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EDITORIAL

Hoping that all our kind readers are well, and wishing them the best in this difficult situation the world is facing, we begin this installment of TRIARIUS, its newsletter on prevention and security against terrorism and new threats.

The first article of this edition comes to us from Uruguay, from the pen of Mr. Colonel (r) Daniel Martínez, in which he makes an introduction to the subject of the pandemic, and how it has affected the spheres of crime and terrorism.

Secondly, from Argentina and along the same lines, Guadi Calvo analyzes the impact that the pandemic will have on Africa, where poverty, disease, a multitude of problems, conflicts and wars are intermingled with terrorism and now with the pandemic. Guadi Calvo then goes on to talk to us about Egypt, and the war that is taking place in the Sinai region, but about which no further information is known due to the strict censorship carried out by the Cairo government to hide its defeats and also its excesses.

Next, from Colombia, Mario Ponguta tells us about the possibility of a military intervention in Venezuela by the United States, or by a coalition led by the United States.

In his article *Al-Qaeda: Hate in times of Covid-19*, Guadi Calvo illustrates how this terrorist organization is dealing with the issue of the pandemic, and what its position is towards a West weakened by this health emergency. Back in Africa, the following article addresses the issue of the refugee camps that abound on that continent, and their vulnerability to the pandemic that is sweeping the world, also devoting a few lines to the fight against terrorism around Lake Chad.

The following article is by the Colombian psychologist Obed Daza, who - regarding the rigors of the pandemic - tells us about the opportunities offered by this crisis.

We end this installment with an article that addresses the Venezuelan issue from a divergent point of view, and presents a paradoxical situation, in which all the damage they have wanted to do to Venezuela has turned into a strategic advantage when facing the pandemic.

Know to win!

Douglas Hernandez

Editor

This newsletter has a Spanish version.

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TRIARIUS

Dear readers, once again we recommend that you wish for the best and prepare for the worst. Imagine the worst scenarios in your environment and take steps to eliminate the risk or minimize your vulnerabilities. Stock up on food and water, as well as essential survival supplies, flashlights, first aid supplies, an AM/FM radio, and communications radios. Imagine the complete collapse of society, the end of civilization, and prepare to survive. What we are experiencing today shows us that these recommendations are not unreasonable at all, and on the contrary, they are necessary in the face of the complex and unpredictable future that awaits us. It should also be borne in mind that, under these extreme circumstances, neither criminals nor terrorists rest. They are there, planning or executing their next actions. Take care!

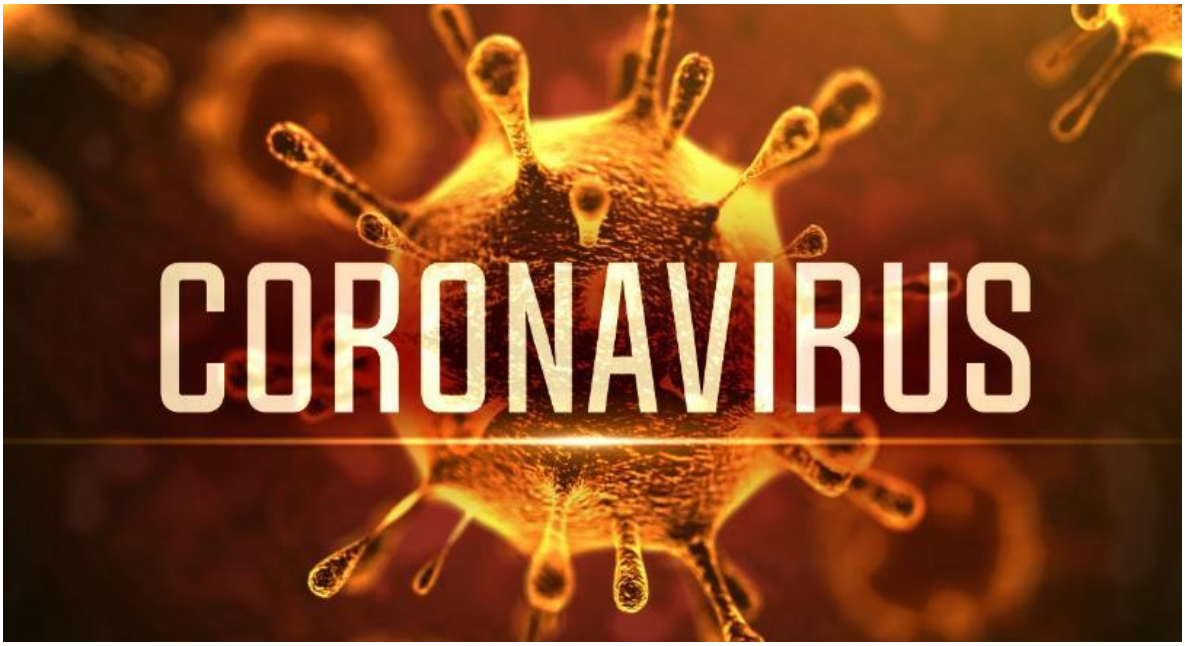
On the cover, **Regular Soldier of the Central African Republic.**
See more information at the end of the magazine.

TRIARIUS privileges freedom of expression, however, the responsibility for what is said in the articles is exclusive to their authors.

Very special thanks to the international analysts who have sent us their articles for this issue free of charge.

Pandemic, terrorism and crime

By Daniel Martínez, Colonel (r), (Uruguay)



Introduction

COVID-19 was first discovered in 2019 in the Chinese city of Wuhan. At first it was related to a bat and then to a mammal that is consumed in China called a pangolin. Upon entering the human body, the virus lodged in the cells and similar to what happened with avian flu or swine flu, lodged in the human body spreads by person-to-person contact.

When a sick patient speaks, sneezes or coughs, they expel droplets that have a virus load that can contaminate the environment or can reach the mouth, nose or eyes of another person, causing contagion. Another cause of contamination occurs when the droplets infect a surface and a healthy individual touch it and puts his hands in his eyes, mouth or nose, for which it is recommended to constantly wash your hands and use a mask or cover your nose and nose. mouth whenever you sneeze or cough.

II.- Stages of the Coronavirus 2019

The main stages of the 2019 Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) would be:

1. appearance of the first cases.
2. The number of infected is rapidly increasing.
3. Appearance of the first deaths and the number of cases continues to increase.
4. The authorities decree different levels of quarantine (closure of public places).
5. A national health emergency is declared.
6. Almost all businesses are closed, including bars, restaurants and shopping malls.

III.- Theoretical origin of the disease

There would be 3 major causes that would have given rise to the global pandemic since 2019:

A.- Biological Warfare

Some analysts consider that the 2019 Coronavirus Pandemic is framed in the 4th Generation Wars (Psychological War) without resorting to the use of weapons, which has as one of its goals, Social Control through collective fear (psychosis of terror)

Francis Boyle, creator of the Law against terrorism and biological weapons (1989) affirms that "2019 Wuhan Coronavirus is an offensive biological warfare weapon", however, Cui Tiank , Chinese ambassador to the US, rejects the coronavirus conspiracy, in a laboratory US military: "There is no credible epidemiologist in the world who has shown proof that the virus originated somewhere other than China" (22MAR2020)

In Wuhan, where 12 million people live, one of the biological laboratories of the highest biosafety level (Wuhan BSL-4) is operating, belonging to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, which experiments with biological agents that represent a *high individual risk of contagion*. This laboratory works with the most dangerous pathogens in the world, including several coronaviruses, such as SARS- CoV (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), MERS- CoV (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) and many other types of viruses under the supervision of the Chinese Government and WHO, World Health Organization

In 1965 Coronavirus 2019-nCoV was first known. 2015: The US Department of Justice granted patent № 10130701 for this virus to the Pirbright Institute (United Kingdom) specialized in preventing and controlling diseases transmitted from animals to man (Russian publication, Svobodnaya Press). The Chinese pathogen QX, discovered in the mid-1990s, was taken as the basis for the 2019-nCoV coronavirus.

As China became the preferred place for virologists (Americans, Europeans, Canadians) and due to its advances in the investigation of contagious diseases and the creation of vaccines to prevent and combat them, the WHO authorized the transfer of the 2019 patent -nCoV to the Wuhan BSL-4 laboratory where Chinese scientists had access to this pathogen that could mutate during experiments

According to Dr. Alan Cantwell (virologist), for 40 years virologists had been trying to genetically modify coronaviruses, both in military and civilian laboratories to raise the virus to the level of biological weapons. 1987: 107 virologists were dedicating themselves to this task. (Global Research, 25JAN2020).

18OCT2019: 2 months before the first case of coronavirus was reported in Wuhan (21DEC2019) , the Johns Hopkins University Civil Biodefense Center, the World Economic Forum in Davos, the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation and 15 world experts in the field of business, government and public health sponsored a coronavirus pandemic preparedness drill in New York, called Event 201

On 01APR2020, an Argentine journalist is denounced for conspiracy and anti-Semitic theories about the coronavirus. *"The rich of the world, from the US, Israel and Europe, have generated this virus."* He said that businessman Bill Gates was "one of the financiers of the origin of covid-19" alluding to Event 201 (OCT2019) of the World Economic Forum and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. John Hopkins University, in charge of the exercises, banished the accusations "Although our simulation exercise included a false and novel coronavirus, the data we use to model the possible impact of that fictional virus is not similar to that of nCoV-2019" .

Other points of view appreciate that it was a premeditated attack by China on the West and add various clues to the book: Unrestricted War: China's Master Plan to Destroy America." Chinese Qiao Colonels Liang and Wang Xiangsui (1999 – Amazon)

B.- Economic interests of multinational corporations

Various conspiracy theories say that it is a created virus and the vaccine already exists, promoted by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Bill Gates and George Soros would have partnered with China on the Coronavirus vaccine. FEB2020: Chinese pharmaceutical company BrightGene Bio-Medical Technology based in Suzhou announced that it had begun mass-producing an experimental drug from Gilead Sciences (an American biotech company dedicated to researching, discovering, developing and marketing drugs to treat diseases) to combat the new coronavirus. Gilead Sciences would be allied with Wuxi AppTec being Soros a shareholder of both laboratories. Bill Gates would have invested US $ 100 million to find a cure for the coronavirus.

C.- Accidental. Biological manipulation or transmitted from animals to people.

Scientists believe the virus emerged from animals sold at a market in Wuhan, where the first cases of the disease were discovered.

IV.- Consequences of the crisis caused by the Pandemic

A.- Sanitary

The COVID 2019 pandemic causes more than 2 million accumulated cases in the world and a figure of more than 150,000 deaths, due to the disease itself and other ailments, particularly in older adults, in addition to other deaths and deterioration of health in society , due to the suspension of care in polyclinics or the collapse of the health system in some countries.

B.- Economic

The pandemic causes one of the biggest economic crises in the world, with no clear outcome. Stopped production lines, manufacturing in the industry and primary production globally, causing the fall of the stock markets. **New threats:**

1.- Concern about the economic collapse.
2.- Widespread debt.
3.- Social uprisings.

