

# SCREEN WATCH



GEOSTRATEGIC FORSIGHT  
SECURITY MONITORING  
COUNTER-TERRORISM  
RESISTANCE TO EXTREMISM

01 - MAY 2019

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## LUXEMBOURG

# The new financial hub of the Muslim Brotherhood

**EXCLUSIVE**

After London and Geneva, recent revelations have brought to light that a new financial nerve centre is being coveted by the nebulous financier linked to the Muslim Brotherhood. It concerns Luxembourg, another European country which subscribes to banking secrecy.

It has been known for a long time that the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg is a financial centre open to 'Islamic finance'. It welcomes openly 'Islamic' financial groups, such as the 'Faisal Finance Luxembourg' and the 'Dar Al Mal Al Islami Trust' (DMI Trust). These groups are well established and work in complete legality. Yet, this is not the case for other entities linked to the nebulous financier of the *Muslim Brotherhood*, which cultivates circumvention and secrecy.

The financial backers who act as figureheads for *Tanzim al-Dawli*, the international branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, now avoid establishing openly Islamic financial institutions, for fear of attracting suspicion. This was the case, in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, for the *Al Taqwa* bank, founded and managed by the mystery treasurer of the *Muslim Brotherhood*, Youssef Nada.

To guard against such risks, the financial backers of the *Muslim Brotherhood* currently operate a kind of financial *taqiyya* (deception), in the form of an entryism which enables them to discretely infiltrate financial groups to all appearances 'smooth', whose respectability is undoubted and who have no apparent links to 'Islamic finance.'

The most recent revelations on this subject concern the investment fund 'Eurozone Equity Company SA', one of the most flourishing financial actors in the Luxembourgian financial centre, which holds assets in the most prestigious investments in the Euro zone. A recent investigation has established that several investors, who have long been known as being clandestine financiers of the *Muslim Brotherhood*, are members of 'Eurozone Equity Company SA' Board of directors.

The main one amongst them is the Egyptian Gamal Attia. A major figure in *Tanzim al-Dawli*, close to Youssef Nada, he was the founder of the 'International Islamic Bank of Luxembourg', connected to the *Muslim Brotherhood* (dissolved in 1994). Alongside him we find another Egyptian, no less well-known, Abdelatif Sayed, former Director of 'Solidarity Takafol SA', a Luxembourg insurance company, also criticised for its connections with the *Muslim Brotherhood*.

According to our sources, the Eurozone Equity Company's Board of Directors includes also two investors from Bahrain, equally known for their links with the *Muslim Brotherhood*: Ahmed Abdulla Bucherry and Ziad Hassan Rawashdeh. ●

## IRAN - GULF STATES

# New Pasdaran department targeting personalities in the Gulf

● An Iranian confidential source revealed to a Western intelligence agency the recent creation of a new department within the Pasdarans, the guardians of the Iranian revolution, dedicated exclusively to clandestine operations

targeting personalities from Gulf countries.

Gholam Shakuri, the officer appointed at the head of this department, is wanted by the American FBI, for his attempt in 2011 to assassinate the then Saudi Arabian am-

bassador in Washington, the current Minister of Foreign Affairs, Adel al-Jubeir.

Shakuri's name has also appeared in other investigations regarding activities aimed at destabilizing the Bahraini regime. ●

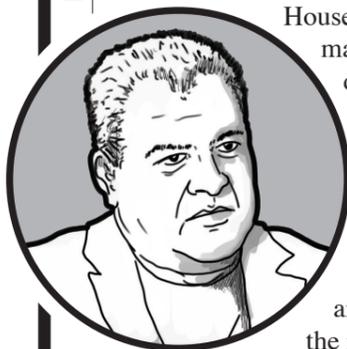
## Why turn the SCREEN WATCH back on?

The world is going through a turbulent period. One of these grey areas of history which Antonio Gramsci described, with the foresight for which he is known, as those moments of twilight from which monsters emerge, when the old world is dying and the new world is slow to be born.

And one of the appalling symptoms of this gestation is the perversion of humanist values, to the benefit of hate speech that resurfaces under a new guise which does not in any way change its abject nature: racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, ethnic and religious extremism.

Thus, hateful thought and speech are not only made free, they also – and this is the most terrifying – become commonplace. As a result, hate speech is no longer found only among the margins and the extremes, it is increasingly contaminating the entire socio-political chessboard.

Absolute proof of this perversion of values is that, as “leader of the free world”, the impulsive new resident of the White House has turned xenophobia, populism and narcissistic madness into the new foundations of US policy and diplomacy!



Similarly, we can only watch with consternation as the old anti-Semitic demons seek to cover themselves in impossible respectability, by flying the flags of false true-seeming left-wing values. They exploit the just Palestinian cause and anti-Zionism (which, although some may argue, is not a form of anti-Semitism!) to promote the most abject Judeophobic impulses. Of course, it is

abusive to want to link any criticism of Israeli policy with this abject line of thought, as some zealots are prone to do.

And it is according to this same process of reversals and perversions of values that the Muslim Brotherhood – the headquarters of all Islamist extremists – while claiming a supposedly moderate and “middle-ground” Islamism, continues to weave its global web aimed at imposing on the world a sectarian and supremacist doctrine in which the Other (non-Muslims, even when they are fellow citizens) may only ever be a submissive subject!

This publication, the SCREEN WATCH, and the global-watch-analysis.com website of which it is an emanation, are intended as tools for monitoring and alerting against all of these forms of extremism and in particular against the usurpation of our humanist values, the fundamental values that constitute the civilizational foundation of peace, fraternity, equality and coexistence. ●

## CONFIDENTIAL

## Where is Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the enigmatic leader of ISIS?

Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, the enigmatic emir leader of ISIS, who has not appeared in public since 2014, recently published a long propaganda video message. An apparition that has revived speculations about where the so-called caliph is buried since the fall of his stronghold of Raqqa.

According to several human sources close to Daesh, recently arrested by Kurdish forces, interrogated by the US, French and Jordanian special services, al-Baghdadi reportedly stayed between October 2018 and February 2019 in the city of Boukamal, before retreating to the region of Anbar. According to the Turkish secret intelligence organization (MIT), the ISIS chief also reportedly envisaged African relief routes, in Sudan or Somalia.

In the hunt for al-Baghdadi, Iranian services are also very active. A team from the al-Quds Force has been deployed in Syria, especially for this purpose. The goal of the Iranian shadow diplomacy is to get to the front, before the others, over the leader of Daesh, to prove that the Islamic republic can contribute effectively to the fight against terrorism. ●

Read on our website [www.global-watch-analysis.com](http://www.global-watch-analysis.com) a detailed analysis of Al-Baghdadi's latest video

## IRANIAN NUCLEAR ISSUE Israeli intelligence establishes secret bases in Azerbaijan

The government of Azerbaijan has recently agreed to establish on its territory permanent secret bases for Israeli intelligence agents whose activities will be directed against Iran. A development which worries the Tehran authorities at the

highest levels, all the more so that the Israeli commando who in April 2018 made off with over 500 kgs of archives on Iranian nuclear power (around 55,000 pages of secret documents) had secretly operated from Azerbaijan. ●

## Wave of Ramadan-related attacks?

European anti-terrorist services fear a new wave of jihadist attacks during the month of Ramadan. Communications captured and exchanges on social networks show that ISIS is trying to galvanize its supporters, encouraging them to take action during the holy month and more precisely during its last ten days.

In addition, European services fear that Ramadan will also be an opportunity for a resurgence on the international terrorist scene of the al-Qaeda organisation. They point out precisely that the latest messages from Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of al-Qaeda, show that he is fixated on the need to hit targets in Europe and more specifically in France and Spain. ●

## How jihadists finance themselves through migration trafficking

According to a report by a major European intelligence centre, the various Libyan militias have raised more than €520 million in one year by organising or facilitating the smuggling of African migrants to Europe.

This proximity between migration trafficking and Libyan militias, some of which are jihadist in nature, is a growing concern for the anti-terrorist services. This very lucrative trade not only gives the militias considerable manna, which they use to arm themselves and finance subversive activities. It also provides them with privileged access to operational channels that they could use to infiltrate jihadist elements responsible for carrying out attacks in Europe among migratory flows. ●

## YEMEN Iranian suicide drones at the hands of the Houthis

According to an internal UN report, the al-Quds force within the Iranian Pasdaran continues to deliver turnkey suicide drones to Houthi militias in Yemen, these include attack drones named Qasef-1. According to the report, Iran even directs some of these drones' operations via satellite. To this end, the Iranian electronic ship Saviz regularly sails in Yemeni territorial waters. ●

## LEBANON - ISRAEL Hezbollah could target Dimona power plant in the event of an Israeli attack

According to an internal source in Lebanese Hezbollah, engineers from the special operations department of this pro-Iranian movement have been working for two years to develop a secret operation to retaliate against Israel in the event of a military attack.

