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**The Problem with Africa: Illegal
immigrants, crime, terrorism, polygamy
and aids**

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1. The illegal immigration problem

Each year, more than 240,000 illegal African immigrants are entering Europe. Behind these huge operations of migrant trafficking are powerful criminal African and North African organizations which bribe the police, customs officials and other local officials as well as (African) government ministers. Each illegal immigrant has to pay up to 3000 Euros to the trafficking organizations. These mafia organizations receive some 300 million dollars (237 million Euros) annually for their clandestine services (bribing of officials, document forgery, etc.), according to a United Nations report (July 2006). Many of these organizations are run by Nigerians, the report says.¹

Nigeria is one of the most corrupt countries in Africa. The trafficking organizations offer complete packages. Sub-Saharan Africans first travel to Senegal, Mali and Niger from where they are transported across the Sahara. The Nigerian traffickers cooperate with criminal organizations in North Africa. They also built strong networks in Europe. In southern Spain, for example, there are operational networks consisting of Moroccans, Algerians en Mauritians. The networks are also very efficient in ‘shipping’ thousands of Africans to the Canary Islands, putting them in large canoes or wooden boats (*cayucos*) and providing GPS (Global Positioning System for navigation).

Between January 1, and August 17, 2006, 16,607 sub-Saharan Africans had arrived in the Canary Islands.² One week later the total number of arrivals had risen to nearly 19,000, 700 minors among them (in the weekend of 19 and 20 August 2006 the total number of arrivals was 1268).³ By mid-September 2006 the total number undocumented African immigrants had risen to more than 25,000.⁴ Nearly desperate local authorities speak of an invasion or an avalanche. Most of these Africans are young men, and none of them has identification papers so that their country of origin cannot not be traced. (They are instructed by the trafficking organizations to dispose of their passports.) They can be interned for a period up to 40 days, and then have to be released. The Spanish authorities transfer thousands of these “sin papeles” (undocumented illegal immigrants) to the mainland where they are subsequently set free. They receive a written “Expulsion Order” which

says that they must leave the country. They are not allowed to work. Often they are then approached by criminal organizations which offer them forged identity papers and some kind of ill-paid job.⁵

There have been a number of violent incidents – examples of aggressive behavior – in Canarian internment centers. On 5 September 2006 one of the illegal immigrants demanded a double ration of food. He was reprimanded by another immigrant who was then attacked by some twenty other young men. The police had to rescue him, a serious fight broke out which resulted in five policemen being injured. Agustín Britó, the regional secretary of the Spanish Police Union (CEP), complained about the difficult working conditions in the centers. When this fight broke out there were only seven policemen who had to watch over 1523 immigrants. Policemen had to draw their guns to discourage the attackers, but no shots were fired. “This is untenable,” Britó said. “It is clear that the security of the policemen was at stake.”⁶ More protection is needed in those centers. Two weeks later the two main Spanish police unions CEP and SUP reported that conditions in the centers were intolerable. In one of the centers there is only room for 300 people yet the number of those interned exceeds 1500, and there are only 8 policemen to watch over all these people. Some 13 minors nearly got suffocated when they and one thousand other illegal immigrants were locked away in garages. There have been serious incidents, and the very few policemen around feel threatened. They are also afraid of contracting the immigrants’ diseases, notably scabies, malaria, aids, tuberculosis, or getting flies and lice.⁷ (We will discuss the health problems of the African immigrants later, about 25 percent of the 11,000 sub-Saharan Africans tested in the Canary Islands, has a sexually transmittable disease or STD.)

In September/October 2005 thousands of African illegals were besieging Ceuta and Melilla, the Spanish enclaves in North Morocco. Each night hundreds of them stormed the fences, and tried to literally overrun members of the Guardia Civil who had to defend the enclaves against foreign intruders. There were very serious fights with the police, quite a few policemen got injured, some of them after being bitten by the attackers. Local police sources complained about the extremely violent and aggressive behavior of those who forced entry into the enclaves. Eventually, the Spanish government had to send the army in to assist the local police force.

Between January and mid-August 2006, Spanish authorities managed to send some 1700 sub-Saharan immigrants back to their home countries, and again this was not very easy. On one occasion the illegal immigrants simply refused to leave the plane, on another occasion they complained

that by sending them back their “human rights” had been violated. On September 13, 2006 the Spanish Interior Ministry chartered two planes to repatriate one hundred Senegalese. Some 160 policemen were also onboard the two planes, otherwise the operation would have been frustrated by those who refused to return to Africa.⁸ These young African men see Spain as an Eldorado and sometimes resist deportation to their home countries. Or they simply try flee, which is not difficult at all. In Senegal itself the police see a number of those who are being sent back from Spain as potential troublemakers. Riots broke out in an internment center in Fuerteventura after the Spanish government continued to repatriate illegal immigrants to Africa.⁹

On the very day that one hundred Senegalese were sent back to Senegal, 3 boats with 259 sub-Saharan immigrants arrived in the Canary Islands. That same week the *Al-Mari*, a boat from Guinea-Bissau, arrived in the Canary Islands, onboard were nearly 200 Pakistanis who had first flown from Pakistan to Guinea-Bissau and then embarked on this boat. It was the first time that illegal immigrants from Asia had chosen this route. The Spanish newspaper *El País* wrote that the trafficking mafias have now picked out the Canary Islands for bringing illegal immigrants into Europe.¹⁰ Once again, the Spanish government in Madrid was surprised and pledged that all of them would be sent back. But that is easier said than done.

It took three months before Senegal accepted the sending back of one hundred Senegalese, not on paper but in reality. In June 2006 Spanish deputy foreign minister Bernardino León signed a repatriation agreement with the Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade to return 623 illegal immigrants to Senegal. But then Wade only accepted some 200 provided Spain gave Senegal a 20-million euro credit.¹¹ Part of this money may very well be pocketed by the president and his entourage. Like in other African countries corruption runs rampant in Senegal. In September 2006, however, much more pressure was put on Senegal to accept the speedy return of illegal Senegalese immigrants. Between September 18 and October 6, 2,178 Senegalese were flown back to their country of origin. The total number of undocumented African immigrants who had arrived in the Canary Islands between January and early October (2006) had risen to 27,000.¹²

Tens of thousands unemployed young Senegalese want to go to the European paradise. Senegal is a poor and highly corrupt country. Families collect money to enable one family member – usually a man – to go to Spain. This man must pay one thousand Euros to the traffickers who operate in towns and villages along the coast.¹³ Senegalese fishermen quickly discovered that they can make much more money by trafficking

illegal immigrants to the Canary Islands. To avoid the increasingly stricter controls by the Senegalese police, these fishermen are now also operating from neighboring Guinea-Buissau where the local authorities claim they just lack the means to stop the traffickers.¹⁴

The internet and those who are already Europe are also very helpful. A Senegalese immigrant in Barcelona created a very popular website advising his countrymen on how to emigrate to Spain. Follow the method of “D-days”: “A boat will cost about 4500 euros, but if you are with 90 persons each has to pay only 150 euros, which is less than the 300 euros you would normally have to pay to the maffias. The Maritime Police can easily be bribed, it is important not to take your identity papers with you, so that you cannot be identified by the European fascist police. If they don’t know your nationality, they can’t expel you. You may spend 24 hours in a prison cell, but later you will be temporarily transferred to an internment center (they are better than the centers in Senegal, and you can make phonecalls), after that you will get an air ticket paid by Zapatero.”¹⁵ (This refers to the transfer of sub-Saharan immigrants from the Canary Island to the Spain mainland, between May and August 2006 some ten thousand Africans have been transferred.) There are also other methods of traveling to Europe, the website says, like the method of “Wedding.” Start flirting with 45-year old female tourists who can’t find a man in Europe. You first have to go to the popular tourist areas in Senegal. Then you ask such a woman to marry you. When she goes home, stay in contact with her, ask her to send you money. The chances of success are 23 percent. The same website further recommends the ‘Student’ method. You first apply for a study grant, once you are in Spain you don’t return to your country of origin. There is little control in Spain and there have been massive regularizations of illegal immigrants.

Young African males in Europe often try to marry a local European woman. They usually court older single women. (I have seen this in Germany, but it is also happening in Italy, France, Spain, Holland and Scandinavia.) A lot of middle aged European women travel to West Africa, to Gambia for example, where they are then being courted by local African “gigolos.” What these gigolos really want, of course, is an entry visa for a European country. Most of these gigolos first consult an African witch doctor or “Marabout.” Witchcraft and magic are an integral part of African culture. African males are also highly promiscuous, fidelity in marriage usually does not mean a thing to them. Polygamy is a generally accepted practice. This is why HIV/aids is more rampant in Africa than anywhere else.

Early 2005, Spain regularized 580,000 illegal immigrants, and the human trafficking mafias in Africa and Latin America immediately began to exploit the Spanish measure. The socialist government of prime minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero ignored the warnings from Brussels. The Dutch and the French government were not at all happy about the massive regularizations in Spain. At a conference on “The Europe of Tomorrow” in Brussels in September 2006, French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy said: “Countries which resort to massive regularizations without asking for the authorization of their partners, not even asking them what they think about it, should not today complain about being in the frontline being swamped by massive clandestine immigration. One cannot say to Europe: ‘I alone decide,’ when it is about regularizing 500,000 illegal immigrants, and then (say): ‘Come and help me,’ when it comes to managing the consequences of these massive regularizations.”¹⁶ European Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner told the Spanish newspaper *El Mundo* that the migrant traffickers are very well informed about everything that happens in Spain, they take a special interest in regularizations.¹⁷ At a meeting in Brussels in October 2006, the interior ministers of the twenty-five European Union states agreed that there will be no further unilateral immigration measures in any of the member states without informing Brussels and the other member states first. Not just France, but other European governments, too, have been highly critical of the massive regularization in Spain.¹⁸ It is clear, therefore, that the problem cannot simply be solved by regularizations, a change of status to become a legal immigrant. Such measures will only lead to a new influx of illegal immigrants. This is precisely what happened in Belgium, Italy (at least three regularizations) and Spain where the situation today is much worse than before those regularizations.

Spain just cannot cope with the thousands of illegal immigrants arriving each week and the criminal organizations are very well aware of this. A number of these illegal immigrants stay in Spain, many others travel to other European countries, especially to France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Britain. “The mafias have converted Spain into an authentic paradise for themselves,” commented opposition leader Mario Rajoy.¹⁹ Barely had many of these young men arrived in Spain, or their fathers back in Africa began to ask them to transfer money.²⁰ And it is not just Spain that is swamped by illegal immigrants. The French have noticed that a number of illegal immigrants from Senegal are using Spain as a springboard to France. They are especially concerned about the impact on the restive immigrant populations in the big cities. In September 2006, French Interior Minister Sarkozy signed an agreement in the Senegalese capital

of Dakar. Senegal agreed it would accept “dignified” repatriations of its citizens, France in turn would ease visa restrictions for businessmen and intellectuals. Sarkozy also met Senegalese president Abdoulaye Wade.²¹

Between January and August 2006, some 12,000 illegal immigrants arrived in the Italian island of Lampedusa and are causing huge problems. At present Europe is facing an unprecedented influx of illegal immigrants from North and sub-Saharan Africa. While the “multiculturalists” may be happy, we cannot ignore the fact that this is a very serious a problem indeed. The trafficking organizations, are, so it seems at least, more powerful than the governments of Europe. The current massive immigration directly affects the security and stability of Western countries. It has been argued that these immigrants do the kind of jobs many consider unsuitable for Westerners. This is a fallacy. A lot of the illegal immigrants are exploited by their bosses, poorly paid and there is no social security for them. It is a new kind of slavery. Those who employ illegal immigrants should be severely punished and more illegal immigrants must be sent back to their countries of origin (in the Netherlands such measures have already been taken). Those who refuse to say what country they are from should be detained.

2. “The beneficiaries of aid are governments” (Mwenda)

In a Dutch radio program I heard somebody quote the famous Dutch economist Jan Tinbergen (1903-1994) who supposedly said: “If we don’t bring it to them, they will come and get it here.” I do not know if Tinbergen – the icon of Dutch Third Worldism – really said this but I would not be surprised if he did. The problem is we brought them a lot, indeed, we brought them so much that they are dependent on us now. Decades of development assistance have had very little effect. It has only made the Africans dependent on us and – Africans themselves complain – fuelled corruption. One of them is a Dutch-Somali woman named Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a former member of parliament in the Netherlands who knows African culture and society well. She claims that development assistance prolongs the poverty it is designed to cure in that it makes people dependent instead of independent. “This policy has failed structurally,” she says in an interview with *NRC Handelsblad*.²² (In the same interview Hirsi Ali also criticized Dutch and European immigration and integration policies which are based on a “philosophy of pitifulness” making too many immigrants dependent on benefits and the like.)

“Aid goes to corrupt countries,” says Dambisa Moyo, and African expert on economics and development. It is “the silent killer of growth” and it leads to “aid-dependency.” “Such is the all-pervasive culture of aid-dependency that there is little or no real debate on an exit strategy from the aid quagmire.”²³

“Greed is the reason why aid money to Africa is not spent on countries but goes through them, often to offshore bank accounts,” writes African specialist Greg Mills in *The International Herald Tribune*.²⁴ “More than \$ 500 billion of Western aid has been sunk into Africa, but with little discernable result,” says Martin Meredith in his book *The State of Africa*.²⁵ Equally sceptical is Robert Calderisi in his book *The Trouble with Africa*. “The ultimate indictment of foreign aid is that few Africans themselves believe in it. Shortly after I arrived in Abidjan to head the World Bank’s regional office for Western Africa, a leading businessman – tough, American-trained and plain-spoken – nearly knocked me out of my seat when I visited him with some rather sharp words: ‘What do you know about our government that we don’t? I hope you don’t believe in all these musical chairs they call ‘democracy’ around here. Why are you lending

them any money? I certainly wouldn't.' That challenge rang in my ears during the next three years in the country – and still does.”²⁶

Many Western aid workers in Africa are staying in five star hotels or living in expensive apartments and drive expensive four wheel drive vehicles through villages – what kind of impression do you think these people really make on the average Africans? (It is not only a problem in Africa: I once was in the hinterland of Peru and heard a Dutchman who was working among the poor complain about a Dutch fundraiser who insisted on staying in an expensive hotel, and how upset the fundraiser was when he was told there was no such place.)

In the summer of 2006, Ugandan journalist Andrew Mwenda traveled to London to convince western publics that handouts only exacerbate Africa's problems. In Africa Mwenda is a known critic of the multinational aid industry and he accuses charities and aid agencies of self-interest. In London he said aid has been a disaster for Africa, fuelling corruption and hindering development. “The beneficiaries of aid are governments, politicians, the staff of aid agencies and charities.” Vast sums vanished into the pockets of politicians and corrupt government officials. Money from western tax-payers, corporations and individual donations raised with rock star endorsement was siphoned into private bank accounts. “The sick and dying never saw the money,” Mwenda says. “White society is being blackmailed. The white world looks at Africa from a position of guilt.”²⁷ He compared the old colonial administrators rattling around in Land Rovers with today's army of foreign aid officials and government bureaucrats. “There were 72 colonial administrators and frugal public expenditure. Today, there are 2,800 foreign expatriates. They fight poverty in a BMW. When was Uganda more colonized, in 1962 or today?” “In addition,” Ben Barber writes in *Foreign Affairs*, “although most of the aid workers are idealistic and underpaid, their organizations have carved out prestigious and profitable niches as suppliers, which can color their advocacy in crises.”²⁸

Successive Dutch governments gave huge amounts of aid to Africa. A country like Tanzania was virtually adopted by the Dutch social-democrats in the 1970s but it did not really work. In the 1970s and 1990s Jan Pieter Pronk, the Dutch socialist Minister of Development Assistance, initiated one project after another, control mechanisms on how on the money was spent were often lacking. In 1998, Pronk's successor Eveline Herfkens – also a social-democrat – had to evaluate Pronk's disastrous policies and drastically reduced the number of projects. She also introduced more control mechanisms and organized an “Anti-Corruption Conference” in Maastricht in April 2000, where she said: “We are all part

of the problem, only jointly can we form the solution.” “If we do not see better performance, we may need to retarget aid. Or reduce the amount of aid given to governments which do not demonstrate the necessary determination.”²⁹ “Corruption is part of our culture, our daily routine,” says John Ekow Ampan in the German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* (June 2006).³⁰ He is from Gambia and he knows what he is talking about. He believes it is too late now to tackle corruption.

