

## WHO JOINS BOKO HARAM AND WHY?

By Hilary Matfess

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Children gather around a burnt-out car following an attack by Boko Haram in Dalori village 5 kilometers (3 miles) from Maiduguri, Nigeria, Sunday Jan. 31, 2016. A survivor hidden in a tree says he watched Boko Haram extremists firebomb huts and listened to the screams of children among people burned to death in the latest attack by Nigeria's homegrown Islamic extremists. (Source: AP Photo/Josly Ola.)

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Hilary Matfess is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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## GERMANY'S MIGRANT CRISIS HAS ROOTS IN AFRICA AS WELL AS THE MIDDLE EAST

By Dr. Ashley N. Bybee

From October 9 to 11, 2016, German Chancellor Angela Merkel took her first [multiday trip to Africa](#) since 2011. This came on the heels of the announcement by the German Ambassador to Niger that Germany plans to construct a military airbase in Niamey. For a country whose interest on the African continent has been limited compared with other nations, this development seems to represent a shift in Germany's foreign policy toward the region. Yet unlike China, the Asian Tigers, Arab investors, or the emerging economies looking to establish economic footholds on the continent, Germany's motivations seem partially rooted in its migrant crisis at home. [more...](#)



Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, center left, walks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, center right, after her arrival at the airport in Bamako, Mali, Sunday, Oct. 9, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Baba Ahmed.)

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## HAS THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT FAILED AFRICA?

By Sarah Graveline

On October 7, 2016, Burundi's cabinet [announced](#) the country's intention to withdraw from the International Criminal Court (ICC), six months after the court opened a preliminary [investigation into](#) human rights violations in the country. The announcement is the latest in a series of setbacks to the ICC's reputation in Africa. In February 2016, African Union (AU) member states [voted](#) to bring forward a proposal to leave the ICC. In addition, a series of individual leaders have accused the court of bias against Africans. Although there are valid critiques of the ICC's effectiveness in investigating and prosecuting cases, politicians' criticism of the ICC may be motivated as much by political expediency as by the court's lack of competence. For victims of human rights abuses, the ICC continues to offer an important source of justice. [more...](#)



From left to right, Major Gen. Hussein Ali, Kenyan Vice president William Ruto, Kenyan President, Uhuru Kenyatta, Henry Kosgei, and Ambassador Francis Muthaura, pray, as they attend a thanksgiving rally, in Nakuru, Kenya, Saturday, April 16, 2016. Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and five others who had been charged with crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court held a rally attended by thousands to celebrate the withdrawal of the charges against them. The rally has been opposed by opposition leader Raila Odinga and some members of civic organizations who say it does not respect the suffering of the victims of violence following a disputed presidential election late 2007. (Source: AP Photo/Kevin Morigo.)

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## Religion

The practice of Salafi jihadism by Boko Haram members has encouraged a number of analysts to consider the insurgency to be essentially a religious movement. Many of those who assert that Boko Haram is best understood as a religious phenomenon rely on simplistic depictions of so-called radical Islam. The Hudson Institute’s Dr. [Paul Marshall](#) criticizes those who fail to “recognize that Boko Haram is motivated by their religious ideology” and give too much emphasis to motivations related to employment, power, and sex. His interpretation is that “Radical Muslims want to take over the world. They divide it into two parts—those who submit to Allah and therefore are at ‘peace’ and those that are at war until they are made to submit to Allah.” The Chibok abductions, which launched the insurgency into the global spotlight, appeared to many to be an explicitly religious attack by Muslim insurgents on Christian school girls. The simplicity and appeal of this narrative made it popular in newspaper accounts and among some advocacy groups; however, it is ultimately not empirically supported. Interviews with former fighters found [fewer than one in ten](#) were motivated to join the group because of their religious beliefs.

Certainly, the insurgency goes to great lengths to portray itself as the vanguard of “true” Islam. Alex Thurston, a professor at Georgetown University, uses historical analysis to explain aspects of Boko Haram as a nuanced religious movement resulting both from differences in Quranic interpretation and political trends. He emphasizes that Boko Haram (like a number of jihadi groups) subscribes to the concept of *al-walā’ wa-l-barā’*. Thurston defines this concept among jihadis as an “[exclusive loyalty](#) to ‘true’ Muslims and disavowal . . . of anyone the group considers an infidel.” This is also borne out in [interviews](#) with former fighters, in which half of male respondents and more than 35 percent of female respondents cited religion as a “strong influence” within the insurgency’s operations.

This concept has influenced the sect’s ideology since its foundation. Thurston observes that Mohammed Yusuf, the founder of Boko Haram, asserted that *al-walā’ wa-l-barā’* was the foundation for a “completely self-sufficient system”—an assumption that allowed Boko Haram to reject the system of politics and governance in North Eastern Nigeria.

Though the scope, scale, and intensity of the insurgency increased under Abubaker Shekau following the death of Mohammed Yusuf at the hands of the Nigerian state in 2009, the centrality of *al-walā’ wa-l-barā’* appears to have continued under his tenure. In the video message to the “[Leaders of the Disbelievers](#),” Shekau not only denounces France’s involvement in the region, but also criticizes the presidents of Chad and Niger for their support of the military campaign against the insurgency. In this video, Idris Deby and Mahamadou Issoufou are infidels by association—and since they are not “true Muslims,” they are legitimate targets.



## Politics

[Interviews](#) with Boko Haram members reveal surprisingly high levels of participation in Nigerian politics, given the group's vehement anti-state position. Interviews with insurgents found that 48 percent of former Boko Haram members voted in the 2015 elections. This finding is particularly striking in light of the fact that national turnout for the presidential election that year was less than [44](#) percent. That level of turnout, if generalizable to the whole insurgency (admittedly, an uncertain leap), suggests that this is a rebellion emanating from those who maintain a considerable interest in the Nigerian political system. In fact, the interviews also revealed that Boko Haram members have high levels of trust in President Buhari—a particularly surprising finding, given the insurgency's condemnation of the Nigerian government.

Interestingly, a common grievance among the former insurgents was their treatment at the hands of the Nigerian security sector—even before they joined the insurgency. When asked open-ended questions about the Nigerian military, former insurgents described them as “brutal,” “merciless,” and “pitiless.” The military's abuses fueled a motivation for revenge, which proved to be very influential in driving recruitment. A majority of the former fighters polled cited revenge as the only or the strongest influence in their decision to join the insurgency.

According to a new [Africa Research Institute report](#) by Fr. Atta Barkindo, a doctoral candidate and researcher at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies, this revenge narrative also has deep historical roots, tracing back to the fall of the Kanem-Bornu Empire in the 14th century. According to Barkindo, who worked as an emergency translator in the Lake Chad Basin and has transcribed more than 50 YouTube videos from Boko Haram, “the Boko Haram narrative contends that the state built on the ruins of the Kanem-Bornu empire brought nothing but corruption, immorality, inequality, injustice and neglect.” Though this “version of history is selective, idealized, and questionable,” it is a compelling narrative for those who feel wronged by the current government.

## Social Networks

[Interviews with](#) former insurgents also suggest that social networks and family pressure are the main conduits of radicalization and membership, rather than firebrand preachers or prison recruitment, as is often assumed. [Interviews](#) with former fighters found that neighbors were the second most important factors; more than one in five women who were members of Boko Haram were brought into the organization through their relationship with neighbors. Family and extended kin networks were also found to influence decisions to join Boko Haram. More than 11 percent of respondents joined the sect because of family pressure or support. Consider the testimony of one former fighter, who recalled, “When I was in Bama town, I did not have any intention of joining this sect. But there are a few children that have decided to join, but for me I did not, until my cousin brother invited me for a serious lecture one day, then from there I developed the interest in being a member of the group.”

These social networks did not have to rely on violent coercion; in fact, only 5 percent of male former fighters and 17 percent of former female members were brought into the insurgency by force. Though it is possible that interviews with defected and former combatants are not representative of the active members of the sect, the findings of this research are consistent with other work done on the insurgency's recruitment. For example, these interviews are consistent with some of the findings of a Mercy Corps report, which documented Boko Haram's use of [business support](#) (through loans and grants to entrepreneurs) to attract membership.

## Conclusions

Emerging work on Boko Haram's members challenges the existing paradigm for why people join the sect, which focuses on radical ideology espoused in mosques and prisons. Gaining a better understanding of the motivations for joining the insurgency might improve the abilities of regional stakeholders and the international community to respond to, and prevent recruitment into, the insurgency.

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Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, center left, walks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, center right, after her arrival at the airport in Bamako, Mali, Sunday, Oct. 9, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Baba Ahmed.)

## Background

Much has been made over the last decade of the engagement in Africa by the BRICS—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—all of which were deemed to be rising economic actors in an increasingly globalized world. Also, countries such as South Korea, Turkey, Iran, and the UAE have shown increasing interest in African engagements. Japan and Singapore have been the latest international actors to focus attention on the continent. In August 2016, Japan pledged to invest [\\$30 billion](#) in Africa's infrastructure and private sector over the next three years, presenting itself as an alternative to China, which is frequently viewed as exploitive by Africans. [Experts](#) have observed that Singapore is reacting positively to Africa's improving investment climate and that investments into the continent have been growing at more than [11 percent](#) annually since 2008. All these countries have economic interests in Africa, which they see as a provider of natural resources, as well as emerging markets for their goods. Some also have political motivations, especially those that view Africa's 54 countries as comprising a significant voting bloc in the United Nations.

## A New Motivation

Germany, however, seems different. It has a mature economy and enjoys an excellent commercial reputation in markets around the world. And while it is interested in securing support from UN member states for a permanent seat on the Security Council, Germany's primary focus lately has been on an immigrant crisis that has roots in Africa as well as the Middle East.

In 2015, Merkel announced a groundbreaking new refugee policy that would admit 1 million asylum seekers from Syria in addition to others seeking protection from violence and warfare. At the time, she enjoyed a 63 percent approval rating. That has since plummeted to 45 percent as the integration of over 1 million refugees proved to be more difficult than she had envisioned, with several cases of [attacks on Germans](#) and significant [backlash](#) against Muslims. Following the notorious attacks on women in Cologne on New Year's Eve 2015, she appears to have shifted some of her focus from Syrian refugees to [North African](#) asylum seekers, the latter of whom were blamed for those attacks, by tightening the rules for their entry.

Merkel's visit to Mali, Niger, and Ethiopia on her African tour this week — before hosting leaders from Chad and Nigeria for talks in Berlin later this month — can be seen as part of Germany's new emphasis on immigration. Her recent [public comments](#) have underscored the importance of development in Africa as one way to improve living conditions and prevent the mass exodus of Africans from the continent. To that end, the German government has announced plans for [development projects](#) such as vocational training and infrastructure, as well as expressing interest in [private partnerships](#) between African and German businesses. She has also been toeing the [European Union's](#) line on migrant policy, suggesting that Germany might negotiate "[Readmission Agreements](#)" with African countries to speed up repatriations of their citizens who reach Europe but are denied asylum. Her comments have also had a humanitarian dimension, lamenting the loss of life that has resulted from the [dangerous journey](#) from Africa to Europe across the Mediterranean.

## Why a Military Airbase?

There also appears to be a counterterrorism component to Germany's engagement in Africa. In addition to the military airbase announced by the German Ambassador, [Merkel](#) announced while in Niamey this week that Germany would provide approximately €10 million worth of military vehicles and other military equipment. Germany already has over [550 soldiers](#) in Mali as part of United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). This base in Niger would offer support to that mission and those troops, while also projecting an increased German presence in Africa. Germany will become the third Western country with a military base in Niger; the others are France and the United States.

Currently, the United States is augmenting its presence in Niger by constructing a new [temporary military base](#) in the central city of Agadez. The [U.S. Air Force](#) has budgeted \$50 million for the construction of a new runway and associated pavements, facilities, and infrastructure adjacent to the Niger Armed Force's Base Aerienne 201 (Airbase 201) south of the city of Agadez. The U.S. will relocate its existing assets from its shared air base with France in Niger's capital city of Niamey to the new facility in Agadez.

## Conclusion

Germany's recently expressed concerns for Africa's security, development, and general well-being seem to be related to the refugee crisis that has plagued the Merkel administration and Europe as a whole. The timing of the announcement that Germany intends to construct a military airbase in Niger and provide a significant amount of military equipment suggests that Germany views an improved security situation in the Sahel (which it hopes to help create) as one way to control the flow of migrants into Europe. As Merkel has [stated](#) on several occasions, "the wellbeing of Africa is in Germany's interest" implying that Germany expects to experience an improvement in its own security once improvements in Africa's are gained.

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## African Leaders Accuse the Court of Bias

The ICC was [established](#) in 2002 by the ratification of the Rome Statute. According to this agreement, the ICC was given the mandate of investigating and prosecuting those responsible for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Since its founding, the court has opened investigations into [10 situations](#), nine of which occurred in Africa, and issued public indictments for 39 people, all of whom are African.

This prevalence of African cases has led many African leaders to accuse the ICC of bias. Most prominently, Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta, who was indicted by the ICC for his role in 2007–2008 election violence, has led a public campaign against the ICC, [characterizing](#) the court as undertaking “weak cases built with weak investigations and pursued with political zeal.”

Other African politicians and commentators have also accused the ICC of political bias. South Africa's ruling African National Congress has criticized the ICC for prosecuting only African cases, [stating](#), “the ICC is no longer useful for the purposes for which it was intended.” Similarly, Ethiopia's foreign minister has regularly [accused](#) the ICC of targeting African leaders for political reasons.

## Despite Criticism, Many States Still Support the ICC

This criticism fails to take into account the way that constraints on the ICC's jurisdiction have affected which cases the court has investigated. As the Court's defenders point out, the ICC only has [jurisdiction](#) over violations that have occurred since the Rome Statute entered into force in 2002. Given the prevalence of conflict in Africa in the early 2000s, and the [33](#) African countries that are signatories to the Rome Statute, it is not surprising that the ICC has investigated a large number of African cases.

Furthermore, the ICC does not choose many of the cases it pursues. In fact, the governments of the Central African Republic, Mali, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo each requested the ICC to open investigations in their countries, while the UN Security Council referred cases in Sudan and Libya. The ICC has only unilaterally opened cases into Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire. Recently, the court has also opened [preliminary investigations](#) into Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq, Palestine, and Ukraine, thus expanding its scope beyond Africa.

Critically, many African states still quietly support the ICC. This support became evident at the AU summit this July. Although a majority of AU member states voted to bring forward a motion to withdraw from the ICC, the [motion failed](#) after Nigeria, Senegal, Tunisia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Botswana argued in favor of the court, while also noting that only individual countries had the ability to withdraw from the Rome Statute.



From left to right, Major Gen. Hussein Ali, Kenyan Vice president William Ruto, Kenyan President, Uhuru Kenyatta, Henry Kosgei, and Ambassador Francis Muthaura, pray, as they attend a thanksgiving rally, in Nakuru, Kenya, Saturday, April 16, 2016. Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and five others who had been charged with crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court held a rally attended by thousands to celebrate the withdrawal of the charges against them. The rally has been opposed by opposition leader Raila Odinga and some members of civic organizations who say it does not respect the suffering of the victims of violence following a disputed presidential election late 2007. (Source: AP Photo/Kevin Midigo.)



## The ICC Is Not Biased, but Is It Competent?

Although the ICC may not be biased against African states, there are legitimate concerns about its competence. Despite an annual operating [budget](#) that has grown from \$53 million in 2004 to \$153 million in 2016, the ICC has only successfully [convicted](#) three people, all relatively low-ranking, while sitting heads of state and senior politicians have avoided conviction.

This is partly because the ICC frequently relies on the assistance of hostile political leaders to carry out prosecutions. This dynamic was seen in December 2014 when the ICC's Chief Prosecutor dropped charges against Kenyatta after failing to gather enough evidence to secure a conviction. As the [Chief Prosecutor](#) made clear, this failure was not because the evidence did not exist, but rather because rampant witness intimidation, [allegedly directed](#) by the Kenyan State House, deprived the Court of testimony necessary to secure a conviction.

Although the ICC was designed to ensure that even the most powerful could be held accountable for crimes against humanity and other grave offenses, in practice, the court lacks the enforcement [authority](#) necessary to complete the investigations and prosecutions of powerful figures that it is legally empowered to carry out.

## Evaluating the ICC's Impact

The most important measure of the ICC's impact is the opinion of those the court is supposed to represent: victims of the most serious crimes of international concern. Despite the ICC's failings, surveys in countries where the ICC pursued cases find that citizens largely hold positive views of the Court. In Kenya, an Afrobarometer [survey](#) conducted after charges against Kenyatta were dropped found that 60 percent of Kenyans believe the ICC is still a relevant institution, and 56 percent opposed the country's plans to withdraw from the ICC. Similarly, in the Central African Republic, a [survey](#) of conflict-affected regions found that victims of violence were both more likely to have heard of the ICC and to hold positive views of the Court. These results suggest that many ordinary people still feel the ICC is a positive force for justice, despite its challenges.

## Conclusion

Burundi's recent announcement of its intention to withdraw from the Rome Statute raises concerns about the ICC's ability to fairly and effectively provide accountability to victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Although the court has struggled to prosecute sitting heads of state, it has won support from many victims and leaders alike for taking on difficult cases that other institutions are unable to prosecute. The ICC remains a unique tool for justice in Africa and worldwide, but still faces many challenges.

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Sarah Graveline is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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## CORRUPTION AND VIOLENCE IN AFRICA: WHAT DOES THE LITERATURE SAY?

