WEST AFRICA'S TERRORIST CHALLENGE

Linkages of terrorist groups in West Africa with terrorist networks in other African regions

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COUNTER EXTREMISM PROJECT

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Executive Summary

- **This policy paper summarizes the current state of affairs regarding the linkages of terrorist groups in West Africa with terrorist networks in other African regions. It also provides recommendations for policymakers and security agencies.**

- The paper looks at linkages of JNIM, IS West Africa Province (ISWAP), and IS in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) with terrorist groups in North, West-Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa.

- In West Africa, ISWAP's activities have been regionally confined to Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. There is no indication that ISWAP intends to expand its territorial base beyond these countries or that it has any transregional linkage with terrorist groups in other parts of Africa.

- **JNIM and ISGS have demonstrated that they possess the intention and capability of regional expansion across West Africa.** Increasing attacks further southwards in West Africa and their presence in the neighboring regions of Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, and Benin suggests that both groups intend to expand their geographical zone of influence to the Gulf of Guinea. **There is, however, no indication of either JNIM or ISGS forming a transregional linkage with terrorist groups in other African sub-regions.**

- In North, West-Central, East, and Southern Africa, there are also currently no indications that terrorist groups have developed linkages with other terrorist networks beyond their own region.

- **Terrorist groups in West Africa are pragmatic in their approach to collaborations. Their choice of network linkages is guided by local dynamics and their own particular agenda rather than ideology.** Hence, existing linkages are driven by the involvement in transnational organized crime (TNCO), potential financial gains as well as the potential of financing terrorism via local and international sources, training of fighters, foreign terrorist fighters from other African countries, and weapons smuggling and use of small arms and light weapons (SALWs).

Recommendations

The changing patterns of attacks conducted by terrorist groups across Africa has made it obvious that terrorist networks as part of their evolving tactics, some of these groups are operating trans-regionally and in some cases are also operating in collaboration with other terrorist networks. **This requires a recalibrating of security and policy measures by African countries, their regional and continental bodies, and foreign national partners in identifying pragmatic methods of addressing the expansion of terrorist networks across the African continent.** One such potential measure which could be implemented could be via the harmonization of policies across the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) member state countries to enforce uniform border control and security measures. This is especially pertinent because of the expansion of active terrorist hotspots across the Sahel region further southwards to the coastal countries in West Africa. The utilization of unmanned border routes and territories by terrorist networks in different parts of West Africa also calls for more concerted efforts to empower regional

multi-national task forces charged with the policing of regional borders and the overall security of the region. **Increased partnership, both regionally and with European partners, is also required to identify and draw on the expertise of local stakeholders.** It is also important to leverage the gravitas of European stakeholders on the continent to help put in place counterterrorism (CT) policies along with promoting governance reforms in West African countries.

- **Harmonizing policies across the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) member countries to enable more effective border control.**
- **Reactivating the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).**
- **Advancing CT policies together with governance reforms**. Active encouragement and participation in fostering good governance, democratic rule, and political stability in West African countries should contribute to disincentivizing local insurgencies in the long term.
- **Increasing opportunities for active engagement with local stakeholders.** The objective should be to gain a nuanced understanding of local grievances as well as liaise with strategic actors who can act as facilitators within their respective constituencies to assist in propagating counter-extremism measures and initiatives.
- **Further strengthening African-African and African-European partnerships on foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) by developing a continental FTF database.**
- **Re-examining the Algiers Accord to increase stakeholder buy-in.**

Introduction

In recent years, terrorist groups have evolved in terms of their networks, modes of attacks, and geographical scope of operations in the West Africa sub-region. For example, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, and the border regions of Togo and Benin have come under increasingly frequent jihadi-terrorist attacks. A study of the pattern of terrorist attacks across West Africa over the last five years suggests a gradual move from Northwest Africa's Sahel region further southward. An overview of the shifts in the modes of terrorist groups such as Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin' (JNIM) and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) in West Africa indicates their interest in expansion. **This situation calls for a consideration of potential wider transregional linkages of these terrorist groups with other terrorist networks operational in North, Central, and East Africa.**

Driving Factors for Terrorist Groups in West Africa

There are various factors that are driving the development of terrorist groups in West Africa, with the most important ones being the following:

