

# 1

---

## THE HORN OF AFRICA AND YEMEN *Diminishing the Threat of Terrorism*

ROBERT I. ROTBERG

The greater Horn of Africa thrusts itself toward Yemen and hence the heart of Arabia and the Persian/Arab Gulf. Within the complex region of northeastern Africa that extends from the peaks of Kilimanjaro to the depression of Djibouti and from the deserts of Chad to the Red Sea and on southward, past Cape Guardafui, to the barren coastline of Punt, there are 149 million people, more than half of whom are Muslims.<sup>1</sup>

For geostrategic reasons, especially in an era of terror, Yemen belongs naturally to this greater Horn of Africa region, adding another 20 million people, virtually all Muslims. Although not necessarily cohesive physically, despite the unifying Rift Valley theme (from the Sudan and Djibouti south through Ethiopia and into Kenya), in the global battles for freedom and democracy and against terrorism these seven nation-states (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan, and Yemen) astride the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Indian Ocean share a common enemy. They also roughly share a paucity of resources and unfulfilled desires for rapid economic advancement.

Al Qaeda can strike anywhere. It has already struck twice in Kenya, at least once in Somalia, and once (with at least two

important retaliations) in Yemen. So the greater Horn of Africa and Yemen region is bound together by its recent history as a sometime target, by its geographical proximity to the homeland of Osama bin Laden and the primary regional object of his political anger, by long and continuing interrelationships of licit and illicit trade, by religion, by centuries of Muslim-Christian accommodation and antagonism, by renowned resistances against Western colonizers (in the Horn), and by shared poverty, poor governance, and underdevelopment. This complex web provides a tasting menu for potential terrorists.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, as the bulk of this book demonstrates, existing instability and potential sources of future conflagration offer added opportunities for infiltration, interference, and backing for extremists. Intensifying repression in Eritrea, unresolved tension between Eritrea and Ethiopia over their disputed border, the genocidal civil war in Darfur, biddable nonstate actors in southern Somalia, Ethiopian attempts to interfere in Somalia, the porous quality of the Somalia-Kenya border, a steady flow of arms and refugees between Yemen and Somalia and Ethiopia, the ease of money laundering (or traceless money transfers), and the widespread availability of inexpensive light weapons and ammunition all provide openings for Al Qaeda infiltration, the effective suborning of local officials, and the coalescence of terrorist surges.

Actual Al Qaeda operatives and sleepers in this region in 2005 are few, but dangerous. Additionally, those with hard knowledge of the region believe that cells linked both loosely and more tightly to Al Qaeda exist, especially in Yemen, Somalia, Kenya, and beyond into Tanzania and the Comoros. Finding and neutralizing those existing and potential pockets of Al Qaeda demands concerted diplomatic, intelligence, law enforcement, and military initiatives. U.S. efforts alone, as the contributors to this book reiterate, are insufficient to deal with the ongoing threats of Al Qaeda and homegrown terror in the region. Only cooperation among component states and security forces in the region, among available international security resources, and among the police and military staffs of the individual nations, the international resources, and the U.S. Central Command's Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) based in Djibouti (and somewhat parallel operations of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation) will diminish the likelihood of further Al Qaeda-sponsored attacks on U.S., allied, or local targets. Without a seamless regional and international response, the greater Horn of Africa and Yemen will remain a reservoir of terror. Such a broad, multinational, and multifaceted response has yet to be constructed.

The coastlines of the greater Horn of Africa and Yemen total 5,510 miles. Although these waters are patrolled by British and American naval vessels and a few Kenyan boats and observed from aircraft and satellites and with ground-based radar, dhows and other smaller ships easily can and do slip through such porous defenses, especially the limited maritime ones. Strengthened and more credible coastal patrol capabilities are essential; each of the states of the region needs to build up its own sea and surveillance defenses with U.S. or other assistance. This is an ongoing requirement, best met by jointly developed regional initiatives as well as specially targeted external efforts. CJTF-HOA is a major part of this overall response but it has limited personnel and power, and its earnest efforts are appropriately directed as much to winning local hearts and minds as to military counterterror operations.

### **Governance and Terrorism**

The winning of hearts and minds is about strengthening good governance throughout the region and about making friends for the United States through the projection of soft power and the intelligent exercise of diplomacy. Indeed, each of the chapters that follow contains a substantial section on how best to strengthen the practice of governance in the countries of the region. The optimal path to stability and reduced openings for terror is markedly to improve the manner in which governments in the region serve their citizens, that is, how they deliver governance.<sup>3</sup>

Governance is the effective provision of political goods to citizens. Of those political goods, security is paramount; there can be no economic growth or social elevation without it. To this end, a nation-state's prime functions are to secure the nation and its territory—to prevent cross-border invasions and incursions; to reduce domestic threats to or attacks upon the national order; to bolster human security by lowering crime rates; and to enable citizens to resolve their differences with fellow inhabitants or with the state itself without recourse to arms or physical coercion.

The nation-states that constitute the greater Horn of Africa and Yemen region present a mixed picture with regard to this fundamental criterion of governance. Eritrea and Ethiopia have gone to war over a border, and much else, and neither nation-state can now claim to have eliminated threats to peace between them. Additionally, there are several ongoing civil wars in the Sudan, and most of Somalia remains in a state of collapse, punctuated by assaults and mayhem. Kenya can claim to be secure from external threats, except for outrages perpetrated by Al Qaeda. Yemen has contested Saudi Arabia

and Eritrea over territory, has porous borders, and was the scene of two Al Qaeda attacks. Djibouti is the nation-state with the strongest sense of cohesion and, tiny though it is, has the greatest ability, thanks to its defense agreement with France, to protect its frontiers from attack.

Internally, Djibouti may be the regional nation-state with the highest level of human security. Of all the others, Kenya especially endures crime levels at the upper end of the African scale—which adds to its intrinsic domestic insecurity. The other states of the region fall in between, with repressive Eritrea almost as safe (except for political miscreants) as Djibouti, and Ethiopia and the Sudan falling between Eritrea and Kenya. There is little crime in Yemen. Somaliland is reasonably secure domestically, too. But the rest of Somalia, where human security is mediated primarily by those who control the largest number of armaments and irregular militia, is by definition lawless.

