



COMMUN X
GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE

North African Terrorism

Background Guide

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to COMMUN X! Our names are Andrew Carter and Brooks Sjostrom, and we have the pleasure of being your chairs for this year's General Assembly Committee on Terrorism in North Africa and the Sahel. We are both seniors, and aside from having both chaired COMMUN committees in the past, we are both active members of Commonwealth's Model UN and Model Congress teams.

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) is the main policy-making body of the United Nations. In this assembly, member states meet to discuss a wide range of global issues presented by the delegates. This committee will take place as part of this assembly, discussing how to respond to and ameliorate the current situation in North Africa and the Sahel.

In recent years, the northern region of Africa has been the site of a large number of incredibly dangerous terrorist attacks, facing rising instability. Exploiting political and economic challenges, these groups have carried out numerous attacks, causing widespread harm and further destabilizing the region. Addressing this issue requires coordinated international efforts and innovative solutions.

Over the course of this conference, it will be each delegate's job to represent one of a diverse group of notions to develop regulations and pass legislation to address the situation of terrorism in North Africa and the Sahel. We hope you will gain a greater understanding of African politics, the history of global terrorism, and the complex role every country plays in the preservation of human life. We also hope that delegates will continue to develop their writing, communication, research, and public speaking skills.

We want to ensure that every delegate understands the role they are assigned in order for conference debate to run smoothly and effectively and for every delegate to get the most out of this conference. Due to this, **we will be requiring all delegates to write a position paper for their role** in order to be eligible for awards. For examples of previous position papers and other resources to aid your research, please visit [COMMUN's Resources Page](#).

We can't wait to meet all of you and read more about your positions! If you have any questions, please feel free to email us!

Sincerely,

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INTRODUCTION

The region of North Africa, a geographical territory of the continent closest to Europe and Asia, consists of the countries of Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, and Western Sahara. The UN-designated political region of the Sahel, geographically below North Africa, contains the countries of Senegal, Gambia, Mauritania, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Nigeria.

Both regions have experienced a large number of terrorist attacks in recent years, leading to great chaos and instability within the regions. The most prominent of these perpetrators in North Africa are Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Both of these groups operate under Sunni Islamist principles and are branches of al-Qaeda that focus more specifically on the North African region. While there have been no concrete instances of these two groups working together to disrupt North Africa, it can reasonably be assumed that, due to their overarching al-Qaeda loyalty, there is some exchange of information or behind the scenes cooperation between the two groups. The most prominent perpetrators in the Sahel are the Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen (JNIM), the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), the Islamic State in the West African Province (ISWAP), and Boko Haram. All four of these groups operate under Sunni Islamist principles, but differ when it comes to their motivations and ultimate goals. JNIM, for example, is the only group who aligns itself more closely with al-Qaeda, and regularly targets French citizens specifically. ISGS, on the other hand, is an offshoot of ISIS, but still works closely and may even cooperate with JNIM. ISWAP and Boko Haram are also offshoots of ISIS, but have had an extremely tense and violent history of relations. ISWAP began initially as a subsection of Boko Haram, but in 2016 a dispute over the leader of the group caused ISWAP to split from Boko Haram and begin an intense rivalry that still continues today. Aside from these many groups, the regions also face the threat of other Foreign Terrorist Figures (FTFs) who, by traveling undetected from country to country, pose a grave threat to African national security. Most terrorist attacks in the regions usually occur after contentious elections or changes in governmental power, and commonly have the goal of eliminating Western values or influence on the countries.

Responses to such attacks vary. Libya, for example, has struggled to effectively respond to terrorist attacks. This is in part due to disagreements between militia groups and Libyan society. Conversely, Egypt has responded to these attacks more effectively, taking proactive measures and aggressively targeting extremists to curb the spread of terrorism.

The effects of these terrorist attacks are not limited to areas within North Africa. Groups such as Al-Qaeda pose a serious threat to Western countries, including the United States, and have forced Western countries to strategize cautiously to avoid a continuous global conflict. North Africa is a significant region for gold and copper mining, but this industry faces severe risks from the instability and disruption caused by terrorist groups.