This operation led by Talal Hamiyah, one of the figures of Hezbollah's foreign services, consists in setting up a ballistic missile system to bring down a missile rain in the vicinity of the Israeli nuclear power plant in Dimona. ●

## DEFENCE TECHNOLOGIES China modifies Kilo Russian submarines

According to a source specializing in defence technologies, China has managed to modify and extend by about 15 metres a Russian-made submarine of the Kilo class, also known in military jargon as «project 8777EKM».

Two hypotheses are being considered by the experts to explain the aims of this modification: to equip the submarine with an Air Independent Power (AIP) propulsion system; or to create a compartment for special missions, such as the deployment of combat swimmers or vertical launch tubes for cruise missiles. ●

## HEZBOLLAH - AFRICA

# George Clooney investigates the finances of the «party of God»!

The American foundation The Sentry, chaired by the movie star George Clooney, recently hired a massive investigations partner regarding secret Hezbollah investments in several African countries, especially Gambia and Congo Kinshasa.

The Sentry Foundation, with an annual budget of 15 million dollars, is known to have conducted major investigations into corruption and war crimes in Sudan and South Sudan, but also in the Central African Republic and Congo Brazzaville.

The investigations of this foundation into Hezbollah's secret investments in Africa come just at the right time and will be important at the moment when US authorities prepare to launch a massive action against Hezbollah, with sanctions and asset freezes aimed at the economic inte-

rests of this organization in Africa, Latin America and Lebanon.

According to a confidential American source, this plan of sanctions and freezes jointly developed by the CIA, the FBI and the US Treasury was based mainly on the confessions of the

financier Hezbollah, Kassim Tajideen, arrested in Morocco and extradited to the United States, in March 2017. He pleaded guilty in US courts and revealed detailed listings of financiers and banks acting as intermediaries for Hezbollah's secret investments. ●

### Arms transfer from Syria to Lebanon

To secure the storage of its weapons in Syria, Hezbollah has set up a specialized service called «Unit 108». This unit monitors the secret deposits where are stocked weapons supplied by Iran to Hezbollah.

Two types of repositories have been created: the first one, dedicated to weapons known as «usual» weapons, dedicated to Hezbollah operations in Syria, these repositories are located in Douma and in Adra, in the suburbs of Damascus.

The second one, dedicated to the so-called «reserved» weapons, is located in ultra-secret sites near Aleppo, Homs and Tartous. These are essentially surface-to-air missile repositories, not used for the Syrian conflict. Unit 108 is responsible for transferring these missiles to Hezbollah strongholds in southern Lebanon.

## QATAR CLOSURE

# Intensive lobbying of Doha in United States to counter its neighbours

Since the introduction, in June 2017, of the boycott of Qatar imposed by the moderate Arab coalition (Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Bahrain), the Doha authorities have created a massive and costly lobbying strategy in United States, in order to be listened and improve their image compromised by a multitude of suspicions and accusations of corruption and funding of Islamist extremism.

According to a US confidential document, 20 lobbying societies, law and public relations companies, based in Washington DC or New York, were involved in this Qatari lobbying operation. The most relevant deal refers to the Ashcroft Law Firm, owned by the former prosecutor of United States under the Bush Administration (2001-2005), John Ashcroft, who receives from Qatar a lump sum of 2.5 million dollars per quarter.

The company Avenue Strategies Global LLC received from Qatar, in 2017, monthly remunerations ranging from 150,000

to 750,000 dollars; Information Management Services INC has been collecting 375,000 dollars per month since June 2017; Stonington Strategies, owned by Nick Muzin, former associate of Senator Ted Cruz, receives monthly remunerations from 150,000 to 300,000 dollars.

Six other companies (Venable LLC, Portland PR, Mercury Public Affairs, Nelson Mullings Eiley & Scarborough LLC, Blue Front Strategies, Conover & Gould Strategic Communications) are paid by Qatar between 100,000 and 150,000 dollars per month.

And eight smaller firms (Levick Strategic Communications, Gallagher Group, SGR Government Relations & Lobbying, McDermott Will & Emory, Tigercomm LLC, Husch Blackwell Strategies, Iron Bridge Strategies, Hawksbill Group) earn remunerations of less than 50,000 dollars per month.

Other companies, such as Lumen Advisors or Pillsburg, Winthrop, Shaw & Pittman LLP, charge their services in Qatar on an hourly basis ranging from 500 to 1,000 dollars. ●

## FRANCOPHONE AFRICA

# A new terrorist structure targeting Westerners and investors from the Gulf

According to a confidential European report, al-Qaeda's central command has recently established a specialised structure aimed at reinforcing its presence in francophone Africa. The objective is to create a jihadist front in western Africa, much like those which the Somali al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP) are running in eastern Africa, through their tentacles in Kenya, Tanzania, Zanzibar and Djibouti.

This new structure, targeting francophone Africa, was disclosed by al-Qaeda's Chief Emir, Ayman al-Zawahiri, to two veterans of the jihad, Abu Mohamed al-Masri and Nazir al-Raghib, considered genuine Africa experts, because they are amongst the masterminds behind the attacks on the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998. Apart from the recruitment of local jihadists and the establishment of training bases and fallback zones, this new structure is also active in constructing 'provider cells' consisting of jihadists in possession of documents which enable them to travel without visas in Europe, in order to act as 'drive belt' channels for future terrorist operations targeting the Old Continent.

Several countries are in the sights of this al-Qaeda francophone structure: Mali, Senegal, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso, and Mauritania.

But particular attention is being paid to the countries of the Gulf of Guinea, which could be targeted because of Western oil interests and investments from Arab Gulf states heavily established in this zone. ●

## Libya: Jihadists search for Gaddafi's chemical stockpiles

More and more sources within the European intelligence community cite sustained attempts by jihadist groups aiming to carry out chemical attacks in Europe. To this end, a quite specific source of concern requires the attention of the antiterrorist services. It concerns the ammunition from Gaddafi's chemical arsenal, previously stored in secret military centres in Sabha, the capital of Fezzan.

This desert region, located 600 kilometres to the south of Tripoli, which was a former fiefdom for pro-Gaddafi forces, currently finds itself at the mercy of jihadist groups looking to get their hands on these sensitive arsenals. ●

## Al-Qaeda is trying to blow up mobile phones... remotely!

Eclipsed for a long time by the rise of its rival ISIS, al-Qaeda is working towards carrying out a momentous return to the forefront of the international terrorist stage. Thus a Western intelligence agency has obtained very worrying information highlighting experimental tests undertaken by the organisation led by the Egyptian Ayman al-Zawahiri, with a view to making mobile phones explode, remotely, by using computer viruses. A procedure which al-Qaeda could use to carry out assassinations of prominent figures, or to trigger telephones acting as detonators for explosive charges. ●

## G5 – Sahel: The antiterrorist forces equip themselves with Chinese drones

The G5 – Sahel antiterrorist forces, which have assembled troops from the armies of five countries from the Sahel-Sahara strip (Chad, Niger, Mali, Mauritania and Burkina Faso), has just become equipped with Chinese drones manufactured by the Poly Technologies company. This public Chinese group which specialises in state-of-the-art technologies, civilian and military, is increasingly active in western Africa and Nigeria. ●

## TERRORISM

# ISIS: attack plans using 'cyanide paste'

A confidential report issued by a major intelligence agency brings to light a new form of terrorist threat being considered by Daesh. According to this report, the organisation led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi aims to carry out chemical attacks targeting transport networks in major Western cities.

Defeated in its former bastions in Iraq and Syria, Daesh is looking to avenge itself by instructing chemist students to develop of a new type of attack using thin layers of cyanide paste, capable of being glued to the armrests of aeroplane seats, to the passenger hang straps in buses or to the handrails found in underground trains, in order to poison travellers. This threat is taken all the more seriously in that Daesh has already experimented with similar methods pasted to the door handles of military vehicles in Iraq. ●

## FRANCE

## Cascade of changes at the Élysée

As part of a very unusual and deep diplomatic movement in preparation, more than 68 positions could change holders. Among the most important appointments: Philippe Étienne, the current head of the Élysée's diplomatic cell could be appointed ambassador to Washington. In this case, he would be replaced at the Élysée by Aurélien Lechevallier, the current Deputy Diplomatic Advisor, or Emmanuel Bonne, currently Director of the Cabinet of Jean-Yves Le Drian at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In addition, the Secretary General of the Élysée, Alexis Kohler, could leave for the private sector. Among his potential successors, Nicolas Revel, the current General Manager of the National Health Insurance Fund. He was sitting right next to Emmanuel Macron's office at the Élysée when he was Deputy Secretary General under François Hollande.

