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LIBYA: THE MILITARY OPTION, US INTERESTS AND DEMOCRACY THAT DOES NOT PAY

Democracy is not an option in the ideological and political landscape of the Middle East and North Africa and, every time a crisis comes about, Islamic terrorism surges. Authoritarian twists are not the problem, but almost always the solution.

This is the case for General Abdul Fattah Khalil al Sisi in Egypt, it has been so for the past 30 years in Algeria where the Generals rule by proxy, as it is for al Assad's family's political and military survival in Syria and, lastly, for General Khalifa Belqasim Haftar in Libya. The uprisings that should follow the manipulations of the vote, as should have happened following the presidential elections of al Sisi (97% of votes) and Bashar al Assad (88%), are simply not taking place. The same could happen in Libya, now in the hands of armed groups, citizen and ethnic-based militias, regional rivalries and divergent interests, where an authoritarian solution could be the only viable path out of the crisis.

Authoritarian solutions?

The Libyan citizens in search of security have understood it, as have the countries in the region and foreign powers that have economic and political interests to preserve. Moving from ethics to pragmatism and having put aside the theories on the exportation of democracy that justified military interventions during the Bush era, the current US administration has understood that the current situation in Libya cannot be solved by speeches or statements, but with facts. Barack Obama has realized that a country's stability is more important than its political configuration. Foremost, he learnt the lesson that supporting democracy and social justice in this part of the world and then facing the nth hotbed of terrorism is not a political or economically desirable outcome and is basically dangerous.

The US administration has also learnt the lesson from the support to the Muslim Brothers in Egypt (then abandoned to their destiny), from the uncritical support to the opposition to the Syrian regime (the fall of Assad would have opened, as the rise of ISIS shows, a new front in the war on terrorism) and from having lead Iraq to its disintegration following their military intervention. In the last stage of their "path to redemption", the US, without being open about it but through a confirmatory official silence, are looking with favor at the military initiatives undertaken by General Haftar in Libya. He could represent not only the lesser of evils, but possibly their solution.

Haftar's military adventure is the result of the above mentioned American considerations, of the General's excessive and never concealed ambition, of his Egyptian colleague al Sisi's openly declared support and of the money and the favors provided by the CIA (and, apparently, also by Saudi Arabia).

The rise of General Haftar

On May 16 2014, Khalifa Belqasim Haftar launched "Operation Dignity" in the declared attempt to eliminate terrorism from the Cyrenaica, thus trying to accredit himself as the Muammar Khadafi of the future. His aims are in fact wider than the simple fight against fundamentalism (a struggle supported by those who fear its spreading in Libya) and go as far as the elimination of an inefficient Parliament and government. The foiled attack against him on June 4, 2014 seems to have reinvigorated his military ardor. Also because – as it is now pretty clear – only the rise of a strong man can halt the dissolution of the country.

As usually happens in these cases, several militias, with the ones from Zintan – that have been competing with their counterparts in Misrata (closer to radical stances) since the beginning of the civil war – in the forefront, have jumped on the bandwagon. The new leadership will be measured on its military might and not on popular consensus. The latter is an irrelevant factor in this part of the world, as are the concepts of democracy and human rights. There are also external actors that support Haftar in his struggle; they are those countries who fear the dissolution of the Libyan state.

The biography of the new Khadafi

Khalifa Belqasim Haftar was one of Khadafi's frontmen since his coup against King Idris in 1969 and until his fall into disgrace after the failed attempt to take over the Aouzou Strip in Tchad in the 80s. Captured by the Tchadians, jailed and abandoned by Khadafi, once freed Haftar migrated to the United States becoming a pawn in the hands of the CIA. He was part of the failed attempt to sponsor and fuel the political and military opposition against the Libyan dictator. Haftar, together with other high ranking officials freed by Tchad (Colonel Saleh Mohamed Habbouni, Lieutenant Colonels Abdallah Shaikhi and Salem Rahman), joined the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL) founded by the former Libyan ambassador to India, Mohamed Megaryef.

