

Slavery and Colonialism: The Worst Terrorism on Africa

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The villain is more powerful than the victim who must search far afield for mechanisms to redress the injustice. -- Ali J. Ahmed

Introduction

Humans need not justify terrorism of any kind, regardless of whether one is Muslim, Christian or Jew, because it is the axis of evil and devastation of mankind. However, the deliberate use of the term *terrorism* in recent decades was carefully selected, mainly, against a certain religion (Islam). The idea was then globally politicized by the Western world. Leaving that scholarly view in its own right, we disagree with the opinion raising terrorism as the devil's *just-born* child of evil, when in reality Africans had been terrorized for centuries as slaves and human chattel. Hence the basis for the concept of this thesis: conceptualizing the episode of 'terrorism' and 'terrorist' from the broader perspective of its practice from the Middle Passage or the Atlantic Slave Trade. To portray that argument and broaden the scope of the debate over this critically sensitive subject, we divided the discussion into three sections: an examination of what constitutes *terrorism* and *terrorist*; history of *terrorism* and *terrorists* from an Africa perspective; and the ideological constraints within the subject of *terrorism* as practiced by the US and its Western allies.

I. An Examination of the Terms *Terrorism* and *Terrorist*

What constitutes terrorism and who is a terrorist? Who should define these terms and whose definition(s) should be taken as more reliable and therefore validated? Who should validate these definitions and qualifications and from whose viewpoint should they be appraised?

These are provocative questions many would like to avoid. Others would juxtapose this definitional crisis to that of: *Who is an African?* – a hard-nut question to which African scholar, Jideofor Adibe (2009) dedicated an entire volume of about 16 chapters. But unlike the qualification for *Africanness*, which holds no one criminal for denigrating or violating the identity, the qualifications *terrorist* or *terrorism* are guided and backed by eminent legal institutions that prefer crimes against those incriminated or suspected of involvement and, therefore, bear harsh consequences. This concern is what heightens the criticality of the subject and the inherent suspicion surrounding it.

The underpinning anxiety over these consequences and evidence of victims of ‘mistaken identity’ in the course of tracking down, apprehending and punishing *presumed terrorists*, call for adequate and uncontroversial definitions and interpretations of these ambiguous twin terms. The topic becomes deeply complicated when even the protagonists of the ‘global fight against terrorism’ could not reach a proper consensus on how to define the terms. “Even the events of 11 September 2001 could not get the UN Security Council agree to a common definition of terrorism,” Cilliers (2003:92).

Notwithstanding the models and possible commonalities of some of these definitions and views, whether observed from scholarly or official lenses, the fact yet remains that “[d]efining terrorism is by no means an easy task,” Foster-Towne (2010). Paraphrasing Griset and Mahan, Foster-Towne argues that over “one hundred definitions of terrorism exist.” The allusion to this obfuscation discerns the infinitive indistinctness of the terms as both “fluid and dynamic,” according to Foster-Towne. Recent descriptions suggest that the “[k]ey to understanding the thinking behind terrorism is that terrorism seeks to induce retaliation,” a fact which rests on the generally accepted doctrine that “Terrorism serves to terrorize” (Cilliers, 2003:92).

The complication mainly originates from the Westerners who fabricate their definitions as and when they serve their particular interests and contexts: leaving out core words and sometimes inserting others or reframing parts altogether into vague readings of immense complexity. One of such interpolations defines terrorism as “criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes,” as Hubschle (2003:18) quotes from Resolution 54/110 of December 1999. Whether the Resolution adopted this definition to deliberately obscure the economic aspects of terrorism or whether the term ‘political’ was the focus and

contemplation of the context of terrorism at that time, it is self-axiomatic that it cannot in any manner degrade or escape the economic implications of terrorism, domestically as well as globally, since some of the core reasons behind the West's engagement with terrorism include the protection of 'western interests' which is essentially economic.

