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HOW HAS US FOREIGN POLICY MILITARIZATION AFFECTED POLITICAL STABILITY  
IN AFRICA?

by

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## ABSTRACT

### HOW HAS US FOREIGN POLICY MILITARIZATION AFFECTED POLITICAL STABILITY IN AFRICA?

Christopher Korkor  
Old Dominion University, 2024  
Director: Dr. Richard Maass

US foreign policy toward Africa was minimal during the Cold War. US engagement in the continent was centered on spheres of influence politics, and compared to other regions in the global system, the continent was viewed as a backwater and neglected for several decades despite historical relations between the country and the continent. Scholars of political science, international studies, international relations, and history also relegated the study of US foreign policy toward Africa to a low-level status, instead prioritizing scholarship that focused on traditional security, particularly states in Western and Eastern Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). US foreign policy toward Africa changed abruptly after the 9/11 attacks, and the continent has since been incorporated into the US national security strategy. This renewed strategic interest in the continent has generated much attention in recent academic literature. This dissertation investigates how US foreign policy militarization has affected political stability in Africa. In particular, it illuminates the role of US foreign policy in contributing to political stability or instability in four African countries, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda as well as the continent more broadly. The findings of this study, with their potential to significantly contribute to academic knowledge and guide future US policy toward the chosen countries, underscore the importance and timeliness of my research.

To understand the effect of US foreign policy militarization on the sampled countries, I used a mixed-method research design including panel data analysis of fifty-four African countries

between 1995 and 2020 and in-depth case studies of the four countries listed above. The panel data analysis examines the relationship between explanatory variables including US military assistance, US troops deployed in African countries, US training of security forces, and intervention, and response variables, including terrorist attacks, civil wars, coups, and anti-government demonstrations, controlling for other variables such as total oil imports, GDP annual growth rate, GDP per capita, total population, maternal mortality, and regime type. The statistical analysis provided a range of statistically significant and insignificant results. Based on these empirical findings, the case studies focused on military aid and US training of security forces in the selected countries to determine their effect on the response variables. In contrast to previous literature that either blamed US foreign policy for causing instability in Africa or praising it for generating stability. The four case studies found that US foreign policy militarization in the selected countries can promote both stability and instability in several ways.

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Dedicated to my children.

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I thank my family and friends for their unwavering support and understanding during this challenging journey. Their love and encouragement have been my source of motivation. I am deeply grateful for their role in completing my dissertation, especially my wife and children. This dissertation is dedicated to my children, Pamela Selase Korkor, Daisy Delali Korkor, and Silas Delase Kwame Korkor.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Due to transatlantic history, the US has often played a pivotal role in African decolonization and post-independence politics. However, the continent has been affected by challenges such as poverty, corruption, and violence, which are a product of colonialism, Cold War alliances, and Western interventions in the continent's political and economic affairs, contributing to political instability.<sup>1</sup> Since the end of the Cold War, US foreign policy militarization in African countries such as Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda has been affected by political instability. These countries became a strategic interest of the US after the 9//11 attacks due to energy resources, regional security to protect the US economic interests, and mounting concern about the threats posed by violent extremist groups that have established sanctuaries in the swaths of ungoverned spaces in the chosen nations.<sup>2</sup> The militarization of US foreign policy, meanwhile, started during the Cold War and intensified after the 9/11 attacks. Several scholars have criticized US foreign policy militarization toward African countries in particular, since conflicts and civil wars from non-state armed groups plague them. While, many scholars have focused on the economic strand of instability, however, this dissertation focuses primarily on the political and security dimensions of US contributions to stability or instability in African countries. It investigates the US role to determine if any causal relationship exists between US foreign policy militarization and political stability/instability. While the literature on US foreign policy militarization is primarily dominated by qualitative evidence, moreover, this dissertation employs a nested analysis methodology that combines statistical analysis with detailed case studies of Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda. In

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). *Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War*

<sup>2</sup> Lauren Ploch (2011). *African Command. US Strategic Interests and the Role of the US Military in Africa*

doing so, it explores US foreign policy militarization in African during three critical areas: the Cold War, post-Cold War, and post-9/11.