The delivery of other desirable political goods becomes feasible only when a reasonable level of security is provided. Good governance next requires a predictable, recognizable, systematized method of adjudicating disputes and regulating both the norms and the prevailing mores of the societies in question. This political good implies codes and procedures that together compose an enforceable body of law, security of property and the enforceability of contracts, an effective judicial system, and a set of norms that legitimate and validate traditional or new values embodied in what is called, in shorthand, the rule of law. Each of the world's nation-states fashions its own rule of law; in the greater Horn of Africa region there are common law and Napoleonic law corpuses, *shari'a* law practices, Coptic church authorities, traditional jurisprudence, and the impositions of non-state actors. Judicial independence and competence are misnomers almost everywhere, so the provision of an articulated and fully practiced modern rule of law remains a work very much in progress. The greater Horn of Africa region and Yemen cannot develop effectively, nor combat terrorism with full vigor, until adherence to the rule of law tradition—not necessarily to any one style of law—is strengthened.

A third political good supplied in greater or lesser degree in the developing world enables citizens to participate freely, openly, and fully in a democratic political process. This good encompasses essential freedoms: the right to participate in politics and compete for office; respect and support for national and provincial political institutions, legislatures, and courts; tolerance of dissent and difference; independent media; and all of the basic civil and human rights. Nowhere in the greater Horn of Africa and Yemen region do citizens enjoy its full possibilities. The inhabitants of Kenya and Djibouti may obtain more of this good than their neighbors in the region, whereas most of those who live

within the old borders of Somalia or the new borders of Eritrea arguably receive very little of such a good. Sudanese, amid war and under the rule of an Islamist political culture, also enjoy very little. Ethiopians and Yemenis are somewhat better off in this respect, but only at the margin. How to enable the governments in the greater Horn of Africa region to deliver more of the political good of freedom to their citizens during the next decade without weakening existing frameworks of stability is a question devoid of easy or comfortable answers. Ignoring the issue of freedom entirely, however, provides potential openings for regime opponents to join up with terrorists, especially those allied to Al Qaeda. Even many Kenyans who experienced the important transition from authoritarian single-man rule to democracy in 2002 still await delivery of the full promise of democratic reform.

A fourth critical component of governance is the creation of an enabling environment permissive of and conducive to economic growth and prosperity at both national and personal levels. This political good thus encompasses a prudently run money and banking system, usually guided by a central bank and lubricated by a national currency; a fiscal and institutional context within which citizens may pursue individual entrepreneurial goals and potentially prosper; and a regulatory environment appropriate to the economic aspirations and attributes of the nation-state. Only Kenya, reliant on tourism and agricultural exports, has a fully modern economy. Somalia is the outlier at the other end of the economic continuum, and all of the other nation-states are fragile economically. The Sudan has oil, but little else. (Yemen also has oil, but in diminishing amounts.) Yemen has an excellent port in Aden, Djibouti has a smaller port, and Eritrea has two. Ethiopia has coffee. But the real economic attainments of the nation-states of the greater Horn of Africa and Yemen region have been limited, largely because of scarce natural resources and harsh terrain. Moreover, none of the regimes in the region, except Kenya and Djibouti, is even marginally concerned with providing more than the rudiments of this good of economic growth. Additionally, corruption flourishes everywhere in the region, sapping efficiency, limiting foreign direct investment (except into the petroleum industry), and undermining other political goods like the rule of law and security.<sup>4</sup>

Infrastructure (the physical arteries of commerce), education, and medical treatment are other key political goods, nearly always the responsibilities of governments. Except for Kenya, all of the other countries and areas in the greater region are poor, with underdeveloped road and rail systems, creaking sea and river ports and airports, poor traditional telephone systems and limited teledensity, and low levels of Internet connectivity. Likewise, again except

for Kenya and northern Sudan, health and educational systems are either nearly nonexistent or primitive (even by African standards). In the medical services field, for example, in 2001 there was one physician per 35,000 people in Ethiopia, one per 33,000 people in Eritrea, one per 25,000 people in Somalia, one per 11,000 people in the Sudan, one per 7,500 people in Kenya, one per 7,100 people in Djibouti, and one per 5,000 people in Yemen. In terms of the number of hospital beds per 1,000 people, Djibouti had more than two, Kenya and the Sudan more than one, and all the others a few tenths of a bed. Ethiopia had only 0.24 hospital beds per 1,000. Comparing health expenditures as a percentage of GDP, Kenya spent the most (nearly 8 percent), Djibouti and Eritrea followed, and Ethiopia brought up the rear with 1.4 percent.<sup>5</sup> It comes as no surprise, given these startlingly low numbers for the delivery of health services, that infant mortality rates per 1,000 live births range from 133 in Somalia and 114 in Ethiopia down to a comparatively welcome figure of fifty-nine in Eritrea. Estimated life expectancy at birth thus ranges from a high of fifty-one years in Eritrea to a low of forty-two in Ethiopia.

Only Kenya has a flourishing civil society. In Somalia, civil society is an oxymoron within warlord-controlled fiefdoms. It has been increasingly limited in Eritrea, as the chapter on that country makes evident. In the Sudan, civil society has been repressed in the North by the military rulers who have run the nation-state since 1989; elsewhere civil society is a casualty both of the old North-South war and the new war in Darfur. In Ethiopia, civil society has been slow to develop amid the tight embrace of authoritarianism and because of the restraints of traditional cultures of discourse. In Yemen, formal urban civil society is limited, but there is a long history of discourse and debate within tribal structures.

