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MED

MEDITERRANEAN DIALOGUES

ISPI

ITALIAN INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL STUDIES

**SHAPING
THE MED AGENDA:
INSIGHTS & PERSPECTIVES**

ISPI

ITALIAN INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

GIANCARLO ARAGONA

Only a full and proper understanding of the root causes for the crisis affecting the southern Mediterranean and the Middle East – with dramatic consequences for the rise of IS as a terrorist threat as well as for immigration flows – will allow officials to identify appropriate policy options to tackle such a crisis.

It is generally accepted that the most impressive feature is the gradual disintegration and imperilment of the regional architecture established after the First World War. One that, up until just a few years ago, represented a pillar in international order. This process can be attributed to the explosion of historical religious fractures as well as long-lasting power clashes: the profound rift between Shiites and Sunnis, as well as the rivalries inside the Sunni world itself.

It should also be recognized that external interventions – with Iraq and Libya coming to mind – have proven to be an additional destabilizing factor, and this is contrary to expectations. The latter element cannot be neglected in the search for appropriate remedies.

The emergence of Daesh, which purports to anticipate the resurgence of the Islamic Caliphate, appears to be, therefore, the by-product of several causes, including the socio-economic problems out of which migratory pressures emerged from various Arab countries,

marked by long-lasting dictatorships and violent regimes.

The unraveling of established states and the ensuing power vacuum have exacerbated competition, on concentric levels. The outermost circle encompasses the rivalry in the region between the United States and Russia. Despite President Obama's non-interventionist philosophy and his "leading from behind" stance, US interests in the Middle East remain crucial, not least because of Israel, even though some argue that the discovery of shale gas in the North American continent will somehow realign Washington strategic priorities. Russia, as usual, seems intent on containing the expansion of American (Western) influence and, wherever possible, expanding its own. Syria is a case in point. The inner circle includes the rivalries between Shiite and Sunni countries ("championed" by Iran and Saudi Arabia) and within the Sunni galaxy itself (Turkey and Qatar on one side, with Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia on the other).

This is the breeding ground of two extremely serious phenomena: the threat of terrorism and the humanitarian problem of refugees. They are totally different issues, although they often tend to be wrongly mixed together. In addition, Daesh, unlike al-Qaeda, is not only a terrorist organization, but it has conquered, and embedded itself in, a territory straddling two

countries, Syria and Iraq. Not to mention Libya, another highly fragmented country where Daesh has already taken hold of various areas and is seemingly expanding.

Given these premises, it follows that a comprehensive policy has to stem from the convergence between the external actors (mainly the USA, Russia and, hopefully, the European Union) and the major regional powers (Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Qatar). Only thus will they not reciprocally hamper efforts towards overall regional stabilization and institutional, political and economic reconstruction of the failed states – Syria and Libya – or the consolidation of fragile Iraq.

To achieve this ultimate goal a number of players must be involved, including relevant domestic actors, as much as possible in a bottom up approach. An incisive UN role would add inclusiveness and legitimacy. External support in terms of security, economic and institutional support will be inevitably required.

A long-term view and the need to design a comprehensive strategy mustn't blind anybody to the fact that the immediate imperative is to fight Daesh and eliminate its territorial conquests. The territorial dimension sustains the claim, however outlandish, that the Caliphate is being reconstituted and represents a source of inspiration for Islamists everywhere. In this respect, the Islamic Countries, with no distinction between Shiites and Sunnis, should come out forcefully and unambiguously in their condemnation of Daesh.

Furthermore, it is crucial that Sunni Arab Countries join military actions against Daesh. Any intervention, in particular if (or rather when) "boots on the ground" will be necessary for the final push, cannot lend itself to the propagandistic accusation of the terrorists that it is a Christian crusade against Islam.

Over the last weeks, a debate has arisen about the use of the word "war" applied to military

actions in Syria and Iraq against Daesh or, in a more general sense, to combating these extreme forms of terrorism anywhere. Some believe that by refusing to label Daesh a "state" and by using the term "war", the international Community would send a signal of weakness, underestimating the military effort required. Yet, these arguments are not convincing. Nobody seems oblivious to the fact that countering such a threat requires major effort and large resources, including military. However, when speaking of war in such circumstances, we should qualify the term.

On a separate issue, peace and stability in the Middle East will not be consolidated until a settlement is reached in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While it may currently seem relegated to the background, it still constitutes a major source of violence and instability, exposed to the larger regional turmoil.

Islamic terrorists in the EU countries (the Paris assassins were mainly European citizens) draw inspiration from events in the Middle East, where they get training and vital support. However, Islamic radicalization in Europe, to some extent, is also linked to complex social, cultural and economic problems in western countries. These often seem to lead to identity problems especially for second, even third-generation-young people. In this context, Olivier Roy's theory that Islamic fanaticism is taking hold on a well-established ground of western radicalism, appears intriguing. He calls it the "Islamization of radicalism", rather than the "radicalization of Islam".

Given the great challenge at hand, ISPI, with the generous encouragement of the Italian Foreign Minister and the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, has planned the MED Dialogues as an opportunity for governmental leaders, business community and experts to debate how to develop a positive and comprehensive agenda in a less constraining atmosphere. We hope it will contribute to progressive steps.

WHICH APPROACH FOR SOLVING REGIONAL CRISIS

JAMAL ABDULLAH

After the Paris attacks, the world seems to be rushing to limit the activities of extremist organisations that have been able to kill hundreds of civilians. World powers have now realised that they have to act more effectively and take the most efficient measures to stop the expansion of extremists and prevent their incursion into capitals of the EU and even the US.

The question to ask now is how will the international community deal with this phenomenon: will world powers repeat a 'War on Terror' scenario or have they learned that military action alone, and wars fought in Afghanistan and Iraq, only led to more extremism and fanaticism?

Twelve years after the start of the War on Terror, international alliances have not succeeded in eradicating terrorism. On the contrary, violent jihadist groups have expanded to wider geographic areas, with branches in the Arabian Peninsula, North Africa, Asia and other areas forming its intercontinental foundation.

The growth of extremist groups with multiple ideological backgrounds is another negative consequence of the War on Terror. With such a track record, will the international powers succeed in eliminating terrorism, or at least

weaken Daesh, after the attacks on the heart of the French capital?

There may be a better way. Several leaders of the Arab Gulf states have presented a vision for dealing with the Middle East crises, especially the phenomenon of extremist organisations, which may develop into terrorist organisations.

The late King of Saudi Arabia, Abdullah bin Abdulaziz, and the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad, have repeatedly stressed the need to address the crises and problems afflicting the region by searching for their original causes, and then working on fundamental solutions and seeking to eradicate the roots.

In August 2014, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saudin called on the international community to unite and collaborate in combating terrorism and eradicating its roots. He went further by warning Europe and the US that terrorism would soon reach their countries. King Abdullah Al Saud based his prediction on his experiences during the 1990s and 2000s. In particular, disastrous results appeared evident after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, which led to the fragmentation of state institutions and embrace of sectarianism by many parties.

The Qatari vision sees the solution in 'the enforcement of principles of justice, security and

peace for all peoples of the region'. This solution is derived from the United Nations Charter. It needs to be implemented with the cooperation of all the components of the international community, where every country abides by its responsibilities.

The perspective provided by Qatar considers that military solutions alone are not enough to defeat terrorism, because it has become a thought and a doctrine, turned into an ideology, and therefore, it is necessary to fight it with thought as well.

Coalition military operations may be able to kill leaders of extremist and terrorist organisations, but they cannot eliminate organisations or extremist ideology. Global decision-makers should pause for a moment to think rationally and re-draw their strategic plans. Action is needed to defuse the despair and frustration in the hearts of global young people in general and Arab youth in particular. The international community, with all its institutions, must support Arab young people to achieve their dreams of freedom and the preservation of dignity, justice and security in their communities.

Another War on Terror might enhance the survival of dictatorships and repressive regimes that have contributed to the formation of extremist groups, some of which turned into terrorist organisations. This in turn leads into a fundamental issue, which Qatar has warned about, that the following two options should be rejected by the international community: 'The Arab peoples have only two choices: either to accept repressive authoritarian regimes or to accept the authority of terrorist extremist organisations'. The international community must

shoulder its responsibilities, admit its mistakes and work to avoid them. Looking at Syria, the Qatari vision considers the death and displacement of much of a nation by a dictatorial regime over five years as a crime and a failure for the international system.

On the other hand, the nuclear deal signed by the P5+1 with Iran in July 2015, after excluding the GCC from participating in the negotiating rounds, has given Tehran official international recognition of the right to develop its nuclear programme. This made Iran more powerful within the framework of parallel powers in the region. Accordingly, the Gulf States, in turn, will seek to restore the regional balance.

Dialogue is one of the ways to solve regional crises and eradicate extremism. Therefore, decision makers should understand that the solutions to the regional crises are in their hands. All parties should be aware that such dialogue, especially between Iran and the GCC states, would be based on foundations of equality and without arrogance, specific preconditions or selective requirements being imposed on the dialogue table.

If we were to be convinced that the causes of extremism that lead to terrorist acts are despair and frustration, it can be concluded that extremism and terrorism are not only born in the Middle East. They are also likely to form in any region in the world that suffers from periods of marginalisation and exclusion, including some communities in Europe and the USA. Therefore, it is important to correctly integrate people of immigrant backgrounds living in poor suburbs in Western countries, in order to avoid any formation of extremist groups.

THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION. NEW IDEAS FOR A CLOSER COOPERATION

YAVUZ BAYDAR

These are, as the Chinese say, interesting times. The dominating element being utterly negative and worrisome, of course. After the collapse of the so-called Arab Spring, the spring turned to winter, and with Syria in particular as the epicenter of unfolding nightmare, the entire Mediterranean Basin is now facing the most elementary issues of human suffering, death, war, radicalisation, closed-border policies, spreading oppression, power plays and, in general growing uncertainty for the people sharing the cultures and history of Mare Nostrum.

We journalists feel the depths of the ordeal. As order turns into chaos, the pressures on us, on the role of our profession, gradually increase. Those of us with conscience, loyalty to truth; with a sense of professional responsibility as the prime witnesses of the disorder rolling further, feel the urgency to raise the stakes and get closer together.

I have been travelling a lot, to take the pulse in countries across the Mediterranean, in seminars and workshops, networking intensely; and everywhere I have been – Israel, Slovenia, Tunisia, Cyprus, Italy, France, Egypt, Jordan etc. - all I see is an absolute need for tighter cooperation within our profession about the

issues that we cover, as well as about how we work and how we should work.

We must tighten our ties across the sea. We need benevolent sorts of leadership in governments and administrations; those still feel that the media is the key for a better future. Some see the media as a stumbling block, a nuisance for what they want to have covered up and unreported. But there are other leaderships that can be persistent enough to pave way for building common platforms, and vivid exchanges of ideas and data.

We in the Platform for Independent Journalism (P24) long ago chose to promote and train journalists who put the human story in the center of the reporting. We have been supporting, for instance, independent colleagues who go deeper into the plight of refugees, as they follow their flight for a better future, and the evil actors - such as human smugglers - who feed nightmares. In order to again highlight the human dimension, we launched a large project under the title, 'Portraits of Peace', telling, story after story, about all those who fell victim to the terror attack in Ankara. This is also what *Le Monde*, for example, is doing with those who were slain in the Paris attacks.

Much more can be done, also in coordination. My personal sense is that the 'age of horror' we live in has brought many of us, in journalism, closer on a common ground.

That ground is now ripe for being institutionalized, with independence, of course, kept intact. Benevolent political actors, like the ones in Italy, in particular, can take the lead to push for well-functioning networks of journalism organisations and platforms, foundations and NGO's, as well as individuals.

Networking is not enough. There must be continuity and a resolve to deal, as media, with all the issues that are, obviously, here to stay, threatening stability, prosperity and happiness. An idea would be to establish a 'MedWatch', which would bring together a finely selected group of journalists, both in conventional and digital media, that would be the focal point for drawing up a strategy on issues both to be covered and to be alerted about; task force formation, the mapping of media outlets committed to opening themselves to informing the public; as well as on issues that torment the

conscience of independent free journalism across the sea.

There are many small and mid-scale organisations, scattered through the Mediterranean countries which deal with those issues with limited resources. For a stronger and lasting impact, there needs to be coordination.

Should the Barcelona Process be revived? How could public broadcasters be of help? What should the role of the social media be? Where are the lines of converging and diverging interests of power holders and the journalists to be drawn, and how is it possible to make the best outcome, in public good in general, to help shape a Mediterranean able to withstand the threats of terrorism, suffering, brutality, poverty? How could we, as journalists, reintroduce humanism, which is in retreat in this age of horror and hatred?

The questions are many, and they can't wait any longer to be answered. It is high time that we pull our hearts, minds, skills, memories and hopes together, and start working for real, without hesitation, fear, or prejudice.

RETHINKING THE MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGIC AGENDA IN AN EVOLVING ENVIRONMENT

KARIM EL AYNAOUI

The EU is the first economic partner for the southern countries in the Mediterranean, with a structural commercial surplus in favor of the EU. During the period 2004-2014 when almost all the bilateral trade agreements were in force, the commercial deficit of southern Mediterranean countries with the EU, which is structural, widened heavily to almost 45 billion euros instead of 30 billion. By country, the trends are almost the same except for energy producers in the region, namely Algeria and Libya, which mainly run commercial surpluses. Actually, the importance of the southern shore as a major supplier of energy might increase substantially, as Europe is implementing a new energy strategy that intends, along other aims, to diversify its suppliers and reduce its dependence on Russian resources.

Besides, the region still does not represent a substantial foreign market for European products or major suppliers, as the shares in the EU's total exports and total imports were respectively around 8.6% and 10.5% in 2014. By contrast, the southern economies rely much more on the European market in terms of exports and imports, almost half of their trade is with Europe, while south-south trade flows are

still limited. Intra-regional trade in the Mediterranean is less than 6% of total trade, a level that remains one of the lowest in the world.

Disparities are still quite noticeable between the EU and its southern neighbors despite a slightly positive trend of convergence in recent years. The major gap identified is in terms of per capita GNI. In fact, southern countries that have signed trade agreements with the EU did not show significant improvement in their economic welfare. In 1990, per capita GNI was 3.4 times higher in the EU than in the southern Mediterranean area and decreased to 2.8 in 2014. Given their economic development stages, these countries should have witnessed higher growth rates in their economic activity. Turkey might be one of the rare countries in this region to have achieved a significant improvement in its per capita GNI, which moved from only 30% of the EU's level in 1990 to more than 50% in 2014.

Despite the tremendous impediments in the Mediterranean basin, there are many opportunities to take in order to achieve the ultimate objective of a space of shared prosperity.

According to the concept of conditional convergence, southern countries have huge potential for growth and catching-up if they

manage to accelerate their structural transformation. This goal requires a transition towards more diversified production sector, with a high proportion of sophisticated and high added-value products. It also implies that southern Mediterranean countries have to improve access to and the quality of education, to stimulate investment and entrepreneurship, to build competitive economies with good positioning in the regional and global value chains.

Southern Mediterranean countries are also characterized by the important demographic proportion of young people (15-24 years) that represents more than 30% of the total population. This feature represents a real opportunity to seize by investing in this abundant human capital through education and vocational training that would increase employability and reduce social exclusion. Such a policy would address the problem of the lack of opportunities in the south and consequently would be an effective tool to mitigate the side effects in terms of violence, terrorism, illegal migration, etc.

Improving south-south integration in the Mediterranean basin should be a priority in the agenda with a higher political commitment. On the one hand, southern partners have the responsibility of creating spaces of complementarity between their trade structures and their production sectors to maximize south-south trade and to benefit from a larger market. On the other hand, European countries should continue to open their own markets to exports from the south. The European Union should also deal with trade integration with southern countries according to a regional view rather than negotiating multiple bilateral agreements with partner countries individually. Finally, European countries should provide more assistance (financial and technical) to enhance south-south integration in terms of trade, infrastructure and logistics investment, financial platforms, etc. because North Africa could be

considered a gateway to a larger and more promising market for Europeans, which is sub-Saharan Africa, the last frontier of growth. Accelerating the process of Integration is essential for more efficient and sustained growth, in particular for Mediterranean countries and in general for economies in the MENA region that remain among the least integrated. In such a context, trade integration can provide an effective supporting role to enhance competitiveness and economic development, but only if it is a part of a wider process of domestic reforms.

In the long-term, the southern Mediterranean has to be prepared for a big challenge, namely, food security. In fact, the region will have to face water scarcity in the future, coupled with other factors such as urbanization and desertification. To mitigate this risk of food insecurity, southern countries should improve productivity in their agricultural sectors and adopt tools that enable them to increase the efficiency of water utilization in the region. North African countries should also contribute to enhancing productivity in sub-Saharan agriculture that could represent a real opportunity for them to diversify and secure food imports.

Energy security is another common point of interest for both the north and the south in the Mediterranean basin. Europe is expected to remain dependent on foreign energy (6% of global energy production and 13% of energy consumption) and should certainly continue to make efforts in terms of diversifying suppliers (Russian crisis), improving the energy-mix, developing renewable and alternative sources, enhancing energy efficiency, etc. On the southern side of the Mediterranean, there are huge potentials that are still underdeveloped, in particular in the fields of solar and wind power where Morocco could be considered a good example in the region. However, it should be emphasized that recent political instability and violence have raised the problem of the sustainability of energy security in the region for

Europe and southern partners. These developments should push European countries to play an active role in maintaining political stability and supporting reforms in order to improve governance, inclusive growth and economic prosperity in the south.

The last point concerns the role of civil society. The focus could be made on two actors; the emigrated and think tanks.

Enhancing relationships between countries of origin in the south and the emigrated living in Europe could be an effective way to strengthen north-south integration and mutual tolerance. Those links could be built through remittances, investment projects but also through civil associations, joint cultural activities, family ties (marriage). In addition, southern Mediterranean countries are “beginning to develop diaspora policies to use migrants as agents of influence in

their host countries through the attention they garner in the host country: this is the case of Turkey and Morocco”. Regarding think tanks, they have the potential and the freedom to foster debates and discussions about subjects and issues of common interest between the north and the south of the Mediterranean basin. Through their diversified activities – analytical work, roundtables, conferences, training – think tanks are able to increase the awareness of policy-makers and citizens on both sides of the region about the most important challenges shared by Euro-Mediterranean countries. Think tanks could also play a critical role in these societies by preparing a new generation of leaders and policy-makers with efficient skills in political and economic management and at the same time a good analytical background that gives them better understanding of the most relevant economic, geopolitical and social issues.

IMPROVING EDUCATION OUTCOMES: A PRIORITY FOR SHARED PROSPERITY

MOURAD EZZINE

The southern part of the Mediterranean is the least integrated region in the world if we consider trade, foreign direct investments, mobility and financial flows. But today new challenges are emerging.

Since the beginning of this decade the region has become the most instable in the world due to open conflicts in numerous countries. Non-conflict countries face terrorist attacks which threaten their security, stability and the democratisation process that some of them have started. As a result of conflict and violence 15 million people have been displaced, creating a major refugee crisis around the region. Europe is affected by both the violence and the refugee crisis.