This dissertation aims to contribute uniquely to the ongoing debate about the impact of US foreign policy militarization in the selected African countries. It provides a comprehensive understanding of US foreign policy militarization and factors that explain how US foreign policy promotes instability and stability, as several scholars have advocated in the existing literature. In addition, this dissertation serves as a roadmap through which US foreign policy militarization can be viewed to be contributing to stability instead of instability. It critically examines counterterrorism operations, the role of military aid, the training of African militaries in the chosen countries, US troops, and intervention. Moreover, the fundamental goal of US foreign policy toward African countries is to promote economic development, peace, and stability. Against this background, my dissertation addresses a puzzle facing scholars for decades, arguing that US foreign policy toward the sampled African countries ultimately promotes stability but can also generate instability in several ways.

The study's research question is: How has US foreign policy militarization affected political stability in Africa? It answers that research question using securitization theory to explain the US's renewed interest in the selected countries, particularly after the 9/11 attacks. I apply securitization theory to understand why the US and the United Kingdom referred to Africa's failed states, ungoverned areas, poverty, underdevelopment, and humanitarianism as a threat and security interest during the global war on terror. The study's findings significantly contribute to academic knowledge and offer a guide for future US policy. In addition, it can assist the US policy-making community, selected countries, regional organizations, and continental institutions in Africa to

better understand the effects of US policy militarization, including whether it contributed to instability, stability, or both.

The dissertation adopts a mixed-method approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. I employ a nested analysis, focusing first on the quantitative analysis to run all the statistical tests.<sup>3</sup> The outcomes of the statistical analysis guide the case study selections. For the mixed-method research design, I use both primary and secondary data.<sup>4</sup> For the quantitative analysis, I ran the statistical analysis from various primary data collected between 1995 and 2020, which has guided the direction of countries selected for the case study. In addition, the case studies also use primary and secondary qualitative evidence but focuses heavily on secondary sources. The case study also focuses on the central research question in the study. The study uses four case studies: Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda. Thus, the mixed-method approach answers the limitations of quantitative and qualitative techniques and offers robust conclusions based on the research findings.

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

After the collapse of the Cold War, the US deserted the autocratic, repressive leaders it had promoted during the bipolar balance of power in Africa. Its foreign policy toward the continent was shifted to promoting democracy, human rights, and a free market economy, which was tied to foreign aid to compel African governments to move away from one-party rule. The post-Cold War era offered the US and other Western governments a unique opportunity to impose their political and economic values globally, with Africa as a prime target. Western democracy and democratization became the precondition for African countries that sought foreign aid and loans

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<sup>3</sup> Evan Lieberman (2005). Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research, *American Political Review*, Vol. 99, No. 3

<sup>4</sup> Nancy Leech and Anthony Onwuegbuzie (2009). Typology of Mixed Methods Research Design

from the international financial institutions (IMF and the World Bank) to redress their political-economic woes, and countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, must accept and adopt the US democracy fetishism and democratization to survive in the new world.<sup>5</sup> During the Cold War, the US adopted a militarization foreign policy through which it established several authoritarian, repressive governments and supplied these leaders with military aid, including arms, weapons, training, and supported insurgent groups. Repressive leaders used this military equipment to terrorize their citizens and committed gross human rights abuses, but the US and other Western governments suspended military assistance to those countries whenever human rights violations were committed. Several scholars criticized US policy militarization during the Cold War because the military assistance supplied to the dictatorial regimes contributed to conflicts in some countries. In addition, arms and weapons are provided to client states such as Liberia, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, US foreign policy militarization to selected African countries intensified when these nations supported the global war on terror paradigm. During the post-9/11 period, the US securitized the chosen African nations, increased their military aid, and established several training programs for the militaries of these nations to fight terrorist organizations. In addition, US foreign policy militarization escalated through the establishment of counterterrorism and counterinsurgency programs to counter and defeat violent extremist organizations, especially Boko Haram in Nigeria, al-Shabaab in Somalia, the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in Mali. For example, counterterrorism programs such as the Trans-

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<sup>5</sup> [kentstateuniversitypress.com/wp-content/uploads/symposium/Nieman/Concepts\\_of\\_Democracy.htm](http://kentstateuniversitypress.com/wp-content/uploads/symposium/Nieman/Concepts_of_Democracy.htm)

<sup>6</sup> Horace Campbell (2017). The United States and Security of Africa. The Impact of the Military Management of International System, Africa Development, Vol. 42, No. 3, 45-71

Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI) and Operation Enduring Freedom Trans-Saharan (OET-TS) were established to deal with the threats posed by violent extremist groups.