Henry Kissinger (96 years old) estimates that: “The Coronavirus pandemic will alter the world order forever” (05APR2020) … The US is required to make a major effort in 3 domains: * Underpin global resilience to infectious diseases; * strive to heal the wounds of the world economy, * safeguard the *Liberal World Order* .

C.- Social

The pandemic terrifies public gatherings, causing a wide range of effects: invisible terror, harangues against looting, demands for subsidies, release of prisoners with light sentences, protest pots and pans, protection measures for SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises), rents transitory emergencies, new taxes, popular pots to minimize the lack of employment (unemployment insurance, health emergency leave), price control of the health and basic food basket, protection of public service workers, postponement of payments, speculation and profit, greater expenditure for the most vulnerable sectors of society, solidarity collections, etc.

Looting and piranha theft in Argentina (Quilmes, La Plata and Ensenada). 19/20/21MAR2020. A message circulating on WhatsApp in which an alleged looting is organized at the La Anónima Supermarket in the city of Allen, Province of Río Negro (General Roca Department) - 18MAR2020. Looting of the Chinese supermarket "Siria" in Pergamino (Avda Siria). Province of Buenos Aires (30MAR2020). Preventive but mandatory isolation as a result of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic alters criminal plans (they target local commercial premises).

24/25MAR2020: Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, called for an urgent reduction in the number of inmates in the world to prevent the coronavirus pandemic from wreaking havoc on prisons, which are generally overcrowded and from being made more flexible or suspended economic sanctions imposed on countries like Iran, Venezuela, Cuba or North Korea due to the coronavirus

First looting in supermarkets, haranguing the rebellion in southern Italy. 28MAR2020

Sometimes disrespect arises, suffered by workers and relatives of people with different types of disabilities, among other reasons, by neighbors who believe they are not complying with mandatory confinement.

V.- INTERPOL suggestions (scams in the purchase of supplies)

The deceitful actions linked to the pandemic range from telephone fraud, in which the simulators communicate with the victim posing as staff from a clinic or hospital, telling them that a relative of theirs has contracted the virus, requesting payment for their treatment to phishing (emails that claim to be from health authorities lying to their victims so that they provide their personal and payment information or so that they open an attached file that contains a malicious program).

INTERPOL created warning measures to buy medical supplies online or in the case of receiving e-mails or links offering medical assistance:

- Independently verify the company/person offering the items before making any purchase.
- Beware of fake websites. Scammers will often use a web address similar to the original, for example "abc.org" instead of "abc.com".
- Consult online reviews of a company before making any purchase, for example, in the event of complaints from other customers that they did not receive the items as they should have arrived.
- Do not trust if it is requested to make the payment in a bank account that is in a country other than that of the company.
- If you think you have been a victim of a scam, notify your bank immediately so they can stop the payment.
- Do not click on links, or open attachments that you did not expect to receive or that come from an unknown sender.
- Take the necessary precautions when receiving an unsolicited e-mail in which they offer medical equipment or request some personal information for a medical review, since legitimate health authorities do not usually contact the public in this way.

VI.- Coronavirus 2019 and its relationship with Terrorism and Organized Crime

ISIS warns terrorists to leave Europe due to the coronavirus (15MAR2020).

United States will persecute as terrorists all those who infect or promote the spread of Coronavirus. Department of Justice classifies COVID-19 as a "biological weapon" (25MAR2020).

Colombian guerrilla ELN (National Liberation Army) decrees a unilateral truce due to the coronavirus (30MAR2020)

Taliban terrorists express concern about the spread of the coronavirus in government prisons and organize surveillance and awareness camps in areas under their control (16MAR2020).

GSIM (Islamic and Muslim Support Group), affiliated with Al-Qaeda, claimed responsibility for the attack on the military base in Bamba Region of Gao, northern Mali (06APR2020, 23 soldiers killed) claiming that it was a " punishment inflicted by God on France and Spain in the form of coronavirus, affected in their countries and within their forces deployed in Mali”

Neo-Nazi groups in the United States and Europe blame immigrants for the Covid19 pandemic and take advantage of the moment to spread their hateful messages through social media (29MAR2020).

During the confinement due to the Coronavirus in France, a Muslim refugee jihadist (33) of Sudanese origin, murdered the owner of a bar with a knife, cutting his neck in Romans -sur-Isère (2 dead and 4 injured - 3 serious). He was arrested. (04APR2020)

The "Gulf Cartel" (Mexico) distributes baskets to the neediest people due to the Coronavirus (they depend on their daily income to eat) in Tamaulipas. (11APR2020)

The Italian mafia began to distribute food to families who have been left without resources due to quarantine. The poorest communities in the south of the country, severely affected by the collapse of economic activity that has caused social isolation, are receiving food boxes from criminals linked to Cosa Nostra, the Camorra and other mafias, occupying spaces left by the central state. (10APR2020)

VII.- Conclusions:

Coronavirus COVID19 is more dangerous than other coronaviruses that humanity has suffered this century, such as SARS (2003, 765 dead, 8,100 infected in 29 countries), or MERS (2012, 862 dead, 2,500 infected in 24 countries) However, the influenza A-H1N1 virus (2009-2010) caused 284,000 deaths, but did not have the global health impact caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, as a pandemic.

The main dilemma of most countries is to protect their economy or the health of the population from coronavirus, the decision being nuances of balance between the two, according to the health, economic and social situation of each State.

The delusional jihadist theories (coronavirus is "a torment of God against the enemies of Islam") and neo-Nazis (they blame immigrants for the Covid19 pandemic) are used for propaganda and recruitment.

COVID 19 (SARS-CoV-2) perhaps caused by nature, suspends the economy, forces social distance, causes fear, empties public places, cancels trips, closes closed borders, causes death, overwhelms the health system, permutes the rules of public security, immune to active and passive counter-terrorist measures and strikes by surprise without knowing when and where.

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Africa, a Mad Max world around the corner

By Guadi Calvo (Argentina)

Image from the post apocalyptic movie MadMax: Fury Road.

Since always and due to the painstaking efforts of colonialism, Africa is destined to become the great resonance box for the dramas of humanity at the political, social, and economic levels, and fundamentally in health matters. Always, absolutely always, the rates of diseases that have shaken the world, in Africa, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, have even more repercussions, perhaps AIDS has been the best example of this assertion, since it took on the characteristic of a pandemic, as in nowhere else in the world, according to 2018 data from the WHO (World Health Organization), 66 percent of all those infected with AIDS live in Africa, which is equivalent to about 25.7 million people. While other diseases, such as Ebola, Cholera, Influenza A, Tuberculosis and a long etcetera, have wreaked and continue to wreak havoc on the continent, there are voices that are already alerted to the consequences that the population of that continent will have when Covid-19 strikes full. So far, Africa has registered only 8,000 infected, 334 dead and 702 people who have recovered.

The director of the *Regional Office of the United Nations Development Program for Africa*, Ahunna Eziakonwa declared that the continent is facing a "complete collapse of economies and livelihoods" unless the spread of the coronavirus can be contained, which in fact is literally impossible.

The conglomerates of large African cities are perhaps and fundamentally characterized by several features in common, overcrowding, scarcity or absolute lack of minimum health services (running water, sewage, waste and wastewater treatment) the endemic deficiency in the areas of health care of the great majority of these populations. So, if anyone has prepared a big welcome to the Coronavirus in Africa, they have been keeping an eye on all the details.

In this panorama, we should add the aggravating circumstance that this time the great international rescuers, fundamentally from Europe and the United States, will not be in a position to attend, since we all know, those who face in the United States, Italy, Spain , France, the United Kingdom and almost all other European countries. The West is no longer just at war against disease, but in an undeclared war for masks and respirators, which is more like the desperate guests of the Titanic , than the most advanced nations of the world in the 21st century, facing biblical diseases with medieval methods, quarantines and save yourself, general, which can place us in a few more weeks in the hallucinated world of Mad Max, a post-apocalyptic film saga that reflected a society impossible to consider real just five months ago.

Although, Africa, for more than a decade now, has lived in many regions that Mad Max world, in which uncontrolled armed gangs travel roads in armored vehicles and motorcycles designed to travel the worst roads and armed with the latest generation materials, in many cases superior in quantity and quality to those of the regular armies that must contain them, they take cities, producing massacres and looting, while challenging the power of perfectly constituted States, at least formally.

An urban legend - which as such was never confirmed - says, for example, that AIDS was nothing more than a laboratory experiment that somehow

escaped from its bucket. About the coronavirus, more or less the same conspiracy theories are already running, but what is not an urban legend, nor conspiracy theories impossible to verify, is that of the armed gangs that with the Kalashanikov in one hand and the Holy Koran in the other although not know how to read it, thousands of young people, and not so much, without destiny, are looking for it.

Until now -as we said above- COV-19 has killed 334 people on the continent, practically a bargain if one takes into account that only in an attack by the Wahhabi al- Shabaab organization in the heart of the city of Mogadishu, capital of Somalia, on October 14, 2017, 587 people officially died. (See Somalia: al - Shabaab commands.)

This virus has not escaped any scientific laboratory, this virus is a strange mutation that has occurred after the intersection of the US State Department and the Saudi monarchy, which achieved great success in the anti-Soviet war in Afghanistan, and wanted to be used more than twenty years later to exterminate the last popular governments of Islam, Libya and Syria, which would finally be the last stop before hitting squarely against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Like that ghost that once swept through Europe, today the Wahhabi virus runs through much of the world, causing thousands of deaths from Nigeria to the Philippines, hitting Europe hard, and today threatening societies as complex as India's (See: Daesh in India an inevitable clash)

Chad declares war on Boko haraam

The last great adventure of this type of terrorist gang was carried out by the well-known and lethal Boko Haram, who killed on the same day - in two different attacks, about 500 kilometers from each other - nearly a hundred soldiers from the Chadian army and almost fifty from the Nigerian army. (See: Boko Haram, the powerful muscle of terrorism.)

In an operation named *Cholera de Boma* , after the place where the attack against the Chadian forces took place, and within the framework of the *Joint Multinational Force* , which would have to be made up of the armies of Nigeria, Chad and Niger, to exterminate Boko mujahideen groups Haram , operating on the islands of Lake Chad, this time Chadian military alone caused some 76 casualties to the takfirists .

This action immediately caused the leader of the terrorist organization, the hallucinated Abu Bakr Shekau, already left for dead more than half a dozen times, will call his men to resist, what is expected is a very long war. While challenging Chadian President Idriss Déby, who directs the operation from the same theater of operations, with a statement known on social networks, in which he says: "Do not think that, because you have been on the front lines of several wars, you can fight those of us who choose to fight for religion."

President Déby, last Saturday the 4th, denounced that in reality his country is "unfortunately" alone, bearing most of the weight of the war, against the fundamentalist insurgency. The Chadian army pursued the insurgents to the Nigerian border, preferring to hold back on those lines, but it is not known until now if they were expected by the Nigerian army and what was the result.