In the essay "Terrorism and Africa", Jackie Cilliers, refers to Article 3(2) of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, also known as the Palermo Convention. In our observation, from the point of view of this Convention, the Western countries which indulged in the heinous practices of slavery and/or colonialism, would have undergone condemnation for their acts of terror and subsequently entered into the book of culprits at the ICC (equivalent to the Jewish Holocaust), for committing crimes against humanity, and this, regardless of time or space. But again, whereas the Western ideological blanket spreads its view of terrorism on the basis of threatening a group that may not constitute the real target, which suggests remoteness to the reaches of the terrorist, we draw our broader version of terrorism on the basis of directly and deliberately planned actions of terror as were specifically designed by the West, and so raptly, to achieve economic ends through the terrorization of the African people, socially, economically and culturally.

But can these diverse interpretations and views be treated as universal for them to accommodate the contending views of the describers of terrorism and the described as terrorists? Foster-Towne illuminates the phenomenon as one with "complex fluidity," which is absolutely true, considering Africa's variant laws injected recently into the terrorism corpus. Emeritus Professor, Ali Mazrui, (2006) visits the issue with a concern and writes, "The trouble with all new African legislation against terrorism is the simple issue of definition—what is a terrorist?" (P. 98). He goes as far as commenting on these laws, particularly in Kenya, as "a catch-all phrase" (P. 99). Indeed 'the trouble' occurs because partly, if not mainly, 'all new African legislation against terrorism' is derived from (and interpreted along the lines of) highly contentious and destructively motivated Western documents and perceptions. So, in the course of merging those with the domestic view, cracks and flaws emerge to agitate demonstrable public disgruntlement.

In principle, we argue that what constitutes the phraseology 'acts of terrorism' should be defined and highlighted holistically and according to a global consensus and contributions from experts and scholars across the globe, and not merely in light of the dubiously worded

interpretational subtleties of Western tutelage. A consensually accepted model should contribute to a better consideration of: a) the world opinion regarding an appropriate consent on what constitutes terrorism, and b) African experts'/scholars' input relating to whether the West's definition of what comprises the meaning and acts of terrorism is in agreement with, or different from that which constitutes terrorism in slavery, colonialism, exploitation, economic sabotage and underdevelopment -- 'African interests' in general as compared to the global promotion of 'Western interests'. An immediate revisiting of this nature needs sincere consideration for the sake of the rationale that, each victim of terrorism benefits from global justice, regardless of one's claim as victim of the resurgent symptoms of terrorism or of the old practices the West would like to keep securely entombed in the decaying annals of history.

From an African perspective, there exist ample reminiscences of a time when the Mau Mau, Frelimo, the ANC, the Maji Maji and a great majority of African liberation movements were labeled as associations of terror, their leaders as perpetrators of terrorism, and the average African seeking his freedom through association with one of these national consciousness-raising institutions as none other than a terrorist (Eno et al 2011). The broader perspective laden with the African reading of terrorism and terrorist looks at the subject from an avoided historical background; that of slavery and its offspring, colonialism, as discussed in the ensuing section.

II. A Historical Glimpse of Terrorism in Africa

They shipped the most healthy wherever possible, taking the trouble to get those who had already survived an attack of smallpox, and who were therefore immune from further attacks of that disease. – Walter Rodney

A. The terror of slavery

Claudia Foster-Towne provides the historical foundations of terrorism from the obstructed western viewpoint: "Terrorism and the effects of terror were first recognized during the French Revolution, when 40,000 people were executed" (2010:1). The writer also acknowledges, "It is, however, believed that the history of terrorism dates back as far as Julius Caesar in 44BC." For Foster-Towne, as one would expect, there is no mention-worthy terrorism between these eras; or, human suffering of

more than 40,000 Europeans does not immediately cross the author's mind. But what in African/Kiswahili terms could be called *maafa* (holocaust), in the contextually usable sense of the word, started during the Atlantic Slave Trade, and not during the death of 40,000 people or recently when the West started feeling the heat and pain of terrorism, which, in the most part, came as a counter-offensive of those whom the West had trained for various goals and interests.

Paradigmatically, a broader section of western scholarship, for perceivable reasons, observes the terrorism phenomenon from the view of what we (authors) see as a recent phenomenon. Therefore, the current literature on terrorism attempts to limit the acts, scope and history of terrorism within a narrow spectrum not beyond the past few decades, and at most, for apparent reasons, not further than the period of African struggle for liberation. Of these, as envisaged in western teaching on terrorism, the most remarkable events and landmarks are seen in the Al Qaeda bombings of the US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the subsequent attacks of the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, by the same terror group.

