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Islamic State / DAESH - essential factors in the development of the group (2013 - 2020)

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Summary

In the context of the Arab Spring, the war in Syria created an environment that allowed the development of terrorist organizations. In the absence of reforms, youth disenchanted with governments were attracted to various entities that offered them a purpose and promised them a future full of abundance, equality and the possibility of development under special conditions. Yet there was no revolution to rebuild a divided society, but a context was created in which terrorism reached very high levels, millions of people became refugees or displaced, and the lack of any prospect of progress, peace, normality and predictability.

The PhD thesis researches DAESH / Islamic State and the essential factors that ensured the development of the group between the years 2013 and 2020 (the period chosen for researching the group to ensure relevant conclusions; the current situation of the group will also be briefly presented to provide a coherent, current picture). Based on the knowledge accumulated by studying DAESH, we identified the following elements as major factors that contributed to this process of development and expansion: the promoted ideology; funding received from different actors and obtained through own instruments; the way in which he administered the occupied territories; the ability to recruit militants, both internally and externally; the lack of adequate action by the international community to prevent DAESH atrocities and support relevant local actors fighting the terrorist group; the failure of the political-diplomatic negotiations regarding Syria, which through training and successive failures did not ensure the context for the establishment of law and order, and against the background of the created chaos, DAESH developed, as well as other extremist / terrorist groups; fear and other elements specific to psychological warfare, which have been skilfully used by DAESH to subdue populations and win non-confrontational battles.

The methodological approach is predominantly qualitative, consisting of the evaluation of the main theoretical models proposed so far, the analysis of relevant documents (official statements of the governments of the states involved, statements of religious authorities, military doctrines, statements of UN officials, UN documents on the subject), investigations journalistic articles, articles from academic journals, relevant books from specialised literature, as well as observing the regional and international dynamics. Quantitative data was used in the contexts where they are needed, a quantitative analysis was used in the context of documenting DAESH funding. The qualitative approach of the research allowed the elaboration of a current interpretation of the ideological motivation of the militants who join DAESH, the presentation of the relevant factors that made this group a global one with special combative capabilities, I insisted on the psychological factors and made a personal interpretation of the way in which fear, administration, radicalisation, funding

sources and the lack of reaction from the international community contributed to the development of DAESH.

The result of the research mainly focused on: visualisation of the way of profiling / evolution of terrorist threats; identifying the areas where the threat exists/operates; anticipation of potential threat sources; the approach at an integrated strategic level to the risks to national / regional / international security. Systematically, I answered the research questions, I tested the hypotheses and theories from which I started, I described the terrorist phenomenon as faithfully as possible in the context of the Middle East. We used the specialised literature to conduct the research in an objective, well-documented manner. In addition to secondary analysis, we considered the use of primary analysis and presented data collected from our own experience¹, selectively, we conducted interviews with relevant people who have adequate knowledge on the subject. We combined the descriptive study with the normative study, to give suggestions, solutions, as well as the predictive study, to provide a personal view on how DAESH will evolve, as well as the terrorist phenomenon in general. I have included most of the normative and predictive elements in the conclusions, to give substance to the research. A specific approach to interpretivism was adopted in the thesis (Alkin, Yelken, 2014, 2) because it offers the possibility of presenting personal opinions and experiences, thus enriching knowledge.

The work is not intended to be exhaustive on the subject of DAESH, it will not address in detail the history of Iraq and Syria, or of the Middle East — specific clarifications will be made in order to explain / give context regarding some of the developments. In the specialised literature, there are numerous works that explain the impact of the decisions of Great Britain and France regarding the Middle East after the First World War, the consequences of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the famous Sykes-Picot Pact. Stewart Ross states: “One of the main reasons for the instability of the Middle East in recent decades has been the painful process of defining and establishing nation-states in a region where this concept is almost unknown. Iraq is a classic example. Like Palestine, Saudi Arabia and other countries (of modern origin) in the Middle East, at the beginning of the 20th century, a state called Iraq did not exist.” (Ross, 2011, 31). I appreciate that it is vital to know our history in order not to repeat the mistakes of the past, but the excessive use of a sequence of events to explain the present can be harmful and leads to an annulment / reduction of the responsibility of current generations. The repeated attempts to associate current problems in the Middle East with the establishment of borders is not wrong, but it is clearly limiting. The fact that

¹ I worked in Iraq between 2013-2016, as head of the Romanian Consular Office in Erbil/Kurdistan Region, Iraq, part of the Romanian Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq. In the period 2016-2019, I worked at the Romanian Embassy in Islamabad, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, responsible for political, consular, economic affairs.

Iraq did not exist as a state at the beginning of the 20th century is an argument that can be used by any state or entity to claim territories that were held by various empires and that they claim as their inheritance. In the exact same logic, Vladimir Putin denied Ukraine's statehood ("Address by the President of the Russian Federation", February 21, 2022) and considered it justified to start a war on February 24, 2022 against this state.

Looking at global jihadism, Riedel believes that: "At the root of jihadism is the belief that the real enemy of Islam today is the United States, which must be met with violence against every American. An apocalyptic ideology predicts that America can be weakened and ultimately defeated through bloody wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and perhaps elsewhere, such as Yemen, just as the Soviet Union was worn down by the jihad in Afghanistan. Al Qaeda, the Taliban and others constantly make this analogy. For bin Laden and Zawahiri and many others, the Mujahideen struggle was the formative experience of their lives and has shaped their worldview ever since." (Riedel, 2012, 105). I brought this quote to attention because the mentioned author makes a relevant statement related to the jihad carried out by terrorist groups up to DAESH, which focused exclusively on the USA. But, the US left Iraq and later Afghanistan (2021), instead the war was not over. Compared to these groups, DAESH took a different approach and declared war on the entire world, starting with the Vatican and all Christians (Faye, 2015). The major threat derives from the fact that there is no longer a border, a defined territory where a confrontation can take place, there is a removal of any landmarks and any objective can be a target for DAESH members, who will attack anyone who opposes the global Caliphate, no capital is safe and anyone can be a victim. This type of approach requires clear policies from NATO states, the EU, but also from any legitimate government, because, as I will show throughout this paper, DAESH developed and had state-like capabilities, and after being defeated in Iraq and Syria in terms of controlled territory, it has expanded its presence through cells globally, which are particularly aggressive (MSNBC, April 4, 2016).