Although Déby says that the terrorists with the casualties produced by the operation, Cholera de Boma, knows that, if it is not possible to cut the financing and recruitment of these organizations, two actions that are much more difficult to suppress than the war itself, In a short time, attacks like Boma's, or perhaps more important, will be repeated.

African armies are exhausted from running after terrorists. Despite the military aid from France and the United States fundamentally, but the pandemic has moved the axis of priorities, of these nations that may withdraw leaving them alone, given the amount of resources that will be needed not only at the peak of the crisis health, but also to overcome the serious economic crisis that Covid-19 is going to leave behind.

Therefore, Africa will have to face practically alone not only the pandemic, for which it has few resources, but at the same time it will face dozens of terrorist organizations from the Mediterranean coast to the forests of Mozambique, highly trained, with very high equipment. quality, and hundreds of thousands of young people yearning to leave behind the poverty that colonialism has made chronic on the continent, where it seems that the world of Mad Max is just around the corner.

Image Source:
https://images.justwatch.com/backdrop/7520744/s1440/mad-max-fury-road

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Egypt: End to a Hidden War?

By Guadi Calvo (Argentina)

The Sinai Peninsula is located on the right bank of the Gulf of Suez and the homonymous canal.

Since February 2018, when Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi ordered the mobilization of thousands of military personnel and security forces, in what is known as Operation Sinai, against the terrorist organization Wilāyat Sinaí (province of Sinai), the The world stopped having news of what is happening in a region that is slightly less than the size of Ireland, and a population of close to a million and a half people. Former General al-Sisi, the man whom none other than US President Donald Trump calls: *"My favorite dictator"* , has decided to hide this war that is fought both in the desert and the mountains, as well as in the cities and villages, with an uncertain result regarding the costs of the civilians, put to resist alone between the two fires. Now, that the end is announced, it will be time to count the casualties of the innocent and also and the way in which that war was fought,

President al-Sisi continues with the information blockade about the actions and results of what is known as Operation Sinai, which since February 2018, with thousands of troops, has been carried out throughout the peninsula by all the security forces. of the country, in addition to the army, air force and navy, in order to exterminate the terrorist groups that operate in that region, and that on several occasions attacked the very center of Cairo, and other targets outside the peninsula. The Navy monitors the Sinai coast day and night to prevent the takfirists from receiving support from the sea, while the Air Force conducts continuous patrols in the skies of northern Sinai, even launching drone strikes against terrorist bases in the mountains.

Last year the Egyptian government operations forces killed 353 suspected terrorists, seized 791 vehicles of different types and destroyed another 268 cargo and personnel transport vehicles.

It is known that, as soon as Operation Sinai began, the Department of National Security of the Ministry of the Interior, is responsible for controlling the information that reaches the media, the newspapers were given clear instructions about the application of the censorship rules. Since the national government is justified by saying that: *"the circulation of news threatens national security and shows that the security forces do not control the situation in theater of operations"*. While it is considered that there are no reasons to publish alarming news, at a time when not only is a war against terrorism being waged, but also, all state forces must be reinforced to face COVID-19, which is exhausting the financial and human capabilities of the state and citizens alike. Despite this, it is failing to article 71 of the Egyptian Constitution that says: *"It is prohibited to censor, confiscate, suspend or close Egyptian newspapers and media in any way*."

Although some news manages to break the established siege -obviously news that benefits the government-, such as the one that has been known in recent days, about what happened on March 13, about the death of one of the main leaders of the Wilāyat Sinai (Sinai province) formerly known as Ansar Beit al - Maqdis , (Followers of the House of Jerusalem) the emir, Abu Fares al-Ansari, in the city of Rafah , north of the peninsula bordering Palestine.

The dejected leader, in his thirties, is responsible for innumerable terrorist actions against military and police units in recent months, he was located in one of his shelters in the southern part of the city of Rafah , along with five other captains of the organization, by army patrols that surrounded the area, after which a major exchange of fire was generated. The death of al-Ansari adds to the already important list of figures killed in the Wahhabi gang, since the Egyptian government began the repression against the group composed mainly of militants from the Muslim Brotherhood organization, an important religious political group, with subsidiaries in several Arab countries, which served as fundamental support during the government of former president Mohamed Morsi , who was overthrown in 2013, when a real hunt was unleashed against this organization, which is very active inside Egypt. Thousands of its militants died, weapons in hand, resisting the coup in the streets of Cairo, while dozens of its leaders were imprisoned, many of whom have been sentenced to death; wing the Wilāyat Sinai, it is also made up of Daesh veterans from Iraq and Syria; members of Bedouin tribes from Sinai, traditionally dedicated to smuggling, so they know perfectly the geography of the peninsula: its passes in the mountains, caves for shelters and storage of equipment and weapons and its watering places. Mujahideen from Gaza, formed in the heat of the anti-Zionist struggle, join this organization.

The abatement of the chiefs of the takfirist gang is the great winning card of President al-Sisi, since the Wilāyat Sinai has had to remove its leaders on several occasions, displacing the middle managers who were not yet prepared to assume the highest responsibilities, while it precisely falls to the high command of the terrorist organizations, who largely depend on their leaders for contacts with economic and logistical support, and with regional and international allies.

On March 26, in what is believed to be revenge for the assassination of Emir al-Ansari, information was leaked about a sabotage with explosives against the electricity distribution system, demolishing the bases of five towers, inaugurated last February, to solve the crisis of repeated power outages. Nearly four and a half million dollars had been invested in this project. When the military patrols along with the crews of workers arrived to repair the damage, they found threatening notes towards both the military and the workers.

The fall caused the power cut to the capital of the governorate of North Sinai, the city of el - Arish with more than 200 thousand inhabitants, and other important cities in the region, such as Sheikh Zuweid , with 70 thousand inhabitants and Rafah (Palestine) the only passage of that territory with Egypt and the town of al- Kharouba in Sheikh Zuweid , for more than three days. What generated the interruption of water pumping, from underground wells at a time when the critical health situation in the world due to the pandemic that is being endured, is demanding the use of water, for personal hygiene, sterilization and hand washing, among other preventive measures, more than ever. The fact aggravated the situation of the locals, generating great uncertainty among the neighbors, since they are experiencing the "war" and the restrictions imposed by the Egyptian army, which acts as an occupying force.

A source close to an Egyptian security force revealed that on March 28, Egyptian aircraft launched several attacks on terrorist bases south of Rafah, killing at least twenty of them and wounding six others. In addition to causing the destruction of three 4x4 units, several transport vehicles and motorcycles.

The overflow of hate

For years, the Egyptian army and police forces have carried out actions against the former Ansar Beit al - Maqdis , an organization that starting in 2014, after leaving al-Qaeda, made its bayat (oath of allegiance) to Abu Bakr al - Baghdadi . , the then leader and founder of Daesh , and took the name Wilāyat sina . It operates especially in the northern area of the Sinai Peninsula. After some actions of great media impact such as the shooting down of the Russian Airbus A-321 plane, in October 2015, where all 220 passengers died. The assault, kidnapping and murder of some thirty Coptic Christians on a desert road in the west of the country between the towns of al- Adua , who were heading in procession to the convent of Saint Samuel the Confessor, in the Qalamun mountains , in May from 2017; the attack by a suicide militant on the church of San Pedro y San Pablo, which killed at least 29 people and injured 47 others on December 11, 2016; the double attack on the Coptic cathedral of Saint George in Alexandria on Palm Sunday, in April 2017, which caused nearly sixty deaths and more than 200 wounded among many others just as bloody, while other targets against tourist centers, which which drastically reduced the inflow of foreign exchange for this item -the main one for the Egyptian economy- forced General al-Sisi to declare this dirty war against Wahhabi fundamentalism. That, despite the time that has elapsed and the asymmetry between both sides, it continues to resist strongly, carrying out attacks against police posts and carrying out explosive sabotage against different supply lines, both electric and oil and gas. Gunmen blew up the gas pipeline connecting Egypt and Israel on the night of February 2 in Bir al-Abed, North Sinai, about 80 kilometers west of al- Arish. The attack was not claimed by any organization, while the Egyptian authorities have not commented. Since last January 15, Egypt began importing gas from the Zionist Leviathan field, in a multi-million-dollar global agreement, which also involves Jordan.

Terrorist operations so far in 2020 have decreased markedly compared to last year. Since the beginning of January, there have been only four attacks in North Sinai, including the sabotage against the oil pipeline and the power line towers. During 2019, there were 45 attacks in Sinai, clearly a smaller number than the 169

in 2018. This heralds the end of General al-Sisi's hidden war.

Image Source:
https://www.viajejet.com/wp-content/viajes/mapa-egipto.jpg

Scenario of a possible intervention of the United States in Venezuela

By Mario Ponguta (Colombia)

EA-18 Growler of the United States Navy, US Navy

For some time now there has been talk of a possible military intervention in Venezuela, and President Trump has mentioned that it is within the range of possibilities.

For some analysts, it is most likely that in the long term the United States will opt for military action. However, the Coronavirus pandemic scuttled the attempt to further tighten the siege on Maduro.

A conflict against the armed forces of Venezuela would be difficult to sustain due to the foreign policy crises that the United States faces in the rest of the world and if we add to this the unwillingness of its allies to a military solution, the possibilities are reduced.

According to an *Army article University Press* there is a big difference with respect to other US interventions in the region -such as Granada and Panama-, and it is basically that in Venezuela there are no lives at risk of US citizens. However, it could justify it to defend democracy and human rights and put an end to drug trafficking routes from Venezuela.

In Panama, it was also mentioned that they were seeking to combat drug trafficking based on the fact that the neighboring country had become a laundering center for drug money and a transit point for drug trafficking to United States and Europe.

There are big differences regarding the number of troops to face in Venezuela and the troops that Panama had. Noriega's Panama had only 15,000 troops, while the United States had well-established military bases throughout the capital and employed a force of more than 26,000 troops during the operation. Panama had a population of less than three million and a legitimately elected President ready to assume power after Noriega was removed.

On the other hand, Venezuela has 115,000 troops, more than 80,000 National Guard troops and a population of thirty million people, of which 20% still support the Maduro government.

Its main weapons systems are made up of armor, artillery, air defense systems and fighter-bombers (Source Wikipedia):

Armored

92 Tanks (MBT) T-72B1.

120 Light Armored AMX 13 and 78 FV 101 Scorpion.

380 Wheeled Armored vehicles, including 150 BTR 80s, 130 V100/150s and 100 Dragon 300s.

120 Armored Amphibious Marines

Tank of Russian origin T-72B1 belonging to the Venezuelan Army

multiple rocket launch systems

- Smerch BM 30.
- 160mm BM-21 and 130mm AMX Lar.

artillery weapons

- 48 2S19, 152mm Msta S. A/P
- 43 2S23 Nona 120mm. A/P
- 100 towed guns, including 24 152mm, 80 105mm. .

air defense systems

- 12 SAM S-300VM Antey 2500 batteries.
- Buk M2E batteries.
- 12Thor M1.
- 23 S125 Chest 2M.
- SAM RBS 70 Mk2.
- 5,000 SA-24 Manpads .
- 300 ZSU 23-4.