US policy militarization in the chosen African countries focuses primarily on military training of African militaries, deployment of US troops, military intervention, security assistance, bases, use of drones, arms exports, and private security companies. The US has increased these activities tremendously in the selected countries during the global war on terror, and militarization has affected conflicts, civil wars, terrorism, coups, and anti-government demonstrations. Alternatively, the militarization and securitization of US foreign policy after the 9/11 attacks have affected development and humanitarian issues in the four selected countries, and the military has become the leading face and taken control over functions that used to be performed by the civilian agencies. The US has deployed over 7,500 military personnel and private contractors on the continent and a Reaper Drone base in the Sahel.<sup>7</sup> Several military officers from the selected countries were trained in the US through the IMET program. Grant Harris has suggested that US foreign policy must focus on strengthening democratic institutions, development, and economic growth and less on military operations. He cautions against continued militarization and argues that this can contribute to radicalization, and the US goals of defeating violent extremist groups will be unachievable.<sup>8</sup> In addition, Amanda Dory suggests that the US must assist in solving problems associated with conflict drivers to create jobs that can prevent vulnerable youths from joining the organizations because of financial incentives.<sup>9</sup> Also, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton suggests that US foreign policy should depend on 3D, which involves diplomacy, development, and defense because the whole-of-government approach can help resolve conflicts

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<sup>7</sup> Salih Booker and Temi Ibirogbu (2019). The Militarization of US Policy Towards Africa

<sup>8</sup> Grant Harris (2019). The Militarization of US Policy Towards Africa

<sup>9</sup> Amanda Dory (2019). The Militarization of US Policy Toward Africa



in the chosen countries instead of militarization policy that exacerbates the problems.<sup>10</sup> Others argue that US foreign policy militarization contributes to a culture of violence. The proliferation of weapons, training of the local armies, and intelligence sharing have led to hostage-taking, kidnapping, and development of mercenary and rebel groups. The policy has made it easy for people to have access to guns and weapons, which is helping criminal enterprises to be involved in drug and human trafficking.<sup>11</sup> This has become a major problem for the selected countries in Africa. In addition, the militarization policy again has a severe consequence on the relations between the US and the chosen nations. These nations use excessive force to achieve their policy objectives when dealing with their citizens, especially during protests or anti-government demonstrations. The US militarization policy has led to coups in some of the selected countries, and the US must reduce this policy, particularly arms sales, military training, technical assistance, and sales of military equipment to some of the countries.<sup>12</sup> The policy contributes to adverse effects in the chosen countries, primarily through Islamic radicalization, and US presence also provokes violent extremist organizations to escalate their attacks on the US interests and innocent citizens in the chosen countries. The US's increased militarization, especially through the creation of counterterrorism programs after 9/11 in the Sahel, has contributed to conflicts and violent attacks in the region. The US must assist in strengthening political institutions and economic development, which can generate employment for the youths and discourage them from joining militant groups because of financial benefits instead of policy militarization. Empirical research has found that some of the military aid to the selected countries has been transferred to violent extremist groups.

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<sup>10</sup> Hillary Clinton (2019). The Militarization of US Policy Toward Africa

<sup>11</sup> Salah Booker and Temi Ibiroga (2019). The Militarization of US Policy Toward Africa

<sup>12</sup> Zdenek Cervenka (1987). The Effects of Militarization of Africa on Human Rights, Africa Today, Vol. 34, 69-84

