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**CHALLENGES IN DEFENSE PLANNING
DEVELOPMENT IN THE CURRENT ECONOMIC AND
SECURITY ENVIRONMENT (TUNISIA CASE)**

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Abstract:

Four years after the revolution, Tunisia confronted new realities that stemmed from the post revolutionary process it was experiencing. The challenges may not have been as acute as in other countries, but they were still complex and problematic. The Tunisian economy remained sluggish and found it difficult to shake off the revolution's impact. Unemployment remained stubbornly high (officially more than 16 percent), foreign investments decreased, and the country's tourist industry—a pivotal component of the economy—did not bounce back to its prerevolutionary levels. Many Tunisians were concerned with the deteriorating internal security situation and the emergence of violent Islamist groups.

In this paper, we will limit ourselves to discussing certain economic and security aspects, first with a focus on the difficult economic situation of Tunisia. And second, a brief analyze of the security situation and relation between economy and security. We will try to identify, in the last part, the challenges that faces Tunisian defense planning in the current economic and security circumstances.

1. Introduction

Since January 14, 2011, Tunisia has initiated a new decisive phase in its modern history. Thanks to the valuable Tunisian Revolution assets, the country has tried - confidently and optimistically- to build a better future; satisfying the will of his wise youth, encouraging the aspiring freedom and enhancing both development and progress. Tunisia is determined to break up with the past and to establish a strong democratic system, to strengthen the rule of the law and institutions as well as to build a new society based on freedom, justice and citizenship. Indeed, the success of the democratic transition process and the adoption of a new development model are the best guarantors of a promising project company that is at the height of the people's aspirations and the best support for the consolidation of the national development process. On this basis, the new reform strategy was developed based on the consecration of political development, building democratic institutions based on pluralism, equality and freedom.

The first democratic elections on October 23, 2011, enabled the establishment of a National Constituent Assembly and temporary executive structures. Following the "National Dialogue" and the acceleration of the political process at the end of 2013, the Tunisian political transition has reached a major milestone with the adoption of a new Constitution dated January 26, 2014.

Tunisia evolves in a context of profound changes that affect the political, social, security and economic system. Also, there are some pressuring changes at the international level that amplify due to the globalization effects and the opening to external environment.

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The democratization of the political landscape of Tunisia has opened a lively debate, marked by tensions on issues such as equality between men and women, the role of religion in the country, foreign policy orientations, territorial inequalities, etc. In fact, since the fall of 2013, Tunisia has witnessed repeated incidents and acts of terrorism between the different components of the society, including the involvement of the radical religious movements. These incidents have revealed the difficulties for certain institutional structures, including military forces, to meet these new challenges.

2. Review of the Economic Situation after Revolution and the Global Crisis

2.1 The painful awakening of the revolution

On January 15, 2011, the Tunisian economy has awakened into a full economic and social turmoil that worsened by the day. The security skid, sporadic anti-revolutionary movements, the opportunism of social demands, the absence of democratic political dialogue traditions, the low representation of social and business organizations and the legacy of despotism inhibiting all forms of expression are all factors that promoted and maintained the emergence and establishment of a genuine economic and social crisis.

Other particular significant element of a certain economic stagnation, industrial productivity declined, particularly in the mining sector, the country's first industry. Tourism has also experienced an unprecedented crisis and will only slowly recovering from the shock of the revolution. Although the outlook is brighter, tourism revenues sustain more than one family out of eight and fell by more than a third in 2011.

Unemployment and poverty are common issues in the developing world and Tunisia is no different. However, the nature of unemployment within Tunisia grew into one of the acute factors that led to the start of the revolution. Hampered by the broader international financial crisis as well as structural issues, the Tunisian economy was hurting. In 2010 unemployment continued to climb and one of the hardest hit portions of the work force was the youth. As for unemployment, it increased by five points since the uprising. He is approaching 19 percent, the equivalent of 800,000 people against 500,000 on the eve of Ben Ali departure, on a labor force of 3.5 million. Furthermore, approximately 200,000 of these unemployed were youth holding university degrees.

