism, the attention centres solely on regions with Muslim population. This is a fundamental change in the view of African Islam or "Islam Noir", since at the time of the appearance of Islam fundamentalism, African Islam was generally regarded as a gentler and more tolerant, than that of the Arabic world. Islam has been present in Africa since a short time after its birth and in the 7-11th century, it reached Western Africa and the East African coast. Yet, its biggest expansion in sub-Saharan Africa took place in the 19th century, when the militant adherers of Islam wanted to re-establish te purity of their faith, and to accomplish this, they called for holy wars. These jihads carried out by the Tuculors and Fulbes led to the creation of Muslim states, where force was also used to convert people. Owing to their intervention, many emirates were created from Senegal to present day to present day Northern Nigeria: genuine theocratic states. The European colonisers were also concerned with Islam's advance in Africa. The Christian missions could claim only small results in Africa, while the Muslims converted millions of people with small effort. Some theologians saw the reason for this in the theory stating that some religions suited superior races and some religions satisfied the inferior ones. "We cannot expect that suddenly African cannibals who prayed to lizards for ages convert to a complex faith religion that demands intelligence."[9]

As opposed to Christianity, Islam did reach more advantageous positions in some ways during the colonial era. First of all, conversion was not done by missionaries, but the Africans themselves, who did not separate themselves from the others, but became part of the converted community. Many African traditions, e.g. magic, polygamy, the priority of the community over the individuum could be fitted more easily with Islam than Christianity. Thus to become a Muslim did not create such a tension in the cultural traditions than the adoption of Christianity. Besides, until recently Islam has had the advantage of not being identified with the colonisers.

It is not by chance, that Islam could increase the number of its believers in exactly those decades, when Christianity was treated with reservations, yet this advantage has disappeared. The southern border of Islam in Africa has not been able to advance considerably for the last hundred years. Out of 1,3 billion people, the world estimate number of Islam followers almost 200 million lived in sub-Saharan Africa at the turn of the millennium. Most of them, 60 million lived in Nigeria, the 8th among countries having Muslim population. At that time, the number of Muslims were estimated to be 29 million in Ethiopia, 22 million on the Sudan, 13 million in Tanzania, 10 million in

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[9] The Times, London, 8 October 1887 ("The Times Annual Index" – British Museum, London)

Mali, 9 million in Senegal, 8 million in Niger, 7 million in Somalia, 6 million in Guinea and Burkina Faso, 5 million in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and 4 million in Ivory Coast, Chad and Cameroon. More than 90% of the population of Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Djibouti, and Somalia profess themselves to be Muslim.

In sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria has become the most important region of Christian–Muslims conflicts. The first attempts to introduce Islam jurisdiction, the sharia took place at the end of the 1970s in Northern Nigeria. Its capital, Kano became the scene for many riots that demanded thousands of victims in the 1980s and 1990s. Poor urban districts have insured the right supply for fundamentalism, which was also supported by Libya and Iran. For instance, in October 1982, the renovation of a Christian church gave the cause for clash es between the Hausas and the Jorubas. Since then, the closely connected questions of ethnical and religious affiliations have become the basic elements of Nigerian politics. The political fights about the sharia have divided the country in two parts: the North Fulan and Hausa representatives supported it, while the politicians of the Jorubas and the Ibos dominated Southern and Central region vehemently objected. Especially General Buhari favoured openly the Islamic North, who came to power in December 1983, following the 5th military coup d'etat since the country reached independence. Nigeria joined the Organisation of Islamic conference, although only less than half of its population is Muslim. The question of introducing Islamic jurisdiction on a federate state level have been brought up again and although it has not been introduced up until today, among the 36 federate states of Nigeria, Sokoto uses the sharia in the scope of its superior court, despite its constitutional state not clarified. In these states, since 1999 stoning has been officially used as a penalty for adultery, limp amputation for stealing and flogging for the consumption of alcoholic beverages. Hisba committees (religious police) have been established to have the regulations adhered to. Kano with its two million inhabitants was the only town in sub-Saharan Africa, where a sympatizer demonstration was organised for Osama bin Laden by Islamic adherers, in September 2001 the Christian–Muslim clashes have become permanent in the last two decades, with such results as resistance to compulsory vaccination for children in the Muslim areas. Vaccination is regarded as the conspiracy of the Christian West. Because of sabotaging the vaccination, polio has spread to six other neighbouring African countries, although the continent was close to the total elimination of this disease.[10]

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[10] Lawrence K Altman, polio spread from Nigeria, W.H.O. confirms. The New York Times , 14. January 2004.