Among the numerous groups and organizations opposing Khadafi from abroad, the NFSL was probably the most active and efficient formation. Founded in Khartoum on October 7, 1981, pro-Western and with branches in the United States and Cairo, it was responsible for one of the most striking military actions against Khadafi: the May 8, 1984 failed attack against the Bab Azizya barracks in the heart of Tripoli and home to the Rais. From that moment onward, the NFSL became the primary target of the regime's killers in their hunt for Libyan dissidents. One of the Front's leaders, Yousef Krebesh, was assassinated on June 26, 1987 by one of the Revolutionary Committee's commandos in Rome (two out of four hitmen were apprehended). The same happened with other Front's members in Egypt and Jordan.

Khadafi's former general was assigned to lead the Libyan National Army in the attempt to wage a coup d'état against the Supreme Guide. The military operation was supposed to take off from Tchad, but the attempt failed following the defenestration of Tchadian President Hissène Habré by Idriss Déby in 1990. Deby had been hosted by Khadafi in Libya prior to his taking over Tchad. Khalifa Haftar and his men fled and managed to return to the United States (while others decided to reconcile with the regime). But, regardless of his foiled plot, in the eyes of his sponsors, namely the CIA, Haftar's reputation benefited in terms of both reliability and credibility from this incident.

He finally resurfaced on Libyan soil together with the NFSL in March 2011, alongside the Benghazi rebels. Haftar held the role of military leader and Youssef Megaryef was the political guide. The latter was appointed President of the General National Congress from September 2012 until May 2013. He was forced to step down by a bill that barred officials with ties to the previous regime from holding key posts.

Since his return home, Khalifa Haftar has gone back to cultivating his ambitions, initially frustrated by the fact that he was not the top man in the rebel's military ranks. Abdul Fattah Younis, former associate of Khadafi, ex Minister of Interior who had shifted to the rebel camp at the last second, was above him. Younis was killed in dubious circumstances in July 2011. Some commentators go as far as implying Haftar could be involved in his death.

The road to Tripoli

Today, General Haftar and his Operation Dignity aim to eradicate the Islamic menace from the Cyrenaica, provide stability and security to a country where both are currently inexistent, avoid – where possible – the regional fragmentation of the nation, but mainly and foremost to fulfill the personal ambitions of a man that wants to become the future Raïs. He's got the necessary external support and money to achieve this. The NFSL has always benefited from the funding of the United States, Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom. This partly explains why Haftar has plenty of weapons, including Russian manufactured helicopters and airplanes, and can afford an entire army (and hence has the money to pay for his men's wages). But, just like all those aspiring to become a dictator, he will become the leader only if he wins his war.

The arrest and extradition in Cyrenaica on June 18, 2014 of the Ansar al Sharia leader Ahmed Abu Khattala, alleged mastermind behind the assassination of US Ambassador Christopher Stevens in Benghazi in 2012, has earned General Haftar yet more points in the eyes of the Americans. Khattala's apprehension was officially an FBI and Delta Force sting operation, but nothing could have happened without the factual local support of the General's men. From now on, Haftar will benefit from the support of US intelligence and this could pave him the way to the road that goes from Benghazi to Tripoli.

THE ORIGINS OF IRAQI CHAOS

On May 1, 2003, while on the air-carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, the then president of the United States, George W. Bush, held a speech on Iraq and pronounced the following phrase, two words that made history: “Mission accomplished”. The war had started with the invasion of March 19, 2003, the enemy had been defeated, Saddam Hussein had fled, the Americans, and those who supported them, had won. Thus, “the mission was accomplished” and, emphasizing the euphoria of the time, the so-called “exportation of democracy” began.

More than 11 years have gone by since that day and this is the price the Iraqis have paid for the victory of democracy: over 133,000 deaths shared between civilians, insurgents, and soldiers, all victims of a war that went from being a military conflict to a civil one. And these are conservative figures. Since January 2014, an average of one thousand people a month have perished in the country. A peak was reached in June, when the victims of the conflict touched three thousand units, basically about the same number of people that died following the March 2003 US invasion of Iraq. In the meantime, the US has completed its withdrawal from the country; it started in June 2009 and ended in December 2011. They have also left on the field over 4.000 US soldiers.

This is the basic synthesis of Iraqi history since February 6, 2003, the day in which, with a famous speech by the then US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, before the UN Security Council, it was certified by “irrefutable” evidence that Iraq still had an active weapons of mass destruction program and that this was a sufficient reason to attack the country. During his speech, Powell showed satellite photos, provided audio recordings and a test tube of anthrax – all obviously provided by the CIA – because he claimed his statements to be “undeniable”. Saddam Hussein was turned into the root of all evil, he was even accused of siding with Islamic terrorism (when everyone knew the exact contrary was true) and, hence, had to be eliminated. And so he was.