Fighter Planes

- 24 Sukhoi 30 Mk2 fighter-bombers.
- 19 F-16A Block 15

Light attack aircraft: 10 tucano and 24 K8W Karakorum

Helicopters: 10 Mi35 M2 Attack and 20 Mil-17 Transport and Assault.

Sukhoi Su-30MkII fighter-bomber of the Venezuelan Military Aviation

Ships

5 Lupo-type frigates
2 type 209 submarines
4 Avante 2200 oceanic patrol vessel
Capana -type LST landing ships

According to the specialized website Infodefensa.com, its greatest weakness lies in the precarious state of its naval fleet due to lack of maintenance and the blocking of its acquisition of ships to update its equipment.

Another aspect is their lack of combat experience and despite the formidable air defense they have, once their fighters, armored forces and artillery are neutralized, they would be left at the mercy of US aviation that would also aim to destroy their supply chain. and infrastructure, especially ports and airports where any foreign aid would arrive.

Even if they manage to dismantle their conventional force, they would have to win the will of US public opinion that is against continuing to wage asymmetric wars, especially when Venezuelan leaders have also been preparing for an asymmetric war for more than a decade and have even counted the advice of Cuba and former heads of the Farc narco-terrorist group.

Countries in the region are unlikely to engage in a military effort to topple Maduro; Colombia especially knows that a US intervention in Venezuela could mean entering the conflict to defend various points of the border.

US forces are unfamiliar with the geography, doctrine, and capabilities of the Venezuelan Army, except for US Southern Command, which would likely be assigned this mission. If US forces launch an operation in the more urbanized areas of Caracas, or some of its outlying areas, in addition to having to deal with conventional Venezuelan forces, they will likely face stiff armed resistance from irregular forces and multiple forms of opposition from supporters of Maduro and his political ideology, including armed uprisings as well as passive popular resistance.

Finally, deploying a significant number of US or coalition forces will also have a significant effect on the logistics, timing, and execution of operations.

Perhaps the recent military maneuvers between the United States and Colombia within the framework of Unitas and Red Flag , among others, have allowed them to improve this coordination, allowing the Colombian Armed Forces to take advantage of logistics and knowledge of the terrain.

Preparation for this initiative

US forces have experience in Bosnia, Iraq, Bangladesh and Haiti, places where they have experienced operational challenges likely to arise in a conflict with Venezuela. The US military can (and should) draw practical lessons from these experiences, since its performance will almost certainly improve during any operation in or against Venezuela.

It is clear that the United States has been using its means in the Caribbean to gather all the information required to carry out an operation of this magnitude. That is why it has deployed P-3 Orion anti-ship and anti-submarine aircraft, P-8 Orion Naval Reconnaissance ASW and Anti-Ship Warfare, EP-3 Orion SGINT, J-8 Stars for support and battle management.

P-3 Orion and P-8

SIGINT platforms seek to effectively extract, classify and locate transmissions within the signal spectrum, they can pick up a wide range of signal types from many kilometers away, even low power pulsed signals. These signals can be categorized as friend or foe and by team type, then geolocated for intelligence on who, what, and where the signal is coming from.

EP-3 Aries

Strategic use

By monitoring the use of emitters, commanders can make strategic decisions about the intent of the opposing force. For example, by analyzing the use and location of radar and communication systems, the movements and capabilities of enemy troops (weapon systems associated with a radar system) can be calculated and used to develop future offensive or defensive operations. .

Tactical use

With real-time spectrum intelligence, troops on the ground can be instantly aware of any potential threat. The systems can monitor and alert friendly forces to the presence and location of enemy forces in their immediate vicinity. By being warned, they are better able to prioritize and respond to potential threats in real time. For example, radio transmissions located in an upcoming valley could indicate a potential enemy ambush site.

E-8 JStars

Analyze radar signals from enemy radars

In addition to detecting the presence of radar, they can be used to gain intelligence on the type and characteristics of equipment. By recording and analyzing an enemy radar signal, the type of radiation, its modulation, its pulse frequency/duration, pulse shape, radio frequency, etc., the radar can be identified and compared to signal types acquaintances. This can be used to determine their range, usage, capability, and vulnerability to countermeasures.

In our next installment we will talk about some of the lessons that the United States will have to put into practice if they want to continue with this large-scale operation.

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Al-Qaeda: Hate in times of Covid-19

By Guadi Calvo (Argentina)

Like a hydra that does not die despite lopping off several heads, Al-Qaeda continues to be active.

As expected, in the face of the pandemic and very possible weakening of anti-terrorist systems, together with the efforts of the vast majority of nations to confront Covid-19, terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda and Daesh , just as the neo-fascists do Europeans, have begun to encourage their partners, sleeper cells and lone wolves to activate to hit Jewish "crusaders" and the Muslims themselves, the vast majority, who do not share the Wahhabi ideology, taking advantage of what could be included in one of the latest statements from the al-Qaeda command, which has stated that the virus is "a sign of God's fury towards humanity for its sins and non-compliance with its mandate".

The highest leadership of the organization led by Ayman al-Zawahiri, Osama bin Laden's heir, called on the kafirs , non-believing Muslims, or in fact those who do not follow the interpretations they intend to impose with sharia (Islamic law) to repent and fight against "the crusader enemy", in addition to condemning "the tyranny" of the Muslim leaders" and the "obscenity and moral corruption" to which the nations of the Islamic world have been led.

For its part, the Daesh leadership, led by its new leader Abu Ibrahim al - Hashemi al - Qurashi , successor to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who was eliminated last October, called on the lone wolves to take advantage of the fear and confusion produced for the pandemic in the world.

The multiplicity of calls to provoke attacks and attacks against mainly Western targets has put security officials on alert, who foresee as a concrete possibility that these calls bear fruit in their followers.

It has already been known that on March 24, a man identified as Timothy Wilson was murdered while resisting arrest by FBI agents (Federal Bureau of Investigation) in Belton, Missouri. Wilson was preparing an attack with a vehicle improvised explosive device (VBIED, for its acronym in English) against a hospital where coronavirus patients are treated. Wilson, who had already been monitored for months by the Bureau, in recent days had accelerated the construction of the explosive device in search of a media coup, beyond the possible damage.

In a statement from the Department of Homeland Security or DHS (Department of National Security) of the United States to the religious communities last week, urges their hierarchies to extreme security standards when the ceremonies stopped by the health crisis are resumed, since they would be suitable targets for terrorist attacks. Although the statement says that there are no imminent threats, the DHS stressed that the stress caused by the pandemic and the increase in speeches and calls to produce acts of violence, could generate a series of attacks and even before the end of the pandemic, taking advantage of the moment of weakness of the governments, focused on the deep social changes and the economic crisis that it entails.

The accounts of hate

For their part, the fundamentalist organizations have intensified their recruitment campaign and have begun to publicize their actions in different parts of the world as part of a global campaign to operate against "Jews, blacks, immigrants, politicians and security agents."

Media linked to al-Qaeda have published a series of infographics that aim to highlight their operations on a global scale, exploiting the general state of anxiety that the world is experiencing, riding the wave and claiming that the virus is an "act of God against the enemies of Islam" while other organizations say that this crisis is "fomented by the Jews or by China".

The infographic, released by al-Qaeda, provides data that is very difficult to ascertain regarding the number of casualties it has produced in its actions. Afghanistan, where the group claims to have a much larger operational presence than the security forces and intelligence agencies operating in the country. So the figures, which the fundamentalists tend to inflate with respect to casualties produced to the enemy and decrease with respect to their own, are random.

According to the mujahideen in the Central Asian country, they carried out 343 operations, killing 520 people and injuring more than 200, in addition to destroying 35 armored vehicles and seizing another seven. While they say they have released eleven police checkpoints. Only during the week of March 26 to April 2, they carried out 88 operations, in which they killed 200 people and injured more than 50, along with the destruction of three trucks, 13 armored vehicles and 14 kisses that have not been individualized.

This "whitewashing" of actions by al-Qaeda in Afghanistan is striking, which had practically disappeared since 2018, since, due to its strong alliance with the Taliban, they have never made them public before, much more so now, when the terrorists Afghans have sealed an agreement with Washington, where they agree not to tolerate and repress the actions of other takfirist groups operating in the country. Al-Qaeda and its regional branch, al-Qaeda for the Indian subcontinent, (AQIS), whose leader Asim Omar was killed on September 23 last year, along with six of his lieutenants in southern Afghanistan, and other associated groups , including the jihadists of Central Asia and the Uyghurs have always been subordinated to the Islamic Taliban Emirate of Afghanistan, for which their operations have always been considered as common bill, together with an interweaving of sister organizations with a presence in other nations of Central Asia. In Pakistan, where AQIS operates during March, they carried out nine operations with more than 20 deaths.

The reference infographics also list the actions where the organization has a presence in Somalia, where the very active al- Shabaab operates, which during the month of March carried out 130 operations and killed 487 people, while in Kenya there were seven actions producing 10 wounded. In West Africa it also operates under the name of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, whose branch for West Africa has a strong presence in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, under the name of Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin or JNIM (Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims), in March, carried out eight attacks in Mali, two in Burkina Faso and one in Niger.

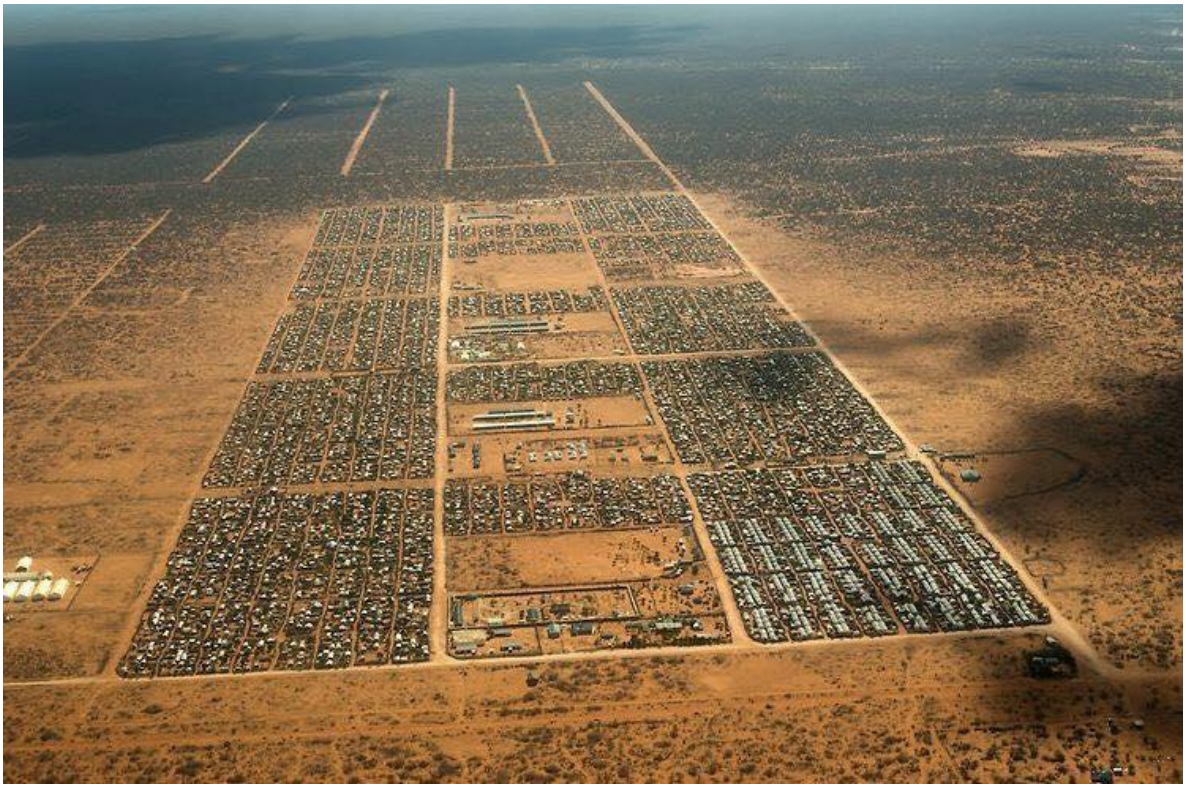
According to the infographic in Syria, where there are half a dozen organizations linked to al-Qaeda and the leadership lines are blurred after the heavy blows dealt by the troops of President Bashar al-Assad and his allies, Russia, Iran and Hezbollah , who they have weakened both al-Qaeda and Daesh , without specifying which of all the groups claims to have carried out, during the month of March, seventeen operations with more than fifty people killed. While al-Qaeda for the Arabian Peninsula, at one point the deadliest of all the companies answering to al-Zawahiri, mentions only four operations with about fifteen people killed or wounded over the past month.

