



BISMUN 2026



**TRICOM: DISARMAMENT
AND INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY COMMITTEE**



STUDY GUIDE



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Delegates,

It is with great enthusiasm that I welcome you all to BISMUN 2026 and the Disarmament and International Security Committee, where we will address the ongoing conflict in the Sahel region. I, Omarr Thomas, will serve as your Director for this incredibly unique committee.

As delegates, you have been tasked with an immense challenge - tackling the tumultuous situation in the Sahel. Set in April of 2026, days after the devastating attacks in Mali, the United Nations has taken a landmark decision. For the very first time, armed extremist groups will be directly negotiating with UN Member Nations- marking a paradigm shift in the history of international relations. With Sahelian states in a state of turmoil and foreign powers vying for regional influence, terrorist groups continue to run amok across the region, yet remain excluded from formal diplomatic processes or multilateral discussions. Delegates must navigate an ever-changing geopolitical landscape while striving to uphold the core tenets of DISEC- preserving global peace, promoting international disarmament and fostering global cooperation. This committee offers you the opportunity to indelibly alter the trajectory of one of the world's most complex security crises, for better or for worse.

Delegates will represent local states afflicted by terrorism, key international actors and the militant groups themselves. As members of DISEC, you are expected to bring your allocation's perspective to the negotiating table; but also to work collaboratively with your fellow delegates.

What makes this committee particularly exciting is its place within BISMUN's TRICOM framework. Throughout the conference, you will be required to coordinate not only with delegates in DISEC, but also with your delegation's counterparts in the Security Council and Human Rights Council. This cooperation will undoubtedly be challenging; crises will evolve rapidly, priorities may conflict, and decisions taken in one committee may create unforeseen consequences in another. Yet it is precisely this complexity that makes the experience so rewarding. Effective collaboration, strategic thinking, and adaptability will be just as important as strong speeches and paperwork. The realities of the Sahel demand solutions that balance security, political stability, and human rights, and I look forward to seeing how your delegations rise to this challenge and shape the course of our committee's history.

Supporting me throughout this conference will be Aman Sarup and Tia Lakra, who will serve as your Assistant Directors. If you have any questions regarding the committee, your allocation, the TRICOM format, or anything else please feel free to contact me at omarr.3215@bis.edu.in . Looking forward to seeing all of you in committee!

Until July,

Warm regards,

Omarr Thomas

Director, Disarmament and International Security Committee

INTRODUCTION TO TRICOM

TRICOM is a new Model United Nations format that combines three committees operating simultaneously under a single overarching agenda. Unlike a traditional MUN where each delegate represents one country in one committee, TRICOM splits each delegation into three representatives, one placed in each of the three committees, allowing them to engage with the same issue from multiple perspectives at the same time.

Each committee focuses on a different dimension of the same global crisis. TRICOM's overarching agenda at BISMUN 2026 is addressing terrorism in the Sahel Region. The free date for all three committees is 30th April, 2026.

The agenda will be explored in the following three committees:

- UNSC: Preventing the rise of terror groups to power, upholding political stability in the Sahel
- DISEC: Disarming Terrorist Groups & Preventing Armed Terror Attacks in the Sahel
- UNHRC: Protecting Human rights against terrorism in the Sahel

Although the committees operate independently in debate and voting, they remain interconnected through shared developments, coordinated crises, and delegation-wide strategy. The functionings of TriCom are explained here:

Delegations

Each delegation represents a single country or non-state actor and is divided into three delegates, one per committee. While each delegate operates within their assigned committee, they are expected to maintain a broadly consistent overall national or organisational position.

Crises

Crises play a central role in TRICOM. When a crisis is officially ratified in any committee by the Executive Board, it is shared across all three committees. However, committees are not required to act on every crisis.

Instead, crisis updates serve as contextual developments that:

- Influence debate
- Shape bloc formation
- Provide strategic background when writing communiques

Crises may be presented periodically in the form of announcements, slideshows, skits, or verbal updates.

Paperwork

Delegates will use similar tools to a standard MUN, but with additional coordination mechanisms.

1. Communiqués

Delegates may submit:

- Open communiqués
- Covert communiqués
- Joint communiqués
- Cross-committee communiqués (written by all three delegates of a single delegation together)

2. Directives

Each committee produces its own directives in response to crises. Delegates are not expected to address every crisis, but should focus on those relevant to their committee's mandate. Directives are debated, amended, and voted on within each individual committee.

3. Draft Resolutions

Each committee also produces formal draft resolutions outlining long-term policy solutions, handled entirely within the committee, aligning with the committee's mandate, and are not cross-committee documents.

Coordination of the Delegation

A key feature of TRICOM is structured inter-committee collaboration, between the three delegates of the delegation. Delegations will be assessed on the coordination between the 3 delegates, and consistency in stance and strategy across the delegation will be rewarded.

For the purpose of coordination, delegations have access to limited Team Time, allowing all three delegates of a country to meet in a designated area outside the committee and coordinate strategy:

- Team Time may be requested once per day per delegation (subject to change as per the EB's discretion)
- Duration: up to 10 minutes (subject to change as per the EB's discretion)
- Held under supervision in a designated space
- Only members of the same delegation may interact during this time
- It is not an unmoderated caucus and cannot be used to interact with other delegations

Additionally, inter-committee communication channels remain open throughout the conference, allowing ongoing coordination between teammates. Delegates are encouraged to use designated lunch and snack breaks as well as time before and after committee sessions to plan and coordinate the delegation's stance and strategy.

Awards and Evaluation

Delegates are assessed both individually and as part of their delegation.

Committee awards will be presented to individual delegates, based on a wide rubric of speeches, quality of paperwork, crisis response, lobbying, bloc leadership, and more.

Delegation awards will be presented to delegations, based on the delegation's performance and consistency across the 3 committees, coordination between the 3 delegates, effectiveness of Team Time, and strategic alignment across all three committees.

INTRODUCTION TO DISEC

History of DISEC

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) is the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). DISEC was set up in 1945, at the same time as the establishment of the United Nations itself. The rationale behind the setting up of this committee was because of the widespread destruction and devastation caused by the Second World War and the emergence of newer technologies in weapons. In this context, the international community realized that there was a need for a forum wherein the issues concerning peace and security were to be deliberated.

Since its inception, the Disarmament and International Security Committee has always been one of the most important forums for dealing with issues that threaten international peace and security. During the period of the Cold War era, the committee took on an important role in the discussion of issues like nuclear arms race, weapons proliferation, confidence-building measures amongst rival blocs, and so on. In the post-Cold War era, the mandate of the committee has become much wider in scope to include other issues like terrorism, cyber warfare, weapons trafficking, weaponless systems, and so forth.

Mandate of DISEC

The mandate of DISEC is to address issues related to international peace and security, with particular emphasis on disarmament, arms control, and the regulation of weapon technologies. As a committee of the General Assembly, DISEC provides a forum where all Member States can participate equally in discussions regarding global security challenges.

The committee examines principles governing disarmament and international security, considers threats to global stability, and develops recommendations aimed at reducing the likelihood of armed conflict. It seeks to strengthen international cooperation by encouraging dialogue, confidence-building measures, transparency in military affairs, and adherence to international agreements.

Unlike enforcement bodies, DISEC focuses primarily on policy formulation, normsetting, consensus building, and the creation of recommendations that may later influence international law, treaties, and state behaviour.

Purpose of DISEC

The primary purpose of DISEC is to promote international peace through cooperation and collective security. The committee serves as a venue where nations can discuss security concerns before they escalate into larger conflicts.

DISEC seeks to:

- Prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).
- Promote nuclear, chemical, and biological disarmament.
- Regulate conventional weapons and arms transfers.
- Address emerging threats posed by new technologies.
- Strengthen international confidence-building measures.
- Encourage peaceful resolution of disputes.
- Foster transparency regarding military capabilities and expenditures.
- Support international treaties and agreements related to disarmament and security.

DISEC Structure and Membership

DISEC is one of the six main committees of the United Nations General Assembly. All 193 United Nations Member States are represented within the committee, making it one of the most inclusive forums for discussing international security issues.