However, the weapons of mass destruction have never been found (but this was of no importance once the war had begun) and the world has gotten rid of a bloodthirsty dictator (this being a truly irrefutable fact). The “democracy” that followed subverted the status quo that had been reigning over Iraq until then: a Shiite leadership took over the pre-existent Sunni one. The order of the divisors had been inverted – lending a mathematical lexicon – but the result should have stayed the same. There was only a switch in roles between persecutors and persecuted, between those ruling and those obeying. But maths is not life in flesh and blood.

In the light of what is now happening in Iraq, it is thus necessary to search for the causes and provide answers about a country that, after the arrival of groups of terrorists waiving the flag of Islam on their path to Baghdad, is sliding towards its dissolution.

The road to disintegration

The first mistake was committed by the Americans whom, when they go to war, systematically destroy a country's infrastructures (whose “side effect” is the out of the blue

creation of a wealthy market for reconstruction). In 2003, the “liberated” Iraq was a devastated and torn to pieces nation; its population was facing, in every day life, the consequences of the conflict: shortages of electricity (still recurrent), a black market for fuel (still present), shortages of water. Starting from the minute following the invasion, the ordinary Iraqi began wondering whether he was better off under Saddam. At the same time, the Americans wondered why the Iraqi people were not acclaiming their passage on the street since they had brought them freedom and democracy.

Then, in May 2003 and until June the following year, the US installed a proconsul to lead the transition in Iraq. He was a diplomat, Paul Bremer, that during his year of interregnum in Baghdad committed the most blatant of mistakes: he decided that anyone who had had a role during the past dictatorship, regardless of his rank, title, civilian or military status, was banned from joining the new administration. The backbone of the Armed Forces of Iraq (in the hands of the Sunnis) was destroyed at once, all the people (once again a Sunni majority) who had joined the ranks of the Baath Party (in most cases simply because they were obliged to do so) were fired. The provision had the immediate effect of throwing on the streets 3 million people and erasing with a single blow the Iraqi security apparatus. From that moment onwards, the Shiites took over and the Sunnis were marginalized.

The Sunnis soon began opposing the Shiite governments that took over in Baghdad. And, since they were a key component of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship, they were also the only ones who knew how to fight. Therefore, with different degrees of effectiveness, they began to clash with the Shiite leadership.

On the Shiite front, instead, after the government lead by Ayad Allawi – during which there had been different attempts to find a compromise with the Sunnis (between 2004 and 2005 several meetings were held between Sunni leaders and US and British diplomats; some of these encounters were also held at the Italian diplomatic compound inside the Green Zone) – the efforts towards a reconciliation waned during Ibrahim Jaafari's tenure (2005-2006) and totally disappeared with the advent of Nouri al Maliki. Maliki whom unfortunately, if you wish for a national reconciliation, still leads Iraq.

At the same time, the country's third largest group, the Kurds, representing around 17% of the Iraqi population, have slowly begun building on their autonomy, have formalized their army of Peshmerga, benefit from the income deriving from the oil fields in Kirkuk and are creating the basis for their own independence. Once opposed by everyone – especially by the Turkish – the idea of a peaceful and prosperous Kurdistan while the rest of Iraq dissolves is an option seriously gaining ground.

The role of David Petraeus

If, on the political level, the contrast between Sunnis and Shias has been linked to the incumbent Prime Minister's negative relational trend, on the military level, there has been an improvement starting from June 2004. The turning point was the appointment of US General David Petraeus to the post of chief of the “Multinational Security Transition Command Iraq”, that is the structure that was dedicated to the creation and strengthening

of the country's security forces. And this objective was reached by involving Sunni militias in the process.

Then, when in January 2007 Petraeus was appointed the new chief of the Multinational Forces in Iraq, his approach gradually began to produce tangible results: annual deaths decreased from 26 thousand in 2007 to ten thousand in 2008 and down to 4-5 thousand between 2009 and 2012. All of this happened as Petraeus was then promoted, in 2008, to the post of commander of USCENTCOM, the command responsible for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The General's success in Iraq (where, according to the official version, the decrease in deaths was the result of the strengthening of the local security forces) was not replicated in Afghanistan where, in 2010, Petraeus was named chief of US military forces.