Economic instability and military coups: While various parts of the African continent have experienced different forms of political and economic upheavals over the last decade, a disproportionate number of political incidences in that period have largely occurred in the West African sub-region. More specifically, a number of West African countries, such as Guinea, Burkina Faso, and Mali, have all experienced military coups over the last five years (excluding attempted coups in Chad, Guinea Bissau, and Niger). **The political and economic instability caused by these coups has had a region-wide spiraling effect across other West African states.** It is within the context of violent coup d'états, counter-coups, attempted coups, and the attendant political and economic uncertainty they have triggered in the sub-region that terrorist groups and networks have both emerged and made inroads from the Sahel southwards in West Africa.

Economic marginalization: Excluding the recent global economic downturn, West Africa has over the last two decades grappled with its own unique problems. Specific challenges include economic underdevelopment, high poverty rates, high mortality rates, and environmental factors (such as desertification, droughts, and water scarcity).[1] These factors have acted as major drivers behind the rise in jihadist attacks across West Africa and the spread of terrorist networks in the sub-region. The response by respective governments and regimes in West African states to these economic issues and local perception of the state's response or lack of response has had a couple of effects. First, it has allowed for a susceptibility of economically marginalized local populations to different terrorist networks. Second, the relative success of the different active terrorist groups across West Africa can be connected to the adaptability of their local networks, enabling their ideology to resonate with the specific socio-economic and socio-political contexts of their local bases.

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Globalization and the spread of extremist ideology: **Globalization along with the advent of modern technology has eased connectivity and bridged the communication between people regardless of their location. Conversely, it has equally proven advantageous for the spread of extremist doctrines by radical Islamist groups and ideologues in the Middle East to both the urban and hinterland areas of sub-Saharan Africa.** In addition to this, West Africa has a unique history of revolts against the state/status quo led by Islamic ideologues (such as Uthman Dan Fodio), dating back to the pre-colonial era.[2] Terrorist groups in the region, such as ISWAP, have relied on this history in their messages [3] to both rationalize their activities as well as to make their ideology resonate with the local population in the Lake Chad axis (encompassing Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria). Other terrorist groups in West Africa, such as JNIM and ISGS, have been able to extend their networks across the Sahel from Mali further southwards to Burkina Faso by capitalizing on long-held inter-group and inter-ethnic rivalries [4] to recruit more members from one of the opposing sides.

Specificities of ISWAP, JNIM und ISGS

A brief overview of local context and factors of the terrorist groups relevant for this paper allows for an adequate assessment of their capabilities and limitations regarding potential linkages with terrorist networks in other African sub-regions.

Firstly, **ISWAP is mostly active in the Chad Basin**, i.e., Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon.[5] **ISWAP's core membership base is transnational**. As such, their recruits are drawn from the four aforementioned West-Central African countries which all border Lake Chad. ISWAP's membership is mainly comprised of Muslims from the Kanuri ethno-linguistic group.[6] Kanuris are indigenous to Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. Consequently, ISWAP's activities have been regionally confined to these four countries. There is, so far, no indication that it intends to expand its territorial base. Although, there are indications that suggest that ISWAP and ISGS cooperate where the sharing of information is concerned, for propaganda and other purposes. ISWAP's limited geographical network is also responsible for its relative success in the Lake Chad axis over the last 13 years. ISWAP's recruitment has been limited to the countries bordering Lake Chad, where it adapts its rhetoric and messaging very well to the changing socio-political situations in the region.[7]

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Unlike ISWAP, JNIM and ISGS have demonstrated that they both possess the intention and capability of regional expansion across West Africa. JNIM's emergence as a single terrorist network from the merger between AQIM, one faction of Al-Murabitoun, Ansar al Din, and the

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Macina Liberation Front (MLF) has already increased its expansion capabilities in West Africa. Although JNIM is mainly operational in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger, it has begun staging attacks in border areas of Togo, Benin, and Ivory Coast in recent years.[8] The pattern of increasing attacks by JNIM and ISGS further southwards in West Africa coupled with evidence of their presence in the neighboring regions of Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, and Benin supports intelligence reports claim that both JNIM and ISGS have the intention of expanding their geographical zone of influence to the Gulf of Guinea[9].

