

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)

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

SOLDIERS WITHOUT BORDERS: THE FRENCH MILITARY IN THE SAHEL

By Richard J. Pera

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>

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

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.

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...](#)

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



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)

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.

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.



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.

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

SOLDIERS WITHOUT BORDERS: THE FRENCH MILITARY IN THE SAHEL

By Richard J. Pera

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.

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

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.



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.

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