To a certain extent, both the direct and indirect role played by David Petraeus favored some form of coexistence that outbalanced the increasing political contrasts between Sunnis and Shias that followed the arrival of al Maliki. As expected, the departure of US troops from Iraq had a negative impact on the country's stability. The result was that, in 2013, the deaths from Iraq's ongoing civil war surged to 10 thousand units once again.

ISIS and the former Baathists

If an internally fueled unrest was not enough, then came the external actors: in March 2011, on the wave of the so-called Arab Spring, the civil war in Syria began. And just like during any other revolution, the armed opposition gathered along the Syrian borders. Iraq also became one of the bases from which attacks against the regime in Damascus were carried out by both secular and Islamic (they were the majority, as a matter of fact, and with the biggest military experience) opposition groups.

Among the latter are Jabhat al Nusra (supported by Al Qaeda) and the ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), both competing to lead the Islamic opposition to Bashar al Assad. The ISIS controls parts of Syria and the north of Iraq; its leader is known under the nom de guerre of Abu Bakkr al Baghdadi (the truth is he was born in Samarra and his real name is Awad Ibrahim Amoush) and his aim is to establish a Caliphate over Syria and Iraq.

His plans are facilitated by two favorable circumstances: the weakness of the Iraqi central government and the support granted to them by the enraged Sunni marginalized minority ready to battle the Shiite leadership. In fact, fighting alongside ISIS are also militias linked to the former Baath party and that are now lead by Izzat Ibrahim al Douri, one of the few members of Saddam's regime still at large. There is presently a synergy between ISIS and Douri, between Islamic factions and secular Sunni demands. This has lead the conflict to slide towards a religious struggle between Sunnis and Shias pushing Iran and the USA closer; Tehran wants to support the friendly government of Nouri al Maliki, while Washington wants to avoid the rise of extremism in the region.

And, as has often happened in the Middle East, roles and alliances switch, friends become enemies and vice-versa.

Which ending?

The future of Iraqi affairs still doesn't have a finale. There are several different variables at play: the potential military role played by the US and Iran against ISIS, how long the Iraqi government will hold and whether al Maliki will be removed to facilitate a national reconciliation, the role played by the take over of the oil fields in Mosul, the raids on the Central Bank and the racket on the population in the financing of the Islamic militias, the question marks regarding the unfolding of events in Syria, the outcome of the clashes between Jahbat al Nusra and the Free Syrian Army, the Kurdish attitude and their decision to whether intervene militarily or not, the role played by neighboring countries like Turkey and Jordan who could decide to act to protect their national security, the failure or the success of any mediation attempt aiming at involving the Sunni community in Iraq's future.

Abu Bakkr al Baghdadi wants to play a political and military role that goes beyond his true influence on the ground. Self-proclaimed Caliph, he claimed he was a descendant of the Prophet and, during his sermon in Mosul in July 2014, he assumed the right to lead the Muslims in a new holy war against the impious and the infidels. A war without boundaries and that includes the entire "Umma", the muslim community. His enemies are not the Syrians or the Iraqis anymore, but the Alawites, the Shia and, in a wider context, the Christians and the moderate factions of Sunnism, like the Sufis.

This means that the issue of the advance of the Salafist militias towards Baghdad is not solely a national security problem of Iraq or Syria. Hence, if and when there will be a military response to this dangerous spread of Islamic fundamentalism, the reply will see the involvement of several different international actors.

A FUTURE BRIMMING WITH DRONES

Today we live in a world where war becomes technology, thus overcoming the classical clash between men and armies; where everything is global and there is no geographical limitations; no differences between the public and private role; where cause and effect take place within the span of a handful of seconds; where interests – be they political, commercial, military or security driven – justify the meddling in the interior affairs of other nations: we live in a drone's world.

The drone (which technically goes by the acronym UAV, meaning “Unmanned Aerial Vehicle”) observes, intercepts, follows, listens, sometimes jams communications, but mostly shoots and kills, all the while subjecting those who direct its actions to a near-to nonexistent risk.