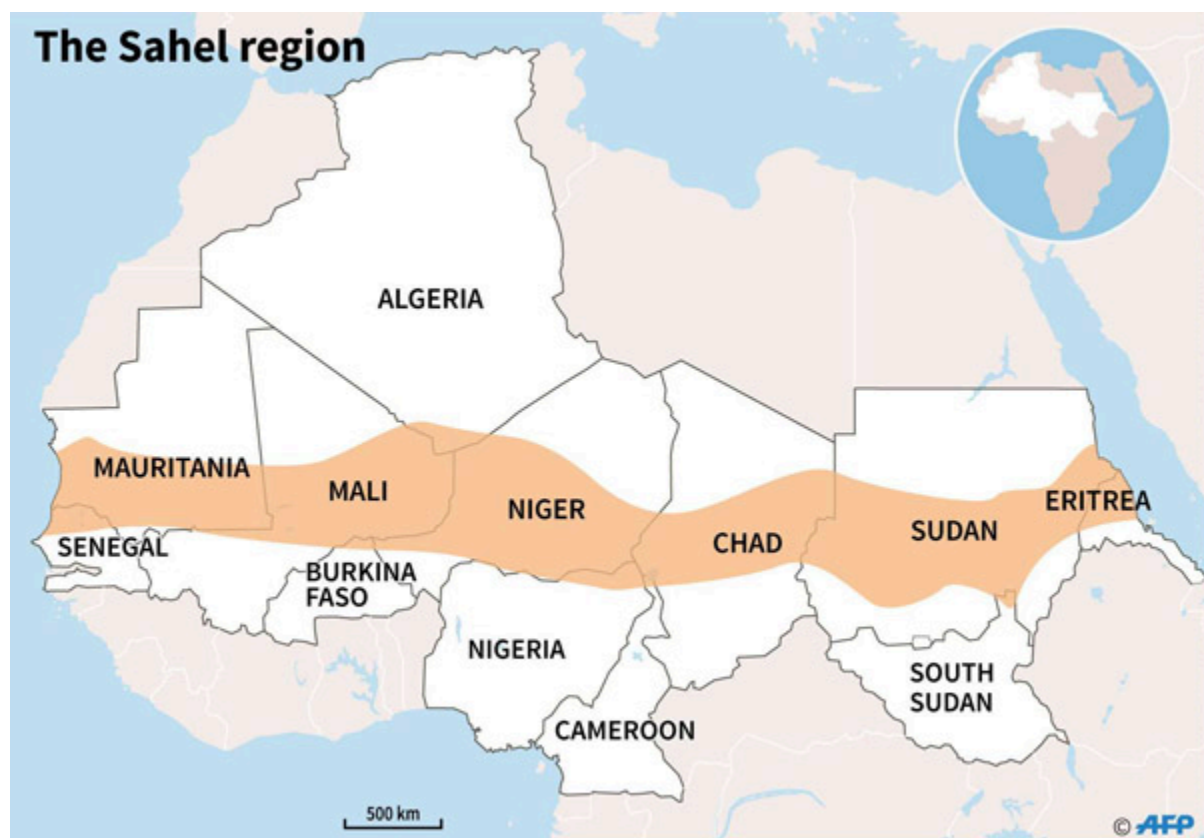
Each member state has one vote, regardless of military, economic, or political influence. This principle reflects the sovereign equality of nations and ensures that both large and small states have an opportunity to participate in discussion concerning global security.

The committee convenes annually during the regular session of the General Assembly at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Throughout these sessions, delegates debate agenda items, negotiate draft resolutions, and work toward achieving consensus on matters of international security.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

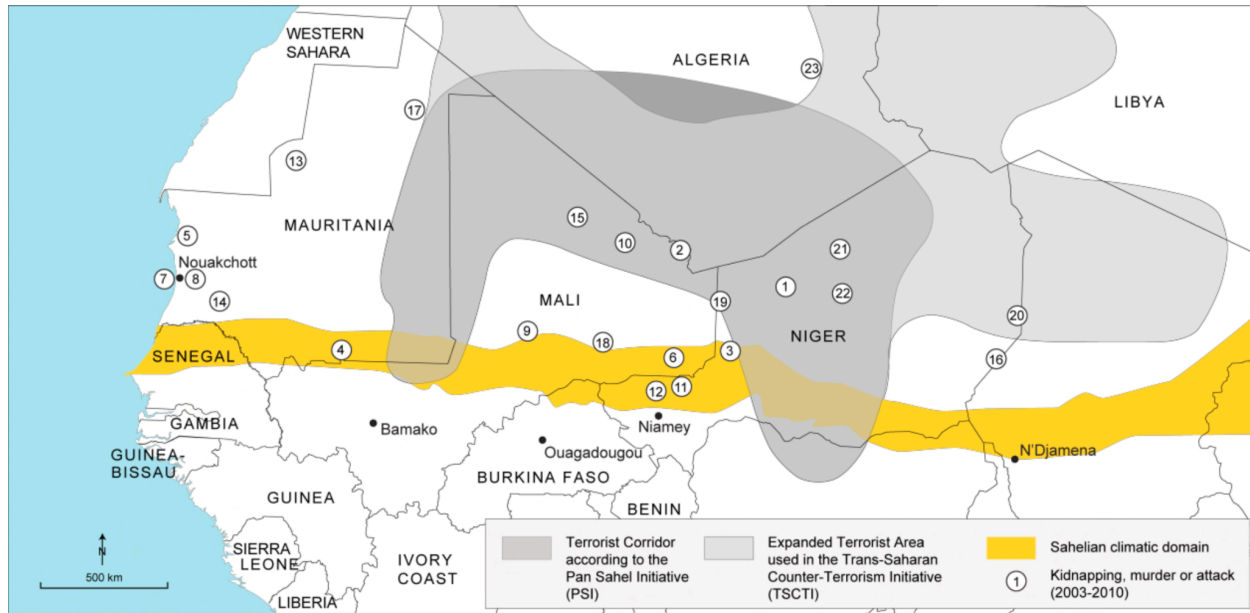
The Sahel Region

The Sahel is an expansive region covering over 6000 kilometres from East to West Africa. The word ‘Sahel’ comes from the Arabic word sāḥil (الساحل) meaning ‘the coast’; and it extends from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Red Sea in the east. It is a semi-arid region in north-central Africa, home to over 200 million people and encompassing 10 core countries: Senegal, Gambia, Mauritania, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Nigeria. Historically, the Sahel has seen the confluence of Arabic, Islamic and nomadic cultures of the north, and indigenous cultures of the South. The region remains a critical transit point for migrants travelling from sub-Saharan Africa to North Africa and Europe.



The Sahel Region

The Sahel region has now become home to some of the world’s deadliest terrorist groups, leading to innumerable atrocities being committed against civilians, security forces and government authorities. The geographical features of the Sahel, such as its vast open spaces and poorly protected borders enable criminals, terror groups, and armed forces to use the region as a route for illegal migration and drug trafficking. Today, the hotbeds of violence are in the Liptako-Gourma and Lake Chad Basin subregions.



Terrorist Activity in the Sahel

Historical Instability

Colonial Legacy

The crisis in the Sahel can be traced to the colonial era, when European powers (primarily France) carved the map of Africa with little regard for ethnic, cultural or historical realities. Decolonization was rampant in the 1960s; with Mali, Senegal, Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mauritania all gaining independence from their colonizers in 1960. The Sahel has traditionally contained various ethnic groups such as the farming communities of the Songhai and Bambara & the nomadic Fulani and Amazigh. As borders were drawn during the colonial period, tribes found themselves divided or confined within new, alien territories, fuelling modern-day tensions. The economies in these new states were unsustainable and its people inherently in conflict; creating much political, economic and military turmoil. A prevailing trend was the rise of weak, corrupt, and illegitimate central governments across the Sahel states that could never exercise full control over the extent of their territories. Thus, the power vacuum left by colonialism was pivotal to the instability in the Sahel.

Tuareg Rebellions

The Tuareg (Arabic: “abandoned by God”) are an indigenous Berber ethnic group of pastoralists and traders who primarily inhabit the Sahara Desert across Mali, Niger, Algeria, Libya, and Burkina Faso. The Liptako-Gourma basin has experienced three Tuareg rebellions pre-2011: the First Tuareg Rebellion (1963–64), the Second Tuareg Rebellion (1990–96) and the Third Tuareg Rebellion (2006–09).