The eradication both of existing terrorist cells and potential future terrorist threats and combinations cannot be achieved without careful, considered attention to uplifting governance in general throughout the region and boosting particular political goods selectively, country by country. Yet, even if the United States and the European Union (EU) were to expend appropriate sums to assist the governments of the region with improving aspects of governance, not all of these nation-states would embrace or welcome such initiatives. Few are anxious to chance their control or dominance internally. Few are as desirous as they might be, and fewer are able, to deliver political goods of the quality and in the quantities that would significantly help to achieve the aspirations of their peoples. The quality of the rule of law or economic enablement, much less domestic security and political freedom, will not change for the better without newly created partnerships forged for such ends

between the United States, the EU, and many if not all of the countries in the greater Horn of Africa region. Hence, because the United States desperately wants to reduce the threat of terrorism, Washington must craft new, broad policy initiatives toward the region as a whole and toward the critical nation-states individually. CJTF-HOA, understaffed as it is, cannot be expected to bear the burden of nation building in the Horn of Africa and Yemen.

There are ample opportunities for multinational coordination with regard to improving good governance in the region. France has long had a military and political presence in Djibouti. Italy has an interest, from colonial times, in the region, especially Somalia and Eritrea. Britain has colonial links to Kenya, Somaliland, and the Sudan. Norway played a substantial role in negotiating a peace agreement between the Sudan's North and South. The EU as a whole has a variety of ties to the region and to individual countries. The United States once had an important listening post in Eritrea, enjoys naval rights in Kenya, was alternately allied with Ethiopia and Somalia, and has suffered direct attack in Yemen and Kenya. It also has a military base in Djibouti.

Americans and Europeans should cooperate to increase governmental capabilities in the region. Working together, they can build new and maintain existing infrastructures. They can find ways to create jobs in a region typified by high unemployment. Local educational efforts are few, leading to high rates of underemployment among secondary school leavers and others with less training. Europeans and Americans can direct their attention to such critical needs, can upgrade health facilities in the crucial battles against HIV/AIDS (increasingly a menace to Ethiopia and Somalia), tuberculosis, and malaria, as well as against dangerous epizootic diseases like Rift Valley fever and rinderpest. They should support local efforts to embed the rule of law and expand political freedom. Positive activities in each of these arenas will directly and indirectly strengthen security and counterterrorism capabilities. The battle against terrorism is as much, if not more, a battle for improved governance and, as a consequence, for local hearts and minds.

Although France, Italy, and Britain have a long-standing expert knowledge of portions of the region and high-level staff fluent in local languages, the United States no longer possesses the regional expertise and capable linguists that it once had in the Department of State, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the several military services. Indeed, the greater Horn of Africa region (Yemen excepted) is in too many respects a terra incognita to Washington. Intelligence personnel responsible for overseeing the region may have no direct acquaintance with it. U.S. embassies and consulates are fewer than they were in the 1980s; budget cuts and personnel retrenchments have left U.S. diplomatic, intelligence, and military services impoverished in terms of an intimate

knowledge of the region and the countries that it comprises. Although Washington helped to ensure the ultimate delivery of the Sudanese peace pact of early 2005, there was still no permanent American ambassador resident in Khartoum (based elsewhere since 1997) and no equivalent presence in Somalia. Indeed, Washington lacks any coherent vision for integrating and advancing American diplomatic and security initiatives in the region. The struggle against terrorism requires just such a far-ranging vision, directed and coordinated at the highest levels.

The battle against terror in the vulnerable countries along the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean is best prosecuted from a holistic regional perspective. The threat is transnational and respects no boundaries. In any event, none of international land or sea borders presents an effective barrier to infiltrators. Drugs and arms smugglers and cattle and sheep rustlers can cross almost anywhere at will. A history of interpenetration, long decades of evasion, tribal or warrior dominance of frontier areas remote from national capitals, adherence to customary entrepreneurial obligations, and the absence of robust security contingents beyond major cities make regional measures and cooperation necessary, urgent, and probably insufficient. The regional Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) tries weakly to organize relevant common responses. Bringing Yemen into IGAD would be sensible, and helpful in forging a more vigorous common approach to terror and its eradication. (But Yemen may not wish to be considered “African,” and IGAD members might resist the inclusion of a new country.) There is no substitute for greater U.S. involvement in any and all forums for the greater Horn of Africa region and Yemen.

As important as a vastly strengthened regional approach will be, Washington also needs a nuanced new policy crafted for and appropriate to the region and each of its countries.

## Somalia and Somaliland

Somalia—the southern and easternmost reaches of what was the Republic of Somalia during the despotic reign of Siad Barre, its last president (1969–1991)—is the least ordered, most volatile, section of the greater Horn of Africa region and the most likely and most obvious locale in which terrorists could gather and from which they could burst forth to spread chaos and devastation. Somalia is a collapsed state—a mere hollow geographical expression—devoid of national government (if not of governance).<sup>6</sup> But that absence alone does not make Somalia a potential bastion of terror. In a number of ways, the implanting of terrorist cells and the free movement of terrorists is always easier



when a nation-state emerges from the chaos of collapse and forms a weak central government. It and its leaders become more rather than less susceptible to the blandishments and intimidations, and even to the arguments and ideologies, of terror and terrorists.

In 2005, Somalia's new Transitional Federal Government was attempting to assert its authority over the vast hinterland northward from the international border with Kenya. But its main battle was with the remaining faction leaders controlling Mogadishu, Kismayo, Merka, and other coastal cities and towns. None of these warlords wanted to be deprived of power and privilege within the various domains that each had managed to dominate during the many years of despoliation since Siad Barre's death. None wanted a new, externally supported government to become legitimate, with its own projection of supremacy. Even if the African Union managed to raise a peace-securing force to accompany the Transitional Government's move from Kenya to Somalia, it was not evident that such a force, or the sheer logic of the new government's existence, could or would prevail.

As Kenneth J. Menkhaus writes in his chapter, with or without a legitimate new governmental authority, and with or without the continuation of warlordism, Somalia presents a very plausible safe haven for terrorists and a potential "perfect storm."<sup>7</sup> There are no customs or immigration inspectors; its beaches and borders remain largely unpatrolled. It is a wild, lawless territory of extreme poverty, now ordered by battle-hardened militiamen. Moreover, the territory harbors its own radical Islamist organization, and in the absence of any state-provided social and educational services, local communities have welcomed Islamic charities and schools funded from Saudi Arabia and by the emirates of the Gulf. There is a rising anti-Western feeling among a Muslim population suspicious of Ethiopian and other foreign Christians. Yet, as disordered and ungoverned as Somalia remained, through 2003 Al Qaeda had not established a major presence within its old borders. There was too much danger of betrayal and extortion. Few Somalis had joined the movement. Additionally, over time armed conflict had become more localized and less lethal. Criminality was somewhat reduced. The rule of law existed in the form of local shari'a courts.