Delegates representing North African countries must navigate the complex political landscape with great care to ensure the safety and sovereignty of their nations. They face the daunting task of protecting their citizens and resources from the growing threat posed by foreign terrorist groups seeking to destabilize the region. On the other hand, delegates representing terrorist organizations must strategize meticulously to advance their agendas, aiming to undermine North African states and challenge the spread of Western ideals, which they view as detrimental to the region's cultural and political autonomy. Meanwhile, delegates from foreign nations must balance the pursuit of their economic and geopolitical objectives with the volatile situation unfolding in North Africa. These nations must work to safeguard their investments, influence, and strategic interests while navigating the challenges of international diplomacy in a region plagued by escalating tensions and conflict. The North African frontier has become arguably the most important region of the globe for both ideological and territorial peace, and delegates must work diligently to achieve their goals.

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

The following terms will appear throughout the background guide and are essential to understanding the many parts of this conflict.

- FTFs (Foreign Terrorist Fighters): FTFs are outside figures who travel to zones of conflict to engage in acts of terrorism. While FTFs may be associated with certain groups such as the ISIL, many FTFs are not directly associated with these groups and simply align with their views.
- North Africa: Region of Africa including the countries of Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, and Western Sahara.
- Sahel: UN-designated region of Africa including the countries of Senegal, Gambia, Mauritania, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Nigeria.
- Maghreb: Sub-region of North Africa defined as Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, and Tunisia.
- Islamism: The idea that Islamic law and teachings should play a central role in public and political life and that these laws and teachings should govern how members of a population conduct themselves.
- Sunni Islam: The largest branch of Islam, which denies that Ali, the cousin of the Prophet Muhammad, was chosen as Muhammad's only legitimate successor. In 632 AD, after Muhammad died, three caliphs were chosen to lead before Ali. Sunni muslims view all four of these caliphs, including Ali, as legitimate, whereas Shia muslims view Ali as the only legitimate caliph. This disagreement caused an extreme split between the two branches of Islam, one that still persists today. The two groups also hold slightly different beliefs on the interpretive authority of scholars of the Quran. Sunni muslim authority is based on the Quran and Muhammad's teachings, and figures who interpret the Quran exhibit little influence on followers of the branch of Islam. Shia muslims, however, believe that God provides guides in the form of ayatollahs, who are experienced Shia scholars that exhibit a great deal of influence and interpretive authority over followers of the Shia branch. In terms of geography, Sunni muslims are the majority in over forty countries across the world whereas Shia muslims are the majority only in Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, and part of Lebanon. Historically, furthermore, many terrorist figures such as Osama bin Laden have used the Sunni-Shia split as a way to target civilians of the other branch and expand their influence and disruption by increasing the intensity of the religious motives for their goals.

BACKGROUND

A Brief History of North African Terrorism

The history of Terrorism in North Africa is both expansive and deeply connected to the region's present-day socio-political and economic statuses. Before the 21st century, terrorism in North Africa was primarily influenced by three factors: local resistance to colonial rule, internal power struggles, and the geopolitical dynamics of the Cold War. Almost all terrorism in North Africa has its roots deeply ingrained in an initial anti-colonial local resistance, particularly against the French, Italian, and British powers. Liberation movements and resistance efforts regularly used terrorism as a tactic against these powers during conflicts for power. One notable example was the Algerian War of Independence (1954–1962), during which the National Liberation Front (FLN) employed urban terrorism and guerrilla tactics to drive

French colonial forces out of Algeria. The FLN also carried its campaign of terror into mainland France, targeting metropolitan areas with bombings and assassinations of high-ranking French officials.

During the Cold War, these newly independent North African states like Libya, Algeria, and Egypt had to begin exploring their roles on the global stage, shifting the purposes and their collaboration over utilizing terrorism. Notably, Libya, under Muammar Gaddafi, proved to be an example of how state-sponsored violence began to define North African terrorism. Gaddafi's government supported other armed groups such as the Palestine Liberation Organization and even the faraway Irish Republican Army by offering financial and logistical support. Libya is also linked (although never publicly acknowledged) to the 1988 Lockerbie bombing, in which a Pan Am Flight flying over Scotland was bombed, placing Libya on the US's "State Sponsors of Terrorism" list.