Year		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Unemployment rate (%)		12.5	12.4	12.4	13.3	13	18.9	16.8	15.8	15.2
Unemployment rate of higher education graduates by gender	Male	11.3	12.9	13.9	14.6	15.8	22.6	21,7	21,7	21,2
	Female	26.0	27.4	30.0	34.9	32.9	44.2	41,9	41,9	40,8
	Total	17.0	18.7	20.6	23.4	23.3	33.1	31,9	31,9	31,4

Table1 (Source; National Institute of Statistics – Tunisia)

Poverty is widespread in the interior of Tunisia, hampered by lack of access to infrastructure and education and the geographic restrictions that often exist with the coastal region of nations built on trade and tourism. One of the main contributors to the revolution was the poverty and inequality experienced by many in the interior of Tunisia and the dignity lost as their way of life fell further and further away from being able to provide for self and family. In fact, nine out of every ten jobs created in Tunisia was created on the

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coast, representing an ever-widening gulf between interior and coast: the revolution began in the interior and spread to the coast.

2.2 End of the transitional period

The easing of the political and security situation at the beginning of 2014 has already had positive effects of renewed confidence in the economy. Preliminary growth projections for 2015, close to 3%, and expected external and fiscal imbalances still large, requiring substantial external financing, reflect the gradual nature of the recovery and economy sanitation. The economic and social programs prepared by the government aim primarily at limiting the social impact of economic shocks while laying the foundations for a revival of economic activity. Nevertheless, this strategy faces significant external financing needs in the short term and in the medium term, in terms of public investment, notably to contribute in a manner that the interior regions catch up the developmental delay.

Despite the positive rate increase in 2014 and 2015 (p), the economic activity remains insufficient to contribute significantly in the reduction of unemployed numbers, including foreign investment and tourism revenues, which remain below the one achieved in 2010. Indeed, it estimates damages to 4% of GDP. All these elements have negatively contributed to the economic activity of the country. An immediate and severe sanction has been imposed during 2011 and 2012 [Tunisian Observatory for Democratic Transition, 2012]:

- Decline in GDP growth.
- Decline in industrial production 6%.
- Reduced entrepreneurship of 8.42%.
- Reduced foreign direct investment of 26.3%.

Social tensions remain high. Unemployment, despite the slight improvement to 15.2% in the first quarter of 2014 (against 17% a year earlier), is still high especially taking into consideration the fact that about 40% of the unemployed are graduated.

2.3 From one crisis to another: Tunisia's new economic challenges

Highly dependent on the economic strength of its European neighbors, Tunisia is an Afro-Arab country whose economy is closely linked to the old continent than others. It has particularly suffered from the drop in purchasing power in Europe. Its tourism revenue declined as well as its exports and foreign exchange.

Among other factors that did not help Tunisia overcome its critical economic situation is the stagnation of the world economy. In fact, the world economy has gone through a period of instability which put the promising perspectives in doubt. Indeed, the World Bank has revised downwards its GDP growth forecast for 2015 by reducing them from 3.4% to 3% as a global average, against 2.6% achieved in 2014. The reasons for such performance reduction are multiple however three main phenomena illustrate the destabilization of global economy.

The first phenomenon is related to the fact that the acceleration of global growth comes only from the US, and therefore remains dependent on the performance of the country. It is certainly expected that the US economy continues its momentum by achieving between 3% and 3.2% from the GDP growth in 2015, against 2.4% in 2014.

The second source of instability comes from the Euro zone related particularly to the situation of the German economy. All Eurozone countries are experiencing poor economic performance, which impacts the expectation of a continuous trend in 2015 by 1% of expected growth. It is not only the consequence of the Russian crisis, but also of the

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adopted economic policies. It is expected that the Eurozone achieves 1.1% of GDP growth in 2015 against 0.8% in 2014 and -0.4% in 2013.

Indeed, the economic crisis of our main partner EU has a direct impact on the growth of the Tunisian economy. Thus, it has resulted in a slowdown of economic activity which reduced the Tunisian fiscal and external leeway. The Tunisian economy, as previously announced, is highly dependent on the European Union. The latter absorbs 78% of exports, provides 65% of imports, generates 83% of revenues in the tourism sector, provides 73% of foreign direct investment and affords 90% of income transfers to Tunisia. Considering the sum, the equivalent of two-thirds of Tunisia's GDP is directly dependent on Europe.

The third source of instability in the global economy comes from the first emerging countries which are known by the "BRICS" appellation. The economic growth in these countries has witnessed a slow that will continue for various reasons:

- Russia lives an economic crisis linked to the situation arising from Ukraine's conflict and the decline in energy prices which constitutes the main resource of the country.
- China sees its growth stabilizing at 7% since it cannot continue to achieve growth rates in double figures.