By 2005, however, Menkhaus detected a strengthening of Islamist power, especially in Mogadishu. Jihadist attacks were increasing. There were more instances of internal terror. The shari'a courts were extending their jurisdiction and in some areas, like Mogadishu, were being used to further the causes and ambitions of radical Islamists such as Hassan Dahir Aweys. More and more schools, mosques, and charities were expressing an anti-Western agenda.

The passage of terrorists across Somali territory was becoming more frequent. Hard-line Somali Islamists, drawing on inter-clan antagonisms, were gaining agency.

Menkhaus explains how Islamic and clan identity and loyalty have, and have not, hitherto been used to mobilize Somalis for jihadist campaigns. He hints at the disarray that may flow from hostility in some sections of Somalia to the domination of the new Federal Government by the Darood clan, especially among rival Hawiye and the Haber Gedir Ayr subclan (and the Mogadishu business and Islamist elites who belong to it). He also predicts that such a minority-run Federal Government, even if it becomes established inside Somalia with African Union support, might paradoxically create a more (not less) hospitable environment for Al Qaeda.

Somaliland, the northern section of greater Somalia whose (internationally unrecognized) borders are congruent with those of the former British mandated territory of the same name, has a strong government (by local standards) and projects security. It has a legal framework, collects taxes, and provides services that approximate reasonable levels of good governance. Its “stability and economic recovery provide a social context less conducive to radicalism.”<sup>8</sup> There is as yet no evidence that Wahhabism or jihadism are active forces. Nor has Al Qaeda established a presence there. Even so, conservative religious practices are growing, along with displays of piety. Recently, too, attacks on foreigners have increased; local radicalism may be intensifying. Geostrategically, Somaliland has a long, easily penetrated flank along the Gulf of Aden. It has few security forces of its own, and must rely on foreign surveillance and assistance.

The recognition of Somaliland as a nation-state in its own right carries many diplomatic perils and would complicate the African and Western desire to see a strong government established in the rest of Somalia. But support of good governance and nation building in Somaliland promises to assist the battle against terrorism now and over the medium term. Given Somaliland’s location, and its order amid the continued chaos of greater Somalia, it behooves Washington, London, and Brussels to craft new policies of aid and backing.

Likewise, if the new Federal Government can broaden its limited clan base and avoid being a tool of Ethiopian meddling, Washington should continue to aid Somali efforts to establish a new government. If successful, this partnership could lead to nation building in Somalia as well as Somaliland. Menkhaus is correct to worry that a strengthened central government could provide openings for the penetration of Al Qaeda. But over the medium term better educated Somalis, strong institutions, a refurbished infrastructure, and eco-

conomic growth are all enemies of Al Qaeda. Somalia cannot remain largely ungoverned forever.

## Djibouti

Although a majority Somali-populated nation, Djibouti's colonial heritage is French. It never endured the misrule of a despot like Siad Barre, or Mengistu Haile Meriam in Ethiopia. It has been remarkably stable since gaining its independence in 1977; France has always maintained a large military presence outside the city of Djibouti and for many years advised ("controlled") the country's treasury. Because Djibouti is now an American and French garrison town, but more so because this diminutive nation-state guards the southern entrance to the Red Sea across from Yemen, it plays a key role in contemporary counterterror operations and will influence the manner in which the region and its neighbors respond to the challenges and opportunities of improved governance. Moreover, IGAD is based in Djibouti. If Yemen were to become a member or an associate member of IGAD, that organization could help significantly to knit the region together and strengthen its existing bulwarks against the rise and spread of terror.

In the battle against terror, the government of Djibouti has been more proactive than others in the region. Despite limited resources, it has removed illegal immigrants for other reasons, shut financial institutions with terrorist links, and cooperated with foreign monitoring and collection operations. Most of all, President Ismail Omar Guelleh has moved determinedly to broker peace in Somalia, especially from 1999 to 2003. He continues to seek to exercise a peacemaking and security-bolstering role among his neighbors and regionally. Washington may wish to find ways to enhance Guelleh's mediation authority for the good of the peoples of the greater Horn of Africa region.

But doing so will also mean assisting Djibouti with improving the living standards and economic, political, and social prospects of its own people. Helping to make Djibouti a developmental showcase would not hurt. The country's greatest need is a reliable source of potable water. Its aquifer is rapidly being depleted and massive investments in modern desalination technology may be justified. With water, Djibouti could successfully irrigate its limited arable land and potentially grow more of its own food

But the people of Djibouti also require viable service and industrial employment opportunities. Creating them would help to mobilize jobs. In Djibouti, as in the region, jobs are at a premium. Creating opportunities for gainful employment is one of the more obvious and most likely methods of

reducing the attractiveness of Al Qaeda and similar forms of terrorism. Djibouti could be developed as a regional transportation hub: its port and airport facilities (now managed by Dubai) could be expanded and the Addis Ababa railroad could be refurbished and upgraded. Djiboutians also require better educational opportunities in English, as well as in French and Arabic.

From Djibouti's vantage point, writes Lange Schermerhorn in chapter 3 in this volume, everything that happens in the countries of the Horn impacts Djibouti, and conversely, Djibouti's political and economic health and welfare impinges on all of its neighbors. Now, more than ever, Djibouti needs a stable region that is developing in ways that will complement its own potential as a regional services hub. Therefore, policy with regard to Djibouti must be formulated knowing that every action in the region stimulates a reaction. Cooperating and collaborating with other donors to help Djibouti attain its objectives for the delivery of social services, education, and jobs should be an important U.S. policy objective in order to maintain the stability of this major regional entry point.