However, not all terrorism in the region was beyond a Nation's borders. During the late 20th century, North African States were often subject to internal terrorism, most often in support or opposition to political movements. Reform, political, and terrorist groups saw terrorism as a strategy to destabilize their state's government and implement their own style of rule. In Egypt, reform groups used violent terrorism to target the lives of government officials and even international tourists to support the building of an Islamic state. From 1991-2002, Algeria experienced what has come to be known as the "Black Decade," defined by its frequent internal terrorist attacks. Opposing political groups, many hoping for the establishment of an Islamic state, used terrorism against the Algerian Government, and were met by similar violence.

Economic hardship and social discontent have been persistent drivers of terrorism in North Africa, continuing to exacerbate the issue to this day. Terrorist organizations targeted underprivileged and disenfranchised youth, partially those residing in urban slums, to expand their influence and numbers. Legacies of colonial rule and the repression of political dissent have often contributed to creating a fertile ground for the rise of resistance movements, many of which have used terrorist tactics.

The Counter-Terrorism Response:

In response to the growing threat of terrorism in North Africa and the continent as a whole in the 20th century, the African Union (AU) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) took active steps to create a framework for the continued fight against terrorism. In 1992, the OAU passed a resolution that aimed to strengthen the African Nation's collaboration in counter-terrorism, which eventually led to the 1999 OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. At this convention, the OAU produced the legal framework for African countries to utilize in order to effectively criminalize and prosecute terrorism, and increase international cooperation in regards to extradition and intelligence sharing. In 2004, the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism was established to create a centralized forum to facilitate a pan-African discussion and research center in regard to the ongoing terrorist threats.

Modern-Day Terrorism in the Sahel and Beyond:

Largely a result of the region's historical roots, political instability, weak state governance, and exploitation by extremist groups, the Sahel region still experiences frequent political terrorism. Emerging in 2015, the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, operating mainly between Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger has been responsible for many attacks on local communities and government forces, including through the

use of brutal terrorist tactics such as civilian massacres. They have even shown heavy resistance to international troops. Furthermore, since 2015, violence in the region has dramatically increased and has shifted to Burkina Faso, in which a majority of the region's current-day fatalities are taking place. The rise of Juma'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimeen (JMIN) formed in 2017 has often been attributed as the largest contributor to the rise in violence. JMIN serves as an alliance of several extremist terrorist groups, including links to al-Qaeda, all of whom operate primarily in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. Their terrorist attacks have largely targeted security forces, civilians, and even the UN peacekeepers. In fact, compared to 2020, only a year before, the 2021 number of violent events linked with terrorist Islamist groups in the region nearly doubled. Similarly, the number of attacks on security forces has also increased significantly. Recent military coups (2020-present) in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger have only destabilized the region further. Ongoing attacks have even begun to overflow into coastal states of West Africa, threatening the Nations of Benin and Togo.

Current Anti-Terrorist Efforts:

On a more positive note, modern counter-terrorism efforts in North Africa have evolved substantially in recent years, although not to equal extents from nation to nation, largely in response to the continued rise of militant Islamist groups. Countries in the region, with support from the European Union, the United States, and African regional organizations, have launched joint military operations. One such operation is the G5 Sahel Joint Force, which combats cross-border terrorism and incorporates direct involvement and military cooperation between Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger, and Mauritania. Technology and information sharing have also become more centralized and accessible. On top of the formation of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, increased use of drone surveillance and counter-drone technology has been used to track terrorist movements and stop attacks. Many North African countries have also begun shifting their focus to addressing the root causes of terrorism. Efforts to improve access to education, reduce poverty, and build stronger state institutions have been used to try to address the historical social, economic, and political issues that have proved to be the core reasons for the rise of extremist terrorist groups. However, it is important to note that while this is a trend, not all countries fall neatly into this grouping. While Algeria has received national praise for its exemplary combat against terrorism, the consistent hiking of its defense budget has taken a toll on school funding. Military-backed counter-terrorism has also been met with human rights abuse concerns. Many of the government military forces in the Sahel region have been accused of abusing their power and displacing civilians.

