



Security Threats

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Cover photo: Ex-militants from the Niger Delta. Courtesy of PM News, www.pmnnewsnigeria.com

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Editorial

All Eyes on Security

Everyone worries about security, but most people define it in terms of guns and ammunition, and uniforms. Policy makers draw misleading inspirations from this pervasive sentiment, which constitutes a threat to proper conceptual definition of security and security threats in West Africa.

The sub region grapples with many forms of threats to security in its midst as it boasts expansion in population unbalanced exploitation of resources at the disposal of the countries. Educated but unemployed citizens are veering off into crime as gerontocracies and kleptocracies ignore the legitimate existential needs of the populace. The Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS' resolve to emphasise human security in its longstanding quest for regional security is commendable but the details of the strategy require attention.

Security challenges border on misgovernance and uneven resource distribution. Conflicts between religious and political ideologies colour the violent manifestations of these social and political tensions, tending to eclipse the real issues such as poverty and low educational levels of society.

International dimensions to these internal conflicts have also emerged with drug trafficking in West Africa (accompanied by arms for protection), piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and general maritime insecurity, kidnapping of expatriate workers, to involvement of multinational companies in the importation of weapons into and across the sub region. The influence of private security agencies on insecurity has served as corollary for propping up the dishonest activities that herald these security threats.

And the prospects of sub regional security look bleak. Insurgencies and unpopular regimes litter the terrain through Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia to Nigeria. Immediate and concerted actions by ECOWAS, in cooperation with national governments and private sector companies are only likely to yield results in a decade, but forecast of such holistic concert simply does not exist. Early warning signals of threats to security such as high unemployment and low economic productivity evidenced by low power supply for businesses and the difficult fiscal climate buttress the sub regional intergovernmental body ECOWAS' newfound resolve to focus on human security. But, while the citizens await movement from resolve to action, insecurity remains a challenge for the individual.

--Odoh Diego Okenyodo

The Emergence of Private Security Organisations

The nature of policing in West Africa is changing. The various functions of policing can now be carried out by members of the public and private organisations. In the sub region, the recent trend in privatising security can be seen with the emergence of 'high walls, massive gates, uniformed security men and ferocious dogs'. Private security organisations can be discussed under two broad groups, namely: organised private security organisations such as private security companies that are registered as business ventures and are established with the aim of making profits. The other broad group can be referred to as non state actors or informal policing groups which are made up of local actors that have established self help groups to provide safety and security services in the community. The former have been said to be structures put in place by the rich and affluent in the society while the latter are put in place by the poor.

Various reasons have been identified for the emergence of private security organisations in the sub region. These reasons include observations that:

1. The state and the formal security organisations like the police are mostly too weak to provide adequate protection and security for majority of its citizens;

2. The police and other security organisations do not have a monopoly on the use of force anymore;

3. Non-formal security organisations are traditional African systems of organising security.

The reasons for the above can be linked to lack of adequate resources, corrupt practices, widespread political interference and manipulation, and poor human and resource management.

The assumption that the emergence of informal security and policing groups indicates a lack of state control or anarchy is misplaced. These groups are of various types and are found in different locations, some of them

self imposed, some of them evolved naturally within the communities as mechanisms to protect the communities from harm and crime. In Nigeria, for example, findings from a survey carried out by CLEEN Foundation between 2005 and 2008 show that non-formal security organs are the preferred choice of citizens in respect of crime protection.

They are easily available and accessible to their 'customers'. They provide their services taking into consideration local realities and contexts. They are not alien, acceptable to the communities they serve and affordable too. Support for these groups is strong within the communities across the sub region and this could be



Courtesy dfid.gov.uk

Private Security Organisations

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based on the concept of local ownership. The system of providing security is not alien to the culture in existent in the communities. Although without formal legal frameworks, the support from the communities often provides some form of legitimisation which has made it difficult for the formal state authorities to curb their activities.