As a result, policy militarization poses risks to recipient states. Arms transfers from the US to the chosen countries have become a strong predictor of conflicts and human rights violations in the selected African nations. The more military aid these nations receive from the US, the more risk it poses for instability, including terrorism, civil wars, and protests. Several scholarly research has found that US military assistance to selected African countries in the study has been transferred to violent extremist organizations, and excessive security aid poses a risk to recipient nations. Thus, arms transfers have strongly predicted conflicts and civil wars involving chosen nations. The chosen nations, mainly Nigeria and Uganda, use US security assistance to repress dissent, and this governmental repression generates grievances among the citizens that lead to instability. Critics of US foreign policy militarization in the selected African countries argue that US security assistance to repressive regimes and weak nations contributes to the destabilization of the regimes through frequent anti-government demonstrations and coups associated with some of the regimes. Typical examples are Mali and Uganda. More importantly, the US uses a vast arsenal of foreign policy tools, notably during the war on terror, to induce, compel, and deter changes in the domestic and foreign policy of the client states, which sometimes leads to political instability through protests, riots, and terrorism when the local populations are against US interference their affairs. To understand the effect of US foreign policy militarization in the selected countries, I have developed a series of hypotheses to be used in both statistical data and the case study. This will assist me in having an independent and comprehensive understanding of the US militarization policy and its implications for the chosen countries in the study.

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND STRUCTURE

I test a series of hypotheses using statistical data from several sources covering the period between 1995 and 2020. First, the military aid data from USAID Greenbook involves fifty-four

African countries. Second, the US troops' data from the Department of Defense Manpower (DDM). Third, the US military training dataset from the Security Assistance Monitor (SAM). Fourth, the intervention data from the Congressional Research Service (CRS). Fifth, terrorism data comes from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). Six, the coup data from the Cline Center for Coup Project Dataset and Coup Agency Mechanism. Seven, civil war data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP). Finally, data on anti-government demonstrations from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) was collected. I use Dynamic Panel Data Model Analysis based on the System's Generalized Methods of Moments (GMM) for the statistical analysis. These empirical results have guided the case study selection.

This dissertation is structured as follows: The first chapter introduces the research problem and briefly describes US policy militarization in selected African countries. The second chapter discusses the literature review on the study's research question and the great debate surrounding US foreign policy militarization promoting stability and instability. The literature review explains the general background of US foreign policy militarization in the international system during the Cold War, post-Cold War, and post-9/11, focusing on Africa. The third chapter focuses on the background of securitization theory. In addition, the fourth chapter is the research design or methodology. This chapter discusses the hypotheses, operational measurement of variables, descriptions of the control variables, and the statistical methods applied in the study. The fifth chapter describes the theoretical arguments of the research. The sixth chapter describes the regression results and descriptive statistics. Also, the seventh chapter outlines the structure of Nigerian case study. The eighth chapter focuses on the case study of Mali. In addition, the ninth chapter outlines Somalia's case study. The tenth chapter describes Uganda's case study. The

eleventh chapter of the dissertation focuses on conclusion and implications. This chapter summarizes the study's findings, and I suggest future research.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THE GREAT DEBATE SURROUNDING US FOREIGN POLICY MILITARIZATION PROMOTING STABILITY OR INSTABILITY IN AFRICA

The US has been a colonial power but has yet to be in Africa.<sup>13</sup> The interaction between the US and Africa did not begin during the Cold War but instead during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, which led to Liberia's creation in 1882. In addition, the US was also involved in North Africa in the Barbary Wars during President Jefferson's administration.<sup>14</sup> While the 19th century saw a surge of Western European powers into Africa, resulting in fifty-four colonial dependencies, the US's approach was notably different. The US's policy towards Africa, demonstrated by its stance at the Berlin Conference and the 'scramble for Africa' in 1884/85, was a unique and fascinating departure from the international norm.<sup>15</sup> Despite being an observer at the Berlin Conference and maintaining an isolationist policy, the US underwent a profound transformation in its international role after World War I. It began aligning its ideology and military strategies with major European colonial powers, a shift that would have profound and lasting consequences for its relationship with Africa.<sup>16</sup>

During the bipolar balance of power, the US's policy toward Africa was one of engagement. However, the approaches of various administrations varied. There was a general low-profile approach toward the continent throughout the post-war period, with Africa often viewed as an appendage of the European powers. Despite its historical relations, this perspective led the US to adopt an inconsistent policy toward Africa during the Cold War. The US continued to view the

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<sup>13</sup> Herman Cohen (2020). US Policy Toward Africa, Eight Decades of Realpolitik