The First Tuareg Rebellion (the Alfellaga) was an insurrection in northern Mali that was violently repressed. The Malian military massacred innocent civilians, eradicated livestock and poisoned vital wells- creating a sense of underlying resentment within the Tuareg population. This triggered a migration of Tuareg communities to Algeria, en masse.

The impetus for the Second Tuareg Rebellion was largely due to the debilitating droughts in the 1970s and 1980s, which altered traditional Tuareg livelihoods and left many young Tuareg men in exile. This generation of Tuareg fighters, which came to be known as the *ishumar*, shared a sense of injustice following the *Alfellaga*, and held a cohesive political identity. The Tuareg notably orchestrated attacks in Tchintabaradene in northern Niger (1990) & Ménaka in eastern Mali (1990); leaving behind a trail of violence in their wake. The conflict was eventually resolved with the signing of the 1992 Pacte National, promising the economic regeneration of northern Mali, local reconciliation initiatives, and the integration of Tuareg rebels into the army and government.

The Third Tuareg Rebellion was sparked by mutinies in the Malian cities of Ménaka and Kidal. The Democratic Alliance for Change, a Malian Tuareg rebel group, responsible for these attacks signed a peace treaty with the government temporarily halting the conflict. However, this ceasefire was short-lived when the Alliance Touareg Niger-Mali (ATNM)- another insurgent Touareg organization argued that northern Mali still remained politically and economically marginalized; and attacked government garrisons and kidnapped soldiers. Furthermore, the Niger Movement for Justice (MNJ) targeted military outposts and Niger's critical uranium mining infrastructure. Several other attacks by Tuareg factions were carried out including a siege on the Malian capital of Bamako. Another peace settlement was ultimately reached, yet several underlying problems that had plagued Mali and Niger since their nascency prevailed. The Third Tuareg Rebellion reinforced the lack of tangible action taken by the governments of Mali and Niger to successfully integrate the Tuareg populace into society. At its essence, a cyclical pattern of rebellion that has characterized Mali and Niger for decades continued to be perpetuated.

All three conflicts stem from Tuareg resentment in being governed by what was perceived to be a 'foreign' authority. Following Malian independence, several Tuareg communities opposed consolidation within the Republic of Mali; and instead sought that their homeland, Azawad be recognised as an independent state. Moreover, it is believed the Tuareg felt marginalized & neglected within Mali. This pervasive sentiment amongst a sizeable majority of the Tuareg, was compounded by extreme economic disparity, resource inequality & harsh droughts; provoking the Tuareg rebellions.

The Emergence of Terrorism in the Sahel

The Algerian Civil War and Birth of AQIM

Following the emancipation of Algeria from France in 1962 and the subsequent period of civil unrest, militant Islamic social movements gave rise to organisations such as the Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA) and its splinter Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC). These armed Islamist groups fought the Algerian government during the Algerian Civil War from 1991 to 2002.

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), was an Algeria-based Sunni Muslim group operating in West Africa, and was among the most threatening and longest standing terrorist groups on the continent. AQIM was the formal rebranding of the GSPC. In 2006, Abdelmalek Droukdal, the leader of the GSPC, transitioned the organisation into AQIM- by officially pledging allegiance to AQ central. AQIM underwent a dramatic change in strategy- attacking both local and international targets & conducting high-profile suicide bombings (notably, an attack on United Nations headquarters and a constitutional court in Algiers which killed around 60 people on December 11, 2007).

However, intense counterterrorism efforts in northern Algeria, forced AQIM to abandon its traditional base to the Sahel (primarily Mali, Niger, and Mauritania). AQIM also began to operate more aggressively across national borders in the western Sahel, running smuggling networks and abducting Westerners. By exploiting weak local governance structures and forming ties with regional tribes, AQIM integrated into the region by absorbing other militant groups such as Al-Mourabitoun and Ansar Dine.

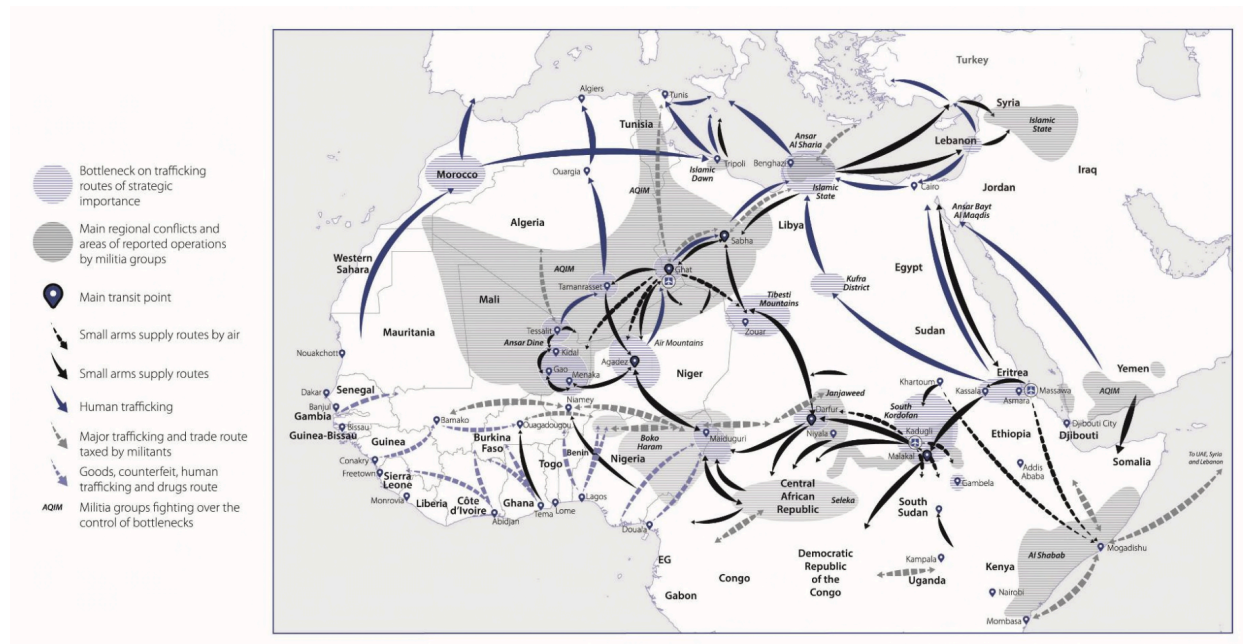
Association between Islamist Militant Groups and Crime Networks

Militant networks such as AQIM carried out a multitude of activities during their period of growth and consolidation (2003-2012). These activities still remain the modus operandi for terrorist and extremist groups across the Sahel today:

Kidnap for ransom (KFR): Kidnapping was vital to AQIM's business model, and constituted the financial foundation for the campaign. KFR is a protracted process that involves abduction, captivity, proof of life, negotiation and, in successful cases, ransom delivery and release. The targets of KFR abductions are largely Westerners visiting the region or those on work assignments. These include aid workers, diplomats or employees of international organisations or multinational corporations. Moreover, groups like Boko Haram are renowned for their involvement in kidnapping (although, KFR is less of a lucrative fundraising strategy for Boko Haram compared to AQIM).

Arms Smuggling: Arms trafficking is an essential trade for AQIM and its affiliates such as Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), one that directly affects their regional influence and enables their pursuit of organisational goals. It is a vital factor for the ability of these jihadist groups to control trade routes and establish territorial control. The collapse of past regimes, notably the 2011 looting of Libyan armories, has flooded the Sahel with black-market weaponry.

Drug Trafficking: West Africa is a critical artery for illicit narcotic drugs. Cocaine trafficking from South America has skyrocketed in Sahelian countries from an average of just 13 kg per year between 2015 and 2020 to 1,466 kg in 2022 (according to UNODC). AQIM and the eventual coalition of JNIM, utilise heavily armed fighters and fleets of vehicles to protect cocaine, hashish, and pharmaceutical shipments from rival factions or state security forces. Additionally, jihadist commanders such as Mojtar Belmojtar, drastically expanded the movement of contraband cigarettes across West Africa, during the late 2000s and early 2010s.