As to the effect of western development aid to Africa, Dutch Africa expert Roel van Duin points to “a perverse relationship between quantity and quality.” The donor countries pledged huge amounts of money, and African rulers counted on receiving them. They no longer saw the need to initiate drastic reforms, the need to fulfil conditions like social welfare programs.³¹ Western aid, van Duin argues, brought results that were opposite from what the donor countries intended. Corruption and “African politics” aggravated things, and in the long term these African countries may be worse off than before, van Duin observes.

A good example is Mozambique, one of the poorest countries in Africa. Mozambique received more than 900 million euros of Dutch development aid. (That amounts to one quarter of the nation’s Gross Domestic Product.) In 2004 it was estimated that between 10 to 50 percent of the Dutch aid money ended up in the hands of corrupt government officials, and the poor remained as poor as there were before.³²

Another example is Rwanda, a country where, aid workers claimed, development had once appeared successful. Yet, all the aid money and projects could not prevent the Rwandan genocide. “Before April 6, 1994, almost none of the foreign experts living and working in Rwanda expected the genocide to occur,” writes Peter Uvin in his study *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda*. “For most of these people, up to the end, Rwanda was a well-developing country – facing serious development problems, but dealing with them much more effectively than were other countries.”³³ And David Rieff claims that “the humanitarians remained as helpless to affect the outcome of the crisis at its ending as they had been at its start.”³⁴ Indeed, in Rwanda aid was being misused, the UNHCR negotiated an agreement with the Congolese government of Mobutu to send troops to police the refugee camps. UNHCR would pay them.³⁵ Ben Barber writes in 1997 that aid that flows to the Rwandan refugee camps “can be skimmed by militants based in the camps, as well as local businesspeople and military and administrative officials of the host government.” “The packed camps, protected by international sympathy and international law, provide excellent cover for guerrillas and serve as bases from which they can launch attacks.”³⁶ Rieff

points out that there are limits. “Independent humanitarianism does many things well and some things badly, but the things it its now being called upon to do, such as helping to advance the cause of human rights, contribute to stopping wars, and furthering social justice, are beyond its competence, however much one might wish it otherwise.”³⁷

Instead of fleeing to Europe and depend on aid there or be exploited as an illegal immigrant, Africans should learn from an industrious people like the Chinese. After the catastrophic events of World War II and Mao’s “Cultural Revolution” the Chinese successfully modernized their economy. They stopped complaining about the “imperialist” and “neo-colonialist West,” and adopted the Western economic system they once reviled. Western development aid hardly played a role. The Chinese are proud people who do not want to beg for money or be dependent on foreign aid. To avoid further catastrophe, Africa and the Africans should heed. Of course, this means hard work, a change of mind, a totally different attitude is needed. The Chinese are also investing in countries like Angola and their investments contribute much more to the local economy than decades of western aid. This does not mean, of course, that all development aid to Africa should stop. But aid must serve as well as activate the individual, the less money goes to corrupt governments the better.

3. Rising crime

In Europe, mass immigration from poor countries is causing problems of a much more serious nature than some sociologists and migration specialists want to admit. It is the police rather than the academics who have to deal with migration crime in Europe's big cities. In May 2003, Chris Fox, president of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) told *The Observer* that "the mass movement of people around the world had brought new levels of organized crime, with drug dealing, gun offenses, prostitution and kidnapping." "Mass migration has brought with it a whole new range and a whole new type, from the Nigerian fraudster, to the eastern European who deals in drugs and prostitution to the Jamaican concentration on drug dealing. (...) It's healthy that we've got lots of different people, but if you go into some of the cities, looking at the North, Bradford simmers, Blackburn simmers. It doesn't take much to disturb the balance, and I think we've got to be very careful to make sure that we're not overwhelming our current infrastructure."³⁸

A shocking case was the killing of a 10-year old schoolboy named Damilola Taylor in London on 27 November 2000. A nice young and friendly Nigerian boy, making good progress in class. And then suddenly two other boys thrust a broken bottle into his thigh in North Peckham Estate in South London. His killers Danny and Ricky Preddie were hardened criminals even though they were just 13 and 12.³⁹ Their father Alfred Preddie had emigrated from Jamaica to Britain in 1966. He fathered and abandoned several children before he married Marion Johnson who was also from Jamaica. She gave birth to Ricky in 1987 and Danny the following year. The father quickly abandoned his wife and kids and married another woman. Single parent families are part the Caribbean immigrant culture. Marion Johnson never really cared about what her kids did when they were not at home. The two Preddie brothers soon had a reputation for extreme violence. They were members of the Youth Peckham Boys street gang and referred to themselves as "The Untouchables." Six years after they killed Damilola Taylor they were finally convicted (in August 2006). As the verdicts were read out, Ricky Preddie started shouting at the jury: "You are corrupt. You are nothing." Speaking outside the court, Damilola's father Richard said: "Nobody can

ever return our son to us, but it is a great comfort that justice has finally been done for Damilola.”⁴⁰

After the conviction of Danny and Ricky Preddie, Damilola Taylor’s teenage killers, Minette Marrin made the following observation in *The Sunday Times*: “The government has been either unwilling or unable to control, or to admit to even to estimate the vast numbers of new arrivals. Only now is it beginning to wonder whether this influx was an entirely good thing. At the time of Damilola’s death the ethnic composition of North Peckham in Southwark, where the estate (where he died) lies, was 43.4% white, 15.9% black Caribbean, 26.6% black African, 4.1% black other, 7.9% Asian and 2.2% other. (...) Southwark today is still considered a high crime area by the Home Office and a high youth crime area. (...) Violent crime there has risen from 10,000 incidents in 2000-01 to 12,500 in 2005-06, even though huge sums of money have been thrown at the problem.”⁴¹

Scotland Yard’s *Operation Trident* is headed by Kevin Davis. It tackles black-on-black shootings and many of those involved in them are still in their Teens. In an interview with *The Observer* Davis blames a new generation of British-born gunmen who have developed a notion of ‘disrespect’ that justifies shooting over the smallest squabble. “Offenders are using firearms over trivial disputes like arguments over spilt drinks, bumping into one another or minor road collisions.”⁴² Most gun crimes are related to drugs. An article in *Jane’s Intelligence Review* claims Jamaican criminal gangs are extremely violent and dangerous and the increasing popularity of cocaine (as well as crack) in the UK has given fresh impetus to Jamaican drug traffickers.⁴³ “The impact of Jamaican organized crime has been far greater than that of any other group in the UK,” writes Tony Thompson in *The Observer*.⁴⁴ No longer do these criminals only target the inner cities, they are also increasingly active in small and formerly peaceful Scottish towns where the local population never had to worry about crack, cocaine and gangland wars.⁴⁵ The Jamaican gangs either operate on their own or in conjunction with Nigerian, Turkish or Asian criminals. There are violent street gangs in London (also Somalian ones), Liverpool, Manchester (“Gangchester”), Bristol and Birmingham.

After a clampdown in Jamaica hitting the hiring of smugglers there, the number of women from Nigeria being recruited as drug couriers is rising sharply, British drug experts and prisoners’s rights campaigners warned in October 2005. The drug couriers get paid up to 5,000 pounds (US \$ 8,850) for bringing in up to four kilos of cocaine.⁴⁶

In the second edition of *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology* (1997), David J. Smith writes: “The rate of imprisonment for drugs offenses was

10.8 times as high among blacks as among white men.”⁴⁷ The high crime rate among black immigrants in Britain has been explained as a result of discrimination and police bias. No doubt, this does play a role, but it cannot explain everything. David Smith: “Although some bias against black people has been demonstrated at several stages, and although some apparently neutral criteria have been shown to work to the disadvantage of black people, the magnitude of these effects seems small compared with the stark contrast in rates of arrest and imprisonment between black and white people.”⁴⁸ According to a March 2006 report the British police are worried about criminals who are allowed to make false accusations and pull the “race card.” “Front-line officers in one of the case study areas suggested that large numbers of black people are stopped because they are criminals and not because of institutional racism in the police service. A similar view was also evident among senior officials.”⁴⁹

The Third Edition of the *Oxford Handbook of Criminology* (2002) shows Home Office statistics of the male prison population by ethnic group, 1985-99. In 1999, the number of white males in prisons was 49,961, the number of black males was 7,355, the number of South Asians was 1,895, the number of Chinese and other was 2,081. In the same Handbook, Coretta Philips and Ben Bowling make the following observation: “Ethnic monitoring data on Britain’s prison population have been available since 1985. The first statistics revealed a marked over-representation of West Indians, Guyanese, and Africans within prisons among both males and females.”⁵⁰

The Oxford Handbook’s Fourth Edition’ (2007) says that the figures for 2003/2004 annual arrest rate show that “the over-representation of black people in arrest statistics was evident in all offence categories, but was most striking in fraud and forgery, drug offenses, and robbery (27.5 percent).”⁵¹ This disproportionality is then explained away as being caused “police prejudices” and “racial stereotyping.”⁵² These rather simplistic allegations are not new. P.A.J. Waddington, a lecturer in Social Psychology at the University of Reading, pointed out in 1984 that hostility to the police is a diversion from real problems. “To blame the police alone for poor police-race relations and to treat their actions with suspicion, is to distract attention from those fundamental problems of urban decay, deprivation and discrimination. It is to indulge in the facile belief that if only the police officers can be made, somehow, better men and women, then all will be well. This is not compassion, it is delusion.”⁵³

In Belgium there is a serious problem with Congolese immigrants who are smuggling drugs or trafficking migrants. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a former Belgian colony which is why there are substantial

Congolese immigrant communities in Brussels and other Belgian cities; only a small minority is involved in serious crime. Nevertheless, in recent years the police arrested quite a number of Congolese. There was, for example, a Congolese couple in Liège who were actively involved in the trafficking of illegal Congolese immigrants to Britain, Ireland and Canada, through Belgium. They started to operate in 1999 and used forged passports. Early July 2006, four other Congolese were condemned by a Brussels court. They had been smuggling cocaine.⁵⁴

In Spain one third of the prison population are immigrants from non-European countries. According to the latest figures (August 2006) the total number of prisoners is 64,042, 19,919 of whom are not originally from Spain. Most of the detainees are Moroccans (5,441), Colombians (2,137), Rumanians (1,365) and Algerians (1,323). The number of detained Nigerians is 281, the number of detained Liberians is 132. The number of Pakistani detainees is 43. The number of prisoners originating from the Dominican Republic is 382, along with 56 in Catalonian prisons.⁵⁵ The number of immigrant detainees is rapidly growing and there are not enough prison cells for all of them. This is why the Spanish General Directorate for Penitential Institutions (DGIP) proposed that immigrants who are convicted in Spain be sent back to their countries of origin to serve the rest of their prison term over there.

In Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and Italy powerful *Nigerian* criminal networks specialized in drugs (especially cocaine), fraud, forgeries, money laundering, migrant trafficking and prostitution. These African gangsters in Europe are making huge profits and it is very hard to deport them. In February 2001, I was seriously threatened by a Nigerian criminal in Hamburg when I was preparing a television news report on drugs and migrant trafficking. Another African drug dealer in Hamburg was resisting arrest and had to be subdued by four policemen. Both drug dealers, men of strong physical appearance, were shown in my TV program. I also showed two fully integrated African immigrants – a bright young woman and an equally bright young man – who told my viewers how much they detested these criminals.⁵⁶ There are too many Nazis and Neo-Nazis in Germany who think that every black person is a criminal.

Konrad Freiberg, chairman of the German Police Union, told me that West African (Nigerian) criminals are extremely violent and aggressive. They fight with the police, even bite police officers. “Some even undress in their prison cells and put feces (excrement) on their bodies,” Freiberg told me. “You have no idea how this emotionally affects the men who have to deal with these people. I hear members of my union complain

about the hard conditions of this kind of work.”⁵⁷ I further interviewed terrified native Germans living in an area near Hamburg’s Central Railway Station. After sunset African drug dealers were taking over the streets. In Belgium I was reporting on Albanian and Nigerian prostitution networks and heard shocking stories about the exploitation of young West African women – sometimes minors. I heard stories about gang wars and killings.

Since 2003/2004 Latin American drug traffickers increasingly use West African countries as a transit shipping point for cocaine en route from South America to Europe. Some Latin American drug barons have even left their homelands and relocated to new havens in West-Africa.⁵⁸ They focus on countries like Senegal, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Ghana and Nigeria characterized by corruption and weak law enforcement capabilities. “It is relatively easy to hide cocaine in some African port until it is sent to Europe by ship,” writes Joanna Wright in her article *African drug trade*. “Nigerian operations involved in narcotics trafficking have global networks dealing with multiple drugs types (...) Other West African criminal groups have become involved in drug trafficking, although more than half the couriers arrested transiting the region since 2000 were Nigerian.”⁵⁹

Nigerian drug traffickers are also operating in South Africa. Formerly fashionable and safe neighborhoods in the South African city of Johannesburg have now been turned into real no-go areas where Nigerian networks fully control the local cocaine market. These neighborhoods are now dominated by guns, killings and extreme violence.⁶⁰ Misha Glenn writes: “South Africans came to perceive Nigerians as the worst criminals because they were highly visible, working tirelessly to expand the consumption of drugs and the use of prostitutes across *all* communities in South Africa.” “The Nigerian drug dealers identified early on that the market was ready for diversification and so they started introducing different communities to new drugs.”⁶¹

South African is now a major hub in international drug trafficking and there is strong competition between Nigerian, Chinese and Pakistani networks. Between 40,000 to 100,000 Nigerians are currently living in South Africa of which only 4,000 have the legal right to be there. Nigerian criminal networks now dominate the ranks of the street dealers. Several Nigerian and South African drug dealers have been arrested in Britain.⁶²

Nigerian criminals in Europe are notorious for their “Advance Fee Fraud” (AFF) scams. They send emails to hundreds of thousands of people (or to somebody working in a firm) asking them to assist in the transfer of (in

reality non existing) funds from Nigeria or South Africa to Europe or by informing them that they have won a lottery and that they will be rich if they follow certain instructions. It always comes down to a request to transfer a small amount of money first before millions of euros or dollars can be sent into your bank account. You also have to provide them with your bank account and passport numbers. There are also dating site cheats using for example matchmaking agencies and pictures of beautiful men and women. This is an example of how the criminals may introduce themselves: “I am a 27 year old white female in America that has never been married. I was born and raised in Winterhaven, Florida. I am a native American and 100% cherokee tribe. I am in Nigeria currently. I lost my dad when I was ten years old (...) My email address is...”⁶³ What the criminals – after they have succeeded in winning your trust – want from you is as much information as possible (your passport and bank account numbers, your address, telephone number, etc.) and they often want to arrange a meeting with you, usually in London, Amsterdam, Madrid or South Africa. Meeting these people is extremely risky and dangerous. In his book *Gangs* British journalist Tony Thompson describes how British citizens have been lured into traveling to South Africa or Amsterdam after receiving letters offering the financial opportunity of a lifetime. One of them was Joseph Raca, a sixty-eight-year-old former mayor of Northampton. He was also a former Polish naval lieutenant who first arrived in Britain fifty years earlier claiming political asylum. Raca was met by a man and a woman at Johannesburg International Airport and driven to a suburb where he was taken into a house. He was then asked to pay 7,000 British pounds before the final transfer could be made. When Raca refused, one of the men pulled a gun. Raca was told they were going to shoot him and dump his body in the jungle. Raca was then instructed to call his wife in Northampton, and explain that unless she paid a ransom of 20,000 British pounds within twenty-four hours, he would be killed. “As his terrified wife listened to his plight, Raca broke into Polish and told her to call the police while he did his best to stall the gang. (...) As the police closed in on the house, the criminals fled, dumping Raca on the roadside. He had been held hostage for nearly fifty hours.”⁶⁴ Raca has been lucky. A number of businessmen and individuals who traveled to South Africa or Nigeria were killed after they refused to cooperate with the Nigerian extortionists.