The international economic and financial crisis was significant for its global, systemic dimension and in particular for its unprecedented form of propagation. In the absence of decoupling, this crisis, whose origins fall within the chain reaction of financial sector failures in developed countries, gradually reached Tunisia via a number of mechanisms and transmission channels. It is above all on the level of the real economy that this crisis has produced negative spillover effects due to close commercial ties with Europe.

The 2014 economic performances reported by the National Institute of Statistics – Tunisia (INS) were weak in several respects: GDP growth was only 2.3% over the first three quarters and is therefore low for the year 2014. This is the second consecutive year where Tunisia fails to achieve the 2.5% of its annual growth. It is mainly due to the decline in production of oil, phosphate and derivatives, and also tourism stagnation. In general, the industrial production has evolved very slowly, partly because of the recession in Europe, as indicated by the slowdown in the general index of industrial production in the first ten months of 2014 (+0, 3% against 2.1% during the same period of the previous year). The Board of Directors of the Central Bank of February the 2nd has also expressed its concern as regards the service sector's situation which saw its key business indicators declining continuously in December, especially in the tourism and air transport sectors.

Foreign trade has evolved unfavorably, bringing the trade deficit to an alarming level since it amounts to over 15% of GDP. This is related to the decline in export volumes (-1.8% over 2013) resulting in a small increase at current prices (2.5%) despite the fall of the dinar. On the other hand, imports are continuing to grow at 6.4%. This deficit is partly due to the energy deficit (27% of the total deficit) and the Chinese phenomenon (22% of the total deficit). - Inflation fell to 5% in December 2014 against 6% in 2013. This decline in the rate -which gives an average inflation rate over 2014 of 5.5%- is related to the decline in food inflation with the improvement of agricultural production, but the level of inflation remains higher than the 4% limited historical average.

The deficit on current external payments reached 8.9% of GDP due to the trade deficit. Its funding was provided by external borrowing rising rapidly near IDE that are declining (5% compared to 2013). – This deficit has increased external indebtedness and

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has allowed consolidation of the level of net foreign exchange reserves, which reached 15,055 MTD or the equivalent of 129 days.

PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC INDICATORS	2012	2013	2014	2015(p)
Growth GDP (%)	3,7	2,3	2,5	3,0
Inflation (annual average)	5,6	6,1	5,6	5,0
Budgetary account / PIB (%)	-5,7	-6,2	-4,8	-6,2
Courant account / PIB (%)	-8,2	-8,3	-7,9	-6,4
Public debt / PIB (%)	44,5	44,8	49,4	55,2

Table2 (Source; National Institute of Statistics – Tunisia (INS))

This difficult economic situation is not the result of chance but rather a consequence of the former regime that was ruling Tunisia for nearly a quarter century, and which had tried to make up a socio-economic reality on a very worrying state aiming at plundering the country from the benefit of a quasi-mafia organization.

2.4 The restricted institutional development of the Tunisian military

Throughout its history as an independent nation, Tunisia has maintained a record of having probably the smallest defense budget among all countries in the Arab world. Investment in impressive weaponry for the sake of prestige has never been a policy of the governing regime. In the 1980s, however, efforts to improve the armed forces' capabilities had strained a national budget oriented primarily toward economic and social development. The defense budget was drawn up annually by the national planning authorities in the Ministry of Finance.

Although never lavished with resources under Bourguiba, the military was modernized in the 1980s, partly with U.S. military aid, in response to growing concern over Qaddafi's Libya. After Zine El Abidine Ben Ali seized the Presidency in a bloodless coup in 1987, further steps were taken to weaken the military institutionally. He reduced the size of the army, cut the defense budget, forced certain officers into retirement, and may even have accused innocent officers of plotting a coup, imprisoning them to serve as a warning to others who might contemplate such actions. By the end of the Ben Ali regime, Tunisian military expenditures accounted for only 1.4% of GDP. Under Ben Ali, the military limited its activities to border protection, natural disaster response, and participation in UN Peacekeeping missions. It became resolutely apolitical, with recruitment and advancement based on performance and academic achievement. Tunisian officers have also been frequent participants in military exchange and training programs offered by the U.S. and France. In keeping the military out of politics, and preventing it from gaining other sources of economic or political power, Ben Ali helped to ensure that the army would remain relatively weak and professional.