I bring to attention the following clarification of Migaux, who claims that it is necessary "Let us not be mistaken, the first weapons of the adversary are his imaginative ability to strike by surprise and his good knowledge of our weaknesses. The fight therefore remains long and requires endurance and cohesion. It is first psychological. And its duration depends on our will, on the transparency of our ways of action, and on the consistency of our words with our deeds. It is also related to our ability to integrate, socially, economically and culturally, populations that feel excluded or in revolt, which are potential reservoirs of jihadist networks. Suffice it to say that in a universe with many gray areas, both external and internal, the gradual decline of radical Islamist movements will not mark the end of the terrorist phenomenon, without the need to overestimate its capacity for evil. In terms of security, Western countries that have never experienced war must be aware of these

long-term risks." (Migaux, 2006, 561-562). This author's analysis is from the year 2006, it has proven its accuracy and the recommendations are still relevant. Eliminating DAESH, Al Qaeda or any other group that sends the same message will not solve the real problem, which is the feeling of exclusion, the belief that the West or the government is responsible for an individual's personal unhappiness, and this can only be achieved after a major struggle, or after attacks in the heart of what these persons consider to be the enemy. Contemporary terrorism is resourceful, up-to-date, up-to-date with all attack possibilities and uses them skilfully. Terrorists seek to obtain chemical weapons (Warrick, July 11, 2022), biological weapons, nuclear components, use cyber-attacks, are not ignorant of technological developments and are open to using them to achieve their goals. When a group like the ones mentioned above disappears, it is replaced by another, which ends up attracting militants from the same pool, possibly coming with varied messages, from radical to moderate, in order to maximise their recruitment pools.

We presented the impact of developments in the Middle East on the concept of the sovereign state, how non-governmental organisations play a major role in shaping a crisis, how regional or international alliances can be instrumental or destructive, as well as the role played by large corporations, especially those active in the oil&gas field, which have major interests in this part of the world. It is necessary to understand this dynamic in order to properly approach academic research in a sensitive field. Vasile Simileanu wonders and observes "Are the states no longer governing the world at the beginning of the millennium? Transnational economic corporations, industrial groups and banks, international financial bodies, regional organisations, the occult circuits of the underground economy and the media impose their status everywhere. The new economic forces that have dethroned the political are replacing the states." (Simileanu, 2004, 60). The question is valid, but without going into conspiracy theories, it is also necessary to note the close cooperation between states and corporations. Regarding the situation in Syria, it was brought to attention by several authors, argued in detail by Charis Chang, that Russia had a major interest in interfering with the project that would have eliminated Europe's gas dependence on Gazprom / Russia, namely the construction of natural gas pipelines from Qatar and Iran to Europe (Chang, 2015). The weakening of the power of the nation-state is a reality, but at the same time, mammoth companies, such as Gazprom, are getting confused with the state. The conflict in Syria and the presence of DAESH has allowed the continued presence of the Russian military, but also of other entities in the war zone, which has prevented any economic development, and the discussion of gas pipelines is something that seems too distant to be addressed. In September 2022, the whole of Europe is concerned that entering the winter will put it in a very difficult situation and because of the war in Ukraine and the sanctions imposed on Russia, it will reach a situation where Gazprom will stop the gas supply, for retaliatory purposes (Strasburg, Ulick, Gomez, 2022). If Europe had had valid alternatives during this

period, the blackmail would not have been carried out, and the unity of the European countries would not have been shaken by economic interests, or real needs, which cannot be managed in adequate conditions without the supply of Russian gas.

Andreescu and Radu observe "Unfortunately, more and more often, in Western democracies, Islam is viewed and judged according to the acts and deeds of certain groups of people. And this is another reason why it must be emphasised that such approaches are not objective, distorting the true meaning of Islam. Let's admit that it would be so, that this is the reality, but then what could we say about the Christian world when we think about the trafficking of live meat, the molestation of children or many others? Islam is the religion that is based on achieving peace through submission to the divine will. This is a simple linguistic analysis that shows us the nature of this religion." (Andreescu, Radu, 2015, 21). If, as a result of the actions of terrorist groups, such as DAESH, or other entities with a similar agenda, we come to believe that a religion is responsible for their actions, then these groups have won. A proper way in which such groups can be defeated is that religion, ideology is not used as a justification for a person's actions. Each individual is responsible for his actions, it is neither necessary nor useful to justify personal choices based on abstract concepts. Before acting, an individual has free will which allows him to choose the direction he wants to go. DAESH has no justification in Islam for the violent actions it has used. If there were many associations, they were made on the basis of lack of knowledge and assessments of people who do not possess the necessary expertise were taken, who take the claims of the terrorist entity that the ideological source is from Islam.

In Syria, the group is active in the Badia desert and Al-Rusafah, Raqqa governorate (SOHR, October 12, 2022), Daraa (SOHR, October 14, 2022) rural areas of Dayr al-Zawr, al-Qamishli, Al-Raqqah (SOHR, 16 October 2022) and al-Hasakah, Idlib, hidden among locals and refugees (Lister, 12 October 2022), Damascus (Al-Khateb, 20 October 2022); in the north, in areas controlled by Turkey / Turkish proxies (SOHR, October 10, 2022; Hagan, October 13, 2022). In Iraq, DAESH members are present in the rural and mountainous areas of western al-Anbar, Diyala (NINA, October 13, 2022), Al-Tuz / Salah al-Din (NINA, October 12, 2022), Kirkuk (NINA, October 12, 2022) and Ninawa (NINA, 11 October 2022), including Mosul (NINA, 11 October 2022), as well as in the Kurdistan Region (NINA, 23 October 2022). There are also cells on the joint Syria-Iraq border (Kube and Lee, October 6, 2022) that facilitate the transfer of combatants and arms trafficking. The group no longer controls any localities where there are civilians. DAESH is also concentrating its activity in Afghanistan (Raghavan, 30 September 2022; Seyler, 5 February 2022; Institute for Economics & Peace - Global Terrorism Index 2019), Pakistan (Terrorism-Info, 9 October 2022; Rivera, 6 April 2022) and Africa (Sasso, 2016); Syria-Iraq became a regrouping/reorganization area, shelter for leaders and symbol of the caliphate. From an operational point of view, the Syria-Iraq area

is little used.

Regarding its operations in Africa, the group is active and carries out terrorist attacks in Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Burkina Faso, the Sinai Peninsula/Egypt, Morocco (Terrorism-Info, October 9, 2022), Libya (Crisis24, October 2, 2022; Wehrey, 2018, 230). Actions range from confrontations with law enforcement, other terrorist groups, especially Al Qaeda, to attacks on minorities, especially Christians, and any group/entity that opposes it.