Organised private security organisations enjoy legitimacy which is outside support from their 'customers'. They are registered as legitimate business enterprises and are linked to different government agencies. In Nigeria, their

activities are overseen by the Nigeria Civil Defence Corps; in the Republic of Niger, their activities are overseen by the Ministry of Interior; same in the Republic of Benin. Formal police organisations have reservations about collaborating with organised private security organisations because of the influence they enjoy from their funders who are usually partisan.

Control of these groups by individuals or groups of individuals that fund their activities have made it challenging for the formal police organisations to work closely with them. Most of these organisations also exhibit gender biases in their constitution and operations. Membership of the informal groups is drawn from the community and attention is paid to the male members of the community because of the patriarchal system that exists in most African communities. This is further strengthened with the

narrow understanding of their practice as one that demands brute force. This has been said to have gone on for too long because the informal policing sector is practically unregulated.

The educational qualifications of the members of the informal policing groups have been queried. They have been found to be with minimal or no education,

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thereby making their comprehension of the rules, regulations and legal framework that regulate security operations in their very minimum. This is one of the reasons they are prone to violating the rights of members of the community. On the other hand for the organised private security members, the level of education is at least token. They also are involved in human rights violations but this can be closely linked to instructions being given by those that fund their activities.

There are reservations about the support and continued acceptance of these groups but the glaring reality seems to be that in practice 'state building and not security for the poor' has been the goal of the governments in the sub region. This has led to various reform initiatives which are still not getting to the vulnerable and marginalised people in the society.

The proliferation of organised

security organisations could be an indication of a pervasive feeling of insecurity on the part of the populace and key actors in the polity and economy. Local businesses and multinational corporations as well as politicians should not be allowed room to convince themselves that they should engage in self-help for security. In order to forestall this situation, it is cautioned that these groups should be identified; documentation of their practices, and lessons learnt should be shared across countries in the sub region.

Nonetheless, if we agree that the emergence of these groups are not as a result of the total breakdown of the state structures but as a

result of people naturally aligning with a system that is affordable, efficient, effective and not alien to them, it can be foreseen that the nearest future is going to witness a popular drift towards patronage for private security organisations. Then there is a need to fully understand this system and develop it, probably we might get to a place where we are developing our own security system which is effective and efficient in problem solving. As nations hesitate in implementing the regional agreements on security and free movement, the roles of cross border communities in curbing crime in the sub region is also likely to diminish further. Police reforms across the sub region must take cognisance of these peculiarities.

--**Kemi Okenyodo**, CLEEN Foundation; asiwaju@cleen.org

Rethinking Counterinsurgency

West Africa is still on the run, dealing heavy handed with insurgencies and this approach constitutes one of the region's most wasteful and unsuccessful

security inputs that requires not only knowledge and resources, but wisdom to deal with. Insurgency is an organised movement aimed at the over-

throw of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed ideological, or religious vision. All means deployed to deal with insurgency is referred to as counterinsurgency.

The Small Arms Survey documented that over a decade now, the region has been destabilised by insurgencies involving more than thirty-five armed groups. Prominent among them are:

-Côte d'Ivoire - Patriotic Movement of Côte d'Ivoire (MPCI) - Ivorian Popular Movement for the Greater West (MPIGO) - Movement for Justice and Peace (MJP) - Forces nouvelles - Group of Patriots for Peace (GPP/CPP/FLN) - Front for the Security of the Centre-West



throw of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict. Insurgencies seek to replace an existing order with one that conforms to their political, economic,

Côte d'Ivoire Insurgency

The Cote d'Ivoire unrest resulted from the artificial colonial borders, the inability of the state to deal with the complexity of African politics, and external factors, struggle over the state and the resources, which was exacerbated by a struggle over citizenship.

Conflict in Côte d'Ivoire had devastating regional consequences, with destabilising outflows of refugees and economic impacts on neighbouring countries that relied on the country for goods, jobs, and access to the port in Abidjan. Côte d'Ivoire was a critical piece in the regional "conflict system" that engulfed Liberia and Sierra Leone from the mid-1990s, with arms, young men, and proxy militias moving fluidly across

borders, and instability in one metastasising to broader regional insecurity.