2016 Ouagadougou Attacks

In the years leading up to the Ouagadougou attacks, Burkina Faso was in a period of political instability. In October 2014, the president, Blaise Compaore, who had served for over 25 years, attempted to amend the constitution to extend his term. In response, an uprising ensued in which protestors gathered outside the National Assembly and other government buildings, demanding new leadership. After two days of protests, in which 19 people were killed and 625 injured, Compaore resigned as president and fled to the Ivory Coast, leaving the country in a "power vacuum." Following a national election, Roch Marc Christian Kabore was sworn in as the new president on December 29, 2015.

On January 15, 2016, armed terrorists stormed the Splendid Hotel in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The day after, the Burkinabé and French militaries led a joint counter-attack resulting in the release

of 126 hostages. Four terrorists were killed, along with at least 17 civilians, including 6 Canadians, 5 Burkinabé, 2 French, 2 Swiss, 1 Dutch volunteer, and 1 American missionary. Within a day, AQIM claimed responsibility for the attacks, which were likely a way for AQIM to demonstrate their strength and prevalence in the region. The UN Security Council condemned the attacks.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

While reading your country's positions below, performing your own research, and writing your position paper, consider these questions as guides to understand your country's stances and where you can collaborate with other delegates.

- What does your country see as the root cause of the prevalence of foreign terrorist attacks throughout Africa? What measures must be taken to ensure these causes have the least effect possible on the African population?
- What exactly should be the UN's role in combating terrorism, and how much focus should the UN receive in comparison to African-based counter-terrorist groups?
- What exactly does your country need in order to effectively combat terrorist groups? Is your country in need of more personnel, more military technology, or more economic stimulation?
- For African nations, which nations should be pursued for foreign aid in the region? For other nations, how should foreign influence in Africa be countered while simultaneously allowing for the effective combating of terrorism?
- How does your country view the unification of African nations in order to counter terrorist threats? Are these new cross-country bonds an effective way to fight terrorism, or do they raise too large a threat to foreign influence in the region?

COUNTRY POSITIONS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Despite the historically strong position of the US in counter-terrorism offensives in the Middle East, the US has not held a strong foothold in combating terrorism in North Africa and the Sahel. Even after the 2012 attacks on US facilities in Benghazi, Libya, the US has avoided taking a strong military position in the regions. However, in recent years the Biden administration has pushed for the US to get more involved in both North Africa and the Sahel. Scholars argue that these regions are not only crucial for countering anti-Western influence across the Atlantic but also for limiting the growing influence of adversaries like Russia and China. Violence in the regions also works to undermine the success of NATO and damage the integrity and legitimacy of American counter-terrorist offensives in the Middle East.

FRANCE

France has held a very large foothold in Africa, with Algeria, Senegal, Mali, Guinea, and Chad being French colonies until the mid-late 1900s. While they no longer hold any specific governmental power in the regions, the remnants of French colonization still exist and many people in the regions speak French. Therefore, an attack on the people of North Africa and the Sahel is an attack on the stability of

French culture throughout the region. Furthermore, conflict in North Africa could lead to a large increase in immigration to France, posing a large challenge to Prime Minister François Bayrou. To figures such as Bayrou, the issue of immigration is “first and foremost a question of proportion” and many French people feel “submerged” by immigration. Therefore, if people such as Bayrou are correct in their assumptions, an increase in immigration would undoubtedly be unfavorable to many members of the French parliament.

SAUDI ARABIA

As an emerging global superpower, the situation in Africa poses some risks to many aspects of Saudi Arabian life. As a technological superpower, Saudi Arabia relies on the many precious minerals found in abundance throughout Africa. As of recently, the country has partnered with the US to invest in the mining of such minerals through large investments. However, this economic intervention is mostly the limit of Saudi Arabia intervention in the region. While the gravity of African stability is understood throughout the Saudi Arabian administration, it is in the country’s best interest to minimize their military involvement in the conflict, reducing the threat of an all-out war.

CHINA

In recent years, China has emerged as one of the main foreign figures deeply involved in the Maghreb and Sahel regions. Through a series of diplomatic, economic, and military relations, China and Africa have developed a deep international bond. Due to this, terrorist attacks in this region are a serious threat to Chinese international relations and the Chinese supply chain. However, China must tread carefully in dealing with the situation. As attacks continue, the presence of Western governments and their resulting Western ideals will begin to have a greater impact on the region and a greater influence on the lives of many North African nations. It is in China’s best interest to remove any terrorist threat swiftly and safely without allowing Western influence to seep in and plague the Maghreb and Sahel regions.