Young people in the Middle-East and North Africa are bearing the brunt of the region's crises: massive unemployment, alienation, dangerous crossings to reach Europe, and the lure of extremism that could go as far as outright violence. After the Arab Spring, political elites underestimated the need to act quickly and abandoned large numbers of their young men and women to their own devices.

Education quality is a key building block for shared growth and stability

The quality of education remains the number one challenge to building inclusive Arab societies

that are peaceful, cohesive and stable. Despite considerable resources invested, Arab youth continues to score very low on international literacy and numeracy tests¹.

The pattern is the same in all Arab countries: mass education failed to equip young people with adequate ability to take action, create, produce, and make decisions, and left too many of them with few opportunities for economic inclusion. Besides this lack of basic cognitive skills education systems failed to develop the universal ideals of pluralism, tolerance, citizen engagement, free thinking and soft skills, which are necessary for social inclusion. Finally, large disparities in learning outcomes between rich and poor, with richer children having access to better education, have contributed to inequality and to a sense of despair among those young people who are left behind.

Arab countries are aware of the limits of their education systems and are trying to modernize and strengthen them. The crucial challenge is to

¹ Arab student performance in international tests is significantly below the world average. At age 16 the average gap with average OECD student performance is equivalent to 2 full grades. Even more worrisome today is that millions of students are abandoning school before completing compulsory education, or are completing the compulsory education cycle without achieving basic literacy and numeracy.

achieve governance and organizational reforms that promote a transition from “education for all” to “learning and skills training for all”. Teaching institutions need to become open to their environment, adaptable, innovative, and accountable to their users. As part of these medium- and long-term developments, the roles of governments need also to evolve.

These much needed reforms and changes are medium- and long-term and must be driven by each country’s own vision and strategy for institutional and regulatory changes. However, there is still a great potential for Mediterranean cooperation, especially through the EU new neighbourhood policy framework.

How effectively could the EU help?

Overall, cooperation needs to be increasingly based on exchange among educational institutions in the framework of solutions sharing networks, rather than on top-down and centrally-driven and managed programs. These decentralized networks would aim at promoting a more intensive sharing of solutions and best practices, fostering learning from each other and harmonization. It is important to recognize that more funding for existing education models will not be sufficient, and in some cases could even delay reforms. North-south cooperation increasingly needs to focus on harmonization and the transfer of knowledge and solutions, rather than on material inputs.

A few priorities have been highlighted by experts who have been meeting at the initiative of the Center for Mediterranean Integration. First, educational quality standards and skills certification are obvious priorities for cooperation. Countries seeking to enhance their trade with Europe must also aim to align technical and vocational diplomas and certificates with those of their leading trading partner. Consequently, Europe could launch a coordinated initiative to support these countries’ efforts to enhance quality assurance and develop

certification mechanisms that are clearly identifiable. This would require a mix of soft inputs (curricula, pedagogical approaches, quality assurance methods) that could best be developed through collaboration within networks built around high performing training and academic institutions. These mixes of inputs are also best defined by practitioners, through a bottom-up approach.

Second, regional targets must be set in the south: following the example of the European Union’s Lisbon Strategy (which evolved into the EU 2020 initiative), Arab countries should set Regional Education Targets for chosen sub-sectors of interest (for example early childhood development, basic education, technical and vocational education). These would be seen as the desirable goals that would shape and steer the education policy agenda.

Third, MENA countries still have a long way to go in order to set up effective tools to assess skills acquisition. While MENA countries rarely assess their student learning achievement and, when they do, never publish results, OECD countries have developed sophisticated assessment systems and also international benchmarks, such as PISA (Program for International Student Assessment.) Collaboration to help Arab countries develop, implement and use modern assessment methods at regional, national and institution levels would have a major impact on improving education quality.

Finally, jump-starting university research will be crucial. The EU could establish research agreements with the southern countries to enable their research laboratories to take part in EU research programs. As a supporting measure, financing a critical mass of post-doctoral students in new sectors by allocating a critical mass of scholarships would have a rapid and powerful impact on research in southern laboratories and promote the development of south-north research partnerships.

THE MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANT CRISIS: RESPONSES BEYOND THE EMERGENCY

PHILIPPE FARGUES

The flows of refugees and migrants that are converging in Europe and then crossing the continent are unprecedented in many regards. While migrants and refugees have been smuggled by sea into Europe since the 1980s, the scale of the phenomenon has dramatically changed in the last year and a half, together with a notable shift from the central to the eastern Mediterranean route. Flows are not only mixed in terms of status but increasingly also in terms of national origins. A number of countries on the route are transit countries not only for economic migrants, but also for refugees who do not seek protection there, rather a passage to the next country.

These facts raise questions. Is it a migrant or a refugee crisis? An indirect estimate shows a spectacular shift between 2011 and 2015 from mostly economic migration to mostly refugee movement. Are refugees entitled to economic needs? The fact that people who flee war and persecution do not apply for asylum in the first safe country they reach could mean that seeking employment and welfare is their main motivation. It could also reflect the hurdles on their way to Europe, leaving them no choice but to earn a livelihood. Was the sudden rise in migrant and refugee flows towards Europe triggered by pull factors in Europe, such as search and rescue on the high seas or the open-door

policy of certain states? Was it instead triggered by push factors in the countries of origin and those of first asylum in the Middle East?

States' and societies' responses to the migrant and refugee crisis have developed in different directions along the migratory routes. Syria's neighbours have undoubtedly been the most generous states in opening their borders and offering protection to more than four million refugees since 2011. But they do not grant refugees proper status and with the passing of time the situation for both refugees and their hosts has deteriorated. Further away from Syria, transit countries on the route to Western Europe have either shut their borders or kept the door open, but facilitated the fastest possible exit of migrants and refugees. Finally, the countries of intended destination in Western and Northern Europe have brought disorderly and contradictory responses, to eventually restrict to an extreme degree the admission of new refugees if not by closing the door.

What could come next? Refugee movements in the Middle East will continue, since wars and conflicts are not abating in a region which is already host to half of the world's refugees. Global economic migration will rise in parallel with economic and demographic differentials between nations, a movement from which

Europe may take advantage. Keeping borders closed to refugees and migrants, which seems to be Europe's preferred response today, is not tenable beyond the very short-term. Not only does it deprive Europe of a resource that its economies need or will soon need, but it creates

unbearable tensions in Europe's neighbours, with high risks of destabilisation on its doorstep. While improving border checks and controlling who enters Europe are necessities for its security, closing the border to those who seek protection will soon become a factor of insecurity.

ARAB MEDIA: A MIRROR OF A CHANGING SOCIETY

ANDREW HAMMOND

The Arab media has been a powerful tool in the hands of Arab states since the decolonisation period. The Nasser regime used radio, television and print media to mobilise support for Egypt's Non-Aligned and Pan-Arab foreign policy, applying methods of mass media propaganda developed in Europe and establishing a model for the region. The power of the media to function as a subversive force was seen in the 1970s when cassette tapes of preachers denouncing governments for tyranny and corruption spread in Egypt and Iran.

In the 1990s Egypt began to lose its hegemonic position in the Arab media with the rise of Arabic satellite news and entertainment media established by Gulf Arab states. Saudi and Kuwaiti businessmen with close ties to the Saudi royal family set up the news channel MBC and Qatar followed in 1995 with Al Jazeera. MBC expanded to bring American and British comedy and drama and then added the news channel Al Arabiya in 2003, which was intended to challenge Al Jazeera's dominance.

An explosion of news, religion and entertainment channels came into existence, serving as mouthpieces for businessmen, religious sects, political movements and governments in what political scientist Marc Lynch called the "new Arab public sphere". Some of its main features included

a strengthening of Pan-Arab identity and awareness (perhaps even producing it among some communities where it did not effectively exist) and providing a forum for two distinct political positions that characterised Arab politics in the period up to the Arab Spring uprisings in 2010-11: an approach on Al Jazeera sympathetic to Islamist groups across the region and a more conservative pro-Western approach in Saudi-controlled media.

The Arab uprisings came at the time of a third stage in the development of modern Arab media: that of social media. Twitter, YouTube and Facebook, as well as the already existing satellite TV stations, became fields for bitterly contested conflicts between youth-driven protest movements and governments who were caught absolutely unawares due to a variety of factors: close cooperation with Western governments, elaborate security apparatus and the arrogance that comes with being in power unchallenged for so long. These tools of communication were used to mobilise protesters in Bahrain, Egypt, Syria, Yemen, and previously in Iran in 2009, but governments fought back: Bahrain engaged in a sophisticated campaign of propaganda, witch-hunting and intimidation using both traditional and the new media.

The media in the post-Arab Spring world has constantly been targeted by the forces of the states in their counter-revolutionary pushbacks.

Gulf governments have focused on social media in particular. In 2011 a Saudi royal decree specified a ban on publishing anything deemed as contradicting Sharia law, disrupting state security or serving foreign interests. Kuwait passed a law in 2014 establishing a Commission for Mass Communications and Information Technology that would monitor social media. Saudi Arabia's courts have gone so far as to issue death sentences for opinions expressed on social media (for example, apostasy charges against Palestinian poet Ashraf Fayyad). The Saudi Mufti has repeatedly denounced social media as a source of social immorality, and issued a fatwa in 2011 deeming expression of opposition via street protest or petitioning the country's rulers as impermissible.

