

## Section 3 International Terrorism

### 1 General Situation

As a result of the ongoing globalization, it has become easier than before for terrorist organizations operating across national borders to share information and cooperate internally and with other organizations, secure geographic access and acquire weapons. In this situation, terrorist organizations, including Islamic radical groups, are conducting acts of terrorism mainly in countries and regions where the political situation is unstable and governance is weak. However, it is said that the objective of activities and the capabilities differ from organization to organization<sup>1</sup>. Some of those organizations are presumed to be securing funds through crimes such as illegal trades and abductions.

Regarding Al-Qaeda, which is believed to have directed the 9/11 attacks in 2001, Osama Bin Laden, the group's leader who was hiding in Pakistan, was killed in an operation conducted by the United States. The killing of Bin Laden, however, has not eradicated the possibility of Al-Qaeda attacks. While the command and control capabilities of the Al-Qaeda leadership have been declining, it has been pointed out that Al-Qaeda affiliates that include "Al-Qaeda" in their name are increasing their force and perpetrating terrorism mainly in North Africa and the Middle East<sup>2</sup>.

Organizations which are said to be affiliated with Al-Qaeda and other Islamic radical terrorist organizations are conducting acts of terrorism mainly in North Africa and the Middle East but also in various locations in South Asia and Southeast Asia. In Algeria, Libya, Mali, Iraq, Egypt and Syria in particular, those organizations are said to have the capability to cross national borders which are not sufficiently controlled and to conduct acts of terrorism in countries other than those where they have bases of activity. Regarding those organizations, it has been pointed out that they have acquired a large amount of weapons which proliferated when the Gadhafi regime of Libya collapsed.

In recent years, we have also seen cases where radical individuals and groups who have had no official relations at all with Al-Qaeda or its affiliates have been inspired by Al-Qaeda's ideology and have become so called "home-grown terrorists".

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<sup>1</sup> The U.S. State of Department "Country Reports on Terrorism 2012" (May 2013)

<sup>2</sup> Director of National Intelligence (DNI) "Worldwide Threat Assessment" (January 2014)

The United States and countries in Europe share concern<sup>3</sup> that their own people participate in the combats in the conflict-affected regions such as Syria<sup>4</sup> or Somalia<sup>5</sup> and get indoctrinated into radical thoughts and conduct acts of terrorism upon returning home.

Due to the threats of terrorism proliferated in this way, and the fact that those involved in terrorism are becoming more diversified, it is becoming increasingly difficult to prevent international terrorism, and the importance of international cooperation on counterterrorism has further increased.

## **2 Global terrorist attacks**

Iraq has seen successive terrorist attacks targeting high ranking government officials, foreign citizens, security authorities, and the like since the U.S. Forces left the country in December 2011. It has continued to face terrorist threats, as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), an organization specified by the U.S. Department of State as a terrorist organization and also considered to be active in neighboring Syria, has controlled western cities of Iraq. These situations prompted the U.S. to announce in January 2014 that it will sell gunships and surface-to-air missiles to the Iraqi government so that the country will be able to enhance its anti-terrorism capabilities<sup>6</sup>. However, in June of the same year, insurgents such as ISIL, attacked Mosul, in northern Iraq, and seized control of the city. In addition, they began to move southward towards Baghdad. The government of Iraq is responding by conducting military air strikes and mobilizing militias to prevent insurgents from going into Baghdad. While the U.S. denies dispatching combat troops, it deploys the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush in the Persian Gulf, and is expanding its assistance to the Iraqi government, including the dispatch of a military advisory group to Iraq.