Washington's stance toward Djibouti should include supporting and advancing the existing UN arms embargo on Somalia, enforced by U.S. and coalition forces; expanding the existing U.S. naval task force that reports to fleet headquarters in Bahrain and operates in the Gulf of Aden; increasing funds and personnel devoted to pursuing the East Africa Counterterrorism Initiative (started in 2003); providing more U.S. Coast Guard assistance to the nations of the region to develop secure ports; strengthening the U.S.- and French-funded De-mining Training Center in Djibouti; and working ever more closely with the French security contingent. Attention to each of these initiatives would acknowledge the linchpin character of Djibouti, an essential ally of the West in the fractured and troubled region of the greater Horn of Africa and Yemen.

## Eritrea

In contrast to organized and stable Djibouti, Eritrea, immediately to the north, is tense and greatly endangered despite an autocratic government. Tightened security under the increasingly repressive regime of President Isaias Afwerki simultaneously guards against the spread of terror and encourages frustrated democratic opponents of the administration to forge links with Islamist extremists. The collapse of the new nation-state's once vibrant economy, and the unresolved bitter and losing war with Ethiopia, have also demoralized Eritreans. Although the government actively discriminates against Pente-

costalists and other new Christians, it also batters Islam, has tried to regiment leading Muslim preachers, and refuses to accept Arabic as an official language—thus drawing the ire of Islamists and radical mosque preachers. For all of these reasons, Eritrea is no longer a reliable bulwark against the spread of terror. Its growing antidemocratic tendencies indeed invite trouble and troublemakers.

Political parties other than the ruling one are banned, most nongovernmental organizations are prohibited, dissent is forcibly discouraged, the media are shackled, evangelical Christian denominations are banned and their churches closed, and private worship is forbidden. Political prisoners—especially editors, journalists, and students—grow in number. Individuals simply disappear. Torture is prevalent. Urban Eritreans believe that their telephones are tapped, that their public conversations are monitored, and that email is intercepted. The national educational and health services are deteriorating. Pastoralism and traditional grazing rights are threatened by government action and by the migration of Christian Tigrinya speakers from the highlands into the western lowlands. The relatively strong infrastructure is decaying. A middle class economy (by African standards) is becoming poor. As Dan Connell notes in chapter 4 in this volume, tight military control masks the “growing alienation of the population from a central government that continues to operate largely through informal and unaccountable structures of power, behind a façade of ineffectual public institutions.”<sup>9</sup>

Once socially and culturally vibrant, Eritrea has regressed toward the mean of African despotisms thanks to the increasingly cranky, personal, heavy-handed rule of Isaias. Opposition groups, nearly all clandestine, are gaining support. Secular groups are active and credible, especially those affiliated with the Eritrean Democratic Alliance, some of whose member organizations are based in Ethiopia. The Alliance is committed to the armed overthrow of the Isaias regime. Armed Islamists are based in neighboring Sudan, where they draw adherents and fighters from the ranks of impoverished Eritreans who have crossed the border. The government in the Sudan backs them in part for ideological reasons, in part because the Eritreans are backing rebels in Darfur. These Eritrean Islamists may also have ties to and receive financing from Al Qaeda. Whether or not Osama bin Laden’s associates befriend them, ensuing battles and likely future national instability will offer some cover to terrorist alliances between the enemies of Isaias and Saudi- or Yemen-based fundamentalists. Connell suggests that Eritrea may be plunged into civil war before 2008, thus adding further instability to a volatile neighborhood. He also warns Washington, allied as it is against the spread of terror to the Isaias government,

prudently to distance itself from what may soon become a weakened and heavily compromised ally. A proactive, aggressive policy opposing the suppression of liberties and promoting internal democracy would be wise. Connell's twenty-two guidelines for U.S. action promote internal reforms, and if enacted would benefit Eritreans as a whole and measurably harden the shields against terror.

## Ethiopia

Ethiopia is under attack from local anti-regime terrorists, as well as from some who are based in Somalia. None of the Ethiopia-based groups has known ties to Al Qaeda or to any other variant of internationally sponsored terror. It is a strong, determined nation-state, too, with distinctive cultures and a long suspicion of foreigners—all positive defensive attributes against the spread of terror from neighbors or from Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, Ethiopia's many inherent weaknesses may provide convenient openings for the spread of opportunistic terrorism. It has long, porous land borders with five volatile countries, several of whom harbor ongoing internal conflicts or—according to the chapters in this book—are about to be consumed by new warfare. It exists on the periphery of a zone of unquestioned danger. Nearly half of its people are Muslim, many resentful of the tight control of the country by Tigrinya-speaking Christians from the north. Wahhabi preachers and teachers are spreading their faith assiduously throughout eastern Ethiopia, establishing new mosques and madrassas with Saudi Arabian funds. Moreover, Ethiopia is large, very poor, and unlettered. There are severe food deficits, thanks to periodic droughts. Its population is growing rapidly, even though the country has the world's fourth highest number of HIV-positive persons (after South Africa, India, and Nigeria). Its infrastructure is weak and fragmented. There is much, in other words, about which non-Tigrinyans can feel resentful, especially given the results of the 2005 election. (David Shinn's chapter 5 in this volume summarizes the flawed results of that election.) There are growing opportunities for externally sponsored subversion and infiltration.

Although Ethiopian Islam has traditionally been dominated by tolerant Sufi brotherhoods and clerics, and the Christian government has embraced Islamic holy days and generally been evenhanded in its attitude to local Islam, in recent years the clash between intolerant orthodoxy and the heterodox Ethiopian forms of Islam has become sharp. The Wahhabist-influenced preachers and their followers have opposed Sufi practices and the syncretic quality of home-grown Ethiopian Islam. Tombs of Sufi sheikhs, for example,

have been desecrated, the Wahhabists claiming that these and similar forms of idolatrous veneration are permeated with pagan sentiment. Backed by wealthy patrons in Saudi Arabia and the states of the Persian Gulf, there has been a steady influx of radical Islamism, largely spread by Wahhabi-controlled charities through mosques and madrassas. Despite such growing animosities, the Ethiopian government has not yet seriously tried to curtail the spread of fundamentalism from Saudi Arabia and elsewhere.