Since the military coup which removed the elected post-uprising government, the Egyptian government has used the traditionally preferred tools of television and print media for propaganda and control. Particular use is made of TV presenters who talk straight to camera on late-night shows attacking particular individuals or groups in society, or foreign governments, for positions deemed treacherous. These presenters are widely assumed to be linked to the intelligence services; while comedian-critic Bassem Youssef, who presented a hugely popular post-uprising show along the lines of *The Daily Show* in the United States, was taken off air, first from the private Egyptian channel his show appeared on and then, following the coup, from MBC, the Saudi-dominated Pan-Arab channel he had briefly moved to.

Another important feature of the Arab media is how it has become an arena for the Sunni-Shia sectarian schism. Though this sectarianism emerges from the return to religious politics following the perceived failure of the secular

Arab nationalist paradigm in the mid-20th century, it was not until the invasion of Iraq in 2003 that it took on the virulent character it has today. Faced with the rise of Shia Islamists as the dominant political force in Iraq – and whose ascendance was made possible through American intervention – insurgent forces under the al-Qaeda banner killed Shi'ite civilians, politicians and religious figures in mass violence that was accompanied by a rabid sectarian discourse. Shiite militias hit back, creating a civil war-like situation in Iraq between 2005 and 2007.

The strength of Hizbullah in Lebanon (surviving war with Israel in 2006) and the Bahraini uprising in 2011 was to Saudi Arabia further proof that Iran planned to overturn the regional order. The media in all its forms is a vehicle for fighting back, drawing on the anti-Shiism at the heart of the Wahhabi Salafi ideology sponsored by the Saudi state. Non-Salafi Islamists joined in: on Al Jazeera, Egyptian preacher Yousef al-Qaradawi described the Bahraini uprising as a Shiite revolt and depicted the war against the Assad regime in Syria as a Sunni jihad against infidel Alawis. Iraq and Kuwait-based Shia have been prominent in using TV channels, some of them based in the UK and the USA, to incite against Sunni Islam.

In the age of the Arab Spring, the media has been revamped and brought back into action as one element of a multi-faceted campaign involving the law, religion, surveillance and forces of coercion to face a range of internal and external enemies seen as challenging the very survival of governing elites. New media were momentarily a weapon against these entrenched systems of rule; for now, the rulers have mastered the new array of technologies and are back in command.

BEYOND THE BOMBING, RETHINKING OUR STRATEGY FOR FIGHTING IS

DAVID HEARST

The debate in UK on bombing IS has largely managed to avoid answering the real questions: Will bombing defeat IS? If, as everyone admits, IS can only be dislodged from Raqqa with ground troops, where are they?

David Cameron claimed there were 70,000 fighters “who do not belong to extremist groups” on the ground ready to retake Raqqa. So whose were they? Questioned by the Defence Committee, Lt Gen Gordon Messenger, the deputy chief of the defence staff did not seem to know.

The maths don’t add up. If you exclude 50,000 troops of the PKK-aligned Kurdish YPG, with whom Turkey is at war, it has to include Salafist-Jihadist elements. It can not exclude the largest rebel force fighting Bashar al-Assad which is the Ahrar al-Sham, who are also part of the Islamic Front coalition. These are the very forces that Russian President Vladimir Putin is trying to bomb.

And they are certainly the forces whom the French Prime Minister Manuel Valls referred to in the wake of the Paris attack. He said on France Inter: “We must fight against Islamism which is a pathology of Islam”. Ahrar al-Sham includes those Islamists. Furthermore they

belong to the same coalition which includes the al-Qaeda affiliated al-Nusra.

Cameron’s claim of 70,000 “moderate” ground troops reminded everyone in Britain of another infamous claim, produced, incidentally, from the same source: the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC). This was the claim made 13 years earlier that Saddam Hussein could deploy a weapon of mass destruction within 45 minutes of an order to do so. In answer to a key question from Sir Richard Ottaway, Tony Blair admitted he did not know that claim contained in the dossier of September 2002 only applied to a battlefield weapon.

Much has happened in the Middle East since then. Four brittle states – Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya – have since shattered into small pieces, all of them a direct result of foreign intervention. Borders have vanished. Rival regional powers in Turkey, Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia are pursuing conflicting aims on the battlefield. Old regional alliances such as that between Turkey and Russia are being torn up. Bombing Syria in 2015 is arguably more serious than invading Iraq in 2003. More is at stake this time round.

Its time to dispel a few myths. Neither Britain, France, Russia nor the US can bomb IS into extinction. Like al-Qaeda which occupied

areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan in 2003, IS may occupy an area the size of Britain, but it is not a territorial concept. Raqqa is not North Waziristan. There are no training camps for foreign fighters there. Ask US pilots who, after conducting 7,600 attacks on IS in Iraq and Syria, are running out of targets to hit. The presence of drones makes movement for IS units more difficult, but did not stop them from seizing Ramadi in Iraq and Palmyra in Syria. IS lives among the civilian population it preys upon. If Putin drops bombs containing white phosphorus on IS, that lethal rain falls on everyone.

If RAF bombs fall on IS, they fall, too, on the terrified, starved civilians of Raqqa itself. If Raqqa and Mosul fell tomorrow, IS would not need to move to Sirte in Libya, or Sinai, or Egypt proper, or Tunisia or Jordan. They are already there. As the New York Times has reported, Iraqi officers of IS have recently arrived in Sirte, which is rapidly becoming their “back up” capital. That is just 1242 kilometres from where this conference is taking place, and 643 km south of Sicily.

On the contrary, bombing helps IS spread. In physical terms IS is not a solid metal, but a liquid one. Its mercurial poison can only spread if its containment is shattered. Bombing by foreign powers provides their recruitment, marketing, and franchise seeking operation, all in one. It tells the leaderless majority Sunni population,

across the Levant, Arabia and North Africa that they have in essence a binary choice: oppression under dictatorship, or protection under IS. Month by month, IS is growing into the role of Defender of the Faith.

The response of France to the Paris attacks is taking it further away from understanding how to defeat IS. Francois Hollande in 2015 is making the same mistakes George W. Bush did after the September 11 attacks – which is curious because France under its foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin did not make the same mistake. Hollande is using Bush’s language. He wants to introduce a Patriot Act *à la française*. Hollande has called on European Union member states to show solidarity with France by invoking Article 42(7) of the EU Treaty, something that neither the IRA campaign in Britain nor the Eta campaign in Spain succeeded in doing.

France’s new found neo-conservatism, its alliances with dictators whose regimes are stoking this conflict – al-Sisi in Egypt, Bin Zayed in the United Arab Emirates, Putin in Russia – can only help the spread of IS further, as all the players in Syria have different agendas.

Europe has now to admit it has a problem. Not only in its neighbourhood. It has a problem at home too. We have all entered an era where the Middle East’s problems are Europe’s too. It’s time European politicians, its elites, and think tanks woke up to this fact.

THREAT POSED BY THE ISLAMIC STATE: SHARED DIAGNOSIS AND SHARED PRIORITIES

JOOST HILTERMANN

Shared security, to be effective, must be based on a shared diagnosis of the threat a joint security posture is called on to address, as well as on an aligned set of policy priorities. For example, while there can be common agreement about the nature of the threat – e.g., the Islamic State (IS): its goals, methods and ideology – this does not automatically translate into a common understanding of the conditions from which this threat arose, nor therefore into agreement on how it could be most effectively confronted.

Extremism grows and thrives in two sets of circumstances:

- Repressive regimes, where the political space needed to press demands that could elicit a measure of redress (social justice) is so severely restricted that it induces a resort to violence; the even more violent state response to this contributes to ever-growing frustration and radicalisation. Thus the outcome of the post-2011 Arab Springs in Bahrain and, especially, Egypt.
- A security vacuum created by war and state collapse, which sharpens polarisation and radicalisation. Population groups, prizing security above all else, will embrace any group capable of providing it (and a way of resolving local disputes), however extreme in its ideology and methods. This has been the

case in Syria and Yemen (war), in Iraq and Libya (state collapse), and potentially also in Lebanon and Palestine (*idem*).

While these environments explain IS's rapid rise, its roots are found in Sunni exclusion, be it in Iraq (post-2003 US policy) or Syria (the regime's survival through extreme violence), and the fear of an ascendant Shia Iran visible directly or through its proxies in these battlegrounds. This sense of exclusion is actively undermining mainstream Sunni alternatives, including political elites and non-jihadi Islamist movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood.

Western states have inadvertently contributed to IS's rise through acts of omission and/or commission:

- Failure to devote more resources to mediating peaceful ends to conflicts in the region;
- Pursuit of overly securitised responses that fail to address deep grievances and indeed fuel them (but are easier to sell at home). This includes:
 - o Support of proxies pursuing their own agendas, which compound the grievance on which IS feeds (e.g. Kurdish and Shia militias), without meaningfully aiding the anti-IS effort;

- Conflating Islamist groups under the terrorism rubric, regardless of their diversity. This leads to indiscriminate responses that may drive such groups into each other's arms;
- Unquestioned support of states, especially in the Gulf, that are (1) parties to these conflicts, (2) have ideologies that further inflame them, and/or (3) are more focused on containing rivals than fighting jihadi groups (e.g. Turkey, and its diverging policies toward the PKK and IS);
- Selling arms or providing other support to conflict actors over and above what they absolutely need for their legitimate self-defence.

What's to be done?

Groups like IS are now so powerful that defeating them militarily is probably not feasible. Yet accommodating them within a political settlement also appears unlikely, given its goals and ideology. At the same time, the track record of international military intervention is poor: it most often backfires or generates a different set of challenges that may be even harder to tackle.