Smuggling and Trafficking in the Sahara

Migrant Trafficking and Human Smuggling: AQIM and its affiliates have been linked to the transport of humans across the Sahara for trafficking or smuggling. Anecdotal evidence suggests that members of the Tuareg community are also connected to these human smuggling routes across the desert. Migrant trafficking usually occurs when migrants knowingly pay facilitators to cross sovereign borders illegally. In contrast, human smuggling involves extreme exploitation, coercion and the subjugation of migrants. Criminal networks hold these migrants hostage, use them as forced labour, or act violently towards them.

The Expansion of Armed and Extremist Groups After 2011

The Arab Spring and Collapse of Libya

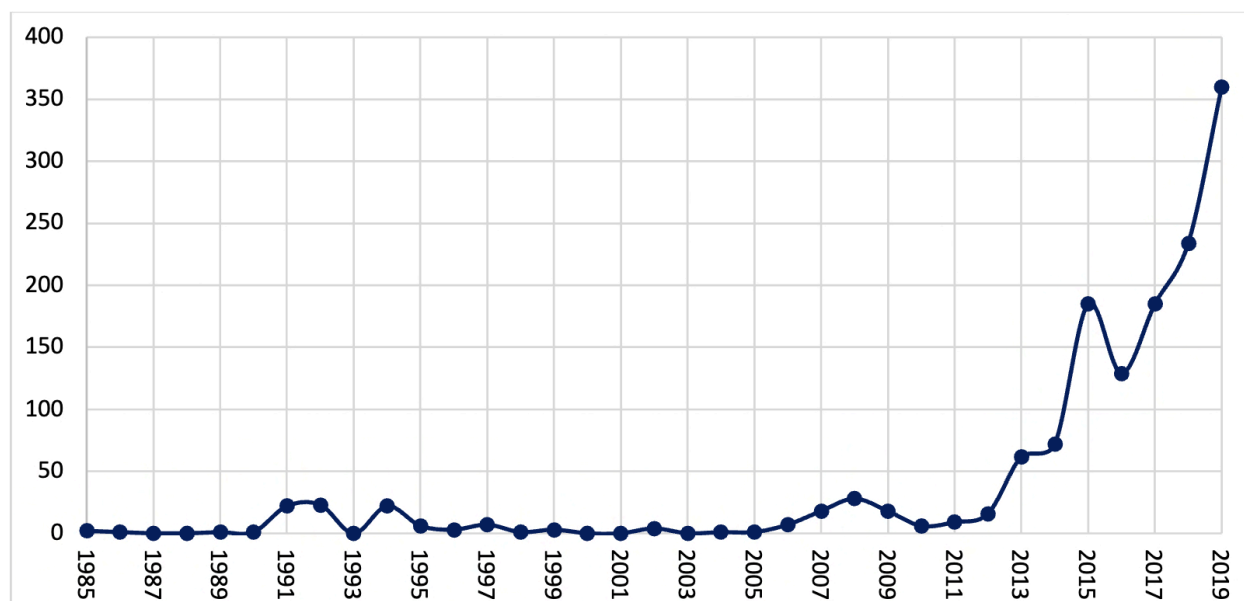
The term 'Arab Spring' is a name used to designate popular revolutions that took place from 2010-2012 in the Arab world to liberate and liberalise Arab states, ensure a change of autocratic governments, and institute socio-economic and political reforms. In Libya, protests against the Muammar Gaddafi government escalated into an armed rebellion in early 2011. In response to the growing violence in the nation, the United Nations adopted Resolution 1973, leading to an intervention by NATO to support the anti-government forces within the country. In October of that year, Gaddafi was captured and killed, ending his forty-two year rule over Libya. The collapse of the nation, however, created a vacuum within its security forces, leading to the spread of threats throughout the Sahel region.

Libya was home to the largest stockpile of weapons in Africa. With the collapse of its government and military, vast amounts of weaponry was stolen from the country and poured into neighboring nations within the Sahel region. These increased military strengths of the various nations across the region led to the increased power of rebel movements in those areas.

Another factor that contributed to the rise of rebellion movements within the Sahel was the return of thousands of former Libyan soldiers to the region. Upon the return of these soldiers to the region, with

their military knowledge and weapons, they were able to contribute to the growing power of rebellion movements within the area. Militant Islamist organizations began to spread into the Sahara-Sahel region as a result of the weakened border controls between the Sahel and Libya. Organizations such as the aforementioned Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and subsequently Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) began to establish themselves in the Sahel, take advantage of the lax border controls, and expand their areas of operation. Additionally, these organizations began to work alongside others, including various trafficking organizations and other rebel movements.

The collapse of Libya is considered to be a turning point in the Sahel's modern history. While the Sahel was experiencing periods of instability prior to 2011, the collapse of Libya initiated a period where extremism began to spread at an increased rate throughout the region. As a result, many of the terrorist and armed groups began to form throughout the Sahel region.



Number of Terrorist Attacks in G5 Sahel

Return of Armed Tuareg Fighters from Libya

Following the collapse of Muammar Gaddafi's regime in 2011, thousands of Tuareg fighters from Libya began to return to the Sahel region. For several decades, Libya had drawn migrants, refugees, and combatants of Tuareg descent. Several waves of Tuareg movements into the country occurred following the droughts and rebellions that plagued the region between the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. In addition to the fact that Libya had permitted some of these tribes to settle in the nation, some even joined the Libyan military.

The Libyan Civil War led to the sudden collapse of Gaddafi's regime. During this period, an estimated 200,000 Tuaregs from Mali and Niger returned to their home countries. These fighters were all experienced in the use of military and combat tactics. Additionally, they returned with military equipment looted from the military forces of Libya during the war between the various rebel groups within the country.

There were existing grievances of the Tuareg tribes against the governments of Mali and Niger. However, the arrival of these warriors with military experience and weaponry led to these tribal rebellions. As a result of these developments, the 2012 rebellion was led by Tuaregs who had returned from Libya. The arrival of these fighters contributed to the rapid collapse of the country's political authority in the region.

The governments of Mali and Niger became concerned over the possible influence that these combatants might have upon populations involved with human trafficking, rebel movements, and movements of militant Islamist groups. These problems were exacerbated by the weapons that these fighters brought into the Sahel region. Thus, the arrival of these fighters was one of the most significant outcomes of the Libyan Civil War. It initiated the development of Sahel's extremist and combatant movements.

2012 Mali Crisis

The 2012 Mali Crisis was a watershed moment in the modern history of the Sahel. Although northern Mali had experienced repeated Tuareg rebellions since independence, the events of 2012 transformed a localized rebellion into a wider regional security crisis whose effects continue to shape the Sahel today.

The crisis began in January of 2012, when the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) began a rebellion against the Malian government. The MNLA is a group composed predominantly of Tuareg separatists. However, the rebellion was strengthened by the return of Tuareg rebels from Libya, following the collapse of Muammar Gaddafi's regime in the nation.

In reaction to the growing rebellion, the military of Mali overthrew President Amadou Toumani Touré in March of 2012 in what would become known as the Mali coup d'état. The soldiers that overthrew the President were dissatisfied with the leader's support of the MNLA rebels.

In April of 2012, the MNLA officially declared the independence of Azawad, following the successful capture of several regions of northern Mali. However, the rebellion was soon overtaken by several militant Islamist groups. These included the Ansar Dine movement, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA). These militant groups had initially assisted the MNLA in their attempts to usurp the Malian government. However, they quickly got rid of the MNLA and began to exercise control over the major cities of the region: Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu.

These various extremist groups were able to take advantage of the existing instability within the nation. Their expansion into several other countries, including Burkina Faso and Niger, laid the foundations for the crisis that continues to impact the Sahel region today. Several experts have referred to the Mali crisis as a "perfect storm" resulting in the region's deeply entrenched instability.

The Mali crisis of 2012, therefore, marked the beginning of a new era of insecurity for the Sahel region. The extremist groups that established themselves in the nation were able to begin the cycle of violence that continues to beset the area today.