At the moment, the main methods used by DAESH are: organising terrorist attacks, hit&run attacks on local community leaders and force structures, infiltrating communities and security structures to gain access to information and prepare new attacks. In Syria, the locations where the group operates cannot be accessed by UN agencies, which limits the population's access to adequate support; aims to carry out attacks on prisons where DAESH members are being held to increase its active cadres and give members confidence that if they are loyal they will be saved. It gets its resources from donations, extortion, ransoms (Rudaw, November 5, 2022) and other sources.

The presented data is relevant in order to observe that DAESH is an active group, which, although it no longer controls territories as it did in 2014-2017, has a global scope, a hybrid threat (Scott, December 1, 2014), constantly reinvents itself, carries out attacks terrorists and further promotes hatred, segregation, sectarianism, which is why it is necessary to understand properly how the group evolved, what were the factors that contributed to its development and what are the necessary measures to be taken to prevent this type of entities to form, or to prevent their development in order to eliminate the possibility of promoting chaos and violence and to build a society where cooperation and understanding prevail.

I would like to mention Huntington who states that: "in the new world (our note, post-Cold War) the most extensive, extensive and dangerous conflicts will no longer occur between social classes, between rich and poor or between other groups defined by economic criteria, but between peoples belonging to different cultural entities. Tribal wars and ethnic conflicts will occur within civilisations." (Huntington, 2012, 23). The statements of this renowned political scientist were prophetic, what DAESH achieved was a clash of civilisations based on religious, ethnic criteria, as well as other forms of racism that will be presented in this research. An important component of the currently active war (November 2022), the one between Russia and Ukraine is based on the ideological side, the pro-democracy, pro-European and pro-NATO orientation of the government in Kyiv, this vision causing Moscow to start a war just because they don't accept the ethnicity and ideology of the neighbouring country.

The research makes useful contributions from a theoretical point of view regarding the understanding of DAESH in particular, but also of other terrorist / extremist groups, going to support a reader with little / average knowledge on the subject to accumulate useful, additional, relevant

elements about the dynamics of a situation of conflict and how terrorist groups of Islamic origin develop and operate.

It also aims to outline useful analytical tools regarding the DAESH terrorist group and highlight factors, situations and events that can have a negative impact if not properly managed, such as situations where humanitarian migrants from conflict zones they become targets of attacks by extremists and xenophobes. It is important not to equate migrants with terrorists. It is not excluded that some members of terrorist groups pose as migrants in order to succeed in penetrating Western states (Faiola, Mekhennet, April 22, 2016), but this does not imply that all migrants are terrorists, nor that it would be fair to treat these persons as attackers. It is important to have discernment and to identify tools by which radical-extremist persons are identified and their activity is monitored / limited, and to have the appropriate attitude towards migrants for humanitarian reasons. We have presented practical solutions to handle this type of situation.

The main theories circulated about DAESH are the following:

1. ISIS is a mixed organisation of jihadists from the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the former Soviet Union, the Balkans, North and West Africa, which seeks to impose its rules and values on the widest possible territory, regardless of beliefs religious or political of the locals. ISIS recruits men to fight and govern occupied territories, recruits young women to become fighters' wives, recruits foreigners for propaganda purposes in psychological warfare and to prove that Islam (n.a. actually the ideology of DAESH, not the Islamic religion) is more attractive than materialistic culture. Colonisation is part of ISIS ideology, as are rape, slavery, torture and genocide. (Bourrie, 2016; Anderson, 2017; Oberle, 2016; Erelle, 2015)

2. In Iraq, DAESH managed to take control of large territories dominated by the Sunni population with the help of sleeper cells, mostly consisting of people with military training, who were part of the former Iraqi army or were active officers. The decision to support DAESH was prompted by the 8 years under the rule of Shia Prime Minister Nouri Kamal al-Maliki, who alienated the Sunni community in a premeditated and organized manner. (Anderson, 2017; Cockburn, 2019)

3. ISIS's power grew rapidly under Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi because it became highly organized and controlled from the center, used propaganda videos showing frequent executions of Muslims to promote a ruthless reputation that demoralised the forces of Iraqi security in Mosul. The Iraqi Sunnis were emboldened by the Sunni uprisings in Syria, the two Sunni uprisings combined into one crisis. (Cockburn, 2019)

4. ISIS was the most successful terrorist organisation from a military point of view, it was inspired by Al-Qaida, it is made up of fanatics who carry out attacks especially against non-Sunni Muslims, with Shia Muslim and Christian communities being the preferred targets. It uses surprise attacks and fear-mongering tactics, capitalising on governments' alienation from their own

populations to recruit militants. (Cockburn, 2016).

5. DAESH claims to be a Salafist-Jihadist group, but is seen by experts in this ideology to be a renegade group that distorts concepts of Salafism to justify attacks on groups that oppose it, with no basis in Islamic jurisprudence (Maher, 2016). DAESH claims to respect a pure form of Islam, as practiced in the time of the Prophet, in fact, the group has promoted extremism, radicalism, Nazi concepts, alienation from everything that represents the Western, impure society. DAESH sold a story in which criminals, extremists, criminals became heroes, in a utopian society that offers the salvation of the soul strictly by executing actions requested by the caliph or his lieutenants. (Bourrie, 2016).

6. The main funding sources of DAESH that contributed to the development of the group are: sale of oil products; charging and scams; capture of funds available in banks in conquered cities; rewards for kidnapped persons; antiquities traffic; agriculture; human trafficking; donations. DAESH's main expenditures are for: fighter maintenance and military operations; wages and social benefits; communications and media; infrastructure. DAESH uses international banks, bypassing the means of detecting suspicious activities, which allows it to sponsor and move funds for terrorist actions. (Bilger, 2014; Levallois and Causseran, 2017; Do, Shapiro, Elvidge, Abdel-Jelil, Ahn, Baugh, Hansen-Lewis, Zhizhin, 2017; Napoleoni, 2016).

7. DAESH has divided the territory it controls in Iraq and Syria into seven provincial administrations specifically created to make the border between the two states irrelevant, from Aleppo province in Syria to Kirkuk province in Iraq. In order to emphasise the transnational character, the wilayet of Al Firat was created, which includes territories from Derizour and Al Anbar. The terrorist group used a judicial power based on religious judges, supported by religious police, in order to enforce compliance with their decisions. The brigades created by DAESH with the name Al-Khansa were used to enforce the strict separation between the two sexes in public transport, in schools, in public places, failure to observe this separation causing the application of severe punishments. As a rule, women were not allowed to move outside the home alone, and those who did needed a permit from their guardian. (Luizard, 2016).

8. ISIS has developed and promoted itself through a combination of ideology, ruthless violence, military force, financial cunning and innovative social media campaigns to convey its message and appeal to the marginalized and disenfranchised Sunni Muslim community around the world. (Mabon, Royle, 2017).