The resolution of the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire lies in the long-term future approach to solving fundamental governance requirement imperatives in Africa. In this case, it lies in the amendment of the constitution of the country. Like most nations in Africa, much of the power is the hand of one person - the president. West African countries have to build the institutions required to minimise corruption and bad governance. As long as those institutions are not established, there will always be room for bad behaviour of the leaders that compromise any political stability.

-Ugherughe Uyoyoghene

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Rethinking Counterinsurgency

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(FSCO) -Front for the Liberation of the Great West (FLGO) - "Young Patriots" (FESCI/UPLTCI/COJEP) - Liberian mercenaries (Lima/MODEL);

-Sierra Leone - Revolutionary United Front (RUF) - Civil Defence Force (CDF) - Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) - West Side Boys (WSB);

-Senegal - Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC);

-Nigeria - Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), O'odua People's Congress (OPC) - Arewa People's Congress (APC) - Onitsha Traders Association (OTA) - Bakassi Boys (AVS/AVS/IVS/ASMATA Boys) - Federated Niger Delta Ijaw Communities (FNDIC) - Egbesu Boys of Africa (EBA) - Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF) - Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV) - Hisbah groups - Zamfara State Vigilante Service (ZSVS) - Al-Sunna Wal Jamma (Followers of the Prophet) (also known as 'Taleban').

Increasingly, through the Sahel sub-region, West Africa is becoming a breeding ground for Islamic militancy and safe haven for terrorists reportedly fleeing the war in Afghanistan and the crackdown in Pakistan and piercing into the vast ungoverned Sahara desert through Mauritania, Chad, Niger, Mali, consolidating into al Qaeda and similar networks with serious implication for security and governance.

It is no longer debatable that insurgencies exacerbates poverty and vulnerability and therefore need to be countered holistically. Deterrence through militarised approach alone has never proved successful anywhere in the world; the French did not get it right in

Algeria, neither Israeli getting it right with neutralisation approach. In many cases, the insurgents are considered as bandits or pirates. In fact, this very consideration closes the door to any negotiation. A government unable to eradicate this type of threat would hardly convince its people or any foreign investors of its capability to guarantee security in its country. In addition, to consider the insurgents as criminals means that anybody who has a friendly interaction with them or does not denounce them becomes guilty or suspect. So there is no doubt that the populations that support the insurgents or that are even neutral would be criminal in the eyes of the government. Forcing the population to take sides while the government is unable to provide enough security for them, pushes them to have more sympathy for the insurgents, who often already have ethnic, cultural or kinship relations with the population.

Over nearly thirty years now Senegal has not defeated the Casamance insurgency; the Touareg question still confronts the Nigerien and Malian authorities; crackdown in the Nigerian Niger Delta did not stop the 'grievances'. In counterinsurgency, the aim of the government should not be to eliminate the insurgents, but to transform the physical and human environment to a point that the insurgency will no longer be able to survive. By properly addressing the grievances of the population, the cause of the insurgent will fade progressively and will ultimately no longer be relevant.

It is now clear that countries may not be able to cope individually. Counterinsurgencies in West

Africa need to be re-strategised. It is in this context that the step ECOWAS has taken in configuring these insurgencies as 'ECOWAS local conflicts' at the 2010 as a Decade of Peace Conference in Monrovia, is in the right strategic direction. In order words, ECOWAS can now intervene in these conflicts and to that extent we have seen ECOWAS first step in the Jos conflict (Nigeria) in 2010 providing direct humanitarian assistance. Moving forward, we can use our wisdom to adapt a holistic strategy combining Diplomacy, Information, Military and Economy (DIME) to effectively and sustainably manage counter insurgencies in the region. The Diplomacy shall emphasise preventive action & cooperation and preventive diplomacy, employing state and civil society actors; Information must be generated from sound intelligence, early warning signals; Military will mean to use lethal force when required, but must be proportional; and Economy to improve conditions of life that will ultimately geared to win the mind and heart of the populations. This must form an integral part of the strategy and projects that must be quickly pursued as part of the implementation of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF).

