Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Rim

Chapter 12

Sources of African Terrorism

- Difficult to single out terrorism in Africa
  - Source of conventional and guerrilla wars, several revolutions, and criminal violence
- Multitude of problems plaguing Africa
  - Poverty
    - Most poverty-stricken region on earth
    - Sub-Saharan portion has negative economic growth
  - Health conditions
    - Worst on the planet
    - AIDS pandemic is creating havoc
  - Child soldiers
  - Slavery
- Terrorism is one problem among many in Africa

Sources of African Terrorism (cont.)

- The center of the continent is plagued by tribal strife
- The Horn of Africa (HOA)—the eastern section bordered by Red Sea and Indian Ocean—witnesses religious and ethnic conflicts
- Southwestern coastal countries along the Atlantic ocean are involved in struggles for resources
- Thomas P.M. Barnett believes the long-term solution to most African violence, including terrorism, is to bring economic development and stabilization
African Oil Regions

- In sub-Saharan Africa, most of the oil resources are located in the west
- The oil is sweet crude
  - Has a lower concentration of sulfur and is easier/cheaper to refine
- The oil fields are closer to the US East Coast than the Middle East
  - Reduces transportation costs
- Africa is increasing its oil production

African Oil Regions (cont.)

- US foreign policy has focused on Jihadists and the areas where Jihadists are most prevalent
  - While this is important, it misses areas where Jihadists have tremendous potential and other areas where the can move without scrutiny
- This occurs in West and Central Africa
  - Criminal networks are in league with corrupt leaders
  - Governments and rebels struggle for power
  - Jihadists exploit these situations

African Oil Regions (cont.)

- Nigeria is home to 67 million Muslims
  - Second largest Islamic country in Africa behind Egypt
- U.S. has not paid attention to the violence in Nigeria or the rest of West Africa
  - From 1999 to 2003, fighting between Muslim north and Christian south claimed 10,000 lives
  - The conflict did not involve established terrorist cells, but it is so deeply rooted in the community that terrorism could easily result from tensions
African Oil Regions (cont.)

- Liberia, another country in the region, presents a second example of misguided US policy
  - Faced with criminal networks, corrupt leaders, and local military adventurers, Liberia is emerging from a long civil war
- Lyman & Morrison argue that when a state fails, it creates a haven for terrorist groups

African Oil Regions (cont.)

- West Africa is a region that is delicately balanced between moderate Islam and an undercurrent of Jihadism
- If the US, and the West in general, would approach the area to ensure economic stability, fair and democratic elections, and an end to corruption, a political crisis could be averted
- In the central region of Africa, large tribal conflicts and lack of governmental control have created large lawless areas
  - Jihadists have exploited this

African Oil Regions (cont.)

- Another potential problem in Central and West Africa is the Big Man
  - Single autocratic rulers may become excellent allies, but they do so at the expense of the people
- When Western gov’t.s support a Big Man, they frequently incur the wrath of the common people
- A strong autocratic ruler may be the best ally in the world—they all fall sometime—there is no guarantee the next gov’t. will maintain the old alliances
- Many Africans believe that the US will ally with gov’t.s that have poor human rights records, if that gov’t. supports anti-terrorism efforts
**African Oil Regions (cont.)**

- Congressional Research Service
  - US Government is aware that Africa represents potential bases for terrorism
- Great Britain has maintained moral and humanitarian approach to Africa
  - Its primary foreign policy efforts have been aimed at expanding economic development and increasing human rights
- France has maintained an African policy that sharply differs from that of either the US of the UK
  - Faced with colonial revolts after WW II, France created a special military unit known as the French Cell
  - Its purpose was to extend French influence in the oil- and mineral-rich areas of Africa

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**Terrorism in the Horn**

- If Central and West Africa represent the potential for terrorists, terrorists are active in the Horn of Africa (HOA)
  - Many known Jihadist organizations in the Horn
  - Kenya has known Al Qaeda cells
- Post 9-11, US worked with gov’ts in the region to create the Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA)
  - The CJTF-HOA detects and disrupts terrorist activities before they occur
  - The CJTF-HOA relies heavily on military force and national security intelligence
- Working with other military forces, the CJTF-HOA has successfully struck numerous targets

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**Terrorism in the Horn (cont.)**

- Terrorism in the Horn will remain problematic
  - Porous borders
  - Lax security
  - Political instability
Terrorism in the Horn (cont.)

Debra West
- The US is facing differing terrorist threats in the Horn of Africa (HoA), and each threat requires a different policy response
  - The threat of the ability of terrorist groups to take immediate action
  - The threat of the ability of terrorist groups, especially Jihadists, to organize in the region
  - The threats of:
    - Unstable political environments and;
    - A population that supports terrorism against the US and its allies

The former Bush administration had tended to militarize the problem of terrorism

There are differing opinions as to the most viable approach to dealing with terrorism in the Horn
- Feickert:
  - CJTF-HOA has been successful and should be used as a model against war on terrorism
- Prendergast & Thomas-Jensen:
  - Horn represents hottest war zone in the world
  - More than the CJTF-HOA is required
  - U.S. involvement has made situation worse

International Crisis Group (ICG) maintains that the U.S. stereotypes Muslims who want to live under Islamic Law as Jihadists

Islamic Courts Union (ICU)
- Took power in Somalia for short period of time in 2006
- Is not a Jihadist organization
- Tribal confederation of leaders tired of continuous warfare and criminal activity in Somalia
- If U.S. treats the ICU as a terrorist organization, it will transform into a Jihadist organization