Evolution of Terrorist Groups

Al-Qaeda and its Affiliates

Al-Qaeda General Command (AQGC): Al-Qaeda is an international militant Islamist network and terrorist organization founded in the late 1980s by Osama bin Laden, during the Soviet-Afghan War. The overarching objective of Al-Qaeda is the waging of a global 'jihad'; seeking to dismantle secular governments in the Muslim world and establish a pan-Islamic caliphate. Al-Qaeda General Command, known as "AQ Core" or central leadership, is the supranational governing body that coordinates the global network of affiliates and outlines its tactical goals. Currently, the de facto leader of AQGC is Saif al-Adel. The General Command issues overarching fatwas (religious decrees), sets ideological parameters, and coordinates propaganda across the Islamic world. Groups in the Sahel such as AQIM must swear a bayat (oath of allegiance) to AQGC, although these organisations still retain a high degree of territorial autonomy.

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM): AQIM is a North Africa-based Sunni terrorist group that seeks to eliminate governments and Western influence in the region and to establish sharia (Islamic law). The group's long-standing leader Abdelmalek Droukdel, was killed by French forces in 2020, prompting the group to restructure its operations and leadership. According to various intelligence services, the current Amir of AQIM is Abu Ubaydah Yusuf al-Annabi. AQIM employs small arms, machineguns, rockets, landmines, mortars, and IEDs, conducting guerrilla-style ambushes against military and civilian targets that include tourist areas and UN peacekeeping bases. Members have been responsible for kidnap-for-ransom operations against foreign and local targets and in some cases have executed their hostages. The group also obtains revenue by extorting drug-trafficking groups and engaging in illicit arms markets.

Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM): Jama'at Nusrat ul-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) is an extremely prominent Salafi-jihadist militant alliance that was created on 2 March 2017; as announced by its leader Iyad Ag Ghali in a speech broadcasted by the media agency Al Zalaqa. Four Mali-based extremist groups- Ansar al-Din, al-Murabitun, the Macina Liberation Front (MLF), and the Sahara Emirate subgroup of Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)- announced that they had merged, formalizing cooperation among them. Ag Ghali pledged fealty to the amir of AQIM, to the amir of Al-Qaeda and the amir of the Taliban. With an estimated force of around 6,000 fighters, JNIM has expanded its presence across Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and has even extended operations into Benin, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire. The group enforces its authority by imposing Sharia law and collecting taxes in territories under its control, establishing parallel governance structures that challenge state authority. Moreover, it funds itself through well-established pathways including ransoming captives (KFR), smuggling armaments and extorting human and drug traffickers. According to some analysts, JNIM's recent coordination with the Azawad Liberation Front (FLA) to orchestrate the attack on Bamako in 2026 indicates that the group is preparing to distance themselves from traditional, stringent Sharia law and the Al-Qaeda factions that practise it.

Ansarul Islam: Ansarul Islam is a major Burkinabé jihadist organization that was established in 2016 by Ibrahim Malam Dicko and is active in Burkina Faso and Mali. Its members are predominantly Fulani fighters. There are thought to be between 300 and 350 people in the group. In order to coordinate their activities in the area, Ansarul Islam and Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) remain close

allies. It is well-known for carrying out lethal ambushes against civilians and security personnel as well as for establishing local Islamist governance in areas it controls, frequently enforcing stringent regulations based on its interpretation of Sharia law. The northern and central Sahel have seen increased instability and insecurity as a result of the group's actions.

(Note: Apart from the groups listed above, Al-Qaeda has historically been affiliated with several other extremist groups in the region including Al-Mourabitoun, Katibat Macina and Ansar al-Din)

Boko Haram

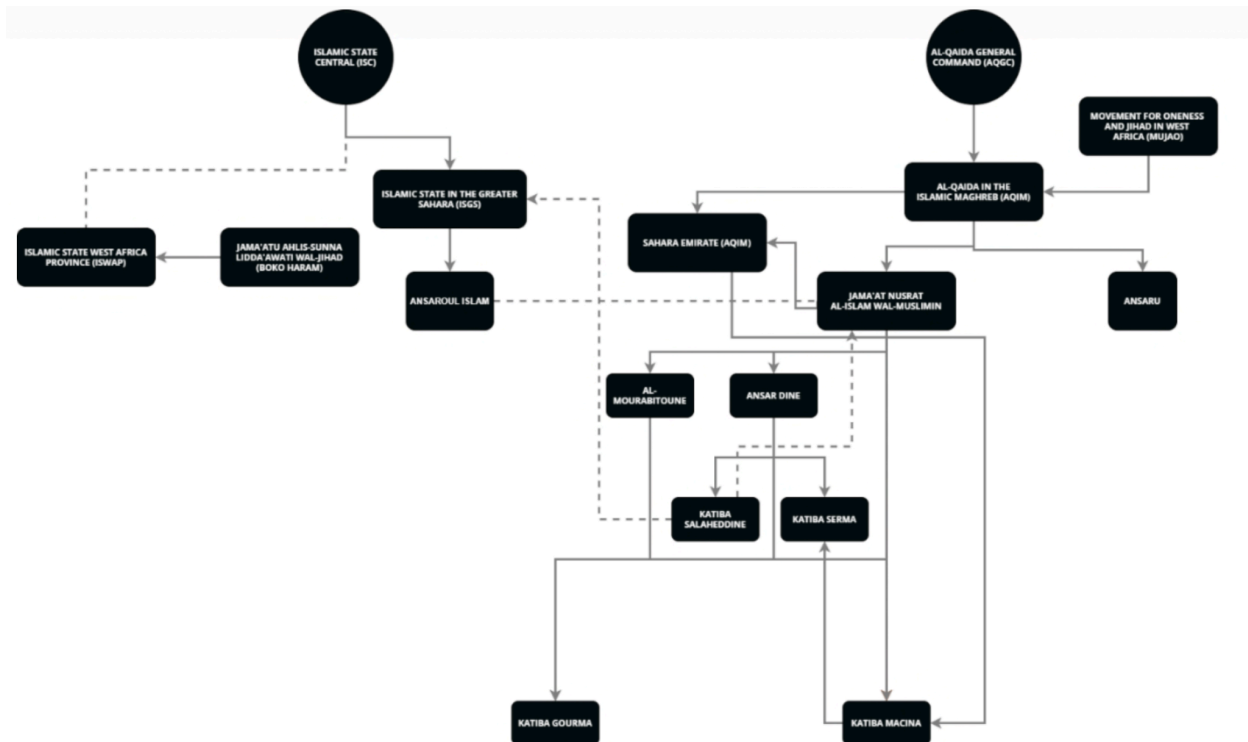
Boko Haram (Jama'atu Ahlis-Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad, JAS): Boko Haram is an extremist organization that was founded in Madiguri, Nigeria in 2002 by Mohammed Yusuf, with the ultimate goal of supporting an Islamic education and creating an Islamic state in Nigeria. Following Yusuf's death in 2009, the group developed into a violent insurgency under Abubakar Shekau and expanded its activities throughout the Lake Chad Basin- terrorising Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon. The group works to overthrow secular governments and install a regime based upon Sharia law. The organization is infamous for its mass attacks, kidnappings, suicide bombings and assaults upon settlements, security forces, schools and places of worship. In 2015, Shekau made a pledge of allegiance to the Islamic State- but internal disputes gave rise to a major split within the group in 2016. The faction led by Abu Musab al-Barnawi formed the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), while the remaining loyalists continued as JAS or Boko Haram. Though the group has lost territory and experienced various leadership losses (including Shekau in 2021), Boko Haram continues to remain active throughout the Lake Chad region- executing raids, enacting kidnappings and IED attacks as well as assaulting military installations. Such an insurgency continues to play a major role in regional instability- tens of thousands of deaths and millions of displaced civilians throughout the basin.

The Islamic State

Islamic State - Sahel Province (ISSP): The Islamic State – Sahel Province is an Islamist extremist organization that primarily operates in the Liptako-Gourma border region between Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. ISSP was originally a branch of Al-Mourabitoun that severed ties with the Al-Qaeda faction to pledge allegiance to ISIS in 2015. The ISSP was formerly known as the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) until 2022. SSP frequently carries out attacks including raids, ambushes, and bombings, targeting both military forces and civilian populations to assert its influence in the region. ISSP routinely utilise mortar attacks, roadside bombs, vehicle-borne explosives, suicide bombers, IEDs and perform KFR operations. The ISSP is known to enforce strict interpretation of Sharia Law, block humanitarian aid from relief organizations and systematically targets civilians based on ethnicity.