-Paul Yao Ahiave

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There seems to be a universal consensus on the fact that al Qaeda is here amongst us and cannot simply be blown away. Considering that, al Qaeda had carried out 6 major attacks, 4 of which were against America, each attack taking years to prepare, the red alerts on travels and American embassies abroad placed immediately after Osama's death is bound to be one of so many that would follow as reprisal attacks are likely not to be immediate. Sadly, America is not the only country that has to worry for al Qaeda and what it stands for. Europe, Iran, Pakistan, Nigeria and et cetera, have become partakers of the Jihad terror. Hence we move by looking over our shoulders, with both the terrorists and the terrorised sleeping with one eye open.

The status of al Qaeda, its strength after Osama and its future impact on global affairs had been a subject of dissenting views. While the one school of thought holds that it is a structural organisation the other believes it to be fragmentation of sectional groups working to achieve similar purpose. If the latter were to be the case, then his death would amount to an insignificant hindrance to the continuation of the Jihad cause. If the former is the correct position, Osama's long term deputy, Egyptian doctor, Ayman Al-Zawahiri or Salif al-Adel readily steps into his big shoes. No doubt, Osama bin Laden's death leaves a vacuum and posits a question of whether there exist in the hierarchy, a

Implications of the Death of bin Laden



successor with his charisma, cash and global reach.

However, pre Osama era witnessed hijackings, bombings, abductions and assassinations on diverse fronts. In the wake of the nineties, during his stay in Sudan, anti - American activities happened in Somali and Yemen by Afghan trained group with enough anti American drive. The incident was never directly linked to him, likewise the car bomb in 1995 in Riyadh and Khobar bombing happened without conclusive proof that Osama was behind them. It is plausible that a resurgence of such daring attacks will be witnessed as a way of defiantly asserting presence, reminiscent of the Maitasine crisis in 1980's Nigeria. Bearing political, ethnic and religious undertones, these conflicts can further strengthen the theory that anti-western cause is not purely an al Qaeda affair. There seem to be an

already ignited blazing flame against western influence.

Since swearing allegiance to the al Qaeda terrorist network in January 2007 and changing its name from the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), Al Qaeda in the Islamic Moghreb (AQIM) has moved beyond its North African base in Algeria, spreading its tentacles southwards towards West African countries in the Sahel region. The great Sahara Desert, which runs through ten countries, facilitates the mobility of the Islamist network. Already, Chief of Defence of the Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, in a recently held meeting, have agreed to join forces to fight AQIM. Amid speculations on the true agenda behind the

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Death of bin Laden

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alliance, it is feared that whatever the reason (common ideology or ego), it is gradually but subsistently spreading like ring worm on an infected skin to other parts of Africa.

Recently, a statement issued after a well attended regional meeting of security officials and experts from Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal and Togo reveals that al-Qaeda uses 'sleeper cells' in several countries across West Africa. Furthermore, the meeting with theme of "Connections between terrorism and organised transborder crime in West Africa" admits that there seems to be strong links between drug traffickers and AQIM.

Africa is not only significant to western development but for terrorist schemes. West Africa, Nigeria in particular is at the heart of both, recent insurrections like the Boko Haram in Nigeria were borne out of the resistance to western education and system of government. Osama might be dead but the cause for which he died lives like a virus.

Going by precedents, the future holds terror but the will and act by West African governments and perhaps support from Western intelligence systems to clamp down on terrorist groups now will be our only hope for a safe tomorrow. Such respite can also be found in governments of African countries doubling

Maritime Insecurities in the Gulf of Guinea



There is a growing recognition of the fact that the vast economic potential associated with the Gulf of Guinea is fast being eroded due to increasing insecurity. The Gulf of Guinea region is regarded as a hot spot for the world's oil and gas exploration. In terms of its strategic importance, the Gulf of Guinea is expected to provide a quarter of the oil imports of the United States by the year 2015¹.