Similar to ISWAP's actions in the Lake Chad Basin, **JNIM and ISGS have both capitalized on local rivalries and grievances against the state to gain the support of the local populations in their respective territories.** JNIM has been able to consolidate its territorial control by inserting itself into local conflicts in Mali and Burkina Faso and has continued to expand its reach to neighboring countries. Clashes have occurred between JNIM and ISGS fighters over territorial control in Mali and Burkina Faso.[10] Although the two terrorist groups share similar ideologies, JNIM is affiliated with AQIM while ISGS belongs to the IS franchise in Africa.[11] ISWAP, also, rarely targets "foreign" interests,[12] which is indicative of its more insular long-term strategy in the Chad Basin as opposed to the expansionist strategy of other active terrorist groups in West Africa. However, Ansaru, which is a splinter faction of Boko Haram/ISWAP, targets foreign interests and has been involved in the abduction of foreign workers in the region in the past. Ansaru has, also, pledged its allegiance to JNIM.[13] Additionally, Ansaru's operational capacity is limited, and it is unknown if the group is still active enough to be capable of a transregional linkage with other terrorist networks.

Globalist versus Localist: Analyzing linkages among terrorist groups

Based on existing debates on local, global, and "glocal" linkages among terrorist groups in Africa, it is also important to consider existing frameworks to understand emergence of terrorist networks. Researchers are mainly divided in their analyses and disagree concerning the extent to which terrorist groups in Africa operate in collaboration with other terrorist groups, both within and beyond Africa. The more common approach adopted is the globalist analysis.[14] Researchers who use this approach in their study of ISWAP's activities in West Africa focus on drawing connections between ISWAP and Al-Qaeda, and more recently IS. However, the sources produced in support of these claims are often either disputable or vague, and this is mostly because there is little first-hand evidence to support this position about ISWAP's operational linkage with foreign terrorist organizations. **It is, however, evident that ISWAP and ISGS, for example, collaborate to some degree in sharing information.**

The "localist" approach is adopted by researchers in opposition to the globalist approach.[15] In the case of ISWAP and the Chad Basin, for example, the analyses based on the localist approach tend to center the lived experiences of various actors within ISWAP's geographical terrain in their studies. Hence, **localist researchers insistently debunk claims of the existence of a substantive collaborative network that exists beyond rhetoric between ISWAP and other external terrorist groups and networks, such as Al-Qaeda and IS.** Although there is audio-visual evidence in support of ISWAP's pledge of allegiance to IS (a video released on March 7, 2015), a critical study has led certain analysts[16] to conclude that ISWAP's claim to an evolving transregional outreach beyond the Chad Basin axis is more propaganda than reality due to a number of reasons.

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There are clear indications that, at the very least, IS is in correspondence with ISWAP. This is supported by references to ISWAP in some of the periodicals published by IS.[17] Also, in 2016, an issue of IS's Al-Naba newspaper made reference to ISWAP's name and leadership rebranding. **While there are transregional connections between terrorist networks within Africa, it is equally necessary to consider some skeptical perspectives on the depth of these linkages.** This is especially due to the overseeing role IS has occupied on the global terror stage in its expansionist attempt to project itself as having a global presence. It should, however, be noted that IS has an active media department in charge of propaganda,[18] and has been known to deliberately produce distorted information. Nonetheless, the pledges of allegiance made to IS by other terrorist networks are worth taking seriously on their own merit and should not be entirely dismissed.

Potential for transregional networks in North, Central, East, and Southern Africa

Terrorist networks have been observed to be hierarchical in structure and have evolutionary capabilities, which includes the ability to form linkages that transcend national and regional borders. Nonetheless, there are unique local contexts and regional factors that shape the potential for and against transregional linkages among terrorist groups across Africa.