Amsterdam had been a major operational base for Nigerian criminals for years. I myself received a number of advance fee fraud and lottery emails from criminals located in Amsterdam. Posing as someone who was interested in accepting the offer a Swedish television reporter made appointment with one of the Nigerians in Amsterdam. This criminal was

then filmed with a hidden camera and the Swedish television report was aired by Swedish and Dutch TV. Later a Dutch television journalist did the same: he met one of the Nigerian criminals in an Amsterdam hotel and filmed him with a hidden camera.⁶⁵ According to the Dutch police, the Amsterdam based Nigerians are closely cooperating with Caribbean (i.e. Antillian) criminals. Attempts have been made to deport them, but they legally (and sometimes physically) resist deportation, and after they have been arrested their lawyers usually manage to convince a court that there is not enough evidence for a conviction. For example, in January 2004 the police arrested 53 “Advance Fee Fraud Nigerians” in Amsterdam Southeast, but they had to be released after a few weeks. “They are the new untouchables,” says a Dutch criminal investigator. (In September 2006, a photo of four of the suspects – all wearing expensive suits – was published in a Dutch newspaper.)⁶⁶ The Dutch police does not have enough manpower to really tackle the problem of Nigerian fraud. The temporary police crackdown, however, forced a number of Nigerian gangsters to move to Madrid, their new operational base. At the end of May 2006, the Spanish police arrested 15 persons most of whom were Nigerians involved in so-called lottery fraud.⁶⁷ But since there have been hardly any convictions Amsterdam remains attractive to these criminals. In 2004, Nigerian criminals in Amsterdam used 259 bank accounts for money laundering. In June and August 2006 the Dutch police again arrested a number of Nigerians. One arrest was made in Nigeria. The latest Nigerian scam in the Netherlands is a notice in a newspaper or on the internet announcing an attractive offer: a four year old BMW X5 the price being only 12,500 euros or an equally exceptionally low priced new Harley Davidson. To get your BMW or Harley Davidson you must first make a small payment in advance, and there we go again.⁶⁸

Some 2400 Nigerian criminals in the Netherlands are involved in Advance Fee Fraud. The police can do little about it. If they arrest and deport twelve or fifty of them, there still more than 2300 criminals left and these guys simply go on as if nothing has happened, a Dutch police investigator complained in October 2006.⁶⁹ Major cities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam with their vast immigrant communities are highly attractive to them. In September 2006 the Rotterdam police arrested eighteen people suspected of involvement in passport forgery and bank account plundering. Six of them – Nigerians and Sudanese – remained in custody.⁷⁰

Other Nigerians are involved in prostitution. They send 14- and 15-year old Nigerian girls to the Netherlands. Upon arrival these minors claim they have no parents and immediately apply for political asylum. Once in the asylum center for minors they contact members of the Nigerian gang by telephone. A few days or weeks later these girls – AMA’s or

Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers – disappear. Many of them end up in brothels in Germany, Belgium (Brussels, Antwerp) or the Netherlands. This has been going on for years, and it also concerns minors from other West African countries and Asia (China, India). Between 1996 and 2001 more than 600 AMA's disappeared from the centers, between October 2004 and April 2006 the number was 135. In the first half of 2006 11 Nigerian girls and two Nigerian boys disappeared.

Dutch authorities are also facing the problem of Somali migrant traffickers. Many Somalians are smuggled via the Netherlands to Europe using forged Dutch passports or using look-alike travelers to match passports. In the past few years too many Somalians in the Netherlands reported their passports missing (and some did so up to five times). Others, claiming a right to family reunification, let their so-called wives and children come over to Europe while they are not married at all.⁷¹

There is the case of a young undocumented Nigerian woman who applied for political asylum in Austria. When her request for asylum was turned down in May 2004, she appealed against the decision and began to work as a prostitute in Vienna.⁷² There are cases of West African single minor asylum seekers who are not minor at all and who, after their arrival in Austria, become hardened criminals smuggling huge amounts of drugs.⁷³ There are at least two other cases of West African asylum seekers who are also smuggling drugs (one claimed to originate from Senegal, the other said he was from Ghana). They, too, appealed against the decision to send them back to Africa and such appeal procedures do take a long time, partly because the authorities cannot cope with the huge number of appeals.⁷⁴ West African criminals (from Nigeria, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Liberia) now control one quarter of the Austrian drugs market, says Herwig Haidinger, Director of the Federal Criminal Office in Vienna.⁷⁵ They also control 80 percent of the street dealers. In the year 2005 the number of Nigerians reported to the police in connection to drugs related crime was 938, the number of reported people originating from Gambia was 337, from Sierra Leone 88, from Guinea-Bissau 108 and from Mali 66.⁷⁶

Most of the immigrants from Africa who enter Italy travel to the rich cities in the north of the country. The ones who are fully integrated, pose no problem. But there are too many others who live in poor conditions in old apartments. In Padua, a popular tourist destination, the center-left city council ordered to build a steel wall around a cluster of run-down apartment blocks housing 1500 people – many of whom are illegal immigrants (*clandestini*) from Africa, the Maghreb, Asia and Eastern Europe. Petty crime is flourishing and prostitutes and drug dealers are

causing trouble. Gangs representing ethnic and criminal groups were formed and there was street fighting in this old and peaceful Italian city. In July 2006, the police had to quell street fighting between Nigerians and Moroccan drug gangs as some 200 of them clashed with knives and machetes. The wall has been condemned as “obscene and racist,” but the socialist mayor of Padua described it as an “enclosure” needed to help tackle the drug dealers.⁷⁷ “When the police tried to arrest the drug dealers in the other part of town they fled to this area here, now that’s no longer possible,” a city councillor told the Dutch TV program *RTL4 News*. “We had to do something,” he continued, “otherwise the problem would be unsolvable. We still remember what happened in the French banlieues, and we don’t want that to happen here in Italy.”⁷⁸

For some reason, Nigerian criminals have a strong preference for Italy. Not only do they run numerous prostitution rackets all over Italy, also do they control part of the local drug and cheap imitation goods markets. They cause tremendous problems not just in Padua but also in Milano, Rome and Naples and lots of smaller towns. In Naples and Southern Italy there are now gang wars between West African pimps and drug dealers on the one hand and Italian mobsters from the powerful “Camorra” on the other. The South Italian mafia does not like Nigerian gangsters who play a growing role in Italy’s drug and prostitution rackets. “One of Europe’s biggest concentrations of African migrants has risen in the heart of Camorra turf,” writes Sebastian Rotella in the *Los Angeles Times*. “Nigerian gangsters have made Castel Volturno a European headquarters.”⁷⁹ Some Italian media reports claim that West African criminals refuse to pay protection money to the mafia.

In addition to rising crime, there are cultural and social customs like Female Genital Mutilation and polygamy which are causing problems in Europe’s big cities. Furthermore, the rapid influx of sub-Saharan immigrants will lead to an increase of HIV infections in Europe. And finally there is the problem islamist extremists who are active in Africa or seek to recruit immigrants from Africa.

4. Al-Qaeda's involvement in Somalia and the growing problem with Somali asylum seekers

The origins of Al-Qaeda lie both in Afghanistan/Pakistan and Africa. After taking part in the jihad against the Soviet occupiers of Afghanistan and founding Al-Qaeda in 1988, Osama bin Laden set up base in Sudan (1992). Four years later, though, he returned to Afghanistan establishing more training camps and expanding Al-Qaeda into a truly global terror network, in close cooperation with his Egyptian friend Ayman Al-Zawahiri.

In Sudan he established a terrorist training camp (referred to as “a farm”) and funded terrorist groups in the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bosnia, Malaysia and the Phillipines. He also established a media organization and a printing house in London, the beginning of his manifold activities in Britain and other European countries.⁸⁰ “The Times” (London) reported in September 2005 that bin Laden even tried to move to Britain having transferred some of his considerable personal fortune to London for his followers to establish terror cells in London and accross Europe.⁸¹

Bin Laden really loves countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan and Sudan, but the lawless country of Somalia is also very dear to the Al-Qaeda leader's heart. In an interview with the daily newspaper “Pakistan” bin Laden boasted of being in Somalia during the United Nations mission to feed Somalis left starving by feuding warlords.⁸² Bin Laden sided with Somali warlord general Farah Aideed, who in his view was battling “neo-colonialist forces” trying to establish their authority over Somali Muslims. In June 2006, a pro-Al-Qaeda militia, the “Islamic Courts Union” (ICJ) chased the warlords out of the capital of Mogadishu and established a Taliban like regime. Music and movies were banned, sharia law was enforced by sharia courts. Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, one of the more radical leaders of the Islamic Courts Union, was an admirer of bin Laden. He also justified Al-Qaeda's attack on the World Trade Center.⁸³ Various leaders of his militia were trained in Afghanistan and assisted Al-Qaeda terrorists who attacked a hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, in 2002.

From his hideout in the tribal areas of Pakistan bin Laden heaped praise on the new Somali leaders urging Somalis to support them. “You have no other means for salvation unless you commit to Islam, put your hands in the hands of the Islamic Courts to build an Islamic state in Somalia,” he said. He lashed out at the president of Somalia’s secular but powerless interim government, Abdullah Yusuf Ahmed, calling him a “traitor” and a “renegade.” He told other countries not to get involved in the conflict. If that were to happen “we will fight your soldiers on the land of Somalia and we will fight you on your own land if you dispatch troops to Somalia.”⁸⁴

On August 23, 2006, the new rulers opened a training camp in Hilweyne, north of Mogadishu, for 600 members of Islamic militias. The instructors came from Eritrea, Afghanistan and Pakistan.⁸⁵ These Pakistani and Afghan instructors and ideologues, no doubt, intended to transform this terrorist facility into a real Al-Qaeda camp.

Somalia is Al-Qaeda’s new operational base in Africa. In December 2008, Abdullah Yusuf resigned as president of Somalia. His successor, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, was a former “commander in chief” of the Islamic Courts Union. The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) formed an alliance with the Islamic Courts Union. Meanwhile, a new and much more radical Islamist movement called *Harakat Al-Shabaab Mujahideen* (“Movement of Warrior Youth”), an offshoot of the Islamic Courts Union, had started a successful guerrilla war against the Somali leadership. Al-Shabaab is now one of Al-Qaeda’s most powerful instruments in Africa. Al-Shabaab began releasing videos portraying Somalia’s struggle as part of a global movement to defend Islam and restore its rule. Foreign recruits were promised “victory or martyrdom” for enlisting.

Several Somalis in America returned to join jihad with Al-Qaeda linked Al-Shabaab, the *New York Times* reported in July 2009.⁸⁶ At least one of them even carried out a spectacular suicide attack.

The Netherlands Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD) informed the Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) in January 2009 that five young American Somali males posed a threat to national security. After their jihadist training in a Somali training camp, they planned to return to the US via the Netherlands.⁸⁷ Since early 2009, the Dutch Security Service is increasingly focussing on Africa where “many countries are vulnerable to the terrorist threat and violent coups as well as to the threat posed by criminals who operate on an international scale (drugs) and corruption.”⁸⁸

In November 2009, an American Somali named Mohamud Said Omar was arrested in the Dutch asylum seekers center of Dronten. The AIVD was instrumental in his arrest as Omar was also deemed a serious security risk. U.S. authorities suspect Omar of bankrolling the purchase of weapons for Islamic extremists and helping Somalis to travel to Somalia in 2007 and 2009. The affidavit states that six American Somalis traveled to Somalia in December 2007. Omar gave travel money to some of them. In January 2008 Omar traveled to Somalia himself and stayed at an Al-Shabaab safehouse for several days and provided money to purchase AK-47 assault rifles, the affidavit says. In August Omar accompanied two men bound for Somalia to the airport and that November hosted a gathering that included several young men who left for Somalia to join Al-Shabaab.⁸⁹ Omar has a U.S. green card and is believed to have been involved in recruiting youths in Minneapolis – a city with a very large Somali immigrant community. At least 20 young Somali Muslim immigrants left the Minneapolis area between December 2007 and December 2009 with a view to joining the violent jihad. The FBI claims Omar was one of the three Al-Shabaab recruiters active in Minneapolis. Although two terrorist suspects implicated him, Omar denies all these allegations.⁹⁰

The case of Omar shows that asylum seekers from countries like Somalia may pose a serious security risk – apart from the wide cultural gap that exists between Somali and Western culture (Female Genital Mutilation, oppression of women, polygamy, etc.) The number of refugees and asylum seekers from backward Muslim countries such as Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan has risen dramatically in recent years. Immigration fraud is very common. The U.S. State Department and the Department of Homeland Security have uncovered massive immigration fraud by Somalis. The State Department has admitted that 80 percent of Somali family reunification cases involve fraud.⁹¹

Massive fraud also exists in the Netherlands where more than 60 percent of all refugees and asylum seekers are from Muslim countries: Somalia 32 percent, Iraq 21 percent and Afghanistan 9 percent. When the government tries to stem the flow of immigration, Somalis and the powerful immigration lobby hire expensive lawyers and go to the courts or even to the “European Court of Human Rights” which usually rule in their favour. This occurred, for example, in July 2007, when the European Court of Human Rights ruled in favor of Shalah Sheekh, a Somali asylum seeker in Holland. When the Dutch government tried to tackle the problem of massive benefit fraud in the Somali community, a court in the city of Haarlem lamely ruled that “singling out Somalis for benefit fraud investigations amounted to discrimination.”⁹² The Dutch

Council of State (“Raad van State”) ruled in January 2010 that Somali asylum seekers are entitled to “categorical (or group) protection,” thus nullifying previous measures by the Dutch government to curb the massive influx of Somali asylum seekers and the many abuses connected with it.⁹³

The Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* reported in 2009 that “asylum seekers are supposed to apply for asylum in the country of first arrival, but some people prefer to travel to another European country if they think they have a better chance of being accepted there, or after having been turned down in the first country.” Somalis have recently taken to filing off their finger tips to escape registration.⁹⁴ Asylum fraud and lying are so common that the government is simply unable to tackle this problem.

All of this, of course, is a financial strain in a time when financial resources are really scarce. Each asylum application costs the Dutch government more than 7000 euros and this does not include the huge costs of housing, health care, legal appeals, etc.⁹⁵

The same applies to widespread abuses concerning “the right of family reunification.” A court in the southern Dutch city of Roermond lamely ruled that it is illegal to restrict the number of “import brides” or “import bridegrooms.” Such Dutch government measures are against the “right to family reunification,” the court said.⁹⁶ Import brides are usually poor and ill-educated and originate from backward societies. To integrate these tens of thousands of new immigrants into Dutch society puts an additional financial strain on ever so scarce financial resources. This is also a very serious problem in Germany, Belgium, Spain, Italy and Britain, by the way.

Italy, Spain, Greece and southern France are flooded with illegal immigrants from Africa leading to a rapid increase in crime (drugs, prostitution, selling fake “luxury” goods, harassment of tourists, rape, armed robberies, knife crime, voodoo practices, etc.) and unwelcome frictions with the local population. The most problematic groups are Nigerians and Africans from the Horn of Africa. Once they are in Europe, governments often cannot simply send them back anymore. They often violently resist deportation and are assisted by powerful local African crime networks as well as refugee lawyers.

In 2009, the Italian government made a deal with Libya to send back African migrants caught at sea. It was obvious that these migrants wanted to reach and still want to reach Europe via Italy. However, Italian asylum lawyers assist 24 Somali and Eritrean immigrants who were sent back to Libya in May 2009. They turned to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in an attempt to force Italy legally to let them in.⁹⁷

What is important, however, is the fact that Italy did *not* return these people to a country or state where their lives and freedom were threatened. They were sent to Libya where they were quite safe. By far most of the African refugees are economic migrants and states have the right to take effective measures to stop a massive flow of unwelcome *economic* refugees. This is exactly what Spain did after 2006. The Spanish socialist government of Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero sent large numbers of African economic migrants back to Senegal and other African countries. (There were special agreements with Senegal and other African states.) There was no outcry at all over Spanish policies – and rightly so.