Whatever the tenet or legacy, no kind of terrorism is justifiable in any form at any given time in the history of any given society. To do so would undermine the human rights of the people concerned and degrade the genuineness of the cases regarding the pain and anguish they have undergone and continue to tolerate presently. Yet, less catastrophic incidents are globalized and recruitments made to divert from the real target, often an innocent African already plagued by the effects of the previous terrorism afflicted to the continent.

Though the West consider themselves as victims of the recent resurgence of what they call terrorism, the savage crimes they committed against Africa during the Atlantic Slave Trade constitute the worst human-caused terrors ever experienced on earth in any imaginable nature or enterprise (Du Bois 1954; Pares 1956). Unlike the current form of terrorism which barely resurged a few decades ago, the acts of terrorism against Africa continued for over four hundred painful years. Yet, notwithstanding the West's acknowledgment of their harsh inhumanities, the term terrorism is hardly ever used to describe slavery. As a wise African elder once philosophized, 'You may never realize the harshness of certain pains till they encroach into your body,' a reality which symbolizes the Western situation of pain.

By those acts, no doubt, the West had contravened the laws of human decency and moral values, taking leisure in the agonies the

Africans were undergoing in their terrorist acts of slavery. The wound created at the time continues to date to reproduce itself in various shapes and forms, from multi level psychological infections to scales of contaminations in social stigma and denigration (Fanon 2004). The intolerable variables of stigma and traumatizing experiences have endured as the worst legacy left for the descendants of that enterprise in Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean. But in a dramatic turnaround, it is the practitioners of yesterday's terrorism of the slave trade venture that keep shedding crocodile tears today as victims of 'terrorism' although they haven't been shackled for months under the deck of slave ships!

Here is where history of crime becomes critical; by juxtaposing the past terror to its present resurgence, and the deliberate reluctance of the West to apply the word *terrorism* to describe their inhumane practice on the Africans. During the era of the slave trade, millions of Africans, particularly the young, women and children, were terrorized by the Westerners' intentional acts of terrorism, with millions perishing in the forests whilst running away from the slave abductors. Others also, estimated as millions, were cruelly suspended from life in the lower deck of the ships transporting them to the Americas and other destinations, sickly and clad in fetters. Yet, millions more lost their lives from dehydration, dysentery and other diseases acquired during the journey. With no sanitary facilities in the lower deck, we do not know of any type of terrorism comparable to or worse than the one suffered by a human being shackled together with a dead body on his right leg and a diarrhea patient on his left!

During the *boom* of the trade, this was the characteristic nature of terrorism the Africans have been subjected to, enduring months of hardship until they would arrive at the port of destination, where they would be auctioned and sold as property much less valuable than any kind of material goods. The horrendous experience of the lower deck became a reverberating reminiscence constantly alive in the mind of many African American, European and Caribbean descendants of slavery, to the extent that the phrase "lower deck" alone became synonymous with terrorism, fear, anxiety, and stigma associated with persistent trauma.

Experts on slavery like Aptheker (1974) convincingly report how "behind" the owner, and his personal agents, stood an elaborate and complex system of military control," (P. 67; read also W. E. B. Du Bois 1954); a revelation of the degree at which the slavery enterprise was indeed a state-sponsored terrorism. Another disturbing example is the

participation by European Royal Families. Though viciously disgusting the business was, Queen Elizabeth I played an active role in empowering a very notorious slave trader, John Hawkins, by providing him with a ship to boost the trade. Upon Hawkins's return from Africa with the *goods*, she could not think of better way to honor him than decorate him with the title '*knight*'. What portrays and increases the guilt of the West in this trans-Atlantic transaction of terror is that "...the shipments were all by Europeans to markets controlled by Europeans, and this was in the interest of European capitalism and nothing else" (Rodney, P. 95; more about the involvement of European royal families, see <http://www.sonofthesouth.net/slavery/history-slavery.htm>).

The sadness is that at the time of these enormous and fugitive acts of terror, Western intelligentsia measured them from the prism of goals achieved, not crimes committed that caused immeasurable setback to the population of nations of Africans. As Walter Rodney suggests, "The European slave trade was a direct block, in removing millions of youth and young adults who are the human agents from whom inventiveness springs," (P. 105). Drawing a comparison with the development achieved in the West, Rodney argues, "Population growth played a major role in European development in providing labor, markets, and the pressures that led to further advance" (Pp. 97-98).