A year after the revolution, this assessment remains unchanged. Ministry officials rank the priorities of the Tunisian government to be economic, with national security—particularly the control of borders—as being subordinate. When asked whether the Tunisian military has enough equipment to accomplish its expanded mission since the revolution, the response was a surprising affirmative. “We have the manpower we need. We managed to go through the revolution and do all that we do with what we have. . . . We do not need expensive weapons or aircraft.” [1]

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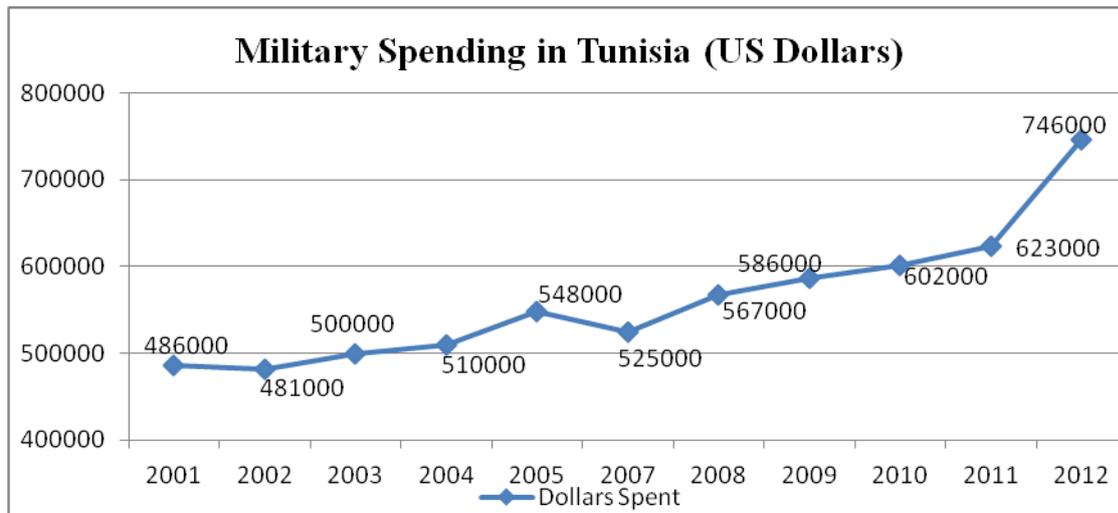


Fig.1 (Source: <http://militarybudget.org/tunisia/>)

Since the year 2012, and after the rising of new serious threats things changed. And despite the national and international economic difficulties the budget of the defense started to increase at a much important rate. The changes that started to occur in TDB size, the importance of the share allocated to equipments and infrastructure. This change in the budget structure traduces a prompt response to effective threats and risks. It is more likely the undergoing of the escalating security situation that obliged decision makers to switch to a need first approach.

New equipment start to be delivered, but the American Blackhawks, recently ordered, will take time to be delivered, in addition to the political wrangling of the two previous years, which have resulted in significant changes at the head of the army. The problem is mainly financial and strategic as well as organizational and human. We must change defense policy by adapting new internal and external constraints that can affect our regional and international environment. Actually, national defense is a collective responsibility and not just an army one. To remain credible, our defense system, to be based on national unity (the collective determination to defend), is a modern defensive armament core, and an effective chain of command.

It is imperative to adapt our army to the new war data against terrorism by developing a new operational strategy. In order to do this, a doctrine revision is needed to change its strategy and adjust their combat tactics. It is also related to encourage taking initiatives to unit field instead of curbing on certain decisions that require necessary autonomy

Formed for a conventional fighting, Tunisia was conducted the day after the revolution, to ensure missions for which the country was not prepared: maintaining public order in the city and fight against terrorist groups practicing guerrilla techniques and harassment. Drones and handling are inadequate, although national UAV projects (from commercial databases) exist; armored vehicles against explosive devices are very inadequate. The modernization of fighter bombers is struggling.

3. Tunisia facing security threats

3.1 Religious Violence in Tunisia: four years after the Revolution

Since the Tunisian revolution in early 2011, religiously-motivated violence has steadily increased. Until late 2012, it was primarily characterized by small scale attacks

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and vandalism. In June 2012, for example, Tunisian Salafists angered at an arts exhibition where they considered blasphemous rioted in Tunis and other cities, throwing rocks and petrol bombs at police stations and other buildings. Yet the real threat of religious violence was first witnessed in September 2012, when protesters outside the U.S. Embassy in Tunis became violent and attacked the embassy, causing the death of three people.