For its part, Daesh , which claims that everything happens by the will of Allah , taking advantage of the weakness of the States affected by the outbreak, also encourages hatred among its followers where it practically threatens them to take action against the "Crusaders and Jews", with slogans as: "You must remember that what prevents the torment of Allah is to carry out jihad in his name and harm his enemies", As announced in the latest issue of its publication, the terrorist group says in one of its latest publications al-Naba , one of the few media outlets that was able to sustain itself after the loss of the Caliphate. Enlisting his mujahideen, to repeat attacks in crossed lands like those in Paris, London, Brussels or Barcelona. For what they are already encouraging to strike when the West is "at the moment of greatest weakness of its capacities to fight against the mujahideen." Warns al-Naba. Which finally advises that "healthy militants do not enter the land of the epidemic and the sick do not leave it." And as last recommendations it says: "cover when yawning or sneezing, wash your hands in addition to trusting in Allah", obviously.

Image Source:
https://www.lavozdetarija.com/2017/07/14/el-pentagono-informo-que-estados-unidos-killed-the-new-chief-of-the-islamic-state-in-afganistan/

Africa: Covid-19 and a war that always begins

By Guadi Calvo (Argentina)



Dadaab refugee camp, in Kenya.

With scarce resources, Africa awaits the inevitable arrival of COVID-19, which threatens to become perhaps one of the most formidable holocausts that the continent has experienced of many. It is only enough to imagine what could happen if the Coronavirus unfolds in the multiple displaced persons camps that exist on the continent. Crammed with displaced people, migrants, refugees from the many wars, famines, droughts and floods that have plagued Africa incessantly since its decolonization, if that had happened, beyond European desks.

A quick look at the most numerous camps on the continent, where millions of people have lived for decades, forces us to think about the consequences that the pandemic could produce if it were to expand in just some of them, the potential being just an innocent expression of wishes of wars, make a quick pass through the refugee and displaced people camps of the continent, where hundreds of thousands of people live overcrowded, with terrible health services and scarce health resources, the blow will be devastating and unstoppable.

Just to name the main ones according to data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):

The Dadaab camp in Kenya contains at least 230,000 people; and in spite of its dimensions it is already surpassed; while that of Kakuma has about 200 thousand. Dollo Ado, the largest in Ethiopia, with a quarter of a million refugees, although together with others, the country has almost a million refugees. The one in Nabadoon , on the outskirts of Mogadishu, Somalia, although the figure is imprecise, it is estimated that there are between 15 and 20 thousand displaced persons. While in Tindouf in the south of Algeria where, since the seventies, it contains about 170 thousand Saharawi refugees, persecuted by the Moroccan regime. The million, million and a half of refugees who in sheds and warehouses in different points of the Libyan coast, await their opportunity to go to Europe, or the two million displaced people from the north of Nigeria or the almost one million 200 thousand, from Burkina Faso, which means a brief look, of a list that could continue as long as it is disturbing, which raises the fear that COVID-19, once

installed in Africa, could make any figure arriving from the United States, Italy or Spain pale.

Other forms of death

Beyond the lack of resources, and the vulnerability of the health system, what has never been lacking at any time in Africa, has been the capital that finances wars and massacres.

In recent weeks, an important battle front has been exponentially reactivated around the shores of Lake Chad, specifically since the Boko group Haram , intensified its actions in the four countries bordering the lake, Chad, Niger and Nigeria and Cameroon, (See: Nigeria: The wide trail of terror) those nations, which in 2015 formed the Multinational Joint Force (FMM) to fight against the terrorism and have not managed to cause significant damage to the Wahhabi organization, given the zeal at the time of crossing information between the different armies, they are now trying to relaunch their alliance and prevent Boko Haram , within the framework of its successes, summon more militants and allocate more material resources, in search of an Emirate on the lake, albeit a virtual one, which would be an affront to the four coastal countries, their armed forces, and would become a great focus of attraction for mujahideen from all over the world, a sequence that we have already seen in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya, where beyond the time that has elapsed and the enormous efforts of the dominant West, even if these efforts were really true, they have not could finish them off. In addition to the increasingly close alliance between the groups that operate in West Africa, with Daesh in the Great Sahara, for example, which is taking center stage in the war that is taking place in the north of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, for French and local troops who cannot prevent their increasingly daring deployment alongside al-Qaeda's arm in the Sahel, Jamā'at Nuṣrat al - Islām wa -l- Muslimīn or JNIM (Front of Support for Islam and Muslims), which could strengthen the mujahideen in a dizzying way.

The *Cholera de Bohoma operation* , launched by the Chadian government, against the different khatibas (brigades) of the Boko terrorist organization Haram , in the islands of Lake Chad, which occupy a wide border sector between Chad, Nigeria, Niger and Cameroon, caused at least a thousand deaths among the mujahideen and 52 army soldiers and at least 200 more wounded. The campaign that began on March 31 and lasted until April 8, in response to the actions of March 23, against a military base on the Boma peninsula, in the province of Lago, where they were killed near than 120 members of the Chadian army and another 200 were wounded, which became the biggest military disaster in that country in its history (See: Africa, a Mad Max world just around the corner.), forcing Idriss Déby, as president of Chad, to arrive at the same theater of operations, from where he personally directed the actions of the army. What has not prevented the consequent abuses of the military personnel against residents of the area such as in the town of Kirkinjia , as has been denounced in different media, who have been subjected to all kinds of torture, in order to obtain confessions. of his membership in that terrorist group.

In a joint operation of the Nigerian and Niger armies, which started from the Arege region in the state of Borno, Nigeria, the terrorists were chased to Lake Chad, ending with a bombing that caused the loss of important caches of materials. of the organization and the death of five militiamen. According to the Nigerien authorities, vehicles, weapons and ammunition belonging to Boko were destroyed Haram , who kept hidden in the islands of Tumbun Naira, Kanama , Doro Lelewa and Shilaya , about 30 kilometers from the city of Bosso , in the far southeast of Niger, also destroyed several speedboats, in which the insurgents move through the alambica lake archipelago.

Along with the actions of Boko Haram, the assaults and attacks of the splinter arm of this organization, the Province of the Islamic State in West Africa or ISWAP, are also replicated, which compete for territorial control and resources, which includes "taxes" to fishing and cattle.

The poor performance of the Multinational Joint Force during the last five years has led President Déby to repeatedly denounce the lack of initiative of his allies. Which means that he no longer hides his annoyance with his "partners". What made the Chadian president declare that: *“Chad is the only one that bears the full weight of the war against Boko haram”.* And he ordered last Monday the 13th, that the troops of his country who fight as part of the G5-Sahel force together with the French forces of the Barkhane operation, stop participating in the combats, that they be freed beyond national borders.

Although in a later statement it was reported that “The Chadian army will not withdraw from the actions against the insurgents in the Lake Chad region and the Sahel, nor together with the United Nations peacekeeping mission (MINUSMA). What would have been a significant loss in the face of the containment of the extremists since the Chadian army, they have great experience and are necessary to neutralize the threat of the takfirists, in a war that always begins.

Image Source:
https://www.comunidadeculturaearte.com/quenia-vai-fechar-maior-campo-de-refugiados-do-mundo-ate-novembro/

fuerzasmilitares.org
el portal militar colombiano

The crisis as an opportunity for improvement

By Obed Daza Martinez (Colombia)

In the evolution of the planet, crises of all kinds have manifested themselves in different ways, tectonic movements, earthquakes, floods, the ice age, meteorites with very serious consequences such as the extinction of the dinosaurs, dark times due to smoke and dust in the atmospheric layer and many other situations; already in the modern era such as world wars, pandemics such as the plague, the Spanish flu, avian flu, currently dengue, in short, the list would be too long to mention.

The question we can ask ourselves is: What have we learned from these different world catastrophes? Have we made casuistry for the prevention and avoidance of future situations of similar magnitude?

Sadly, I would say that we have taken very little into account the events that have already occurred. We are good at forgetting and sometimes thinking that what happened, happened; Omitting the possibility of its repetition.

But what can we do today in the face of a world situation that took the powers by surprise and despite their large capitals they were not prepared to face a problem of this magnitude and above all with no apparent quick solution.

Colombia, as a third world country, is no exception. We hesitated to make decisions and social pressure was necessary through the different media so that the measures recommended by international organizations such as the WHO were adopted; the fear of diminishing capital and wealth for big businessmen has been stronger than the fear of losing one's life. As in many other events, people do not believe that it can happen to them. It was demonstrated by the large number of citizens who, despite the restrictions to protect their lives, continue to break the law and prefer a financial sanction to complying with the voluntary and legal confinement measures, because despite the fact that it was a law - the 457 of 2020-, also It was a logical and necessary decision, supported by the majority.

This leads us to conclude that: *we are not prepared to face situations of global impact*; people do not assume responsibly the recommendations - whether imposed or voluntary- that tend to provide solutions to events that are taking place or that are perceived, may happen. The famous phrase *"until we see, we don't believe* " has us abject to take in an almost sporting way facts that we will later have to regret.

So what should we do today?

The different crises give us the possibility of several strategies to take, such as the following:

First: clearly define the situation that arises. After several deaths from the same symptom picture, we cannot deny that what is coming is a serious public health situation, there we must become aware and at least assume the part that corresponds to us for our own safety.