9. The Islamic State surpasses the armed organizations of the past in terms of military audacity, media manipulation, social programs and, above all, nation building. These subtle advantages in directions usually ignored by armed groups suggest an improvement in the old model of terrorism, not a genetic mutation (Napoleoni, 2015). This perspective does not accurately reflect reality because: DAESH does not see itself as an organization and in no way a terrorist organization,

it has presented itself as an ideal responding to a need, it has manifested itself as a state in the making with resources at its disposal financial and human fully committed to achieving the objective. The construct targeted by the group was not a national one, but an Islamic one, a global state construct, based on a religious identity, Sunni Islam, in which borders, national identity, local customs, traditions, no longer exist, there is only strict respect for Islam. Of course, this was the ideal presented by the group, although the pillars on which it was built was an Iraqi nationalism and a major frustration of some Syrian tribes, to which were added the Central Asian groups, who were in a constant struggle for survival and individuals in Western states, most of them in search of belonging to something that gives them purpose, to prove that their lives are worthwhile and in the service of an ideal.

It is important to emphasize that the development of DAESH took place in a favorable regional and international context due to the lack of leadership and a major division of values at the global level. Faith in democratic values has greatly diminished and current structures do not meet the needs of current generations. From Central Asia and the Middle East, revolutions, internal conflicts spread to North and Central Africa. Even states that were considered stable in the region were facing internal tensions and serious problems regarding respect for human rights and/or rights of minorities. Patrick Cockburn points out that: "The great wealth of the Gulf oil states — Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait — has translated into political power. These absolute Sunni monarchies are the ones who are at the top of the Arab world today, a position held 40 years ago by secular-nationalist states like Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Algeria, Libya and Yemen. The same period also saw an important ideological shift, with traditional Sunni Islam becoming increasingly dominated by Wahhabism, the variant of Islam adopted by Saudi Arabia. The wealth of the Saudis has increased the influence of this intolerant and regressive strain, which denounces other Islamic sects, such as Shiism, as heretical and views women as forever subservient to men. Nowhere in the world, apart from Saudi Arabia and the Caliphate, are women prohibited from driving a car" (Cockburn, 2019, 7). Of course, it is no longer the case today that women do not drive in Saudi Arabia², but the violation of human rights has remained constant. I agree with this author that the wealth that has come into the possession of the governments of these states, but also of businessmen and not only from these countries, has created a major funding base for radical segments that support DAESH or similar entities because they believe that this is the way to secure their future after death. When some people's choice is death and they no longer have the motivation to create in this life, real possibilities for negotiation are nullified. Trying to stop these people will result in bloodshed, the extent of which will depend on the weapons used by each side. There is also the option of isolating them and letting them

² Granted in 2018.

create their own universe, detached from the normal world, or engaging in a mission (difficult, by the way) to reset, reprogram, and take them out of the fatality zone, because destiny it is not written for them and that they can write / rewrite it themselves, any action being a personal choice. Having to make a choice can be a burden for some people, but it is a liberation when one's consciousness expands and one realizes that they are the one who decide upon each and every step.

DAESH had the opportunity to benefit from a territory and a population where it could apply Sharia and all the specific conditions of an Islamic leadership, an Islamic government. Those who represent the leadership of the Islamic State have not chosen to focus on the development of a society, but have systematically acted to amputate important elements of what constitutes a functioning society, in which tolerance is a necessity to manifest and be a constant feature. DAESH had the opportunity to apply a fair, just regime, coming in a context where the Sunni populations of two countries wanted to benefit from predictability, from a stable, fair government that would not target them just because they are part of another sect to the state leadership. Although on the surface, DAESH promoted justice and the application of an Islamic law, it used elements of pressure and enforcers that aimed to promote violence, not the development of trust between the legislators, the arm that carries out the decisions and the resident population. The failure to gain the trust of the population, the corruption that set in, relatively quickly, facilitated the elimination of DAESH from the controlled territories.

With the exception of Syria and Iraq, the territories effectively controlled by DAESH were small in size and mostly represented conspiratorial cells. For ISIS-core, these wilayates were meant to give the group scope and demonstrate its global component, as well as a steady source of militants, who traveled to Syria and Iraq to join the fight. We emphasize that the group did not function as a unitary entity and the leadership of the caliphate did not have the physical means by which to enforce the directives, it was effectively based on the faith of the members.

DAESH does not see itself as an organization and in no way as a terrorist organization, it has presented itself as an ideal responding to a need, it has manifested itself as a state in the making, with financial and human resources at its disposal fully committed to achieving the objective. The construct targeted by the group was not a national one, but an Islamic one, a global state construct, based on a religious identity, Sunni Islam, in which borders, national identity, local customs, traditions, no longer exist, there is only strict adherence to Islam. Of course, this was the ideal presented by the group, although the pillars on which it was built was an Iraqi nationalism and a major frustration of some Syrian tribes, to which were added the Central Asian groups, who were in a constant struggle for survival and individuals in Western states, most of them in search of belonging to something that gives them purpose, to prove that their lives are worthwhile and in the service of an ideal.

The manner in which DAESH administered the territories gave the group the ability to maintain control for a significant period of time, longer than initially anticipated, and the approach used was a successful one. The liberation of the territories under the control of DAESH was achieved by external forces, with the exception of specific actions, there were no internal riots, the status quo established by DAESH did not implode, it was not shaken by internal forces, which revolted because of the injustices of the ruling forces.

DAESH declared a total war on all those who did not accept its rules, regardless of religion, color, gender or other criteria. This threat targeted the entire Globe because it wanted to conquer every state and eliminate every border. The aspects are important because they clearly present the parties involved in this confrontation, DAESH versus the rest of the world, including against the sponsors who provided financial support to it in the beginning and allowed it to develop, who were acting on the criterion of the enemy of my enemy is mine friend. A short example is relevant, DAESH was funded by Saudi Arabia because it acted against the interests of the Syrian government and attracted the resources of Iran, but DAESH threatened both the Saudi monarchy and the rest of the Gulf monarchies, which it considered apostate, so it turned against the states who supported it to develop in the beginning. Muslims, even Sunni Muslims were the majority of those who fell victim to DAESH. This is explained because the message promoted by the terrorist group was not accepted with open arms by all Sunni Muslims. The territories in which DAESH entered and sought to develop, both in Syria and Iraq, were populated by Sunni Muslims, who could be a pool of recruitment, but also the first opposition that the group faced, which is why the terrorist leadership he took action against them, beheading and executing by various means members of the Sunni tribes who opposed him. It was an example for all those who might have opposed it later, but it was also the way DAESH operated, through violence, cruelty and us-versus-the-rest mentality.