The factors driving the increase in religious violence in Tunisia are complex and include socio-political, economic, and regional dynamics. Such important event has contributed to the rise of Salafist activity especially when many political prisoners - including jihadists- were released following a general amnesty shortly after the revolution. Ennahda's initial dialogue-seeking strategy, in which they turned a "blind eye" to many instances of small-scale religious violence, also likely, helped violent Salafists to evolve, both ideologically and organizationally. In fact, only after the assassination of Mohammed Brahmi in July 2013 that Ennahda's leaders clearly take some distance from the Tunisia's Ansar al-Shari'a (AST), declaring that organization as a terrorist one.

Political exclusion is another key factor that has made some young Tunisians more prone to religious violence. Political parties struggle to integrate the youth, and young Tunisians often describe political party as "sclerotic" and the "same as before." Immediately after the revolution, many international donors gave money for civil society projects that absorbed some of the youth, but such funding has declined during the past year, leaving even more youth without prospects.

Another key cause of the rise in jihadist activity in Tunisia is the increasing number of Tunisians who have traveled to Syria to fight against Bashar al-Assad regime. Tunisian foreign fighters in Syria [*an estimated 1,500 to 3,000 of the fighters are from Tunisia, ICSR - The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence*] have fought alongside the al-Qa`ida linked Jabhat al-Nusra, as well as the most radical fighters of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham (ISIS). Motives for fighting in Syria include ideological conviction and economic opportunities.



Fig.2 (Number of foreign fighter in Syria and Iraq, Source: <http://icsr.info>)

There is a very strong recruitment network of Salafist organizations that send people from Tunisia to Syria or Iraq. In the long term, Tunisia is facing a big challenge of people coming from back from Syria and Iraq. Perhaps one of the reason's it's so peaceful there is that all of the troublemakers are in a different place. The return of combatants from conflicts in the Middle East has been identified as a contributing factor to radicalization and instability. The return of trained and potentially armed fighters may increase the

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likelihood for the medium and long term that Tunisia could become a staging ground for jihadist action.

3.2 Smuggling: a porosity generating activity

The jihadist breakthrough in Mont Chaambi, the Libyan chaos, and progress in the Middle East of radical Islam that attracts an unemployed youth present a worry. "Since 2013, the alliance between traffickers (arms and drugs) and jihadist cells is reinforced in the border areas," says a recent report from the International Crisis Group (ICG). The end of the Libyan revolution and the fall of Gaddafi had both facilitated in large proportions trafficking and arms exports. This hollow meantime, when Tunisia was very busy with her political process, gave discretion to the armed groups to be formed through official channels (political wing) which hardly concealed his commitment to the ideals of al Qaeda and above forming an armed wing spread the ideals supposed jihadists.

The Tunisian-Algerian Border Mountains extend over 220 km, and apart from the topography, this area (with southern Tunisia) was always a land of smuggling, even at the time of colonization where the seizure of weapons and various commodities constituted the daily of the time security forces. With the Libyan border, it is not easy to secure such a zone and to counter smuggling that feed directly parallel trade.

This organization has become so powerful that it controls and masters the border gates. The weapons are circulating, and the discovery of arms is evident as well as the numerous local accomplices.



Fig.3 (Trafficking routes, International Business Times)

Terrorism resorts to contraband. The funding secret enjoyed by these groups facilitated their collaboration with smugglers who know the terrain (mountains) and provided them food and weapons. Not only national security is in danger, but also a large part of our today's economy which is dying due to the uncontrollable invasion of all kinds of goods.

3.3 The smuggling migrant

Human smuggling networks are also active in Tunisia, though migrant smuggling which is less common now than in Morocco. Nonetheless, migrant smuggling networks exploited the collapse of border control during and immediately after the revolution to stage migrants in Tunisia for maritime transport to Europe. Tunisian officials note that Syrian refugees are

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also being smuggled through their territory as they attempt to reach Europe. The refugees reportedly fly into Algiers before traveling to the Tunisian-Algerian frontier. Many of them cross the border to Kasserine governorate. From Kasserine, they travel to the Libyan border, where they hire maritime smugglers to bring them to Europe.