Second: let's apply the snail method. Let's sweep from the center of our family to the other responsibilities, since the reason for our daily struggle will always be summed up in the core of the home,

since it is the greatest motivation, that is why it is the first thing we must protect.

Third: define the safest strategies to adopt. Different positions will always be presented in all areas, but we with a clear and serene mind must take the one that really, after analysis and verification, is the most accurate. For example, in the current pandemic crisis, the best strategy, while creating a vaccine, is the concentration of people in their homes, this does not cure, but prevents contagion. With this strategy, many infected people who do not know they are infected have avoided spreading the disease to healthy people.

Fourth: Ignore everything you hear or say. Social networks are very good at disseminating news and have been valuable tools in special situations, but there are also those who are dedicated to disinforming and creating chaos; There are innumerable cases in which presidents have been overthrown through social networks, when in reality they were calm in their country houses. Many times, the networks have "killed" people of international stature, but when verifying, everything has been a *fake news* or false news. The measure of staying at home is not so different from that of not going out with strangers or not picking up strangers on the street or before opening the door to go out, check if there are suspicious loitering; but if we do not assume it with the responsibility that it requires, it will not be useful, but on the contrary, it will create more commotion and be fatal.

Today with the covid 19 pandemic, there are many "specialists" who publish magical remedies that even cure cancer, but there are more slights than positive results; likewise, times like the current one are taken advantage of by people with a lot of criminal spirit to achieve their tasks, with quite good results because the best time is when the victim is weak or confused. Computer thefts have skyrocketed, all because people are desperate and want quick fixes. Analyze, verify, don't assume.

Finally, crises are the best thing that can happen to us if we face them with responsibility and a positive attitude, we cannot avoid them, but we can manage them until we overcome them.

Image Source:
https://www.tressis.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/20160518_MMV-1100x487.jpg

Obed Daza Martinez
(Colombia) Risk Specialist, Psychologist.

Here could be the advertising of your company.
Thousands of people would be watching it now.

On chavismo, sanctions and pandemic

By Douglas Hernandez (Colombia)

President Nicolás Maduro in a meeting with part of his work team, in times of pandemic.

Over the years, different personalities have repeated to us thousands of times that the government of Nicolás Maduro Moros is illegitimate, that it stems from electoral fraud, that his government is a dictatorship, that the Bolivarian revolution destroyed Venezuela, that the socialism of the XXI century is a failure, that Maduro and his associates are a gang of criminals, corrupt and drug traffickers, that among the Venezuelan leadership there is a drug cartel called El Cartel de los Soles, that no Venezuelan wants that government, that we must restore democracy and freedoms in Venezuela, that citizens in that country are starving, that the Venezuelan government supports terrorist groups, not only from Colombia, but also from Europe and the Middle East, that due to so many irregularities there is unrest in the military ranks, that the fault of the shortage of basic products is the fault of Maduro and his mismanagement, that hyperinflation and the lack of circ ulante is the product of the improvisations in economic matters of a "regime" that is turning Venezuela into a failed state, that in Venezuela there is a solid, massive, responsible opposition sector, and ready for a democratic transition, that at any moment there will be a social explosion, that at any moment there will be a civic-military coup to overthrow the Maduro dictatorship, that the Venezuelan government is isolated and has no friends in the world, that the true and only President of Venezuela is this Guaidó , that The best thing for Venezuela would be a "humanitarian intervention" and that Maduro has only a few hours left in power. We are going to explain some things, which may not coincide with what we have been told.

The Bolivarian revolution is the process that Venezuela has experienced since Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías became president of the country in 1998. That is, 22 years ago. The set of measures of a social nature and redistribution of wealth that has been advanced in Venezuela, taking into account its particularities, capacities and limitations, was given the name of Socialism of the 21st Century, to differentiate it from the socialist processes of the 20th century. that were related to the Marxist ideology and the Soviet Union. Although XXI Century Socialism does not ignore these historical processes and takes some of their ideas, it mainly embraces as its founding roots, an indigenous ideology, whose main exponent is Simón Bolívar, El Libertador, visionary, example of virtues and national hero, followed by by Simón Rodríguez, a thinker ahead of his time, who was Bolívar's teacher, and who proposed that Latin America should invent its own political system, the third source from which the Bolivarian Revolution is nourished is General Ezequiel Zamora, a Venezuelan

revolutionary who defended agrarian reform and who had interesting ideas about power and politics. From these ideological bases, a doctrinal framework was developed with which to base the Venezuelan political process.

If we define a revolution as a sudden political and economic change, what happened and is happening in Venezuela is undoubtedly a revolution. Chávez dismantled all the economic structures of exploitation that channeled resources abroad, and hit the political networks that allowed it in exchange for important private benefits. Chávez, in addition to being a patriot, was a very educated person, beyond his humorous, quarrelsome, theatrical personality, and little given to protocols, he was someone enlightened, who had read a lot and had reflected on many topics. In his long speeches one could always appreciate an appropriate reading of the context, a strategic vision, a plain language to be understood by all, a spontaneous and totally coherent speech, that is, he never read his speeches, but from the central idea he developed his live exhibition, being very interesting that he always used to quote books and authors, and recommend everyone to read, because it is because of ignorance that they have always been able to dominate us.

This revolution, which put the people above the elites, which took away power and wealth from those who had traditionally managed them, which openly confronted its detractors -domestic and international- without diplomatic formulas or half measures, which was demonstrating a new way of governing in favor of the majority, and that through an active and vibrant diplomacy, was leading global processes of all kinds, did not suit the status quo, so all sorts of political actors colluded against it, economic, social, and military, that could do nothing against the giant that was Chávez, who confronted them with cunning and sagacity, surprising all those who had initially underestimated him. Venezuela became a protagonist in all the political and economic scenarios of the world.

Chávez exercised his leadership in various international organizations, and proposed the creation of others, to counterbalance those that have traditionally been dominated/manipulated by imperialism, the United States, the right, the economic powers. This is how the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) was born, which is opposed to the Free Trade Area for the Americas (FTAA) promoted by the United States. This is how the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) emerged, as a South-South cooperation scheme, which makes it possible to avoid asymmetric economic relations in which developing countries always lose out. This is how Petróleos del Sur (PETROSUR) was born, as a solidarity initiative through which Venezuela distributes oil and its derivatives at solidarity prices among the countries of the region. This is how Nueva Televisión del Sur CA (TELESUR) arose, as a multi-state media, which became a communicational alternative to tell the world in another way, and not in the way that suits the big capitals.

Internally, through the so-called Social Missions, resources are delivered and well-being is generated in the Venezuelan population (and even people from neighboring countries are supported), as never before. There was everything and enough for everyone. Chávez had not only put the Venezuelan elites in check, taking away power, wealth, influence, political positions, and had channeled all of this to benefit the population. He was demonstrating that, if there is a political decision, a tremendous leap could be taken towards the future, towards development, towards the happiness of the people. His internal strategy had two main aspects: on the one hand, a "shock therapy", giving direct benefits and subsidies to the poorest, literally so that they would not starve. Measures that were disparagingly described as “populist”, but that were necessary and that have eventually been applied in all the countries of Latin America. On the other hand, structural measures, which included mass education at all levels, from adult literacy, to expanding coverage of pre-school, basic and secondary education, including guaranteeing university quotas for everyone who I would like to opt for higher studies. It is assumed that all this as a whole would contribute to improving the qualifications of the population and would strengthen the country in the future.

On the other hand, the sick were treated massively and free of charge, the most seriously ill were taken to Cuba to be treated by specialists, thousands of Cuban doctors were brought to treat the poorest in neighborhoods and hamlets, trainers also came from Cuba high-level sports teams, to work with the kids from the neighborhoods, and advisers on agricultural issues were brought in, to resume national food production. Many services were modernized and multiple mega-projects started across the country, including highways, bridges, tunnels, railways, strategic industries, airports, ports, and there was even talk of building a new capital city. With Chavez everything was possible.

From a traditional and conservative point of view, all this represented multiple problems for the global status quo. In the first place, Chávez, by intervening in the economy, rescinding contracts, nationalizing or expropriating companies, altered the flows of capital that were "normal" affecting the interests of individuals, corporations and governments, who profited from the exploitation of Venezuela in all spheres. . Reversing that wealth into welfare

for the population, which in turn increased the president's popularity, strengthening him in power. These actions, in addition to the courage shown in his public statements, earned him great international popularity, making him a “bad example”. Other rulers could be tempted to do the same, or some peoples could actually demand measures similar to those being taken in Venezuela. Then began a fierce and continuous process to discredit the Venezuelan government and the political-economic model that it had been promoting: The Socialism of the 21st Century, which could certainly change the Latin American reality for the better, and become a paradigm for other regions of the world.

In this way, all sorts of international pressures, threats, blackmail, internal and external economic sabotage, political agitation, coups, manipulations, and fake news. Throughout this process of destroying a possibility, the mass media have been fundamental. In spite of all the combined forces that insisted on defeating him, Commander Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías, succeeds in all the attempts against him. He was even overthrown in a coup d'état and taken prisoner to the island of La Orchila, the Venezuelan people mobilized demanding his return, then a group of paratrooper commandos aboard Cougar helicopters went for him and reinstalled him in the Miraflores Palace, something never seen before in the “banana republics”. The revolutionary, socialist, anti-imperialist, Latin Americanist and humanist government of Venezuela prevails against all odds, and that makes Chávez an icon. A modern day, Robin Hood, who suddenly dies from cancer. Everything indicates that inoculated by his enemies.

In the final stage of his life, knowing that death would come. He records a message in which he asks his followers to elect Nicolas Maduro Moros as the new president of Venezuela, as his replacement. Under the slogan "Chávez, I swear to you, my vote is for Maduro" the current president wins his first presidential elections. With the commitment to continue the lines drawn by Commander Chavez and deepen the Bolivarian Revolution. The great economic, political and military powers that opposed Chávez managed to kill the man, but not his ideas.

Maduro came from being the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela (Chancellor). After winning the presidential elections, he had to face all kinds of problems, even worse than those that Hugo Chávez had to overcome. With an aggravating circumstance, Maduro lacks the charismatic personality, the drive, and perhaps not even the intelligence that characterized his predecessor. So things tended to get worse, especially the quality of life of Venezuelans, who began to suffer from a shortage of basic necessities. In a massive and staggered way, which gives the certainty that the country is being the victim of an economic war. An ordinary person would say, "come on, it's nonsense, if the businessman does not sell, he stops receiving his profits, the objective of every businessman is to obtain profits, it makes no sense to think that he has purposely stopped producing or selling." It should be remembered that, in order to force the overthrow of Salvador Allende in Chile, strikes were promoted in different strategic sectors, for example, among carriers. Today it is known that the strikers were subsidized by the enemies of the government so that they did not have to work.