Islamic State – West Africa Province (ISWAP): The Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) is an Islamist extremist organization active predominantly within northeastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin. The group dates to 2016 following a split within Boko Haram (as mentioned earlier)- after the Islamic State recognized Abu Musab al-Barnawi as leader of its West African affiliate. Unlike Boko Haram's former leader Abubakar Shekau, ISWAP tended to direct its attacks against military and governmental targets rather than violence against Muslim civilians- though the group has led numerous attacks resulting in civilian casualties. ISWAP utilizes ambushes, raids, IEDs, kidnappings and assaults upon military installations to extend its area of influence. Each region that comes under their control

features taxation and governance systems- making the group one of the most capable Islamic State affiliates active within Africa. Such operations and recruitment efforts cross into both Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon making ISWAP a significant threat to regional security and stability throughout the Lake Chad Basin.



Violent Networks

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Independence of Niger - Independence Era Begins (August 3, 1960): Much of the Sahel became independent of France in 1960, including Mali, Niger, Chad, Mauritania and Upper Volta (modern Burkina Faso). While the states achieved political independence, they did so with weak institutions, artificial borders imposed by colonial rule, little infrastructure and vast, unwieldy territories to manage. The national boundaries did not reflect existing ethnic boundaries, with many groups such as the Tuareg and Fulani spread across numerous states. This was in addition to poor institutions. As a result, later years would see widespread instability, rebellions and difficulties managing the new states.

Military coup in Mali (November 19, 1968): Lieutenant Moussa Traoré seized power and removed Malian president Modibo Kéita, launching the region's first military coup. This set a precedent for the future and demonstrated the fragile nature of democracy in newly independent Sahelian states, with other coup d'états following in the coming decades.

Military coup in Niger (April 15, 1974): Hamani Diori was ousted by the army amid widespread concern over drought, poor economic conditions and government corruption. The coup solidified military involvement in governance and illustrated the vulnerability of Sahelian states to both environmental crises and political instability.

Thomas Sankara comes to power in Burkina Faso (August 4, 1983): Captain Thomas Sankara took power and implemented an extensive reform programme covering environmental issues, women's rights, economic self-sufficiency and anti-corruption efforts. Sankara rose to become an iconic figure for progressive African leadership and reduced reliance on former colonial powers while addressing poverty and inequality. Thomas Sankara is still regarded today as one of Africa's most important post-colonial revolutionaries.

Thomas Sankara Assassinated (October 15, 1987): Sankara was murdered during a coup orchestrated by Blaise Compaoré. The assassination of Sankara and his reign ushered in an era of instability and highlighted the difficulties experienced by reformist leaders in managing fragile states and political institutions in the Sahel region.

First Major Tuareg Uprising (June 1990): The Tuareg in northern Mali and Niger revolted against their national governments. The tribes cited political and economic marginalisation in the north of their countries. The uprising demonstrated deep rifts between central governments and ethnic minorities. This became a recurring issue for Sahelian states for the next three decades.

Al-Qaeda Spread into the Sahara (2002–2007): Extremist organisations linked to Al-Qaeda began spreading into the Sahara and Sahel region, initially called Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). They exploited weak security mechanisms in remote areas to establish a presence, gradually merging local conflicts with the broader global jihadist agenda and smuggling routes.

Emergence of Cross-border Jihadist Networks (2010): By 2010, extremist groups were not only developing more sophisticated attacks but were working on a trans-border basis with militants moving easily between Mali, Niger, Chad and Algeria. This demonstrated the inadequacy of national counterterrorism measures and the need for cooperation between states.

Fall of Gaddafi (October 20, 2011): The collapse of the regime of Muammar Gaddafi during the Libyan civil war triggered what many consider to be the key cause of the modern crisis in the Sahel. Thousands of experienced jihadist fighters returned to their home countries, bringing vast caches of arms and military training, significantly bolstering rebel groups.

Northern Mali Crisis (January–April 2012): Rebels and extremists joined forces to fight the Malian state and establish territorial control in northern Mali, capturing Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal. For the first time, extremists were exercising control over large areas of a state and posed a direct threat to central governments and international interests in the region.

Operation Serval (January 11, 2013): France intervened militarily in Mali under Operation Serval at the request of the Malian government and pushed extremists out of the major urban areas, preventing the complete collapse of the Malian state. The military intervention succeeded in pushing back extremists but

did not eliminate them and allowed their networks to continue operating in the vast rural hinterland of Mali.

Formation of Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (March 2, 2017): Several Al-Qaeda affiliated groups in the Sahel formed a new alliance called Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM), one of the region's most formidable extremist organisations. The group remains a major security threat today and combines local and national grievances with transnational extremist ideology.

Inates Attack in Niger (December 10, 2019): Militants launched a major assault on a military base in Inates in Niger, killing over 70 soldiers, one of the worst ever defeats for the Malian army. This demonstrates the growing power and ruthlessness of terrorist groups in the region.

Military coup in Mali (August 18, 2020): President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita was ousted from power by the army following widespread anger over corruption, insecurity and poor economic performance and another military coup signals instability across the region.

Coups in Burkina Faso (January and September 2022): Two coups in Burkina Faso in 2022 signal continuing regional instability, with military leaders arguing it is to combat increasing terrorist violence in the nation, although the government's own inability to achieve success against the growing crisis leads many to criticise these actions.

Coup in Niger (July 26, 2023): President Mohamed Bazoum was overthrown by the army, ending a crucial security alliance between Niger and Western governments. The move intensified regional geopolitical competition and signals increasing instability.

Alliance of Sahel States formed (September 16, 2023): A regional military and political pact between Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger is formed, named the Alliance of Sahel States (AES). The alliance signifies a turning away from Western-backed security models, towards a focus on sovereignty and military self-reliance.

Withdrawal of Western forces, expansion of Russian influence (2024–2025): As Western powers such as France began reducing their security presence in the region, relations between AES states and Western governments began to sour as Russia increasingly took an increased role in security initiatives across the region.

Intensification of JNIM operations (June 2025 – June 2026): JNIM leads attacks on military posts across Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger with unprecedented strength and sophistication, demonstrating that years of counter-terrorism and military action have done little to diminish their capability.

The Mali Offensive (April 25, 2026): JNIM orchestrates major, coordinated attacks against military bases across Mali, including in the capital Bamako. The successful offensive leads to the assassination of the Minister of Defence, Sadio Camara, and around 130 Malian soldiers are captured, and JNIM blockades the capital. The commander of the junta takes over the defence portfolio himself, and the crisis is regarded as the worst seen since 2012, prompting widespread international concern.

April 27, 2026: The Guterres Doctrine (Note: the events illustrated below have been introduced by the Executive board)

In the wake of increased instability in the Sahel geographical region and the rise of terrorism all around the world. Antonio Guterres gave a historic speech on the floor of the United Nations. He rallied the nations of the world to form an international coalition to unanimously pass an unprecedented resolution in the UNGA, spearheaded by the Honourable Secretary General. The resolution permitted unrecognised actors to send representation to UN forums only under extraordinary circumstances. This resolution has come to be referred to as the Guterres Doctrine. It allows unrecognised groups to have voting rights in the committees.

30th April, 2026: FREEZE DATE

PAST INTERNATIONAL ACTION

United Nations Counter-Terrorism Framework

United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2006): The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is composed of four pillars:

1. Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.
2. Measures to prevent and combat terrorism.
3. Measures to build States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in that regard.
4. Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism.

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is a holistic, worldwide pact designed to augment national, regional and international efforts to effectively combat terrorism.

United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT): The UNOCT is an office of the United Nations that coordinates and global counterterrorism efforts. Established in 2017, the UNOCT takes decisive action against terrorist threats all over the world. In the Sahel, the UNOCT operates under the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), it works towards quelling localized threats and comprehensive long-term solutions. The UNOCT has introduced capacity-building measures for local governments to detect the transfer of arms (such as IEDs, Unmanned Aircraft Systems & Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)); undertakes measures to ensure border security in vulnerable areas and has introduced community-oriented measures to prevent the spread of radicalization amongst youth. Additionally, the UNOCT collaborates with local police, military and INTERPOL to investigate and prosecute terrorism.