But terrorism did not strike first in Nigeria or West Africa, but in East Africa. In August 1998, suicide bombings were carried out against US consulates in the Kenyan and Tanzanian capitals. In November 2002, there was an (abortive) attempt to shoot down an Israeli plane again in Kenya that followed an explosion at a Mombassa hotel. The 9/11 attack was a significant turning point for Africa as well. American foreign policy recognised the dangers of hopeless poverty; President Bush's policy of "Leave no continent behind" promised extensive co-operation with Africa. Yet this revaluation was rather relative, did not extend to all regions and the civilian sphere was also pushed into the background. The extension of military co-operation to some of the continents' states was carried out in order to prevent crises similar to the Rwandan genocide. In the framework of the Pan Sahel Initiative (PSI), the European Command of US. Armed forces started training programmes with the participation of Algeria, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad. These still continue today. These programmes are officially meant to help suppress smuggling and international crime, but it is obvious that their primary aim is to train soldiers of the participating countries to track down and eliminate terrorists. At the 2004 programme conference, the general staffs of Morocco, Tunisia and Senegal also represented themselves. On the horn of Africa, the participants of a similar initiative are Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Kenya and Djibouti, but their institutionalisation is still awaited. The American soldiers dug wells and made some other minor infrastructure developments to convince the local Muslim and not exactly US sympathiser population. Just like in West Africa, some suspicious people have been tracked down, although their connection to al-Kaida could not be proved. These programmes are criticised because participating African governments are claimed to strive to make their own political opposition the target.[11]

THE NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION AND SECURITY POLITICS

For understandable reasons, the EU concentrates much less on military co-operation with Africa. Although the US is the biggest donor, the EU and its member countries provide altogether more than half of development aid. The EU wishes to increase the aid for Africa by $10 billion up to $30 billion in the next five years.[12] This means, contrary to initial Hungarian expectations, Brussels will concentrate more on the poorest

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[11] Andreas Mehler, Wesentliche politische und wirtschaftliche Entwicklungen in Afrika südlich der Sahara (2004) Institut für Afrika-Kunde, Hamburg, 2005. p.7.

[12] http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4335954.stm

continent.[13] Experts on development co-operation claim that these programmes, which require significant material and immaterial resources are some sort of insurance fees: they can protect Europe from African dangers. Since it is about spending a considerable amount of EU money, certainly this is a more effective argument to win the support of public opinion than just to appeal for moral considerations. Yet, this has its own risks. While each expert is pleased with development co-operation becoming the third pillar besides foreign and interior politics, many researchers warn of the dangers of development politics becoming an extended arm of security policy.[14]

This question has gained theoretical and also practical importance, when in April 2004, shortly before ten new members joined, the EU had established the "African Peace Facility", modelled on the "Water Facility". Due to budget constraints until 2006, the €200 million is for peacekeeping and the remaining sum is spent mainly on "capacity building" were covered from the non-allocated allowances of the development co-operation chapter.

It is an irrefutable argument: first of all peace is needed for the development of Africa. Yet Europe's clearly understood interest lies in allocating the least for peacemaking and peacekeeping in the new budget period commencing in 2007 and in having a development policy stressing more significantly on commercial, humanitarian, environmental and other considerations rather than security.

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[13] The parts related to Africa of the European Security Strategy, prepared under the leadership of Javier Solana High Representative for CFSP, and accepted by the Council on 12 December 2003 can be downloaded here: http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/Africa.pdf

[14] See for Maihold, Günter: Die Sichereitspolitische Wendung der Entwicklugspolitik: Eine kritik des neuen Profils. In: International Politics and Society. Bonn, 2005/4. p. 30-48.