A fourth-generation war is being waged against Venezuela, and even with the presence of fifth generation elements. Everything has been tried to defeat the Bolivarian revolution. Simultaneously they have applied political, geopolitical, economic, military, psychological, computer, technological, terrorist, electromagnetic strategies, they have promoted strikes, violent protests (called "guarimbas"), coups, oil strikes, sabotage of electrical networks, the assassination of Chávez, explosive drone attacks against Maduro, infiltration of paramilitary groups into Venezuelan territory for terrorist and assassination purposes, training of terrorists in Colombian territory, destabilization of the country through the recognition of a parallel government (that of Guaidó), and through it the looting of the accounts of the Venezuelan government abroad, as well as the confiscation of highly prestigious companies such as CITGO in the United States or Monómeros in Colombia. The classification of the Venezuelan government as an "extraordinary and unusual threat" to the United States of America opened the door for the formal - but unilateral - application of all kinds of sanctions. Such a "diplomatic siege" is promoted against the Maduro government, in which different right-wing governments in Latin America are aligned, and most of the Western powers, under the leadership of the United States. All in search of defeating "the Venezuelan dictatorship" and helping its long-suffering people to recover democracy and freedoms.

It is not true. If it were a question of avoiding human rights violations, a humanitarian intervention would have already taken place against the Saudi monarchy, which is not only an absolutist and hereditary monarchy (something totally contrary to the values of liberal democracy), but has also arranged a repressive apparatus that kills or disappears its opponents, that oppresses its own people, and that is currently carrying out a genocide in Yemen. But why doesn't anything happen there? Why doesn't the United States speak out against this situation, take action, or apply sanctions? Well, Saudi Arabia is a heavyweight within the Organization of

Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC, is an ally of the United States in the Middle East to confront Iran, and is also one of the main buyers of US weapons. They are “good guys”. The Venezuelan government is not agreeable to them because it is their ideological adversary, not their ally, it buys weapons from the Russians and the Chinese, and to top it all off, it does not lend itself to doing business with oil. And it is that oil is the essence of the problem, not the suffering of people, nor human rights, nor democratic values. Those are sophistry, to cover up the real interests behind so much bitterness.

Venezuela has the largest proven oil reserves in the world. They are more than 300 billion barrels. Enough quantity by itself to supply the whole world for 10 years at the consumption rate of 2019 (I do not say current, because with the pandemic consumption fell, as did the price). The tankers take a week from Venezuela to the east coast of the United States, and not a month, as it happens if they come from the Middle East. Everyone wants to control that wealth, especially the United States, and those Chavista fools stand in the way. Having tried everything to remove Chavez and then Maduro from power, the latest was the massive operation "against drug trafficking" in the Caribbean, which was announced weeks ago, and which many of us understood to open the doors to a military invasion. Coincidentally, the pandemic went through, and the thing did not happen to majors. It appears that Trump is determined to start a war, to shore up his re-election bid.

I find something quite paradoxical in what has happened in Venezuela. Everything bad that has been done to it has strengthened it in a certain sense, and now it turned out to be one of the country’s best prepared to face the virus that brought the powers to their knees and has humanity in check. The virus even put out of action an aircraft carrier from the United States and another from France, and the United States of America is the current epicenter of the pandemic, with the highest number of infected and deaths from this cause. While "the Venezuelan dictatorship" stands out for the excellent handling it has given to the crisis.

Faced with each eventuality, each act of sabotage, each attack, each new restriction, each new problem, the Government of Venezuela reacted and took measures to counteract what threatened it, learning from each situation, to the point that it is now ahead of the threats and take proactive, creative and coordinated measures to disrupt, contain or mitigate them.

Today, most of the population is organized into different social, political and/or military structures. People are registered and registered, the physical, health, family, academic, cultural, and socioeconomic characteristics of each inhabitant are known. The central government sends direct economic aid to each person or family, according to their needs, through the so-called "Carnet de la Patria". In addition, due to the problem of hyperinflation, devaluation and the lack of circulating money, in Venezuela they are very advanced in the area of electronic banking and cryptocurrencies. For example, you could buy something from a vendor on the street and pay with a card, through a wireless point of sale (POS). In addition, the Venezuelan government has given some subsidies in Petro, which is the cryptocurrency launched in Venezuela, and which is the only one that is backed by physical wealth (Venezuelan oil and gold).

To address shortages, the Venezuelan Government created the Local Supply and Production Committees, CLAP, around which an entire logistics infrastructure has been created. In strategic places of the country there are collection centers where the national production and imported products arrive, there standardized markets are packed in a duly identified box or bag, then, through a distribution chain, the quantity of boxes or bags required by the community, in these places the Communal Council is in charge of distributing them house by house. The CLAP boxes have a value, but in general it is low, it is subsidized by the State. This ensures that families receive a minimum amount of food at solidarity prices, fulfilling several purposes: inflation is combated, speculators and hoarders are affected, the population is provided with the basics, maintaining their health and minimizing their hardships, there is also an important psychological impact in favor of the Venezuelan government.

On the other hand, the primary medical care structure based on Cuba-Venezuela cooperation is maintained, and there are health clinics of the Barrio Adentro Mission in all the neighborhoods and hamlets.

In addition, with the constant military threats against that country, a body of militias has been formed in Venezuela that currently exceeds four million militia men and women, who are integrated into the different communities, and are part of the Venezuelan Armed Forces. developed volunteer work during different activities of social and community interest.

Finally, the pressures to which Venezuela has been subjected forced its government to strengthen cooperation ties and alliances with Russia, China and Cuba, among other countries of interest. Today, these three countries stand out in terms of international cooperation to confront the pandemic, and they have been a

key piece for Venezuela, as they have provided advice, and have sent personnel, supplies and equipment, necessary for the fight against the pandemic.

Thus, when it was determined that the virus had reached Venezuela, all the protocols that had been established in advance were activated, the quarantine began, and important determinations were made, which have kept the numbers very low. compared to other countries. Now it turns out that people in Venezuela are not dying of hunger, nor was there an unsustainable hospital crisis that led to a mortality, nor has the parallel government of Mr. Guaidó been seen acting. In Venezuela who is in charge is Nicolás Maduro Moros, all the instructions for the different State agencies emanate from his office, the National Armed Forces obey him, and it is to him and his team of collaborators that Venezuelans must thank that there has not been a tragedy in the country with the theme of the pandemic.

Venezuela has advanced with all the sanitary, prevention and containment measures. The number of sick and dead is minimal for the total population of the country. They have set up a tremendous logistics infrastructure to attend to the emergency, even oversized compared to other countries. For example, in Colombia there is hardly a machine for the diagnosis of the coronavirus, which is not enough and which broke down a few weeks ago. Nicolás Maduro offered the President of Colombia, Iván Duque, two of these machines, which Duque rejected alleging technical incompatibility. The case is that while Colombia is on all fours with a single machine, Venezuela could afford to give away two.

There is an air bridge between Venezuela and China, and another between Venezuela and Russia, through which tons of humanitarian aid, supplies, and equipment to face the pandemic continue to arrive. Russia and China want to show the world how beneficial it is to have them as allies, while the US government not only helps no one, but takes actions that harm others. As was the case of banning 3M from exporting masks to Canada and Latin America.

In Venezuela, the people are disciplined, respecting the instructions of President Maduro -even the staunchest opponents are attentive to official pronouncements-, they receive income through the so-called Carnet de la Patria, with which they can pay the CLAP cash and buy other essential supplies. The National Armed Forces are mobilized to guard the borders and critical infrastructure, the Bolivarian Militia collaborates with the CLAPs and with the Communal Councils, increasing their logistical capacities. The central government and local leaders support producers to guarantee supplies at this difficult time.

The productive apparatus that had been dismantled has been restructuring under another leadership and under another conception, the socialist one. Now there are different factories that produce essential elements to supply the population through the CLAPs. But also to supply the national market without subsidies. By the way, the times of scarcity have already been overcome. Today the supermarkets are well stocked, although things are very expensive in relation to the national minimum wage. Only those who receive remittances from abroad buy there, the rest must wait for CLAP, or figure out how to cover their needs through networks of solidarity and also corruption, which logically arise in times of crisis. Gasoline is currently in short supply due to damage to the country's refineries and US sanctions that prevent the importation of oil derivatives.

In short, at this historic moment, the Venezuelan government is demonstrating great capacity not only for crisis management, but also for international management, obtaining significant support to strengthen its ability to fight the threat of the pandemic. Events have strengthened Maduro. On the one hand, on March 16, 2020, the young Guaidó had called for a protest demonstration, but that same day the quarantine was decreed in Venezuela, preventing the development of opposition activity. Now everyone is locked up in their homes, while the Armed Forces, loyal to Maduro, are deployed. At this time, the population is totally dependent on the Venezuelan government, which has the upper hand, as the measures it is taking to confront the pandemic are completely logical and coherent, with positive and verifiable results. However, at the same time, with these measures, valuable time is gained, while the prestige of President Nicolás Maduro is strengthened, in the face of the population itself, but also in the face of the international community.

Two actions demonstrate his statesmanship, on the one hand, requesting a loan from the IMF to face the pandemic, and on the other, offering the diagnostic machines to Duque. Any result represented a political and psychological gain. In the first case, if the IMF granted the credit, they would have to lift the sanctions for the disbursement, then to guarantee the payment of the loan they would have to make concessions that would allow Venezuela to maintain its solvency, but if they denied it -as indeed happened-, it would be shown that Maduro did everything possible to face this crisis and if something went wrong, he could always blame it on the International Monetary Fund, and whoever has Venezuela under economic sanctions (because if they did not have money withheld from Venezuela, it would not need loans). As for Duque, we must not forget that he -along

with Almagro- has been leading the so-called Lima Group, which brings together the right-wing governments of the region against the Government of Venezuela. So the offer becomes a magnanimous gesture that puts Duque on the ropes, if he received the machines he was giving in to "the dictatorship" and affected his international position and his leadership, placing Maduro not only in a position of moral superiority , but also generating a contradiction in this kind of cold war that is being waged between the two countries: failed and besieged socialism giving a hand to savage capitalism. For the Colombian people, Maduro would no longer look so bad, he would have come to save them. But if he did not receive them -as indeed happened-, he would remain as an abject person who puts his personal interests and his pride before the well-being of the Colombian people. Then Maduro will be able to point out that many deaths could have been avoided in Colombia, if timely diagnoses had been made. In other words, Colombians died because of Duque, when Maduro could have saved them.

We must not forget some things, if we want to try to understand the complex Venezuelan and even regional situation. The months before the pandemic were of intense political turmoil, not only in Latin America, but also in the world. The governments of the so-called Lima Group faced severe governance crises and resorted to the most savage repression, which they previously criticized "the Venezuelan dictatorship." The protests showed that these right-wing governments were simply no better than the socialist government of Venezuela, and that there were serious contradictions within those countries. Nor should we forget that during the pandemic, in the region the government that best managed the crisis was the socialist government of Venezuela, with the solidarity of Cuba, China and Russia, while the right-wing governments of the Lima group did not stand out. precisely because of its efficiency, and for example in Ecuador there was a disaster that could be avoided, furthermore, the ally and promoter of those right-wing governments, the United States of America, did very little to help them in the crisis.

Little by little, they forced Venezuela to set up a war economy, which is now a comparative advantage that allows it to efficiently face the current health problem.

