

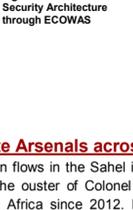
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Jihadists, Insurgents Plundering State Arsenals across Sahel

A new report, the most extensive on illicit weapon flows in the Sahel in several years, confirms arms looted from huge Libyan stockpiles after the ouster of Colonel Moammar Gadhafi have fueled Islamist insurgencies in North and West Africa since 2012. But jihadists and Tuareg fighters have diversified their supply chains and have added new sources as the outflow from Libya has decreased, due partly to interdiction efforts and a rising internal demand in Libya for weapons as the conflict there looks set to escalate. Jihadists and other Islamist insurgents have plundered arms from inadequately secured national stockpiles in Mali, the Central African Republic, and Ivory Coast, according to a report by Conflict Armaments Research, a London-based independent organization that tracks illicit weapon movements. And jihadists in the Sahel are also using assault rifles that have their origin in Syria and Iraq, thanks to a supply chain from the Islamic State terror group, which likely seized the weapons from Syrian and Iraqi government forces as its militants advanced in 2014 and the early part of last year. CAR's report is alarming European counter-terrorism officials as much as their counterparts in the Sahel and West Africa. **VOA**

Mali ethnic militia group says it will lay down its arms

A militia in central Mali that represents ethnic Peuhls said on Saturday it would lay down its arms in a boost for government attempts to bring peace to the country. The National Alliance to Safeguard the Peuhl Identity and Restore Justice was one of three groups that claimed an attack on an army base in central Mali in July in which 17 soldiers were killed. The other two groups were Islamist. The alliance was founded in June 2015. It aims to defend ethnic Peuhl civilians from atrocities and does not agree with Islamist militant groups that operate in northern Mali or with the separatist agenda of the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA), which is also in the north. Many ethnic Peuhl, or Fulani, people live in the region of Mopti and rear cattle, practicing a pastoralist or nomadic lifestyle. "Long discussions with our brothers in the CMA's armed movement have forced our hand to rejoin the (peace) process. It was never a question for our movement to oppose the territorial integrity of Mali nor to make war against Mali," said Oumar Aldiana, leader of the group, in an interview. "For the moment, the alliance ... has laid down its arms and will sign up to the peace process," Aldiana said. **SABC**

In Mali, waning fortunes of Fulani herders play into Islamist hands

For centuries, Fulani cattle herders and the farmers of central Mali -- both dependent on the Niger River for precious water -- have had a deal. The Fulani graze their cows on the greenery that springs up after the river recedes from its flood plains. As it gets munched the farmers plant their crops, now fertilised by cow dung, so long as they do not block access to the nomads' routes. But as climate change shrinks the river, population growth swells its users and more land gets cultivated, the Fulani are being pushed deeper into poverty. Conflicts with their sedentary neighbours are growing. Thrown in radical Islam, abusive security forces, a feeling of racial exclusion and a flood of guns from lawless deserts to the north, and conditions are ripe for a rebellion that could destabilise not just Mali but much of West Africa. "The Fulani feel marginalised everywhere. In Mali, in Guinea, in Central Africa," said Abdou Aziz Diallo, who runs Tabital Pulaaku, a Fulani association spanning 15 countries. "In Mali, they're being infiltrated by the jihadists from the north and there is a very real danger from new Fulani militias that have emerged and are stoking inter-ethnic strife. "The road west out of Mopti, a city of muddy streets and a grand clay mosque on the Niger's banks in central Mali, crosses flooded rice fields and land where cows graze on wild grass. **Reuters**

Malian soldiers killed in election-related violence

Mali voted Sunday in its first elections since 2013, with turnout low as security jitters remained elevated despite an international military intervention. "After the voting on Sunday, an army convoy taking the ballot boxes for counting was attacked in the north by jihadists. Five Malian soldiers were killed," the security source said. Another Malian security source said the assailants were unable to make off with the ballots, but confirmed the jihadists "wanted to sabotage the elections". Separately, a local official recounted an attack on the town of Dilli, southwestern Mali, where presumed jihadists stole vehicles and killed a civilian. "They arrived early Monday in Dilli. They attacked a council building. The jihadists then took off with two ambulances and a vehicle, after which they killed a civilian and made off for the Mauritanian border," a local official said, requesting anonymity. It is alleged the jihadists were looking for ballot boxes in the building while counting takes place. Voters are electing 12,000 councillors across Mali as the government wrestles with implementing a 2015 peace deal and warding off the stubborn jihadist threat in the north. **France24**

Sustainable peace: Driving the African Peace and Security Architecture through ECOWAS

The African Union (AU) has prioritised its relationships with regional economic communities (RECs) in order to implement the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Yet a lack of clarity remains over roles and responsibilities. One such REC -- the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) -- has been at the forefront of West African peace and security efforts. Although these efforts have proved challenging, the organisation has gone to great lengths to become more effective in dealing with the wide array of peace and security challenges in the region. This paper looks at the best practices and lessons learned from ECOWAS' peace and security efforts and how it can enhance its implementation of the APSA. It draws on academic and policy literature, as well as ECOWAS reports and frameworks. It also bases its recommendations on the findings of field research conducted in August 2016 with 18 stakeholders. It focuses in particular on ECOWAS' efforts to sustain peace (i.e. going beyond peacekeeping), and focusing on conflict prevention and peacebuilding). **Institute for Security Studies**

Cameroon: Clashes between protesters & security forces as Anglophone tensions rise

The Cameroonian city of Bamenda was calm on Tuesday morning, a day after skirmishes broke out between protesters and security forces. Demonstrators took to the streets on Monday following the start of a teachers' strike against a perceived lack of educational provision for Anglophone children. Security forces were deployed to the north-western city and fired tear gas to disperse demonstrators who joined teachers in voicing their grievances with the Francophone administration. "Yesterday was the start of a sit-in strike declared for teachers and students of the English sub-system of education in Cameroon in the two Anglophone regions, the south-west and the north-west," said Tassang Wilfred, Secretary General, Cameroon Teachers' Trade Union (CATTU). Teachers in Bamenda are angry that the government has been deploying Francophone teachers to teach Anglophone children, according to Wilfred. "Francophone teachers don't master our system of education, there's a pedagogy problem." There are differences in the curriculum under the Anglophone and Francophone system, the CATTU head told RFI. In sciences, for example, Anglophone pupils start taking lessons in biology, chemistry and physics four years earlier than their Francophone counterparts. **RFI**

Spotlight: Shaping African and global peace operations training

The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) provides practical expertise on peace operations that makes a positive impact on African and international conflict management and peacebuilding efforts. Through two recent appointments to key decision-making bodies, ISS experts are well positioned to directly influence peace operations training on the continent and globally. ISS senior researcher Riana Paneras was selected as a voting member on the African Peace Support Training Association (APSTA) Board at an annual general meeting in Cairo in September. Paneras has 37 years of experience in policing and was the former Police Commissioner for the African Union (AU) -- United Nations Mission in Darfur. APSTA is the African chapter of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC). It coordinates training provided by organisations in Africa to improve their capacity and enhance peacekeeping initiatives by the AU and regional economic communities. "Through APSTA we are able to directly respond to the training needs of the AU, which is vital to continental peace operations," says Paneras. "The ISS has years of training experience, which has helped APSTA identify priorities and standards, coordinate training efforts and share best practices." **Institute for Security Studies**

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