DAESH is said to be like a "Salafist" (Napoleoni, 2016, 32) jihadist group. Salafism (Wagemakers, 2016) is a branch of Sunni Islam that adheres to the need to respect the "piety of predecessors" and wants to recreate a world similar to the first 3 Muslim generations. Salafism includes 3 currents: (1) avoids political involvement and focuses on pure political teachings; (2) political, which focuses on developing the involvement of Islam in politics, as a component of political parties and parliamentary participation; (3) Jihadist Salafism which aims to remove all apostate Muslim regimes through Jihad – "holy war". DAESH adhered to all 3 currents and tried to propagate the need for a political system that was exclusively religious, based on rules from the seventh and eighth centuries, but this claim is unachievable because the whole dynamic in contemporary societies is different (I avoid rankings or evaluations such as better or worse), inter-connectivity is at the highest level and with the greatest coverage, and authoritarian ways of imposing restrictive norms are no longer accepted by the present generations, who explore and integrate in your

own life experiences only your own choices.

DAESH's declarations of immersion in radical Salafism has helped the group to attract funding from the wealthiest states of the Middle East, from the aforementioned communities of Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, with radical individuals being more willing to pay zakat, as well as in addition to this sum, to join the cause and fight to the death against any entity deemed hostile to Islam. The attraction was amplified by the belief of these financiers that by paying for Jihad they would atone for their sins, and DAESH was offering this ticket to salvation through various methods of involvement, so some chose the easy way to provide money for the fight, continuing to and current activities, and if the terrorist group succeeded in achieving its goals, the financiers would be in important positions in the new order. The role of Saudi Arabia is also emphasized by Patrick Cockburn who reflects that, in addition to large financial resources, it is also a base of Wahhabism in the Middle East area (Cockburn, 2015, 5).

The research shows that Islam is not the theoretical source of the atrocities committed by the terrorist group. The terrorist group's claim that it claims its legitimacy from Islam does not represent reality, but an attempt at manipulation to provide the group with as large a recruitment pool as possible among the Sunni Muslim community. DAESH used Islam and Hadiths to legitimize itself, it presented itself as a Salafist group, which wants to impose the purity of Islam from the time of the prophet, but in fact it used manipulation techniques for control, attracting funding, militants, for expansion by joining new groups in territories where DAESH-core from Syria and Iraq could not reach. The group capitalised on populist discourses, created opinion leaders and maximized ideas like we are you, you are us, to show that they are humble and anyone can join them. The strategy worked, but the lack of consistency and the atrocities committed sunk the group in its own glory.

Amir Taheri points out that "the second characteristic that distinguishes the Islamic version from other forms of terrorism is that it is very clearly conceived and conducted as a form of holy war, which can end when the final victory has been achieved" (Taheri, 1987, 16). Any form of terrorism is not part of the religion it claims to represent or promote. What is relevant from this author's observation is that terrorist groups that draw their motivations from Islam are constantly perpetuating themselves because although they are defeated, they lose territories, but a limited number of militants constantly maintain the idea of holy war and are reborn. This is the main reason why these entities maintain themselves at the level of rhetoric for longer periods of time, compared to strictly political terrorist groups, whose existence is ephemeral.

From the interview with the imam and specialist in Islam Ahmed Mazhar Nakechbandi, it follows that the way in which religion was transformed into a goal from the path determined fanaticism, which also characterised the actions of DAESH, a fact that confirms the fact that the group's activities have left the area of Islam and have followed a leadership agenda that used

appealing ideas from religious ideology to attract funding and militants.

The financing of terrorism is a current topic because, at present and in the foreseeable future, terrorist groups are and remain active at a global level, they manage to keep under control territories or cells through which they carry out attacks with varying degrees of intensity and scale. Financing ensures the maintenance and development of these entities, which requires studying, understanding and creating countermeasures.

The main sources of financing of DAESH that contributed to the development of the group are: sale of oil products; charging and scams; capture of funds available in banks in conquered cities; obtaining rewards for kidnapped persons; antiquities traffic; agriculture; human trafficking; soliciting donations. DAESH's main expenditures are for: fighter maintenance and military operations; wages and social benefits; communications and media; infrastructure. DAESH uses international banks, bypassing the means of detecting suspicious activities, which allows it to sponsor and move funds for terrorist actions. (Bilger, 2014; Levallois and Causseran, 2017; Do, Shapiro, Elvidge, Abdel-Jelil, Ahn, Baugh, Hansen-Lewis, Zhishin, 2017; Napoleoni, 2016).

Because of the diversity of funding sources, it used, their complete control is difficult or even impossible. But, at the level of the international community, action can be taken for: strict control of donations and traceability measures, from donor to beneficiary, monitoring of activities carried out by states neighboring conflict zones to prevent transactions that would produce resources for terrorist groups; eradication of smuggling; drastic punitive measures for individuals/entities identified as having traded with terrorist groups. Of course, it is necessary that these measures do not cancel the possibilities of exchange/acquisition of goods to allow the captive population in territories controlled by terrorist groups to survive. The financing of terrorist groups is a topic that requires further study and is related to the financing of organized crime groups because, as a rule, they overlap. Joint actions against these types of entities, coordinated at the international level, can have an adequate impact and create the conditions to prevent the perpetuation of the financing of terrorism and organized crime.

DAESH defined itself as an administrative structure upon the declaration of the caliphate by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi on June 29, 2014. Since then, in addition to the campaign of conquest, the terrorist group has worked systematically to create a functioning administrative system and to obtain acceptance from on the part of the locals, to be attractive to Sunni Muslims from the rest of the world who were disillusioned with their experiences in democracies, monarchies, dictatorships or other forms of government that were active in their home spaces. The group's leaders understood that violence is not enough to rule, prosper and establish a caliphate. DAESH's administrative structure consists of an "Islamic judicial system and a nomadic police force, which carries out sentences in public, on the streets or in the markets." (Napoleoni, 2015, 67), measure by which the punishment

applied immediately after the offence was identified creates a state of panic, which also causes a decrease in offences / crime. This violent approach also represented the foundation of DAESH's beginning and, also, decline.