Although Ethiopia is not likely to be the target of an Al Qaeda-sponsored terrorist strike, in the medium term its lamentable inability to deliver meaningful political goods suggests that the battle against terrorism in the country must and will be fought by improving governance and through major efforts of creative nation building. Any initiatives that reduce social inequality and build bridges between mutually hostile ethnic and religious groups will help to limit the appeal of terrorists. So, too, will actions that reduce poverty, increase the number of schools and places of education, enhance the delivery of health services, and provide more phone and Internet availability. New roads are also essential to permit the flow of commerce and reduce the price of goods in outlying areas, both Muslim and Christian. U.S. and European donors should help the regime of President Meles Zenawi to realize such goals for their own sake, as well as to combat terrorism.

Ethnic tensions are likely always to bedevil a country as large as Ethiopia, and they do so despite, or even because of, Meles' willingness to devolve increments of power to the provinces. Ethiopia consists of eighty-five ethnicities, several of which attack each other but do not and would not provide a subversive beachhead for Al Qaeda outposts. However, Somali in the Ogaden and elsewhere have always expressed separatist sentiments. So have Afar (shared with Djibouti and Eritrea) and Oromo, situated as the latter are in the heart of the nation-state. Many nationalist Oromo seek Oromia, a future polity on its own. Many Oromo have joined or covertly support one of several ethnic political parties. One such is based in Eritrea and occasionally attacks Ethiopian forces. The Ethiopians regard these dissidents as terrorists.

Irredentist nationalists, whether Oromo or Somali, might very well seek support from Al Qaeda or forge links to terrorists in one or more of the neighboring countries. The Eritrean and Sudanese governments doubtless fund some of these groups. In any event, both of those regimes and some of the Somali warlords have reason enough to dislike and act by proxy against the Meles administration. In the 1990s, there were a number of attempted assassinations and hotel bombings. In this century, a warehouse on the railroad between Addis Ababa and Djibouti has been bombed. There was an attack on

the Dire Dawa railroad station. Bombs have gone off in Addis Ababa and elsewhere. More of these kinds of acts will occur; Ethiopian security forces are sufficiently strong to suggest that a cascade of such events, leading to pronounced instability within the country, is unlikely. Yet, as the waters of tranquility are increasingly being roiled, so externally driven terrorists are able increasingly to take advantage of revealed chinks in the regime's armor.

U.S. and EU counterterror efforts should obviously be directed at helping Ethiopian (and regional) security teams to upgrade their own capabilities, supplying technical forms of assistance, and stepping up existing methods of surveillance and intelligence sharing. The United States and the EU also should encourage the government of Ethiopia to pay closer attention to extremist insinuations into Muslim communities. Most of all, they must develop ingenious ways to help the Meles administration govern more effectively, democratize, reduce corruption, and spend ever more generous sums to ameliorate the lives of urban and rural Ethiopians.

## The Sudan

With the signing in early 2005 of a comprehensive peace agreement between the Islamist military government of the Sudan and the southern Sudan People's Liberation Movement, the war-ravaged country could focus for the first time in three decades on the spread of peace across the South, the distribution of significant political goods to southerners, and the knitting together of North and South within a context of renewed partnership. At least, those are among the foremost goals of the negotiated compromise that may or may not keep North and South together beyond a six-year grace period; lead to the delivery of enhanced health, education, and human services to southerners; create numerous new jobs; and reduce both warfare and the possibility of terrorism across the vast reaches of the Sudan.

The UN subsequently authorized the recruitment and dispatch of a 10,000 person peacekeeping contingent to monitor the several complicated demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration provisions of the peace agreement.<sup>10</sup> The UN resolved, over the protests of the government of the Sudan, to try Sudanese perpetrators in the Darfur conflict before the bar of the International Criminal Court. But the UN, in late 2005, was still leaving almost all direct action to end the Sudan's war in its westernmost province of Darfur to a limited force of weakly mandated African Union monitors and to desultory AU negotiating efforts led by Nigeria and Chad. If the battles in Darfur between rebel groups and marauding camel-borne raiders funded and emboldened



by the Khartoum government can also be brought to a peaceful close in 2005, and the main perpetrators punished, then the entire Sudan (including the embattled Beja areas in the east) will be able to focus on economic and social betterment rather than on killing, exploitation, looting, and finding advantage. Such a focus will also prevent potential terrorists, or resumed contacts with Al Qaeda, from gaining traction. Stability is the most effective enemy of terror. So is good governance and economic growth.

The Sudan has long been a failed state, beset by relentless combat and fatally undermined by governments antagonistic to popular participation and to broad social achievements. Since 1989 an intolerant, suspicious military junta has ruled with a heavy hand. Until 1999, its leaders were also thoroughly in thrall to a severe strain of Islamist doctrine. Although those Islamist strictures are now less influential than before, they and the continuing intra-regime tensions over orthodoxy continue to inhibit the Sudanese authorities from providing most of the positive political goods of modern governance to their disparate peoples, and from treating non-Arab Sudanese as beneficently as Arab Sudanese from the dominant North. Once the United States, the European Union, the African Union, and UN end the war in Darfur by cajoling or sanctioning Khartoum, then the United States and the EU may be poised to encourage improved governance.

Such attention to political goods and governance, and to the modern development of the Sudan more generally, would surely provide medium-term barriers to the spread of terrorism. That Al Qaeda was once based in the Sudan does not mean that, as such, it can return. The country is still listed by Washington as a sponsor of terrorists (even though the Sudan has now signed all twelve international conventions against terrorism and seems to have shut the offices of Hamas in Khartoum). However, given the abrasive and authoritarian quality of the current regime, given profound contemporary internal instability, and given the ongoing confrontations with Ethiopia and Eritrea, endless opportunities for outside interference and infiltration remain. And as Timothy Carney notes in chapter 6 in this volume, reducing the internal cohesion and power of the Islamists who now govern the Sudan might offer an opening to even more radical forces within Sudanese Islam. That is a dilemma that can only be managed by fully understanding the several powerful tendencies that compete for hegemony within northern Sudan. For this intricate nest of reasons, the powers of the West need more rather than fewer diplomatic and listening posts in the Sudan. Washington must find means to become more rather than less influential in Khartoum. An effective policy of tough love rather than any new warm embrace of the current Sudanese regime

would be appropriate, if difficult to achieve or to calibrate. Without such a new approach to the problems of the Sudan, the battle against terror cannot be won.