The retirement of Admiral Bernard Rogel, Chief of Staff of President Macron, is also in preparation. He could be replaced by General Thierry Burkhard, former military adviser to François Hollande and current Inspector General of the French Army. Another possible candidate is Vice-Admiral Jean-Philippe Rolland, Head of the Naval Action Force. But the Land Force strongly claims the place.

There are also reports of several senior military officials from the Direction du Renseignement Militaire (Directorate of Military Intelligence - DRM) coming to the Élysée. ●

## Large ministerial reshuffle or union government?

President Emmanuel Macron is preparing a major cabinet shuffle that could take place during the summer. The new government will be in charge of implementing the decisions recently announced by the President, but also of actively preparing on the ground the upcoming elections (municipal and regional elections), in an attempt to establish at the local and regional level the networks and support of the President's party, La République en Marche.

In anticipation of this reshuffle, President Macron's relatives say he plans to launch « broad consultations, on the left, the centre and on the right ». However, he has not yet made a final decision on a possible unity or inclusive government. The results of the forthcoming European elections could be decisive in this respect. One thing is certain, President Macron wants to create a new ministry of civil society organizations.

According to the various scenarios, which are still under study, the next Prime Minister could be Jean-Yves Le Drian, Jean-Louis Borloo, Gérald Darmanin or Sébastien Lecornu.

## Sarkozy's Libyan case: the Djibouti chapter!

The judicial part of the Libyan case of former President Nicolas Sarkozy is now being extended to Djibouti. This new twist in the investigation is the work of investigating judge Serge Tournaire, who discreetly heard the financier Wahib Nacer, whose name appeared in the judicial investigations. He is a relative of Alexandre Djouhri's intermediary, himself awaiting a decision from the London court following a French letter rogatory requesting his extradition.

## Renewal at the financial prosecutor's office

Eliane Houlette, the prosecutor in charge of the financial prosecutor's office, will retire. The name of Bruno Dalles, the current head of Tracfin, is mentioned to replace her. The Élysée is also considering the creation of a post of judicial coordinator for corruption cases, in liaison with the police and intelligence services.

## New counter-terrorism structure

At the request of the President Emmanuel Macron, a new anti-terrorist structure is being prepared. This structure will be in charge of better coordinating the monitoring of radicalized individuals appearing in «Fiche S» and other databases on people at risk.

In addition, the Elysée is working on expanding the powers of the departmental evaluation groups on radicalized individuals. Social, academic and medical services will be better associated with the units of analysis of the DGSI, the judicial police and the gendarmerie. And the judges responsible for monitoring young people will be systematically consulted.

The File for the Prevention of Terrorist Radicalization (FSPRT) will be equipped with new logistical and electronic means, including supercomputers.

Another innovation secretly in preparation: the creation, for undercover agents (human intelligence), of a status of «repentant» and «witnesses under protection», such as in the USA.

## COUNTER-TERRORISM

## Who will inherit the new role of the counter-terrorism prosecutor of the republic?

The Élysée is following very closely the creation of a new public prosecutor in charge of the anti-terrorism. A magistrate will be appointed this summer to this key position. Marc Trévidic, the former investigating judge at the anti-terrorism unit of the Paris District Court, is pushed by its peers. But, for the moment, the cabinet of the Ministry of Justice and the legal adviser of the President leans on Jean-François Ricard, the predecessor of Trévidic at the counter-terrorism unit, currently at the court of cassation.

The Directorate for Criminal Matters and Pardons at the Ministry of Justice, pushes for Anne Kostomaroff, a magistrate who already manages, for the Place Vendôme, business related to terrorism, through the AGRASC - Agency for the Recovery and Management of Seized and Confiscated Assets.

According to our sources, in addition to the creation of this key counter-terrorism role, considerable steps are going to take place, very soon, in the judiciary, with important promotions for anti-terrorism judges. ●

## EXCLUSIVE

## Several attacks foiled since October 2018

Several attacks have been foiled in France since last October. In December, a Daesh cell prepared an attack on the demonstrations of yellow vests. Another bombing was planned, from Germany, to target Roissy Charles de Gaulle Airport.

In addition, counter-terrorism services thwarted several planned attacks against schools. The last one took place at the end of March.

According to our sources, the Ministry of the Interior wanted to communicate about this. The second thought related to this decision was to calm the ultras of the yellow vests. But the anti-terrorist services have asked not to reveal information on this subject, not to hinder further investigations.

## Iyad Ag Ghali: anti-French attack plans

Several confidential memos, issued by African and European antiterrorist services, have recently disclosed persistent attempts on the part of the head Malian jihadist Iyad Ag Ghali to mount attack plans targeting French military bases or troops in Africa.

Leader of the Ansar Eddine group, Ag Ghali was elected in March 2017 to become the head of a Choura (or Council) unifying the different jihadist factions in the Sahel (Ansar Eddine, AQIM, MUJAO and Mokhtar Belmokhtar's al-Mourabitoun group), going by the name of the 'Group to Support Islam and Muslims'. Nevertheless, according to the reports in question, it is with AQAP (al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula) that Ag Ghali has had the most secret communications and operational contacts aiming to implement these anti-French attacks.

## Alarming rise of the number of radicalized jihadists

According to a confidential note from the Central Service of Territorial Surveillance (SCRT), the number of salaf-jihadist radicalized individuals in France has experienced a significant increase over the past year. In November 2017, they were 19,980. A year later, the SCRT identified 29,500 radicalized considered to be dangerous mid-term and 45,000 long-term.

## An attempt to target a French nuclear plant?

The French Gendarmerie's special forces, responsible for the protection of nuclear power stations, have recently broken up a ISIS sleeper cell, consisting of jihadist sympathisers with no previous police files who had successfully applied for jobs at a French power station.

## USA - North Korea: secret deal on Iran's nuclear?

According to a well-informed source in Washington, the Trump administration has presented to the North Korean government a secret deal, according to which the United States would accept to establish with Pyongyang new diplomatic and economic relations, with a special aid program, under the condition that North Korea agrees to exchange with the United States sensitive information held by Pyongyang regarding the Iranian nuclear and ballistic program.

### EXCLUSIVE

## New type of Iranian nuclear detonators

Information exchanges between several European intelligence services have established that Iran is currently conducting, in a secret military laboratory near Tehran, very advanced researches to produce a powerful and very stable explosive based on cyclotrimethylene-trinitramine (RDX 44). This explosive, also known by the military names of HMX or Octogen, is intended to be used to fire ballistic missiles, but it can also be used as a detonator for nuclear weapons. A certain amount of information on this subject has been exchanged between the Israeli Mossad and the American and European Services.

## IRAN Facing sanctions, Tehran is considering the «refugee weapon»!

A recent note from the intelligence center linked to the European diplomatic services (EU INTCEN) expresses concern over a new type of repercussions that EU countries could suffer as a result of the tightening of American sanctions against Iran and the US withdrawal from the Vienna nuclear deal.

Among the retaliatory measures contemplated by Tehran, facing the increased embargo on its oil exports, the note warns of a possible use of the «weapon of the refugees». As the Turkish regime of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan did with Syrian refugees, the regime of the mullahs would consider, in the event of a major crisis, to disseminate in Europe one million refugees among the three million displaced Afghan refugees in Iran.

For their part, the European anti-terrorist services are worried about the risk of infiltration of such a flow of refugees by terrorist groups, such as ISIS or Al-Qaida. And they are also extremely concerned about the possibility of manipulation of these groups by the Iranian services or by the Pasdaran, the guardians of the Iranian revolution. ●

## Strait of Hormuz: maritime forces acquire a new generation of attack drones

The Iranian maritime forces sailing in the Persian Gulf and in the Strait of Ormuz have just been equipped with forty pieces of a new generation of attack drones called Mohajer-6. These devices, which are about 6 meters wide, are equipped with a new type of air-to-surface missiles called Qaem-1. Manufactured by the Iranian company HESA (Aircraft Manufacturing Industrial Company), the Mohajer- 6 drones have a range of 150 kilometers and a flight duration of 6 to 7 hours.

## Beijing trains Iranian engineers in "surveillance technologies"

According to an American confidential note, the program of security cooperation between China and Iran has been intensified, with the recent creation of training sessions in which Iranian engineers from the governmental company "Iran Electronics Industry" are initiated into new technologies of listening and interception of communications within a specialized department of the Chinese People's Army (12th office of the 3rd department).

## Germany: Illegal trade between Iranians and North Koreans

The German secret services (BND) have recently alerted its European and American counterparts about illicit trade between Iranian and North Korean diplomats in Berlin. According to the German alert, the exchanges in question consisted of providing the Iranian embassy with scientific documentation and secret plans related to nuclear and ballistic technologies.

## AFRICA Revival of American interest for central Africa

### Big Russia-Africa summit in preparation in Sochi

In turn, Russia is also performing a great return to the African continent, through the strengthening of its diplomatic and military presence and of its economic investments. President Putin has even created a special unit dedicated to Africa in the Kremlin, and a Russia-Africa summit (the first of its kind) is planned in Sochi in mid-October. On that occasion, the master of the Kremlin aims to welcome 70 African Heads of States.