IRAQ

Having finally recovered from the devastating effects of the Iraq War, the country of Iraq is currently experiencing a period of relative stability and positive economic growth. In this period of stability, Iraq has begun to build up a partnership with North African countries such as Algeria and sees the country as “pivotal” to the safety and security of the world. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to Iraq that Algeria is safe from the clutches of foreign terrorist groups. However, the country must make sure that, if Western involvement in the African conflict is to occur, the conflict does not escalate into a repeat of the events of the Iraq war and the devastating civilian casualties that resulted from it.

INDIA

Since 1991, India has held an incredibly strong diplomatic relationship with many African countries. India and Egypt, for example, are bilateral trading partners and rely on each other for many crucial materials such as petroleum and steel. Due to this, the country has developed an extremely strong economic presence in the regions, one which could be easily disrupted by terrorist attacks and increased instability, especially around the mining industry. Having invested in counterterrorism measures in the

past, India is deeply involved in the protection of the North African nations and must continue working to secure the region from any foreign threats.

IRAN

In recent years, Iran has attempted to rebuild its ties with Africa after a period of extended disinterest during the Rouhani administration (2013-2021). The main vehicle for these new ties is the country of Algeria. Unified under a dislike of Western colonization and exploitation of natural resources and a focus on improving technology, Algeria and Iran have grown extremely close diplomatically. Algeria has also supported Iran's presence in the field of nuclear technology. Due to these factors, Algeria and the North African region have become the frontier for increased Iranian power throughout Africa. Iran also sees the recent loss of Western influence in the Sahel region as a key way to exert their influence on a wider number of countries throughout the world. In order to properly continue its diplomatic relationship with Algeria and expand its global reach, it is of utmost importance that Iran works to ensure political and societal stability in Africa.

SPAIN

Spain holds a key trade position with many nations in Africa, especially Morocco. Since 2012, Morocco has been a key destination for Spanish exports into Africa as well as Moroccan imports. Spain has also been a strong advocate for closer ties between the European Union and the Maghreb region and increased technological partnership with many Maghreb nations. However, with the closure of the Maghreb-Europe Gas Pipeline in 2021, a key source of natural gas imports for the EU, due to a conflict between Morocco and Algeria, their relationship has become somewhat strained. Despite this, the country's close proximity to the Maghreb region has led to an increase in Spanish counterterrorism units and an increased focus on their geographical neighbors. While Spain recognizes the clear importance of stability in the Sahel region, its main focus is on stability in the Maghreb. It is key for Spain to protect itself from the economic threat of Maghreb terrorism while also continuing to take clear stands on the Maghreb's political endeavors.

RWANDA

Rwanda has recently been a strong source of counterterrorist action, especially in West Africa and Mozambique. Despite experiencing an incredibly strained diplomatic relationship with its immediate neighbors, Rwanda has developed an incredibly strong diplomatic relationship with all of the countries in the Maghreb region. Being one of the only African countries to ratify the Algiers Protocol for combatting terrorism, Rwanda has a strong foothold in and stance on the prevention of terrorism in North Africa. It also has a strong place in counterterrorism in the Sahel, recently cooperating with Benin to send troops to combat Sahel terrorism. Due to this, it is important for Rwanda to work to empower other African countries to fight terrorism throughout the country and solve the North Africa and Sahel crises through the combined intervention of African nations.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The DRC has been the site of a large number of attacks from rebel groups seeking to gain control of the country's large and incredibly profitable mining industry. Especially in the eastern region of the country, over 100 armed groups have been trying to take control of the country. Many of these groups have strong connections with foreign terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda that give them a strong military foundation for their goals. While the country is somewhat limited in the aid it can give to fight these terrorist organizations due to its incredibly weak government, helping the Maghreb and Sahel overcome its terrorist threats could deal a great blow to the groups that back these Congolese rebels. For its success, the DRC must carefully weigh its options and decide exactly which African offensives to support in order to bring peace to both the DRC and the Maghreb and Sahel regions.