Experts of the 400-years-old trans-Atlantic terrorism estimate a modest number of the dead resulting from the process of enslavement and slavery to the tune of eleven million Africans. Some of these estimates include flights into the forests, deaths in transit centers, combined with the arduous travail of slave labor, malnutrition, lack of medication, psychological trauma, psychiatric ailments, subordination, submissiveness, humiliation as well as a number of dehumanizing forms of physical and psychological torture in the highest degree of holocaust and terrorism.

For instance: David Stannard (1992) registers that between 30 to 60 million Africans died while being enslaved, and that a mortality rate of 75-80% occurred in transit. Meltzer, as cited in White (2003), believes that 10 million slaves arrived in the Americas; this would be the residue after 12.5% of those shipped out from Africa died on the ocean, 4-5% died while waiting in harbor, and 33% died during the first year of seasoning. As White (2003) claims, Drescher estimates the casualty to the tune of 21 million as enslaved, 1700-1850, of whom 4 million died "as a direct result of enslavement". Of 12 million slaves shipped to America, about 15%, or 2 million more, died in the Middle Passage and seasoning year. According

to White (2003), emphasizing on Jan Rogozinski's work, close to "eight million Africans may have died in order to bring four million slaves to the Caribbean islands."

Walter Rodney argues that, "...no scale of rationality could the outflow of population be measured as being anything but disastrous for African societies" (P. 98). It was a multi-facial form of terrorism which affected the Africans across different geographical locations. It applied a lot of violence to suppress the African slaves. Commenting on slave condition, (Morris, P. 25) maintains, "The control and use of violence by the dominators was central to the maintenance of slavery." The statement depicts another harsh example of slavery as a form of terrorism. However, the West embarked on the second destructive terrorism on Africa under the veiled name of colonialism.

B. The terror of colonialism

After the abolition of slavery, Western terrorism of Africa began at the infamous Berlin conference in 1884 when many European countries convened and deliberately planned the partitioning of the African continent in a blueprint the Western colonial and imperial world named the Partition of Africa (Padmore, 1936; July, 1992). The new module of exploitation was so terrifying that the atrocities afflicted against the African society consisted of a broad spectrum of crimes: "Deportation, massacre, forced labor, and slavery were the primary methods used by capitalism to increase its gold and diamond reserves, and establish its wealth and power," (Fanon, 2005:57). Fanon emphatically argues that colonialism made the institution of the African indigenes "a sector that crouches and cowers, a sector on its knees, a sector that is prostrate" (P. 4). As a result of this kind of Western terrorism, thousands of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) were created and the ambience of their livelihood entirely disrupted for fear of being massacred or conscripted for forced labor (Kayongo-Male and Onyango, 1991:1-2, 25; Eno 2008). Uncountable figures died in the forests, hiding, while others became easy prey to wild animals. With all the undeniable evidence, the West developed acute allergy to the acceptance of these acts of violence as equal to *terrorism* and the culprits as *terrorists*, because they are the criminals who also happen to be the gate-keepers of the courthouse.

Furthermore, Africans were compelled to work on the very land expropriated from them under the newly enforced colonial legislation of servitude. The African economy was brought to its knees in the course of

boosting Western wealth. The indigenous Africans were deprived of the benefits of their production while every “surplus was drawn to feed the metropolitan sector” (Rodney P. 149). As such, no amount of “moral reparation for national independence” (Fanon P. 58) could be commensurate with the devastation and exploitation of human and natural resources.

However, Africans fought bloody battles to end colonialism (Mazrui and Tidy 1984). Terms like ‘the struggle for independence’ and ‘freedom fighter’ marked the daily life of the African society. Hardly a family lives on the continent that has not experienced a form of the terrorism of slavery or colonialism or both. The term ‘decolonization’ is still so fresh in the memories of living African freedom fighters as well as descendents of the martyrs who sacrificed their lives towards the cause of freedom, liberty and human dignity for self-rule. Over the period of half a century of colonial terrorism and neo-colonialism in Africa (K. Nkrumah 1974), the West has successfully pillaged the continent in every possible way it could and by any mentionable social oppression and economic exploitation (P. Jalee 1970), though most memorable are the massacres, disappearances, amputations, and the economic exploitation and underdevelopment. Whereas according to the Africans these are our heroes and liberators who sacrificed their precious lives for the just cause of our freedom, the Colonial West believed they were terrorists threatening their domination; hence “One man’s hero is another’s villain” (Mazrui 1990:7).