By Sarah Graveline

Some advocacy groups are turning their attention to the link between conflict and corruption in Africa. The Enough Project, which focuses on East and Central Africa, has recently unveiled a new campaign to “[bankrupt kleptocracy](#),” while Transparency International regularly publishes reports highlighting the links between [security sector](#) corruption and conflict. The advocates’ focus on corruption and conflict is relatively new, but scholars have considered this issue for decades. A survey of academic work on corruption and conflict shows that although corruption can intensify conflict by increasing elite competition and generating public grievances against the state, interventions that focus on eliminating corruption without addressing underlying political fragility are likely to fail. [more...](#)

Sarah Graveline is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.



On May 26, 2015, cars queue in front of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation headquarters to buy fuel in Abuja, Nigeria. Nigeria will start selling and buying oil and gasoline directly to cut out middlemen and curb graft. (Source: AP Photo/Sunday Alamba File.)

## TURKEY AND AFRICA AFTER THE FAILED COUP

By George F. Ward

The history of Turkish engagement with sub-Saharan Africa is lengthy, but until relatively recently the relationship has not been particularly strong. This situation began to change in 1998 with a Turkish opening toward Africa. Over time, Turkey developed an effective mix of commercial, humanitarian, and political outreach, which benefited from the support provided to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s government by the religious and humanitarian movement founded by Fethullah Gulen, a prominent Muslim cleric. That relationship began to deteriorate in 2013, and it crashed in the aftermath of the attempted coup of July 2016, for which President Erdogan held Gulen responsible. Since then, Erdogan and his government have sought to eliminate the Gulenist presence in sub-Saharan Africa. In doing so, they may be weakening the humanitarian buttresses of Turkish policy. It is worth examining these developments to gain an understanding of the likely course of the Turkish-African relationship in the years to come. [more...](#)



July 2016, Islamic cleric Fethullah Gulen speaks to members of the media at his compound, in Saylorsburg, Pennsylvania. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan accused Gulen of orchestrating the failed military coup attempt in Turkey, by placing his followers into positions of power decades ago. Gulen denies any involvement. (Source: AP Photo/Chris Post, FILE.)

Ambassador (ret.) George F. Ward is editor of Africa Watch and a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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## MALI—THE DEADLIEST OF ALL CURRENT UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS

By Richard J. Pera

Since its inception in 2013, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has become the deadliest of the United Nations' (UN) 16 ongoing peacekeeping operations worldwide. Through August 31, 2016, [106 UN peacekeepers](#) have perished in Mali, including 69 from acts of violence, especially by use of improvised explosive devices (IED). Fatalities in 2016 have already exceeded those of 2015. What is MINUSMA, how have IEDs affected its mission, and what are the UN's impediments to countering IEDs in Mali? [more...](#)

Richard J. Pera is a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses.



Mali. (Source: CIA, "Mali," *The World Factbook*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ml.html>.)

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## Corruption and Political Power: Pay to Play

Access to political power is a key factor driving corruption in Africa. Elites use corruption to build [personal wealth](#), but more perniciously, they leverage corruption to fund clientelist networks that enhance their political power. In a 1993 [article](#), Ernest Harsch reviewed academic literature describing the formation of these networks across Africa in the post-colonial period, finding that corruption has enabled the rise of powerful elites in an ideologically diverse group of countries across the continent.

Elites’ ability to turn illicit gains into political power hinges on the development of patronage networks. As Inge Amundsen [argues](#), elites gain power by ensuring that the benefits of corruption flow in two ways: through extractive corruption, in which resources flow “from society to the state,” and through redistributive corruption, in which financial benefits move from elites to the public. These flows are purposely imbalanced. Elites extract tangible resources from the public, including “money, wealth, and fiscal privilege,” so that they can redistribute intangible resources, including “influence,” “identity,” and “security,” which encourages self-perpetuating reliance on elites.

## Patronage Improves State Cohesion ... Up to a Point

Although corruption has clear moral and financial costs, scholars find that it can actually strengthen state cohesion by lessening the risk of coups and civil war in the short term. [Leonardo Arriola](#) used cabinet appointments in 40 African countries as a proxy for the size of a leader’s patronage network, finding that leaders with large networks were statistically less likely to be deposed in coups.

Similarly, Hannah Fjelde [studied](#) the onset of civil wars between 1985 and 1999, finding that countries with higher levels of corruption in their oil sectors were at less risk of entering into conflict than less corrupt oil-rich states. Fjelde hypothesized that this was because elites could use ill-gotten oil rents to co-opt potential spoilers.

These findings were supported in 2013, when Rabah Arezkie and Thorvaldur Gylfason [studied](#) resource rents and corruption in 29 African countries. The authors found that although higher resource rents indicated higher levels of corruption, states with the largest increases in resource rents were also the least likely to experience conflict because their leaders could “quell the masses through redistribution of rents to the public.”



On May 26, 2015, cars queue in front of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation headquarters to buy fuel in Abuja, Nigeria. Nigeria will start selling and buying oil and gasoline directly to cut out middlemen and curb graft. (Source: AP Photo/Sunday Alamba File.)

In the long-term, however, scholars generally agree that patronage networks alone are not strong enough to hold a state together. Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way [tested this hypothesis](#) in Kenya, Mozambique, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, finding that financial patronage was not enough to co-opt potential spoilers during times of crises and that elites were forced to rely on identity-based ties, such as ethnicity, to ensure compliance.

### **Corruption Decreases Barriers of Entry to Conflict**

Corruption can make conflict more likely. Access to large sums of illicit money can drive the price of patronage to an unsustainable level, leading to a fracturing of the elites and formation of new armed groups. Alex de Waal [argues](#) that this occurred in South Sudan following the oil shutdown in 2012 and ultimately caused the ensuing civil war. Unsustainable patronage networks have also played a role in the fractionalization of militias in the eastern [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#), leading to increased conflict from 2012 to 2015.

Corruption also can ensure that elite spoilers have access to the cash necessary to fund militias, thereby increasing the ease with which elites can use violence for political means. In a 2002 [article](#), William Reno argues that in failed states the fractionalization of patronage networks has led to increased violence because patrons can easily provide weapons to small groups, leading those who would pursue large-scale political change to be subsumed in the proliferation of violent feuds between local rivals.

Similarly, [CMI researchers](#) documented this trend through qualitative interviews with elites, finding that elites themselves recognize the destabilizing impact of violently targeting opponents, but believe this self-perpetuating trend cannot be easily overcome because the financial barriers to violence are so low.

### **Corruption Makes States Fragile from the Bottom Up**

Corruption's most pernicious impact is increased state fragility. This increase occurs as citizens grow disillusioned with the prevalence and impact of kleptocratic networks on their daily lives. As [scholars](#) have [documented](#), not only does corruption weaken macroeconomic growth, but the daily experience of being shut out of patronage networks and coerced into paying excessive bribes also generates grievances that weaken state cohesion. As Abhijit Banerjee argued in a 1997 paper on [misgovernance](#), governments that purport to serve the poor experience agency problems in which government officials' best interests align with corruption, rather than the people they serve.

This conflict of interest can frequently take on regional and ethnic dimensions. For example, Tarila Marclint Ebiede [argues](#) that corruption has led directly to conflict in the Niger Delta because locals believe violence is the only way to reclaim the financial benefits of oil production from corrupt government officials. Similarly, in *It's Our Turn to Eat*, Michela Wrong ties Kenya's 2007–2008 post-election violence directly to corruption organized along ethnic lines, arguing, “had all Kenyans believed they enjoyed equal access to state resources, there would have been no explosion [of violence].”

### **Vertical Kleptocracies Increase Insecurity**

As Sarah Chayes documents in *Thieves of State*, in pernicious kleptocracies, corruption enables security forces to abuse local populations. This abuse can lead locals to support insurgencies and terrorism. In these countries, kickbacks flow from the lowliest policemen to the highest politicians. This vertical structure means that it is in elites' best interests to ensure that even the most junior police and soldiers have complete impunity because any accountability would negatively affect elites' bottom lines.

Elites' protection of low-ranking security officials leads to abuse, as shown by [Human Rights Watch](#) in Nigeria. Maria Eriksson Baaz and Ola Olsson also [document](#) this vertical structure in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, using qualitative interviews to show how ordinary citizens and high-ranking authorities collude to ensure property crime goes unpunished when it benefits dominant groups. The World Bank also recognizes this risk. In its 2011 [report](#) “Conflict, Security, and Development,” the World Bank argued that when governments do not protect citizens from corruption or provide access to justice, violent conflict becomes more likely.

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## Conclusion

Academic research on the links between corruption and conflict shows both the importance of stemming corruption and the risk that narrow interventions may do more harm than good. Efforts to cut off illicit financial flows could inadvertently lead to the fractionalization of patronage networks by increasing competition over the remaining financial resources. There is little to stop this heightened competition from spilling over into violence.

Ultimately, corruption is both a political and a financial challenge. Although the international community can limit access to many of the financial tools that enable corruption, changes in political norms seem required to make significant steps toward its eradication.

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# TURKEY AND AFRICA AFTER THE FAILED COUP

By George F. Ward

The history of Turkish engagement with sub-Saharan Africa is lengthy, but until relatively recently the relationship has not been particularly strong. This situation began to change in 1998 with a Turkish opening toward Africa. Over time, Turkey developed an effective mix of commercial, humanitarian, and political outreach, which benefited from the support provided to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government by the religious and humanitarian movement founded by Fethullah Gulen, a prominent Muslim cleric. That relationship began to deteriorate in 2013, and it crashed in the aftermath of the attempted coup of July 2016, for which President Erdogan held Gulen responsible. Since then, Erdogan and his government have sought to eliminate the Gulenist presence in sub-Saharan Africa. In doing so, they may be weakening the humanitarian buttresses of Turkish policy. It is worth examining these developments to gain an understanding of the likely course of the Turkish-African relationship in the years to come.



July 2016, Islamic cleric Fethullah Gulen speaks to members of the media at his compound, in Saylorsburg, Pennsylvania. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan accused Gulen of orchestrating the failed military coup attempt in Turkey, by placing his followers into positions of power decades ago. Gulen denies any involvement. (Source: AP Photo/Chris Post, FILE.)

## Three Phases of Turkish Engagement with Sub-Saharan Africa

The history of Turkish relations with sub-Saharan Africa can be divided into [three periods](#). The first covers the centuries-long existence of the Ottoman State. During that time, the territories of several future African countries were part of the Ottoman Empire. In sub-Saharan Africa, that included enclaves on the Horn of Africa and political and security relationships in northwest Africa. As Ambassador David Shinn argues in a Chatham House [paper](#), Turkish influence on sub-Saharan Africa during this period was not significant.

During Turkey's republican era beginning in 1923, Turkish-African relations were [downgraded](#). Turkey was focused on its internal modernization and on developing strong relationships with the countries of the West. Turkey became a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and a candidate for membership in the European Union (EU). It did, however, establish diplomatic relationships with some of the newly independent states of Africa.

The third period of Turkey's relations with sub-Saharan Africa began in 1998 with an [opening toward Africa](#). The opening was in part a reaction by the Turkish government to the EU's failure to recognize Turkey as a candidate state in 1997. It was also propelled by an outpouring of [private Turkish humanitarian assistance](#) to conflict-ridden Somalia in 1996 and to Ethiopia in 1999–2000. The government's Action Plan, prepared in 1998, provided a roadmap for expanded political, economic, and cultural cooperation with Africa. The Plan was essentially on hold until 2005 due to a variety of Turkish internal and political problems, but it began to blossom in 2005 when the government of then-Prime Minister Erdogan proclaimed "the year of Africa."

## Aid, Education, Infrastructure, and Guns

Turkey became a major player in sub-Saharan Africa in a remarkably short period of time. Its success was largely due to the comprehensive nature of its engagement. At the government leadership level, Turkey has paid a great deal of attention to sub-Saharan Africa. President Erdogan's June 2016 visit to Kenya and Uganda was his [10th official trip](#) to the region. The Turkish leader took a robust business delegation with him on this trip, and he noted that Turkey's trade with sub-Saharan Africa had grown eightfold to \$6 billion annually since 2000. Other aspects of Turkish engagement include humanitarian assistance, expansion into sub-Saharan Africa by Turkish Airlines, and large-scale educational and cultural programs.

Turkish engagement in Somalia provides the best example of President Erdogan's strategy. As reported by the [World Policy Institute](#), Erdogan touched off a new era for Somalia when he landed in Mogadishu on August 19, 2011, with two plane loads of Turkish politicians, businesspeople, journalists, and even a reality television star. The visit occurred only weeks after al-Shabaab had given up control of the city. Even before the visit, the Turkish Red Crescent organization had been active in Mogadishu decontaminating water supplies; clearing mountains of trash; and setting up schools, clinics, and refugee centers. In the year following Erdogan's visit, 1,200 Somali students were provided full scholarships for university studies in Turkey. During 2011, the Turkish private sector provided \$365 million in aid to Somalia, and the government added \$49 million. Turkey took the courageous step of setting up a resident embassy in Mogadishu, and Turkish construction firms undertook large-scale infrastructure projects. The UN's deputy humanitarian coordinator in Somalia praised Turkey, stating that the Turks had accomplished more in a few months than any other nation or aid group in 21 years. Ordinary Somalis were impressed that Turks in Mogadishu often lived [among the people](#) rather than in fortified compounds.

### **The Hizmet Factor—Before and After the Coup Attempt**

Hizmet, or "Service," is the [movement](#) connected to Fethullah Gulen, the Muslim cleric who was once one of President Erdogan's most enthusiastic supporters. Gulen fell out of favor when police and prosecutors seen as sympathetic to him opened a corruption investigation into Erdogan's inner circle in 2013. Gulen sought refuge in the United States, where he continues to live. Following the June 2016 failed coup, Erdogan accused Gulen of having been the principal instigator, and he has launched a campaign against Gulen's interests worldwide, including in sub-Saharan Africa.

Hizmet has been the [cornerstone](#) of the Turkish approach to Africa. On its own, Hizmet has sponsored the establishment of 110 primary, middle, and secondary schools and one university in sub-Saharan Africa. These schools enjoy generally excellent reputations and often serve the families of top officials and business leaders. The Hizmet presence extends beyond education. The movement has had a close relationship with TUSKON, a nongovernmental and nonprofit umbrella organization that represents Turkish business federations and associations and Turkish entrepreneurs and companies. TUSKON has been the most important Turkish organization involved in trade and investment promotion in Africa.

Even before the failed coup, President Erdogan was [actively campaigning](#) in Africa to limit the influence of Gulen, even demanding that African countries close Gulen schools. This campaign has intensified [following the coup](#). African responses have varied. Somalia shut down premises belonging to the Gulen movement hours after the coup attempt. In Nigeria, on the other hand, the request of the Turkish ambassador that Gulen schools be shut down was met by a storm of protest.

### **Conclusion**

The problem for President Erdogan—and for sub-Saharan Africa—is that Gulenist organizations have been the motors of the Turkish opening toward Africa. Without the support of Gulen, some Turkish businesspeople may be less likely to invest in Africa. And even if current Gulen schools continue to operate, it is unlikely that the movement will be able to establish many additional ones on its own. President Erdogan himself may be too distracted by internal security concerns to invest much time in the relationship with Africa, especially if governments on the continent do not yield to his demands. All in all, it appears that there may be a pause in the Turkish opening to Africa. Coming at a time when the continent is facing significant economic headwinds, a decline in Turkish engagement would be a negative development.

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# MALI—THE DEADLIEST OF ALL CURRENT UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS

By Richard J. Pera

Since its inception in 2013, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has become the deadliest of the United Nations' (UN) 16 ongoing peacekeeping operations worldwide. Through August 31, 2016, [106 UN peacekeepers](#) have perished in Mali, including 69 from acts of violence, especially by use of improvised explosive devices (IED). Fatalities in 2016 have already exceeded those of 2015. What is MINUSMA, how have IEDs affected its mission, and what are the UN's impediments to countering IEDs in Mali?

## Establishment of MINUSMA

[MINUSMA](#) was established following a rebellion in northern Mali. In January 2012, militants from the nomadic Tuareg ethnic group calling themselves "Mouvement national pour la liberation de l'Azawad" (MNLA), supported by al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and other Islamist groups, [declared independence](#) and overran government positions. Fighters destroyed Islamic shrines and imposed Sharia law. In March 2012, disaffected Malian soldiers overthrew the government in Bamako. With Islamic fighters pushing south and its army in disarray, Mali's transitional government requested and received French military intervention ([Operation Serval](#)) in January 2013. MINUSMA was authorized by Security Council [Resolution 2100](#) in April 2013, and a [ceasefire and preliminary peace agreement](#) were accepted by all parties in June 2013.



Mali. (Source: CIA, "Mali," *The World Factbook*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ml.html>.)

## Ceasefire Breaks Down and Peacekeepers Are Targeted

By the end of 2013, hostilities resumed, making it impossible for MINUSMA to carry out its mission as intended. [As one scholar commented](#): "They are peacekeepers in what is generally not a peacekeeping mission . . . It is still an active insurgency." While peacekeepers have died from illness and accidents, most fatalities have been due to what the UN calls "malicious acts." These include rocket attacks and ambushes, but most casualties have been caused by IEDs, which [the UN confirmed](#) have "emerged as a weapon of choice for perpetrators of violence in Mali." [In May 2016 alone](#), there were five IED attacks against UN forces on patrol, resulting in 11 killed and 10 injured. One of these attacks was a suicide vehicle-borne IED attack and the others were IEDs detonated remotely or by proximity activator. Insurgent tactics have adapted and, by mid-2016, most IED attacks were followed by ambushes. One [French officer](#) commented on the evolving tactics of the insurgency: "They are watching us all the time and they adapt very quickly . . . They put an IED in one place, and if it doesn't work, they put it 10 km away to fit our technology. At present, one is more likely to be affected by an IED than get shot."