In Britain, young Somalis who claim to be “refugees” applied for asylum claiming it was too dangerous for them to return to their home country. Yet, once their asylum claim had been accepted, a lot of them did indeed make a return trip to Somalia. Many Somali women accompanied their young daughter whom they wanted to be “circumsized” in their home country. Somali men traveled to Somalia to join the jihad. “Somali immigrants with jihad training pose terrorist risk,” the London *Times* reported in May 2009. “For Britain, the evidence of spreading Al-Qaeda training camps is particularly alarming because of the large Somali community in the UK.”⁹⁸ A Somali immigrant living in Ealing returned to Somalia and subsequently blew himself up in a suicide attack that killed more than 20 soldiers.

By far most Somalis in Britain entered the country as asylum seekers within the past 20 years, *The Times* reported. “They include Yasin Omar and Ramzi Mohammed, two of the four men convicted of the botched bombing of the London Underground on July 21, 2005.”⁹⁹

While enjoying welfare payments, many young Somali youths in Britain are involved in knife crime and gang violence. Quite a lot of them admire Osama bin Laden. They now feel they are entitled to join groups like Al-Shabaab. This trend is one of the greatest concerns of the British Security Service MI5 which reported in September 2009 that Somalia now serves as a haven and training ground for extremist Muslims from Western countries. The number of young Britons traveling to Somalia to join the jihad or train in terror training camps has even quadrupled to at least 100 since 2004. A Somali religious leader in Kentish Town, north London, said in September 2009 that he had heard from families of sons traveling to Somalia. “I’m hearing it from parents,” he said. “They say they (their children) are joining the jihad. This is a big problem facing our community.”¹⁰⁰

Just like Britain tolerant Scandinavian countries welcomed many Muslim militants who entered these countries in large numbers in the 1980s and 1990s as so-called refugees or asylum seekers. Most of them came from Iraq, Afghanistan and Africa. One of them was Mullah Krekar, a terrorist from North Iraq who successfully applied for asylum in Norway. He later returned to Iraq to head the Al-Qaeda linked terrorist group “Ansar Al-Islam.” “Suicide is the biggest jihad for Islam,” Krekar told a British TV reporter in 2003. He also praised Osama bin Laden on more than one occasion.¹⁰¹

Another example is Mohammed, a Somali immigrant in Sweden who left the peaceful city of Göteborg in 2007 to join the jihadist terrorists in Somalia. He was killed in a U.S. bombing raid.¹⁰² Mohammed was a member of the so-called Göteborg Group. “These individuals are part of a steady trickle of volunteers traveling from Scandinavia to fight in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia,” Michael Johnson and Christopher Berglund write in “Jane’s Intelligence Review.”¹⁰³

The Swedish Security and Intelligence Service Sapö believes more than twenty (Somali) Swedes have been recruited by Al-Shabaab. “Göteborg is home to Al-Shabaab’s largest online community, alqimmah.net, which was established by a former Nazi who converted to Islam,” the Swedish English language paper *The Local* reported on May 5, 2010.¹⁰⁴

In Denmark, a Somali immigrant named Muhudin M. Geele tried to kill Danish cartoonist Kurt Westergaard who created the cartoon of the Muslim prophet Mohammed wearing a bomb in his turban. “We will get our revenge! Blood!”, Geele, who has a Danish residence permit, shouted. Police shot him in the hand and knee and subsequently arrested him. The Danish security service found out that Geele stayed in close touch with Al-Shabaab militants in Sweden, Denmark and Somalia. In Göteborg, Sweden, he was known as a Muslim hate preacher propagating jihad. He also knew Abdi Rahman Mohammed, a Somali immigrant in Sweden who returned to Somalia and killed three Somali ministers in a spectacular suicide attack in Mogadishu (early December 2010).¹⁰⁵

Militant Muslims joining the jihad in Somalia is also a growing security concern in Holland. In July 2009, four young Dutch Muslims were arrested in Kenya. Two of them were Dutch Somalis, the other two were Dutch Moroccans. The Dutch Security and Intelligence Service reported that the four men expressed an intention to join the violent jihad in Somalia.¹⁰⁶ One of them had previously attempted to join the Islamic jihad in Chechnya.

Australia is another country where Muslim militants pose a serious security threat. On August 4, 2009, Australian police arrested four Muslim extremists – two Australian Somalis and two Australian Lebanese. They planned a suicide attack on Holsworthy Barracks, an army training area near Sydney. (Australian troops are deployed in Afghanistan.) A fifth man was charged in the following days. The prosecution claims that they had been trained by Al-Shabaab. A prominent U.S. Somali leader was quoted in the Australian “The Daily Telegraph.” He said “extremist elements had been dispatching Al-Shabaab members from Minneapolis on regular fundraising and lecturing trips to Australia.” “Australian Al-Shabaab members were among the most prominent in the group.” Police concluded from intercepted phone calls and text messages that the attack was imminent.”

One of the terror suspects, Nayef El Sayed (Lebanese), refused to stand when asked by magistrate Peter Reardon. He would stand for no man – only for Allah. Another terror suspect Saney Edow Aweys (Somali) said he hated Australia and thanked Allah for Victoria’s Black Saturday bushfires that killed 117 people. “Thanks be to Allah, we say. Allah bring them fitna (trouble), Allah bring them calamity.”¹⁰⁷

In March 2010, Kenyan immigration officials arrested Hussein Hashi Farah, an Australian citizen of Somali descent who was on an international terrorism watchlist. However, he escaped from police custody hours after he had been arrested and his whereabouts are now unknown. Kenyan and Australian police believe Mr. Farah is an Al-Shabaab operative who was involved in planning a terrorist attack on the Holsworthy Barracks in Australia.¹⁰⁸

5. Al-Qaeda's involvement in Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa

With 1.2 million Somali immigrants and hundreds of thousands of restive Somali refugees, many Kenyans now fear that the bloody conflict in neighboring Somalia could spill over to their country. Kenya shares a 420-mile porous border with Somalia. In the past Islamic radicals crossed the border undetected. About 11 percent of the Kenyan population is Muslim, most of them are moderates, but there are Islamic courts (or Kadhi's courts) and these are recognized by the government. Abdulkarim Jimale, a Somali journalist in Eastleigh, Kenya, told Dutch *NRC Handelsblad* correspondent Kurt Lindijer in January 2010 "that wounded Al-Shabaab fighters travel to Kenya to be treated in Kenyan hospitals. They recruit Somali youths in northeast Kenya and Al-Shabaab seeks to persuade preachers to disseminate their (Al-Shabaab's) radical message in mosques."¹⁰⁹

Kenya expelled radical Jamaican cleric Abdullah Al-Faisal in January 2010. Al-Faisal had tried to recruit Kenyan citizens for Al-Shabaab as he was preaching in mosques in Mombasa. He was first detained and his detention led to demonstrations by Somali youths in Nairobi who were waving Al-Shabaab banners and were firing at the police. Shortly after Al-Faisal's expulsion by the Kenyan authorities, Al-Shabaab issued a statement declaring war on that country.¹¹⁰

Al-Qaeda has always shown a preference for East African countries and was successful in recruiting a number of local Muslims. Al-Qaeda began establishing cells in East Africa during the early and mid-1990s.¹¹¹ There were Al-Qaeda cells in Nairobi, the coastal city of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam, the capital of Tanzania. These cells were responsible for the suicide attacks on the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in August 1998. After the bombings it was found out that some Kenyan Muslims had visited Al-Qaeda training camps in Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹¹² One of the Kenyans who played an important role in the Nairobi bombings was Sheikh Ahmed Salim Swedan, born in Mombasa. A few days before the bombings he left for Pakistan and he was on the FBI's "Most Wanted Terrorists" list. (He was killed in Pakistan on

January 1, 2010, in an American drone missile strike.) Swedan visited Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, in June 2001, when Liberia's dictator Charles Taylor was selling diamonds to Al-Qaeda.¹¹³ He is a high level Al-Qaeda operative.

Another Nairobi plotter on the FBI list is Abu Anas-Al-Lib(b)y, a Libyan who once claimed asylum in Britain and lived in Manchester before 2000. Another Al-Qaeda conspirator in the embassy bombings is Mohammed Sadiq Odeh, a Palestinian born in Saudi Arabia who joined the jihadists in Afghanistan. He arrived in Kenya in 1994 and worked as a fisherman in Mombasa marrying a Kenyan woman and having children. He was known as "Mohammed the Fisherman" – indeed, a perfect cover for a terrorist. More than 200 people died, more than 5000 were wounded in the twin blasts – most of the victims were Kenyan and Tanzanian nationals.

The Tanzanian Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, born in Zanzibar, played a key role in the Dar es Salaam bombings. Arrested in Pakistan on July 25, 2004, "Ahmed the Tanzanian" was a high-level Al-Qaeda operative. Originally a moderate Tabligh Muslim preacher he quickly radicalized during a visit to Pakistan. He joined Al-Qaeda and was trained in bomb making and the use of explosives, probably in an Afghan Al-Qaeda camp. In Pakistan or Afghanistan he married an Uzbeki woman. In 1998 Ghailani was sent by bin Laden's deputy Ayman Al-Zawahiri to Dar es Salaam, the capital of Tanzania. He purchased a truck and obtained the necessary bomb components. Six days before the bombings Ghailani checked into Nairobi's Hilltop Hilton used for meetings by the bombers. On August 6, 1998 – one day before the bombings – he left for Karachi, Pakistan and from there he traveled to Afghanistan. In March 1999 Ghailani and Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, another East Africa bomber, traveled to Liberia. They were assigned high-level tasks, probably by Osama bin Laden himself.

Their mission was to buy diamonds from Liberia's president Charles Taylor, one of Africa's most brutal dictators. They handed Taylor a leather pouch containing US \$ 500,000 in cash, the standard amount for doing diamond deals in Liberia, writes Douglas Farah in his book *Blood for Diamonds*. Enjoying the protection of Taylor, the two Al-Qaeda operatives stayed in Liberia in 2000 and 2001 and also made a tour to the diamond fields in Sierra Leone. They left in June 2001, a few months before the 9/11 attacks in America.¹¹⁴ There are rumors that the two Al-Qaeda operatives could not quite resist the temptation of alcohol and women.

The planning for the Embassy bombings started in 1993 when bin Laden was still in Sudan. At the end of 1993, an Al-Qaeda surveillance team

was sent to Nairobi, writes Johathan Randal in his book *Osama. The Making of a Terrorist* (2004). These men thoroughly cased the U.S. embassy. “Photographs were later shown to Osama bin Laden in Khartoum. Bin Laden looked at the picture of the American embassy and pointed to where a truck could go as a suicide bomber. Less than five years later an Al-Qaeda team did just that.”¹¹⁵ The surveillance team consisted of Abu Mohammed Al-Amriki (Ali Mohammed) and Anas Al-Lib(b)y who carried a camera on Moi Avenue.¹¹⁶ The August 1998 attacks had been planned by Mohammed Atef, a former Egyptian police officer who assumed military command of Al-Qaeda in May 1996, says former CIA officer Gary Berntsen in his book *Jawbreaker*. ‘He had traveled to Somalia in 1992 and 1993 to train clans opposing U.S. forces.’¹¹⁷

Al Qaida continued to operate in Kenya and Tanzania after 1998. At the end of November 2002, the Paradise Hotel near Mombasa, a resort owned by an Israeli and popular with Israeli tourists, was car bombed. Sixteen people died, including three Israelis and the three car bombers. Almost simultaneously SA-7 missiles were launched shortly after an Israeli charter plane had taken off from Mombasa airport. They missed. SA-7 surface-to-air shoulder launched missiles are popular with Al-Qaeda and Somali militias. The missiles were probably smuggled across the Somali-Kenyan border. Behind the attacks was the Somali-based group “Al-Itihaad Al-Islamiya,” which was linked to Al-Qaeda. They received money from Osama bin Laden and many of its members were trained in Afghanistan.¹¹⁸ It did not take long for Al-Qaeda to claim responsibility for the Mombasa attacks: “The brothers gave them a gift for Ramadan in Mombasa, and the gift for the holiday (*Id Al-Fitr*, at the end of Ramadan) is on its way.”¹¹⁹ (The latter is a reference to a future attack but nothing happened.)

In his article on *Al Qaida Recruitment Trends in Kenya and Tanzania*, William Rosenau (Rand Corporation) discusses the possibility “that Nairobi- and Mombasa based remnants were responsible for the November 2002 attacks on Israeli tourists.” “Fazul Abdallah Mohamed, the Comoros-born mastermind of the embassy bombings, is widely considered responsible for the Mombasa attacks. Like his fellow Mombasa and Nairobi co-conspirator, Ahmed Salim Swedan, Fazul was a product of Al Qaeda training in Afghanistan.” Fazul lived quietly in the coastal town of Lamu near the Somali border, married a local woman, taught at a madrassa. The planning for the November 2002 attacks, though, was protracted and meticulous: “Fazul assembled a team along the coast, and established a small-scale lobster fishing business to provide cover for the group’s activities. A year before the attacks, some members

of the group gathered in Mogadishu, Somalia, where they received ideological and weapons training, with locally purchased weapons. Later, a number of terrorists returned to the Mombasa region, where they were joined by other elements from the network, and by the following April, the group had identified its targets and was conducting surveillance. Before the attacks, the group divided into four subgroups, with one staying in Mogadishu, a second carrying out the suicide bombing of the hotel near Mombasa, a third in Lamu preparing a boat for escape to Somalia, and a fourth, under Fazul's command, carrying out the failed missile attack on the airliner. The surviving members of the organization fled to Lamu and on to Mogadishu, although a number later returned to Kenya. In August 2003, a suspect in the attacks, Feisal Ali Nasser, killed himself and a police officer when he detonated a grenade as he was being taken into custody. A subsequent raid on a Mombasa house yielded a weapons cache and ammunition, and confirmed to authorities that terrorist cells were still active in Kenya."¹²⁰

Terrorists and Muslim extremists are also active in Tanzania and Zanzibar. In Tanzania about 45 percent of the population are Muslims. Most of them are moderate and peaceful, but there are worries about outside fundamentalist Wahhabist influences from Sudan and Saudi Arabia. Saudi, Sudanese and Gulf charities and businesses are active in Tanzania which may serve as a cover for terrorist operations and financing. There are also indications that Al-Qaeda and other extremists ("Pakistani missionaries" and the like) are stepping up their recruitment efforts in Tanzania and Zanzibar. There have been violent incidents including armed takeovers of moderate mosques in Dar es Salaam. According to *Time Magazine* (September 2003) fundamentalists have taken over 30 of the 487 mosques in the capital and have begun bombing bars and beating up women who go out without being fully covered.¹²¹ Mosques are packed on Fridays and the sermons are increasingly hostile to the West and supportive of the holy war in Iraq and Palestine. "We get our funds from Yemen and Saudi Arabia," says Mohammed Madi, a fundamentalist activist. "Officially the money is used to buy medicine, but in reality the money is given to us to support our work and buy guns."

At least three Al-Qaeda operatives have been identified as originating from Zanzibar: Khalfan Khamis Muhammed, one of those convicted in connection with the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings, Qaed Sanyan Al-Harithi, a suspected East African point man for bin Laden who was killed in Yemen by a CIA drone, and Ahmed Khalfan Ghalaini.¹²² Disillusionment with democracy and corruption in Zanzibar and Tanzania

has led to more converts to Islam in recent years. Saudi Arabia financed clerics present Islam as a morally and politically superior model.

Quite worrying is the fact that since 2004 a growing number of African jihadists have traveled to Iraq. Close to a quarter of foreign fighters in Iraq come from Northern Africa. General Thomas Csrnko, head of the U.S. special operations command in Europe (EUCOM), whose security oversight includes North and West Africa, says: “Many veterans could return to Northern Africa to use insurgent tactics developed in Iraq, from bomb-making to strategic planning, against their governments.”¹²³ Al-Qaeda in Iraq issued a statement on its website congratulating the “Mujahedeen who are fighting the converters in Mauritania.” (This – the converters – refers to a U.S special forces training program in Mauritania, Chad, Mali, Senegal, Morocco, Niger, Tunisia and Algeria.)