The preparation of the summit is entrusted to the diplomat Iouri Ouchakov, whose presence is noted on all of Moscow's important diplomatic fronts (Iran, Yemen, Turkey, Trump, Europe, etc.). Alexandre Stonglev, special advisor to President Putin and himself President of the Roskangress Foundation, is also involved in the project. He is amongst other things the person in charge of Putin's visits to the Davos forum. In France, he is very close to a former advisor to Nicolas Sarkozy: the former MP Jean-Pierre Thomas, who is well known for his close ties with the Russian business diplomacy.

### Benalla's partner and Qatar's shadow ambassador!

The controversial financier Philippe Hababou Solomon, who took Alexandre Benalla to Chad during a visit that hit the headlines last December due to the fraudulent use of diplomatic passports, is one of the shadow diplomats entrusted by Qatar to increase its influence in Africa. An atypical character, condemned in France for forgery and use of forged documents, Solomon started as a jeweller in Place Vendôme, in Paris. Then, since 2011, he has acted as a shadow diplomat for the former South African president, Jacob Zuma.

### Qatari tripartite body to oversee Doha's lobbying in Africa

As part of a campaign to increase Qatar's presence and influence in Africa, a special body has been set up by Doha, with the task to oversee the lobbying and seduction operations aimed at several countries, including in francophone Africa.

Three key personalities of the Qatari power direct this body: Mohamed bin Ahmed al-Misnad, Special Advisor in charge of the Emir's secret and reserved affairs; Khalifa Jassim al-Kawari, President of the Qatari Development Fund; and Mohamed Bin Nasser Al-Hajri, head of the Qatari intelligence services.

Moreover, the Qatari lobbying counts on the significant influence developed in recent years by Morocco in francophone Africa. Since the Kingdom has chosen to side with Qatar in the conflict that sees it facing the coalition of moderate Arab countries, the Qatari services are trying to rely on their Moroccan counterparts to increase their presence as well as their political, economic and diplomatic influence in Africa.

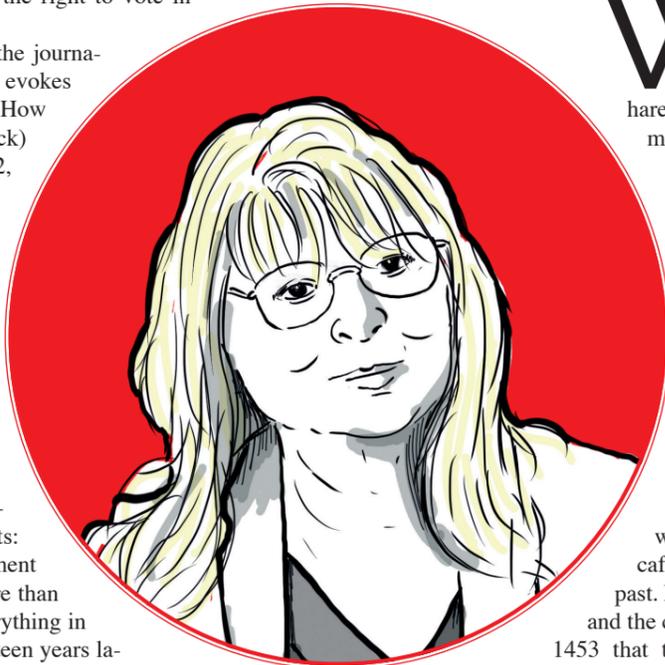
# Is Erdogan Turkish?

By **Martine Gozlan\***

**T**his is the question that every lover of the shores of the Bosphorus, their blue domes, this majestic and melancholic horizon, an alloy of oriental sweetness and European freedom, asks himself: this is Turkey's seal and genius. From which black box did Erdogan spring to reduce this beauty to nothing? Perhaps from those coffins that Victor Hugo imagined sinking into the shimmering water with the screams of the young victims... Is he Turkish, the man who describes Orhan Pamuk as a traitor, the Proust of the Bosphorus, Nobel Prize winner for literature, dreamer inspired by the mysteries of Galata? Is he Turkish, the man who wants every daughter of Eve to lock herself home to procreate, when Ankara gave women the right to vote in 1934, long before Paris?

It is precisely a woman, the journalist Ece Temelkuran, who evokes in a remarkable essay («How to Lose a country», Stock) the slogans heard in 2002, in a meeting of AKP activists: «We are the Turkish people. And when I talk about the people, I mean the real people!». Sinister warning: so there were fake people to be killed. Addressing the young Ece «with the condescension of the machos of Anatolia», these strong minds developed what they considered to be their thoughts: «You can call us the movement of the Virtuous. We are more than a party, we will change everything in this corrupt system». Seventeen years later, the «real people» of the «Virtuous», led by a notoriously corrupt guru, have shaken up Turkey's image and atmosphere.

Editorialist Kadri Gursel, one of the most brilliant writers of the Cumhuriyet newspaper before being thrown in jail (fortunately he has just left the Silivri penitentiary) wrote in 2016: «The Turkey we knew will not return, a page is being turned, that of a Turkey inspired by the principles of 1923 which are progress, science, reason, gender equality, secularism in order to harmonize with the Western world. This cultural revolution, this process of secularization carried out by Ataturk was accomplished in great pain, which the Islamist movement



later used to transform it into a victimization of an ideological nature. For Erdogan, Ataturk is a taboo word, an unpronounceable name... « In this heartbreaking farewell to the beloved country («Turkey, Year zero», Le Cerf) Kadri Gursel expressed the major fears raised by the Erdogan regime. «Democrature» is no more in question, this word forged to define a democracy vaguely tempted by authoritarianism. By adopting by referendum in 2017 a constitution that gives him all the powers, Erdogan has moved up a notch. «Democracy is like the bus, you get off when you get to your destination» he used to say. It's been a long time since he got off. A heavy iron gate has closed over Turkey, which has become one of those dictatorships that disfigure, render stupid and blood the Arab-Islamic world.

It is true that one day or another, they end up falling. Look at Algeria! This requires that the Supreme Leader has crossed all boundaries. «Will Erdogan go further?» asks Ariane Bonzon, an international reporter stationing in Istanbul for many years, in her latest survey («Turkey, The moment of truth», Empreinte editions), «will he engrave Sharia law, Islamic law, into the Constitution? Or include religious provisions in the Civil Code and the Criminal Code? If this allows him to stay in power, he will do so. In any case, he succeeded in imposing Islam as a referent for all parties. The opposition candidate for mayor of Istanbul, Ekrem Imamoglu, who still won, publicly prayed on the Koran and his wife defended the veil... «

**W**hat's the difference with Emine, Erdogan's wife, who was an advocate of harems, the ideal place for women's education in her eyes? The tragedy is there: in the shift of a country towards an ideology that would be the negation of itself. It is under the portrait of Ataturk that Erdogan eradicated the secularism invented by Mustapha Kemal in 1924. At the time, the newspapers in Cairo headlined: «Farewell the East! «. Today, Erdogan wants to wrap himself in the caftans, gold and wars of the past. It was the fall of Christianity and the capture of Constantinople in 1453 that this pseudo-modern, drunk with conspiracy, constantly invokes. But is his «White Palace» of a thousand rooms and a thousand servants enough to make him a sultan again? Not in the least. Erdogan is a fake Turkish. ●

*\* Editor-in-Chief at the weekly french magazine "Marianne" and essayist. In 2011, while Recep Tayyip Erdogan was still worshipped abroad by the naive followers of «moderate Islamism», she wrote a premonitory book on him: « The Turkish imposture » (Grasset).*

# Iran: between American sanctions and regime crisis

By **Christian Malard**

**O**n March 21, Iranian New Year's Day, the Supreme Leader of the Revolution, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, surprised everybody by calling for «unity and national reconstruction». We then said to ourselves: are the American sanctions starting to take effect? The answer is yes, according to most observers. And the financial crisis in Iran, exacerbated by the sanctions, is hitting the Allied militias hard, blocking Iran's presence and influence in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen and the Gaza Strip.

Militias in Syria have seen their salaries significantly reduced. The projects that Iran had promised to help a faltering Syrian economy, have failed. Many Hezbollah fighters admit that they lost half their salary or didn't get paid at all in January and February. They even say they expect the worst with more cuts to come. Even Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah acknowledges the difficulties caused by the US sanctions.

However, one question remains: can all these financial restrictions have an impact on the behavior of all these militias who remain ideologically attached to the Iranian politics? The reactions of combatants, officials and observers are all in the same direction: American sanctions hurt!