In formulating an effective response, keep in mind that jihadi groups didn't start the conflicts in the region but are an outcome of them, or of poorly governed or collapsing states. This means that any effort aimed at countering extremism must start with a broader effort at preventing and managing violent conflict. This means:

- Not doing (further) harm in the form of any of the aggravating steps listed above.
- Pursuing a political strategy with security/military aspects, not a strictly security-based approach, in countering IS and kindred groups. The strategy should be based on an accurate diagnosis of the group in question, its strength, goals, relationship to communities in the area in which it operates, their grievances, the motives of the government and its neighbours, etc.

- Redoubling efforts to mediate peaceful ends to conflicts in the region, especially in Syria, Yemen and Libya where IS has capitalised on the security vacuum to advance, and simultaneously laying the groundwork for a process involving key regional actors that could, in time, culminate in a security architecture that would reduce tensions. Individual mediation efforts should focus on inclusive peace processes that marginalise only the most extreme groups such as IS, enabling their military defeat. Arrangements for a stable post-conflict order will need to prioritise local security arrangements and dispute-resolution mechanisms as indispensable preconditions to reconciliation, and over time provide for a far greater degree of decentralisation than has been the case so far. The key is to change the calculations of the communities in which extremists operate. Iraq is a good case in this respect.
- Engaging in dialogue with those groups that prove willing to do so – a factor that would clearly set them apart from IS – and encourage them to accept political means of conflict resolution.

In seeking to counter the threat posed by IS, Western states would clearly benefit from working with partners in the region. These are mainly states, but could include non-state actors (for example, the YPG in Syria or the Kurdistan regional government in Iraq). This raises the question of shared diagnosis, as well as of shared priorities.

Some actual or potential allies de-emphasise the importance of poor governance (particularly problems in the social-justice sphere) as a major contributing factor to radicalisation. In their preferred response they would therefore rather focus on a combination of military means, an effort at providing a counter-narrative (“IS cannot speak for Islam, which is a religion of peace”), and a solicitation of Western funding for “development”. This should be vigorously resisted.

Just as dangerously, actual or potential allies naturally have their own agendas, and will seek to marshal Western support to advance these, even if they do not prioritise the fight against IS (as indeed they tend not to). Western states may thus find themselves working at cross-purposes with their allies – to the benefit of IS. It is therefore imperative that Western states focus on the narrow common ground that may exist between them and their allies on the IS question, and make any support conditional on fighting IS without feeding the conditions on which IS preys. (Example: Provide aid to Iraqi Kurds only

to the extent that they agree to institute joint security arrangements with local non-Kurdish actors in areas retaken from IS in Iraq's disputed territories). A cautionary note: In their response, Western states should not overstate the importance of either “root causes” or ideology (and therefore of countering it): People tend to join extremist groups for their success much more than for their ideology or vision of society, and there is no direct causal link between radicalisation and unemployment / poverty / lack of education / underdevelopment.

EUROPEAN MUSLIMS: BETWEEN RADICALISATION AND ISLAMOPHOBIA. HOW TO AVOID THIS DILEMMA?

BICHARA KHADER

The last terrorist attacks that took place in France (13 November 2015) are sparking a heated debate on Muslims' integration in Europe and particularly on the radicalisation of some home-grown Muslim youth. This short article aims to answer two questions: 1) how and why do a tiny minority of European-born Muslims become radicalised and go even further, engaging in indiscriminate terrorist attacks in their home countries; 2) why is the very presence of Muslims in Europe triggering an ever-increasing anti-Muslim sentiment?

Muslim youth of Europe, radicalisation and violence

European states recognise that the vast majority of Muslims in Europe does not engage in violence or terrorist activities, but, at the same time, they admit the existence of small cells or “lone wolves” with links to al-Qaeda or the Islamic State. While the “lone wolves” theory is not credible, since behind each terrorist lies a group providing logistics, ammunition and training, one question can be raised: how and why does a native European Muslim become radicalised?

The radicalisation of some home-grown Muslim young people can take place in radical mosques, in prison, during long stays in Muslim countries

or through the internet. Attacks such as those carried out in Madrid (2004), London (2005), Toulouse (2012) and Paris (2015) were perpetrated by second-generation European Muslims of Arab origin. Investigating the reasons behind radicalisation, one school of thought adopts a culturalist view, which links terrorism to the Islamic religion itself based on the evidence that most terrorist groups are Muslims. A second school of thought, considered to be realist, asserts that the failure of European governments to fully integrate Muslim communities leaves some European Muslims marginalized, making them more vulnerable to jihadist ideologies.

Clearly both these arguments are not convincing. The assertion that Islam is the religion of the sword, and, by contrast, that Christianity, Judaism or even Buddhism are religions of peace is grossly misleading and historically erroneous. But neither is the other argument credible: there are millions of marginalized immigrants who do not engage in terrorist attacks, and there are terrorist attacks that are perpetrated by well-educated and economically comfortable individuals.

Four factors might help to fully grasp the gradual process of radicalization. The first is

identity-based radicalisation. Whether left behind or fully integrated, many young Muslims don't feel completely accepted as citizens in Europe, where they are still perceived as "Middle Eastern" and Muslim.

The second factor is socio-economic based radicalisation, related to grievances harboured by second and third-generation Muslims, especially in terms of poor education and training and job discrimination.

The third factor is the search for a mission by those youths who pursue a fantasy of heroism which I called the passage from "zero to hero" or the passage from anonymity to celebrity, even through death. This process is also linked to exposure to social media and to satellite televisions promoting a binary "Islam versus the Other" logic that leads to fanaticism and the rejection of negotiation dialogue or compromise.

The fourth factor is geopolitical-based radicalisation. This relates to the constant exposure that young European Muslims have to the sufferings inflicted by the West and its regional allies on Muslims in the Arab world. It is not fortuitous that al-Qaeda and later IS increased their activities in Iraq after the American invasion in 2003. The Palestinian cause also raises feelings of resentment among Muslims against Israel and its allies, even though Palestine so far has been more of a justification than a source of radicalisation for some young European Muslims.

All of these forms of radicalisation, whether they converge or not, do not totally invalidate the relationship there is between failed integration and radicalisation. But what seems unquestionable is that the minority of radicalized Muslim youth in Europe has more to do, as Anna Triandafyllidou argues "with today's global-local connections rather with failed integration or ethnic penalty".

The Islamophobic construction of the Muslim "problem"

Let us reiterate an undeniable fact: since 711, Islam and Muslims have obsessed and captured the European imagination first as conquerors, then as a competing religion and finally as the internal 'Other' with the new waves of migration. Thus, Islamophobia as a fear or a prejudiced opinion of Islam and Muslims is not a new phenomenon. What is really intriguing and somehow disturbing is that Islamophobia today is gaining salience. Why? Many intellectuals, both Muslim and non-Muslim, are convinced that Islamophobia is the natural outcome of extreme violence in Muslim countries, anti-Western terrorist attacks, reprehensible behaviour of certain groups of migrants and the radicalisation of some young native European Muslims. Others claim that the West's disdain for Islam and Muslims has historic roots and is ingrained in Europe's culture of superiority. Others – see John Richardson and Jack Shaheen – go even further by arguing that there is a well-structured and well-financed Islamophobia industry that has managed, especially through savvy use of the media, to capture public opinion.

All of these claims oversimplify a complex issue. First, religiously-motivated violence has erupted in many places in the world, not only in Islamic countries, even though Islamist violence has surpassed all other forms in terms of the "theatricalisation" of jihadi violence (see the Transatlantic Academy, *Faith, freedom and foreign policy*, NY, 2015).

The argument that Western vilification of Islam is inherent to Western culture is also a gross exaggeration, as it considers the West a monolith incapable of empathy and trapped in its closed views of Islam and Muslims, neglecting the existence of different points of view among European intellectuals (see Edwy Plenel, *Pour les Musulmans*, 2014).

While the idea of an Islamophobic industry may suppose that there is a sort of intellectual and political conspiracy against Islam and Muslims – which is something I am not fond of – what is sure is that Islamophobia is related to identity politics, since it allows its adherents to construct their identity in opposition to a negative image of Muslims.

Islam and the Muslims have gradually become domestic issues in Europe. Coupled with the identity and economic crisis the European states are facing, this could only rekindle anti-Islamic sentiment. It is not surprising therefore, that Islam's critics among European intellectuals are becoming “best sellers”: Oriana Fallaci in Italy, Thilo Sarrazin in Germany, Michel Houellebecq in France, Christopher Caldwell and Bruce Bawer in England and many others.

At the popular level, anti-Islamic sentiment is also dramatically increasing, as revealed by a special study on Islam by the Bertelsmann Foundation (2015). Taking Germany as case study, the 2014 public opinion survey shows the

following alarming percentages: 57% of Germans believe that Islam poses a threat; 61% are convinced that Islam is incompatible with the West; 40% say that “because of Islam I feel like a stranger in my country”; 24% think that “Muslims should not be allowed to immigrate to Germany”.

These percentages cannot be ignored by Muslim countries, which are also responsible for the degradation of the image of Islam. They cannot simply shun their responsibility by suggesting that Islamophobia is a sort of incurable Western illness or that Islamist terrorists do not represent the “real Islam”. This argument is self-serving and not credible. After all, radical Islam is the religious form through which a particular kind of violent political rage expresses itself. It is somehow the “voice of protest” against the states that failed to live up to their pledges, against the prevailing acquiescence and “anomie” of Muslim societies and against the ruling elites who harnessed religion in the service of political power.

A PATH TOWARD A SETTLEMENT FOR SYRIA

LINA KHATIB

The Syrian conflict has become a shared problem whose global repercussions are perhaps more acutely felt around the Mediterranean than anywhere else. This is not only because of the migrant crisis that has seen a hike in the number of Syrians seeking refuge in Europe, but also because of the security threats that Europe and other countries around the Mediterranean are facing, and which are spurring conversations about shared security in the Mediterranean and in Europe. But there can be no viable shared security measures in the Mediterranean without a political settlement to the Syrian conflict.