## Yemen

Of all of the nation-states discussed in this book, Yemen would seem to provide the most propitious setting for infiltration by Al Qaeda and the spread of jihadism. Robert Burrowes suggests in chapter 7 in this book that Yemen could “become a major incubator and exporter” of transnational revolutionary political Islam.<sup>11</sup> Yemen faces both west and south to Africa and east and north into the Arabian kingdoms. Its long, troubled, and contentious border with Saudi Arabia allows for the relatively free movement of persons and weapons. Al Qaeda sympathizers and potential sympathizers are presumably present in the trackless eastern regions of Yemen and the rugged hinterland north of Aden, as well as in cities and towns. Moreover, the country’s government, tough and careful though it is, does not fully control all of its distant marches. Nor does it exert unquestioned dominance over its national periphery.

Nevertheless, Yemen has been partially immunized against the rise of revolutionary political Islam and terrorism by a pervasive attitude of traditional conservatism. Islamic fundamentalism was never a pillar of the policies or society of Yemen; the country never embraced Saudi support for Wahhabism and, indeed, Yemen distrusts almost any reactionary and radical impulses that stem from its much wealthier neighbor. Its government has also been careful to monitor the activities of individual Yemenis, radicalized and battle hardened after returning from Afghanistan, Algeria, and elsewhere. Al Qaeda’s attacks in Aden and along the coast further aroused official concerns.

Yemen doubtless contains Al Qaeda cells. The southern port of Aden is more cosmopolitan than the capital, Sanaa, and more open to foreigners and foreign influences. Yemeni security forces, supported by and cooperating with U.S. agencies and with CJTF-HOA, follow these cells, intercept some terrorist operatives, and have thwarted possible attacks similar to those on the USS *Cole* and the *Limburg*, a French oil tanker. That battle against Al Qaeda cadres will continue, particularly as Yemeni and U.S. detachments come to work ever more closely with one another and with authorities in Oman and Saudi Arabia.

But, as in all of the countries discussed in this volume, the broader battle against Al Qaeda and the spread of terrorism must be fought largely on the nonmilitary front. Burrowes terms Yemen’s economy “not viable”; major reforms are required if the regime’s legitimacy, and support for the current ruling political coalition, are to be sustained. Yemenis are desperately poor, with

a per capita GDP of \$332 and low levels of life expectancy (high levels of infant mortality), few and poor schools, high unemployment (at least 40 percent), and a deficient infrastructure.<sup>12</sup> Most of the country is desperately short of water. The United States should assist Yemen in providing better educational opportunities and new sources of potable water. Yemen has vast need for medical and other social services as well. Most of all, large numbers of new jobs must be created, here and in the other countries discussed, if the aspirations of the youthful majorities are to be satisfied, even appeased.

There is little good governance. Despite a veneer of modernity, Yemen is still a traditional society, especially in terms of institutional capacity, political freedom, and the rule of law. Helping the government to begin to address these problems, and to begin a gradual process of greater adherence to international democratic norms, would strengthen Yemen's ability to counter the appeal of bin Laden and like forces in the medium term. As Burrowes reports, "Yemen is not now a very democratic country, and much of its democracy is more apparent than real . . . with shallow foundations."<sup>13</sup> Only under favorable conditions, and conceivably with nuanced and light-handed foreign guidance, will Yemen evolve into a truly democratic polity.

President Ali Abdullah Salih, who has cooperated with the United States' global and regional counterterrorism endeavors, has run Yemen for twenty-seven years. He heads an oligarchy with strong tribal, commercial, and security connections. It is corrupt and corrupted (Burrowes calls Yemen a kleptocracy) and remains in place thanks to patronage and official licenses to steal. Washington should be aware of the kind of regime to which it is allied, and to some extent dependent upon. If Washington could ease Yemen toward more democratic practices, the medium-term battle for the hearts and minds of Yemenis, and therefore for a marginalization of sympathizers with extreme Islam, would correspondingly be boosted.

## Kenya

No country in the greater Horn of Africa and Yemen region is as important to, and has had such a persistent record of strong relations with, the United States as Kenya. A staunch ally during the long presidencies of Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi, Kenya has been an equally reliable friend of Washington under the new administration led by President Mwai Kibaki and Vice President Moody Awori. Moreover, Kenya is the economic powerhouse of East Africa and greater Horn of Africa regions, if currently only faltering, and their air and sea transportation hub. Flawed though its recent performance has been, Kenya also is a beacon of democracy for both regions. The Sudan's peace

pact was negotiated over several years in Kenya, and with Kenyan help (on behalf of IGAD). And further testifying to Kenya's critical diplomatic role, so were many of the arrangements connected with the creation of the Transitional Federal Government for Somalia, whose leaders were based in Nairobi.

For those reasons and many others, Kenya has always provided a tempting target to those wanting to attack Western interests and friends of the West. Since the country contains several tourist destinations, American warships visit Mombasa, there is a new U.S. embassy in Nairobi, and Americans, Europeans, and Israelis provide appealing targets, Kenya and the U.S. are joined together in the continuing battle against both externally based and home-grown terrorism.

Because the Muslims and Somali living on Kenya's coast are essentially marginalized politically and economically within the country, because Kenya's economy is growing too slowly to absorb the legions of frustrated job-seeking school leavers, and because of high levels of corruption and crime, radical Islamism and jihadists in general have found Kenya a fertile recruiting ground. Johnnie Carson reports in chapter 8 in this volume that one or two Al Qaeda-affiliated cells have operated within Kenya for more than a decade, with Kenyan nationals and family members being implicated in terrorist attacks. Additionally, several of Al Qaeda's senior leaders have regularly transited Kenya.<sup>14</sup>

The terrorist threat is more palpable in Kenya than in other parts of the greater Horn of Africa region and Yemen. There are more enticing targets. Finding supporters is comparatively easy because of widespread alienation, and resentment by coastal Muslims of their up-country rulers. In order to avoid renewed attacks, the United States and Britain are actively helping to train Kenyan security forces, have strengthened their own local intelligence capabilities, and are training and equipping the Kenyans to watch the Indian Ocean littoral. But much of Kenya's day-to-day preventive capacity will always be contingent on its easily bribable police personnel, and on Kenyan infiltration of clandestine cells. Forestalling terrorist atrocities and physically preventing the growth of an Al Qaeda core in Kenya thus remains a difficult work in progress.