## Impediments to Countering IEDs

- **Lack of Counter-IED Policy.** [The UN considered the IED problem](#) before the initial deployment of MINUSMA, but decided to send peacekeepers despite the absence of a comprehensive counter-IED policy and strategies for training and tactics. The UN continued its [ad hoc approach](#) even after casualties mounted in 2014 and 2015. Historically, most UN peacekeepers regardless of location have not been authorized to disarm or destroy "operational" IEDs (as opposed to "remnant" or abandoned IEDs) for fear of reprisal against UN personnel or assets.



- **UN Has Emphasized Land Mines, Not IEDs.** The UN agency responsible for countering IEDs is the United Nations Mine Action Service ([UNMAS](#)), founded in 1997 to rid the world of abandoned landmines—“explosive remnants of war” (ERW). The UNMAS engagement in Mali, which predated MINUSMA, was oriented toward removal of ERW, a mission that continues today. UNMAS now also provides counter-IED support to MINUSMA, largely through private companies, such as the British-based [Optima Group, which was contracted](#) to train peacekeepers in IED awareness. Most contributing nations have little to no experience operating against IEDs, and they lack training, technology, and equipment to provide adequate force protection.
- **Lack of Equipment.** Vehicle design is a critical aspect of force protection from IEDs. Mine resistant ambush-protected vehicles (MRAP), with V-shaped hulls to deflect explosive blast, were not in MINUSMA’s inventory in 2013, and there were only [about six MRAPs as of May 2016](#). Given the hundreds of miles between garrisons and the requirement for frequent patrols and resupply, more MRAPs are needed. [UN Security Council Resolution 2295](#) (June 2016) approved deployment of additional mine-protected vehicles to Mali. Besides citing the need for MRAPs, [experts have long recommended](#) acquisition of counter-IED equipment, including electronic countermeasures; ground-penetrating radar; and reconnaissance technologies such as small, tactical, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). Often, deployment of sophisticated equipment depends on donations from countries with advanced militaries.
- **Operations-Intelligence Integration—A New Concept?** Locating IEDs is an intelligence-driven process. [The Netherlands](#), which provided 450 military personnel, led establishment of MINUSMA’s All Sources Intelligence Fusion Unit in 2015, and Resolution 2295 sought to buttress intelligence capabilities even further. While “ops-intel” integration is routinely executed by NATO nations, soldiers from developing countries are not necessarily accustomed to this concept. For example, when asked how to counter Islamist fighters’ use of IEDs, Burkina Faso [Brigadier General Sidike Treore described](#) intelligence as a “new” tool.

## Current Status

In 2015, [MINUSMA’s mission was expanded to include](#) supporting, monitoring, and supervising implementation of the peace agreement; stabilizing the country; protecting civilians; and providing humanitarian assistance. In June 2016, the [UN extended MINUSMA’s mandate](#) through June 30, 2017. Of note, French forces have continued their national counterinsurgency mission in Mali (and other Sahel countries) via [Operation BARKHANE](#), which includes an air and ground campaign and cross-border operations against groups opposed to Mali’s central government.

Today, [MINUSMA has 15,209 members](#), including an additional 2,500 approved in June 2016. MINUSMA has an annual budget of \$933 million and is commanded by [Major General Michael Lollesgaard, Danish Army](#). There are nearly [50 contributing countries](#), with two-thirds of the force coming from 22 African countries. The top three force providers are Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, and Chad. [Troops are garrisoned in 14 locations](#), with large concentrations in Bamako (HQ), Gao, Kidal, Timbuktu, and Tessalit.

## The Way Forward

While progress has been slow, the UN recognizes the need for a comprehensive policy on countering IEDs. Operational changes, though, will likely continue to be defensive in nature to ensure the UN’s neutrality. For example, the UN does not currently permit MINUSMA to destroy proactively IED assembly facilities or target personnel involved in IED production.

[Several thousand peacekeepers have received IED awareness or response training](#), and for the first time last year, training was conducted in peacekeepers’ home countries before their troops were deployed. High IED-related casualties in 2016 may be due in part to Islamist fighters’ ability to adapt to UN tactics.

Casualties may fall if more MRAPs join the MINUSMA fleet. Improvements in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems and processes could help as well.

## Conclusion

The UN appears committed to improving force protection for MINUSMA peacekeepers. Whether those improvements result in lower casualties in 2017 remain to be seen.

Richard J. Pera is a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses.



## AMISOM AND PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS: LESSONS LEARNED

By Sarah Graveline

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has had a challenging year. Its troop contributing countries (TCCs) are beginning to search for an exit. [Uganda](#) and [Kenya](#) have both pledged to withdraw their forces by 2018, while Ethiopia is currently [withdrawing](#) non-AMISOM soldiers from Somalia. Also, [Burundi](#) is at risk of losing international funding for its peacekeeping contingent in Somalia due to its own internal conflict. Because AMISOM is the African Union's (AU's) largest and longest deployed peace-support operation, fatigue and instability on the part of its TCCs represent a concern for the AU's peace-support model. AMISOM has achieved successes, but without broader political reform within Somalia, the conditions fueling conflict will continue, magnifying AMISOM's weaknesses. As the AU takes steps to expand its use of peace-support operations, AMISOM's experience offers valuable lessons learned. [more...](#)



Top AMISOM officials in a meeting at Somali National Army headquarters in Galmudug State on October 11, 2016. (Source: AMISOM Photo; see <http://amisom-au.org/>.)

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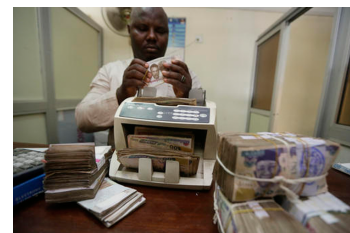
Sarah Graveline is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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## NIGERIA'S TWO-PRONGED APPROACH TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY

By Dr. Ashley Neese Bybee

The sharp decline of the global oil market beginning in 2015 marked the beginning of a severe economic recession in Nigeria. As oil prices have dropped, so have Nigeria's foreign exchange reserves, putting pressure on the naira, Nigeria's national currency. In response, the Government of Nigeria has proposed a series of economic reforms aimed at stimulating the economy and improving transparency. [more...](#)



A money changer counts Nigerian naira currency at a bureau de change, in Lagos, Nigeria. Nigeria floated its embattled naira currency earlier this year to control a spiraling crisis in Africa's biggest economy. (Source: AP Photo/Sunday Alamba, File.)

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### About IDA

The Institute for Defense Analyses is a non-profit corporation operating in the public interest.

IDA's three federally-funded research and development centers provide objective analyses of national security issues and related national challenges, particularly those requiring scientific and technical expertise.

IDA's Africa team focuses on issues related to political, economic, and social stability and security on the continent.



## BOY SOLDIERS, GIRL VICTIMS: GENDER MISCONCEPTIONS AND WOMEN IN WAR

By Hilary Matfess

Misconceptions about women's roles in conflict have ramifications for the design and implementation of post-conflict demobilization, de-radicalization, and reintegration. Failing to effectively deal with women and girls undermines the ability of these programs to stabilize post-conflict countries and to reduce the risk of these communities relapsing into violence. [more...](#)



Child soldiers. (Source: UAWR, "Child Soldiers: Protecting Children against Violence, Exploitation and Neglect," [http://www.africanwomenrights.org/what\\_we\\_do/](http://www.africanwomenrights.org/what_we_do/).)

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Top AMISOM officials in a meeting at Somali National Army headquarters in Galmudug State on October 11, 2016. (Source: AMISOM Photo; see <http://amisom-au.org/>.)

## AMISOM's Cycles of Success and Failure

In its nine years of operation, AMISOM has been through several cycles of success and failure. Created as a peacekeeping mission to protect key sites in Mogadishu, AMISOM first deployed in [March 2007](#) with only 1,600 Ugandan soldiers. At the time, AMISOM was only a secondary actor in Somalia's security architecture. The majority of operations were conducted by Ethiopian forces then occupying southern Somalia. When Ethiopian forces withdrew in December 2008, AMISOM's expanded Ugandan and Burundian contingents became the primary deterrent against al-Shabaab, managing to hold key territory during al-Shabaab's September 2010 invasion of Mogadishu. This was a critical success that forced al-Shabaab to change tactics, using assassinations and bombings to attack AMISOM's weakest points, while choosing to strategically cede territory that it could not hold through conventional fighting.

Although it controlled Mogadishu, AMISOM struggled to defend against asymmetric tactics until an influx of new forces enabled it to focus on territorial expansion. Kenya, which invaded Somalia unilaterally in September 2011, formally joined AMISOM in July 2012. In [September 2012](#), Kenyan forces captured Kismayo, the coastal city from which al-Shabaab drew most of its revenue. Ethiopian forces simultaneously re-engaged, capturing territory from al-Shabaab in cooperation with AMISOM. Ethiopia formally re-hatted under AMISOM in January 2014, bringing the [total deployment](#) of AMISOM forces to 22,126 soldiers and police officers from eight different countries.

In March 2014, AMISOM launched the first of three new [campaigns](#) to push al-Shabaab out of strategic towns. These operations, which utilized Kenyan and Ugandan air power to support the rapid movement of ground forces, enabled AMISOM to control more territory than at any point since its initial deployment in 2007.

While AMISOM cited its territorial expansion as a critical success, it also exposed its forces to increased attacks. In the year between [June 2015](#) and [June 2016](#), al-Shabaab successfully [overran bases](#) controlled by four of AMISOM's five TCCs and since then has launched [progressively more sophisticated attacks](#) in Mogadishu.



## To Assess AMISOM's Impact, Consider More Than Territorial Gains

Since 2010, AMISOM has focused on territorial control as a key metric of its success in stabilizing Somalia. However, AMISOM's expansion was partly due to factors unrelated to its operations. For example, al-Shabaab's harsh style of governance, in combination with a devastating 2011 famine in Somalia, turned public opinion against the organization in many rural, famine-affected areas. This challenge to al-Shabaab's legitimacy weakened its ability to respond to AMISOM's initiatives, a consideration not addressed in the AU's 2013 [self-evaluation](#).

The extent of AMISOM's actual control over territory varies because AMISOM forces rarely leave their bases to conduct [patrols](#). This limits soldiers' ability to provide protection to populations in areas AMISOM ostensibly controls. Also, it prevents troops from forming good relations with local populations, thus decreasing AMISOM's perceived legitimacy and ability to collect intelligence about militant activities. These factors appear to have contributed to al-Shabaab's successful attack on Kenyan base [el Adde](#) in January 2016.

The focus on territorial expansion as a measure of effectiveness also disguises the impact of self-inflicted harm caused by AMISOM's failure to protect human rights or ensure command and control. In 2010, AMISOM lost critical public support after indiscriminately [shelling](#) Mogadishu in an effort to dislodge al-Shabaab fighters. In addition, AMISOM forces have regularly been accused of [sexual violence](#) against civilians.

AMISOM's TCCs have faced a variety of command-and-control challenges. The UN Monitoring Group on Eritrea and Somalia (UNSEMG) has found [evidence](#) that AMISOM soldiers colluded to sell weapons on the black market, even though they would likely end up in militant hands.

In some corruption cases, impropriety was allegedly condoned at the highest ranks. For example, Kenyan Defense Force (KDF) officers overseeing a charcoal smuggling ring [reportedly](#) paid kickbacks to senior Kenyan politicians, as well as al-Shabaab. Despite a ban on charcoal trade, the [October 2016](#) UNSEMG report finds that KDF soldiers continue to profit from allowing illicit sales.

## AMISOM within the Broader Political Context

AMISOM's current challenges also reflect broader political issues. Chief among these is the failure of the Somali government to implement effective political reforms that address the grievances driving al-Shabaab.

From its inception, AMISOM was designed to support an ongoing political reform process. As [Africa Watch](#) has noted, however, this process has remained largely ineffectual. Delayed national elections and the uncertain status of Somalia's federated regional governments has created instability in the political process, while corruption scandals and failed service delivery lend credence to al-Shabaab's claims that it can provide more effective governance. As a peacekeeping force, AMISOM does not have the tools or mandate to address these political legitimacy challenges, but until political reform occurs, conflict will likely continue.

AMISOM is also hampered by TCCs with independent political interests in Somalia. Both Kenya and Ethiopia have long histories of acrimonious involvement in Somalia. Their continued deployment with AMISOM enables al-Shabaab to make the case that AMISOM is an occupying force intent on securing Somalia for exploitative political aims.

## Conclusion

The AU remains [committed](#) to using peace-support operations as a tool to respond to conflict on the continent. While laudable, recent experience in Somalia has shown that peace-support operations can face many challenges to success. Interventions are subject to the weaknesses of intervening forces, and when these forces come from neighboring states, political challenges can be compounded. Finally, it is hard for peacekeeping operations to stabilize a country in conflict without concurrent political reform.

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Sarah Graveline is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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By Dr. Ashley Neese Bybee

The sharp decline of the global oil market beginning in 2015 marked the beginning of a severe economic recession in Nigeria. As oil prices have dropped, so have Nigeria's foreign exchange reserves, putting pressure on the naira, Nigeria's national currency. In response, the Government of Nigeria has proposed a series of economic reforms aimed at stimulating the economy and improving transparency.

## Background

The decline in oil prices beginning in 2015 marked the beginning of an economic recession in Nigeria, for which "over 90% of exports and at least 70% of government revenues come from the oil sector." This, in turn, put pressure on Nigeria's currency, the naira. President Muhammadu Buhari's initial instinct was to keep the naira artificially strong by restricting the supply of dollars and encouraging people to buy Nigerian goods. However, this policy hurt people and businesses that had struggled to obtain dollars to pay for needed products and services. Despite having a diverse economy in which agriculture and services provide the majority of the GDP, Nigeria still imports most of its consumables, which historically have been paid for in part with oil money. This summer, under considerable pressure, the Government of Nigeria (GON) finally allowed the naira to float, resulting in the highest inflation rate in 10 years and causing the country to slip into a serious recession. Hundreds of thousands of jobs have been lost, and the difficulty of importing goods has caused their prices to increase.

While most critics agree that the immediate crisis was caused by the GON's initial mismanagement of the naira, the GON has, to its credit, anticipated the need for major economic reforms to stimulate growth, diversify the economy, and create a buffer of foreign exchange reserves, which should help to stabilize the naira. In 2016 President Buhari announced Nigeria's "Economic Governance, Diversification and Competitiveness Program" (EGDCP), which has the following objectives:

1. Strengthen public financial management through enhanced fiscal performance and sustainability (expanded and efficient tax base and improved revenue collection, improved efficiency of public expenditure, and enhanced fiscal transparency and accountability).
2. Improve energy market competitiveness.
3. Enhance agriculture sector policy and institutional environment.
4. Foster social inclusion by protecting and empowering poor and vulnerable groups.

This plan is accompanied by the GON's record-setting "expansionist" 2016 budget of \$30 billion, which places heavy emphasis on capital projects such as infrastructure (representing 30 percent of the budget), as well as major new investments in security and defense. How the GON will finance this budget since its expenditures cannot be covered by expected revenues remains to be determined.

## Seven Big Wins

Despite plans to diversify the Nigerian economy, the GON continues to direct resources toward the petroleum industry. In October 2016, President Buhari unveiled the "Seven Big Wins" (officially, the Petroleum Industry Roadmap.) This is a short- to medium-term program overseen by the Ministry of Petroleum Resources aimed at accelerating the growth of Nigeria's oil and gas industry by 2019. The plan rests on an ambitious set of priorities:



A money changer counts Nigerian naira currency at a bureau de change, in Lagos, Nigeria. Nigeria floated its embattled naira currency earlier this year to control a spiraling crisis in Africa's biggest economy. (Source: AP Photo/Sunday Alamba, File.)



1. **Policy and Regulation**—Review existing regulations in the oil and gas sector to make it more responsive to current economic conditions.
2. **Business Environment and Investment Drive**—Put in place adequate infrastructure to increase crude oil and gas production.
3. **Gas Revolution**—Shift focus from oil to gas through new infrastructure and gas terms that would encourage the rollout of a national blueprint for backbone gas pipeline and processing infrastructure.
4. **Refineries and Local Production Capacity**—Upgrade the nation's refineries and increase local production capacity with the objective of reducing imports of petroleum products by 60 percent by 2018 and becoming a net exporter of petroleum products and value-added petrochemicals by 2019.
5. **Niger Delta and Security**—Improve security and ensure environmental safety in the oil-producing areas of the country to increase national crude oil production and attract investment and infrastructural development to the difficult terrain of the region.
6. **Transparency and Efficiency**—Restructure and revamp the parastatal institutions by instituting transparency and efficiency at all levels of operations.
7. **Stakeholder Management and International Coordination**—Deploy a potent communication strategy and build and maintain robust relationships with stakeholders within and outside the petroleum-producing community.

In terms of supporting the first priority, the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) would facilitate greater regulation of the petroleum industry by [requiring](#) the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) to split into two independent entities—the National Petroleum Company (NPC) and National Asset Management Company. A contested piece of legislation that addresses several aspects of the Nigerian petroleum industry, the PIB has been stalled in parliament for over a decade. Although several key issues remain, the PIB recently passed a second Senate reading, an indication that the legislation might move forward over the next few weeks.