RUSSIA

Russia has been slowly reintroducing itself back into Africa since the mid-2010s. The country's main aim seems to be to gain more support for a new world based on decreased Western influence. Its main way of doing so has been tapping into lingering anti-western sentiment using a variety of both facts and misinformation. In the Sahel, it has also worked to back military regimes in Mali and Burkina Faso and has sent arms shipments to various countries in the region. For the continued success of these goals and aims, it is important that the African countries Russia has become involved with are relatively stable and experience no foreign terrorist threats to distract them from Russia's goal. Furthermore, Russia must also work to ensure that, if Western nations such as the US are to get involved with the African situation, then their effects on the public opinion of the countries must be minimal.

ALGERIA

Especially after the 2021 Tebessa bombing, Algeria has stepped up its counterterrorist response, killing 20 terrorists and arresting 385 more during counterterrorism offensives in 2022. Due to these efforts, no major terrorist groups in the country carried out any attacks. Diplomatically, the country has an extremely tense relationship with Morocco, especially since 2021 after the two countries cut ties with each other. In terms of the Sahel, terrorist attacks in Mali, Niger, and Libya prove extremely dangerous to the security of Algerian borders and increase the chance that violence could spill over country lines. For Algeria's success, it is of utmost importance that it continues to deploy counterterrorism offensives throughout both its own territory and the surrounding region and that it stays faithful to its own diplomatic relations.

EGYPT

While not experiencing as many attacks as its neighbors in the Sahel, Egypt has still been the target of a large number of terrorist attacks in recent years. In 2022, at least 95 attacks occurred in the Sinai Peninsula, most of which were the responsibility of the Sinai branch of ISIS, ISIS-SP. There was, however, a large decrease in the amount of large-scale operations against Egyptian forces. As the country holds strong bilateral diplomatic relations with many other countries in North Africa, it could use the help of countries such as Algeria which have been more effective in eliminating terrorist threats. In the case of the Sahel, Egypt has stressed its support for the region in combating terrorism, with Egyptian Minister of

Foreign Affairs Badr Abdelatty stating that “The security and stability of the Sahel region are integral to Egypt’s national security.”

MOROCCO

Morocco has developed extremely effective counterterrorism measures throughout the past 10 years. By placing an incredible emphasis on border security and strong prosecution, Morocco experienced no significant terrorist attacks on its soil in 2022. While the country does face some small threats by sporadic groups usually affiliated with ISIS, these groups do not pose a large obstacle to Moroccan security. Its relationship with other North African countries, however, is a bit shaky. The country has an extremely tense relationship with Algeria, especially since 2021 after the two countries cut ties with each other. In terms of the Sahel, Morocco has pledged to involve itself deeply with the Sahelian countries and has sent lots of humanitarian aid to countries such as Niger. While Morocco does recognize the numerous government benefits that a partnership with the Sahel could have, its primary focus is on improving the lives of Sahelian citizens, which in turn requires removing the terrorist threat from the region.

LIBYA

Despite the number of large terrorist attacks in Libya in 2020 and 2021, the country has not passed any clear counterterrorism legislation. Although it has recognized the African Union’s Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, the country’s regulations around prosecution of terrorists are largely ad-hoc. Pushing through difficulties surrounding its internal political differences and ineffective security institutions, Libya has worked to try to reduce terrorism in its own country and throughout North Africa and the Sahel. Due to this ineffectual government, Libya must carefully consider every single detail and implication of any counterterrorism legislation passed to ensure that it has no adverse effects on the country’s ability to combat both foreign and internal threats.

SUDAN

Currently, Sudan is involved in its own civil war that has been raging since April 2023 and has killed around 15,000 people as of October 3, 2024. For a country already experiencing an incredibly chaotic and tense internal situation, the last thing Sudan needs is foreign terrorists taking advantage of the situation to more effectively and discreetly commit acts of terror. Furthermore, the war has displaced an incredibly large number of people and has required some to flee to states in the Sahel. If these Sahel states are similarly unstable and the target of foreign terrorism, then these Sudanese refugees could find their new situation even worse than before. To ensure its international safety as it continues to fight its civil war, it is imperative that Sudan works with other nations to obtain aid for counterterrorism offensives and that other countries of the world develop legislation that protects all past and present Sudanese civilians.