Abdullah Azam Saleh Al-Qahtani, a captured Saudi Al-Qaeda operative in Iraq, revealed in May 2010 that Al-Qaeda’s number two, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, is plotting a terrorist attack in South Africa during the World Cup. Suicide attacks would primarily focus on the Danish and Dutch soccer teams to avenge the Mohammed cartoons in the Danish press and the anti-Islam film “Fitna” made by the vocal Dutch politician Geert Wilders. Western intelligence and security services believe South Africa is an easy target for Al-Qaeda as local security authorities are insufficiently prepared and equipped to face this kind of threat. They are also worried because South Africa has become a real safe haven for Muslim extremists and terrorists.¹²⁴

6. The case of Mohamedou Ould Slahi

Immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean are targeted by Al-Qaeda and other terrorist networks. These young men visit mosques in France, Italy, Germany or Britain, visit internet-café's and some of them become radicalized. Not always are they marginalized. Take Mohamedou Ould Slahi, a young man from Mauritania who went to Germany to study Electronics at Duisburg University.¹²⁵ When he arrived in Germany, he was not radical at all. But this changed after he began to surf the net and met friends who visited the radical "Al-Taqwa" mosque, a favorite place for terrorist recruiters. There were some interesting websites on the war in Chechnya, there was a website linked to Al-Qaeda, and there was a nice offer for a free trip to Afghanistan. It did not take long for the young and promising African student to be recruited by Al-Qaeda. He finished his studies and set up company in Duisburg. This company served as a cover for Al-Qaeda's financial transactions. He married a Mauritanian woman named Sina Bint Seif Al-Din, the sister of Khalid Al-Shantiqi alias Abu Hafis the Mauritanian. This man happened to be a friend of Osama bin Laden's. Abu Hafis the Mauritanian was directly involved in the attacks on the US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. In 1999, Osama bin Laden personally asked Ould Slahi to go to Canada. There, he was to meet an Al-Qaeda operative named Ahmed Ressay. Ould Slahi had to pass on money and instructions to Ressay in view of a planned 'Millennium' terrorist attack in the United States. But US customs found the explosives in Ressay's car and he was arrested.

In Germany, Ould Slahi befriended a native German citizen named Christian Ganczarski who also traveled to Afghanistan where he met Osama bin Laden. Bin Laden needed Ganczarski because of his German passport. He became an Al-Qaeda courier. In 2002, Ganczarski would play an important role in the Al-Qaeda suicide attack on the synagogue on the Tunisian island of Djerba. He gave the suicide bomber his blessing.

Ould Slahi was instrumental in recruiting the Hamburg based future 9/11 hijackers. Initially, Mohammed Atta, Ramzi Binalshibh, Marwan Al-Shehhi and Ziad Jarrah wanted to fight the Russians in Chechnya. But in late 1999 Binalshibh and Al-Shehhi met an individual named Khalid Al-Masri on a train. They talked about jihad in Chechnya. Al-Masri told

them to contact “Abu Musab” in Duisburg, who turned out to be Mohamedou Ould Slahi. Binalshibh, Al-Shehhi and Jarrah visited Ould Slahi who explained it was difficult to get to Chechnya. Why not go to Afghanistan instead? Although Atta did not attend the meeting, he joined in the plan with the other three. Following Ould Slahi’s instructions, Atta, Jarrah, Al-Shehhi and Binalshibh first traveled to Karachi, Pakistan, then went to the Taliban office in Quetta from where they were escorted to Kandahar, Afghanistan. There they met Osama bin Laden and his close associate Mohammed Atef (Abu Hafs Al-Masri) who were impressed by the promising new recruits from Germany. The “9/11 Commission Report” finds: “The new recruits from Germany possessed an ideal combination of technical skill and knowledge that the original 9/11 operatives, veteran fighters though they were, lacked. Bin Laden and Atef wasted no time in assigning the Hamburg group to the most ambitious operation yet planned by Al-Qaeda.”¹²⁶ Eventually, Ramzi Binalshibh, a Yemeni, could not get a visa for the United States, and he had to be replaced by Hani Hanjour from Saudi Arabia – the fourth 9/11 suicide pilot.

Mohamedou Ould Slahi was captured in his home country of Mauritania in November 2001 and subsequently transferred to Jordan. He arrived in the extrajudicial detention center at the United States Naval Base Guantanamo Bay (‘Gitmo’), Cuba, in August 2002. However, in March 2010, Judge James Robertson of the U.S. District Court of Columbia granted Mr. Slahi’s petition for “habeas corpus” (a legal safeguard against arbitrary state action). The federal judge argued that the government lacked legal grounds to hold Ould Slahi who was then ordered released by the judge on Monday 22, 2010. The government once called Mr. Ould Slahi “the highest value detainee” and “the key orchestrator of the Al-Qaeda cell in Europe.”¹²⁷ Unfortunately, Mr. Ould Slahi had unwisely been subjected in Guantanamo to “a special interrogation plan” involving physical and mental torment.

Yet, to comply with the federal judge’s order to release him might be highly risky, regardless of what his defense lawyer argues. Not so few Al-Qaeda Gitmo detainees from Yemen, Saudi Arabia or Afghanistan decided to return to terrorism shortly after their release – breaking solemn promises that they never would. (Many jailed Islamists and Muslim terrorists have previously been instructed to deceive their enemy.) One of them, Abdul Qayum Zakir, became a Taliban commander. Abdullah Mehsud, also an ex Gitmo inmate, directed an attack that killed 31 people in Pakistan. (He got a U.S. \$ 75,000 prosthetic leg before leaving U.S. custody.) A former detainee named Omar Khadr returned to Afghanistan. A video showed him building roadside bombs in Afghanistan with

several reputed Al-Qaeda operatives. And Al-Qaeda leader Said Ali Al-Shihri, a Saudi, masterminded the U.S. Embassy bombing in Yemen after being released. He is now the deputy leader of “Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula” (AQAP).¹²⁸

7. Al-Qaeda's involvement in Nigeria

Osama bin Laden said in February 2003 that “the areas most in need of liberation are Jordan, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.”¹²⁹ It is interesting to note that Nigeria was the only sub-Saharan African country selected by bin Laden as “an area most in need of liberation.” The reason was obvious. This multi-ethnic nation has witnessed serious clashes between Muslims and Christians since early 2000, after Saudi Wahhabism (conservative Sunni Islam) had made inroads in Nigeria. These clashes began in the northern Nigerian state of Kaduna in February 2000 – after Sharia (= Muslim fundamentalist) law had been introduced there. In the neighboring northern state of Zamfara militant Muslims reportedly put on their dancing shoes and took to the streets to celebrate the 9/11 attacks in the United States.

In January 2004, Nigerian soldiers crushed an uprising by Islamic militants in the northern Yobe state. The militants wanted to establish a Taliban-style Islamic government. In the southern Anambra state as well as in the north more than 1000 people were killed after protests against the Danish cartoons satirising the Muslim prophet Mohammed.¹³⁰

Militant Muslims want to turn all of Nigeria into an Islamic state modelled after the Taliban. One of the most militant groups is known as the “Nigerian Taliban” or the “Hijrah movement.” Most members of the Nigerian Taliban are young university graduates from influential families. They openly show their admiration for former Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Omar. They are heavily armed and trigger happy and attacked several police stations to confiscate weapons and “to kill unbelievers in uniform.” They are fanatics willing to die as martyrs in the jihad. Their aim is to establish an Islamic state in the northeastern Nigerian states of Yobe and Borno (bordering on Niger and Chad). They call on Muslims in Nigeria to rise up in jihad.¹³¹

Nigerian jihdists receive support from Al-Qaeda affiliates in Mauritania, Mali, Sudan, the Maghreb, Yemen and Pakistan.

In February 2007, Nigerian prosecutors wanted a man accused of plotting attacks on Americans in Nigeria with the help from Al-Qaeda to be tried in secret for security reasons. The judges rejected their request, though. Mohammed Ashafa stood accused of receiving U.S. \$ 1,500 from an Al-Qaeda cell in Pakistan – two Al-Qaeda operatives in Lahore – and was

charged with receiving decoding messages from this Al-Qaeda cell and passing them to the Nigerian Taliban with a view to attacking Americans. Pakistani authorities decided to deport Ashafa. According to the charges, he had undergone terrorist training in Mauritania. He was also accused of sponsoring 21 members of the Nigerian Taliban to receive combat training and indoctrination at camp Agwan in Niger run by the Algeria based “Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat” (GSPC), since January 2007 known as “Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb” (AQIM). Ashafa denied the charges.¹³²

Five Islamic militants were arrested in Northern Nigeria in November 2007. Three of them were charged with training in Algeria with GSPC/AQIM between 2005 and August 2007. Nigeria expert Bestman Wellington made following observation in June 2008: “In Nigeria, particularly in the Muslim north, there are various armed Islamist formations with agendas similar to that of Osama bin Laden.”¹³³

8. Nigerian “Underwear Bomber” Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab

Those who are recruited by Al-Qaeda are usually not marginalized poor Africans. Al-Qaeda and its regional affiliates have a preference for university graduates, intellectuals and people with a military background, people without a conspicuous terrorist track record. People like Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, son of Alhaji Umaru Abdul Mutallab, former Nigerian government minister and former chairman of First Bank of Nigeria – described as being one of the richest men in Africa.

Abdulmutallab’s polygamous father is from the Muslim north and has two wives and 16 children, but he is not a militant Muslim. Abdulmutallab visited the U.S. for the first time in 2004. He subsequently studied in Yemen, possibly his first encounter with radical Islam. Not only did he study Arabic at the Sana’a Institute of Arabic language, also did he attend lectures at Al-Iman university near Yemen’s capital Sana’a. It was there that met his favorite teacher, Al-Iman’s American-born firebrand cleric Anwar Al-Awlaki, a high level Al-Qaeda operative. Awlaki’s father was a former Yemeni minister who studied in the United States.

American-born Taliban fighter John Walker Lindh was also a student at Al-Iman University. Lindh was captured in Afghanistan in November 2001 by Afghan Northern Alliance forces and subsequently handed over to CIA interrogators. Al-Iman university, a private institution, is headed by Sheikh Abdel-Majid Al-Zindani, named by the U.S. as a “specially designated global terrorist, the London *Daily Telegraph* reported.¹³⁴

Abdulmutallab’s father, though, wanted his son to study at a serious foreign university. So Abdulmutallab went to London in September 2005 to study Engineering and Business Finance at University College London (UCL). He was nineteen years old then. He earned a degree in mechanical engineering in June 2008. In 2006, he became president of the university’s “Islamic Society,” a militant student group which invited jihadist preachers. One of those preachers reportedly said: “Dying while fighting jihad is one of the surest ways to paradise.”¹³⁵ Abdulmutallab also visited London’s “Finsbury Park Mosque,” where young militant Muslims were recruited for the jihad. While in London, Abdulmutallab’s mind was further poisoned by hate preachers and he evolved into a

sexually frustrated angry young male. Meanwhile, he was living in a three million British pounds flat in London.

Although Abdulmutallab's favorite hate cleric Al-Awlaki was banned from entering the United Kingdom in 2006, he did give a number of videolink lectures to mosques and Islamic student associations. Awlaki is believed to have had links to the London "7/7" (July 7, 2005) suicide bombers and other terrorist plots in Britain.

It was probably Awlaki who encouraged Abdulmutallab to return to Yemen in the summer of 2009. Abdulmutallab's father was flatly opposed. Why did his son go back to Yemen, instead of pursuing a master's degree in cosmopolitan Dubai? The father was deeply concerned about his son's inexplicable radicalization. He had every reason to be worried, although he could not know at the time that his son would be trained by Awlaki's "Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula" with a view to playing a central role in a major terrorist plot. He didn't even know his son's whereabouts in Yemen.

It was late August 2009 when the National Security Agency (NSA) intercepted Al-Qaeda transmissions in Yemen relating to an unidentified Nigerian being involved in a possible plot, "The Sunday Times" reported. "It was the first small piece in a puzzle that could have prevented Abdulmutallab from boarding the Detroit-bound plane."¹³⁶ A U.S. intelligence official who was quoted by the *Los Angeles Times* said "communications intercepted by the NSA indicated that Al-Awlaki was meeting with 'a Nigerian' in preparation for some kind of operation."¹³⁷ However, the intelligence was too sketchy to link it directly to Abdulmutallab himself. But in November new intelligence emerged when Abdulmutallab's distressed father met Nigerian security agencies and CIA officers at the U.S. embassy in Abuja warning them that Abdulmutallab was a security threat. "Look at the texts he is sending." He then sought their assistance to find and return him home. "We provided them with all the information required of us to enable them to do this," Abdulmutallab's family said in a statement issued shortly after Christmas 2009. "We were hopeful that they would find him and return him home."¹³⁸

These warnings did not sufficiently alarm U.S. security and intelligence officials, though. Abdulmutallab's name was added to the U.S. 550,000 name "Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment," a database of the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC), but he was not put on the no fly list.¹³⁹ His multiple-entry visa to the U.S., granted in June 2008, was not revoked either. Information on him was not shared with the FBI. So he was not put on any watchlist.

On December 16, 2010, Abdulmutallab traveled to Accra, the capital of Ghana, to buy a return ticket for U.S. \$ 2,831 in cash from Lagos to Detroit, via Amsterdam, Holland. On Christmas Day he traveled to Amsterdam, carrying only hand luggage. At Amsterdam Schiphol Airport he boarded Northwest Airlines Flight 253 en route to Detroit. Nearly 300 people were on board. His seat was 19A, near the fuel tank. David Learmont, an aviation expert, was quoted in “The Sunday Times” as follows: “It was pretty much the best possible seat in the plane to have the highest chance of bringing it down.”¹⁴⁰

Shortly before landing Abdulmutallab spent about 20 minutes in the bathroom to prepare the PETN explosive device, a 15 cm packet which was sewn into his underwear. PETN or “pentaerythritol” is hard to detect, but you have to mix it with a liquid to trigger an explosion. For this purpose Abdulmutallab used a small syringe but the bomb itself failed to detonate. There was only smoke and fire. Dutch Film director Jasper Schuringa later said: “Suddenly we heard a bang. It sounded like a firecracker. Everybody panicked. Someone screamed: Fire! Fire!” “I saw smoke rising from a seat. I didn’t hesitate. I just jumped on him.” He put out the fire with his hands and members of the flight crew appeared with fire extinguishers. Another passenger described the man’s behavior during the incident. She said: “He stood up. He was belligerent. He was yelling, swearing. He was screaming about Afghanistan. He was fighting with the wonderful stewards that we had.”¹⁴¹

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) claimed responsibility for the failed attack. It was “a response to American backed airstrikes on the group in Yemen.” Abdulmutallab himself told FBI agents “that he was one of many suicide bombers being groomed by the Yemeni Al-Qaeda affiliate to attack American-bound aircraft.”¹⁴² British police believe 25 British born Muslims are currently in Yemen being trained in the art of bombing planes.¹⁴³ A video was disseminated by the same Al-Qaeda affiliate in April 2010. It showed Abdulmutallab and others in his training class firing weapons at a desert camp. The tape includes a martyrdom statement in Arabic from the 23-year old Nigerian justifying his actions against “the Jews and the Christians and their agents. He read several passages from the Koran and adds: “God said if you do not fight back, He will punish and replace you.”¹⁴⁴

The Northern California Regional Intelligence Center (NCRIC) traced messages in *Sada Al-Malahim* (“The Echo of Epic Battles”), AQAP’s magazine. In the October 2009 issue, the group began moving away from Saudi and Yemeni government targets that it has pursued for years. AQAP leader Nasser Al-Wuhayshi recommended that individual jihadists expand their attacks on the West using any possible means, including

household items and knives, and target the “airports of the Western crusader countries... or in their aircraft, residential compounds or in the train tunnels, etc.”¹⁴⁵

A *Pew Global Attitudes Survey* found in 2009 “that 43 percent of Nigerian Muslims believed suicide bombings were sometimes justified.”¹⁴⁶

9. Al-Qaeda targeting North African immigrants in Europe

Al-Qaeda also recruited a number of Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan immigrants in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Belgium and Britain. Terrorist cells planned and carried out attacks, like the one in Madrid in March 2004 (most perpetrators were Moroccans). In 2002, a Tunisian cell in northern Italy experimented with nerve gas and planned a terrorist attack in France. They were linked to at least one Al-Qaeda operative in Belgium. Fortunately, the Tunisian cell in Milan was dismantled by the Italian police just in time.