Under the constraints of oppression and subjugation, the fight for freedom against the military might of colonial authorities was an uphill battle for the terror-stricken Africans. Just to mention a few instances, these horrific terrorists include the Germans who pitilessly crushed the Maji Maji movement in Tanganyika, the current Tanzania (Kimambo and Temu 1968); the British protagonists of colonialism and imperialism who hardheartedly terrorized the Mau Mau movement in Kenya (Corfield 1960; Ogot and Kieran 1960; Ochieng’ 1985), and freedom fighters in northern Somalia (Samatar 1989); and Italy’s brutal acts in southern Somalia (Eno 2008; Touval 1963; Pankhurst 1951).

Elsewhere on the continent, France was a notorious protagonist of African colonization and terrorism in northern and western Africa (Odetola and Ademola 1994; Fanon 1970; Abun 1975; Ade and Crowder 1974). It callously killed and tortured African citizens under colonial laws it designed to control their resources. The Dutch and their apartheid system in South Africa represent the enormous toll European terrorism

has taken on Africa (Stapleton 2010). Equally, a study of colonialism in Africa cannot afford to overlook the nature of terrorism which the Portuguese (Duff 1959) subjected to the indigenous populace, committing ruthless destruction and devastation of their colonies including Mozambique, Angola and elsewhere on the coastal polities along the Indian Ocean.

Finally, no sensible human being, African or non-African, would be at ease with a reminiscence of the devastating cruelties and abominable exercises of terrorism by the Belgian colonial authorities in Congo (Ewans 2002; Hochschild 1998), where killing and other carnage were not only committed, but also indecently, through the more painful punishments of severing parts of the body, leaving the surviving victims the lifelong trauma of amputation and physical as well as mental disability! In the circumstances above, viewing terrorism broadly under the lens of the African envisages ideological dichotomy surrounding the Western approach to the meaning, use and treatment of the words terrorism and terrorist. A discussion on that dichotomy is in order next.

III. The ideological morass and causes of current terrorism

When the US's worrisome situation and inability to effectively encounter the unpredictable dimensions of the terrorism dilemma increased, it saw it as an inherent interest to establish African forces which it could drag into its war on terror. One of these projects was brought to life in 2005 as the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Initiative (TSCTI) "to address terrorist threats in Africa," with a budget of "\$500 million to start, in \$100 million per year increments" (Zalman, (TSCTI)). At the earlier stage of this initiative, well over 3,000 African troops were trained by the U.S. Special Operations unit to deal with suspected elements of terrorism in the African continent.

Under the sub-title 'External pressures' Harsch (2009:5) asserts that, "in the wake of the dramatic September 2001 attacks in the US, many African governments felt pressure to adopt stringent anti-terrorism legislation and sign military agreements with the US and European countries." The most notable evidence of this pressure, among others, was popularized by former US president George W. Bush's popular jargon calling for the world population to either be with the US or with the 'enemy', a demonstration of the paradigmatically arrogant behavior of certain US leaders. In taking this posture, George W. Bush ignored entirely the world community's democratic exercise of neutrality as an

alternative choice. Instead he exercised the American might of "...controlling millions of people abroad through economic inducements, economic threats, diplomatic pressure and state manipulation, the power of trade and the lure of aid, promises of military security and threats of destabilization..." (Mazrui 2006:188).

To a section of the African and world society, the so-called war on terrorism is laden with ideological and political flaws, and represents the interests of specific national and Western parties. For example, in the essay 'Terrorism in Africa', Amy Zalman (nd) chronicles how in Somalia, in order to support an ideological framework midwived by Ethiopia, "A U.S. backed Ethiopian invasion in 2007 restored TFG control" against the Union of Islamic Courts. In spite of the invasion, "The UIC has been characterized by some commentators as a productive force that contributed to stabilizing the country," which no transitional administration had done or is capable of doing till now (P. 2). As a result, "the news in the US about the events in Somalia is told from the point of view of the war on terror" (P. 1). But contrary to the American and Ethiopian perception, a majority of the UIC's beneficiaries on the ground believed the institution as "a coordinated group of Islamic Courts. It took over services and security functions of the government after the 1991 collapse of the Somali government" (Pp. 1-2).