TUNISIA

Currently, Tunisia is experiencing an incredibly poor period of economic growth. In 2013, Tunisia experienced its second lowest year of economic growth in the last decade, only second to 2020, the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although it has developed a series of economic goals, it currently is not

in an economic position to spend large sums of money on counterterrorism offensives. Although no terrorist attacks occurred in 2022, the country still faces threats from the spillover of Libyan instability. Furthermore, Tunisia has experienced a period of increased immigration from the Sahel region from people attempting to leave Africa and immigrate to Europe. This, combined with the already poor economic situation, has put extreme strain on the Tunisian government. For the future success of Tunisia, the country must work to receive both foreign humanitarian and counterterrorist aid to ameliorate their internal situation and allow them to develop their own successful economic and counterterrorist offenses.

BURKINA FASO

Burkina Faso has recently been the site of a large number of extremely deadly terrorist attacks. It is estimated that over 2,100 civilians have been killed in such attacks, one of which was perpetrated by the JNIM and killed between 200 and 600 people. Forces from Burkina Faso were dispatched to fight terrorist groups such as the JNIM, but most Burkinabé authorities abused this order to illegally arrest or kidnap perceived critics of the government. While not a part of the region of North Africa, success in counterterrorist offensives in Burkina Faso or in North Africa could greatly reduce the overall trend of terrorism throughout Africa. A victory secured in one of these regions could discourage further terrorist acts and move Burkina Faso back towards a peaceful existence.

SENEGAL

Overall, Senegal has developed an incredibly strong foundation for counterterrorist offensives. In 2022, the country experienced no major terrorist attacks, proving a great disparity in counterterrorism effectiveness between itself and its neighbor, Mali. Due to this, Senegal has become a de-facto mediator in many conflicts around the Sahel region. Having such a strong experience of effective counterterrorism, Senegal must work with other countries to spread its effective measures to the rest of Africa and be a leading example for the rest of the African nations.

GAMBIA

Gambia has developed extremely strong diplomatic relations with many African countries, especially Morocco. In January of 2024, the two countries met to discuss continued investment in African energy and trade and expressed a continued desire for strong bilateral relations. Gambia also signed an agreement with the UN in 2022 to strengthen various counterterrorism measures. This new agreement, combined with the strong relationship with Morocco and its strong counterterrorist measures, has helped Gambia emerge as a key player in the fight against global terrorism. Due to this, it is important for Gambia to set an example for other African countries to follow and to use its skills and relationships to help bring peace to the region.

MAURITANIA

Mauritania has possibly the strongest counterterrorist structure of any country in Africa. Due to its unbelievably effective measures, the country has not experienced a major terrorist attack on its soil since 2011. The country has also developed an incredibly strong and well-funded military training

program that trains people in a wide variety of fields for the fight against terrorism. Aside from this, Mauritania is a key spot for mining and has been beginning to develop bilateral diplomatic relations with the EU. Using its experience with all of these factors, Mauritania must work to help other countries adopt similarly effective counterterrorist structures and act as a shining example for what African counterterrorism can be.

MALI

In recent years, Mali has had an extremely shaky relationship with its immediate neighbors, causing it to renounce France as its main international partner and turn to Russia for help. Internally, the country has been struck by an unprecedented amount of terrorist attacks, most of which were perpetrated by the JNIM and ISIS-GS. Mali also has experienced extreme difficulty in securing its borders which are vast and surrounded by seven neighbouring countries. Although the Malian Gendarmerie and National Border Police have worked to secure the country's borders, both agencies are dramatically understaffed and underfunded and lack all the necessary resources required to both secure Malian borders and fight terrorism throughout Mali. In order for the country to make it through its current crisis, it is imperative that Mali obtains both economic and military support from other nations to adequately supply itself with the means to combat terrorism.

NIGER

Recently, Niger has been the site of a large number of terrorist attacks, most of which occurred near its borders. In 2022, at least 180 attacks were carried out throughout the country, most of which were perpetrated by JNIM, Boko Haram, and two African branches of ISIS. It has worked to develop more effective modes of combatting this terrorism and has emerged as a leader in the prosecution of terrorism suspects. Recently, the country also split with the US over a pact allowing US personnel to operate within the country with the reason that, according to Niger military official Amadou Abdramane, the actions of the US denied “the sovereign Nigerien people the right to choose their partners and types of partnerships capable of truly helping them fight against terrorism.” For their continued success, it is imperative for Niger to carefully choose their allies and continue to work carefully to choose which counterterrorism offensives to support.