Growing insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea has attracted the attention of policy makers and the academia on a global scale as a result of the spate of piracy and smuggling that takes place in the region. Under international law, piracy constitutes crimes against the security of commerce on the high seas for private ends. This includes

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their zeal to curb corruption, porous inter-country border security networks, poverty and illiteracy.

--**Oluchi Agbanyim**

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China-Africa Relations Shaping Global Discourse

From left to right Director of CDD, Dr. Jibrin Ibrahim, Prof Okello Oculi, former Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Defence, Dr. Haruna Sanusi, Abiodun Alao, and Chris Alden of SAIIA during the opening session of the workshop.



China's role in Africa should be seen as a continuum, beginning with China and Africa's shared history of enduring decades of imperialism which built up to partnership under the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War. This was the position of some participants at a workshop on China-Africa relations held in Abuja on May 4, 2011 at the Denis Hotel. The Centre for Democracy and Development, CDD based in Abuja, and the South African Institute for International Studies (SAIIA) based in Pretoria, collaborated in organising the workshop.

Some of the papers presented argued that the context of the relationship between China and Africa presents Nigeria and other African countries with an opportunity to take a giant leap in terms of development and the opportunities that China opens up. They urged Africans to think, not only of what China wants in Africa, but also of what Africa wants with China. Others noted that most forums on China-Africa relations have focused on the risks that the relations portend to western interests in Africa, implying that the continent's relations with China is influencing the agenda for global

discourse since other countries, especially in the West are forced to follow and review such relations.

Participants reflected that in Africa, China's development aid and policies are not only thought to be working, but also less obstructive, in sharp contrast with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank's policies which are thought to be anti-democratic and not in favour of Africa's long term development. By 2000, China's investment in Africa was valued at \$10 billion; the figure by 2010 (following the financial crisis of 2008 which forced western economies to scale down aid to Africa) had climbed to over \$100 billion. China buys an assortment of resources from Africa, including copper, cobalt, oil, timber, etc, while African countries patronise China's textiles, machinery and retooling, armaments, etc.

Concerns were raised about the opacity of China's regulatory framework with its companies

often producing substandard products in environments and manners that are detrimental to human health and wellbeing. It was observed that China in Africa is seeking to establish the same poorly regulated business environment in which employers could exploit and abuse their workers especially the non-Chinese. Mr Auwal Musa Rafsanjani, who presented a civil society perspective of the relations, advocated vigilance and a corporate social responsibility culture among businesses. He also advocated establishment of linkages between African and Chinese civil society groups to facilitate exchange of knowledge and development of strategies for engaging the relations between parties.

Agreeing with Mr Rafsanjani's propositions, in response to the threat and opportunities posed by the Chinese activities in Africa, participants called for an integrated policy framework for

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Maritime Insecurities in the Gulf of Guinea

attacking, robbing and pillaging of ships on the high seas.

Maritime security is critical for countries within the Gulf of Guinea to achieve optimum benefits. Africa provides 15 percent of the oil the United States requires, most of whom come from the Gulf of Guinea. The region is rich in timber, iron ore, copper and other mineral and aquatic resources³. The two pillars upon which insecurity that is associated chiefly with piracy rests, has to do with the lack of protection for individuals and oil vessels from acts of violence, as well as the inability of a sub-regional economic body such as ECOWAS to develop a framework for ensuring maritime security so as allow for free flow of goods and services and a secured sea routes.

Under sub-regional security

arrangement, there is need for ECOWAS to work towards the establishment of a Standby Force that would be charged with the responsibility of ensuring maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, which currently poses grave maritime security risks as a result of the illicit activities of pirates.