Another way in which the GON plans to implement the Seven Big Wins roadmap is through a [\\$10 billion Niger Delta Infrastructure Fund](#), which President Buhari recently announced. The fund is to improve petroleum infrastructure in the Niger Delta. President Buhari envisions both new and renovated facilities and infrastructure in the region to attract new investors while also facilitating development. This will be a public-private program, funded through Nigerian and private sector investments. To provide transparency in the financing, the GON is also planning to adopt a joint account with private investors to ensure transactions are visible to all stakeholders.

A potentially challenging unintended consequence of this increase in infrastructure spending is that it will necessitate the reallocation of funds from the 2009 Amnesty Program in the oil-producing Niger Delta, which has been an important success. In 2009, approximately 30,000 militants who had sabotaged oil facilities laid down their arms in exchange for cash payments and, in some cases, schooling abroad. This program has maintained a fragile peace, although it has not facilitated any long-term solutions through job creation or other economic improvements. While President Buhari has often referred to an “exit plan” that will gradually remove this financial burden from the GON, the 2016 budget cut funding for this program by approximately [70 percent](#)—far from a gradual decline. With little economic development or new job opportunities in the region, some militants may choose to resume the violent tactics that destabilized the Niger Delta region for decades.

## Conclusion

To revitalize its economy and surmount the current economic crisis, the GON appears to be pursuing a two-pronged strategy: (1) using the EGDGP to stimulate economic growth and reduce dependence on the oil sector and (2) implementing initiatives in support of the Seven Big Wins roadmap to rehabilitate and grow the petroleum sector. Some critics may consider this approach as contradictory, interpreting the EGDGP as a gesture to multinational financial institutions that require economic diversification as a condition of financial assistance. A more sympathetic interpretation, however, is that this strategy is a phased approach to achieving long-term economic stability with a short-term emphasis on the petroleum sector.

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# BOY SOLDIERS, GIRL VICTIMS: GENDER MISCONCEPTIONS AND WOMEN IN WAR

By Hilary Matfess

Misconceptions about women's roles in conflict have ramifications for the design and implementation of post-conflict demobilization, de-radicalization, and reintegration. Failing to effectively deal with women and girls undermines the ability of these programs to stabilize post-conflict countries and to reduce the risk of these communities relapsing into violence.

## Background

More than 15 years ago, the United Nations adopted UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, "a landmark international legal framework that addresses not only the inordinate impact of [war on women](#), but also the pivotal role women should and do play in conflict management, conflict resolution and sustainable peace." Given that Africa hosts a significant proportion of the world's ongoing conflicts, as well as a number of post-conflict reintegration programs from previous wars, the implementation of UNSCR 1325 had special significance for the continent. UNSCR 1325 helped catalyze the movement toward "gender mainstreaming," a sweeping process that "involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality [are central to all activities](#)—policy development, research, advocacy/dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects." Despite the considerable gains made in incorporating women into programs related to peacemaking, peace building, and post-conflict reconciliation, women and girls remain classified primarily as "victims." This classification ignores the ways in which women contribute to violence and are integral parts of conflicts. In sub-Saharan Africa, it has been estimated that up to [30 percent of fighters](#) are female. Of the women and girls in the Lord's Resistance Army surveyed, 12 percent reported that their "primary" role was as a fighter; an additional 49 percent said it was their "secondary" role. Misconceptions about women's roles in conflict have ramifications for the design and implementation of post-conflict demobilization, de-radicalization, and reintegration programming. Failing to effectively incorporate women and girls undermines the ability of these programs to stabilize post-conflict countries and reduce the risk of these communities relapsing into violence.



**Child soldiers.** (Source: UAWR, "Child Soldiers: Protecting Children against Violence, Exploitation and Neglect," [http://www.africanwomenrights.org/what\\_we\\_do/](http://www.africanwomenrights.org/what_we_do/).)

## Evolution of Gender Programming Approaches

A review of the transformation of gender policy since the mid-20th century reveals that much progress has been made in considering the totality of women's experiences. The [United Nations Development Program \(UNDP\)](#) sketches a rough outline of this evolution, observing that the 1950s and 1960s were characterized by the "welfare approach," in which "the emphasis on women was on their reproductive roles as mothers and homemakers." This approach assumed that women were "economically dependent on male breadwinners."

This assumption began to fade away in the early 1970s, as researchers focused their attention on the "division of labor based on sex, and the impact of development and modernization strategies on women." This analytical framework gave rise to the "Women in Development" (WID) approach, which asserted, "the gap between men and women can be bridged by remedial measures within the existing structures." Because the WID approach "provided women with additional resources but no power to manage these resources," it often increased the burden on them.



WID gave way to the “Gender and Development” (GAD) approach, which gained currency in the 1980s. GAD emphasized the unequal power dynamics between men and women; as UNDP [observed](#), “the term gender arose as an analytical tool from an increasing awareness of inequalities due to institutional structures.” By the mid-1990s GAD was supplanted by the idea of “gender mainstreaming.” The notion that gender issues need to be brought into the mainstream was on display during the UN’s Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Since then, gender mainstreaming has continued to gain momentum, but a number of critical gaps remain. For example, in 2001, the same UNDP documents that encouraged holistic understandings of women’s roles in war included problematic examples and relied on stereotypes. For example, a checklist for assessing needs in conflict situations [included as one of its items](#) “protect both women and men from violence (e.g., women: sexual violence; men: forced recruitment in the armed forces).”

## Prevalence of Women in War

Despite the overarching narrative of women as “victims” or “camp followers,” evidence is emerging that women play critical roles in modern conflict in Africa—providing not only logistical support, but also serving as fighters. The Democratic Progress Institute emphasizes that women undertake “a [plethora of roles](#)—and in some cases may alternate between various responsibilities, including armed activities like frontline combat or defending camps, to more traditionally ‘female’ support functions such as providing essential services such as cooking, cleaning, agricultural labor and trade.”

Many reviews of women’s participation in conflict place an inordinate amount of attention on sexual violence and conscription. Although there is “[extensive evidence](#)” of sexual violence against women in armed groups and of women and girls being “taken as ‘bush wives’ . . . it would be inaccurate to assume that all women ex-combatants have been the subject of abuse.”

Women do not make up the majority of combatants in conflicts (including those in sub-Saharan Africa), but ignoring the prevalence of women as fighters “conceal[s] their [full range](#) as political and social actors.” [Nascent research](#) on women’s motivation for joining armed groups reveals a variety of recruitment patterns. There are those women who “join armed forces for the same ideological or political reasons as men—such as a desire for self-government or autonomy,” those who “join as an alternative or escape from oppression or traditional gender roles, particularly in conflict settings where armed groups have explicitly included gender equality as one of its principles,” and those who are recruited through [kin or family networks](#). Failing to appreciate the full scope of women’s participation in armed groups limits the effectiveness of post-conflict programming and combatant demobilization programs.

## Gender and Demobilization in Sub-Saharan Africa

Despite the growing influence of gender mainstreaming, few disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs are designed with women in mind. For example, even though roughly [one-third of the fighters in the Sierra Leone conflict were female](#), only 6.5 percent of adult participants and only [7.4](#) percent of child soldier participants in that country’s DDR program were female.

Some progress has been made toward including women in DDR programs. Liberia’s experience demonstrates that making a concerted effort to include women has a sizable impact. The [2004 DDR program in Liberia](#),<sup>1</sup> in which 17 percent of the demobilized ex-combatants who participated in the program were female, marked a steep increase from the low rates of female participation in the 1997 DDR program, which was designed and implemented prior to gender-mainstreaming efforts.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Coulter, Persson, and Utas. “Young Female Fighters in African Wars: Conflict and Its Consequences,” Policy Dialogue #3, The Nordic Africa Institute, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 264, footnote 4.

Despite this progress, there are still significant gaps in DDR programming. Even when women are included, their “[special needs](#)” are rarely addressed: no female clothing in the aid packages, no tampons or pads, no reproductive healthcare, etc.” Often, even the livelihood support programs that DDR programs include are [tailored to men](#).

This is a particularly pernicious oversight, because women associated with armed groups face significant stigma when they seek reintegration into their communities. As the Democratic Progress Institute observes, “female ex-fighters are often looked upon with suspicion and fear for having been perpetrators of violence but also for having violated established gender roles.”

## Conclusion

The international community has made great strides in recognizing the roles of women in modern conflict. But as evidenced by the continued marginalization of women in post-conflict programming and the widespread misconception of women as mere victims of conflict, there is still much work to be done to fulfill the mandate of UNSCR 1325.

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## ZUMA SURVIVES LATEST NO-CONFIDENCE VOTE – WHAT’S NEXT?

By George F. Ward

On November 10, 2016, South African President Jacob Zuma survived his fifth parliamentary no-confidence vote since 2014. The no-confidence motion had been brought by the opposition Democratic Alliance (DA) in the wake of the release of a report entitled “[State of Capture](#)” that was prepared by the Public Protector of the Republic of South Africa. The report outlined in exhaustive detail the results of an investigation into alleged improper and unethical conduct by President Zuma and other government officials in their dealings with the powerful Gupta family. Although the results of the no-confidence vote were never in serious doubt, the continuing overhang of “Guptagate” and other allegations of corrupt behavior cast doubt on Zuma’s ability to govern effectively. [more...](#)



In this photo taken in September 2010, Atul Gupta is seen outside magistrate’s court in Johannesburg. (AP Photo)

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France is now in its third year of “Operation BARKHANE,” a counterterrorism campaign conducted in five former French colonies in the Sahel: Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Chad (the “G5 Sahel”). While the operation includes military forces from all five African states, France clearly leads and unifies the combined force. Paris has conducted BARKHANE using limited resources; it has committed only a few thousand troops and relatively modest equipment in a large area about [half the size of the United States](#). [Some have voiced concern](#) that there is no exit strategy. What is Operation BARKHANE? Has it been successful? What are its prospects going forward? [more...](#)



French and Nigerien soldiers at Fort Madama in Niger, November 12, 2014. Photo by Thomas GOISQUE -

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=37528558>

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Richard J. Pera is a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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The Institute for Defense Analyses is a non-profit corporation operating in the public interest.

IDA’s three federally-funded research and development centers provide objective analyses of national security issues and related national challenges, particularly those requiring scientific and technical expertise.

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## LESOTHO'S GOVERNING COALITION COLLAPSES

By Alexander Noyes

On November 11, 2016, political instability returned to Lesotho when a faction of Prime Minister Pakalithi Mosisili's Democratic Congress (DC) party [announced](#) its departure from the ruling coalition government. After months of infighting within the DC party, things came to a head when Prime Minister Mosisili [fired](#) four ministers. In retaliation, DC's Deputy Leader (and former Minister of the Police) Monyane Moleleki, four ministers, and 20 other lawmakers quit the coalition, [citing](#) corruption, economic stagnation, and the government's failure to uphold the rule of law. Moleleki and the breakaway faction of the DC called for the formation of a new government. [more...](#)

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Alexander Noyes is an Adjunct Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili, shown in May 2011 file photo, was inaugurated on March 17, 2015, in the capital Maseru. Mosisili came to power after his party, the Democratic Congress, formed a coalition with several smaller parties to secure a majority after the Feb. 28 election. (AP Photo/Lai Seng Sin, File)

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In this photo taken in September 2010, Atul Gupta is seen outside magistrate’s court in Johannesburg. (AP Photo)

## State of Capture

Three brothers, [Ajay, Atul, and Rajesh Gupta](#), moved to South Africa from India’s northern state of Uttar Pradesh in 1993. They had been small businessmen in their home country, but they found much greater success in the liberal atmosphere of post-apartheid South Africa. Their business interests eventually included mining, computer equipment, the media, and more. The colorful title of the Public Protector’s report, “State of Capture,” refers to the apparently successful efforts of the Gupta family and their business and political allies to control and direct to their own advantage organs of the South African state. Even before the events that were addressed in the Public Protector’s report, the Guptas were no strangers to controversy. In 2013, they found themselves at the center of a political storm after it was revealed that a family plane carrying wedding guests had landed at a South African air force base and had been accorded the sort of VIP treatment normally reserved for foreign government representatives.

The investigation by the Public Protector was opened pursuant to complaints received from the leader of the DA and others in March and April 2016. It proceeded on a fast track. As Thuli Madonsela, the Public Protector, completed the report, she was also coming to the end of her term. She intended to release the report on October 14, 2016, the day before her term ended. On October 13, 2016, President Zuma [appealed](#) in court to block the issuance of the report, asking for an opportunity to question witnesses. Although this move delayed the report, the justices on November 2 [ruled against Zuma](#), clearing the way for the issuance of the report.

The 355-page report provides in detail the results of the Public Protector’s investigation. The following is a synthesis of some of the more significant observations in the report:

- A former deputy minister of finance alleged that he was offered by the Gupta family the position of minister of finance in return for specified favors involving personnel of the Ministry of Finance.
- Six weeks after the above, the minister of finance was removed by President Zuma and was replaced by an individual who appears to have been in consistent close contact with the Gupta family.
- Another individual was offered the post of minister for public enterprises in exchange for canceling the South African Airways route to India. (The Gupta family reportedly had [links to](#) a rival Indian airline.) President Zuma is alleged to have been at the Gupta residence when this offer was made. The individual receiving the offer claimed to have advised President Zuma of the offer. By his inaction after receiving this report, President Zuma appears to have violated the law.

The opinions expressed in these commentaries are those of the authors and should not be viewed as representing the official position of the Institute for Defense Analyses or its sponsors. Links to web sites are for informational purposes only and not an endorsement.

- President Zuma may have improperly allowed his son and members of the Gupta family to be involved in the process of appointing members of the boards of directors of state-owned enterprises.

## No-Confidence Vote Fails

Even though a number of leaders of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) had in the wake of the release of the report joined the opposition in calling for the resignation of President Zuma, the no-confidence vote in parliament was doomed to fail. First, the numbers were against the DA. The ANC has a solid majority – 249 members in the 400-seat National Assembly. Second, there is no provision in the National Assembly for a secret ballot, helping the ANC maintain strict party discipline. Allegiance is rewarded, and dissent is punished. Third, because the report recorded only allegations and appearances of possible misconduct, Zuma and his defenders were able to argue that nothing had been proven and that therefore action against the president was unwarranted. In the end, there were [126 votes](#) in the National Assembly for the motion and 214 against. One member abstained, and 58 members did not vote. Despite the result, it is notable that the number of votes against Zuma was the [highest](#) of any of the five no-confidence questions since 2010.

## What Comes Next?

On November 14, 2016, DA leader Mmusi Maimane [announced](#) that he would the next day present charges against President Jacob Zuma under the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, which compels people who suspect an offense to report it to the police to investigate. In addition, the Public Protector in the “State of Capture” report mandated that the president appoint within 30 days of issuance of the report a commission of inquiry headed by a judge to be selected by the chief justice. The commission would be empowered to investigate all issues. The president is directed to provide the commission with adequate staff and other resources. The commission is directed to report its findings to the president within 180 days. The “State of Capture” report also directs the Public Protector to bring to the attention of public prosecutors any matters identified in the report “where it appears crimes have been committed.”

Maimane’s charges and others that may emerge from the commission of inquiry or any the public prosecutor will join other allegations pending against President Zuma. Recently, a court ruled that [783 counts of corruption](#) related to President Zuma’s conduct prior to his assuming his current office should be reinstated.

## Conclusion

Although surprises are always possible, it is likely that the wheels of justice will grind slowly enough to allow President Zuma to remain in office until the December 2017 ANC party congress. At that point, his stewardship of government and his personal conduct are likely to come under serious scrutiny. Until then, the most serious consequence of the multiple scandals is likely to be the loss of confidence on the part of investors and other governments in the stability of South Africa and the effectiveness of its governance.

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Ambassador (ret.) George F. Ward is editor of Africa Watch and a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses

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France is now in its third year of “Operation BARKHANE,” a counterterrorism campaign conducted in five former French colonies in the Sahel: Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Chad (the “G5 Sahel”). While the operation includes military forces from all five African states, France clearly leads and unifies the combined force. Paris has conducted BARKHANE using limited resources; it has committed only a few thousand troops and relatively modest equipment in a large area about [half the size of the United States](#). [Some have voiced concern](#) that there is no exit strategy. What is Operation BARKHANE? Has it been successful? What are its prospects going forward?



French and Nigerian soldiers at Fort Madama in Niger, November 12, 2014. Photo by Thomas GOISQUE -

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=37528558>

## Foundation of French Military Presence in the Sahel

France’s military presence in Africa’s Sahel region reflects strong political, economic, and cultural links dating back to colonial days. Throughout the post-colonial period, France has employed military force to defend its former possessions in the Sahel and to support pro-French governments facing rebellions and coup attempts. [Chad is a case in point](#): in the early 1970s, French troops crushed a rebellion, and in 1986, France deployed forces to thwart an invasion by Libya. French forces remained in Chad for decades under the military banner of “Operation EPERVIER.”