DAESH specifically used the wilayat subdivision for the administration of the caliphate: "Wilayat ISIS were territories that formally, legally and politically belonged to the caliphate, with defined borders and population, administered by governors appointed or approved by Baghdadi, who ruled in line with ISIS policy and conducted operations in within a defined set of rules." (Kilcullen, 2016, 128). Wilayats were established in Syria, Iraq, as well as in Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, the Sinai area of Egypt, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan-Pakistan (Khorasan), Nigeria and the Caucasus, which had the duty of sending fighters as well as it diverted attention from the fighting ISIS-core was waging in Syria and Iraq to allow the development of the caliphate (Kilcullen, 2016, 127-128). It is important to emphasise that, with the exception of Syria and Iraq, the territories effectively controlled by DAESH were small in size and mostly represented cells acting in a conspiratorial manner. For ISIS-core, these wilayates were meant to give the group scope and demonstrate its global component, as well as a steady source of militants, who traveled to Syria and Iraq to join the fight. We emphasise that the group did not function as a unitary entity and the leadership of the caliphate did not have the physical means by which to enforce the directives, it was effectively based on the faith of the members.

DAESH skillfully capitalized on the context, particularly in Iraq, and filled a power vacuum, a stability vacuum, and gave the impression that it would provide the local population with conditions that sovereign governments did not provide, that it would provide predictability, eliminate corruption and will provide the context for development. The structure used by DAESH is less important, but the attitude had the strongest effect. After nearly a decade of being sidelined from power, Sunnis in Iraq embraced DAESH because they believed it couldn't get any worse. I appreciate that when such a situation arises, it is necessary for the international community to intervene skilfully, use peacekeeping forces and set a clear, appropriate course for the integration of the population, with safeguards against entities that carry out abusive actions. Special attention needs to be paid to the training of the cadres of the force structures, who are able to maintain control of the locations where they are responsible, to be paid well enough not to give in to bribery / forms of corruption and to be educated in the spirit of camaraderie to protect each other and the population they work for. It is also necessary to have clear protocols in place on how to act to prevent large quantities of weaponry from falling into the possession of a terrorist group attacking a military base. The reintegration of the population is a challenge in any situation, even more so when religious differences arise. But the greater the challenge, the greater the need. Thus, extensive projects can be put into practice with the support of UN agencies, international NGOs with expertise in the field of multiculturalism and

reintegration. At the same time, extensive de-radicalization programs need to be implemented in cooperation with local communities.

A powerful tool of DAESH's recruitment has been that it has demonstrated its violence both through attacks on government forces in Iraq and Syria, but also on groups considered "apostate" (Anderson, 2017, 136). An important segment of those who joined DAESH were those who wanted adrenaline, violence, and the need to exercise control over other human beings. They felt strong when they took a life in battle, at the same time they were ready to be killed.

Berger, who studied the cases of American citizens who joined Jihad, identified the following: "Their motives are as varied as their backgrounds – some travel to defend Muslims in danger and some fight to establish Allah's rule on earth. Some channel a personal anger that has very little to do with religion. Others are looking for a community to belong to." (Berger, 2011, viii). It is challenging to identify and particularize all the motivations of the people who joined the terrorist groups that declared Jihad. The aspects identified by Berger are useful to provide benchmarks / selection criteria for potential candidates, but at the same time they provide tools to prepare public policies that meet the needs of potential recruits. All are related to the need to communicate and provide real, authentic explanations. For example, it is difficult to convince a person willing to reach certain territories to protect Muslims in danger to stop traveling because he sees the need to fight as a duty determined by the situation in which people of the same religion find themselves, telling him to do nothing or choose a different fight, reorienting him to the needs of those close to him may be a solution in some cases, but not in all cases.

Pichon believes that "Frustration, nationalism, millenarianism: an explosive cocktail that for thousands of European jihadists is an additional motivation. In reality, we are facing a monstrous avatar of globalization and Daesh uses its codes: the fluidity of space, social networks and, above all, the growing acculturation of societies. Lacking a cultural, rooted Islam, full of a market and consumerist civilization, young European Muslims thus believe they are returning to their origins while doing nothing but adhering to a monstrous globalizing ideology, to which Saudi Wahhabism has contributed for thirty years using billions of petrodollars." (Pichon, 2015, 124). The motivations presented by Pichon played an important role in the recruitment process carried out by DAESH, but also by other terrorist groups with a universalist agenda, which launch various messages, even without being convergent, in order to access the widest possible recruitment pool. Changing values, frustrations do not force violence, this approach I consider reductionist, just to give a plausible explanation, not the real one. If young Muslims do not identify what they need to engage in what Western society is building, it means that previous generations who were part of how values have evolved have a major responsibility that needs to be shouldered. These young people need options, guidance, which cannot be achieved only by accusing them of not being cultured enough, it is

important to identify their motivation, to be appreciated for what they do and to be given support to fulfil their ideas constructive, it is time to get out of the trend of criticism, which causes lack of commitment, possibly opposition, revolt and the need to identify means by which the accusing society is destroyed, reset, possibly by violent means.

Attracting new militants has been a major contributor to DAESH's success in becoming a group with global capabilities. In order to reduce/eliminate the recruitment pool for terrorist groups it is necessary to apply appropriate integration policies consistently. An adequate policy at a given time can become obsolete, which is why updating in accordance with the evolution of society is a necessity. We cannot go back to time zero, but we can think of measures for periods of healing and restoration of rights. It is important for each individual to feel that they are listened to, that their rights are respected and that their needs can be answered in the society in which they live, and there is no need to join a utopian community, such as that created by an extremist/terrorist group.

We have presented theoretical arguments regarding the context that ethically calls for the intervention of the international community, more precisely, the conditions when an intervention of international forces is necessary (under the auspices of the UN, NATO or another regional multilateral format) to prevent a humanitarian crisis with all its implications (violations of human rights, displacement of population, interruption of social services). The research framework applied these criteria to the situation in Kobane (2014-2015). The start of the conflict in Syria against the background of the Arab Spring was expected in the Western states, after the events in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. At the level of young people, the general mood was one of euphoria and appreciation, they hoped that the trend would extend to Arab states led by dictatorial regimes or monarchies. Syria is not a country very rich in natural resources, such as oil and gas, resources that have been the basis of development in most Arab states in the Middle East and North Africa. Moreover, the Syrian regime did not have an open attitude of cooperation with Western states, often having agendas opposed to European states, especially in Lebanon, where with the support of some local actors (such as Hizballah), it created tensions and political instability. Until 2015, the Russian Federation adopted a wait-and-see attitude, provided limited support to the Syrian regime and sought to protect its military base in Tartous. By 2015, it became clear that the US and other Western states did not have a defined agenda. In the second half of 2015, after the US presidential campaign tilted in favor of Donald Trump, who declared himself in favor of the withdrawal of US forces from the Middle East, Moscow sensed that the time was right to increase its presence and intervene, thus to become an international player that mediates regional conflicts. As a result, the Russian Federation intensified its cooperation with the Syrian regime and carried out a series of attacks against DAESH, becoming a main pillar for the survival of Bashar al-Assad and putting itself in a favorable situation for negotiation and the promotion of its own agendas in the eventuality of solving the Syrian crisis.