There is need for deliberate international cooperation in strengthening institutions of governance in the Gulf of Guinea states which would invariably reduce maritime insecurity and high crime rate. Concrete efforts should be put in place by national and sub-regional institutions such as ECOWAS so as to boost maritime security as it relates to preventing unlawful acts in the Gulf of Guinea. One of the partnerships that can be explored in this context is the

African Maritime Governance Initiative that was established in 2006. In view of the large scale insecurity in the gulf of guinea, there is need to strengthen patrol within the context of maritime security as demonstrated through the contract awarded to the US based PMSC, to the tune of \$250-million from Equatorial Guinea to provide nationwide coastal surveillance against piracy. There is need for ECOWAS to work with the Gulf of Guinea Commission to consolidate on these gains.

In a significant sense, the prospect for maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea should be a product of collective efforts among countries that make up the coastline between Ghana and Angola. Nevertheless, in view of the huge threats mari-

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China-Africa Relations Shaping Global Discourse

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engaging with China rather than bilateral relations. This, they argued, would allow African countries to put up a strong position in negotiation with China and in promoting African interests in the relationship.

The workshop brought together over 60 participants drawn from policymakers, members of civil society organisations, government officials, researchers and other relevant stakeholders from Nigeria, South Africa, Angola and Zambia. These included Dr. Jibrin Ibrahim, Dr. Chris Alden, Prof. Okello Oculi, Abiodun Alao, Dr. Guillaume Mounmouni, Mr Dauda Garuba, among others. The paper presenters included seasoned researchers, analysts

and long-term observers of China-Africa relations such as: Abiodun Alao ("Chinese Banking in Nigeria"), Hon. Ojo Patrick ("China-Nigeria Relations: A Personal View"), Auwal Musa Rafsanjani ("China-Nigeria Relations: A Nigeria Civil Society Perspective"), Ms. Chilufya Chileshe ("China and Zambia: Aid, Trade and Debt"), Chijioke Iwuamadi ("China-Nigeria Economic Relations"), Dr Sergio Chichava ("China and Agriculture in Mozambique"), Dr Guillaume Mounmouni ("China and Post Conflict Peacebuilding in Liberia") and Mike Avofepiyen ("China Activities in Africa: A Predatory Role or Developmental Strategy?").

The debate on the implica-

tions of China in Africa was not resolved at the workshop. But consensus was that China's influence in Africa was a real factor that is likely to grow over the years and so there is need for more studies on the subject. There is need to ascertain and continuously monitor the number of Chinese nationals in Africa and to catalogue the nature of their investments and businesses in Africa. At the national level, there is need to analyse the nature of relations, obligations and duties of national governments with China, and such analysis must be placed in the public domain.

--Nengak Daniel

Monthly News and Current Affairs

Compiled by Oluchi Agbanyim

Call for Synergy in ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy



In a first consultative meeting held at the ECOWAS Commission headquarters in Abuja on the 10th May 2011, to review the Draft ECOWAS Counter-Terrorist Strategy and

Implementation Plan, experts have recommended leveraging best practices from AU, UN and other regional and international instruments. The participants also called for an in-built review mechanism to ensure effective monitoring of implementation and further recommended that the

commission collaborate with member states as a means of ensuring that political consensus of member states reflect their regional priorities. The meeting was attended by well over 40 participants from international organisations. <http://news.ecowas.int/presseshow.php?nb=064&lang=en&annee=2011>

PanAfricanists Celebrate "Mr Africa"



Activists gathered in Abuja on Africa Liberation Day, May 25, 2011, in celebration of the second anniversary of the death of foremost Africanist and scholar, Dr Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem, also fondly called "Mr Africa". The celebration featured a symposium and a dance drama performance sponsored by the Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem Educational Trust Fund. The drama titled, *A Feast of Return*, draws from the anti-colonial struggle as well as the struggle against apartheid and against military rule in Africa to tell the story of perseverance, unity and hope. Until his death in a traffic accident in Nairobi on Africa Day, May 25, 2009, Dr Abdul-Raheem was the Africa Director of the United Nations Millennium Campaign the MDGs campaign organ of the United Nations.