If, in Lebanon, Hezbollah remains the main military force and an essential political actor, in Syria, Iranians are forced to reduce the presence of certain militias, not only because of financial problems, but also because after 8 years of war, Bashar El Assad defeated all opposition. That said, it is in Iraq that Iran will become more involved in strengthening its political and economic ties. The militias, which he had supported, will now be financed by the Iraqi authorities. Iran also maintains links with allies on the other side of the Iraqi political spectrum who defend Iranian interests by defying the American military presence in Iraq.

It must be remembered that there is an underground war of influence between those whom we, Westerners, undoubtedly wrongly call the regime's moderates (Hassan Rohani, the President, and Mohamad Javad Zarif, his Minister of Foreign Affairs) and the ultra-conservative clan embodied by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Revolution, General Souleimani, the all-powerful Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces and the Corps of the 160 000 Pasdars (Revolutionary Guards) who lock down all the country's political, economic and military sectors. Today, this war is well



opened. We can even talk about the beginning of a regime crisis.

Hassan Rohani and Javad Zarif now risk to pay the price for the openness they have advocated towards Westerners. The ultra-conservative regime will not forgive them for not having obtained the dividends expected from the nuclear agreement. Nor do they believe in the barter system introduced by the Europeans to circumvent American sanctions and better ensure their economic survival.

Indeed, a few days after the announcement of the barter system, Khamenei, who has the final say on all foreign policy decisions, warned that his country should not trust Europeans.

All this could therefore lead to a disavowal by the moderates, a retreat of the regime on itself, with a tightening of its policy towards the United States, Israel and Europe. With, at the end of the day, a possible withdrawal of the nuclear agreement, a revival by Iran of its nuclear program, not to mention the maintenance of Iranian troops on Syrian territory and of Hezbollah in Lebanon.

If this were the case, I am not sure that Israel, the United States and its allies in the region would remain idle! ●

*\* International policy expert and diplomatic consultant*

# Tariq Ramadan, the magic of a (fake) university degree!

By **Ian Hamel\***

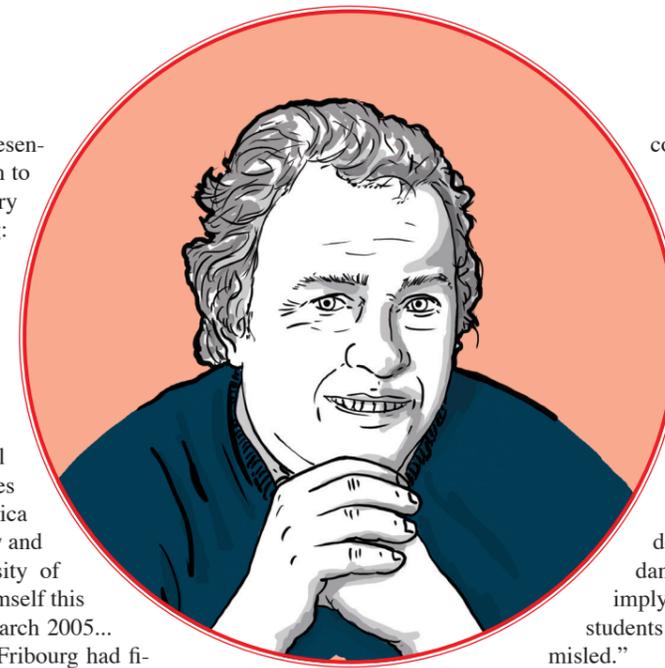
**H**ow did a Swiss of Egyptian origin manage to seduce so many young Muslims from the French suburbs since the 1990s? Tariq Ramadan certainly speaks well. Tall, slim, elegant, he has charisma, a charming smile. A speech perfectly adapted to its audience. But the main thing is not there. He is the grandson of Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Such a lineage is a must when those who are listening to you pull the devil by the tail. And that their parents, who came from the village, left school too quickly and are lining up small jobs.

Above all, the French authorities gave Tariq Ramadan a superb gift, by banning him from French territory for a few weeks, from November 1995 to May 1996. From now on, young people in depressed areas see him as the rebel. The one who fights the dominant and arrogant West. The Swiss bourgeois does not hesitate to compare himself to Malcolm X. Nevertheless, he only has a little touch left to add to refine his image. At the time, he was only a French teacher in a secondary school in the Geneva suburbs. It's not devaluing, but it's not enough to make you look like an intellectual.

He set out to conquer the small Catholic university of Fribourg (10,000 students). What did he propose to them in

1997? Give a one-hour presentation entitled «Introduction to Islam» on a weekly voluntary basis. This is a good thing: Switzerland, which has no colonial past, had very few Muslims before the Balkan wars. Since then, it has welcomed Bosnians, Kosovars and Macedonians. From now on, Tariq Ramadan presents himself in all symposiums and conferences in France, Canada and Africa as «Professor of Philosophy and Islamology at the University of Fribourg». He still gives himself this title in *Le Monde* on 31 March 2005... whereas the University of Fribourg had finally done without his services a year earlier!

But isn't the most serious thing to be found in the blindness of television hosts and journalists, who have never stopped handing him their microphones or pens? None of them bothered to check, even though this imposture has been re-



counted in detail for more than ten years in several biographies devoted to Tariq Ramadan. It was not until 16 February 2018 that the Vice-President of the Socialist Party of the Canton of Fribourg called on the Cantonal Parliament: «The accusation of «false teacher» is very significant. It would imply that our university may have been fooled about the academic status of Tariq Ramadan. It would also and above all imply that the students who were students of the said Islamologist were misled.»

The rectorate of Fribourg immediately replied that «Tariq Ramadan was neither a teacher nor even an assistant»! ●

\* *Journalist and writer, specialist of the Muslim Brotherhood*

# 2019, the new «UAV War»?

By **Roland Jacquard\***

**U**AVs, small remote-controlled flying devices, made their appearance in the world of intelligence and counter-terrorism on September 7, 2000. Almost one year to the day before the tragic turn of the September 11, 2001 attacks, a Predator-type drone flew over a farm in southern Kandahar, where al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden was reportedly staying as part of a reconnaissance mission codenamed «Afghan Eyes».

Anti-terrorist experts were stirred by the quality of the images captured by these small «iron birds», which are much more accurate than those of spy satellites. They then predicted that drones would play a leading role in counter-terrorism intelligence. A role that will very soon exceed all predictions. Because after September 11, the American services, launched after the al-Qaeda leaders, did not simply use drones as tools for gathering information to track down terrorist leaders. They turned them into «killing machines» by equipping them with Hellfire missiles. In this way, the drones could hit

and instantly spray terrorist targets as soon as they located them.

At the time, the US Air Force had only five drones. Equipped with air-to-ground missiles, they very quickly showed the



full extent of their effectiveness. And it took only 9 days for these five «iron birds» launched over Kabul from 7 November 2001, to achieve a major feat.

Indeed, on 16 November, a Predator armed with Hellfire missiles spotted al-Qaeda's number 3, Mohamed Atef, alias Abu Hafis al-Masri, in a small house in Kabul's western districts. The target is immediately pulverized by the drone. Atef, his deputy Abu Ali al-Yafi'e and six of their guards were killed immediately.

A program for the production of drones armed with air-to-ground missiles was then launched. In May 2004, General Atomics, the manufacturer of the Predators, delivered thirty copies to the US Air Force.

And it was immediately the beginning of a 7-years «drone war», during which more than a million hours of flight time of these remote-controlled vehicles were carried out in the Afghan-Pakistani tribal areas. This has resulted in more than 80,000 «targeted assassinations» missions that have eliminated 2,588 terrorist targets, including 1,357 al-Qaeda members.

Later, this «drone war» continued with the same terrifying effectiveness on other jihadist fronts in Yemen, the Sahel, Libya and of course in the Syrian-Iraqi fiefdoms of Daesh.

But terrorist organizations, which have long suffered the pangs of drone attacks, now have the ambition to control these «iron birds» in turn, to use them as a new technological weapon for future jihadist attacks.

The threat is not entirely new. Since 2015, Daesh fighters have been using civilian drones, freely available on the market, which they use for reconnaissance and attack missions. By equipping them with grenades or small explosive charges of a few hundred grams, they carried out an average of 60 to 100 remote-controlled attacks per month, particularly against Kurdish fighters and American and French special forces, until the collapse of the strongholds of the Caliphate.

A confidential US report, entitled «The Islamic State and Drones: Supply, Scale and Future Threats», states that the fall of

the Caliphate did not end the Daeshian program of using drones for terrorist purposes. According to this report, documents seized after Mosul's takeover showed that Daesh has set up a unit within its «Military Manufacturing and Development Committee» dedicated to controlling UAV technology.

For its part, a French report entitled «The Islamic State is seeking to manufacture drones equipped with high-intensity explosives» is alarmed by the fact that the tests carried out on devices developed by Daesh, for instance by modifying Chinese-manufactured DJI drones, have enabled them to be equipped with higher intensity explosive charges of up to 4.9 kg.