The attacks in Paris orchestrated by the Islamic State organization (IS) in November 2015 demonstrated that the Syrian crisis is not an isolated, distant conflict. It is a problem directly affecting Europe and Mediterranean countries. The Paris attacks had two key motivations beyond humiliating the West. Attacks around the world bolster the image of the Islamic State organization, showing that it has global influence, which aids it in its recruitment. This means that the Paris scenario is likely to be repeated elsewhere, highlighting the urgent need for concrete plans for shared security around the Mediterranean and beyond.

Through the attacks, the Islamic State organization also aimed at sparking hasty

retaliation in the form of air strikes. IS had not been just anticipating but also desiring this kind of reaction: since its advance in Mosul in June 2014, it has been engaging in defensive warfare and has prepared itself for a Western air campaign (for example, through digging underground tunnels to hide its fighters). In this, it has counted on Western aversion to sending ground troops to the Levant following the post-2003 Iraq experience. Western air strikes benefit IS because they support its narrative that it is fighting “infidels” and “crusades,” which helps it recruit more fighters and residents.

The hasty nature of reactionary air strikes plays right into the hands of IS because it is intervention based on symbolism rather than on a comprehensive security strategy. A comprehensive security strategy would not just include a military dimension but also a political one. The more IS can distract its opponents by making them concerned about security in technical terms, the less attention they pay to politics. Indeed, at the Vienna talks that immediately followed the Paris attacks, the conversation was overshadowed by the theme of security as opposed to being dedicated to the matter of seeking a political settlement to the Syrian conflict.

Of course, there are immediate measures that can and must be taken by Mediterranean and

European countries to increase their shared security capacity. Intelligence sharing is one of them, but it must go beyond international cooperation. Within countries like Tunisia and Lebanon, rivalries and lack of capacity among different intelligence bureaus meant that crucial information gathered by the different bureaus in each country – that could have helped prevent the recent terrorist attacks in those countries from happening had it been analyzed collectively – was not shared across the bureaus, and therefore was rendered worthless. If Europe wants to protect itself, it must also work on increasing the security capacity of its allies in the south.

But this is not enough. For there to be a viable strategy to protect Mediterranean countries and Europe from similar attacks in the future, thinking about security must be coupled with thinking about politics. In other words, no matter what measures of shared security Mediterranean and European countries might take, this will not be enough as long as the political drivers of insecurity are not also addressed. The continuation of the Syrian conflict is a key reason behind the existence of IS; organizations like it benefit from the chaos of civil war and sectarian strife. And IS in particular has benefitted from facilitation of its expansion

within Syria by the Bashar al-Assad regime, which saw in it a useful tool to weaken the moderate's opposition. As long as the Syrian conflict rages, IS will continue to exist and pose a threat to the world.

There is currently global consensus that the Islamic State organization presents a shared, concrete threat to international stability, as demonstrated by the UN Security Council resolution announced in the aftermath of the Paris attacks, in which countries agreed to redouble their efforts to eradicate this terrorist group. But security should not be the ceiling of the international debate. This shared threat presents a good opening for addressing the wider issue of the Syrian conflict.

IS is a product of this conflict. It is a problem in itself but also a symptom of a larger problem. Shared intelligence, capacity building, and other technical measures to bolster security around the Mediterranean and in Europe are only part of the solution. What is needed is for Europe to use its military engagement in Syria to gain a seat at the international negotiating table to discuss a political settlement for the Syrian crisis. Only when there is a political settlement to the Syrian conflict can the threat of the Islamic State be addressed adequately. The path to shared security must go through politics.

AN APPROACH FOR REDUCING CONFLICTS: THE ROLE OF VOLUNTARY PRIVATE SECTOR

FOUAD MAKHZOUMI

In the years since 2011, the Middle East and North Africa have been convulsed by instability. Bad governance and civil war have left vacuums that extremist groups have eagerly filled. Competition between regional powers is on the rise; it is often waged violently through sectarian proxies, including terrorist groups. As the nature of the terrorist threat evolves, so must the tools to combat it. Meeting people's needs and aspirations will help advance stability and prosperity in the region.

The civil wars in Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Yemen have erased years of development and progress and inflicted widespread suffering and displacement on a scale not seen since World War II. A few years before the Arab Spring broke out, the MENA region was already in huge economic trouble; in fact it was the very reason why the Arab Spring began. There was huge discontentment among the population; the younger population wanted higher paying jobs but the governments in the respective countries where the Arab Spring took place could not provide enough jobs for their people. Very few jobs were created either by the public sector or by the private sector at that time. So people were unhappy.

Furthermore, the world nowadays faces massive migrations and related humanitarian emergencies caused by political instability and global conflicts, spread around the world from the

Middle East to sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Europe has recently received more than 530,260 refugees while more than 700,000 migrants are estimated to have arrived by sea, so far this year.

The causes of unrest are deep, complex, and involve structural problems in governance, demographics, and economics. None can be solved in a few months or years. This is why the young populations should be prepared, trained for their future away from terrorism and migration. Lebanon is an example of how to deal with both migration and preparing youth for a useful future away from radicalism and migration. Lebanon's overarching strategy is to protect, assist and facilitate solutions for refugees and other vulnerable people.

Lebanon will not be able to support host communities and to mitigate the direct impact of the presence of the refugees in order to ensure a more favorable protection environment. Beyond the European Union's immediate borders, and in the region surrounding Syria, the number of refugees has continued to rise and now stands at 4,089,023 people, of which Lebanon has 1.5 million. Many of these people lost their savings long gone, and are now living in abject poverty.

Like many Arab and Muslim countries, Lebanon has a great need for an economic recovery project, especially where the Syrian refugees and

poor Lebanese reside. The recovery project needs to focus on technical assistance and revitalizing small and medium-sized agro-processing enterprises. It should enhance the livelihoods in rural areas through technology transfer and the promotion of non-farming income-generating activities, as well as reconstruct the destroyed infrastructure, boost the economy and resettle displaced persons and refugees, along with creating various new jobs and enterprises.

In 1997 the Makhzoumi Foundation (FM) was established by Mr. Fouad Makhzoumi and has been run by him. FM's vision is as follows: evolution of Lebanese civil society, empowerment of the potential of Lebanese human resources, empowerment of Lebanese citizens to reach self-sustainability and independence, emphasizing the importance of environmental preservation, encouraging the quest for education, encompassing good healthcare. To achieve this, FM's empowerment translates into capacity building, micro finance, healthcare, community development and the following programs and units associated with them: Health Care Program, Vocational Training Program, Micro Credit Program, Development Program, Relief and Humanitarian Services Unit, Citizenry Unit, Volunteers Unit. FM reached out to 86,000 people in 2014 alone, with 250,000 services. Its cumulative impact since 1997 has outreached 560,000 people, providing 2.2 million services.

In this context, I am glad to introduce you to the Makhzoumi Foundation as an example of what the private sector can do. The voluntary private sector should be supported and expanded in order to meet the needs of Syrian refugees and needy Lebanese. It also should be encouraged in the Arab and Muslim countries. Below are short overviews of only a few of FM training programs:

- *The Vocational Training Program* at FM provides trainees with educational, technical and

vocational skills. It is encouraging the search for knowledge and promoting self-reliance. The training provided contributes positively to the development of youth, as the mastering of vocational skills creates a feeling of satisfaction and hope that transforms candidates into a productive power. The Vocational Training Program encompasses digital literacy and IT skills, languages, business and enterprise skills, diploma courses, personal development, as well as the Beauty Academy.

- *Digital Literacy and IT Skills*: This specialty training focuses on the Microsoft Office operational system program. Additionally, FM provides special courses in speaking and listening, writing and reading English grammar, business English and English for hotels and tourism.
- *Personal Development and Soft Skills*: FM focuses on nurturing trainees' soft skills and self-development, so courses in photo shooting, video filming and editing are offered explicitly for this purpose. Personal development and soft skills feature in our Professional Development Project, which offers several tracks. In addition, crafting projects cover a variety of options from food decoration and creation to handmade crafts.
- *Micro Credit Program Overview*: microfinance has gained popularity worldwide as a powerful instrument for poverty reduction. Microcredit was initiated to provide financial services to those who are unable to get these services from the banks, giving them the chance to increase their incomes and save themselves from the poverty circle covering more than a third of the Lebanese population.
- *The Relief Humanitarian Services Unit*, an emergency humanitarian aid unit, initiated its works with UNHCR in August 2011 as a result of the agreement, as implementing partner, to respond to the needs of the non-Syrian Iraqis and other nationalities. This

partnership continued with the expansion of the Syrian crisis.

- *Creating* business hubs, such as hangars in remote areas, FM can teach different trades and skills in poor areas. Other skills are required in job markets here and abroad, especially if we expect a construction boom.

All the skills and training programs provide hope for young people to find work and live in dignity, instead of migrating or joining radical groups. FM cannot over-emphasize the positive impact of these programs for poor youth in Lebanon and Syria – their weapons will not be deadly guns but decent jobs.

A POSITIVE AGENDA FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION: HOW TO ENHANCE THE EU ROLE?

BARAH MIKAIL

Europeans are anything but newcomers to the southern Mediterranean. Many EU members have a shared history with several MENA countries. But Europeans also become aware, starting from the 1970s in particular, of the benefits they could earn from dealing with their southern neighbors. Both the Euro-Arab dialogue (1970s) and the Venice Declaration (1980) well translated this reality.