<http://www.cddwestafrica.org/>

Anti-al Qaeda Group Formed

A coalition to fight al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) was formed in a meeting held on Sunday 15 May, 2011 at Tamanrasset Algeria. This agreement comes at the heels of increased terrorist activities in the Sahel region. Chief of Army Staffs for Algeria, Niger, Chad and Mauritania decided to adopt a formal strategy to curb fast spreading terrorism along the Sahara. Since swearing allegiance to the Al Qaeda terrorist network in January 2007 and changing its name from the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), AQIM has moved out of its North African base in Algeria, spreading its tentacles southwards towards West African countries in the Sahel region.

<http://www.afrik-news.com/article18310.html>

Togo is new WAFU Champion

In a highly competitive grand finale of the 2011 edition of the West African Football Union Cup held at the MKO Abiola Stadium in Abeokuta, the Hawks of Togo defeated their Nigerian counterpart by 3- 2 goal margin. The Eagles had come from 2 -0 goal deficit to level up, but could not withstand the ambitious Hawks as they pulled one more goal to carry the day. The victory earned the Togolese \$25,000 while Nigeria and Liberia received \$15,000 and \$10,000 each.

Maritime Insecurities in the Gulf of Guinea

time insecurity poses for the West African sub region, dialogue and initiatives at the level of ECOWAS, should be geared towards containing its menace. By so doing, the security of states and by extension human security will be guaranteed now and in the future.

--Chris M.A. Kwaja

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Human Security Should Be Our Goal-Dieng

Lt. Col. Abdourahmane Dieng is the head of Security Division in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission. Odoh Diego Okenyodo and Oluchi Agbanyim had a chat with him about security challenges in the sub region. Excerpts:



What challenges do the proliferation of small arms and light weapons pose to security in West Africa?

Small arms and light weapons pose a real challenge to West Africa. This is what we have discovered since ten years ago when for the first time political leaders in the region developed the declaration to monitor importation, exportation and manufacture of small arms in 1998. But before then in 1992/1994, the President of Mali discovered that a real link exists between the fact that as long as combatants keep arms in their hands, all efforts to stop violence becomes useless.

What do you think necessitated the insurgencies like Niger Delta, Boko Haram and others within the region?

The main reason is that you have millions of people unemployed. When you are in a system like Nigeria where you have one single

common religion-- which is money-- it becomes a real problem. What is happening in this country is a very dangerous situation. With the amnesty and the silence now in the Niger Delta the problem has not been solved. You solve it in one generation; the next generation will ask you why are you using our oil to develop other side of Nigeria and you don't develop our part. It's a good question, if you don't solve it, it will remain.

What about the Casamance kind of problem; how will that be solved?

Integration; develop Casamance. Poverty is a condition that is fertile for insurgency. That is why we in the ECOWAS are moving to human security, to solve problem of development. Something else happening in Nigeria is the absence of a social security system. In Senegal with 40 million people, no natural resources, it is mandatory to get scholarship up to university level as long as you pass exams.

What threat does the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement, Goods and Persons pose to security within the region?

Article 45 of our protocol gives citizens of ECOWAS countries a right to enter, reside and develop business in any ECOWAS country. But when people and goods are moving, small arms and also criminals move. Unfortunately, our security agencies, instead of looking

for criminals and bad goods, are looking for money. At the Seme border, from Benin Republic until you get to Lagos you have at least 20 checkpoints of security operatives looking only for money. Ordinary people that are supposed to benefit from this principle of free movement of people and goods are suffering. Criminals that have money, they just give it and pass. So far, free movement of people and goods is benefitting the criminals, because the ordinary people don't have income to beg the security personnel. It's the same from Togo to Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina to Mali, and Mali to Sudan.

What should be done?

Our government should lend their voice and take action against the security personnel to do what they are supposed to do. They have to develop a mechanism of community policing along the borders as members of border communities know where the criminals hide.

What are the security risks of population explosion in West Africa?

When you talk about India, China and Brazil, they have huge population. Population can be an opportunity and we need to talk about developing countries being able to manage billions of people. The problem in West Africa is not the problem of population. It is the problem of governance.