The advent of transnational terrorism generated new threats to France’s allies in the Sahel. In January 2012, Tuareg rebels initiated a military campaign to establish an [independent country](#) in northern Mali known as Azawad. Disaffected soldiers overthrew the Malian government. Rebels and Islamic groups, notably Ansar Dine, overran Kidal, Gao, and Timbuktu. In January 2013, at Mali’s request and with United Nations’ (UN) authorization, France initiated “[Operation SERVAL](#)” to defeat the rebels and stabilize the country. Supported by Malian and other African troops, French forward-deployed units in Chad and Côte d’Ivoire participated in the operation, and air and ground forces from Metropolitan France (totaling over 5,000) were deployed to the region. French forces were successful, and by the spring of 2013, major combat operations ended. The government and rebels signed a peace agreement in June 2013, though it has yet to be implemented. Operation SERVAL was terminated in July 2014, but many troops remained in Africa because the long-term threat remained.

## Operation BARKHANE

In August 2014, Operation BARKHANE (French for barchan – a crescent-shaped sand dune) replaced Operations EPERVIER and SERVAL. French Defense Minister le Drian [argued](#) that counterterrorism had to be France’s military focus in the Sahel because “... jihadists develop in the area that runs from the Horn of Africa to Guinea Bissau ... [and] between Libya and the Atlantic Ocean.” French President Hollande [stated](#) that BARKHANE is a regional coalition that “... seeks to ... help Africans enforce their own security,” especially regarding cross-border operations. The [French objectives for BARKHANE](#) are to 1) support partner nations in their actions against terrorist groups and 2) help prevent reconstitution of terrorist sanctuaries in the region.

Operation BARKHANE is currently commanded by General Patrick Brethous of the French Army. The [operation includes](#) about 3,000 troops, including Special Forces and Legionnaires. Twenty attack and transport helicopters are deployed for the operation. Sixteen fixed-wing aircraft, including six RAFALE and MIRAGE 2000 fighter/attack aircraft, and ten transport planes, are also deployed. The operation employs unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), including the U.S.-built MQ-9 REAPER. Also about 200 light armored vehicles are in the Sahel. French forces are garrisoned in [four locations](#): 1) N’Djamena, Chad – headquarters and air forces; Gao, Mali – regional base with at least 1,000 troops; 3) Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso – special forces; and 4) Niamey, Niger – intelligence fusion center and UAVs.

## Has Operation BARKHANE Been a Success?

To date, France's relatively small investment has stabilized the G5 Sahel governments and kept terrorist organizations from mounting a major military campaign like insurgents did in northern Mali in 2012. Although France and G5 Sahel states have precluded terrorist groups from gaining sanctuary, they have not been able to defeat them, largely because of porous borders and changing terrorist tactics. Instead of direct challenges to more sophisticated forces, militants have opted for an [indirect approach](#). For example, tourist hotel bombings in [Bamako \(November 2015\)](#) and [Ouagadougou \(January 2016\)](#) – both linked to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) – resulted in many hostages taken and dozens killed, and kept terrorist groups in the press. Militants have also used mines and [improvised explosive devices \(IED\)](#) against government, French, and UN forces alike. For example, three French soldiers were killed by IEDs near Tessalit, Mali, in April 2016.

## The Future of the BARKHANE Mission

Operation BARKHANE continues to be seen as the unifying force behind the regional counterterrorism approach. If it were to end in the near term, terrorist groups likely would exploit a French withdrawal to the detriment of the G5 Sahel states. For example, insurgents in northern Mali might be encouraged to initiate another military campaign. Nor is there an apparent exit strategy to support a French withdrawal. What state or entity would take France's place? In the case of Mali, France had hoped the UN peacekeeping mission, known as "[MINUSMA](#)," would relieve France of its counterterrorism operations in that country. MINUSMA, however, [lacks the mandate and capacity](#) to perform such a mission, and UN peacekeepers are careful to portray themselves as *non-combatants*.

Over the long term, [some observers believe](#) that stability in the Sahel will not be achieved without a lengthy, costly, and complex effort of nation-building, especially regarding political and defense institutions. Without that, the Sahel nations may be unable to ensure their own security without French forces.

At present, the forces committed to Operation BARKHANE lack the capacity to cover effectively a territory [almost 10 times the size of France](#). As a result, French forces in the Sahel have been mostly reactive. They respond to intelligence reports of threats rather than undertaking more proactive counterterrorism operations. This approach is necessitated in part because French forces are stretched thin at home and abroad. As the French daily *Le Monde* [noted](#): "French soldiers are everywhere, like never before – from Mali to the streets of Paris."

The French [press](#) and [decision-makers](#) assess BARKHANE in the context of France's overall counterterrorism strategy, which has two other operational parts: "[Operation CHAMMAL](#)," air and naval operations against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, and "[Operation SENTINELLE](#)," which involves deployment of more than 10,000 French troops across France in response to domestic terrorism. Earlier this year, French Chief of Defense, General Pierre de Villiers [declared](#) that the French military is at the extreme edge of its ability to meet all three commitments. The cost, duration, and effectiveness of BARKHANE and other military operations may become an issue in France's presidential elections in April and May 2017. Nevertheless, French forces have become essential to suppressing terrorism in the G5 Sahel, and France seems unlikely to relinquish that role for some time to come.

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# LESOTHO'S GOVERNING COALITION COLLAPSES

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On November 11, 2016, political instability returned to Lesotho when a faction of Prime Minister Pakalithi Mosisili's Democratic Congress (DC) party [announced](#) its departure from the ruling coalition government. After months of infighting within the DC party, things came to a head when Prime Minister Mosisili [fired](#) four ministers. In retaliation, DC's Deputy Leader (and former Minister of the Police) Monyane Moleleki, four ministers, and 20 other lawmakers quit the coalition, [citing](#) corruption, economic stagnation, and the government's failure to uphold the rule of law. Moleleki and the breakaway faction of the DC called for the formation of a new government.



Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili, shown in May 2011 file photo, was inaugurated on March 17, 2015, in the capital Maseru. Mosisili came to power after his party, the Democratic Congress, formed a coalition with several smaller parties to secure a majority after the Feb. 28 election. (AP Photo/Lai Seng Sin, File)

## Lesotho's Chronic Instability

Lesotho is a small, lower middle-income country located in Southern Africa. It has a landlocked population of just over 2 million and is entirely surrounded by South Africa. South Africa continues to dominate Lesotho's political and economic affairs.

As highlighted in the March 12, 2015 [edition](#) of *Africa Watch*, despite once being hailed as one of Africa's rare democratic successes, Lesotho has suffered from chronic political instability over the past two years. Amid rising political tensions and deep divides within the security sector, things boiled over in August 2014 when the head of the military, Tlali Kamoli, launched a failed coup attempt after he was sacked by then Prime Minister Thomas Thabane. In the wake of the coup attempt, several outbreaks of political violence and [skirmishes](#) between the military and police took place, prompting a diplomatic intervention from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) under the leadership of South Africa's Deputy President, Cyril Ramaphosa.

After a series of agreements were signed, early elections were staged in February 2015 (two years prior to their scheduled date) in order to help resolve the political crisis. Despite some [violence](#) in the run-up to the 2015 elections, the close poll was peaceful and viewed as [free](#) and fair by outside observers. Mosisili's DC narrowly beat Thabane's All Basotho Convention (ABC) party and formed a seven-party coalition with Mothetjoa Metsing of the Lesotho Congress for Democracy. This new government failed to end the country's instability, however, as politically motivated violence continued, including the high-profile killing of army commander Maaparankoe Mahao at the hands of a group of soldiers. These killings prompted opposition leaders, including Thabane, to [flee](#) to South Africa. After his departure, Thabane [exclaimed](#), "The security situation in Lesotho has collapsed."

## Most Recent Instability

In July 2015, a SADC Commission of Inquiry was [deployed](#) to Lesotho to investigate the killing of Mahao. When the SADC Commission wrapped up its proceedings in late 2015, the Commission, in "the interest of finding peace," [recommended](#) a number of thorough security sector and constitutional reforms, including the removal of Kamoli as head of the military. These recommendations were made public in early 2016. Over the next ten months, Mosisili's government steadfastly [refused](#) to implement any of these reforms, ostensibly because Kamoli, the 2014 coup plotter, was a staunch ally of Mosisili's. Just last week, however, Mosisili's government [announced](#) that Kamoli had agreed to step down from his position on December 1.

While Moleleki's motivations for breaking away from Mosisili's government remain unclear, it appears that the drama over Kamoli may have played a role, with Moleleki [citing](#) a lack of rule of law in Lesotho as one of his grievances. Also, Moleleki is rumored to have had aspirations to become prime minister of Lesotho, and his pulling out of the coalition might simply have been an opportunistic power grab. After splitting away from the coalition government, Moleleki has been negotiating with opposition parties in an attempt to form a new government. On Sunday, November 13, Moleleki called the coalition government "rotten" and [said](#): "I invite all parties represented in the national assembly including the opposition to approach us to talk about how we can take this country forward." Moleleki is believed to be in ongoing discussions with Thabane, and a few ABC members have already decided to [join](#) the breakaway faction, which may bode ill for Mosisili.

## Conclusion

With Mosisili losing his thin majority in parliament, Lesotho is yet again primed for another uncertain period of political instability. While the political situation is still in flux, a prolonged battle between the Mosisili and the Moleleki faction seems likely, perhaps triggering yet another snap election that could lead to low-level violence. To promote long-term stability in Lesotho, SADC and international actors could urge support for an agreement to expedite the reforms highlighted by the SADC commission. The [rumored](#) deployment of a SADC "oversight committee" to guide the reform process in Lesotho is a welcome step in the right direction.

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## ZIMBABWE—WARNING LIGHTS FLASHING

By George F. Ward

In a [Contingency Planning Memorandum](#) published by the Council on Foreign Relations in March 2015, this author noted that acute instability in Zimbabwe could emerge at any time and would be likely to play out along one or more of the following lines:

- President Robert Mugabe dies or becomes incapacitated before installing a chosen successor.
- Mugabe's control is challenged and undermined by growing factionalism.
- An economic crisis triggers demands for political change.

In recent weeks, there have been increasing indications that all three of these scenarios may be emerging. As a result, the risks of political instability and even of significant violence have increased. Although Robert Mugabe has earned his reputation as Africa's ultimate survivor, the threats to his rule are mounting to unprecedented levels. [more...](#)

Ambassador (ret.) George F. Ward is editor of Africa Watch and a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses.



A man shows the new notes introduced by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe in Harare, Monday, Nov. 28, 2016. Zimbabwe has rolled out a new currency for the first time since 2009 in hopes of easing biting shortages of the U.S. dollar. Banks across the country started issuing the new currency, called bond notes, Monday. (Source: AP Photo/Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi.)

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Migrants stay in an impoverished neighborhood in the city of Agadez, Niger, April 27, 2015, until they have enough money to continue their journey through the Sahel desert to Libya or Algeria, as part of their path toward Europe. (Source: Photo by Kristin Palitza/picture-alliance/dpa/AP Images.)

Dr. Ashley N. Bybee is a Research Staff Member in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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Charlotte Osei, Chairman of the Electoral Commission of Ghana. (Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, "Leadership," <http://www.ec.gov.gh/about/leadership.html>.)

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# ZIMBABWE—WARNING LIGHTS FLASHING

By George F. Ward

In a [Contingency Planning Memorandum](#) published by the Council on Foreign Relations in March 2015, this author noted that acute instability in Zimbabwe could emerge at any time and would be likely to play out along one or more of the following lines:

- President Robert Mugabe dies or becomes incapacitated before installing a chosen successor.
- Mugabe's control is challenged and undermined by growing factionalism.
- An economic crisis triggers demands for political change.

In recent weeks, there have been increasing indications that all three of these scenarios may be emerging. As a result, the risks of political instability and even of significant violence have increased. Although Robert Mugabe has earned his reputation as Africa's ultimate survivor, the threats to his rule are mounting to unprecedented levels.



A man shows the new notes introduced by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe in Harare, Monday, Nov. 28, 2016. Zimbabwe has rolled out a new currency for the first time since 2009 in hopes of easing biting shortages of the U.S. dollar. Banks across the country started issuing the new currency, called bond notes, Monday. (Source: AP Photo/Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi.)

## Waning Health and Hints of Retirement

At age 92, President Mugabe understandably appears increasingly frail. Most recently, wide notice was taken of his ["wobbly" arrival](#) at the UN climate summit in Morocco in mid-November 2016. Soon after his return from Morocco, on Sunday, November 20, Mugabe gave a speech at a meeting attended by senior leaders of the government and security forces in which [he said](#), "If I am failing, let me know. I will go." That statement and others in his speech resulted in headlines such as, ["Robert Mugabe Announces Retirement."](#) Like many things in Zimbabwean politics, the story was not that simple. According to a [translated text](#) of Mugabe's speech provided by Africa Check, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting accuracy in public debate and the media in Africa, Mugabe also pointed out the importance of proper leadership transition:

We are in a critical time of regime change. To think that we will be toppled by whites who say, "we want to change the government of Zimbabwe"—which we fought for all these years, will we simply yield? I say no. . . . So change will come in good time. . . . If I have to retire, let me retire properly; people must sit down and discuss it cordially.

## Dissension in the Ranks

The net impression left by Mugabe's speech was that of a leader who, while realizing that there eventually must be a succession, is determined to control that process and, in the meantime, has no intention of stepping down. The problem for Mugabe—and for Zimbabwe—is that the ruling ZANU-PF party is increasingly divided into factions and unable to govern effectively. As previously reported in Africa Watch, most recently in the August 18 [edition](#), allegiances are shifting even in the security sector, which heretofore has been the ultimate guarantor of Mugabe's power. Leaders of the powerful war veterans' organization have turned against Mugabe. With [political fractures](#) appearing in the military, the party faction led by Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa ("Team Lacoste") no longer can count on the unqualified allegiance of the security sector. Some senior military figures seem to be supporting the "Generation 40" movement. The *de facto* leader of the latter is Grace Mugabe, the president's wife, who recently said in a [speech](#) to the ZANU-PF Women's League that she "plans and does everything with President Robert Mugabe," leaving the impression that she is already running state affairs.

## The Gathering Economic Storm

The disarray within the ZANU-PF leadership was evident during the run-up to the introduction of so-called bond notes on November 28. Since its bout with hyperinflation in the past decade, Zimbabwe has recognized a basket of foreign currencies as legal tender, but the U.S. dollar has been dominant. Most recently, dollars have been in short supply in part because of the decline in Zimbabwe's ability to acquire the U.S. currency through exports. Bond notes were proposed as a means to address this shortage, which had led to lines of customers forming outside banks each night, hoping to be able to acquire dollars in the morning.

Zimbabwe's Reserve Bank chief was at pains to describe the bond notes not as a currency, but as [export incentives](#) pegged to the dollar at 1:1 and backed by a \$200 million facility provided by the African Export-Import Bank. Vice President Mnangagwa undermined this position in an October 6 [speech](#) that was reported by The Herald, a ZANU-PF mouthpiece, saying that the bond notes would be "a currency that circulates within its jurisdiction," and which "we can control."

Of course, the bond notes cannot remain both pegged firmly to the dollar and under the control of Zimbabwe's government or central bank. The [statement](#) made by the Reserve Bank upon the initial issuance of the bond notes emphasized the export incentive feature and the peg to the dollar. The Bank pledged to release bond notes "on a measured basis." It is not clear whether the Bank's pledge will be honored in practice. So far, the bond notes are being used as a substitute for dollars in bank transactions. Their function as export incentives has not been evident. [Reports](#) are circulating that banks have obliged customers to accept bank notes rather than dollars and that some merchants have refused to accept them. According to Reuters, [one money changer](#) demanded two "dollars" in bond notes for each U.S. dollar. Although it is too early to judge the fate of the bond note system, the specter of [Gresham's Law](#)—bad money driving out good—looms.

## Growing Potential for Violence

Taken together, the deterioration in Mugabe's capacities, the strife within the ZANU-PF leadership, and Zimbabwe's increasing economic problems warn of possible crisis ahead. In a perceptive [report](#), the Early Warning Project of the United States Holocaust Museum makes the case that Zimbabwe is entering a period of "acute risk of mass atrocities that will last at least through the next planned general elections in 2018." The report outlines two non-mutually-exclusive scenarios: escalation of intra-ZANU-PF strife into open violence and repression of increasing anti-government protest activity by security forces.

## Conclusion

Given the looming possibility of widespread violence in Zimbabwe, the Early Warning Project's report urges, among other things, engagement by the United States, other Western countries, the United Nations, the Southern African Development Community, and the European Union in a focused conflict prevention and mitigation effort. For those interested in security and stability in the key southern African region, that seems like good advice.

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There are few locations in the world more dangerous than Niger. To its west, refugees from the conflict that started in Mali in 2012 threaten to destabilize villages in western Niger. To its north, the return of thousands of armed Tuareg fighters who fought in Muammar Gaddafi's army concern many Nigeriens who wish to preserve the fragile peace in an unstable region. To its south, the threat posed by Boko Haram to Niger's Diffa region is the most imminent one. Here violent terrorist attacks coupled with an influx of refugees from Nigeria have placed pressure on government security forces and humanitarian workers alike. Throughout Niger, low economic development, desertification, and the lack of job opportunities for an exploding youth bulge are all factors contributing to social strife.



Migrants stay in an impoverished neighborhood in the city of Agadez, Niger, April 27, 2015, until they have enough money to continue their journey through the Sahel desert to Libya or Algeria, as part of their path toward Europe. (Source: Photo by Kristin Palitza/picture-alliance/dpa/AP Images.)

