## Former US State Secretary Tillerson's Visit to Africa was only Focused on Spilling More Muslim Blood in the Name of Counter-Terrorism Initiatives By: Ali Nassoro Ali\*

The visit was publicized by a senior State Department official as a follow-up to Secretary Tillerson's hastily-arranged and poorly-attended meeting with African foreign ministers in Washington in November 2017. Although the ministerial meeting covered trade, development and security issues. Tillerson's last trip was heavily focused on security cooperation and America's support to its key African partners in the fight against al Shabaab in Somalia and Boko Haram in north-eastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad region.

Donald Trump's policy of making 'America First' is meant to view all other players either allies or foes as pawns in America's global political ambitious chess game with him as the chess master. With such a policy in mind America must stamp its authority and be viewed as the global security guarantor. To that extent revamping and re-engineering its policy number one which is to ensure that Islam as an alternative ideology does not rise against that of the secular capitalist which US and its allies are struggling to keep it afloat due to its imminent collapse. America has resolved to visit its African stooges the so-called key partners in the war against terror with a proposal to each of the partners as follows:

**First**, Ethiopia, which has the region's largest and most effective army, has been fighting al Shabaab since 2008. The country is experiencing serious political tension and uncertainty, but Tillerson's focus in Addis was dominated by security concerns. He used his visit to reaffirm U.S. support for the government, and to caution the government not to allow domestic political issues to distract from its counter-terrorism efforts in the region.

**Second**, Djibouti, a tiny country with a population of less than one million, has served as the hub of American military operations in the region. Strategically located north of Somalia and across the Red Sea from war-torn Yemen. Djibouti is home to several thousand U.S. forces at Camp Lemonnier, the largest concentration of U.S. soldiers in Africa. As long as al Shabaab remains a threat in Somalia, Camp Lemonnier will be a keystone in the U.S. defense network in the region. Tillerson's visit to Djibouti was intended to counter China's growing influence and presence in that country. In the past decade, China has pumped millions of dollars into the tiny enclave and has been actively repositioning itself to be Djibouti's number one development and security partner. Beijing recently completed two major projects in Djibouti: a multi-million dollar rail line into landlocked Ethiopia and China's first overseas military base, a sprawling complex that rivals that of the United States

**Third**, Kenya, which has been the target of several horrific al Shabaab terrorist attacks, has several thousand troops in Somalia as a part of AMISOM. Recently AU's mission in Somalia, Amisom, to which the Kenya Defence Forces are apart, admitted its timeline of withdrawing from Somalia by 2020 is unrealistic. Tillerson went to reassure Kenya, America's oldest security partner in the region, of Washington's continued military, intelligence and funding support to remain and keep fighting in Somalia.

**Fourth**, Nigeria, the U.S-Nigeria security relations have not always been smooth and Nigerian officials have chafed at past American restrictions on the purchase and acquisition of U.S. military equipment, especially aviation assets. Tillerson went to reaffirm American support for Nigeria while encouraging officials to intensify their fight against Boko Haram and to enhance their coordination with states in the region where Boko Haram is operating.

**Fifth**, Chad, the most effective member of the G-5, the five nation regional anti-terrorism network operating against Boko Haram in the region, Chad has been shamed and singled out by the Trump administration as one of the eight, largely Muslim states whose citizens are subject to a ban on travel to the United States. Tillerson went to thank Chadian officials for the role they are playing in fighting Boko Haram while quietly reassuring them that the State Department will do all it can to have Chad removed from the list of countries affected by the travel ban.

In Conclusion, despite the numerous attempts by the bloody-hands of the American leadership and its allies to shore up their invalid secular capitalist ideology from collapsing, the Muslim Ummah will remain steadfast and refute all false callers who are against its awakening and embracement of the Khilafah Project which is soon to be re-establish based on the Prophet (saw) methodology by the blessing and support of Allah (swt). إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾ "Indeed, the disbelievers will not succeed." [Al-Muminoon: 117]

\*Member of the Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir in Kenya

\* Written for Ar-Rayah Newspaper – Issue 174