Following the Ethiopian invasion, independent "Human rights observers have recorded much Ethiopian troops' brutality against civilians." Not surprisingly, neither the US nor Ethiopia has accepted responsibility for the inhuman devastation of Somali lives at a time when the people needed stability and not foreign invasion. Similar to other analysts' observation, Zalman expresses that Ethiopia was "also in Somalia in pursuit of its own objectives," and that some of those objectives "include proxy battles with Eritrea." But the US pointed an accusing finger only at Eritrea for the support it provided to the UIC, which Eritrea did in response to a similar backing Ethiopia was offering in man and military equipment to various armed militia groups operating in the fallen nation.

Although as Mazrui deliberates, "We are caught up in other people's wars and conflicts" (2006:97); this may, however, lead to devastating consequences and a huge spill of African blood for the sake of recruitment into an American dogma. Therefore, by committing to the participation in a war whose major actors and targets are a great distance away from the continent, Africa seems to have accepted an entrapment in the quagmire of the ideological as well as military crossfire between two

opposing forms of terrorists: those behind the slave trade and colonialism on the one part, and the perpetrators of the recent resurgence of *terrorism* targeting the West and its 'interests'.

Our notion regarding this factor is supported by the reality that, first of all, "not everyone agrees that terrorism is as pressing a threat in Africa as the U.S. says it is" (Zalman, nd:2). We agree with Zalman because these are terms adopted to fulfill specific goals for specific people, against specific categories of individuals or groups, domestically and globally, on specific occasions. Secondly, analysts share the concern "that the TSCTI could increase popular opposition to the US for its meddling," (Zalman P. 2). What makes the situation more chaotic to the ordinary African is the reality that the US is not and may not do enough regarding the "concern that authoritarian African governments are opportunistically taking advantage of the US war on terror to increase their repression at home" (P. 2) Zalman (TSCTI) concludes, "Finally, the potential U.S. dependence on African oil has raised questions about American motives for increased security in the region."

A major ideological challenge to Africa is: how appropriate is Africa's moral obligation to take a frontline stage in a war that nominates another group distinctly by the same terms the West used to criminalize the Africans in order to control their conscience and manipulate their resources? Another reality is that the US policy towards terrorism suffers from flaws and imbalances and is therefore hinged on hypocrisy. That is to say, the US occupies a unique global position in condoning acts globally accepted as serious terrorism when the accused belong to its political turf. One of the ideological deficiencies is that "...it was extremely difficult for Britain to get suspects extradited from the United States" (Mazrui, 2006:112). In certain cases, "Both the judges and the Irish lobby on Capitol Hill" do not only "continue to favor this particular class of 'terrorists'" upon arrival in the United States, but in fact accord them with exceptions and treatment "as candidates for asylum" (Mazrui, Ibid).

On the national level, Harsch (2009:18) acknowledges, "In Nigeria, early efforts to introduce counter-terrorism laws met particularly stiff criticism in the predominantly Islamic northern states, where many viewed them as specifically targeted against Muslims." Even in the United States, and elsewhere in Europe, Muslims of all walks of life, including distinguished clerics, scholars, leaders and prominent personalities were harassed and had their rights violated for the simple reason of belonging to the Islamic faith. Despite these problems, the West does not convincingly mention the causes of terrorism.

Causes of terrorism

In a comment on the causes of terrorism, Africans should read carefully Mazrui's concern: "We are being drafted to combat terrorists, but we are given no say in determining the *causes* of terrorism" (2006:97). Though Africa is blindly selling itself to the so-called 'global combat against terrorism', Jackie Cilliers (2003:94) contributes:

...the CIA let a genie out of the bottle...The subsequent withdrawal of the CIA once the Soviet Union retreated from Afghanistan ten years later left former US allies isolated and betrayed. The training of yesterday's liberators (consisting of various factions of the secret anti-Soviet Muslim army in Afghanistan) became terrorist brotherhood with global ramifications.