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North Africa and the Maghreb, in particular, has suffered from political instability over the past decade which has rendered the region vulnerable to infiltration by terrorist networks.**[19]** **In addition to that, the spread of anti-western sentiments as a fallout of American foreign policy decisions in the Middle East has increased support in the region for terrorist groups.** Furthermore, the existence of vast unpatrolled spaces in the Sahara has created a situation which some analysts term as "ungoverned spaces,"[20] which has also been exploited by terrorist groups including JNIM and ISGS for different purposes. In this regard, **North Africa acts as a hub for Al-Qaeda and IS in their attempts to set up franchises across Africa.**

Further southwards, JNIM and ISGS's expansion in West Africa has emerged from linkages, albeit not simply due to transregional linkages with other terrorist networks. **JNIM and ISGS have both employed "loose alliances"—by bringing together other terrorist groups in the Sahel to become a bigger conglomerate.** In addition to that, they have also made use of the co-optation tactic to ingratiate themselves with local populations and impose themselves territorially. In northern Mali in 2015, for example, AQIM collaborated with local terrorist networks to take advantage of the on-going Azawad rebellion.[21] This insertion into what began as a political rebellion by secessionists was converted, in the end, into an agenda by the terrorists to create an emirate. JNIM and ISGS have established bases in central Mali and Burkina Faso. However, while JNIM's presence appears to have been contained in the former areas, ISGS has expanded to establish a strong presence in Niger while also conducting sporadic attacks in the border areas of Benin, Ghana, and Togo. ISGS has fueled conflicts among different ethnic groups in the Sahel, and ISGS's reliance on these divisions has played a primary role in its expansion in the region, more so than any output from external terrorist networks or collaboration with terrorist networks in other regions. In Mali, for example, ISGS has sided with the Peul local population against the Dogon, thus fueling the ethnic conflict between the two groups which was initially a land-related issue.[22] The available evidence suggests that terrorist groups in West Africa are more pragmatic in their approach to collaborations and are not purely ideologically driven organizations. As such, their choice of network linkages is guided by

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local dynamics and their own particular agenda rather than the expansionist agenda of the leadership of IS-core in Syria and Iraq.

In West-Central Africa, there are no indications to suggest that ISWAP has been successful in expanding beyond the Lake Chad axis to form linkages with terrorist networks in other regions. However, ISWAP and ISGS have collaborated in the sharing of information regarding attacks. There is also evidence of individuals from the region, specifically Nigeria,[23] who have traveled to the Middle East to join IS,[24] but there are no indications of this happening on a large scale transregional level within Africa.

In East Africa, Al-Shabaab has capitalized on the political instability stemming from the aftermath of the civil war and the failure of the Somali government[25] to effectively control major parts of the country to expand its operational outreach across large swathes of Somalia and the coastal areas off the Horn of Africa. **Al-Shabaab also has supporters in Djibouti and Kenya,[26] mostly among their ethnic Somali communities in these countries. This allowed Al-Shabaab to develop a transnational reach.** In Kenya, in particular, Al-Shabaab's support has mostly emerged from recruitment among ethnic Somalis, both in the neighboring counties between Somalia and Kenya and on the Kenyan coast,[27] which has a sizeable Muslim population. While there have been reports of youths from the Somali diaspora returning to Somalia to support the group, there are currently not indications demonstrating that Al-Shabaab has been successful in forming a transregional linkage with other terrorist networks beyond East Africa.

In Southern Africa, the Islamist group known locally as Al-Shabaab (or as Ansar al-Sunna) has been active in Mozambique's northernmost region of Cabo del Gado since 2015. Similar to terrorist networks in other regions across the continent, Mozambique's Al-Shabaab has in recent years also attached itself to IS's franchise in Africa and has been re-branded as IS-Mozambique. IS-Mozambique has a transnational element to it, as some of its founding members were acolytes of the pro-Al-Qaeda Kenyan cleric Aboud Rogo Mohammed based in the coastal town of Mombasa.[28] After their leader's death, members of this group migrated to Tanzania before finally settling across the border in Mozambique.[29] As such, they maintain ties to East Africa. **However, IS-Mozambique's influence appears to not have expanded beyond the northernmost region of Mozambique, and it should be noted that despite titular similarity, the group has no connection to Somalia's Al-Shabaab.** IS-Mozambique's relative success in the northern border region of Mozambique is understandable if put within the country's post-civil war context. In the aftermath of the end of the long civil war between FRELIMO and RENAMO, there has been a focus on reconstruction in Mozambique. The region captured by IS-Mozambique has, however, faced regional marginalization and economic underdevelopment over decades despite its huge natural gas resources and crude oil deposits.[30] This political and economic situation has been exploited by IS-Mozambique in establishing a base in the Cabo del Gado region. The Swahili ethno-linguistic link shared with other East African countries by some of the region's residents has also made it possible for IS-Mozambique's religious radicalization of residents of the region. However, this ethno-linguistic and transnational linkage is a limited one and has not extended beyond the region to other parts of Southern Africa or East Africa. IS-Mozambique is also affiliated with the IS franchise and its ISCAP (Islamic State Central Africa Province) branch and functions as its hub in Southern Africa.[31] The ADF (Allied Democratic Forces) is one wing of ISCAP and is based in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Some ADF-affiliated Ugandans have been arrested in Mozambique, but ADF is currently only active in DRC and Uganda.[32]