The high explosive charges that these modified UAVs can now be equipped with, combined with the significant improvement in their drop accuracy, raise fears among counter-terrorism services that a new form of remote-controlled attacks will emerge, which will no longer be confined solely to Syrian-Iraqi Jihadist areas.

In that case, we would move towards a «new war of drones» directed against civilian targets or sensitive areas, through «robotized or remote-controlled flying kamikaze systems».

Worse still, the «Action Plan against Terrorism», revealed by the French government on last 13 July, pointed out the «rise in technical skills of radicalized people», alluding to point 19 of the Action Plan (the plan includes 32 anti-terrorist action points) aiming for «anticipating the response to emerging threats - nuclear, radiological, chemical, explosive and drones», the existence of the «risk of misuse of commercial drones».

If this hypothesis were to materialize, the malevolent use of drones with an unprecedented use of chemical or radiological explosive charges, commonly known as «dirty bombs», could make of the upcoming «new drones war» a major challenge for counter-terrorism in the months and years to come. ●

\* *Writer and consultant, President of Roland Jacquard Global Security Consulting (RJGSC)*

**QatarCharityGate**

# The hard-hitting book on Qatar's financing of the Muslim Brotherhood

"Qatar Papers" is a book that resembles its authors and their temperament with restraint. Concerned about journalistic objectivity and neutrality, the two reporters and ex-hostages in Iraq (2004), defend themselves from having written an «anti-Qatar polemical papers». Yet their book came as a bombshell. From a secret file containing an impressive amount of internal Qatar Charity documents, which they received from a confidential source, they managed to draw up a terrifyingly accurate map of 140 Islamic projects funded by Qatar across Europe, all linked to the Muslim Brotherhood. With generous allocations of tens of millions of euros, of which 25 million have been allocated to projects in France.

## Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot: We were astonished by what we discovered on Qatar Charity!

Interview by **Atmane TAZAGHART** and **Nicolas CHENE**

After having previously written two books about the less brilliant aspects of Qatari politics, entitled "Qatar, The Secrets of The Safe" (Michel Lafon, 2013) and "Our Very Dear Emirs" (Michel Lafon, 2016), Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot return with a hard-hitting book entitled "Qatar Papers - How the State Finances Islam in France and Europe". Interview

**What surprised you most about your survey on the QatarCharityGate?**

**Christian Chesnot:** What surprised and even astonished us was the extent of the funding granted by Qatar to the Muslim Brotherhood network. Tens of millions of euros throughout Europe, including 25 million in France. We drew a precise and very extensive mapping, which goes from Spain, Italy and up to Norway and Sweden. It passes through very improbable places, such as Jersey, Lugano or Luxembourg, and all this constitutes a very vast spider's web, which enamels every European continent. We are obviously asking ourselves questions:

why? and for whose benefit? And we can see that Qatari funding goes almost exclusively to the Muslim Brotherhood, through associations and personalities who are subordinated to them throughout Europe. Unlike other countries that finance Islamic associations in Europe, Qatar has no human resources. It has a lot of money but very little human support. So he connected to the Muslim Brotherhood networks established in Europe since the 1950s. Our investigation shows that there is a real connection between the two. In addition, the Muslim Brotherhood is at the heart of Qatar's political-religious DNA. Not only in Europe, but all over the world. With Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi as the figurehead. As for the question of why, it is clear from the documents published in the book that Qatar is seeking to buy influence from Muslim communities in Europe, with the aim of re-Islamising these communities. In this respect, Qatar's objectives are in line with the Muslim Brotherhood's global strategy, as it has been since the first writings of its founder, Hassan al-Banna. This connection is at the heart of the investigation that we conducted in this book and the documentary film, which we made at the same time, and which will be broadcast at the beginning of the school year.

**Unlike Qatar's other areas of «investment», such as sport, luxury trade or political lobbying, the goal sought through the financing of the Muslim Brotherhood is not only to seek visibility or influence, but also a political and ideological project clearly linked to Islamism?**

**Georges Malbrunot:** Indeed, behind the entryism operated by Qatar Charity, within the Muslim communities in Europe, there is not only a search for influence, but also a desire to influence the chessboard of European Islam where, until then, the main operators were Algeria, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, enemy of Qatar, but also Turkey, great ally of Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood.

Behind all this, there is an objective which aims - as we see written in black and white in the Qatar Charity internal documents we publish - to strengthen the Islamic identity of Muslim minorities in Europe, to support the work of the Da'wa (preaching), to re-educate Muslim youth, to make them an Islamic elite able to take its part of influence in the societies where Muslim minorities in Europe live. And on all these objectives, as can be seen in the documents that the book reveals, there is a direct relationship between Qatar and the «political Islam» [Islamism] of the Muslim Brotherhood.

It is not only noted that more than 90% of Qatari funding goes to associations close to the Muslim Brotherhood movement. But there is also the desire to build Islamic centres always on the same



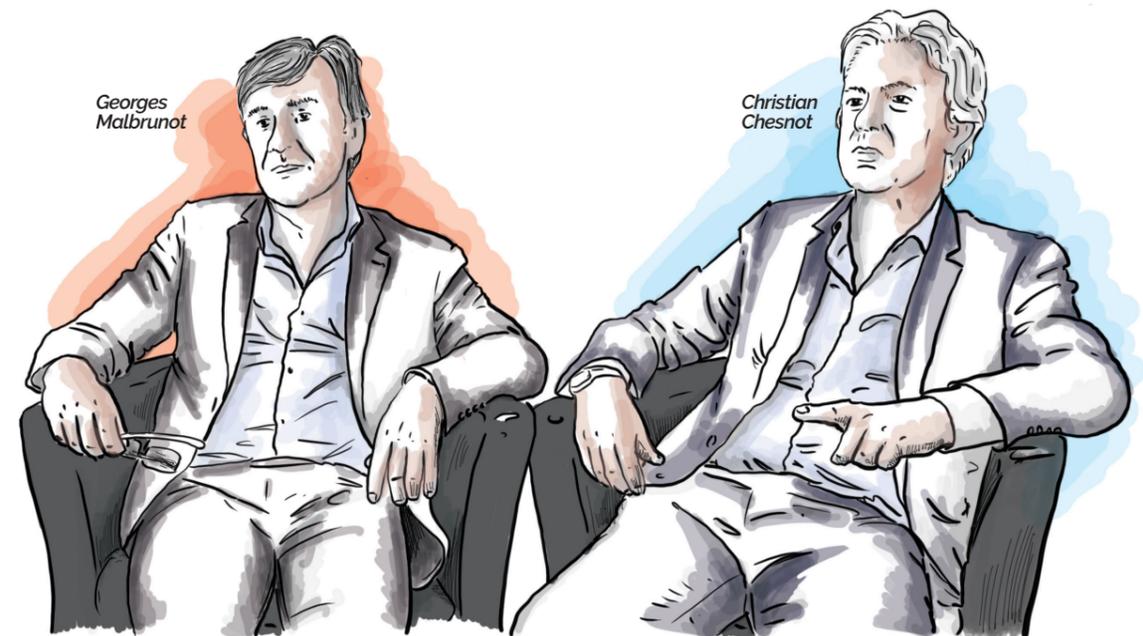
Read the full interview & watch the video on our website [www.global-watch-analysis.com](http://www.global-watch-analysis.com)

model. That is, a prayer room for men, a prayer room for women, a shopping mall nearby, classrooms, a cultural space and sometimes a swimming pool or even a morgue! This corresponds to the doctrine of «global Islam», as Hassan al-Banna theorized, from his first writings, which consists in taking charge of the Muslim individual from birth to death! So, we are in a scheme that aims to transpose and export the «political Islam» of the Muslim Brotherhood to Muslim communities in Europe.

**You say in your book that the financing granted by Qatar to the Muslim Brotherhood in Europe does not fall within the scope of terrorist financing. Yet you cite examples of connections between the Muslim Brotherhood and jihadist terrorism, such as the case of Hanan Abu al-Hanna in Mulhouse?**

**Georges Malbrunot:** Indeed, we are not in the financing of terrorism, strictly speaking, because the financing of Qatar Charity is not illegal, as long as the associations financed in Europe do not carry out attacks. However, there is sometimes - and we have noted this in the book - the porosity between the neo-Islamic ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood and jihadism. There is indeed the case of this woman in Mulhouse, Hanane Abu al-Hanna, who was the assistant director of the association responsible for the great mosque financed by Qatar Charity. She was killed in the RAID police assault on the prison where she introduced a knife that her radicalized companion used to stab two guards.