A similar contention is sustained by Mazrui (2006:283) who emphasizes, "In Afghanistan in the 1980s, the West armed the liberation of a Muslim society in order to frustrate Moscow."

Examining terrorism from a global ideological sphere, and by extension the parameters the West wouldn't appreciate mentioning, Mazrui takes his outspoken liberal academic stand and reveals, "It is not just terrorism that has become globalized. It is also its causes—the frustration and desperation of people affected by decisions made in Washington, New York, Paris, London, and Moscow," (2006:59). Providing another core ideological factor to the impasse, Mazrui argues: "The single most explosive cause of anti-American terrorism is the perceived alliance between the United States and Israel against major Muslim concerns" (Ibid). After a critical analysis, he draws the reader's attention to the rationale that "a global coalition against terrorism would only make sense if it included addressing the causes of terrorism" (Ibid).

But the problem towards "addressing the causes of terrorism" is hindered by the West's traditional neglect of the subject as a taboo and the misleading direction into which they guide the world opinion through the western controlled media. According to a majority of western thinkers, improper distribution of meager resources, poor governance, and corrupt political leadership are the causes of terrorism which attract the youth to demonstrate their anger. But the real fact reveals more than that. Coinciding with Mazrui, Cilliers (2003:94) writes, "...this coalition of brotherhood is coalescing around a single global target, the United States, Israel and those perceived to be their close allies."

For a grasp of the ideological guidance in its right place, one should take a glimpse at history. For example, when Iran was a strong ally of the US, the regime there was embraced with all the dignities and privileges of international relations, from military equipment to economic and technological support: a US interest indeed! After the Iranian masses determined their cessation with monarchy, Iran was not only a neglected old ally but an enemy often categorized as state-sponsor of terror. To further aggravate the delicate matter, after the US defeat of Iraq in the Persian Gulf War of 1991, Israel and Iran, who were previously considered allies, became the worst enemies due to their endeavor each to maintain a superior political and military power in the region (Trita Parsi 2007; see also Maximilian Terhalle 2011).

Within Africa itself, not all elites are of the same opinion at the national level regarding the ideology of anti-terrorism. It becomes more precarious at the legislation stage. More often than not, the laws amount to tools of suppression for despotic leaderships. Harsch (2009:7) produces such a concern as was raised by Nigerian human rights advocate Rotimi Sankore :

Now it appears that all any corrupt, undemocratic or insecure government needs to do to ensure the support of the West is to sign up to the anti-terror war and introduce 'anti-terrorist' legislation which is sure to be used to suppress or undermine democratic opposition and human rights.

Harsch (2009:8) reports a similar anxiety by Boubacar G. Diarra who asks, "How can we, as democratic societies that respect human rights, assure our collective protection and fight effectively against this form of intolerable violence?" Despite the concerns by Sankore and Diarra, and others who care for the continent and its people, we need to recognize that, through corrupt leaders, Africa is being dragged into a nasty and costly confrontation with people who ideologically do not have a grudge against the continent as its people, but who are "...making Americans pay a price for any abuse of power" the US committed against them. Therefore, and as Mazrui indicates, "The price could be by making Americans feel disliked by others, or even making Americans feel unsafe," (Mazrui 2006:185).

Conclusion

This essay looked at the issue of terrorism from a different perspective; that which constitutes the worst, most vicious, and most devastating of all acts of terrorism – slavery and colonialism. It also provided the importance of an effective and unambiguous interpretation of what act is to be classified as terrorism and who to be qualified as terrorist.

The bottom-line of the essay is also to bring to Western attention that, after committing the horrific acts of terrorism as mentioned above, the West's current appeal for an end to the violence against them, sounds quite ironical to the average African who considers the enduring pain and anguish of slavery, colonialism, domination and exploitation as exceedingly more destructive and more intolerable than that which the West concocted recently as its own version of 'terrorism'. The overemphasis on terrorism and the call for global recruitment to the 'fight against terrorism' sounds, to majority of Africans (including descendants of slavery), as a hollow message to one who had already suffered worse atrocities of terrorism(s) under the West. Yet, the West behaves oblivious of those holocausts and prefers to ignore them as unworthy of consideration for reparation!

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