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Linkages of terrorist groups across African regions

After having established the context of potential linkages between terrorist groups in West Africa with terrorist groups in other African sub-regions, the following sections lists currently existing linkages:

Financial gains through involvement with transnational organized crime (TNOC): TNOC is an important element of terrorist networks in Africa. The possibility of exploiting transnational and or transregional spaces for financial gains is a major incentive for transnational and transregional linkages. The TNOC activities referred to involve illicit commercial trades, activities, and interactions with actors beyond their territories. **Numerous reports illustrate that armed groups operating across sub-Saharan Africa over the last three decades, including terrorist networks, have been largely involved in transnational organized criminal activities.** Some of these activities include the illicit/black market trade of contraband items and natural resources by making use of their numerical advantage, weaponry,[33] and territorial control of strategic areas rich with resources or border areas that ease transnational smuggling activities.[34] For example, AQIM and Al-Mourabitoun were previously known to be active in the smuggling of narcotics, cigarettes, and humans across the Sahel, which has helped in the past to finance their terrorist activities.[35] JNIM[36] and ISGS, since their respective areas of operation, have also taken advantage of the lucrative trans-Saharan smuggling economy which previously benefitted AQIM and Al-Mourabitoun to finance their different transnational networks.[37]

> The possibility of exploiting transnational and/or transregional spaces for financial gains is a major incentive for transnational/-regional linkages.

Financing terrorism via local and international sources: Most of the active terrorist networks across Africa seem to rely on localized, self-funding avenues to finance their activities. Consequently, they are in competition with other terrorist groups, limiting the possibility of strong cooperation and linkages developing between various terrorist groups. There have been, however, exceptions that demonstrate the ability for terrorist groups to merge into coalitions where their interest align. One of such examples can be drawn from the coalition which birthed the JNIM. In the Chad Basin, ISWAP has relied on funds generated from taxes levied on villagers, market traders, farmers, and fishermen who use Lake Chad.[38] Terrorist groups also rely on financial contributions from some of their members and sympathizers as one of their sources of funding,[39] contrary to popular theories, which seem to exaggerate their reliance on external funding sources. A primary source of funding for these groups, however, comes from their involvement in transnational organized criminal activities as well as the exploitation of natural resources in territories under their control.

Training and foreign terrorist fighters: There are indications that some individuals belonging to terrorist groups in West Africa attended training camps in North Africa.[40] Additionally, jihadi-terrorist fighters from North Africa have also been used in attacks in different countries across the Sahel.[41]There are also indications of a similar pattern in other regions—with reports of fighters from Mozambique having been trained in East African countries such as Tanzania, Kenya, and Somalia.[42] There have been reports also alleging the presence of a small number of individuals from other West African countries (Senegal, to be exact) joining AQIM and ISWAP temporarily before then returning to their home countries.[43] **However, while most of the recent reports confirm the presence of active IS cells across different African sub-regions,[44] there have not yet been any strong indications showing that this has translated to large-scale collaboration among terrorist networks on a transregional level.** Also, fighters coming from outside of the African continent or, for example, returning from conflict zones such as Iraq, Syria, or Afghanistan, remain the absolute minority.