I can argue that the intervention of the international community is justified when a group is at risk (up to extermination) because of its ethnicity, or any other form of discrimination by a much more powerful, superiorly weaponized enemy. Other factors to consider may include strategic considerations: will the conflict create a regional imbalance? When a humanitarian crisis is imminent, preventive action may be necessary, especially when the intervention is rooted in self-defense. However, any intervention without appropriate limitations can lead to abuses, which is why it is important that once the danger is removed, the forces of the international community withdraw. Weapons, while superior, should be relatively proportionate to those used by the adversary, encouraging combatants to surrender rather than seek extermination, as some or a significant portion of the combatants may have been forced into the conflict (by blackmailing their families).

The contemporary world is global, multipolar, complex and dynamic. For this reason, it is necessary to concretely define international values and apply them accordingly. Without constancy and consistency, the international community has a credibility problem, and this will depreciate the world's confidence in it and nullify the valid merits of its commitments.

We analyzed the evolution of the negotiations carried out regarding Syria and the reasons why they did not produce real effects in solving the crisis. In parallel, I documented how these failures of the international community facilitated the development of DAESH.

There are two formats for conducting negotiations, Geneva and Astana. The Geneva format was not successful because:

- Western states supported opposition groups that had no support on the ground, most of them being Syrians from the diaspora who had relations with the governments of the states involved in the Syrian case;
- the opposition groups were divided, with often contradictory agendas, which pursued the interests of the sponsors and not of the population of Syria who opposed the Syrian regime;
- the Syrian government used the negotiations to stall for time. Until 2015, when the Russian Federation intervened with troops and military equipment in favor of Assad, there were times when Damascus was interested in negotiations to remain a decisive factor during the transition period. After the Russian Federation provided substantial military support and the opposition groups became far too isolated and irrelevant from a military point of view, the Syrian regime capitalized on international negotiations to remain in dialogue with Western states, without having the real goal of reaching an agreement;
- constant mistrust between the parties involved in the negotiations as a result of the actions taken, for example, before a new round of negotiations, the Syrian regime carried out a strong military offensive to have a position of strength in the negotiations, attacks with chemical substances in civilian areas, etc.

The Astana format was more successful because the negotiations were not carried out between the parties involved in the conflict, but by the state actors who have interests, the talks only focused on certain disputed areas and peacekeeping is achieved through imposition by foreign forces.

At this point, dialogue between the Syrian regime and possible opposition forces is irrelevant, it would bring no results because neither side is militarily relevant. Political-diplomatic negotiations on the Syrian file could be successful if the regional and international actors involved would be willing to reach an agreement so as to harmonize their positions and accept that it is time for the destruction to stop. One form of agreement would be where each relevant actor would retain an area of influence and allow the local community to develop. All parties would no longer support proxies with weapons and money to carry out attacks on forces coordinated by adversaries, and a sustainable economic reconstruction would begin. At the same time, programs are needed to reintegrate fighters from opposition/extremist/terrorist groups, as well as to convince refugees to return to their homes in order to be able to rebuild what was destroyed.

Political-diplomatic negotiations are vital in a world that interacts at the highest level known to mankind, and interdependence requires us to mediate conflicts, disputes, misunderstandings through discussion and avoid violence. Through negotiation we can create a safe environment for future generations. The escalation of the war in Ukraine, started by Russia on 24.02.2022, demonstrated, once again, that this interdependence requires us to act within the limits of the negotiations, otherwise, economic crises, food crises, energy crises appear, and the effects are difficult to predicted, in any case, are not accurate and categorically create poverty, displaced people and refugees, destroy lives and replace creation with lack.

DAESH promoted a form of psychological warfare, specific to terrorist groups. Robert E. Goodin points out that terrorism primarily promotes terror, and the killing of innocent civilians is not an end in itself, but a means to achieve future goals, and "those goals can be accomplished by terrorizing the target population" (Goodin, 2006, 45). The assessment also applies to the case of DAESH, which has constantly provided examples of terror with the aim of eliminating any opposition, a short-term objective, because in time it aimed for the same community to align with the ideology promoted by the group and contribute to the construction of an Islamic state.

DAESH through radical actions obtained a valuable thing for free, namely publicity. All international and national television broadcasted images and promoted the image of the terrorist group for free. DAESH has woven different canvases that reflect certain images, with the role of promoting panic, fear, for example, the jailers of the hostages of the terrorist group described them as inhuman and psychopathic, the pure embodiment of evil, who had no rational justification for their behavior. In fact, Napoleoni believes that this type of action was well-prepared to spread the emotions targeted by the DAESH leadership. Regarding the hostages, they were treated distinctly, depending

on what they represented, nationality, occupation, and depending on the value assigned they could play a good role to produce income, or for political games (Napoleoni, 2016, 211).

DAESH used mass executions to propagate an image of invincibility, ubiquity, unlimited power and the ability to access any location: "Like in Ramadi (our note, in 2015), mass executions were carried out by ISIS in every city taken under control or captured. [...] Meanwhile, the beheadings, crucifixions, amputations and floggings continued." (Kilcullen, 2016, 153).

To demoralize the security forces, DAESH carried out large-scale and atrocious attacks. One of the most devastating attacks was carried out on an Iraqi training camp north of Tikrit, informally known as Camp Speicher. This attack took place on June 12, 2014, and estimates are that around 1,700 people were killed, most of them Shiite recruits (BBC News, August 21, 2016; UNITAD, June 12, 2019; Alhammadi, April 7, 2015). In the face of the DAESH threat, the military and superiors who provided leadership of the garrison abandoned their positions and "left the students stranded" (Anderson, 2017, 143). The fear promoted by DAESH had reached such a heightened level that any values of camaraderie were abandoned and caused friends to leave their friends in the face of death.

The capturing of Mosul and the massacre at Camp Speicher were milestones in 2014 that demonstrated DAESH's operational capability and established its reputation. There have been numerous other times when the terrorist group has demonstrated its violence, but the execution of a group of young Shiites who were part of the future of the Iraqi army shows a clearly defined objective, which is to destroy the trust within the new recruits towards their superiors, who abandoned subordinates, hatred and perpetuation of rivalry between the Shia and Sunni communities, the fact that they cannot coexist in the same territory, as well as the fact that each side is required to withdraw to its own territory in order to stop interacting. At the same time, it involved such a powerful effect that the only way was the war to the end, those involved in such atrocities could no longer hope to be rehabilitated in a society where DAESH would have lost, for them only their lives within DAESH could still exist.