In January 2007, the Algerian Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) adopted a new name and is now known as “Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb” (AQIM). The group is active in Algeria, northern Mali, eastern Mauritania, northern Mali, northern Niger and northern Chad (to create safehavens outside Algeria). The group has also created a base in the Sahara itself. Sources of income are drugs, crime and taking Western hostages.¹⁴⁷ “Militant groups like the GSPC can encamp in these regions and go undetected for long periods of time. They promise the poor that Islamic government or a return to Sharia will alleviate their misery.”¹⁴⁸ They may also have ties with some African trafficking organizations and are involved in migrant trafficking and document forgery operations themselves. In February 2003 a group of tourists, among whom the Dutchman Arjan Hilbers, was taken hostage near Tamanraset in southern Algeria. The kidnappers were GSPC members. In August 2003, the hostages, including Hilbers, were released.¹⁴⁹

Libya’s leader Muammar Ghadaffi, who restored relations with the West in recent years, is very concerned about the threat posed by these “Pan-Saharan Salafis.” He is equally worried about the prospect of jihadists returning to Libya from Iraq. A number of Libyan jihadists have joined the insurgency in Iraq, three Libyans from Benghazi blew themselves up in Baghdad, and their families in Benghazi held a special “wedding” celebration for these “martyrs.” What Ghadaffi does not want is a repetition of what happened in the 1990s when Arab Afghan veterans returned from Afghanistan and continued to wage jihad, but this time against the leaders of their home countries.¹⁵⁰

The GSPC/AQIM is furthermore active in Europe (Belgium, France, Spain, Britain, the Netherlands). In April and June 2002, intensive investigations by the Dutch General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD) into recruiting activities in the Netherlands resulted in the arrest of a group of persons that had formed itself around an Algerian man named Rodoin Daoud who was affiliated with the GSPC.¹⁵¹ After that not much was heard about GSPC activities in Holland.

In November and December 2005, Spanish authorities arrested 18 Algerians on suspicion of giving logistical support to the GSPC through criminal activities (theft, document forgery).¹⁵² In September 2006 Al-Qaeda's second-in-command, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, announced the "blessed union" with the GSPC. From now on, the GSPC officially was an integral part of Al-Qaeda, even though GSPC-leaders had previously sworn allegiance Al-Qaeda.¹⁵³ Al-Zawahiri announced that France would be targeted. Algerian terrorists were behind a number of previous terrorist attacks and killings as well as one hijacking operation. Al-Qaeda strongly criticized the sending of French troops to Lebanon as part of the United Nations force in the south.

European police organizations and security services are worried about the growing number of Europe-based AQIM cells. According to an Europol study radicalized individuals may now offer to act on behalf of AQIM to attack European targets.¹⁵⁴ "A group that had limited its terrorist activities to Algeria is now part of the global jihad movement," Bernard Squarcini, chief of France's domestic police and intelligence service, was quoted in "The New York Times."¹⁵⁵ France is also vulnerable since there are large African and North African immigrant communities on its territory which makes it easier for Al-Qaeda jihadists to operate there without being detected immediately.

Some AQIM communiqués and statements made by Laden's deputy Ayman Al-Zawahiri specifically focus on France and Spain, former colonial powers in the Maghreb. Al-Qaeda repeatedly announced that not only would it liberate the Spanish enclaves in northern Morocco – Ceuta and Melilla – but also "Al-Andalus" or Spain proper.¹⁵⁶ A large part of Spanish territory was once occupied by Muslim armies and then known as "Al-Andalus."

Spain, with its large North African immigrant community, is indeed very vulnerable to an attack by Al-Qaeda. Spain has the largest Algerian immigrant community after France. (More than 30,000 Algerian immigrants are living in Alicante alone.) About one-third of the

imprisoned Islamists and jihadists in Spain are of Algerian origin whereas nearly forty percent are of Moroccan descend.¹⁵⁷

Between March 2004 and June 2007, at least 325 Islamists had been arrested in Spain alone. Most of them were Moroccans or Algerians. About thirty of them belonged to the GSPC/AQIM network. Both the Spanish intelligence service CNI and the police are alarmed by AQIM's increased activity. For example, in June 2007, three GSPC/AQIM operatives were arrested in Barcelona. Mohammed Laksir, Mohammed Akazim and Moulay Lahoucine Miftah were involved in a terrorist operation to send young Muslim radicals to small Al-Qaeda training camps in the African Sahel.

It was no coincidence that these terrorists operated from Barcelona: this city is an important base for AQIM and other Islamist terrorists and Salafists.¹⁵⁸

In January 2006, a Moroccan named Omar Naksha was arrested in Spain, accused of recruiting jihadists for Iraq and assisting the Madrid bombing suspects. Spanish authorities linked him to both the GSPC and the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM).¹⁵⁹

In February 2007, Spanish police arrested a high level AQIM operative named Mbar El Jaafari, a Moroccan. Police discovered that Jaafari had sent 35 jihadists to Iraq. He had also sent a number of militant Muslims to new AQIM training camps in the Sahel where the AQIM organization allied itself with local Tuaregs.¹⁶⁰ So far, Spanish police and security services managed to prevent a major AQIM inspired attack on Spanish territory. (These terrorists did make several attempts.)

AQIM has also stepped up its presence and activities in Alicante and southern Spain. There exists an AQIM criminal and terrorist infrastructure consisting of secret cells in Alicante. These Algerian terrorists send money to Algeria, either by special courier or through the so-called "Hawala-system" (Islamic banking). Money is obtained through criminal activities (robberies, etc.), so-called phone centers (or *locutorios*) and is being collected from Islamic shop owners. With less than 6000 euros a car bomb can be made. With the same amount of money friendly Tuaregs in the Sahara desert can be supplied with kalashnikovs. Money from Spain has already been used to finance terrorist attacks not just in North Africa but also in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Chechnya.

To evade tax controls, money has even been transferred via the Bahamas after an Algerian citizen living in Spain opened a business account there. Payments were made after receiving fake bills sent from Holland and Germany.¹⁶¹

In Europe's big cities radical North African and Arab Muslims seek to introduce sharia law in neighborhoods and suburbs where Muslims form a majority. In Brussels-Molenbeek, for example, Salafist Muslims want to establish an Islamic caliphate, others propagate jihad, the holy war against the infidels. Hind Fraihi, a young Muslim women in Brussels, just published a shocking book on her conversations with fellow Muslims in Brussels-Molenbeek and Brussels-Schaarbeek. Fifteen year old Moroccan boys talked about terrorist attacks and suicide bombings as if they were a normal thing. Young men in Brussels are recruited for the jihad and sent to terrorist training camps, she was told by various sources. She was in a mosque in Schaarbeek where a firebrand cleric was calling on the mosque visitors to sacrifice their money and lives in the jihad.¹⁶²

In the summer of 2005 there were two terrorist attacks on the public transport system in London, those on July 7 were successful, the ones on July 21 tried to imitate the July 7 bombings but failed. The 7/7 attacks were carried out by three Pakistanis (well integrated, not poor) and one Jamaican immigrant. At least two of the Pakistanis had previously received training in a terrorist training camp in Pakistan.

There are strong indications that Al-Qaeda was involved in the 7/7 bombings. The July 21 "copycat" attacks were probably not linked to Al-Qaeda. But attention should be focussed on another interesting aspect. Three of the suspects of the failed London bombings were born in Africa, they became jihadists after their arrival in London. Osman Hussain (real name: Hamdi Isaac) and Yasin Hassan Omar were born in Somalia and arrived in Britain in 1992. Mukhtar Said Ibrahim arrived from Eritrea in 1992, and moved in with Omar in 1995/96. He was convicted in 1996 for gang robberies and spent some time in juvenile prisons. After the failed attack on July 21, Osman Hussain fled to Italy where he was arrested (together with his brother who lived in Italy). Italian Interior Minister Giuseppe Pisanu said "Hussain counted on an extensive network from the Horn of Africa in Italy to protect him in his flight from London, through Paris and to Rome."¹⁶³ (Members of Somali clans usually protect each other.) Osman lamely claimed he was not a terrorist, he had no intention to kill anyone, but he had just been "upset" by the presence of British and American troops in Iraq.

10. Radicalized young black people: an important target for jihadist recruiters

There are terrorists and militant Arab, Pakistani or North African “missionaries” who seek to convert and recruit young African and Jamaican males who feel lost, disoriented, lonely and marginalized in Madrid, Barcelona, Rome, Milan, Paris, Marseille, Brussels, Cologne, Berlin, Hamburg, Birmingham or London. Al-Qaeda, too, successfully targeted frustrated and angry African and Jamaican immigrants in Europe. One of them was Richard Reed, the so-called “shoe bomber,” whose father was a Jamaican career criminal in Britain. Another was Tunisian-born Nizar Trabelsi, a former professional soccer player in Germany who became addicted to cocaine and got involved in petty crime. A disillusioned and frustrated man, he moved to Brussels, traveled to London where he visited radical mosques and was subsequently recruited by extremists. He traveled to Afghanistan, even met Osama bin Laden himself and was later convicted in Brussels for his role in a major terrorist plot.

Another example is Feroz Abbasi from Croydon, England. He was born in Uganda and moved to Britain with his mother and family when he was eight. He was brought up a moderate Muslim, was well behaved and well adjusted in school, in short, he was a promising pupil. He took a two year computing course but dropped out of the course halfway through his first year. After a mugging experience in Switzerland he felt frustrated and angry. He now began to search for answers in Islam. In the spring of 2000 he joined London’s radical Finsbury Park mosque where he met the mosque’s preacher Abu Hamza Al-Masri, a follower of Osama bin Laden. The young and enthusiastic Abbasi helped set up a website for a militant Islamic group and then left for Afghanistan. He joined Al-Qaeda and met Abu Hafs Al-Masri (Mohammed Atef), one of Osama bin Laden’s closest aides. Abu Hafs asked him if he would like to take actions against Americans and Jews. Abbasi said yes, and Abu Hafs then said: “Okay, we’ll see about getting you some special training.”¹⁶⁴ Abbasi received his training in the Ubaida and Al-Farooq camps, both near Kandahar. Shortly before September 11, 2001, he heard Osama bin Laden speak to his future fighters. He strongly admired bin Laden and Taliban leader Mullah Omar and liked the “martyrdom operation” against

Massoud.¹⁶⁵ (Massoud was killed by Al-Qaeda operatives on September 9, 2001, as a prelude to the 9/11 attacks.) After the Americans and British invaded Afghanistan in October 2001 Abbasi joined the Taliban fighters and was captured in Kunduz, the last Taliban stronghold. In January 2002 the Americans transferred Abbasi, whom they described as an “enemy combatant,” to Guantanamo Bay, the US naval base in Cuba. In January 2005 Abbasi and four other British detainees were transferred into UK custody and subsequently released. After his release he claimed to have been tortured by the Americans.

The most recent example of a radicalized African male in London is Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab. His sincere and rich Nigerian father sent him to London to study business and finance. It was in London that young and impressionable Abdulmutallab began to visit radical mosques and meet militant Muslims. This tragic example of radicalization and terrorist recruitment has already been discussed above. Whether Abdulmutallab was actually recruited by Al-Qaeda in London, is uncertain. His was probably recruited in Yemen by his Yemeni friend Anwar Al-Awlaki. But his friendship with militant Muslims in London surely paved the way.

The problem is that the British government issues too many student visas to young people from high risk countries such as Pakistan, Iran, Kenya and Nigeria. Al-Qaeda recruiters and the Iranian intelligence service are quite aware of this. “In the 12 months to March 2009 , the government issued 236,470 student visas, a threefold increase on the numbers issued in 1998,” the British “Sunday Express” recently reported. Many of these students don’t even study or they enroll for bogus courses. “For every 110,000 students granted visas for 12 months only 10,000 return home annually.” “Intelligence officers warn the system is a major security loophole.”¹⁶⁶ It is indeed. Thanks to decades of the British displaying “fairness,” tolerant British “multiculturalism” and lax British immigration policies, Britain is now the place to be for jihadist recruiters whose victims all too often are young African or Caribbean students and immigrants.

Islamist terrorism is now by far the greatest threat to national security and two-thirds of the Security Service (MI5) resources are devoted to countering this threat, a recent British study on the history of MI5 concludes. Between July 2005 and February 2008, MI5 disrupted 6 plots to undertake terrorism in Britain. In one of those disrupted Islamist terrorist plots the plotters “had planned to bomb seven flights leaving Heathrow for North American cities during a three-hour period. Suicide

bombers were to detonate explosives concealed in soft-drink bottles, using the flash units on disposable cameras. As well as causing massive loss of life on the scale of 9/11 (even greater if the planes had exploded over cities), the plot would have caused major disruption to transatlantic air travel.”¹⁶⁷

11. Witchcraft and mystical power

“To my knowledge, there is not an African society which does not hold belief in mystical power of one type or another,” writes John S. Mbiti in his authoritative study *African Religions and Philosophy*. “There is mystical power which causes people to walk on fire, to lie on thorns or nails, to send curses or harm, including death, from a distance to change into animals (...) power to make inanimate objects turn into biologically living creatures; there is power that enables experts to see into secrets, hidden information or the future, or to detect thieves and other culprits. African peoples know this and try to apply it in these and other ways.”¹⁶⁸ Sorcery, witchcraft (evil employment of mystical power), evil magicians, witches, medicine-men and priests still play an important role in the life of many Africans. Witchcraft “is part of the religious corpus of beliefs.”¹⁶⁹ There is also a widespread belief in spirits, spirits are blamed for all forms of illness. “Spirit possession occurs in one form or another in practically every African society.”¹⁷⁰ Daniel Etounga-Manguelle from Cameroon puts forward the idea that Africa needs a cultural adjustment program. “A society in which magic and witchcraft flourish today is a sick society ruled by tension, fear and moral disorder.”¹⁷¹ In his view, it is the Africans and their culture which are to be blamed for irrationalism, widespread practices of corruption (“the elites have access to large amounts of money”), inefficient African bureaucracies, tribalism and the negation of the individual. There is also a “propensity to feast that suggests that African societies are structured around pleasure.” “The African works to live but does not live to work.”¹⁷² (In the Summer of 2004 I had a long and friendly conversation with the Sierra Leonan filmmaker Sorious Samoura who emphasized: “It’s easy to blame the West for Africa’s huge problems, but we in Africa must first look at ourselves before we start blaming others.”) The costs of irrationalism, says Etounga-Manguelle, are high: “Sorcery also extends to government. Witch doctors surround African presidents, and nothing that really matters in politics occurs without recourse to witchcraft. Occult counselors, responsible for assuring that authorities keep their power by detecting and neutralizing possible opponents, have power that the most influential Western advisors would envy. The witch doctors often amass

fortunes, and they themselves end up with official designations, enjoying the direct exercise of power.”¹⁷³ Africans believe in the God of the Christians but also in the spirits of their ancestors, says John Ekow Ampsan from Gambia in the German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* (June 2006). “That is why you will see your cross on our tables but under those tables there are shrines for sacrificial offerings.” “Voodoo works. Since we want to be like the white man, we lost our protection.”¹⁷⁴

In his excellent study *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa* Dutch anthropologist Peter Geschiere points out that witchcraft “is not a barrier against change and innovation, on the contrary, there is a constant proliferation of new forms of sorcery or witchcraft that seem, rather, to express determined efforts to appropriate new riches.”¹⁷⁵ In African society, there is no conflict between modernity and witchcraft, and Geschiere found out that the new (urban) elites are also proudly involved in witchcraft or “*djambe*.” *Djambe* affects both village and national politics.¹⁷⁶ “It is not a force reserved for the villagers. The elites make use of it also, and often with more success.”¹⁷⁷ Witchcraft constitutes the essence of (political) power, it can be source of power but it can also curb overly ambitious persons.¹⁷⁸ So-called “healers” play an important role in Africa. In the East Province of Cameroon there is a readiness to bring witchcraft affairs before the state courts but Geschiere doubts if this new state offensive will succeed in breaking the vicious circles of witchcraft discourse.¹⁷⁹ Healers (*nganga* or *onkong*) “now appear before the courts as witnesses for the prosecution.” Judges are willing to support the healers. “Without the testimony of a healer, confirming the accusation, the judges will hardly take interest.” “The judges themselves become entangled in the conspiracies and the traps of the occult forces.”¹⁸⁰ Healers have become even more confident than they already were, “extremely aggressive in their ways of approaching new clients.”¹⁸¹ They are probably more powerful than the state. A number of these healers have emigrated to Europe where they continue their practices.