Terrorist attacks have recently been on the rise targeted at diplomatic delegates, security authorities and other groups in Yemen. In October 2010, some explosive materials were discovered in multiple air cargoes bound for the U.S., which were revealed to have originated in Yemen. It is thought that these attacks were conducted by groups affiliated with Al-Qaeda. In addition, it has been pointed out that activities by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) are continuing<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Statement of the Director of the U.S. Office of Homeland Security February 7, 2014

<sup>4</sup> See Part I, Chapter 2, Section 1-2 for Syrian situation

<sup>5</sup> See Part I, Chapter 2, Section 1-2 for Somali situation

<sup>6</sup> In January 2014, the U.S. Office of Homeland Security notified Congress of the export of 24 AH-64E attack helicopters

<sup>7</sup> Director of National Intelligence "Worldwide Threat Assessment" (January 2014)

In Libya, Islamic insurgents attacked the U.S. General Consulate in Benghazi in September 2012, killing four U.S. citizens including the ambassador. In January 2014, the U.S. Secretary of State designated Ansar al-Shari'a, which is considered responsible for the incident, as a terrorist organization. Furthermore, the U.S. and the NATO have announced their intention to enhance the security capabilities of Libya by offering training to its armed forces and dispatching military consultants<sup>8</sup>.

In January 2013, an Algerian natural gas plant in the Southeastern city of In Amenas was the subject of a terrorist attack by an Islamic radical group presumably derived from "al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb" (AQIM), which had been kidnapping Algerian and western citizens. The group killed many citizens including 10 Japanese citizens during the incident. The country continues to be exposed to terrorist threats, as Algerian troops and insurgents were engaged in gunfight near the borders of Mali and Libya in June 2013.

In Mali, French troops dispatched based on a request from the provisional Mali government launched an assault upon insurgents including Ansar al-Dine, an organization that controls the northern area of the country and is considered to have relations with Al Qaeda, and in response the group announced its intention for retaliatory terrorist attacks. This exemplifies the continuation of terrorist threats in the country.

Somalia established a newly unified government in November 2012. The country, however, includes many areas where collisions between "Al-Shabaab" controlling part of Somalia, Somali government forces, and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) are still underway. In September 2013, terrorists attacked commercial facilities in the capital city of Nairobi in neighboring Kenya after the country dispatched its troops to Somalia, killing many citizens including foreigners. Furthermore, in May 2014, a suicide bombing took place in the capital city of Djibouti in Djibouti that dispatched its troops to Somalia. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the bombing and is still a significant threat in the region.

In Nigeria, Boko Haram, which aims to build an Islamic nation, has stepped up its activities since 2010, carrying out acts of terrorism repeatedly in retaliation against a crackdown by police and other authorities. In addition, in August 2011, Boko Haram claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing targeting a United Nations building in Nigerian capital of Abuja. It is reported that the Nigerian government declared the state of emergency in three northeastern regions in

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<sup>8</sup> NATO Secretary General Rasmussen announced in October 2013 that he will dispatch military consultants to Libya. The U.S. Department of Defense announced that it will train 5,000-8,000 personnel of Libyan forces in Bulgaria in November 2013

May 2013 and started counter-terrorism campaigns using its armed forces. Under these circumstances, in April 2014, Boko Haram abducted over 200 female students in Borno State in northeastern Nigeria. In response, the United States dispatched equipment, including an unmanned aerial vehicle, to assist with the search efforts of the Nigerian government. The Sanctions Committee of the United Nations Security Council added Boko Haram to its sanctions list. The international community is taking these and other measures to deal with the situation<sup>9</sup>.

South Asia has long been suffering frequent terrorist attacks. In particular, Pakistan has experienced a number of terrorist attacks targeting religious facilities and government organizations masterminded by Tehrik Taliban Pakistan (TTP) or Al-Qaeda<sup>10</sup>.

In Southeast Asia, some progress has been made in countering terrorist organizations. In the Philippines, it is pointed out that terrorist organizations such as the Islamic extremist terrorist group Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), which have been the biggest source of domestic public security concerns, have now significantly weakened<sup>11</sup>.

In the United States, there was an incident where a bomb exploded during the Boston Marathon in April 2013, leaving three dead and numerous people injured. This was considered to be a crime committed by typical home-grown terrorists.

*See ▶ Fig. I-2-3-1 (Major Terrorist Groups Based in Africa and the Middle East Regions)*

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<sup>9</sup> In November 2013, the U.S. Department of State designated Boko Haram as a terrorist organization

<sup>10</sup> See Part I, Chapter 1, Section 6-2 for Pakistan situation

<sup>11</sup> See Part I, Chapter 1, Section 5-2 for Philippines situation