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Weapons smuggling and use of small arms and light weapons (SALWs): The many decades of small-scale and large-scale violence across different parts of Africa has meant a vibrant arms market, facilitated by racketeers, with a continuous cycle of demand and supply for SALWs, especially among terrorist groups. The domino effect of the Libyan civil war, for example, can be traced to the increase in jihadist attacks across North-West Africa due to the increased availability of arms and ammunition on the black market flowing outwards from Libya. Furthermore, various porous border areas across Africa's different regions have aided the illicit economy of weapons transnationally and transregionally by both racketeers and terrorist networks. Apart from being buyers of weapons and ammunitions, JNIM, ISGS, Al-Shabaab,[45] IS-Mozambique (funded and supported by smuggling barons and the proceeds of smuggling networks involved in the heroin, contraband, and ivory trade),[46] and other terrorist networks have been reported to be actively in the arms trade and smuggling economy. **There are, however, currently no indications suggesting that beyond financial incentives this illicit weapons trade across regions has translated to transregional linkages between terrorist networks.**

Recommendations

- **Harmonizing policies across the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) member countries.** The objective should be to identify policies that enable creating more effective border control measures. The coastal countries in the region along the Gulf of Guinea should be prioritized to forestall the spread of terrorist networks further southward. Policies should include concerted efforts to recruit and train customs and immigration personnel as well as addressing corruption.
- **Reactivating the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).** The objective should be to support other active counterterrorism missions across West Africa such as the Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF) in the Lake Chad Basin and the joint force of the Group of 5 for the Sahel (G5 Sahel). A specific focus on the border regions between ECOWAS countries should help to build regional resilience against the expansion of terrorist networks in the region. The objective should be to enable relevant government actors in ECOWAS countries to implement their mandates and close information gaps.
- **Advancing CT policies together with governance reforms.** Active encouragement and participation in fostering good governance, democratic rule, and political stability in West African countries should contribute to disincentivizing local insurgencies in the long term. This can be achieved by foreign partner-countries proactively encouraging the merits of democratic governance, providing assistance with impartial election monitoring personnel, demonstrating open support for democratically elected governments, and enforcing punitive/deterrent measures (such as a visa ban) against individuals who disrupt the electoral processes.
- **Increasing opportunities for active engagement with local stakeholders.** The objective should be to gain a nuanced understanding of local grievances as well as liaise with strategic actors who can act as facilitators within their respective constituencies to assist in propagating counter-extremism measures and initiatives. The inclusion of civil society actors can rebuild trust between the state and citizens and can help in negotiations with some armed groups. Civil society stakeholders with local legitimacy in conflict zones can be used as actors in the peacebuilding processes in those regions. This would require an adjustment of the security architecture put in place in the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin to provide inclusion for the operation of civil society organizations in tandem with existing security and development initiatives.

- **Further strengthening African-African and African-European partnerships on foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs).** Increased intelligence gathering, inter-agency cooperation, and sharing of information on FTFs should be developed primarily among African countries but also in partnership with European and national agencies in Europe. An objective could be to compile a continental database of persons, groups, and entities involved in terrorist acts, including FTFs. This should be done in a list of priority countries in North Africa, West Africa, East Africa, and Southern Africa. A proposed list of countries could include: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Niger, Somalia, and Tunisia.

- **Re-examining the Algiers Accord.** The objective should be to reconsider key aspects such as the overly heavy focus on northern Mali and instead consider adding measures to address increasing Islamist violence and ethnic tensions as well as general insecurity in Mali's central regions.1 In addition, additional pillars should be developed that might increase critical stakeholder buy-in, for example, around the issue of political decentralization and the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants, updating previous assumptions and integrating more recent findings about what is needed.

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The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. (KAS) is a German political foundation that started its international cooperation programs in 1962. The Foundation carries out assignments in the field of governance, parliamentary support and cooperation, rule of law, human rights protection and gender, civil society development, media promotion, decentralization and local democracy promotion in more than 110 countries on four continents. In this regard, KAS functions as a political think tank. KAS places a strong emphasis on dialogue and free exchange of views and ideas, the cornerstone of an open, democratic society.

About the Counter Extremism Project (CEP)
The Counter Extremism Project (CEP) is a nonprofit and non-partisan international policy organization formed to combat the growing threat from extremist ideologies. CEP builds a more moderate and secure society by educating the public, policymakers, the private sector, and civil society actors about the threat of extremism. CEP also formulates programs to sever the financial, recruitment, and material support networks of extremist groups and their leaders. For more information about our activities, please visit counterextremism.com.

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