Geschiere further points out that eating humans (cannibalism) is often linked to witchcraft – both in Cameroon and in Africa more generally.¹⁸² Where such practices occurred the state and the central authorities often intervened to stop them. Modernity and cannibalism can and will never be reconciled, of course, although some post-colonial African dictators did eat human flesh: Emperor Jean-Bedel Bokassa¹⁸³, Idi Amin¹⁸⁴ and Charles Taylor¹⁸⁵; Amin, a Muslim with strong ties to the Arab world, was also frequently consulting witch doctors. Cannibalism is no longer practised as widely as before, nowadays it is quite rare. Geschiere once invited the village elder to his house. This man told him: “Before we ate whites. Now we eat with them.”¹⁸⁶

Although Geschiere largely focusses in Cameroon, much of what he writes applies to other African countries and societies as well.

Migrants from Africa take their views, habits, cultural and social manners with them. For example, Nigerians introduced voodoo practices to Holland, Belgium, Britain and Italy. Young girls from Nigeria are forced into prostitution by Nigerian traffickers and sent to Europe. Before going to Europe such a girl first has to visit a priest or witch doctor who often has sex with her as part of some sort of initiation ritual. Then he cuts her nails and takes some of her pubic hair and performs a magic ritual called voodoo, thus enforcing the girl's loyalty to the criminals who will send her to Europe. The terrified girls are told that they will die should they dare to escape before they paid their debt to the criminal organization.¹⁸⁷

In 2010, a Nigerian criminal gang operating from Holland and Britain was on trial in the Netherlands. The gang was led by Solomon Osaikhwuomwan, born in Benin City, Nigeria on November 1, 1964, and Gilbert Ektor, born in Johannesburg, South Africa, on July 21, 1973. The gang trafficked young Nigerian women to Holland abusing Dutch centers for so-called "Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers" or AMA's. Girls were instructed to lie about their age. After a few weeks in the center the girls were picked up by a gang member and subsequently transferred to Italy and other European countries. During the trial the prosecution said that gang members intimidated these women by using voodoo curses to force them into prostitution. "The victims believe that voodoo priests have power over life and death."¹⁸⁸

In May 2009, Spanish police arrested 23 people across the country. Police said the Nigerian traffickers ring carried out voodoo rituals and black magic to frighten their female victims and keep them under control. "All the money which the women earned was kept by the ring until they had paid off the debt they incurred to make the trip to Spain where they were forced to work as prostitutes."¹⁸⁹

A Nigerian woman named Joana Adesuwa describes in a shocking book on voodoo curses how difficult it was for her to break the witchcraft spell. She also describes a so-called "ritual house" where organs are removed from women and children who are still alive but who die shortly afterwards. Most of the victims are persecuted women and children who are accursed of practising witchcraft. Their organs are then used in magic rituals or sold to others.¹⁹⁰

In Britain and Italy, some – certainly not all! – African migrants have introduced cannibalistic rituals.¹⁹¹ They believe that eating parts of the human body will give them extra powers.

Many African immigrants who arrived in Spain in 2006 had amulets (the “gri-gri”) protecting them against evil and among them were quite a number of Muslims.¹⁹²

12. Polygamy

In African societies individuals do not count. What counts is your ethnic group, tribe and family relationships. In these male-dominated societies polygamy is not uncommon. Marital fidelity is exceptional. Aids in Africa is rampant because of widespread practices of promiscuity and prostitution. Having many wives and girlfriends and lots of children, enhances a man's status among African men (such a guy must be very strong and sexually potent). This is also the typical lifestyle of many – again, certainly not all – Antillians and Jamaicans from the Caribbean who have emigrated to the Netherlands and Britain.¹⁹³

Former Ugandan Health Minister Henry Kyemba makes the following interesting observation about polygamy: “To Europeans and Americans, the idea of having several wives seems strange. There is such a vast cultural gulf between Africans and western nations that the practice is often condemned out of hand by westerners (as we condemn the western custom of extramarital affairs). But in Uganda – indeed in many parts of Africa – the system is long established, and still works as well. In fact, I myself have two wives.”¹⁹⁴ King Mswati III of Swaziland has 13 wives and lots of girlfriends (his father had up to 90 wives and 600 children). Each year the king selects a new and beautiful teen virgin and many Swaziland males want to copy his promiscuous behavior. Queen LaMbikiza, King Mswati's third wife, told the Dutch newspaper “*Trouw*” in August 2006 that polygamy is a way of thinking which must be changed.¹⁹⁵ In societies like these, men see themselves as gods to be adored by as many women as possible. More than 200,000 people and 42,6 percent of the women in Swaziland are HIV infected and the men invariably blame the women for it.

Jacob Zuma, the current president of South Africa, has three wives and 19 children. He also had unprotected sex with a woman who was HIV positive. Promiscuity is widespread in all African countries and societies. In West African countries like Mali and Senegal polygamy is quite common. It is an accepted form of marriage. In Senegal, a Muslim country, 48 percent of married women and 32 percent of married men are in polygamous unions.¹⁹⁶ Women are objects to multiple childbirths. In Mali there are government ministers and ambassadors married to more than two wives.¹⁹⁷ About 90 percent of the population of Mali is sunni

Muslim (There is a strong tradition of religious tolerance in Mali, but fundamentalist Wahhabism is gaining ground.¹⁹⁸) Ancestral practices abound, though, and belief in witchcraft is widespread. In an interview with the BBC in September 2004, state prosecutor Fodie Toure said: “We are getting more cases of everything from people being killed for their organs, to graves being dug up and the bones being stolen, so they can be sold – either in Mali or exported.” Bodies have been found. Their organs have been cut out so that they can be used in human sacrifices.¹⁹⁹ Such primitive religious customs are not in consonance with official Islam, and Mali has strict laws against practices like human sacrifice: anyone found guilty faces the death penalty. But having up to four wives – polygamy – is allowed under Islam.

Many illegal immigrants currently pouring into Spain are from Mali, Mauritania, Senegal and sub-Saharan Africa. Unfortunately, these immigrants do not hesitate to continue their polygamous lifestyle. Ndiaga Diop, a Muslim immigrant from Senegal, arrived in Spain in 1991. He has two wives and six children in Senegal. When Diop applied for Spanish citizenship in 2002, his application was denied by the Ministry of Justice on the grounds that he had more than one wife. This was not in accordance with Spanish “basic social principles.” But Diop then appealed to the National Court of Spain and won. The court ruled that Diop had adapted himself to his new society, that his behavior did not negatively affect the “public order” and that Spanish law respects his convictions. Diop’s defense lawyer Marcelo Quilez was jubilant. “Although he (Diop) was a polygamist, the court granted him Spanish nationality,” he said. Diop was now entitled to bring his two wives and his children into Spain – in the context of “family reunification.”²⁰⁰ In other words, the Spanish National Court kind of legalized polygamy. The court ruling reflects a dangerous trend in Spain and other European countries where Muslim immigrants from North or sub-Saharan African countries are allowed to have more than one wife.

Another Senegalese Muslim immigrant in Spain, Pap Ndiaye, has three two wives, one of them being a Spanish convert to Islam who does not object to polygamy.²⁰¹

Susan Moller Okin, a feminist from the United States, is highly critical of Europe’s lax immigration policies. She makes the following interesting observation about France: “During the 1980s, the French government quietly permitted immigrant men to bring multiple wives into the country, to the point where an estimated 200,000 families in Paris are now polygamous. (...) The French accommodation for polygamy illustrates a deep concern and growing tension between feminism and multiculturalist concern for protecting cultural diversity.”²⁰²

In the past twenty years, thousands of immigrants from Mali settled in France's major cities, particularly in the suburbs of Paris (the so-called "banlieues" or "cités"), and they continue to arrive today in vast numbers. Mali (formerly French Sudan) and Senegal were French colonies and French is still the official language spoken in Mali. There are some 120,000 Malians in France, only 40,000 of whom have a residence permit. Many arrived as illegal immigrants, others in the context of so-called "family reunification." Between 1999 and 2004 there was an unprecedented 45 percent increase in immigration from sub-Saharan African countries.²⁰³

In France polygamy is prohibited by law (since 1993) – as is the case in all western countries. But the ban on polygamy was never seriously enforced, the French government simply being unable and unwilling to do so. Immigrants often invoke their "human right" of family reunification. (In 2003, there were nearly 140,000 immigrants, more than 100,000 of whom arrived in France in the context of family reunification.) There are more than 20,000 polygamous families in France, most are from Africa. It is obvious that these migrants take their cultural and social habits and lifestyle to France, disrupting social life and harmony in the suburbs of Paris and other cities. For quite a long time this was a taboo theme in France.²⁰⁴ Criticizing the cultural and social habits of African migrants was tantamount to racism and xenophobia – even Female Genital Mutilation (see below) was a "cultural practice" you were not supposed to condemn (fortunately, this is no longer so). But in November 2005, France's employment minister Gerhard Larcher said "multiple marriages among immigrants was one reason for the racial discrimination which ethnic groups faced in the job market. Overly large polygamous families sometimes led to anti-social behavior among youths who lacked a father figure, making employers wary of hiring ethnic minorities."²⁰⁵ The men live in apartments with three or four wives and children do not go to school. Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, secretary of the prestigious "Académie Française," sounded desperate when she said in November 2005: "Everybody is wondering: Why are African children in the streets and not in school? Why is it that their parents cannot buy an apartment? It is obvious why: Many of these Africans are polygamists. In one apartment there are three to four wives and 25 children. These apartments are so cramped that you cannot call them apartments any longer. God knows what they are! Now we understand why these kids are roaming the streets."²⁰⁶ Critics said Carrère d'Encausse was "stigmatizing" the African community.²⁰⁷

Polygamous families from Mali and other African countries have become real clans intimidating anyone who dares to oppose them. The total number of people involved is somewhere between 150,000- and 300,000. Some of the polygamous Malian immigrants have more than twenty children most of whom have been trained in street crime. They cost the French taxpayer 300 million Euros a year in welfare payments and health costs. (The more children you have, the more money you get.) Many Malian men have a wife in Paris as well as in Mali. Without divorcing their first wife, they can easily marry a second or third time, as so-called “Islamic marriages” are considered legal in Islam, even when such marriages are not recognized by the secular state. Immigration rules have been violated by men who enter France (or Spain) as so-called single men who are not single at all. In France they marry a local woman who has a residence permit. Mosques and imams fully cooperate, imams in Parisian suburbs are even willing to perform wedding ceremonies in cramped apartments with the men in one room and the women in the other.²⁰⁸ Abdoulaye Doumbia, President of the “High Council of Malians in France,” justifies polygamy as “an ancient custom.” Monogamy should not be imposed on Africans, he says. French authorities are afraid to really enforce the ban on polygamy. It would lead to serious disturbances. Another Malian in France (with two to wives) says: God allows us to do so. We have to the right to have four wives.”²⁰⁹

The Paris suburb of Montreuil is now called the “first Malian city in France.” In Montreuil there are some 6000 Malians, one thousand of whom are polygamous. In the small suburb of Val-Fourré there are 75 polygamous families. Local authorities tried to solve the problem by finding an apartment for each wife but it just did not work.²¹⁰ The secular French Republic has lost the battle and everyone knows it. Native French are no longer safe in their own street, their own city, their own country. The huge problems in the suburbs will not be solved when immigrants continue to live and behave as if they were still in Africa. Indeed, this kind of arrogant attitude is the root cause of the problem.

I am familiar with the case story of man from a sub-Saharan African country whose application for political asylum in the Netherlands failed. For six years or so he managed to survive working as an illegal immigrant. At regular intervals he sent few hundred Euros to his wife and relatives in Africa. But last year Dutch immigration authorities sent him back to his home country. As a matter of fact, our African friend was quite happy to be back and see his wife and child again. But his relatives were not so happy. One of his relatives had more than one wife to support, and now the money flow from Europe had suddenly stopped. By sending money to his family back in Africa, our illegal immigrant in

Holland was supporting polygamous relationships in his home country. We may pity these illegal immigrants and we may be inclined to help them by giving them a job, but polygamy in Africa not something we should promote.

13. Police no longer in control of rising crime in the Parisian suburbs

In France, quite a number of African and North African youngsters are organized in criminal and violent gangs (so-called *bandes*) which control streets and neighborhoods. These youngsters are largely responsible for the riots in the French suburbs in October/November 2005 when more than 10,000 cars were set on fire. The damage to the infrastructure amounted to 250 million euros.²¹¹ A French police report on the 436 gang leaders who were detained in the Autumn of 2005, finds that 67 percent of them had a North African background, 17 percent originated from Africa, and 9 percent was native French.²¹² The report was criticized by “*SOS Racism*” for mentioning the ethnic origin of the detained.

But in the suburbs of Paris there is a new kind of racism aimed at “white Europeans.” Native French are afraid of 13-year old boys some of whom have knives. (During the riots last year violent youths set a woman afire, killed a man, frequently attacked the police, causing injuries to quite a few policemen.) Native French are now in a minority in the suburbs, they are intimidated and threatened, even beaten up. “You must not look at them,” a 47-year old Frenchman told the French newspaper *Le Monde*. “If you do they may regard this as a provocation.” And a 58-year old French woman told the newspaper: “I take the dog out for a walk in the afternoon. I then return home and lock myself up. There are gangs in the street which threaten us. I am afraid. There are too many immigrants here. There would be no problem if they were quiet, if they were educated. The problem is, each time when 2000 of them are leaving some 3000 new ones are arriving.”²¹³

In February 2006, a 23-year old Parisian Jew named Ilan Halimi was kidnapped, tortured and murdered by an extortion gang from the suburb of Bagneux. The gang included Muslims of North African descent and was headed by Youssef Fofana, an immigrant from Ivory Coast. They proudly called themselves “the Barbarians.” The gang kept Halimi naked and tied up for weeks. They cut him and in the end poured flammable liquid on him and set him alight.²¹⁴ The brutal killing of Halimi was widely publicized, Fofana panicked and fled to Ivory Coast, his native country. He was arrested and subsequently expelled to France. Fofana,

too, was a man of many women. When he was interviewed by French television in his prison cell in Abidjan, the capital of Ivory Coast, a young local girl was with him all the time. During house searches police discovered Salafist material, some gang members obviously sympathized with extreme religious ideas.²¹⁵

The police are also targeted by these African and North African youth gangs. In September 2006 two policemen were attacked by a group of twenty aggressive youngsters in the problematic Paris suburb of Tartarêts (Essonne). One of the policemen was beaten with an iron bar. After suffering a double skull fracture he had to be taken to the hospital to be operated immediately. He lost one eye. The other policeman was only lightly wounded. It turned out that the group had been lying in ambush for the two policemen. “We doubted that we would survive,” the lightly wounded policeman told a press conference. “They wanted to kill them,” a police union official declared.²¹⁶ In September 2006, three (North African?) youngsters from the equally problematic suburb of Sevrans (Seine-Saint-Denis) were interviewed by Saskia Dekkers, a Dutch TV reporter in France. They said that what happened in Tartarêt was not unique. It could also happen in Sevrans. “Sure, even worse things could happen here,” one of them said. Another youngster said the policeman in the hospital had been lucky (he could have been dead). “They should lock these people up and not release them,” he said. (This refers to the practice of the overloaded Parisian courts to release many of those involved in riots and acts of violence in the suburbs.) Police unions do not hesitate to speak of an “urban guerrilla” in these suburbs. It is so dangerous there that policemen are now afraid of patrolling the streets. “There are high-rise buildings,” a spokesman for one of the police unions told Saskia Dekkers. “Quite often they throw fridges, stones, and even blocks of concrete from their balconies above in an attempt to kill you.”²¹⁷ Early October 2006, some 200 aggressive youngsters attacked the police in the Paris suburb of Les Mureaux. It happened after a frequent offender had been arrested. Once again policemen had to flee for their lives. The police were shocked at the level of violence.²¹⁸ One year after the riots, tensions still run high in the Paris suburbs, the authorities very much fear a new and massive outburst of violence. The police claim that many aggressive youngsters feel they are now above the law, nobody can do anything to them, they control the streets – certainly at night. “Often they have not been arrested or punished sufficiently,” a police union spokesman told Saskia Dekkers. The local mayor says that the situation in Sevrans resembles a state of emergency (*l'état d'urgence*).