In the mid-1990s, the European interest on the southern Mediterranean garnered further evidence. The Barcelona process (1995) was meant to put European tools at the service of mutual development, further prosperity and shared security. The three main foundations for this process (political, economic and socio-cultural) sounded interesting on paper; but somehow, reality got us elsewhere. While Barcelona was meant – among other objectives – to bridge the gap between Europeans and their southern neighbors, it rather produced a contrary effect. MENA region citizens did not necessarily feel that their socioeconomic perspectives were doing better; authoritarian rules were kept in place while they deployed a series of repressive rules that contradicted the spirit of the Barcelona process and its core idea

of having more democracy and rule of law in return for European money and investments; migrations flowing towards the north did not decrease; terrorist threats remained a reality.

We would be wrong to blame Europeans for southern Mediterranean failures, but we cannot discard the fact that the contradictions of their policies towards the southern Mediterranean contributed to extending the life of authoritarian rules. Most of the limits of European policies probably derived from the incoherence that surrounded the idea of conditionality. Europeans were supposed to witness concrete reforms in the southern Mediterranean in return for their economic and technical contributions, but none of this really happened. Regarding the foundations of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM, 2008), they sounded erroneous from the very beginning. Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy's belief that the economy would steer politics and that it would allow peace to prevail in the MENA region the way Europeans had been able overcome their differences before proved to be far-fetched – if not an illusion. While Europeans are living their own crisis today, the reality of the southern Mediterranean is that it needs its political problems to be solved before regional stability is able to bring economic development in return.

The EU still has to prove that it can exist as a global actor and that it can go beyond the national policies that are favored by some of its members. That said, while the nomination of Federica Mogherini as the EU's HRVP came as a welcome step, her pragmatic and accurate statements must translate into deeds if we really want to be able to talk about an active contribution of the EU to the prospects that prevail in its southern neighborhood. Among the many challenges that originate from and/or are present in the southern Mediterranean, the EU can make a more active contribution to many determinant security issues that include the following:

- *Migrations and refugees:* the attempts by many refugees and asylum seekers to reach the EU and to benefit from its prospects are a reality. Some of these refugees mean to stay in the EU; the others are willing to go back to their homelands. While the proportions that belong to each of these categories are hard to determine, the fact is that while the EU cannot welcome unlimited numbers of refugees that would stay indefinitely on its soil, it can still act by guaranteeing decent living conditions to these people and by considering the many social and economic benefits that it will earn from having some of these refugees stay in the EU.
- *The conflicts of the MENA region:* Refugees that are willing to reach the EU come from various regions (the African continent, Asia...) but it is easy to notice that conflicts in the MENA region have accentuated the problem. The EU needs to understand what the origins and the dynamics of these conflicts are and how it would be possible to solve them. This implies not only figuring out what tools the EU could use to help solve prospects but also to understand to what extent national policies and the external actions of the EU member states do – or do not – represent or reflect the EU's choices and/or policies.
- *Political and territorial disputes:* Talking about more and better involvement in the southern Mediterranean implies being aware of the centers of gravity for regional unrest. The Israeli-Palestinian and the Western Sahara conflicts are undoubtedly important epicenters that should figure at the top of the EU's agenda. Besides, Libya and Syria are also important Mediterranean countries within which serious ongoing conflicts are having an impact on the rest of the region. Nevertheless, approaching regional conflicts efficiently also makes it important for the EU to seriously consider the consequences for the situations that we can find in both Iraq and Yemen.
- *Terrorism and radicalization:* Who are the terrorists, who are the radicals, what motivates their actions, how do they end up believing in violence, and how do we reverse and/or overcome this situation? The answers to such a question are not easy. Nevertheless, it remains clear that while Daesh/Islamic State is an organization that is made 80% of Iraqis, its European members most likely were radicalized within the EU, not outside of its borders... Figuring out solutions to this situation has to start with acknowledging this reality and trying to solve it.
- *Admit (or discard) its role as a military actor:* Many members of the EU sell military weapons to the rest of the world, including MENA region governments. Where does the EU stand on this? By discarding the military component that shapes a part of its identity, the EU is definitely losing the capacity to prevail as a political actor. It at least needs to be aware of this fact before it decides whether to reassess things, to orientate them another way and/or or to keep them the way they are.
- *Supporting CSMs:* the EU has always been keen on supporting Civil Society Movements (CSMs), but when it comes to realities, one can only see how weak these happen to perform in the MENA region. The EU needs

to understand why it was less efficient than the U.S., and what is required from it so that the billions it has invested in CSMs-related projects reflect better on its image and on the efficiency of its actions. This step entails many preconditions, including changing the way heavy bureaucracy creates additional obstacles to the EU's ability to adapt to a landscape that changes constantly.

- *The EU's counterparts:* last but not least, if the EU wants to act efficiently in the southern Mediterranean, it must clarify where it stands *vis-à-vis* other governmental and influential actors. This implies sorting out where EU interests lie within the MENA region, what common points and what differences they

have with regard to the U.S., Russia, China, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey... and how the EU could favor policies and

- behaviors that would translate into and reflect views of its own rather than having to endorse the stance of other actors every time it wants to prove that it exists.

These elements deal mainly with the issue of how the EU could get its economic contributions to benefit it more politically. But they also remind us that while the Lisbon Treaty allowed for considerable improvement in future, institutionally speaking, it still needs to benefit from additional measures that would give the EU sovereign means that would also apply to foreign affairs.

BACK TO BASICS IN THE SECURITY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

TAREK OSMAN

At a talk I gave last year at a European university, I presented some of the key challenges that the vast majority of young Arabs confront. During the questions & answers session, a European student reminded me that these problems – many of which revolve round the increasing difficulty of finding sustainable jobs with decent pay – also afflict the lives of tens of millions of young Europeans, especially on the northern shores of the Mediterranean, for example in Italy, Greece, and Portugal. I agreed – but emphasised, what I think is a fundamental difference: whereas young Europeans have inherited successes (the heritage of transforming Europe in the last six decades from a warring, exhausted continent, emerging from the bloodiest war humanity has ever witnessed, into a peaceful, largely prosperous place where human, civil, and political rights are taken for granted), most young Arabs have inherited failures. All the key epochs in modern Arab history – Arab liberalism in the first half of the 20th century, Arab nationalism in the period from 1950s to the 1970s, and the different experiences of the past 40 years – resulted neither in sustainable economic development, nor led to stable political systems.

There are colossal frustrations that dominate how millions of young Arabs perceive their lives

in their homelands, their relationships to the regimes governing them, and their choices about the future. These frustrations have now been exacerbated and intensified by the results of the transformation that the Arab world has undergone in the last five years. Many young Arabs – whether among the best educated or the ones with the least means – opt to leave, or isolate themselves from the dominant political-economy structures in their countries. That physical or intellectual (and emotional) detachment deprives the Arab world from some of its most promising assets. Many other young Arabs have responded to the results of the past five years in a radically different way. They arrived at the conclusion that peaceful change has not yielded the hoped-for transformation, and as such, many are gradually acquiescing to the idea that violence is needed to effect change. Not all of those are in the militant Islamist camp.

These feelings – detachment and acquiesce to violence – are the real peril that needs to be tackled for the shared security of the Mediterranean basin. The question is: how to tackle them?

Most of the Arab countries that have retained their stability in the last five years are trying to avoid the waves of violence, chaos, and radicalisation that were unleashed in that period.

Many are scrambling to preserve the political structures that have been in power in the last half century, which means they are either consumed by internal challenges – or willing to stifle change, innovation, and the will of their countries’ young generation for the sake of securing their rule. It is highly unlikely that these power structures will lead a transformation that would assuage the anger and frustrations prevailing across the Arab world. Actually, many of their efforts are fuelling that anger.

Neither will any magical solution come from the West. Restrained economic conditions (and accordingly lack of resources), disappointment in the outcomes of the so called “Arab Spring”, and in many cases misunderstandings of the real nature of the transformation that the Arab world has been undergoing, limit the West’s ability to put forward any viable solutions that could absorb this anger and these frustrations. Plus, the increasing spread of the menace of militant Islamism and the acute apprehensions (almost across the whole of Europe) of the potentially massive waves of immigration to the continent have led several Western countries to tacitly sacrifice many values in pursuit of “stability” in the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean.

“Stability” (however it is defined) will remain elusive in most parts of the Arab world, for at least a few more years. Because of the accumulated pressures of the political and economic conditions that have existed in many parts of the Arab world in the last half-century, the region will inevitably undergo still more

painful episodes of polarisation regarding identities and social frames of reference, and state-divisions and reformations. Few of these processes will be smooth and peaceful; many (including those still to materialise) will entail violence such as that which has been unfolding in the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa in the past few years.

The actors – whether countries, international organisations, or regional or external stakeholders – need to recognise the limits of their ability to effect change – whether through military interventions or political mediation. What they can do is to invest in the drivers that, in the long-term, have high chances of absorbing the anger and frustrations of the tens of millions of young Arabs across the region. Many case studies, across the globe, tell us that this means supporting the Arab world to move from closed, top-down, often extractive, and in several cases corrupt and oppressive political-economy structures to open, plural ones. There are no shortcuts or clear pathways. But the move towards such open structures certainly involves supporting the private sector to grow, local civil society to acquire influence, independent media to exist, and to crucially enhance competition - not just within key economic sectors but in local politics.

These may sound like small steps, not commensurate with the gravity of the threats currently emanating from the Arab world. But it is these small steps that, both bear the most potential, and are the ones can do no harm (to borrow from the famous medical dictum).