An equally taxing problem is how best to remediate the underlying, long-term social, political, and economic conditions that may predispose some Kenyans to express their frustrations through terrorist acts. Carson writes that opportunities and hope are drying up along the coast of Kenya, especially for politically vulnerable young men. So they have turned to the Middle East for work, for training, for religious education, and for succor. Returning, they have brought Islamist approaches and sympathies, built new mosques and

madrassas, and imported new preachers. Improved governance is the obvious answer to the overall problem in the medium term. If the Kenyan government could be persuaded and assisted by the United States to build and staff schools and clinics along the coast, to pay more attention to the other needs of the coastal peoples, and to give a greater political role to their representatives, that could help. So could the steady creation of jobs and more jobs. These same kinds of initiatives are necessary in the Somali and Giriama areas of northeastern Kenya, if much more difficult to achieve. Overall, too, if the Kibaki administration provided more and better political goods for all of its citizens—if it achieved a reputation for good governance and fairness (a robust rule of law would be useful)—Kenya could over the medium term become a less fertile ground for the spread of Al Qaeda–like tendencies.

### A Safer and More Secure Region

The countries of the greater Horn of Africa region and Yemen will remain places of intrigue and danger for the foreseeable future. The United States and the European Union will not enjoy the luxury of again neglecting or slighting its peoples and governments. There is too much at stake, no matter what happens in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria. Indeed, even if Osama bin Laden should be captured and the back of mysterious Al Qaeda broken, the short- and medium-term threats against the region will not vanish.

Each country is fragile, some with weak governments and economies, some with autocratically strong (and thus potentially implusive) governments and poor or stagnant economic prospects. The greater Horn of Africa region and Yemen is typified by poor governance—the insufficient provision of political goods in terms of quality and quantity. Security is largely problematic, rule of law questionable, and political freedom wanting. There is much to be done.

The inhabitants of the region seek lives that are less brutish and more rewarding for themselves and their young people. In the battle to alleviate poverty, provide more education and better health outcomes, and enhance broad political participation, the United States and other donors must redouble their efforts. They can develop imaginative new ways to support and inspire local efforts. They can devise regional as well as country-by-country responses to critical needs. All such endeavors are also a part of the real battle against terrorism.

So will be Washington's own battle for attention to this region. Whereas twenty or so years ago this area commanded more official resources and personnel than it now does, today there are few diplomatic or other listening posts, few knowledgeable analysts, few intelligence specialists, and few persons

in government possessing critical language skills. The tiny Combined Joint Task Force, the East Africa Counterterrorism Initiative, naval visits, and other forms of surveillance can only go so far. The United States can and will help the region upgrade its counterterror and security operations, especially at harbors and airports, but its more profound task is to help inoculate the ground against the spread of terrorist sympathizers. That means winning hearts and minds, which—for victory in the ultimate combat against Al Qaeda and terrorism—means helping to strengthen governance and improve the life prospects of all of the inhabitants of this crucial and endangered region.

## Notes

1. Fifty-five percent of the people in the region are Muslims, according to the Department of State's *International Religious Freedom Report* (2004) and the latest edition of the *CIA Factbook*. Coptic Catholics in Ethiopia and Eritrea, Roman Catholics in the Sudan and Kenya, followers of traditional religions in the Sudan and Kenya, and Pentecostal and other Protestant groups in all countries, plus Jews in Ethiopia, account for the remaining 45 percent.

2. For valuable essays that complement much of the discussion in this book, see Alex de Waal (ed.), *Islamism and Its Enemies in the Horn of Africa* (Bloomington, 2004). A less profound but nevertheless helpful, largely historical commentary is contained in Shaul Shay (trans. Rachel Liberman), *The Red Sea Triangle: Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and Islamic Terror* (New Brunswick, 2005).

3. This and the ensuing discussion of governance and political goods draws heavily upon Robert I. Rotberg, "The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States: Breakdown, Prevention, and Repair," in Rotberg (ed.), *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton, 2004), 3–5.

4. In 2004, Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index of 145 world nations ranked Eritrea 102, Yemen 112, Ethiopia 114, the Sudan 122, and Kenya 129. Cameroon, Iraq, and Pakistan joined Kenya at the corrupt end of the scale. (Djibouti and Somalia were not ranked, for lack of data.) See [www.transparency.org/cpi/2004/cpi2004.en.html](http://www.transparency.org/cpi/2004/cpi2004.en.html).

5. Health statistics are from the World Development Indicators database (World Bank, 2001).

6. See Rotberg, "Failure and Collapse," 9–10.

7. Kenneth J. Menkhaus, "Somalia and Somaliland: Terrorism, Political Islam, and State Collapse," chapter 2 in this volume, p. 38.

8. Menkhaus, "Somalia and Somaliland," p. 38.

9. Dan Connell, "Eritrea: On a Short Fuse," chapter 4 in this volume, p. 66.

10. For details, see Robert I. Rotberg, "Sudan and the War in Darfur," *Great Decisions 2005* (New York, 2005), 57–67.

11. Robert D. Burrowes, "Yemen: Its Political Economy and the Effort against Terrorism," chapter 7 in this volume, p. 141.

12. World Bank, "World Development Indicators" (2003). The figure cited is GDP per capita in constant 1995 U.S. dollars.

13. Burrowes, "Yemen," p. 144. The official U.S. government view of Yemen's democracy is more benign.

14. Johnnie Carson, "Kenya: The Struggle against Terrorism," chapter 8 in this volume.