Describing the situation as “explosive,” Jean-François Cordet, the Prefect of Seine-Saint-Denis, says crime has risen dramatically. There is, for

example, a 16 percent increase in armed robberies and a 22 percent increase in theft with violence. Minors are responsible for nearly 50 percent of the crimes. The courts do not sufficiently and effectively punish them, Cordet claims. Of the 1651 delinquent minors who appeared before the local court of Bobigny in 2005, only 132 were convicted. Consequently, these minors now feel they can act with impunity (“*le sentiment d’impunité prévaut*”).²¹⁹ The police become increasingly demotivated: they arrest many delinquent minors and a few days or weeks later the courts often release them. (This, by the way, is also a very serious problem in Belgium, especially in Antwerp and Brussels, and in Britain.) There was an outcry when French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy criticized what he called “the laxity of the courts” in convicting frequent offenders. Even president Jacques Chirac²²⁰ and Prime Minister Dominique de Villepain said Sarkozy’s remarks were not justified. “The whole government is aware of the fact that the judges are facing a difficult task,” De Villepain said.²²¹ But Sarkozy insisted he had only expressed what most French are thinking: “Who is my judge? The people of France!”²²² And in an interview with the French magazine *l’Express* the Interior Minister said: “I don’t want the order (established system) of the mafias or the bearded men (radical Muslims), I want the order of the Republic.”²²³

Another major problem that worries authorities like the Prefect of Seine-Saint-Denis is the rapid rise radical Islam in the suburbs. Radical imams from Chad, Algeria, Syria and Pakistan have been recruiting young people for the jihad in Iraq, Afghanistan or Chechnya. In September 2006 the French government intended to expell eleven of these imams to their conuntries of origin. They preach violence and hatred, a report from the French anti-terrorist unit UCLAT said.²²⁴

14. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and gang rapes

Another problem is Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), a practice widely spread in Somalia, Sudan, Egypt, Mali, Mauritania and North Nigeria. In Senegal up to 20 percent of girls undergo FGM, despite a government ban. The World Health Organization estimates that FGM has affected between 100 and 140 million women and girls in 28 African countries (although some of these women and girls live in Asia and the Middle East), and the numbers continue to rise at a rate of approximately 2 million per year.²²⁵ The practice of FGM is also increasingly found in Europe, Australia, Canada and the USA, primarily among immigrants from these countries. For example, in 1995 it was estimated in France that 20,000 women and 12,500 girls have either suffered Female Genital Mutilation or will do so. Of these, 90 percent live in the Paris region; most are from Mali, a few from Senegal.²²⁶ Given the recent influx of immigrants from Mali, Mauritania and Senegal the numbers could be even be higher now.

There are different kinds of FGM or female circumcision: The “Sunna,” consisting of the excision of the prepuce of the clitoris (Egypt), the “clitoridectomy,” consisting of the excision of the clitoris sometimes with parts of the minor labia, and the “infibulation operation” which means excision of the whole clitoris, the minor labia and the internal faces of the major labia. The remains of the major labia are then stitched together and a small opening left at the lowermost part of the vulva.²²⁷ (Widely practiced in Somalia and Sudan.) “The large numbers of Africans who have emigrated to Europe and the United States have taken the practice with them,” says a Somali woman named Waris Dirie in her shocking book *Desert Flower*.²²⁸ She herself endured this ancient and savage custom at the age of five. Dirie: “The practice is simply promoted and demanded by men – ignorant, selfish men – who want to ensure their ownership of their woman’s sexual favors. They demand their wives to be circumcised. The mothers comply by circumcising their daughters, for fear their daughters will have no husbands. An uncircumcised woman is regarded as dirty, oversexed, and unmarriageable. In a nomadic culture like the one I was raised in, there is no place for an unmarried woman. (...) There is no reason for the mutilation of millions of girls to occur every year except ignorance and superstition. And their legacy of pain,

suffering, and death that results from it is more than enough reason for it to stop.”²²⁹

In many male dominated African societies and cultures women are seen as objects for sexual pleasure. On the final page of her book Dirie writes: “Since women are the backbone of Africa, and they do most of the work, I like to imagine how much they could accomplish if they weren’t butchered as children and left to function maimed for the rest of their lives.”²³⁰

In a number of African countries (South Africa, Sudan, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Rwanda, Congo) many women are victims of rape, especially group or gang rape. In post-Apartheid South Africa more women are raped than anywhere else in the world (every 85 seconds a woman is raped) which is one of the main reasons South Africa has the world’s highest rate of HIV infections. In Europe, North African, African and Caribbean youth gangs are responsible for the rising incidence of group rapes. The victims are often (but by no means exclusively) white European women. In Britain, Scotland Yard reported: “Suspects of African and Caribbean appearance were identified in 49 percent of attacks. A further 13 percent were committed by men of Indian/Pakistani appearance.”²³¹ In England gang rapes and “jack rolling” (gangs of youths in cars block off streets and rape every woman caught in their net) were introduced into Britain by young blacks from Jamaica and South Africa.²³² In court the rapists usually deny everything, claiming that the women they raped wanted sex themselves. They often intimidate and threaten their victims and their family members if they go to the police.

Gang rapes in the suburbs of Paris have been described in Samira Bellil’s book *Dans l’Enfer des Tournantes* (2002). She was frequently gang raped herself by youngsters of North African descent living in the Parisian suburbs. Her case shows that second generation Muslim female immigrants are also targeted by these extremely violent groups and gangs. Any woman who dares to resist the dominance of these local youth gangs can be raped or even killed. Samira Bellil describes how women are being gang raped in basements. The *cités* (suburbs) are full of North African and African *machos*, the only thing they learn at home and in the street is that men are the masters of the women. Women have to oblige all the time.²³³ Reporting to the police is out of the question. Women like Samira Bellil who take such a step face serious consequences.²³⁴ The young gangsters threaten to set their apartment on fire, they intimidate parents (after receiving many threats Samira’s parents had to sell their apartment in Pierrefitte), sometimes they even kill their victim. There is no lack of guns and knives, no lack of

aggressive young men seeking revenge. You are not supposed to break the rules of the cités.

“Enjoy your drink, finish your glass quickly, because this will be your last,” two Cape Verdian killers said just before they used their machine guns in a pub in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Pub owner Alberto Jose Frances, a Cape Verdian immigrant himself, and two visitors died instantly, the woman in the bar was seriously wounded and will be handicapped for life. Some local Cape Verdian gang leader wanted money from a man named Brian, but Brian had left the pub shortly before the killing commando entered it.²³⁵

In the Rotterdam, Cape Verdian and Antillean (from the Netherlands Antilles) gangs have a notorious reputation. They carry arms and intimidate others, especially people whose skins are white. Claiming to be victims of racial discrimination they display racist views themselves, are extremely arrogant and violent – those who dare to contradict them will be severely beaten or killed. Their special skills are rape, gang rapes and prostitution. One of the gangs proudly calls itself the “Cabo Pimp Unit” (CPU), another is called the “G-Unit” (Gorilla-Unit). They are inspired by rap music and music channels like “The Box” and “TMF” which show sensual girls wanting sex with black men.²³⁶ In Rotterdam 50 percent of the Cape Verdian girls is raped or sexually abused by their father. In September 2005, a court in Rotterdam condemned a group of twelve boys who had gang raped a 13 year old girl. The youngest gang rapist was only 9 years old.²³⁷ Girls are seen as objects for pleasure. This is not something unique. It is part of the youth culture in Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles (where most Antillean youths in Holland originally come from), Jamaica and South Africa. There is a pattern of single parent families, macho fathers who are often absent, mothers defending their sons’ crimes, lack of proper education and money is made through crime or prostitution. For most of these gang rapists – often minors younger than 18 – rape is a leisure, a game.²³⁸

15. Importing Aids, tuberculosis and other contagious diseases

Depending on the country of origin 4 to 15 percent of the young undocumented Africans arriving in Spain, Italy and Greece must be HIV infected. In a Muslim country like Mali the infection rate among 15 to 19 year old is 3.4 percent, the infection rate among the 20 tot 23 year old is 3.8 percent (2005).²³⁹ The adult prevalence of HIV infections in Senegal and Mauritania is between 0.5 and 1.0 percent, in Ivory Coast it is 5 to 15 percent, in South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique it is 15 to 34 percent (UNAIDS, 2006). “In Senegal the number of women with HIV quadrupled between 1989 and 2004,” writes John Iliffe in his study *The African Aids Epidemic*.²⁴⁰ “In Nigeria individual states within the federation recorded a prevalence up to 12 percent, and even the official figure implied that over three million Nigerians were infected, the largest number in the continent outside South Africa. “The epidemic in Nigeria is now common in the general population,” a policy document warned in 2003.”²⁴¹ The situation in Cameroon (a prevalence up to 11 percent) is equally alarming. Uganda, however, has been very successful in curbing the epidemic. In Kenya and a number of other African countries prevalence appears to have stabilized in the early 2000s.²⁴²

Many African men do not like condoms, even if women ask them to use them. Polygamy also promotes the spread of Aids. Finally, there is a widespread irrational belief in Africa that Aids can be cured by magic or having sex with teen-age virgins (the more the better), or eating and drinking according to a regulated or prescribed system. The latter is advocated by South-Africa’s former Minister of Health, Mrs. Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, who claimed that garlic, African potatoes and olive oil can cure the disease.²⁴³ A man named George Ngobo heeded the minister’s advice, but he soon discovered it did not work and now he takes retroviral drugs. There are some 5,5 million South Africans with HIV/Aids. The UN Special Envoy says the minister’s theories are more worthy of a lunatic fringe than of a concerned and compassionate state. The South African Medical Association says the minister’s theories are criminal.²⁴⁴ Mrs. Tshabalala-Msimang was responsible for the death of at least 300,000 black South Africans.²⁴⁵ Indeed, her policies were even more disastrous those of the apartheid regime. But she had a powerful ally in South Africa’s former president Thabo Mbeki who believed that

Aids is not caused by a virus. At the International Aids Conference at Durban in July 2000 Mbeki argued that the real problem was poverty.²⁴⁶ (On many occasions Mbeki clashed with his predecessor, the much more admirable Nelson Mandela who holds quite different views.) In 2004 Mbeki said he will not keep quiet about “others whose minds have been corrupted by the disease of racism,” implying that those who linked HIV/Aids to sexual promiscuity were racist.²⁴⁷ This kind of arguing reminds us of Robert Mugabe, the man who made a good start but later ruined Zimbabwe. After Mbeki was belatedly forced out of office in 2008, the foolish woman who was his health minister had to go as well. She died in December 2009.

The rapid influx of sub-Saharan Africans, most of whom are young and sexually active males, is bound to result in an increase of HIV infections in Europe, especially in Spain, Italy and Greece. Many African illegal immigrants are also carriers of other diseases, notably yellow fever, tuberculosis, malaria, gonorrhoea, syphilis or scabies. In Spain and the Canary Islands policemen handling the arrival of illegal immigrants from Africa are wearing protective nose and mouth caps against contagious diseases. Illegal immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa are not *routinely* tested for HIV, tuberculosis and other diseases. Yet, between March and Mid-September 2006, exactly 10,947 illegal immigrants who had arrived in the Canary Islands have been tested for HIV/Aids, syphilis, hepatitis B and C. (This was done at the request of the Spanish Interior Ministry.) A quarter (25 percent) of those who had been tested turned out to be infected with either of these sexually transmitted diseases (STD's): the number of those infected with hepatitis B was 2,288, the number of those infected with hepatitis C was 235, the number of those infected with syphilis was 158 and the number of HIV infections was 68.²⁴⁸ These are highly worrying figures. Spanish police unions have expressed concern especially since none of the Africans has been tested for tuberculosis, typhus, yellow fever, dengue fever, Ebola, meningitis and giardiasis (a diarrheal illness caused by a one-celled microscopic parasite).

On August 19, 2006, a group of 132 Africans arrived in the Canary island of El Hierro. After one of them indicated that he had contracted tuberculosis, the whole group was taken to a sport complex and medically examined. It turned out that 46 of them reacted positively to the Mantoux test. Doctors emphasized, however, that none of them showed any symptoms of the disease yet. Local authorities decided to transfer 90 of these immigrants to the Canary island of Tenerife. But two shipping companies refused to take them aboard. The management of the

companies argued that the health and security risks for the crew and the passengers were too high. They wanted a one hundred percent guarantee about the health condition of the Africans, and no such guarantee had been given, they claimed.²⁴⁹

Medical experts in Africa and Europe are very worried about the increasing prevalence of resistant forms tuberculosis or “extreme tuberculosis”) in Africa, especially in South Africa. Many African tuberculosis and HIV patients do not take the full prescribed course of antibiotics.²⁵⁰ As soon as they feel better, they think it is no longer necessary or they take the advice of some healer and this, of course, results into even more serious health problems. “In Africa, active tuberculosis cases are rising by 4 percent a year, largely because HIV activates latent TB infection.”²⁵¹

16. Concluding comments

It must be emphasized that the majority of immigrants from Africa are decent, honest and hard working citizens, not involved in crime, terrorism or witchcraft. People like the parents of Damilola Taylor, a young Christian boy who was murdered so brutally. Or people like the African immigrants I met in Hamburg who told me in fluent German that they detested the African drug dealers operating in the city. It is also true that black Africans in Europe are often subjected to discrimination. Some of them have been attacked or even killed by Neo-Nazi groups. For example, 39-year old Mozambican Alberto Adriano was brutally murdered by Neo-Nazi skinheads in East Germany in June 2000. Such despicable acts must be strongly condemned and the perpetrators must be severely punished. There is no justification whatsoever for discrimination, violence or killings. I am in favor of prohibiting Neo-Nazi parties (like the German NPD) and Neo-Nazi groups. Such political parties should not be able to participate in elections. I would not call the Belgian *Vlaams Belang* (Flemish Interest) a typical Neo-Nazi party. Consequently, a ban is not justified in this particular case, it may even be counterproductive. However, their nationalism is extreme and must be repudiated. Flemish Interest undermines the unity of the federal Belgian state and they still tend to be rather xenophobic. There are other parties in Belgium like the Christian Democrats and the Liberal Party that also advocate tougher immigration policies now but they are not as nationalistic as Flemish Interest is.

The problem is *not* the presence of immigrants from Africa. Those who are legally here, those who are working or studying usually pose no problem. The *real* problem which European governments face today is what the German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* describes as the *Ansturm der Armen*, the *invasion* of the poor.²⁵² It is the sheer number of undocumented illegal immigrants from Africa as well as the African criminal trafficking networks that directly threaten the security and stability of Europe. This unprecedented mass exodus from Africa will only serve to heighten already existing racial tensions in Europe. It has already resulted in a rapid increase in crime and violence in Europe's inner cities. It is true, not all illegal African immigrants are HIV positive, not all of them are involved in crime, terrorism or witchcraft, not all of

them are married to more than one wife, but a relatively high proportion of them really are. Any measures taken by European governments to stop the *mass exodus* from Africa are therefore welcome. Any state has the right to defend its territory and borders against invasions of this kind. How would Zimbabwe react if 2 million poor Russians from Siberia or the Ural Mountains would cross the border and, claiming to be refugees, simply refuse to go back? By far most migrants from Africa are economic migrants.

Even a small country like Israel is now taking measures to restrict the number of illegal economic immigrants from Africa. The criminal African trafficking networks see Israel as part of the Western world. Most illegal immigrants enter Israel via Egypt. It is posing a growing security threat as African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Mali, Mauretania, Kenia, Tanzania Somalia, Eritrea, Morocco and Algeria are significant source countries of criminals and terrorists who operate on an international scale.

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Related articles from Emerson Vermaat (internet):

- ***Out of Africa: Illegal immigrants, crime, terrorism, polygamy and Aids, Militant Islam Monitor, August 29, 2006.***
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Footnotes

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