## Migrants In and Transiting Agadez: A New Security Concern?

To date, despite being one of the poorest countries in the world, Niger has managed these threats on its borders. In 2009, the government negotiated a successful peace agreement with the Tuareg population in the north. The Tuaregs had led a series of insurgencies over the preceding two decades. Unlike its neighbor, Mali, whose government failed to effectively address the concerns of its northern population, Niger successfully created an inclusive government in which northerners are now represented. Niger has also managed to avoid losing vast swaths of territory to extremist groups that operate in the Sahel, a development that has befallen northeastern Nigeria. Now, a new phenomenon has emerged that has the potential to significantly affect Niger—large numbers of migrants transiting Niger's vast territory and the smugglers that move them to North Africa and Europe.

In recent years, the flow of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa to Europe has increased dramatically, contributing to a European migrant crisis that Africa Watch examined in [October](#). Niger has been one of the countries most affected by this migrant flow, particularly through the northern Sahelian town of Agadez, which is located on the southern edge of the Sahara and the northernmost inhabitable edge of West Africa. Citizens of member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) can move freely from anywhere in West Africa to Agadez. Once in Agadez, migrants require smugglers knowledgeable of the difficult Sahelian terrain to traverse the desert. This year, the International Organization on Migration (IOM) [announced](#) that it expects migration through the Agadez region to reach 300,000, which is more than double the 120,000 estimated to have transited the town in 2015.

## Agadez—An Evolving Town

Historically, Agadez was an important trans-Saharan trading town and one of the continent's most important Tuareg cities. It was a popular tourist attraction until Tuareg rebellions from 2007 to 2009 and the increase in kidnappings by armed Islamist groups in the Sahara discouraged tourism. Today, Agadez, with a population of approximately 120,000 people, is an active market town and transportation center for uranium that is mined in the surrounding area. It is also a well-known [smuggling](#) town and departure point where migrants from across West and sub-Saharan Africa travel in hopes of reaching a better life in Libya, Algeria, or Europe. Many local residents have benefited from this development by [providing services](#) to migrants. The act of smuggling people across the desert, however, was [outlawed](#) by the Nigerien government in 2015 under pressure from the [European Union](#), which was experiencing an immigration crisis. Because [corruption of government officials](#) is commonplace, however, smugglers continue to operate largely unimpeded by local law enforcement.

An effective crackdown on smugglers could have unintended consequences. It would remove a source of income and employment for many in a town with few options for work. Such unemployed young men could become easy recruits for Islamic extremist groups operating in the region. To date, the government of Niger has not committed to major development programs in and around Agadez that could reduce the appeal of either of these options by offering other opportunities for financial gain.

In fact, the Government of Niger has not invested any significant public funds in the region that could alleviate the pressure that will inevitably be placed on local resources if the population, both permanent and transient, continues to grow. Many migrants aspiring to reach Europe [end their journeys](#) in Agadez once money and motivation run out. There are numerous accounts of individuals who believed they had the financial resources necessary to pay smugglers to take them to Europe only to be left in Agadez until they could earn more money or their families could send additional funds. In some of the [worst cases](#), migrants have been forced into slavery or prostitution by smugglers to whom they are indebted.

## Conclusion

As long as Africa's population boom and high unemployment continue to fuel large-scale migration to North Africa and Europe, towns such as Agadez will continue to be major hubs for migrant smuggling. The IOM's 2016 data suggest that this trend will continue and that the Nigerien government's crackdown on migrant smuggling has [failed to deter](#) migrants or their smugglers. As a result, corruption that undermines local governance is likely to continue and the social and economic impacts caused by a growing population have the potential to disrupt—and possibly destabilize—the region. Although the Government of Niger's security forces have an impressive track record, the prospect of collaboration between Islamic extremist groups and disaffected migrants would present an ominous development in the Sahel.

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On December 7, 2016, Ghanaians are slated to go to the polls for presidential, parliamentary, and local elections. In the run-up to the vote, a number of contradictory reports concerning the country's ability to hold free, fair, and peaceful elections have emerged. Although citizens have expressed their confidence in the country's electoral and security institutions and have demonstrated a preference for peaceful elections, many are concerned that the 2016 elections may have the same technical issues [the 2012 election](#) did. The electoral commission's decision to delay the elections (which were originally scheduled for November 7) by a month has attracted scrutiny, while a number of lawsuits against the country's electoral bodies and the tactics of the candidates could spell trouble for the legitimacy of the vote.



Charlotte Osei, Chairman of the Electoral Commission of Ghana. (Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, "Leadership," <http://www.ec.gov.gh/about/leadership.html>.)

## Citizen Support

The Center for Democracy and Development (CDD), a West African think tank with offices in Ghana and Nigeria, conducted a [survey](#) of Ghanaians that revealed robust and growing support for the country's electoral institutions. Eight in 10 Ghanaians responded that they believe that the elections will be "completely free and fair" or "free and fair with minor problems." In particular, trust in the Electoral Commission (EC) is on the rise. In July 2016, the administrators of the survey found that 63 percent of Ghanaians believed the institution could "administer free, peaceful, and credible elections." By November, that number had risen to 73 percent. The high levels of confidence in the EC are particularly encouraging since the body came under criticism after the 2012 election. The election that year was particularly tight, and the results were challenged by the opposition in the country's Supreme Court. Although the Supreme Court ultimately upheld the EC's decision in a 5–4 vote, the process "[kept Ghana on tenterhooks for much of 2013](#)." The retirement of the EC's head allowed Ghana to take a "[bold step](#)," appointing Charlotte Osei (the former head of the National Commission for Civic Education) to lead the body through the 2016 elections. Osei, who is relatively youthful at 46 and has a background in youth issues and law, was selected to "[inject vigour, rigour, and fresh ideas](#) into the EC."

A less sanguine finding was that roughly one in three surveyed "indicated a certain apprehension about the outbreak of violence" once the results of the votes are made public. This fear appears to be concentrated in the country's north, where more than half the respondents expressed concern about violence.

Despite these concerns, respondents overall expressed [confidence](#) in the institutions responsible for addressing electoral issues: 72 percent reported satisfaction with the conduct of security personnel, 68 percent reported the same for political party agents, and 65 percent indicated satisfaction with registration officials responsible for managing the country's electoral registration regulations. Equally important, over three quarters of respondents ([76 percent](#)) said that they intend to vote, and the majority (over 60 percent) reported that they value peaceful, free, and fair elections.

## Signs of Trouble

Even though Ghana's citizens have expressed confidence in the upcoming elections, troubling signs have developed. The CDD [reported](#) that "the tone of the election campaign, as well as political discourse [is] increasingly bellicose," noting

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"the use of inflammatory language in the media and political party . . . [and] mobilization of private militias." Some of this mobilization and discourse include potentially divisive "ethnic undertones," according to the CDD [survey](#).

Further, a handful of incidents have already challenged the credibility of the elections and the independence of the EC. Pro-opposition groups have organized the "Let My Vote Count Alliance" (LMVCA), which in 2015 staged "[street protests](#)" to put pressure on the Commission to compile a fresh voters' register." These protests turned violent that September when the group reached EC headquarters, where they met "[riot](#) police armed with tear gas, rubber bullets, water cannon, batons and bamboo canes." Osei did not meet with LMVCA leadership after the incident.

Journalists have also lodged complaints with the EC for attempting to charge "[media accreditation fees](#)" to cover the elections. A Ghanaian journalist noted that "it is [the right of every Ghanaian](#), journalists or not, to be able to supervise the election," and he emphasized the importance of the "right to information" in the country.

In May 2016, the Supreme Court was forced to adjudicate the question whether a National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) card is an acceptable form of ID to use when voting—the incumbent party asserted that it should be, whereas the opposition challenged that these cards are not proof of identity. Ultimately, the Supreme Court confirmed its original recommendation, favoring the opposition with its ruling that NHIS cardholder names be removed from the voting rosters. The EC returned with "a list of names that looked distinctly [underwhelming](#)," complying with the Supreme Court's ruling but not significantly altering the electoral calculus.

The EC's neutrality has also come into question following its decision in October that disqualified [12 candidates for president](#). Although the EC cited issues with registration paperwork, some opposition parties argued the decision was political. A handful of candidates have [petitioned the courts](#) about their disqualification. A political analyst, Kwesi Jonah, told [Deutsche Welle](#) that he is concerned about the impact of the court cases on the electoral process.

## What's At Stake?

As Ghanaians head to the polls, their hopes are high. No matter who wins, Ghana's role as an example of successful democratization in Africa is at stake. In that regard, it is crucial for the elections to be conducted peacefully and for their result to be seen as fair.

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Hilary Matfess is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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## A FORGOTTEN EMERGENCY: THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN THE LAKE CHAD BASIN

By Hilary Matfess

Recent weeks have witnessed a [spate](#) of attacks by Boko Haram throughout the Lake Chad Basin, leading many to wonder whether the Nigerian government's [declarations](#) of the group's imminent defeat were premature. Many of the government's statements have focused on military operations against the insurgency, paying less attention to the rapidly escalating humanitarian crisis throughout the region. Boko Haram-related population displacements have exacerbated food security issues in the region. These displacements, which have taken place in a region already challenged by the effects of climate change, have contributed to making the humanitarian crisis in Lake Chad Basin among the worst in the world. Unfortunately, the United Nations (UN) and its partners are [struggling to garner the funds](#) they estimate will be necessary to respond to the situation in the region. An effective response to the humanitarian situation in the Lake Chad Basin requires addressing both the near-term and long-term drivers of the crisis. [more...](#)



In this file photo taken Saturday, Aug. 27, 2016, women displaced by Islamist extremists wait for food to be handed out to them at the Bakassi camp in Maiduguri, Nigeria. (Source: AP Photo/Sunday Alamba, File.)

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By Alexander Noyes

On December 2, 2016, Yahya Jammeh, the president of The Gambia for the last 22 years, [conceded](#) defeat in a surprise electoral win by opposition candidate Adama Barrow. The electoral turnover marks The Gambia's first democratic transfer of power. Jammeh came to power through a military coup in 1994 and led the country in an increasingly authoritarian and mercurial fashion since then, proclaiming in 2011 that he would rule for "a [billion](#) years." Barrow, who led a coalition of opposition parties, [won](#) 45 percent of the vote, with Jammeh gaining 36 percent. While some [reports](#) indicate that Jammeh may not leave the political scene so easily, the election result and Jammeh's concession have been hailed regionally and internationally as an unexpected success story for democracy in Africa. [more...](#)



Gambian President-elect Adama Barrow sits for an interview with the Associated Press at his residence in Yundum, Gambia, Saturday Dec. 3, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Jerome Delay.)

Alexander Noyes is an Adjunct Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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In this file photo taken Saturday, Aug. 27, 2016, women displaced by Islamist extremists wait for food to be handed out to them at the Bakassi camp in Maiduguri, Nigeria. (Source: AP Photo/Sunday Alamba, File.)

## Near-Term Issues: Displacement and Food Shortages in the Region

The displacement crisis in the Lake Chad Basin is perhaps the most obvious of the challenges facing the region. [An estimated 2.6 million](#) people have been displaced as a result of Boko Haram's violence. According to the International Rescue Committee, it "[is Africa's fastest growing crisis](#)," affecting an estimated 21 million people in some way. Many of the displaced have taken shelter in Maiduguri, the capital of the beleaguered Borno State. Dr. Bulama Gubio, a member of the Borno Elders' Forum and a resident in the city, estimates that the population has doubled in size since the crisis accelerated in 2009. The strain on the city's infrastructure is evident. Schools were, [until recently](#), unable to focus on students' needs because they were serving as makeshift displacement camps.

The government and international humanitarian groups have struggled to keep pace with the rapid acceleration in displacement and the pressing needs of the displaced. [More than 90 percent](#) of the displaced are living with hosts in the community, rather than in formal camps. Although this alleviates the burden on the government, which does not provide medical care, education services, or food assistance to those who are not in formal camps, it places an additional strain on the city's residents. The increased demand for housing, as internally displaced people (IDPs) and aid workers alike have made their way to the city, has sent prices skyrocketing—Al Jazeera reports that prices have [doubled](#) as a result of the influx. Many of the displaced were farmers. In Maiduguri, however, few have access to land, limiting their ability to support themselves. The region is suffering from a crippling food crisis, in large part due to the collapse of farming throughout the region.

Estimates from the World Food Program suggest that in Borno State alone, there are more than [3 million people](#) who are experiencing "moderate and severe food insecurity." In mid-November, the UN warned that [75,000 children](#) are at risk of death from starvation and malnutrition "in a few months" without support.

Toby Lanzer, the UN assistant secretary general and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)'s regional humanitarian coordinator for the Sahel, [expressed the gravity of the situation](#): "This is about as bad

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as it gets. There's only one step worse and I've not come across that situation in 20 years of doing this work and that's a famine." As of July, only [\\$75 million](#) of the UN's requested \$279 million had been secured. This shortfall reflects a history of underinvestment in the region. Although the humanitarian crisis has captured the attention of the [press](#), it has not necessarily attracted sufficient attention from policymakers around the world.

Even though this food crisis can be traced to Boko Haram's destruction and the military operations against the insurgents, long-standing characteristics of the region make it prone to food insecurity. Some of the vulnerability of the region's food security can be traced to "a lack of investment in rural [development](#)" by regional governments. In addition, even before the Boko Haram crisis, many were concerned about the effects of climate change and population growth on the Lake Chad Basin. As the World Food Program notes, "Lake Chad is a [dynamic](#) body of water, constantly changing size, shape and depth, in response to even slight fluctuations in annual precipitation," making it difficult to project the relative health of the lake and its ecosystem. The lake itself not only provides water to millions and enables the region's agricultural productivity, but is crucial for the fishing economies of the countries that border it. The lack of protection and investment in the Lake Chad Basin results in "poor infrastructure and social protection . . . which, in turn, undermines livelihoods [and food security](#)."

### **A Long-Term Issue: Securing the Region**

Providing nutritional support and emergency food assistance to those in need in the Lake Chad Basin is the most pressing humanitarian issue in the near term. One obstacle is that the Nigerian authorities view the humanitarian crisis as a short-term issue. The government of Borno State has expressed its intention to close the IDP camps in the state by [May 2017](#), a timeline that seems difficult to meet. IDPs and returnees complain of a lack of physical security (from both landmines and continued incursions by Boko Haram) and inadequate government support to rebuild and resettle their communities. Father Maurice Kwairanga, whose cathedral serves as a shelter for displaced people in Adamawa State, [explained the problem](#): "Many places are still not as secure as the media or the military say they are. Close to the highways it may be OK, but not in the more isolated rural communities where there is [no security cover](#). Some people from here did go back home, but they were then attacked and came back here to the cathedral."

Short-term priorities, such as kinetic operations against Boko Haram, should be pursued in combination with longer-term planning focused on securing the region. As the World Food Program observed, "while crucial to treat immediate hunger and strife within the region, the [Band-Aid](#) emergency relief neglects to address development problems underpinning the protracted humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin." Building more resilient rural communities and agricultural systems could be a part of the resettlement objectives.

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Gambian President-elect Adama Barrow sits for an interview with the Associated Press at his residence in Yundum, Gambia, Saturday Dec. 3, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Jerome Delay.)

## Jammeh's Brutal Rule

The Gambia, located in West Africa, is the smallest country in mainland Africa, with a population of just under 2 million. In 2015, Jammeh [declared](#) the country an Islamic republic. With the country previously [known](#) as the "smiling coast of West Africa," Jammeh ruled The Gambia for the previous two decades in a brutal and erratic manner. He faced sharp [criticism](#) from international and human rights groups for widespread human rights violations, including torture and extrajudicial killings. Indeed, critics have [referred](#) to Jammeh's rule as, "the worst dictatorship you've probably never heard of." International actors also took notice, with the United States removing the country from eligibility for the African Growth and Opportunity Act in 2015 and the European Union (EU) [suspending](#) aid to The Gambia in 2014 over a severe anti-homosexual law. As highlighted in the January 15, 2015, [edition](#) of *Africa Watch*, Jammeh has faced a number of alleged attempts to overthrow him. After the most recent coup attempt was put down, in December 2014, Jammeh purged the military and cracked down on opposition groups.

## 2016 Election Surprise

Given Jammeh's harsh 22 years in power, his loss and acceptance of defeat was unexpected, both in the region and abroad. Building on momentum [generated](#) by anti-government protests in April and May of this year—in which nearly 50 were arrested, including senior opposition figures—eight opposition groups formed a united coalition to oppose Jammeh. But Jammeh's [refusal](#) to allow EU election monitors in the country and his [decision](#) to cut off all access to the Internet and international phone service appeared to suggest that Jammeh would again do whatever it took to remain in power. When the election results were announced, however, Jammeh called Barrow to concede defeat, shocking many. With television cameras rolling, Jammeh [told](#) Barrow: "Allah is telling me my time is up and I hand over graciously with gratitude toward the Gambian people and gratitude toward you." Barrow, a former businessman and real estate mogul, appeared just as surprised by Jammeh's concession and his own victory as many observers, [saying](#), "I'm very happy because everybody thought that it was impossible, and the impossible became possible." Alieu Momar Njie, the head of The Gambia's electoral commission, also expressed surprise, [noting](#), "It's really unique that someone who has been ruling this country for so long has accepted defeat."