There are therefore, here and there, porosities between the Muslim Brotherhood movement and jihadist terrorism. Moreover, historically, this is not a new phenomenon. The current leaders of al-Qaida and Daesh, Ayman al-Zawahiri and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, are both from the Muslim Brotherhood, and there are many other examples, the most illustrious of which is the Arab Mujahideen leader during the anti-Soviet war in Afghanistan, Abdallah Azzam. ●



## Qatar Charity Gate

# New revelations on political and sports corruption

The political-financial scandal linked to the Qatar Charity foundation is not limited to the financing of the Muslim Brotherhood, mentioned by Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot in their "Qatar Papers". Our investigation focuses on new aspects of this scandal related to sports embezzlement and political corruption. Exclusive revelations.

**Q**atar Charity, an allegedly charitable foundation, is suspected by a British investigation, whose conclusions we have obtained, of embezzlement aimed at influencing London politicians. After the financial scandals linked to the purchase of the Parisian luxury group «Printemps» and the prestigious yacht «Katara» for the benefit of the former Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Tahni, it was another Qatari investment in France that brought the British bloodhounds to their attention.

This involves the purchase of 5% of the capital of the French giant Veolia, the world leader in public utilities, by the «Qatari Diar» Group. As was the case in the «Spring» and «Katara» scandals, the Qatari investor in the Veolia case is suspected of having used the complex financial arrangements set up in the context of this purchase to conceal suspicious transactions linked to hidden financing, for the benefit of the London branch of Qatar Charity.

The Veolia case alerted British bloodhounds, who were charged with investigating certain activities of the "Qatar Charity UK", aimed at influencing British personalities with the aim of having them adopt favourable positions in Qatar.

The British investigations have each time referred to a central figure at the heart of this system of Qatari corruption. They are Ghanim Bin Saad Al-Saad Al-Kawari, the all-powerful Chairman of the "Qatari Diar" Group, and a key figure of "Qatar Charity UK" and "Nectar Trust", who later succeeded him.

According to the confidential report submitted by the London bloodhounds, the financial package set up in the Veolia case involved three offshore companies based in Luxembourg, Cyprus and Singapore. And it was the money from the secret commissions, collected through these companies, that was then used to attract the favours of British politicians. The transfers came precisely from an account used by one of these companies in Singapore! ●

### How Qatar bought FIFA's votes for the 2022 World Cup

The names of Ghanim Bin Saad Al-Saad Al-Kawari, the «Qatari Diar» Group he chairs and Qatar Charity also appear in investigations conducted by the US FBI and the Brazilian judiciary into Qatar's corruption of a number of voters within FIFA, in order to obtain the organization of the 2022 Football World Cup.

These investigations in turn refer to the financial arrangement of the Veolia case. The trace of part of the commission money relating to this case was found on an account of PASCHE bank in Monaco, and it is from this account that transfers have been made to FIFA members to buy their votes.

The most famous of these personalities whose vote Qatar bought is former Brazilian football league president Ricardo Teixeira, who was, at the time of the votes, a member of FIFA's executive board. He received, from the said account of the PASCHE bank in Monaco, a transfer of 22 million dollars in return for directing his vote in favour of Qatar.

## AMNI

# How ISIS Adapts its Intelligence Service to Post-Caliphate Era

While it is clear that the fire is still smoldering under the ashes of the Islamic State Organization (ISIS), one of the major questions facing counter-terrorism experts is the survival strategy that the ISIS will adopt following the collapse of the proto-state of the Caliphate in Iraq and Syria. The ISIS's intelligence service known as the AMNI is at the heart of this survival strategy...

**T**he present paper is intended to introduce a field study titled "From Directorate of Intelligence to Directorate of Everything: The Islamic State's Emergent Amni-Media Nexus" conducted by Asaad Almohammad, an independent expert on political violence and counter-terrorism, and Charlie Winter, associate researcher at the Center for Radical Studies at King's College, London, and the International Center for Counter-Terrorism in The Hague (ICCT).

The field study provides important insights into the IS new operational modes and attempts to trace the metamorphosis undergone by the latter, especially in its chain of command. It also reveals the emergence of new decision-making centers within the IS focused around its Directorate of General Security (DGS), previously known by the Arabic acronym AMNI (*al-markaz almuwahhad al-amni*).

### REVERTING TO "GUERRILLA-STYLE" OPERATIONS?

The authors of the study noted that whilst the ISIS has turned back on itself since the collapse of its Caliphate dream, this setback did not prevent the ISIS from revisiting its *modus operandi*. The ISIS's jihadist related "nebula" has a proven presence in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, respectively. It works to stir up religious tensions, especially between Sunnis and Shiites, in order to preserve its nuisance effect, *inter alia*, through attacks, assassinations and other terrorist operations. So one can say that the IS returned to guerrilla-type operations, according to the insurrectional *modus operandi* that it has already tested and practiced in Iraq. However, the attacks launched by the ISIS to restore its «vitality» necessarily require new operational coordination modes. Hence the emergence of the DGS, which has become a

predominant Directorate within the ISIS chain of command.

The present study produced for *Perspectives on Terrorism (PoT)* -Journal published by the *Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI)* American think tank- is based on interviews conducted between January and October 2018, in Eastern Syria. It is on the basis of these interviews that the authors of the study advanced, in their conclusions, the assumption that the DGS is the organ that has evolved the most since the collapse of the Caliphate to be at the heart of the decision-making process within the ISIS's chain of command.

### FROM INTELLIGENCE TO PROPAGANDA

The ISIS/DGS is now in charge of several spheres including recruitment, training, intelligence, management of detention and torture centers, as well as preparation of terrorist attacks in the West.

After the establishment of the «Unified Security Center (USC)» between January 2017 and February 2018, the DGS powers were considerably strengthened. In addition to the management of military operations, the DGS powers also encompass external operations, intelligence and religious affairs. However, it is through the «Central Media Directorate», including its «Security Media Office» that the DGS has imposed

its presence and has become a major actor in the organization's leadership.

To realize «Centralized Media Productions», the Security Media Office relies on its A'maq Press Agency which has the primacy of access to the ISIS's internal information which is secured through a strict security strategy revolving around the following four imperatives:

- **Prevention:** by restricting access to Internet amongst the ISIS members to preserve sensitive information.

- **Deterrence:** by restricting access to the organization's stored data (data base) and by taking, as necessary, severe sanctions that may lead to the execution of jihadists suspected of espionage.

- **Surveillance:** strictly imposed on all persons and places related to the production or transport of sensitive information.

- In addition to this **Security Strategy**, there is a propaganda component based on strict control of the members of the organization, compartmentalization and application of a «deception policy» combining misinformation and propaganda.

In conclusion, in order to deal with the setbacks it has suffered in its Middle East traditional strongholds, the ISIS relies on its DGS Directorate which is in charge of leading both the armed and media fights. The very survival of the Organization is at stake... ●

### AMNI Metamorphosis into DGS

Established by Samir Abd Muhammad al-Khelifawi, a former intelligence colonel-major of Saddam Hussein, AMNI (forefather of the DGS) has long been led by Syrian Abu Mohamed al-Adnani, a prominent figure in the organization, a sponsor of several terrorist attacks in Europe. After his death in 2016, he was replaced by his compatriot Ali Musa al-Shawakh alias Abu Lôqman and Abu Ayoub al-Ansari. According to the two researchers, it is the latter who has changed the structure of the DGS to transform it into a directorate responsible for both security and media issues.

### EXCLUSIVE Qatar hires former FBI and Israeli military intelligence investigators to try to stop the leaks

Faced with difficulties due to the increase in investigations into corruption and sports scandals, the Qatari authorities are concerned about the repercussions of these revelations on the 2022 World Cup, the organisation of

which has been attributed to them by the FIFA, under conditions marred by suspicions of irregularities.

To this end, Qatar has engaged several private investigation firms to try to identify sources that have orchestrated numerous

leaks of information and documents in the international media accusing the Qatari authorities of corruption. According to our sources, his cabinet includes a former FBI investigator and a former senior Israeli military intelligence official. ●

# INTERVIEW

## Theo Padnos: Qatar used me to finance al-Qaeda!

American journalist and essayist, Theo Padnos was abducted and imprisoned for 22 months by the jihadists of the Al-Nusra Front, al-Qaeda's affiliate in Syria. During his captivity, he was subjected to various forms of torture, including waterboarding, as made famous by the CIA's "intense interrogations" carried out in Guantanamo, and gruesome staged scenes aimed at making him believe that he would be hung or buried alive. Yet he remained hopeful, convinced that he would be freed: as he understood Arabic, he got into the habit of discreetly listening to his jailers' conversations. He thus came to understand that his captors had previously concluded a secret agreement with the Qataris aimed at obtaining financing under the guise of getting Doha to pay a ransom for his release!