Image Source:
https://www.ntn24.com/america-latina/venezuela/maduro-asegura-que-reforzara-cuarentena-en-la-region-capital-120486

“Spanish America is original, its institutions and its government must be original, and original their means of founding one and the other. Either we invent, or we make mistakes.”
Simon Rodriguez

Douglas Hernandez
(Colombia) Founder and director of the website www. Fuerzasmilitares.org, he works as a journalist specializing in security and defense. He is a contributor to *Air and Space Power Journal* - institutional magazine of the USAF, now called *the US Air Force Professional Magazine, American Continent* -, and of the Brazilian magazine *Segurança & Defesa* . He is a Sociologist and Master in Education from the University of Antioquia (Medellín, Colombia), a PhD student. He has a Diploma in International Relations.

Central African Republic
Armed forces

The first name of this former French colony was Oubangui -Chari, since most of the territory is located in the basins of the Ubangi and Chari rivers. In 1958 it became a semi-autonomous territory of the French Community and on August 13, 1960 it finally gained its independence, taking its current name.

The Central African Republic is a landlocked country located in the central region of the African continent. It borders Chad to the north, Sudan to the northeast, South Sudan to the east, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo to the south, and Cameroon to the west. It has an area of 622,984 km ^{2} and has an estimated population of around 4.8 million inhabitants. The most populous city is its capital, Bangui.

The country is divided into 14 administrative prefectures (préfectures), two economic prefectures (préfectures economiques) and an autonomous commune. The prefectures are further divided into 71 sub-prefectures (sous-préfectures). The administrative prefectures are Bamingui-Bangoran, Basse-Kotto, Haute - Kotto, Haut-Mbomou, Kémo , Lobaye , Mambéré-Kadéï , Mbomou , Nana - Mambéré , Ombella-M'Poko , Ouaka , Ouham , Ouham-Pendé and Vakaga. The two economic prefectures are Nana-Grébizi and Sangha- Mbaéré, while the autonomous commune is the capital city, Bangui.

Despite its abundant resources such as uranium, oil, gold, diamonds, timber, farmland, and hydroelectric potential, this is one of the poorest countries in Africa and among the ten poorest countries in the world. world (by the way, the 10 poorest countries in the world are in Africa). The explanation for this contradiction has multiple edges, factors such as the damage that colonialism did to the original social fabric of these regions, as well as their culture and traditions, must be taken into account. It is also important to highlight the extreme poverty in which find its inhabitants, the low educational level, the propensity for corruption of its leadership, as well as the multiple inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts. It is worth noting that conflicts between religions have their

maximum expression between Christians and Muslims, and neither of these two religions was part of the worldview, culture and traditions of the tribes, in the time prior to European colonization. Another important factor in trying to explain why there is such a poor population in such a rich territory is the interventionism of foreign actors -state and non-state-, and the dispute between said actors in an attempt to seize the wealth that exists there. Probably if there weren't so many resources there wouldn't be so many conflicts. It should be noted that the phenomenon called "blood diamonds" occurs in this country, whose export and international trade is prohibited because they come from regions where "lords of war" kill, mutilate, rape and enslave, to extract them and with them finance more violence. Only diamonds that are extracted from areas controlled by the legitimate government of the Central African Republic are allowed to be traded.

Another source of discomfort and conflict comes from the circumstance that 99.5% of the population is black, while the remaining 0.5% is white (generally Europeans or European descendants). Whites, along with a black minority, dominate the political and economic life of the country. Below them is the black majority who live in poverty or extreme poverty. The average number of children per woman is 4.32.

In the Central African Republic, there are more than eighty ethnic groups, each with their own language. About 50% is Baya - Mandjia and 40% is Banda (mostly located in the north and central part of the country), and 7% is M'Baka (located in the south-west of the territory). The continuous economic and political problems that the Central African Republic suffers cause a continuous emigration to other countries, mainly to France, and the forced displacement resulting from multidimensional violence, takes thousands of people to neighboring countries.

The conflict

Thousands of people have been killed in the conflict in the Central African Republic, some 700,000 people have been internally displaced and another 570,000 have fled to other countries since 2013, when the Seleka coalition of mainly Muslim rebel groups ousted Francois Bozize , a Christian, who had himself seized power in a coup.

The Seleka officially disbanded a few months later, but many fighters refused to disarm, and the groups that emerged from it are known as ex- Seleka . Many others joined the mainly Christian anti - Balaka militia to fight the Seleka , leading to a spiral of violence between the groups, both religiously and ethnically motivated.

The weak government of President Faustin-Archange Touadera controls about a fifth of the country and relies heavily on the UN troops in the country (MINUSCA) for support. The rest is controlled by at least 14 different militia groups, which often fight each other for control of territory, the population and its resources.

The Armed Forces of the Central African Republic (FACA) has only 7,000 troops, in a population of 4.8 million, and faces at least 14 militia groups, which as a whole are similar in number.

The FACA have serious deficiencies in terms of training and equipment, the latter mainly due to an arms embargo imposed by the UN Security Council in 2013. The only exception is for the security forces, only for light weapons and with special prior approval of a sanctions committee. This embargo is due to the fact that in 2013 the militias took over the barracks and arsenals of the capital and stole all the weapons and ammunition they found there, it is assumed that the ban on the sale of weapons to the country seeks to stop the proliferation of themselves and consequently more violence, however, the militias continue to acquire contraband weapons and ammunition, through the porous borders of the country. Paradoxically, the one who was left with serious limitations to arming itself was the government.

The embargo has been lifted on several occasions, in order to allow the shipment of weapons donations to the FACA, on the one hand, France handed over 1,400 rifles that it had previously confiscated in Yemen, and they are of the Ak-47 type, apparently from Iranian manufacture. Russia has also donated weapons to the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic. At all times there is fear that the weapons delivered will go to the militias, strengthening them. This fear is based on the weakness of the Army, and the corruption present in all levels. Deliveries of other military equipment (not weapons) have also been made by France, Belgium, China and the United States.

Spanish General Fernando García Blázquez, who at the time (2017) was the commander of the European Training Force that is present in the Central African Republic, declared: “The photograph of the Central African Republic, one of the poorest countries in the world, is convoluted: in the foreground, the battle between militias made up of Christians (they are the majority in the country) and Muslims (15% of the population profess Islam). In the background, a conflict between armed groups of different ethnic groups, with a large presence of men,

money and weapons from abroad and the lethal component in many of the neighboring countries of the region: the dispute over the land and its minerals, including the gold and diamonds. 'It is not (only) a religious problem', adds the Spanish general, 'it is multipolar'." (elpais.com, August 14, 2017)

In the same report on this country, it is read that to date, Minusca had 12,500 troops on the ground, but that they are insufficient. It is revealed that there are 600,000 internally displaced persons, and 480,000 people who have fled to neighboring countries escaping violence.

The Armed Forces

The European Training Force (EUTM CAR) has 170 troops, of which 29 are Spanish. The aim of this mission is to create a self-sufficient, trained and effective Central African military force. Although the Army of the Central African Republic nominally has about seven thousand men, the European Training Force has initially concentrated on the formation of three Battalions of about 600 troops each, acting in training bases in Bangui (the capital) .

Note that weapons are not available for all troops, and there are no heavy weapons either. In January 2020, the UN Security Council extended the arms embargo for another six months, which would then run until July 31, 2020, when the situation would be reviewed to make new decisions. The resolution in question was drafted by the French government and was approved with 13 votes in favor and two abstentions, those of Moscow and Beijing. The text of the resolution gives the Central African Republic the possibility of acquiring "military vehicles without weapons or armed with a caliber of less than 14.5 mm" for its armed forces, on the condition that it notify the UN beforehand.

It is worth noting that until 2016 the French were in charge of the training issue, but problems arose with accusations of child abuse against elements assigned to the French troops. However, France continues to play a leading role in this country.

The European Union has trained more than 4,000 people to serve in FACA, although it is unclear how many have the proper equipment. In July 2018, the bloc extended EUTM-RCA until 2020, pledging €25 million (about $29 million) to help reform the country's defense sector. The scope of the mission was also modified to provide strategic advice to the president's cabinet, the interior ministry, and the police, as well as the military.

The government of the Central African Republic aims to train around 1,300 soldiers annually until 2023. Thus consolidating a core of trained, disciplined combatants capable of confronting and defeating the militias that operate in the different regions, recovering for the State the monopoly of force.

More than 4,000 FACA members have completed training programs with the Russians, which they undertake after completing the EUTM-RCA program. The 235 Russian instructors train them in the use of weapons before they are deployed. Russian advisors in addition to working with the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic, provide security and advice to President Touadera. In August 2018, Russia signed a military cooperation agreement with the Central African Republic that offers the possibility of training officers and non-commissioned officers from Central Africa in Russian military schools. Based on this agreement, the 235 instructors are there, that is, it is a bilateral agreement that has nothing to do with the UN, but that has its endorsement. In the United Nations One-Dimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (Minusca for its French acronym), the Russians barely have 12 troops, including two women. Most of the Russian advisers on the ground are "civilian contractors" - what we used to call mercenaries, this gives the Russian government greater room for maneuver and assurances. Moscow learned from the Americans the issue of outsourcing the war.

Weapons and Equipment

Most of the Central African Republic Army's weapons and heavy equipment were destroyed or captured by Séléka militants during the 2012-2014 civil war. Immediately after the war, the army only had 70 rifles. Thousands of army small arms were also distributed to civilian supporters of former President Bozizé in 2013. Prior to 2014, army arms and ammunition stockpiles were primarily of French, Soviet, and Chinese origin.

In 2018, the Army received the donation of 900 pistols, 5,200 rifles and 270 rocket launchers from Russia. That was added to the donation of 1,400 rifles by France. Thus, the 7,000-strong force of the Army of the Central African Republic now has at least half of its personnel trained by Western Europeans and by the Russians, with the certain perspective of completing the training of the entire force. They have been provided with basic quartermaster elements, and have basic weapons:

- 6,600 Assault Rifles.
- 900 Pistols.
- 270 rocket launchers.

Before 2013, the Armed Forces had a few tanks, some armored reconnaissance and transport vehicles, as well as a helicopter, a Hercules plane, and some light aircraft. But all of that is now considered out of order.

Conclusions

It is pertinent to clarify that all the interest that this country arouses among the powers (USA, European Union, France, Russia, China), which intervene bilaterally outside the UN, is not out of charity, nor because they are interested in the well-being of the poor population. All of them seek to exploit the natural resources of the Central African Republic, and they need the country to be stable and at peace, so that their technical personnel and their executives can travel without danger to their integrity, as well as to guarantee a minimum of security for their investments and your assets. Obviously, the army that is being formed will enter to pacify regions rich in mineral resources, and will take care of strategic installations and critical energy and road infrastructure. All this in order to guarantee economic exploitation, which on the one hand will allow the government to capture resources for its own functioning, and make some investments for the well-being of the population, without forgetting to keep something in its own pockets, but which will mainly enrich large foreign corporations, with long-term contracts that their governments have cleverly helped them obtain.

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