Barrow's victory spurred large celebrations in Banjul, the capital, with thousands taking to the streets. In a marked departure from the past, security [forces](#) looked on and did not intervene, as demonstrators pulled down posters of Jammeh. Barrow has promised to [reverse](#) many of Jammeh's most controversial policies, pledging to return The Gambia to the Commonwealth and not to pull out of the International Criminal Court, which Jammeh had promised to do. Barrow also pledged to undertake significant security sector reforms, [saying](#), "We will improve their [security forces] training to give them the professionalism to do their job . . . . With our government, they will be distanced from politics." Members of Barrow's coalition have also suggested they will [prosecute](#)



Jammeh for past crimes, which could complicate a smooth transition process. International actors have welcomed the election results and Jammeh's concession, with Secretary of State John Kerry [congratulating](#) Barrow for "his historic victory, which will mark the first democratic transfer of power in the country, and we look forward to working with him as he helps to usher in a new era in The Gambia." Ties with Western countries and the United States look set to deepen under Barrow.

## Conclusion

Although [fears](#) persist that Jammeh may attempt to scuttle the coming transfer of power, the unexpected election results in The Gambia highlight the importance of opposition unity to democratization in semi-authoritarian countries, in both Africa and beyond. Indeed, academic [research](#) highlights that opposition unity is key to political liberalization in non-democracies. Marc Morje Howard and Philip G. Roessler, for instance, [find](#) that the opposition's "decision to create a coalition or to jointly support a single candidate, despite significant regional, ethnic, or ideological differences and divisions—can have a tremendous effect on the electoral process and its results." The Gambia, as well as the recent case of [Nigeria](#) in 2015, lend further support to these findings.

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## PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION IN ANGOLA—A PAUSE IN THE PLAN?

By George F. Ward

In early December 2016, Angolan state radio [broadcast](#) that the current minister of defense, João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, had been selected by the ruling party, the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), to succeed President José Eduardo dos Santos in 2017. Dos Santos, who has governed the country since 1979, had months earlier announced his forthcoming retirement. The radio said that Lourenço would be officially presented as the party's future leader during the celebration of the MPLA's 60th anniversary on December 10. Since in Angola the leader of the ruling party automatically becomes president, the decision by the MPLA appeared to resolve the question of succession to dos Santos. The MPLA's 60th anniversary scenario did not, however, unfold as had been announced. President dos Santos skipped the [celebration](#). Lourenço, who did attend and delivered a [speech](#), was not presented formally as party leader. Even without speculating on the reasons for the party's failure to publicly anoint Lourenço, it seems clear that there has been at least a momentary pause in the choreography of the presidential succession in Angola. [more...](#)



João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço. (Source: "Minister Represents Head of State in African Games," March 9, 2015, Official Portal of the Government of the Republic of Angola, <http://www.angola.gov.ao/VerNoticia.aspx?id=29241>.)

Ambassador (ret.) George F. Ward is editor of Africa Watch and a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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Prior to his founding of the Khaled Abu al-Abbas Brigade, Belmokhtar was a senior commander in the terrorist group al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). In this position, Belmokhtar conducted numerous kidnapping operations against Westerners, acquired weapons for use in terrorist attacks, and was involved in various negotiations for hostages taken by AQIM. Belmokhtar, a former Algerian soldier, was trained in camps in Afghanistan.

Excerpt from Rewards for Justice Poster, "Mokhtar Belmokhtar." (Source: [https://www.rewardsforjustice.net/english/mokhtar\\_belmokhtar.html#](https://www.rewardsforjustice.net/english/mokhtar_belmokhtar.html#), accessed 13 December 2016.)

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### About IDA

The Institute for Defense Analyses is a non-profit corporation operating in the public interest.

IDA's three federally-funded research and development centers provide objective analyses of national security issues and related national challenges, particularly those requiring scientific and technical expertise.

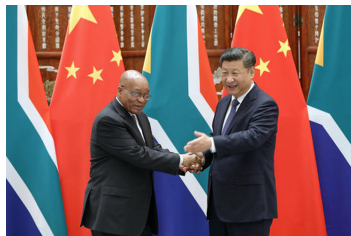
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## CHINA IN AFRICA: ECONOMIC MYTHS AND SOFT POWER

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China's emerging and evolving role in Africa has been the subject of [books](#), briefings, [conferences](#), and countless newspaper articles in recent years. A significant proportion of this coverage has focused on China's economic relationship with the continent; in particular, China's position as the continent's [largest trading partner](#) is frequently cited and analyzed. Undoubtedly, the Sino-African economic relationship is important and complex. But the public discourse over trends in China's investment in, aid to, and interests in African economics is clouded by a number of misconceptions. Moreover, Chinese soft power in the region is infrequently discussed, despite evidence of the country's political influence in a number of African countries. [more...](#)



Chinese President Xi Jinping, right, shakes hands with South African President Jacob Zuma as they meet at the West Lake State Guest House in Hangzhou, China Saturday, Sept. 3, 2016. (Source: Lintao Zhang/Pool Photo via AP.)

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João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço. (Source: "Minister Represents Head of State in African Games," March 9, 2015, Official Portal of the Government of the Republic of Angola, <http://www.angola.gov.ao/VerNoticia.aspx?id=29241>.)

## The Dynamics of Succession

During its decades-long rule in Angola, the MPLA has become synonymous not only with the state, but also with control of the economy, which is based overwhelmingly on the production of oil. Dos Santos has been able to remain at the helm for so long in part due to his skill in balancing the various factions, ethnic groups, and economic interests within the MPLA.

Dos Santos has never designated a successor, and he distributed senior positions in government and business adroitly so as to protect his party leadership while also advancing the financial interests of his own family. Until this year, Manuel Vicente was the most talked-about potential successor to dos Santos. Vicente rose through the ranks of Angola's national oil company, Sonangol. He [chaired the company](#) from 1990 to 2012, acquiring a good reputation in the international petroleum community. Vicente was briefly Minister of State for Economic Cooperation in 2012 before being elevated to the vice presidency of the MPLA in the same year. After that year's elections, he became the country's vice president. Vicente abruptly fell from grace in March 2016, when [reports surfaced](#) that he was under investigation in Portugal for having allegedly bribed a public prosecutor there. Opponents of Vicente were known to view the oil executive as a political newcomer who did not deserve to succeed dos Santos. The press reports concerning Vicente emerged only days after President dos Santos had announced that he would [retire](#) from politics in 2018.

Months later, at the MPLA's congress in August 2016, João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço was elected vice president of the party, replacing Vicente. Lourenço, variously reported to be [60](#) or [62](#) years of age, is a retired general and the incumbent minister of defense. Before assuming the defense post in 2014, he had been the [secretary general](#) of the MPLA. Following the party congress, reports surfaced that the party's electoral list in the 2017 elections would be headed by Lourenço rather than dos Santos. Were that the case, the succession question would have been effectively resolved.

## If Lourenço, Why Lourenço?

If indeed Lourenço will become dos Santos's successor, his choice could be seen as logical from at least four points of view. First, he has a long record as an MPLA stalwart rather than as a representative of a single faction or an ethnic group within the party. Second, Lourenço has solid military credentials. He rose to [general officer](#) rank in the war of liberation



against Portugal, and he was trained in the former Soviet Union. That record carries weight in a country in which military credentials, especially those stemming from the liberation war, are held in high regard. Third, Lourenço has significant international experience. As defense minister, he has traveled widely and built up a network of connections on the continent and beyond. Angola's relationship with China is crucial, and Lourenço has been entrusted with [significant consultations](#) with the Chinese government. His wife, Ana Afonso Dias Lourenço, currently serves as an [Executive Director](#) of the World Bank Group, representing Angola, Nigeria, and South Africa. Fourth and perhaps most important, Lourenço is viewed as a successor who would be likely to protect the financial and political interests of the [dos Santos family](#). The president's son, Jose Filomeno, chairs Angola's multi-billion-dollar sovereign wealth fund (see November 21, 2013, [report](#) in *Africa Watch*). His daughter, Isabel, often described as Africa's richest woman, is currently is the boss of Sonangol.

### Other Alternatives Lacking

Lourenço has twice before lost favor with dos Santos. He made a misstep in 2003, when he [commented](#) publicly on the possibility that dos Santos might leave office. He was [touted](#) as a successor to dos Santos in 2009, but was then ostracized by the president. Given dos Santos's track record of keeping rivals off balance, it is conceivable that the same might again occur. Just as Vicente fell out of the picture, so could Lourenço. The problem for dos Santos, and for Angola, is that alternatives are not abundant. Dos Santos may have the long-term hope that his children will eventually assume political control of the country, but a move in that direction now would probably be premature, given opposition among MPLA grandees. Whatever the outcome, the end of the succession drama appears near. On December 12, the Associated Press [reported](#) a perhaps indicative, if enigmatic, statement on the succession by Joana Lina, vice president of Angola's parliament and member of the MPLA's central committee: "In the party we know the name of the successor of President dos Santos, and the candidate of the party in the elections . . . . The official announcement will be made in a few days."

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# IS MOKHTAR BELMOKHTAR REALLY DEAD?

By Richard J. Pera

On November 27, 2016, *The Wall Street Journal* [reported](#) that one of the world's most wanted terrorists—Mokhtar Belmokhtar—had likely been killed in southern Libya by French forces earlier that month. A [cofounder](#) of al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Belmokhtar had survived multiple assassination attempts, a fact that lent to his “[untouchable](#)” moniker and mystique. Who is Mokhtar Belmokhtar; what terrorist acts are attributed to him; what is latest news of his demise; and, if it is true, what will be the impact on terrorism in Africa?

## Belmokhtar's Background

Born in Algeria in 1972, [Mokhtar Belmokhtar](#) became a jihadi as a teenager and fought for the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan in the early 1990s. He became known as “[Le Borgne](#)”—French for “The One-Eyed”—after losing an eye while mishandling explosives. Belmokhtar financed operations in North Africa and the Sahel by smuggling cigarettes (which earned him yet another moniker—“[Mr. Marlboro](#)”), drugs, cars, and diamonds. He also earned millions of euros from [kidnapping and ransoming](#) Western citizens. Belmokhtar fought in the Algerian civil war, aligning himself successively with the Armed Islamic Group (“GIA”) and the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (“GSPC”)—both Algerian, Islamist insurgent groups. The GSPC pledged allegiance to al-Qaida, and Belmokhtar, a military commander in AQIM, became known as “[Emir of the Sahel](#).” Belmokhtar’s [threats](#) against the West, especially France and the United States, have been consistent: “you will hear from us on the battlefield . . . [and] we will fight you in your own homes, you will experience the heat of wounds in your own countries and we will threaten your interests.”

Frequent disagreements with other AQIM leaders led Belmokhtar to form an autonomous, al-Qaida-aligned group in 2012 called “[Those Who Signed with Blood Brigade](#).” The group merged with another like-minded militant organization to form [al-Murabitun](#) (Arabic for “The Sentinels”) in 2015. Since late 2015, al-Murabitun has been aligned with AQIM. Of note, Belmokhtar consistently sought to outflank the influence of the Islamic State across the Sahara and Sahel.

Belmokhtar escaped death [at least five times](#) before 2016. In June 2015, [for example](#), the United States targeted him when two U.S. F-15s struck a building in Ajdabiya, Libya, near Tripoli. The raid killed 29 likely AQIM associates, but not Belmokhtar.

Algeria sentenced Belmokhtar to death *in absentia* in 2007. He was [sanctioned](#) by the UN Security Council in 2009 and [indicted](#) by the Department of Justice in 2013. The U.S. Government [offered](#) a \$5 million reward for information leading to his arrest and conviction. The State Department [described](#) Belmokhtar as “the greatest near-term threat to US and Western interests in the Sahel.”

Belmokhtar orchestrated numerous terrorist acts throughout the Sahara and Sahel, including:

- 2012–13: Following establishment of a separatist state in northern Mali in 2012, Belmokhtar’s Those Who Signed with Blood Brigade [joined](#) with other groups to implement Sharia law in territory that included Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu. Terrorists and insurgents were driven out by French forces in 2013.
- January 2013: Attack on a multinational energy complex near [Amenas](#), Algeria, with 800 hostages and 40 killed, including three Americans.



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- May 2013: Coordinated attacks on a Nigerien military barracks and French-run uranium mine in [Niger](#), killing 19.
- August 2015: Attack on the [Byblos Hotel](#) in Sevare, Mali, killing 13, including five U.N. workers.
- November 2015: Attack on the [Radisson Blu Hotel](#) in Bamako, Mali, with 120 hostages and 22 killed.
- January 2016: Coordinated assault on restaurants and businesses in [Ouagadougou](#), Burkina Faso, with over 200 hostages and at least 28 killed.
- March 2016: Assault on a beach resort in [Grand-Bassam](#), Côte d'Ivoire, killing at least 16.

## The 2016 Attack on Belmokhtar

The *Journal* [reported](#) that French military aircraft, supported by U.S. intelligence, struck a target in southern Libya, likely resulting in Belmokhtar's death. Based on the caliber of intelligence, U.S. officials expressed "greater confidence" that this strike was successful (compared to the June 2015 attempt). U.S. and French spokesmen provided little official information about the attack.

The *Journal* [suggested](#) the strike took place between November 1 and 26. According to [separate reporting](#), a senior AQIM official—Abu Talha al Hassnawi—was struck by an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) near Sabha, a city in south-central Libya, on November 14. Al Hassnawi and Belmokhtar were close associates; at least one Libyan source [reported](#) that three AQIM seniors, including Belmokhtar, were targeted that day. Seven bodies [recovered](#) in Sabha were unrecognizable.

Given that Belmokhtar was responsible for the deaths of French soldiers and civilians, there is little question that France would target him. It is not surprising, however, that France did not confirm the action. French involvement in Libya is controversial because Libyan officials in the UN-backed Government of National Accord [believe](#) France has been taking sides in Libya's civil war. While Paris denies the allegation, the loss of three French Special Forces "advisors" in a helicopter crash in July 2016 caused French President Hollande to [acknowledge](#) for the first time that France was conducting "intelligence-gathering" operations in Libya. The killing of Belmokhtar would be the [first confirmation](#) of a French airstrike in Libya since the NATO military intervention in 2011.

If the *Journal* article is accurate, the attack on Belmokhtar reflects a U.S.-French intelligence-sharing [relationship](#), which has been expanded since the November 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris. As one expert [commented](#): "Today, the crisis and the threat is so pervasive that it has sharpened and accelerated intelligence sharing between the two countries."

## Impact of Belmokhtar's Death on Terrorism in Africa

Belmokhtar was more than a senior al Qaida decision-maker. He was a ruthless, larger-than-life individual who motivated many to join the Islamist cause. His ability to evade sophisticated intelligence services made him an almost mythological figure in the eyes of his followers. In the near to medium term, it seems unlikely that anyone will be able to fill his shoes fully — especially his knowledge of the terrain and tribes, ability to recruit followers, and ability to generate revenue. [His death likely will](#) disrupt organizational cohesion and alter operational planning. That said, there are plenty of rivals who will seek to assert themselves. Because of Belmokhtar's independent streak and occasional [criticism of AQIM](#), some al Qaida leaders [will not mourn his passing](#).

In 2006, Belmokhtar [said](#), "I dream of only one thing: to die a martyr." A decade later, he may have finally gotten his wish.

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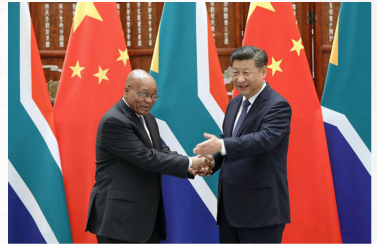
Richard J. Pera is a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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# CHINA IN AFRICA: ECONOMIC MYTHS AND SOFT POWER

By Hilary Matfess

China's emerging and evolving role in Africa has been the subject of [books](#), briefings, [conferences](#), and countless newspaper articles in recent years. A significant proportion of this coverage has focused on China's economic relationship with the continent; in particular, China's position as the continent's [largest trading partner](#) is frequently cited and analyzed. Undoubtedly, the Sino-African economic relationship is important and complex. But the public discourse over trends in China's investment in, aid to, and interests in African economics is clouded by a number of misconceptions. Moreover, Chinese soft power in the region is infrequently discussed, despite evidence of the country's political influence in a number of African countries.



Chinese President Xi Jinping, right, shakes hands with South African President Jacob Zuma as they meet at the West Lake State Guest House in Hangzhou, China Saturday, Sept. 3, 2016. (Source: Lintao Zhang/Pool Photo via AP.)

## Economic Myths

A [Brookings](#) report published in 2015 studied more than 4,000 investments by more than 2,000 Chinese firms across 49 African countries. The findings pointed to a number of popular misconceptions about the nature of China's economic involvement in African countries.

A common assumption underpinning much analysis of modern Sino-African relations is that Chinese investments are disproportionately clustered in natural-resource-abundant countries. The Brookings analysis found that holding all other things equal, "African countries that are more resource rich attract more Chinese investment . . . [however,] this effect is about the same for [Western investment](#), and it is only one factor determining investment." Further, the researchers found that "in terms of sectors, these investments are not concentrated in natural resources; services are the most common sector; and there are significant investments in manufacturing as well."

Another stereotype in the coverage of Sino-African economic partnership is that Chinese investments target countries with weak [rule of law](#) or autocracy. The same Brookings report found that this is also a misconception and that Chinese Overseas Direct Investment (ODI) flows are "indifferent to the rule of law" measurement the researchers used, but were influenced by the political stability of the receiving African country. They conclude, "Chinese investment is not concentrated in poor rule of law countries . . . But it does mean that China's investment is more visible in the poor rule of law countries because China has invested in those locations whereas Western investment generally stayed away from them."