Interview by  
**ATMANE TAZAGHART**

**How did you become a hostage of the al-Nusra Front, al-Qaeda's affiliate in Syria?**

I was abducted in October 2012. I was in Turkey reporting on the Syrian refugees. I then wanted to report on the foreign voluntary doctors helping the victims of the war on the other side of the border, in Syria. It was at that time, in Antakya, that I met three individuals who told me that they were prepared to help me organise a two or three-day trip to Aleppo and then Idleb, and finally returning to Turkey. However, as soon as we crossed the border, they beat me and put me in restraints and told me in Arabic: "We are from al-Qaeda and you are our prisoner". They held me for a further 24 hours before handing me over to Al-Nusra. It was a terrible day during which those three jailers subjected me to torture for the first time. They tied my hands to the ceiling and whipped me in the hope of making me confess that I was a spy. They kept asking me: "Who do you work for? Who trained you? Where did you learn to be a spy?". Then they subjected me to waterboarding and laughed and said: "You see, it's just like in Guantanamo!"

**When did you first learn about a ransom for your freedom proposed by Qatar?**

From the very first days of my detention, I heard that my abductors were in contact with a Qatari emissary. Little by little, through the fragments of conversations that I overheard, I finally understood that my abductors had been in cahoots with the Qatari from the very start, that they had agreed to take hostages in order to release them for a ransom. No-one told this to me explicitly, but I understood, little by little, that

there was a secret deal with the Qataris; that these ransoms were a roundabout way for Doha to fund al-Nusra without being suspected of financing terrorism. I was convinced of this.

**Did that help you to get through the ordeal of those long months of captivity?**

Yes, it helped me to remain hopeful. However, my abductors took great pleasure in constantly letting me believe that they were going to kill me. On many occasions, they came to my cell and told me: "Get ready, we will be coming back in 5 minutes to execute you according to Sharia law". Once, they led me to a torture chamber that they called the "chamber of death", made me climb up on a scaffold and put a noose around my neck. Their Emir then walked towards me and said: "You are a spy, admit it. I know that American spies are trained not to admit anything, but you are going to die anyway, and it is better to confess before going to hell". Another time, they came to get me and led me to a nearby field where a grave had been dug beforehand. They started beating me and haranguing me, saying "You will die like an animal, we are going to bury you alive like an insect". They then pushed me into the grave and they began covering me with earth. I struggled with all my strength, but my hands and feet were tied, and I could not get the earth out of my eyes and mouth. They then suddenly stopped and left, leaving me there for another two hours before telling me to get out of the grave and taking me back to my cell.

**Have you been subjected to other forms of torture?**

I was regularly beaten, whipped, starved, tortured with electricity. I spent the first 7 months of my captivity with

the same clothes, I couldn't even brush my teeth. I was infested with lice and in such a state of grime that I eventually came to wish my death ...

**Regarding your release and the ransom paid by Qatar, how did things go?**

At that time, I was detained in Deraa, in southern Syria. One day, I was in my cell, when Abu Mariya came to see me and said: «Get ready, we will send you today to your mother's house!» They put me in the back of a pickup and drove south to the Jordanian border. I thought for a moment that they were

going to liberate me via Jordan, but then they crossed the border to the Golan and handed me over to the UN forces stationed on the Syrian-Israeli border. When I went to Doha later, two months after my release, the Foreign Minister told me that Qatar demanded al-Nusra my release via Israel because it was afraid of me being kidnapped again by other jihadists, if I was released via Jordan.

**Who did you meet during your stay in Qatar? And what did you talk about?**

I first met the head of the secret ser-

vices [Saâda al-Qobeissi], then the Minister of Foreign Affairs [Khalid al-Attiyah]. I wanted to explain them that al-Nusra and al-Qaeda were one and the same organization. I naively thought the Qatari minister probably didn't know the whole truth about al-Nusra's activities in Syria. I tried to explain him that it was a terrorist organization that was destroying the country and executing innocent people. I told the minister: «By cooperating with al-Nusra, you support terrorists and help to destroy Syria!»

**What did he answer?**

I was in his office at the ministry and our discussion was friendly. He gave me a polite and diplomatic answer. He told me that he knew the people of al-Nusra well and trusted them completely. «We are sure of our intermediaries,» he added, «and they have always assured us that al-Nusra members are honest and sincere people who defend the Syrian people and work for the good of Syria.» I then told the Qatari minister that the people of al-Nusra were singing every day: «Our leader is Bin Laden. We destroyed the United States with a civilian plane. We have reduced the World Trade Center to dust. I sang this song in front of him, in his ministry. And he exclaimed: «At this point! Seriously? that's what they sing!»

**And with the head of the Qatari secret service, Saada al-Qobeissi, what did you talk about?**

He told me that an American emissary came to see him in Doha, with my photo and those of other American hostages held in Syria, asking him if he could interfere on our behalf. The head of the Qatari service told me that he had replied to the American envoy: «I can't promise you anything about James Foley, Kayla Mueller and Peter Kassig because they are in the hands of Daesh. But, for Theo Padnos, yes. I will make him free!»

**Did this statement confirm your doubts about the fact that your captors were in cahoots with the Qataris?**

Yes. Absolutely! ●



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# The new faces of Algerian Intelligence agencies

**T**he political crisis, which led to the removal of President Bouteflika, has caused an unprecedented series of changes at the head of Algerian Intelligence agencies.

On the one hand, this led to a generational renewal, that allowed the arrival of sexagenarians who did not experience the Algerian war, at the head of the “agencies”. This constitutes an important political new order of things. This is likely to overcome the usual division between the former members of the French army and those of the ALN (“National Liberation Army”, the armed wing of the FLN – “National Liberation Front” –, during the Algerian War). Moreover, it is also the opportunity for a sweet revenge for those who are known in the jargon of the Algerian Intelligence agencies as the «Operational». These are the officers who waged the anti-terrorist war against the GIA (“Armed Islamic Group”) rebellion in the 1990s and who were marginalized as a result of President Bouteflika’s policy of “national reconciliation”. Sometimes they were humiliated, as was the case for the former head of anti-terrorism, Abdelkader Ait Ouarab, alias “General Hassan”, imprisoned in August 2014.

Ironically, this resurgence of the “Operational” was made on the occasion of the fall of their former leader, General Othman Tartag, alias “Bachir”, brutally sacked by the Chief of Staff the day after Bouteflika’s resignation.

Tartag had been appointed coordinator of the Directorate of Security Services (DSS), which took over from the famous DRS, dismantled in 2015 following the dismissal of its emblematic leader, General Mohamed Mediène, alias “Toufik”. Acting as the go-between between Said Bouteflika and General Toufik during the “manoeuvres of the last few hours”, which preceded and precipitated Bouteflika’s removal, General Tartag paid the price for the failure of the Toufik clan’s plan to create a constitutional vacuum with the aim of establishing a collective presidency as in 1992. This led to the specta-

cular arrest on May 4 of Said Bouteflika, Toufik and Tartag, both accused of high treason.

According to sources close to the military command, the Chief of Staff, General Ahmed Gaïd Saleh, demanded and obtained from President Bouteflika, on the very day of his resignation, a presidential decree terminating Tartag’s functions.

The same sources claim that Tartag’s successor is General Mohamed Kaïdi, who was previously head of the Defence Operations Centre (COD) within the staff. His appointment has not been formalized, because the position of DSS coordinator, which he now occupies in place of Tartag, was until now attached to the President of the Republic, who appoints him by decree, while General Gaïd Saleh would like to “repatriate” him to the general staff.

The other general to pay the price for the alliance aborted in General Toufik and Said Bouteflika, is one of the last figures of the “old guard” of Algerian intelligence. This is General Abdelkader, who was dismissed on 6 April from his position as head of the all-powerful Directorate of Internal Security (DSI). His successor is General Wassini Bouazza, who was previously Central Director of Infrastructure at the Ministry of Defence.

On the very day of General Abdelkader’s dismissal, Ali Bendaoud, former military attaché in Paris, was disembarked from the Directorate of External Security (DSE). A position he held for barely a month: he was appointed by the Bouteflika clan on March 13 to replace General Mohamed Bouzit. His successor, Colonel El Ouanès Skouret, was previously the head of the Counter-Terrorism Intelli-

gence Operational Coordination Unit, which reports to the Central Directorate of Army Security (DCSA).

The same DCSA saw its leader, General Ali Benzemerli, leave the Services in his turn. His successor is also a prominent figure in the «operational» field. This is Colonel Nabil, alias «Bob», who was previously the director of the Main Military Investigation Centre (CPMI). ●

## 5 DATES

**SEPT. 1957** Creation of the MALG, the ancestor of the Algerian Services.

**SEPT. 1962** Creation of military security (MS), under the aegis of Colonel Kasdi Merbah.

**NOV. 1987** The DM is split into two: the Army Security (SA) and the General Delegation for Prevention and Security (DGPS).

**OCT. 1988** The DGPS becomes the DRS, Department of Intelligence and Security, under the aegis of General Mohamed Mediène.

**JAN. 2016** Dissolution of the DRS, following the dismissal of its leader by the Bouteflika clan in September 2015.

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