Since the year 2001 this operative vehicle has become an integral part of the asymmetrical global warfare. Its first test run as a weapon by the US took place in California in January 2001, when a drone was used against a tank. By 2003, there was already a massive deployment of drones in the war against Saddam Hussein. During that year, about a hundred different drones were launched on a daily basis by different military entities (the Army, the Airforce, the Marines, the CIA, the DIA...). There were so many of them in the skies above Iraq that they sometimes accidentally crashed into one another. After 2003, drones were employed in Afghanistan, Yemen, Pakistan and Somalia to eliminate members of Al Qaeda. By March 2013, when John Brennan became the head of the CIA, drones had become an essential tool in the fight against terrorism, working at the services of a 'kill list' that included all the top exponents of international terrorism.

The US is not the only nation that uses drones; they are widely employed by Israel as well to fight its enemies and to carry out both offensive and defensive tasks. As the CIA uses drones outside of the US territory, the FBI uses them at home. Finally, drones have lately been employed in the civil sector as well. The pioneer of such use of drones is Amazon, the leading US on-line sales company, which is presently testing the use of a small drone, the “Prime Air”, for the delivery of packages to its costumers. In the light of such use, the US Federal Aviation Authority is tasked with issuing guidelines for the civil use of drones by September 2015.

As we mentioned above, drones have become a major instrument in the fight against terrorism and in electronic and visual espionage; they can cross borders without asking for authorization and are more efficient than manned aircraft. A drone will usually be guided in its strategic activity by spy satellites that provide it with its tactical guidelines. The sheer number of operations and killings by drones in the past years prove that they have become an widely employed instrument of war.

Collateral damage

The use of drones comes coupled with the problem of the collateral damages that they leave behind them: civilian victims that sometimes lose their lives during the elimination of a terrorist or the destruction of a target. Unfortunately, the person driving the drone sits thousands of kilometers away in front of a monitor with a keyboard and a joystick in his hand. That person has an incomplete perception of what he sees and no certainty. He

cannot contextualize the events that appear on the monitor, he merely interprets them. It therefore becomes easy to mistaken a group of people celebrating a wedding for an assembly of terrorists.

And there is, of course, the technical issue. From the moment that the pilot sees his target, (there is a delay of a few seconds due to the satellite transmissions) decides a course of action (a few more seconds) and issues his commands, the position of his target might have changed. This delay often causes victims among civilian bystanders. It is for this reason that the UN has launched an inquiry in 2013 questioning the legitimacy of the use of drones.

According to widespread statistics, the ratio of killed terrorists to civilian victims derived from the use of drones in Pakistan, for instance, is four to one. In practice, during the past 10 years, drones have killed 3500 (alleged) terrorists and, at the same time, about one thousand civilians, two hundred of whom were children.

The race to make better drones

There are many varieties of drones that are currently being produced and every new model is more sophisticated than its predecessor. It is a technological race that pits many countries in competition against one another.

The Americans make the "Predator". It is a little over 8 meters (26 ft) long (thus almost invisible) and can be fitted with two missiles. Another, more efficient model is the "Reaper". It is 11 meters (36 ft) and can carry four missiles. The least lethal US drone is the "Sentinel". only 4 meters (13 ft) in length, it is mainly used in "listening". The smallest of the US drones is the "ScanEagle". It is 1.5 meters (5 ft) long and is often used in the skies above Iran. A prototype of the ScanEagle was captured by the Iranians at one point and handed over to the Russians to share the technological information contained therein.

Israel has the tiny "Ghost" and the larger "Eitan" (the Resolute), 14 meters (46ft) in length and able to fly for 36 straight hours while carrying an explosive charge weighing a ton. Some of these drones were stationed in a base in Azerbaijan. Israel also has the "Hermes 450", which is used in surveillance, reconnaissance and interception missions. The "Heron Machatz" was another prototype that crashed (whether willingly or accidentally, we do not know) in Lebanon in November 2011 and exploded while the Hezbollah were trying to pry it open.

Italy has acquired its share of drones by virtue of a contract signed with a US company in 2001. The agreement was followed by an order of six Predator units in 2006. The Italians have even produced their own drones; the "Hammerhead", which can fly for 16 straight hours at a very high altitude; and the "Falco" (Falcon), which is presently used by the UN to survey the Democratic Republic of the Congo on behalf of the international force operating there.