I believe that when a group shows tendencies similar to DAESH at an early level, it is time for prompt, concrete and effective intervention because it is the beginning of a wave of tragedies, which can be stopped in the face "soon enough" through prompt action. After the elimination of such an entity, clear reintegration policies are needed in liberated territories to give victims a chance for therapy, to be accepted by other members of the community, as well as to rebuild trust and a chance to rebuild a life at normal rates. The suffering will be great, the challenges also, for this reason it is necessary to establish policies of inclusion, to fight discrimination and to change the mentality and stereotypes, to allow victims, especially those of rape, to rebuild their lives without living constant community attacks. It is a challenge to combat local traditions, but it is important to show that the

trauma the community has gone through is able to transcend these customs and ways of thinking, the community needs healing, which can only be achieved if they manage to accept that a new start is needed, and the integration of victims is the responsibility of the whole community.

From the interview with the psychologist Stelian Chivu, it emerges the major impact that the control of emotions has on a community. Through fear, DAESH has been able to control territories, deter those who might oppose it, and convey an image of invincibility globally. Because the group was defeated and lost territories in Syria and Iraq shows us that this kind of psychological warfare can be overcome.

As DAESH faced a reduction in territorial control, the group focused on increasing "the number of ISIL members outside of Iraq and Syria, as well as the number of non-affiliated groups that have decided to pledge allegiance to the group." (Institute for Economics & Peace, November 2019). The group managed to maintain an image of a role model, and as it began to lose territory in Syria and Iraq, it controlled the narrative enough to present these failures as successes or amplify the sense of victimhood while at the same time, to inculcate the idea that precisely because they fight for the truth they are silenced. There is an attraction for a significant segment of radicals to join the side seen by the majority as losing, especially when the narrative has been well controlled and the DAESH supporting community outside of Iraq and Syria has been told in advance that the losing period will follow control of the terrain and the need to continue the fight in the rest of the world.

The assessment of the systemic actions, with aggressive valences designed by DAESH in Syria, Iraq, as well as in the rest of the world, confirms that this threat is persistent, adaptable and evolving to the responses of the force structures, with a global manifestation capacity, with a propaganda clearly superior to the operational capacity and action. At least in the short term, DAESH will capitalize on the opportunities to ensure the favorable framework for the promotion of its own interests, it being possible to intensify efforts to create cells in states with a Sunni Muslim community, native or made up of migrants, to multiply the capacity for action, obtain resources and perpetuate the idea to create a global caliphate.

DAESH has attracted the attention of an entire world with its aggressiveness, violence and ability to insert itself into communities and take control of territories. The terrorist group has lost control of vast territories in Iraq and Syria, but has expanded its presence in other areas of the globe, in Africa, Central and Southeast Asia. The US war against Al Qaeda has been going on for decades, although the group has limited capacity for action, it remains active. Eradication of DAESH in the short to medium term will not be achieved, and similar terrorist groups may take root in failed states. Such groups exist as long as there are conditions: lack of sovereign state control over some territories, major cleavages between segments of the population, countries with artificially drawn borders that do not consider the ethnic / tribal / religious structure, etc.

From an operational point of view, after the loss of its last territorial stronghold – the town of Baghouz (eastern Syria) — in March 2019, DAESH has become a guerrilla group, operating clandestinely. The number of fighters operating in the territory of the former caliphate is approximately 10,000, operating in cells spread across the desert area of central Syria and western and central Iraq. Unlike during the caliphate, when DAESH attacks were largely planned by former leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and his associates, Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurashi was not involved in coordinating the cells, which were free to plan and execute attacks. In the short term, DAESH under the leadership of Abu Hassan al-Hashemi al-Qurashi will most likely have a similar mode of action to its predecessor.

In contrast to Syria where DAESH cells are forced to face multiple hostile entities – the Assad regime (supported by Russian aviation, Iranian militias, Hezbollah and other Shia proxies), the Syrian Democratic Forces (a coalition of predominantly Kurdish militias) and the International Anti-Terrorist Coalition (coordinated by the USA), in Iraq the terrorists have the advantage of benefiting from much greater freedom of movement, as well as an unstable security situation that will increase against the background of the withdrawal of American troops. In recent months, DAESH attacks in Iraq have increased in intensity, targeting military officers and commanders, checkpoints and convoys of the army, security forces, as well as the Shiite civilian population.

In the coming years, DAESH in Syria and Iraq will most likely focus on the fight for survival, given that it will have less and less financial resources and territory — especially in Syria — to carry out its actions. Even if the recruitment pool will continue to be generous (due to poverty and the repressive measures of Shiite militias in Iraq and the Assad regime in Syria against Sunni communities), it will still be difficult for DAESH to continue recruiting fighters through ideological motivation alone and without providing substantial financial allowances.

Deradicalization, as well as adaptation to a society, is a complex program that involves conscious choices that an individual is required to make. To live in a peaceful, development-focused community, it is useful to have options, to choose to integrate and contribute, accepting differences of opinion, religion or otherwise.

The twenty-author study reflects the following: “As an extremist organization, ISIS will endure for years to come as a pure insurgency using terrorist tactics. It revolutionized the mobilization of supporters and sympathizers in the West, a lasting legacy as well as a future threat.” (Wright et al., December 2016-January 2017). These authors’ assessment was correct — currently DAESH is an organization that uses guerrilla and terrorist tactics to perpetuate its presence both in the Syria-Iraq area, Africa and Southeast Asia. We brought evaluation into focus in the conclusions because it is necessary to adapt our strategy to insurgency tactics and build relevant partnerships with local entities willing to develop in accordance with the values of Western democracies.

In closing, I will bring to your attention the following aspects mentioned about DAESH in the US Congress: “ISIS is a radical Islamic terrorist group. [...] It explains and justifies its actions by interpreting Islamic law and Islamic scriptures. [...] ISIS believes that either Christians must renounce their faith and embrace Islam or die. [...] Reports indicate that there is no recruiting mind behind their conversation, only the belief to illegally share ideology. There is a dozen more examples. Teenagers, women and men of fighting age are all heeding the call of ISIS. The main way these recruits hear the call of ISIS is through social media.” (U.S. Government Publishing Office, November 17, 2015). The elements reflect the type of entity we have faced globally, and concrete actions to eliminate this type of grouping are a must because, wherever and whenever they have the opportunity, they will act to develop, control territories, attract militants, group and prepare the attack strategy against any real (or imagined) threat.

The international community has the duty to monitor and take timely measures in order to avoid situations such as those in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, and others, which lead to wars, destroyed families, refugees, internally displaced persons, children who do not see a constructive future on the horizon, but one of destruction. It is time to be responsible for contemporary developments and take appropriate decisions for a stable and predictable security environment.