Italy: Arrivals by sea, 2014				
	Men	Women	Minors	Total
Syria	25,155	6,203	10,965	42,323
Eritrea	24,061	6,076	4,192	34,329
Mali	9,382	27	529	9,938
Nigeria	6,989	1,454	557	9,000
Gambia	7,409	28	1,270	8,707
Palestinian	3,413	1,035	1,634	6,082
Somalia	3,010	1,104	1,642	5,756

Table3 (Source; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-32387224>)

Migrants are not a major threat to the North African zone. The threat is rather the active networks along the border which are transporting those who can pay across regional borders regardless the reason why the individuals want to move. These networks can be leveraged by nefarious actors—such as terrorist organizations—to move their personnel throughout the region. Their existence carries a risk for the entire region

3.4 The close link between terrorism and smuggling:

The 459 kilometers of the Tunisian-Libyan border are basically desert, sparsely populated and requiring a certain expertise (knowledge of relief) and technical equipment to be crossed. After a swampy area a few kilometers from the Mediterranean Sea and the border post of Ras Jdir begins a semi-desert area. The passage, however, is easier through the tracks.

This conventional boundary line is first checked by the border police, which has stations through which citizens wishing to travel legally in Libya and Algeria must pass. Apart from these legal points of entry and exit, many opportunities to cross land borders exist.

To prevent illegal crossings, National Guard, army and customs control the border areas between border crossings. The National Guard has about 105 of advanced and equipped stations, including old forts of the French army, from which it radiates and often reinforced by military units.

It should probably insist on today's importance of mobilization of our armed forces on the border line from Mount Chaambi till the maritime border in the northwest. These are long mountainous series of more than 240 km with average mountains whose heights range from 600 to 1500 meters, with course valleys, gorges and especially the concentration of a rural and mountain population very familiar with the terrain. Jebel Mghila where the terrorist operation took place extends to 1058 meters and is moderately wooded. It borders Jebel Smama which reaches 1314 meters. It is in this triangle of mountains (Smama, Mghila and Chaambi) and perhaps with connecting routes with neighboring villages that terrorists always act with impunity. Much more than a hostile topography with dense forests, the phenomenon of smuggling and complicity of part of the population living in these regions has much in the amplification of the terrorist phenomenon. In previous terrorist operations, detainees have confessed to their appeals even to children for tracking operations, which proves once again that we should exclude any track to know the procedure of these groups.

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4. The new challenges of the Tunisian defense.

We must admit that the Tunisian armed forces are not adapted to the fight against terrorism, which explains their difficulty in overcoming the jihadist maquis whose epicenter is at Jebel Chambi, bordering west-central. Tunisian military are indeed able, and they have shown in recent years with four partially, to ensure or restore order and security at the national level, whether in the urban centers along the axes traffic or on the borders. This earned them respect and reaffirmed confidence from the majority of the population. The modest material resources at their disposal do not constitute a major handicap, given the small size of the country. Finally, we find at the command structures proved that professionalism is accompanied by partisan neutrality.

For now, the immediate priority for the military is to deploy its full active means, to better control the borders, especially in desert areas south of the country. The military has primary responsibility in the military zone—a border buffer zone—created in September 2013 in the southernmost third of the country. Movement in the border zone is monitored but not restricted. The fact that the military coordinate the activities of all security organs in these buffer zones and will direct the joint patrols, which confirms the leading role of the military in the fight against terrorism and activities revolving around.

The challenge remains considerable for state authorities because the powers that be can now use the methods in force at the time of Ben Ali, essentially based on the police surveillance and repression. The latter, for they have been effective in their time, are no longer compatible with the new regional environment but even more with the institutional functioning and the deontological principles carried by the Revolution in January 2011. adaptation and capacity operational and technical means involved in the fight against the armed extremist movements must now be superimposed an approach based both on a sanitized and stabilized political environment, but also a reconciliation to the most targeted populations, socially and geographically, for the radical movement. The key to the success of the Tunisian state and society in the fight against jihadism, a task which falls within the period, based on the complex assembly de- combining seemingly contradictory steps but that should not be separated the 'from each other

4.1 Change the military belief.

The Tunisian army has been formed in a spirit of military defense of the homeland against the foreign enemy. Therefore, everything has been directed to the defense of borders (land, sea and air). Now, the enemy is there, it is among us and is inside! It is a strategic shift in size than confront the enemies of the country from within. This requires mobilization of the army in a new defense concept.