FACING IS: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RATHER THAN SECURITY SOLUTIONS

MARINA OTTAWAY

The threat coming from radical Islamist organizations affects all countries in the Mediterranean region (and beyond). With the lines blurring between IS, once thought to be focused only on the expansion of its caliphate in the Middle East, and al-Qaeda, with a focus on targets in the West as well, all radical Islamist groups are now a threat to everyone.

Developing an effective strategy to counter the threat thus requires efforts by all countries. It also requires a clear understanding of the different facets of radical Islamist groups and of the different ways in which each country can address the problem. While there is a common responsibility shared by all countries, not all can contribute in the same way. IS – a term to be used from here on out as a broad reference to violent, radical Islamist groups for reasons that will become evident below – has at least three components. Policies that might help work against one of these components may make attempts to combat the others more difficult. Furthermore, some countries can fight some aspects of IS effectively, while probably being unable to do much against others or even making the situation worse.

First, IS is a proto-state organization that controls territory in both Syria and Iraq – I will refer to this territory – as the Islamic State. The boundaries of this state are contested and the

degree of actual control the leadership has on the territory is unclear; there are probably pockets of hard control and areas where the hold of the organization is tenuous or intermittent. There is no doubt, however, that there is a state in the making in parts of Iraq and Syria – a caliphate according its leaders. This is the aspect of IS that has received the most attention. It is also the aspect of IS that European countries and Turkey, along with the United States, are best suited to combat, particularly as long as no troops are put on the ground. The military campaign against IS requires the capacity to project power far away, and not all countries around the Mediterranean are in a position to do so. By virtue of its proximity, as well as the strength of its military, Turkey bears a special burden in this fight, but it is also crucial that other countries do not put unrealistic expectations on it. Turkey will never be able to seal the border with Syria, as some politicians seem to expect, because no country is ever able to seal its borders. All countries have equal responsibility to control movement across their borders as much as possible. Thus, countries whose citizens are fighting with IS are as responsible for not stopping them before they leave as Turkey is for letting them slip into Syria or Iraq.

Second, IS is a network, or a constellation of networks, of radical Islamist groups that operate

internationally. The success of the Islamic State and the attention it has garnered by controlling territory have created an incentive for other groups to declare their allegiance to it. Even parts of al-Qaeda are now gravitating toward IS, including al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. It is rarely clear what declaring allegiance means in practice. Does it mean that the organization receives orders from IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and does his bidding? Does it mean that the group coordinates some operations with IS while essentially maintaining its autonomy? Does a group that declares allegiance receive financial support or conversely pay tribute? Does IS channel foreign fighters to it? Or is declaring allegiance simply a means for a group to increase its visibility and jihadi legitimacy? Most probably, no answer fits all organizations – the relation of the Islamic State to Boko Haram in Nigeria is probably quite different from the one it has with Ansar Beit al-Maqdisi in the Sinai.

The fight against this component of IS is one in which all countries share equal responsibility. Networks are not defeated by targeting a command center, wherever that might be, but by dismantling the pieces in each country. Security services in each individual country have the responsibility for collecting information on these networks and sharing it with all other countries. The fight against these networks is a burden shared by all countries and requires good intelligence and above all shared intelligence. Operations on the ground against the networks are obviously mostly the responsibility of the host country, but given the speed and ease with which people move across borders, cooperation across countries is needed constantly.

The third aspect of IS is something even vaguer than these networks. For lack of a better term, I will define this aspect as “IS as a state of mind”: the accumulation of grievances and resentment, of anger, frustration, youthful idealism, religious fervor, and the desire for an exciting alternative to a drab life without a future. This state of mind

attracts thousands of young men (and some women) from Muslim countries and the West to go fight in Syria and Iraq, or to carry out terrorist attacks in their own countries in the name of vague ideals and uncertain goals.

Combating this state of mind is a long-term project that will bring no quick result, because the problems are so difficult, requiring social and political change rather than security solutions. But efforts must start now. Each country is responsible for analyzing what is pushing their young people to turn to terrorism at home or in Syria, Iraq, or elsewhere. They are also responsible for mobilizing as many of their resources to address the social problems as possible and to work with potential donors to supplement their efforts. Each country is also responsible for taking a hard look at the political conditions that make the problem worse. Political remedies are not necessarily costly – as creating jobs is. But they require governments, in all countries, to take a hard and honest look at themselves and be honest about how they may be contributing to the problems. This includes European governments, which are ready to denounce a lack of democracy elsewhere but also need to ask themselves whether they are doing everything they could.

One aspect of the fight against IS as a “state of mind” is mostly the responsibility of Muslim countries, and that is combating the interpretations of Islam that justify and support violent extremisms. The fight against these ideas must come from Muslim countries and Muslim organizations. It is dangerous for European countries to meddle in this – we need to ask what the reaction would be in predominantly Christian countries if Muslim governments and organizations took it upon themselves to promote some forms of Christianity and combat others.

The struggle for shared security is one for which all countries bear the same responsibility, but not one in which all countries have the same role to play.

EUROPE'S NEGLECTED 99.9%*

CLAIRE SPENCER

When terrorism is uppermost in the public consciousness, the immediate concern of governments is understandably to focus on the perpetrators, their backgrounds and motivations and the possibility that terrorists surviving attacks will be planning more. Paris having been on the frontline of intelligence that put paid to a second series of terror attacks following the atrocities of November 13, 2015, it is now Brussels' turn to be in the forefront of hunting down the Belgian-Moroccan survivor of the Paris attacks, Salah Abdeslam. The basis for Brussel's current citywide 'lockdown' also derives from intelligence that Abdeslam and possible accomplices are planning a further imminent attack.

Much is said about the causes of terror in the aftermath of attacks, but then very little actually done. The marginalisation of second- and third-generation immigrants in Europe is a common theme in interviews with families and immediate community members, but public enthusiasm to address its root causes is usually short-lived. Close relatives of suicide attackers often cite the phenomenon of rootless identities, whereby young Belgian Moroccans, for example, are neither Belgian enough for the country of their birth and education, nor Moroccan enough for their parents' or grandparents' place of origin.

The radicalisation of those who go on to perpetrate terror is often cited as being a relatively recent

phenomenon, and in the case of their affiliation with IS or other radical-jihadist organisations, only skin-deep as regards the perpetrators' knowledge and understanding of the religious precepts underlying their ideologies. The Paris attackers of November appear to have been linked as much by a past in drug-dealing, drink and petty crime as by a change towards more ostentatiously religious behaviour. In the case of the Abdeslam brothers, their supposed 'piety' was barely six months old; until a couple of weeks before the Paris attacks, they ran a bar in the Moelenbeek district of Brussels, which was closed for alleged drug-dealing just prior to the Paris attacks.

Against this background, the appeal of IS appears to be much less inspired by the brutalised version of Islam underlying Islamic State's imagined Caliphate than by the easy availability of funds, Kalashnikovs, hard drugs, operational training and the associated notoriety of being labelled dangerous outlaws accruing to successful or would-be terrorists.

The insights accumulated by journalists in the aftermath of attacks commonly tell of the surprise of friends and families at the direction taken by otherwise 'normal' men and women. In reality, it is their acknowledged nonentity which should provoke more active public concern over the lack of alternatives open both to them and their immediate peer groups. Deficient education systems and job opportunities take time and

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public funds to be activated and install, but it is also the lack of a vision that things will ever improve for these communities that is most striking. From a public policy perspective, it is as if the petty crime of young *banlieue* Muslims can be tolerated and managed until such a time as they ratchet up their actions to cold-blooded attacks on their fellow citizens. The subtle signs of their changing intent are often there with hindsight, yet the capacity (or lack of it) of local authorities and communities to capture and redirect the attention of a larger potential base of terrorist recruits is consistently underplayed as a critical tool in official strategies to combat and counter the attraction of IS.

Driven by the media and popular outrage, governments are quick to intensify security spending directed towards the heartland (in this case Syria) of the ideologies and organisations that tip the balance in turning the passive anger of disaffected youth towards violent extremism. Thus, budgets for defence, coordinated intelligence and public surveillance increase at the European, regional and international levels, while programmes (such as 'Prevent' in the UK) pre-empt the creation of more inspirational polices of inclusion closer to home.

For a fraction of the price of new weaponry and the recruitment of new intelligence operatives, much more could be done to act on the insights of political sociologists, psychologists, educators and the very communities closest to the core of the immediate challenge. That tackling the exclusion of Europe's ethnic and religious minorities is a two-way street is the first such insight, not least since creating and sustaining social mobility is above all the responsibility of mainstream society and governments. Another is

that sustainable and attractive alternatives have to be consciously created to fill the void currently filled by the stealthy recruitment operatives of IS. An individual's turn to violence and/or terrorism is a process, not a choice made out of the blue, when a lifetime of slights and rejections contrasts starkly with the abundance of choice and opportunities facing fully-integrated members of the same European societies.

Left unchecked, the current risk is that the alienation and rejection of whole communities on the basis of their religion will be driven by populist right-wing parties, rather than being countered by more conscious efforts to heal the breach in the counter-terrorist strategies currently being elaborated in European capitals.

In other contexts, much is made of the negative impact on growth in developed economies, above all the US and Europe, of the current rise in inequality between the accumulated wealth of the richest 1% and the diminishing resources of the remaining 99%. The same logic needs to be applied to the social deficits of badly integrated second and third generation immigrant communities across Europe. The rationale of defensive action by governments is warranted in the short-term, but is not enough to stave off future risks of terrorism. The perceived effectiveness of terrorism has, if anything, received a boost among the less than 0.1% of Europe's Muslim population who see no other way to get their names into history books. The other 99.9% now also needs to be heard and heeded: not as outsiders to the European project, but as one of Europe's strongest bulwarks should their nation's combined resources of social recognition and greater social mobility be accorded to them in earnest this time.

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