CHAD

After the death of its former president in 2021, Chad has been working through a very tenuous political landscape. Just recently, Chad's new president, Mahamat Idriss Déby, was elected with large amounts of violence surrounding his victory including the murder of one of his potential candidates. Both France and the African Union, the two biggest counter-terrorist forces in the region, have become greatly alarmed by this transfer of power and the implications behind it for Chadian future. In 2022, the country suffered five major terrorist attacks, all of which were carried out by Boko Haram. In November of this same year, French President Emmanuel Macron ended French counterterrorist support for the region, meaning Chad must seek help from other countries to eliminate its terrorist threat. For its future prosperity, Chad must carefully choose its alliances to secure more effective counterterrorist assistance in the future.

CAMEROON

In recent years, Cameroon has experienced both a large number of foreign and internal threats to its national security. Its insecure northwestern border with Nigeria, for example, has been the site of numerous attacks from Boko Haram and an Islamic-state-affiliated splinter group. In 2021, a total of 35 civilians were killed as a result of four major attacks from Boko Haram and ISIS-WA. Attacks such as these, combined with the Cameroonian government's war against Anglophone separatists in the region, have led to the country having an estimated 358,000 internally displaced persons in need of humanitarian aid. The US has been a large partner with Cameroon in the past to counter such acts of terror, but allegations of torture at US-backed military bases have weakened the international image of both Cameroon and the foreign aid it receives. For its future success as a country, Cameroon must balance its internal conflicts and choose carefully which conflicts to prioritize and which countries to look to for foreign counterterrorist aid. Cameroon must also carefully consider its history of human rights violations and work towards a counterterrorist solution that does not put its civilians at an increased risk of either death or further displacement.

NIGERIA

Similarly to Cameroon, Nigeria has recently been the site of a large number of terrorist attacks from Boko Haram and ISIS-WA. In 2021, the groups carried out hundreds of attacks, some of which killed large numbers of women and children. Such attacks have led to extreme turmoil within the country, with an estimated two million people being internally displaced and 328,000 being displaced to neighboring countries. In terms of foreign aid, the country receives a large portion of its aid from the US, which supplies the country with both monetary funds to be put towards combating terrorism and military technology, as well as Russia and China, who have both pledged to invest in Nigerian institutions and companies. In order to achieve internal stability, Nigeria must continue to work carefully with both other African nations and international powers and must work to strengthen their internal counterterrorism efforts, which are currently not well developed.

TURKEY

Turkey has played a pivotal role in North Africa, particularly active in Libya, where it supported the internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA) as part of its broader foreign policy in the Mediterranean. Turkey has viewed North Africa as an extension of its influence and aimed to strengthen ties with countries in the region through trade, defense agreements, and energy partnerships. Turkey was both a source and transit country for FTFs attempting to join ISIS and other groups in Syria and Iraq. Domestically, the PKK continued to conduct terrorist attacks, leading to significant security operations in eastern and southeastern provinces, as well as military interventions in northern Iraq and Syria. The International Crisis Group reported casualties from these clashes, including civilians, security personnel, and PKK militants. In order to secure itself and other nations, it is imperative that Turkey continues to collaborate with international partners while ensuring that its counterterrorism efforts uphold human rights and the rule of law.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has been a critical actor in North Africa due to its focus on countering extremist ideologies and fostering stability in the region. The UAE had taken a strong stance against groups it considered to be tied to political Islam, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, and had actively supported factions in Libya opposed to Turkey-backed forces. Its engagement in North Africa extended beyond security concerns to include economic investments and partnerships aimed at development and infrastructure. The UAE's approach to combating terrorism often involved leveraging its financial and diplomatic influence to support allied governments and counteract the spread of extremist networks. It sought to shape the region's future in line with its vision of stability, secular governance, and economic modernization. For its continued success as a large global power, the UAE must leverage its economic influence with both Western, Middle Eastern, and African nations to combat terrorist action and promote collaboration and prosperity throughout the world.

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