Chinese investment in African countries is often discussed in aggregate, even though the continent's 54 countries have varying economic profiles. Assessments of bilateral relationships between China and individual countries, such as [Sino-Angolan](#) and [Sino-Somali](#) relations, are often more enlightening than broad-brush approaches to the Chinese involvement on the continent.

Although Chinese economic involvement in African countries has grown rapidly since the 1990s, an [IDA Africa Symposium](#) held in July 2016 noted that in light of the country's 6.9 percent growth rate in 2015—its lowest since 1990, "the popular narrative of Chinese successes in Africa currently faces uncertainties." Yun Sun, a senior associate at the Stimson Center's East Asia Program, observed that this slowdown altered the typical trade balance between China and Africa: "Sino-Africa trade dropped by 18 percent in 2015, but within that, Africa's exports to China decreased about 40 percent while China's exports to Africa increased slightly by 3.5 percent." Vigilant research and analyses of how altered Chinese macroeconomic indicators affect its economic relationship with African countries will be necessary in coming years.



## Soft Power: Understanding Public Opinion

Sometimes overlooked in the discussion about the prevalence, growth, and characteristics of Chinese engagements in African countries is the perception of this involvement by African citizens—and the variation between countries. Understanding citizen perceptions is critical to measuring Chinese soft power in Africa. Survey data collected by [Afrobarometer](#) finds significant variance among African countries' perceptions of China and its development model: "In Southern and North Africa, China matches the United States in popularity, and in Central Africa, China takes the lead (35 percent vs. 27 percent for the United States). In five Southern African countries (Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia, Malawi, and Zimbabwe), South Africa is the most highly regarded development model." In Cameroon, Sudan, Mozambique, Mali, Tanzania, and Zambia, "China is the most popular model for development."

When citizens were asked to elaborate on which aspects of Chinese involvement in Africa contributed to a "[positive image](#) of China in their country," the most frequent responses were "China's investments in infrastructure and other development projects (cited by 32 percent of respondents), the low cost of its products (23 percent), and its business investments (16 percent)." Conversely, 35 percent of those polled asserted that the "poor quality of Chinese products damages China's image," and 14 percent were concerned about Chinese investment taking jobs away from Africans.

These attitudes have informed African politics and contributed to the platforms of a number of candidates across the continent. The [Council on Foreign Relations](#) observed, "in September 2011, Michael Sata won Zambia's presidency largely by tapping into anti-Chinese resentments after Chinese managers shot protesters at a large coal mine in southern Zambia one year prior." Similarly, an *Africa Watch* [article](#) in August 2015 documented how the political opposition in Angola used Chinese influence as a rallying point. Homogeneity cannot be imposed on the nature of Chinese investment in African countries or on the impact that such investment will have on African political economies.

## Soft Power: Spread of China's Development Model?

Chinese influence has not only animated some political opposition movements but also potentially served as an inspiration for incumbent parties. A chapter that Francis Fukuyama and the author contributed to [Beyond Convergence: World Without Order](#) discusses the emulation of the Chinese model of development by sub-Saharan African countries. This work argued that China's successful economic growth has inspired countries to imitate the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) "model." The authors characterized this model as "a political economy centered on a hegemonic ruling party that subsumes the state through the manipulation of investment, suppression of dissent, and delivery of impressive economic growth records," and observed that it "has both endogenous appeal to leaders attempting to retain power in their respective countries, and exogenous momentum, as China gains international clout and becomes an increasingly important source of aid and investment." This pattern was also observed in [Ethiopia and Rwanda](#), two African countries notable for their high rates of growth and underwhelming human rights records.

The spread of this model, whether by Chinese promotion (through Confucius Institutes or other cultural outreach programs) or African emulation, could be problematic for those hoping to promote liberal democracy in Africa.

## Conclusions

Despite much coverage of Sino-African engagement, there is insufficient analysis of the significance of China's increasing presence on the continent. Data-driven studies of the characteristics of Chinese investment in the continent, especially in light of the country's recent economic slowdown, can provide crucial insights into the characteristics and future of Sino-African relations. Examining not only China's economic engagement but also its political influence and public perception is important for understanding the emerging relationships between China and African countries.

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## LIBYA: THE WEAK LINK IN MIGRATION CONTROL

By Dr. Ashley N. Bybee

Libya has historically been a frequent destination for African migrants seeking greater economic opportunities and better lives in a country that, until recently, offered decent prospects for those goals. Since the death of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 and the political chaos that ensued, however, many migrants who would have otherwise remained in Libya have fled to Europe in search of safety and opportunity. Among other factors, the actions of the German government, which instituted an “[Open Door](#)” policy that welcomes refugees and asylum seekers, have contributed to a [massive influx of migrants](#) from the Middle East and Africa. While the Gaddafi regime was effective at controlling the migrant flow, the lack of a functional government and law enforcement institutions in Libya today means that country no longer plays an effective role regulating migration. Worse still, the confluence of desperate migrants, extremist militia groups, and the absence of the rule of law has resulted in a continuing humanitarian crisis. [more...](#)



Migrants fleeing Libya, crowded onto a dinghy, about 25 miles north of Sabratha, Libya, Thursday, Aug. 18, 2016. Source: AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti.)

Dr. Ashley N. Bybee is a Research Staff Member in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

## ZIMBABWE: MUGABE, 92, SELECTED TO RUN AGAIN IN 2018 ELECTION

By Alexander Noyes

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Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe addresses an event before the closure of his party's 16th Annual Peoples Conference in Masvingo, Saturday, December 17, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi.)

Alexander Noyes is an Adjunct Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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The Institute for Defense Analyses is a non-profit corporation operating in the public interest.

IDA's three federally-funded research and development centers provide objective analyses of national security issues and related national challenges, particularly those requiring scientific and technical expertise.

IDA's Africa team focuses on issues related to political, economic, and social stability and security on the continent.



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Supporters of Congo opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi hold up an cross that symbolizes no third term for Congo President Joseph Kabila, during a political rally in Kinshasa, Congo, Wednesday, July 31, 2016. Several thousand people, many wearing the blue, yellow and red colors of Congo's flag, gathered near the Stadium of Martyrs in Kinshasa Sunday holding banners that said, "No to a third term." (Source: AP Photo/John Bompengo.)

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# LIBYA: THE WEAK LINK IN MIGRATION CONTROL

By Dr. Ashley N. Bybee

Libya has historically been a frequent destination for African migrants seeking greater economic opportunities and better lives in a country that, until recently, offered decent prospects for those goals. Since the death of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 and the political chaos that ensued, however, many migrants who would have otherwise remained in Libya have fled to Europe in search of safety and opportunity. Among other factors, the actions of the German government, which instituted an “[Open Door](#)” policy that welcomes refugees and asylum seekers, have contributed to a [massive influx of migrants](#) from the Middle East and Africa. While the Gaddafi regime was effective at controlling the migrant flow, the lack of a functional government and law enforcement institutions in Libya today means that country no longer plays an effective role regulating migration. Worse still, the confluence of desperate migrants, extremist militia groups, and the absence of the rule of law has resulted in a continuing humanitarian crisis.



Migrants fleeing Libya, crowded onto a dinghy, about 25 miles north of Sabratha, Libya, Thursday, Aug. 18, 2016. Source: AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti.)

## Libya: An Immigrant's Destination

Libya has a long history of receiving migrants not only from sub-Saharan Africa but also from countries as far away as [Bangladesh and the Philippines](#). Its prior relative wealth and stability compared with the rest of the continent appealed to people looking for economic opportunities. Gaddafi welcomed immigrants whom he saw as important contributors to the national economy. Migrants performed the low-paid, manual tasks that most Libyans did not want. For this reason, and consistent with his pan-African ideology that aimed to strengthen the bonds of solidarity among all those of African descent, Gaddafi instituted an open-door policy and visa waivers for most of Libya's African neighbors. He (and his security apparatus) even turned a blind eye to human smuggling into Libya, although this seemed driven by his desire to maintain political support in the periphery of the country where smugglers operated.

## Crisis in Europe

When Libya transitioned from a destination country to an important transit country for migrants seeking to reach Europe, Gaddafi came under direct pressure from the EU to control this flow. In August 2008, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and Gaddafi signed the “Treaty on Friendship, Partnership and Cooperation between Italy and Libya.” As part of the deal, Gaddafi agreed to improve Libya's border security and repatriate migrants who were refused entry by Italy. In return, Italy agreed to pay [\\$5 billion over 20 years](#) as part of a financial package intended to put to rest lingering disputes related to [colonial history](#).

Although Gaddafi proved to be effective at implementing the aforementioned measures to stem the flow of migrants to Europe, an effective government failed to materialize after Gaddafi was killed in 2011. As a result, Europe began to experience its first significant increase in immigration from Libya. When Angela Merkel announced a new [refugee policy](#) in 2015 that would admit 1 million asylum seekers into Germany, the flow of refugees accelerated. Finally, in March of this year, the EU negotiated a [deal with Turkey](#) to close the “eastern Mediterranean route” where migrants entered Europe from Turkey through Greece. At the same time, Balkan nations also closed their borders to migrants. The result has been an increased migrant flow on the Libya/western Mediterranean route.

## Crisis in Libya

Multiple groups have claimed to be the legitimate government in Libya. Amid this political chaos, the national Department for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM, which is formally under the control of the Tripoli-based Interior Ministry) has little ability to effectively operate Libya's official detention centers, where illegal migrants are held. Instead, [armed groups, criminal gangs, and smugglers](#) have assumed control of the official detention centers while also operating



their own unofficial centers, where gross human rights violations have been [documented](#). The United Nations (UN) recently [reported](#) that detained migrants are suffering consistent and widespread abuse, including arbitrary detention, forced labor, rape, and torture. The spread of infectious disease from overcrowding and lack of sanitation also presents a serious threat to migrants' health. The situation has become so dire that the UN now qualifies it as a [humanitarian crisis](#).

### Profiting from Migrant Smuggling

Historically, migrant smuggling has been a lucrative business for criminal networks operating along Libya's national borders. State officials have been involved in this activity, which they view as a way to [extract bribes](#). Some [experts](#) assert that Gaddafi's economic policy of subsidizing a wide range of consumer goods actually bolstered human smuggling by creating an illicit market for these subsidized goods within a wider illicit economy that included trafficking in drugs and weapons. Today, the EU estimates that Libya's coastal cities are generating up to [€325 million](#) each year through migrant smuggling activities. These activities range from voluntary payments to smugglers to [ransoms](#) extracted from family members of migrants who have been kidnapped and held in unofficial detention centers. Of particular concern is the belief that [al-Qaida and its affiliate in the Maghreb, AQIM](#), are among those extremist groups that are benefiting financially from migrant smuggling activities.

### Conclusion

The EU is eager to seek partners in combatting illegal migration from nonmember states, particularly those in North Africa and the Middle East. This will be difficult in Libya, where the core elements of national sovereignty such as law enforcement, border control, and diplomacy are weak and dispersed among numerous actors. The international community should not expect Libya to implement effective migration policies as long as competing factions are unable to stabilize the country and reconstruct its national institutions. Expanding the capacity of regional neighbors to counter migrant smuggling might be the only feasible approach at present.

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Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe addresses an event before the closure of his party's 16th Annual Peoples Conference in Masvingo, Saturday, December 17, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi.)

## Background: Party Splits

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in southern Africa with a long history of violent and contentious politics. As [highlighted](#) in recent editions of *Africa Watch*, two factions within Mugabe's party have been waging a fierce and increasingly public battle over who will take over for Mugabe when he dies or leaves office. After Mugabe's former vice president, Joice Mujuru, was kicked out of the party in 2014, two main ZANU-PF factions emerged. The first, headed by current Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa, is known as Team Lacoste, and the other, known as Generation 40 (G40), enjoys support from younger elements of the party and President Mugabe's wife, Grace Mugabe. Although Mnangagwa is [thought](#) to have backing from many prominent military generals, who hold considerable influence in Zimbabwe, the allegiance of Zimbabwe's security sector appears to be more [divided](#) than it has ever been.

## 2016 Party Congress

The annual ZANU-PF party congress was held in the town of Masvingo, which is located due south of the capital city of Harare. Before the congress, Mugabe had openly [broached](#) the topic of his retirement: "change will come in good time . . . If I have to retire, let me retire properly; people must sit down and discuss it cordially." At the party congress, Mugabe addressed the internecine battles and [said](#) that the party must come together: "We agreed that conflicts should end. Infighting should end. The party ideology should be followed . . . Let us be one. We are one family, the family of ZANU-PF bound together by the fact of understanding between its members." Despite long-standing internal divides, the various elements of the party came together to nominate Mugabe once again as their sole candidate in 2018, when he will be 94. The party's youth league even went so far as to [declare](#) that Mugabe should be made president for life. Under Zimbabwe's revamped 2013 constitution, presidents are allowed only two terms.

## A United Opposition Ahead of 2018?

Zimbabwe's opposition parties have also been riven by increased infighting and splintering over the past two years. After a loss in the 2013 elections, Zimbabwe's largest opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change led by former Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai (MDC-T), split apart when the party's former secretary general, Tendai Biti, [broke](#) with Tsvangirai. A number of other former MDC officials followed suit and formed their own parties. More recently, however, various parties have taken initial steps to form a united opposition front to take on ZANU-PF in 2018. Under the banner of the National Electoral Reform Agenda (NERA), 18 opposition political parties—including MDC-T and Mujuru's Zimbabwe People First (ZPF)—have come together and held a number of [rallies](#) in support of electoral reform. Just last month, another grouping of 13 opposition parties met in South Africa to discuss an umbrella coalition, although MDC-T and ZPF



did not attend, citing possible [infiltration](#) by ZANU-PF elements. The largest challenge of a united opposition front remains the key question of who would lead, as both Tsvangirai and Mujuru [believe](#) they deserve the top spot.

## Conclusion

Despite the splits within the ruling party and hints that Mugabe may be open to retirement, ZANU-PF's decision to back Mugabe in 2018 shows that Mugabe maintains control over the party and that he is not ready to depart the political scene on his own volition. While circumstances can certainly change prior to the 2018 election, Mugabe's candidacy also indicates that ZANU-PF is unlikely to implode as a viable party as long as he remains alive. A [deteriorating](#) economy, a [rising protest movement](#), and a divided security sector suggest that Mugabe and ZANU-PF's political fortunes may be declining. That said, the formation of a cohesive opposition coalition, which, as seen recently in The [Gambia](#), could lift the opposition's chances in 2018, remains a work in progress.

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## Many Talks, Little Progress

The DRC's current crisis did not come as a surprise. Kabila's administration began efforts to retain power beyond 2016 almost immediately following its victory in the [contested](#) 2011 national elections. By systematically [underfunding](#) the electoral commission, Kabila's government made it hard for elections to be held on time. Bolstered by the Constitutional Court's May 2016 ruling that the president would remain in office until elections were held, Kabila became well placed to stay in power by delaying elections, a strategy termed *glissement*.

The DRC has an active opposition, which has tried to resist *glissement*. As [Africa Watch](#) has reported, in June 2016 the DRC's most popular opposition leaders, Etienne Tshisekedi and Moise Katumbi, united with other opposition groups to form a coalition known as the *rassemblement* to strengthen opposition to Kabila.

Although the *rassemblement* has helped to unify the DRC's fractious opposition, it has yet to win concessions from the administration. During talks led by the African Union between the opposition and the government this summer, both Tshisekedi's and Katumbi's parties withdrew in protest. The remaining opposition parties continued to negotiate, signing an [October 2016 agreement](#) with the government that stated elections would be held in April 2018, an outcome favorable to Kabila. Tshisekedi [called](#) the timeline "unacceptable," and the *rassemblement* rejected the agreement.

Throughout November and December of this year, the Congolese conference of Catholic bishops, known as CENCO, attempted to [mediate](#) between the government and the *rassemblement* in hopes of reaching a resolution before December 19. On December 17, however, CENCO announced that its efforts would be put [on hold](#) due to failure to reach an agreement.

## International Pressure Goes Only So Far

Kabila has received mixed messages from the international community. Regional heads of state [endorsed](#) the October 2016 agreement that called for elections in 2018, thus tacitly accepting the *glissement* strategy. The United States and European Union have reacted more strongly, placing [sanctions](#) on key figures in Kabila's security services in response to violence against protestors in September and December of this year.

It is doubtful, however, that international censure will have any effect on Kabila's behavior. A Bloomberg News [investigation](#) traced the Kabila family's financial holdings to over 70 companies with stakes in nearly all sectors of the DRC's economy. Were he to step down, Kabila would no longer be in a position to protect his family's financial interests from



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anticorruption lawsuits or poaching by other politicians. In addition, once out of power, Kabila would have few guarantees of security against criminal lawsuits or threats to his physical safety. Because of these risks, Kabila is [incentivized](#) to remain in office despite international and domestic pressure.

## Conclusion

While the opposition and the government continue to resist brokering an agreement, ordinary Congolese are suffering. The economy has [slowed down](#), with growth falling from an average of 7.7 percent annually during the 2010–2015 period to 4.3 percent in 2016. Food prices have risen while public sector salaries have been slashed, and an already-anemic service delivery system has almost ground to a halt. In this environment, political gridlock has a tangible impact on citizens' livelihoods, which has translated into widespread opposition to Kabila. A recent nationwide survey showed [74 percent](#) of Congolese want Kabila to step down. Despite this, Kabila has demonstrated that he will not leave office willingly, and, at present, the opposition seems to lack the leverage needed to force him to do so. Given the incentives for both sides to resist compromise, DRC's political crisis may not be quickly resolved.

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