

Chapter 89

Islamic Extremists in Africa: Security Spotlight on Kenya and Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Security is a growing concern on the African continent as the Regional Economic Communities (REC) move toward economic integration. Furthermore, these regions collectively make up the African Union (AU) which has an objective to promote peace, security, and stability on the African continent. In recent years, Africa has been plagued with political uprisings, civil wars, extremists, corrupt politicians, and the battle for natural resources. In particular, Kenya and Nigeria are facing Islamic extremists that threaten the foundation of multiple nations. In both countries, they are using military force to combat these threats. This chapter provides insight into these West and East African nations and their means to provide security assurances to their citizens.

INTRODUCTION

The AU has released some press statements regarding matters dealing with national security to the exploitation of natural resources (African Union Peace and Security, n.d.). Of these issues the Somali originated group Al-Shabaab, and Nigerian originated group Boko Haram appear to be taking international headlines. The groups have continuously shaken the foundation for these countries. Also these groups have expanded their reach to other neighboring states. Boko Haram has attacked not only Nigeria but Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and the Republic of Benin (Mantzikos, 2014). Their insurgency has cost more than 4,000 lives in the years of 2010 to 2014. Al-Shabaab is yet another result of a growing insurgency which is attracting global jihadists with shared ideology than ethnic or nationalist sentiments (Vidino, Pantucci, & Kohlmann, 2010).

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The AU's African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) has implemented the African Standby Force (ASF) to be divided into tasks with various regions. APSA provided the following recommendations; 1. clarify PSC relationship with panel, 2. enforce criteria for appointing PSC members, 3. improve synergy between PSC and other APSA components, 4. provide additional analysts for the CEWS and early warning, 5. provide joint training and skills development, 6. ensure connectivity between AUC and RECs, 7. increase and strengthen collaboration with other actors, and 8. increase flexibility and reliability of external support (Fisher, et al, & 2010). Recommendations covered that cover the ASSF were the following: 1. adopt binding legal instrument with member states, 2. harmonize membership of standby arrangements, 3. improve staffing of PLANELMs at AU and RECs/RMs, 4. strengthen management of the ASF, 5. address logistics gap as priority, and 6. provide guidance and leadership for centers for excellence (Fisher, et al., & 2010).

ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international economic organization that is comprised of 34 countries. OECD publishes reports, books, and other statistics that allow for further understanding various markets. Key artifacts published are the OCED Economic Outlooks, Main Indicators, OECD Communications Outlook and the OECD Internet Economy Outlook (OECD, 2012). Significant amounts of reports are created for Kenya and Nigeria. These reports include economics, corruption indicators, and key events such as the Trans-Saharan gas pipeline which affects Nigeria significantly. This pipeline could pose a security issue as Nigeria is known for ongoing conflicts in the Niger Delta. The data contained within OECD can be mined, and literature analyzed to assist in making key strategic military decisions.

AFRICAN UNION

The African Union (AU), formally called Organization of African Unity (OAU) was founded in Cairo in the 29th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the organization that was held from the 28th to 30th of June 1993. The name of the union was changed from OAU to AU in May 2001. AU is a union of fifty-four countries in the African continent with its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. All the countries in Africa are members of the AU except Morocco due to the present status of the Western Sahara. The highest level decision-making body of the African Union is the Assembly of the African Union (AAU). The AAU is made up of all members of states and is currently headed by Robert Mugabe, the president of Zimbabwe.

The objectives of the AU include:

1. To defend the African territory and its member states.
2. Promote peace, security and unity among its member states.
3. To encourage and promote political and socio-economic cooperation among its member states.
4. To promote development in the African continent by encouraging research in all fields most especially in the areas of science and technology.

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