The army is well aware, but should we speed things up by using another certainly much heavier design. And this is hardly minimize combative value of our soldiers or the insights of top executives that also say that this war against these groups, these nebulae and tapes must be prepared other than by a classical approach to war called "conventional ". We are now witnessing a "asymmetric" war bands that create each time the element of surprise, most often disguised as civilians, peasants or citizens. It is unlikely that with our current resources both human (training) materials that we can eradicate this scourge that continues to grow.

It is high time to review the whole struggle against these groups strategy, starting with the intelligence service, and especially not let fixed troops to the sentry. These groups employ almost all the time to surprise. It is also time to use the same strategy to overcome these groups to be surprised in their nests. Let us remember, the operation of the National

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Guard against the leaders of these terrorists is proof that intelligence, information and the surprise must be the most used weapons against the vandals of the XXI century.

For equipment also monitoring the mountains, villages and cities have to do with means, let us say, civilians. Pending the acquisition of adequate equipment, it takes on the human factor in delivering our day military maneuvers with cyclic especially our Algerian neighbors

4.2 Strengthen the capacity of intelligence and the fight against jihadism

To fight against this terrorism phenomenon, and among the undid of the defense, the need to stand against terrorism on the effective coordination, particularly in intelligence, between the various departments concerned, which had been lacking until now . In particular the creation of a National Security Agency, have ample means and expanded responsibilities, under the direct authority of the head of state. At the time of Ben Ali, such coordination did not exist, most of the repression against religious extremism was the sole responsibility of the powerful services of the Interior Ministry, while border surveillance, including in the northern part of the country, was the prerogative of the National Guard, aspect militarized body, but dependent on the police. The context created by the Revolution has not diminished, on the contrary, mistrust and lack of dialogue between the two departments.

Strengthen

4.3 Fight arms trafficking:

A recent report by the International Crisis Group noted the links between the sale of arms and the trafficking of drugs, especially on the southern Tunisian border. The conflict in Libya and, above all, the disastrous handling of the fall of Gaddafi have fed a phenomenon that the Tunisian authorities seem unable to respond to. Perhaps they do not know how. At a time of faster and more individual radicalization processes, the ease with which arms can be acquired is doubly worrying. Preventing new weapons entering the market and removing those already acquired from circulation should form part of any prevention strategy.

4.4 International collaboration:

Inasmuch as terrorism is a global threat and a transnational phenomenon, the sharing of information and the technical capacity to fight it has become an unavoidable necessity. In fact, cooperation on anti-terrorism between the European police and intelligence services and their Maghrebi counterparts has been in development for years. Tunisia has made notable progress in a particularly adverse setting. This should be translated to a maximum level of cooperation. Further, we should add a new dimension to the anti-terrorist fight in which cooperation between Europeans, Tunisians and the other Maghrebi states is of vital importance. All of them share the goal of slowing (and, ideally, preventing) radicalization processes and preparing a strategy to deal with the possible return of combatants who are at the moment in Syria and Iraq.

5. Conclusion

As Tunisia prepares to enter a new phase in its process of democratization, with the election of a new president and the formation of a new cabinet following the successful parliamentary elections held in October, two key challenges face the country's government: the economy and security.

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The two challenges are interconnected. Economic underperformance has led to the high rates of unemployment and exacerbated the sense of hopelessness that led to the revolution and caused many young Tunisians to take up armed opposition. Stronger economic growth is therefore crucial to social and political stability, but it will not be easy to achieve.

Undoubtedly, Tunisia's security situation is fragile. The army has long faced low-intensity, but persistent, threats from jihadists along the border with Algeria. Growing lawlessness and continued conflict in Libya fuel fears that malevolent extremists, munitions and drugs will be smuggled across largely unmonitored borders.

In facing the new threat posed by the presence of jihadist combatants on the border with Algeria and Libya, the Tunisian security apparatus has a double challenge. The first is to identify who is behind the attacks; the second, at a more purely strategic level, is to put in place measures to face the threat.

"When people decide to live, destiny shall obey, and one day ... the slavery chains must be broken."

So we have chanted since our adolescence, repeating this legendary verse by the Tunisian poet Abu al-Qasim al-Shabi. Perhaps, the mythical character of this verse does not stem only from it being old - al-Shabi wrote it in the 1940s against the colonialism of the past century - but also from our feeling of hope.

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