But the use of drones is not limited to sovereign nations. The Hezbollah have the "Ayoub", which they flew in the Israeli skies on October 7, 2013, nearing the nuclear plant of Dimona before being shot down. In the past years, Hezbollah has made use of other, Iranian, drones such as the "Mohajer" and the "Ababil". The "Ayoub" is a drone produced in Iran but which the Hezbollah have assembled and used in Lebanon. The brains behind

the “Ayoub”, Hassan Laqis, who was also the brains behind all of the other latest technological developments of the Shiite group, was eliminated by a commando in Beirut in early December 2013.

The Hezbollah are backed by Iran and benefit from their military and technological efforts in this specific field. Iran has been one of the first nations in the world to invest in drone research. After the “Mohajer” (the Migrant), used in the war against Iraq in the late 80s, they developed the “Ababil” (Swallow), which was produced in 1993 for reconnaissance missions (It was used in the skies above Haifa in 2006 and later in Iraq). After the Ababil, Iran began devising more sophisticated models such as the A-3, the A-T, the “Karrar” (Bombardier), the “Sofreh Mahi” (Eagle Ray) and the “Sharapa” (Butterfly).

The problem with the Iranian drones are the vehicle's lack of invisibility to enemy radars and its limited range which, in order to be useful, must be long enough to include Israel among its possible targets. The “Karrar” was designed in 2010 with a range of 1000 km, but it was not enough to reach the Israeli skies, they needed a range of at least 1700 km. For this reason they upgraded the “Ababil” into the “Ababil T”, which allegedly has a range of 2000 km. The Hezbollah are used by Iran not only in testing their technological advancements on the field, but also in dispatching their instruments of death in the skies above Israel.

How to defend oneself from a drone

If the drones have greatly increased the operative capacity of those that use them in the fight against terrorism, the terrorists are struggling to find countermeasures against them. The worrisome reactions of terrorists when faced with drones suggest that drones are efficient, scary and unpredictable; they strike without warning, like an invisible enemy.

In a handbook found recently by journalists inside a building in the north of Mali, where groups affiliated with Al Qaeda were stationed, there is a long list of precautions to be adopted in order to escape from drones. These precautions range from electronic ones (to produce frequencies that disturb those of the drones; to jam communications and to keep radios and other similar equipment on to provide the drones with fake targets) to operative ones (mounting mirrors on the roofs of cars and houses in order to blind the drone's eyes with reflections; to hide under trees and in the shadow of buildings; to never assemble outside; to confound the drones by walking into buildings with multiple exits; if found, to run out of a car in different directions in order to cut one's losses; to keep away from cars during firefights; to use forests or other natural hideaways when training; to burn car tires in order to produce smoke and decrease visibility; to use fake targets in order to draw the drone's attention; to change the location of headquarters and living quarters frequently; to use caves and bunkers because the US missiles have a scarce ability to penetrate such structures; to enact early warning systems to detect incoming drones; to position snipers on the roofs of buildings that can fire against the drones; to carry out counter-surveillance activity in order to identify the spies that can direct the drones to their targets).

The terrorist handbook also mentions another precaution that shows how the drone war has become a global instrument that is used not only by the terrorists but also by the countries that support their struggle. The handbook speaks of buying a Russian software

called "Skygrabber" which, together with a computer and a satellite decoder, would allow one to intercept the frequency of the drone and see what the vehicle transmits, usually via unencrypted satellite communications, to its headquarters. So we have the Russians, we have the Iranians, the on-the-ground experience of the Hezbollah in Lebanon and of the Sunni terrorists in Iraq. There is, in short, a sharing and partaking of knowledge, technology and experiences about drones.

The future

There is no available data about how many operations were conducted by the US with the use of drones. This is in part because the drones are always busy flying around. Those that listen or see don't end up in the news while the others, those that shoot, are mentioned only when they successfully eliminate infamous terrorists such as Abu Yahya al Libi (Pakistan, September 12, 2012) or Anwar al Awlaki (Yemen, 2011).

Statistics suggest that between 2004 and 2013 there have been over 380 operations in Pakistan and 60 or 70 in Yemen (maybe this figure should be doubled). They also show that there have been an additional 10 drone operations in Somalia during the past five years. These statistics were probably rounded down, seen as they all refer to secret operations.

It is unequivocal today that the drones are part of a technological war that is being fought in many parts of the world and that their employment is due to spread widely in the future. Analysts have esteemed that, in the coming four years, there will be over 30 thousand drones (both military and civilian) flying above our heads; half of these will be hovering over the US.