United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)

Established by UN Security Council Resolution 2100 in April 2013, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) was formed in response to the Mali crisis of 2012- a period marked by both Tuareg separatist rebellions and various jihadist groups capturing territory throughout northern Mali. MINUSMA was entrusted to stabilize those areas and support the political

transition within the country. Moreover, the protection of civilians and human rights and contributing to the implementation of peace agreements was another key tenet of MINUSMA. Over time, responsibilities expanded to include support for national elections, ceasing fighting between parties, disarming and demobilizing those forces and programs delivering logistical aid to regional anti-terrorism initiatives.

Throughout its decade-long operational period, MINUSMA featured a significant role in both supporting the 2015 Algiers Peace Agreement and maintaining stability within the major urban centres of Mali. The mission did provide security and logistical support for national elections, dialog between government and violent groups and humanitarian efforts.

MINUSMA, however, encountered significant challenges. Usually, peacekeeping missions typically correlate to a reduction of terrorist activity or “no peace to keep,” groups such as JNIM and ISGS continued to attack both civilians and peacekeepers- making MINUSMA one of the deadliest UN missions in history. The mission struggled with insufficient resources, issues introduced by Malian authorities and tensions developing with the military-led junta government that emerged post the 2020 and 2021 coups.

In June of 2023, Mali requested MINUSMA’s withdrawal - claiming the mission had failed to fix the national security crisis. The Security Council acted to terminate its mandate, leading to MINUSMA’s withdrawal by December of 2023. The mission had notable successes, but the experience revealed the limitations of traditional peacekeeping efforts in the face of persistent terrorist threats.

G5 Sahel Joint Force

The G5 Sahel Joint Force (FC-G5S) was founded in 2017 by the members of the G5 Sahel - Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger - with the intention of increasing regional cooperation against terrorism, organized crime and arms trafficking. The extremist groups that populated the region and who showed a tendency towards weak state control in remote areas prompted the creation of such a joint effort and force to coordinate military operations across national boundaries and to share intelligence within the region.

Recognised by the African Union and well received by the United Nations Security Council, the force established several operational sectors- each targeted at some of the most vulnerable borders in the Sahelian region- such as the Liptako-Gourma area where the three countries converge. The FC-G5S was created with goals related to countering terrorist groups, smuggling networks, enhancing border security and restoring state authority to areas affected by insecurity and instability.

The G5 Sahel Joint Force represented one of the most significant security initiatives to emerge from Africa within the Sahelian region. The FC-G5S undertook numerous operations against groups related to both Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State with the aim of limiting the movement of weapons, fighters and other goods throughout the region.

Despite these ambitions, the organisation encountered many challenges. A lack of funding, logistics, equipment and stability among member states all limited the effectiveness of the FC-G5S. Military coups throughout Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger created further complications to regional cooperation, while Mali’s withdrawal from the organization in 2022 (subsequently followed by Burkina Faso and Niger)

significantly weakened the organisation altogether. Nonetheless, the joint force remains an important example of regional anti-terrorism cooperation- and one that reveals both its potential and challenges.

African Union and ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Efforts

Regional organisations have also played a significant role in combating terrorism and insecurity within the Sahel. The two most prominent actors here are both the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Each of these organisations has contributed to regional security and stability - crucial elements for addressing terrorist violence within member states.

The African Union has taken steps to combat terrorism across the continent. The AU has made use of both the 1999 OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and its various protocols - all of which focus upon preventing terrorist activities and their safe haven within the continent. The AU also supports initiatives that enhance capacity within various member states, as well as shares intelligence - efforts supported by the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT). The ACSRT assists member states with both counterterrorism strategies and monitoring of extremist threats. The AU also operates in close coordination with Sahelian and international organisations working towards peace and stability.

ECOWAS has similarly made an important contribution to security and stability throughout West Africa. The organisation works together to combat terrorist activity and organised crime. At the same time, ECOWAS advocates for sound democratic governance and constitutional order within the region. Following military coups in Mali (2020 and 2021), Burkina Faso (2022) and Niger (2023), the organisation implemented various sanctions and called for the return to civilian rule - reflecting its longstanding position that instability and unconstitutional governmental changes pose both regional and security-related risks.

Yet relations between ECOWAS and the military governments of these three countries significantly deteriorated. Each of these nations felt that the regional body undermined their sovereignty and security priorities. In January 2024, the three countries jointly announced their withdrawal from the organisation - following which they further improved military cooperation through the newly formed Alliance of Sahel States (AES).

The actions of both the AU and ECOWAS show the importance of regional cooperation in countering terrorism. But they also reveal the challenges of maintaining such a unified framework - particularly amid persistent security threats and military government transitions in such a region.

KEY SECURITY CHALLENGES IN COUNTERING TERRORISM

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) is a strategy used after conflicts to assist former combatants of those conflicts to reintegrate into civilian society. DDR programmes aim to both disarm former combatants of the weapons that they previously used in conflict, as well as to assist those individuals in reintegrating into civilian society. There are three main stages to the DDR process: disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. During the disarmament and demobilization stages,

former combatants relinquish their weapons and are disbanded from the combatant groups from which they originated. Finally, during the reintegration stage, former combatants are assisted in transitioning back into civilian society.

Several peace agreements in Mali, such as the 1992 National Pact and the 2015 Algiers Peace Agreement, have incorporated provisions regarding the disarmament and integration of former rebels into civilian life and the government. Furthermore, DDR initiatives have been supported by organizations like the United Nations, the African Union, and the governments of the Sahel region.

However, there are some challenges to the implementation of DDR in the Sahel. Some of the active armed groups within the region make it difficult to distinguish which groups are combatants of political insurgencies, militias, criminal organizations, or terrorist organizations. Furthermore, some former combatants have been reintegrated into the country's security forces, only to begin their rebellion once more. Finally, the lack of economic opportunities for former combatants makes it difficult for them to reintegrate into civilian society.

Despite the challenges in implementing DDR in the Sahel, DDR remains a crucial component in addressing the region's instability. Military operations alone will not provide a permanent solution to the conflicts in the region unless alternatives to participating in violence can be provided to the former combatants. Consequently, DDR continues to be used in the Sahel by various organizations and governments to disarm the region's armed groups and to promote peace within the Sahel.

Arms Proliferation

The proliferation of arms within the region remains one of the most significant security challenges - one which has fed the growth of terrorist and insurgent groups. Following the collapse of Libya in 2011, massive quantities of weapons were looted from government stockpiles and moved across regional borders. These weapons entered existing smuggling networks but proliferated throughout the region - Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad and neighbouring states.

The widespread availability of small arms and light weapons (SALW) has increased the lethality of these groups, recruited to the causes and conflicts throughout the region. Terrorist organisations such as JNIM, ISGS, Boko Haram and ISWAP have all relied upon these illicit arms supplies. Such efforts to curtail proliferation face major challenges posed by weak borders and controls, vast spaces without effective governance- the limitations of the state- and well-established trafficking networks throughout the Sahel.

Border Security

The security of the border areas in the Sahel poses significant problems in light of the large territory that is difficult to surveil, the harsh environment of the region, and its porous borders. Many areas along the borders of Sahelian states are hard to reach and poorly populated, and as a result, they provide perfect opportunities for the activities of terrorist organizations and other militant movements which operate in this region. The border areas where there is a convergence of Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso territories in Liptako-Gourma region, as well as the border zones in Lake Chad Basin, are particularly exposed to these threats.

Due to ineffective border security, extremist organizations, such as the JNIM or ISGS, can conduct cross-border operations and avoid military attacks. Therefore, the enhancement of border security through collaboration, coordination, and intelligence exchange should be viewed as an important part of counterterrorism and overall security strategies.

DELEGATION STANCES

Mali

Mali's junta came to power through the 2020 coup and has since expelled MINUSMA, ejected French forces, and invited Russian security personnel onto its soil. The April 2026 JNIM offensive exposed severe state fragility, the Defence Minister was assassinated, Kidal was lost, and Bamako itself was blockaded. Mali simultaneously demands international solidarity while having systematically dismantled the multilateral frameworks designed to provide it. Its closest ideological companions in this room are Burkina Faso and Niger.

Burkina Faso

Two coups in 2022 brought Captain Traoré to power, inheriting a state where armed groups have embedded themselves into rural governance, taxing communities and settling disputes in territories the government cannot reach. Burkina Faso has expelled French forces, shut down the UN human rights office, and suffered some of the deadliest terror attacks recorded globally. The gap between the junta's sovereignty rhetoric and its actual territorial control is stark. It shares its political trajectory closely with Mali and Niger.

Niger

The 2023 coup ended Niger's role as the West's last meaningful security partner in the central Sahel, triggering the closure of US bases and the departure of French forces. Its legitimacy crisis runs deep, the democratically elected President Bazoum remains detained, yet the junta governs a state facing acute pressure from both JNIM and ISSP along its borders. Niger's relationship with France is among the most fractured in the room, and its pivot toward Russia mirrors that of its AES partners.

Chad

Chad occupies a uniquely ambiguous position. It never joined the AES and still hosts French and American military assets, yet Mahamat Déby's own government is a military transition following his father's assassination in 2021. Chad was a founding member of the G5 Sahel and remains central to the Multinational Joint Task Force in the Lake Chad Basin, maintaining security relationships across ideological lines that no other Sahelian state has managed to sustain. Both Western powers and AES states regard Chad as a country worth cultivating.

Mauritania

Alone among Sahel states, Mauritania has materially improved its security situation, reducing extremist influence through community dialogue, prisoner releases, and economic integration of former fighters, without expelling foreign partners or joining regional military blocs. It remained in the G5 Sahel until its dissolution and has consistently advocated for political solutions over purely military ones. Mauritania's experience sits in quiet tension with the approach taken by its AES neighbours, and in quiet alignment with the kind of dialogue-first thinking Senegal also represents.

Nigeria

Africa's most populous state has waged a sustained counterterrorism campaign against Boko Haram and ISWAP across its northern territories for over fifteen years, at enormous human and financial cost. Nigeria was instrumental in establishing the Multinational Joint Task Force alongside Chad and Cameroon, and championed the G5 Sahel framework before its collapse. The Lake Chad Basin remains an active warzone on its doorstep, and JNIM's documented southward expansion toward the Sokoto region marks a direct and escalating threat to Nigerian territorial integrity.

Cameroon

Cameroon's Far North region has endured repeated Boko Haram and ISWAP incursions for over a decade, with thousands of civilians killed and hundreds of thousands displaced. It is a founding member of the Multinational Joint Task Force alongside Nigeria and Chad, a relationship that anchors its approach to regional security. Internally, Cameroon manages its own separatist conflict in its Anglophone regions, a context that shapes its deeply state-centric instincts on questions of armed group legitimacy.

Sudan

Sudan's own civil war between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, ongoing since April 2023, has produced one of the world's largest displacement crises and effectively hollowed out central state authority. Sudan shares a border dynamic with Chad that directly affects regional stability, and the relationship between the two countries carries significant weight in this room. The Sudanese state's lived experience of armed groups capturing territory and establishing parallel governance gives it an acutely personal lens on this committee's agenda.

France

France spent over a decade as the Sahel's primary external security guarantor, launching Operation Serval in 2013, then sustaining Operation Barkhane across five countries until its expulsion. It was the principal architect of the G5 Sahel Joint Force and the driving force behind MINUSMA's mandate. Having been expelled from Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger in successive years, France now watches Russian personnel operate in the same theatres where its soldiers died. Its relationships with the AES states are broken; its alignment with the US and UK remains the foundation of its position here.

United States of America

The US built a substantial counterterrorism infrastructure across the Sahel, drone bases in Niger, special forces training programmes, and intelligence-sharing frameworks, much of which has been dismantled following the AES coups. Washington has since redirected security partnerships toward coastal West African states to contain southward jihadist expansion. The US maintains the most robust sanctions architecture against Sahelian terror groups and coordinates closely with France and the UK, though it has historically been less exposed than France to the personal animosity of AES governments.

Russia

Russia's Africa Corps currently operates on the ground in Mali alongside the junta, fighting JNIM forces that now sit across the committee table. Bilateral defence agreements with Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger were signed as Western forces departed, a sequence Russia regards as vindication of its partnership model. This direct military presence gives Russia stakes in the Sahel's political outcomes that are

immediate and material, not merely diplomatic. Its alignment with China on sovereignty-first language reflects a broader coordination that extends well beyond this committee.

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER (QARMA)

1. How will accountability for the proliferation of terrorism and cross border insurgency be formally assigned in the Sahel? For example, Will state level governance failures, historical colonial border demarcations, or foreign interventionism be attributed to the blame?
2. What political, economic, and security conditions will be imposed upon regional states that fail to contain or explicitly tolerate terrorist hotbeds within their borders?
3. Should breakaway regions or historically marginalized factions (such as the Tuareg separatist movements in Azawad) be formally included in future regional security and governance architectures, and if so, under what legal conditions?
4. Should financial or structural penalties be imposed on states that serve as safe havens or transit nodes for illicit drug trafficking and arms smuggling, and if so, in what form?
5. How will counter terrorism financing restrictions and anti trafficking frameworks be enforced and monitored over time to prevent localized economic collapse and regional political instability?
6. Should territorial and border adjustments be made to better reflect ethnic, cultural, and historical realities in volatile cross border subregions like the Liptako-Gourma or Lake Chad Basin?
7. What military restrictions or oversight mechanisms should be imposed on the deployment of non-state actors, local militias, and private military companies (PMCs) operating in the region?
8. Is long term security in the Sahel guaranteed under the current regional security structures, or must a completely new multilateral framework be established?
9. What role should external, non Sahelian allies and global superpowers play in shaping the regional security architecture, particularly in the wake of the Western military withdrawal?
10. Does this resolution cover what fixed diplomatic, economic, or military consequences will follow if a member state violates the established regional counter terrorism frameworks or border protocols?
11. Has this resolution prioritized aggressive military suppression and punitive political isolation, or long term reconciliation, socio economic integration, and structural stability?
12. What is the fundamental aim of this resolution and how does it intend to disrupt the cycle of regional coups, civil rebellions, and violent extremism to prevent conflicts in the future of similar scale in Africa and globally?

GUIDE TO FURTHER RESEARCH

To move forward with debate in committee, delegates must conduct independent research and move beyond this study guide. The study guide is simply a base for you, and the following suggestions will serve as a starting point for your research.

General Research Topics

- Historical development of terrorism and violent extremism in the Sahel.
- The rise and activities of JNIM, Islamic State Sahel Province (ISSP), and other extremist organizations.
- The impact of military coups and political instability in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger.
- Humanitarian consequences of terrorism, including displacement, food insecurity, and human rights concerns.
- Climate change, resource competition, and their links to insecurity in the region.
- Cross-border terrorism and challenges to regional cooperation.
- The role of international actors, including the United Nations, African Union, European Union, and foreign military missions.

Disarmament and Counter-Terrorism Specific Research Topics

In addition to the topics listed above, delegates are encouraged to research:

- Small arms and light weapons (SALW) proliferation in the Sahel.
- Arms trafficking routes and border security challenges.
- Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programmes.
- Terrorist financing and its links to organized crime.
- Regional counterterrorism initiatives, including the G5 Sahel Joint Force and MNJTF.
- The challenges of countering terrorism while respecting state sovereignty and international law.
- International frameworks governing arms control, disarmament, and counterterrorism.

Delegates should evaluate the effectiveness of existing security mechanisms and consider how regional and international cooperation can better prevent armed terrorist activity in the Sahel.

United Nations Sources

- United Nations Security Council resolutions relating to terrorism and security in the Sahel, including Resolutions 2391 (2017), 2423 (2018), 2480 (2019), 2584 (2021), and 2640 (2022). These resolutions provide insight into the Security Council's evolving approach to counterterrorism and regional stabilization efforts.
- Reports of the UN Secretary-General on the situation in the Sahel.
- Security Council meeting records concerning Peace and Security in Africa.
- Reports published by the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).

Useful Databases and Publications

- UN Digital Library
- UN Security Council Report
- International Crisis Group
- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
- International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)
- Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) reports on preventing violent extremism
- Institute for Security Studies (ISS Africa)

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