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> Stephen Magu (2019). Great Powers and US Foreign Policy towards Africa

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

continent as a non-strategic region, which did not align with its national security policy. Although the continent was still perceived as non-geostrategic by the US, it had experienced three significant scrambles in the 19th century when the continent was divided among European powers at the Berlin Conference, the post-World War II, and the Cold War bipolar balance of power. The collapse of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union dramatically altered the world's geopolitical landscape, leading to a drastic change in the US's policy toward the continent.<sup>17</sup>

Wafula Okumu 2007, argues that ‘the US has no competing interests in Africa, and after the collapse of the Cold War, the US adopted a foreign policy of benign neglect or manifest destiny.’” For example, the US policy of benign neglect exhibited in the Rwandan conflict, which led to the genocide because Clinton’s administration refused to intervene because of the battle of Mogadishu that led to the death of 18 US military personnel in Somalia. Although Africa became essential to the US during the Cold War for geopolitical reasons, it achieved its goal by promoting its democratic ideology to prevent the spread of communism in the continent, primarily in Angola and Mozambique. However, after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the US policy toward Africa began to change again. Africa matters to the US when certain activities in the continent affect its national security interests.<sup>18</sup>

Nonetheless, there was a dramatic change in the US perceptions and geo-strategic interests in Africa after al-Qaeda bombed its embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam and the 9/11 attacks. The US moved Africa from the periphery and incorporated the region into its national security policy to fight the global war on terror. Africa is no longer viewed from a humanitarian lens. The post-9/11 interests were based on energy security, the global war on terror, and countering Chinese

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Wafula Okumu (2007). *Africa Command: Opportunity for Enhanced Engagement or the Militarization of US-Africa Relations*

political influence and investment in the continent, which the US has viewed as a national security interest.<sup>19</sup> Despite these threats, the US again adopted a policy of disengagement until the 9/11 attacks. The 9/11 attacks renationalized the global security environment, emphasizing hard power. The US policy toward Africa gained importance due to terrorism, energy resources, and Chinese influence.<sup>20</sup> The US National Security Strategy of 2002 asserts that “failed states threaten America more than solid nations, and the NSS pledges to help strengthen Africa’s fragile states as it poses a significant threat to US geostrategic interests.”<sup>21</sup>

## BACKGROUND OF US POLICY MILITARIZATION

Militarization of US policy, both domestic and foreign, started during the Cold War with the establishment of the National Security Act (NSA) in 1947, which led to the creation of new bodies and instruments, including the National Security Council (NSC), Truman Doctrine, the result of NATO, the White House policy memorandum NSC-68 and Korea War played a significant role in the creation of the US foreign policy and national security institutions that had not existed previously.<sup>22</sup> A large army and a unified civilian establishment were created to oversee all military services, intelligence services, and national security coordination processes in the White House and the National Security Council. The US became militaristic during the Cold War, and the federal bureaucracy established in 1947 absorbed considerable resources. In addition, US militarization and interventionism did not start only with the Cold War; the US industrial-military complex started during World War II, with the national security system and increased defense expenditures

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<sup>19</sup> Kofi Nsiah-Peptra (2014). Militarization of US Foreign Policy in Africa: Strategic Gain or Backlash, Military Review

<sup>20</sup> Ibid

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> Gordon Adams and Shoon Murray (2014). Mission Creep: The Militarization of US Foreign Policy, Georgetown University of Press, Washington DC

were factors that led to militarism, and many interventions were carried out during the Cold War years.<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand, the US divided the international system into Unified Combatant Commands (UCCs) after World War II due to ideological hostility between the two superpowers. The global system was divided into five geographical segments due to spheres of influence and balance of power politics. These divisions include United States Central Command (CENTCOM), United States Pacific Command (PACOM), United States European Command (EUCOM), United States Northern Command (NORTHCOM), United States South Command (SOUTHCOM) and the newly formed United States African Command (AFRICOM) in 2007. These bodies contributed to the US militarization of domestic and foreign policy in the international system.<sup>24</sup>

In the 1980s, U.S. defense operations increased to address counter-narcotic operations and humanitarian issues. A significant expansion of militarization policy started during Clinton's administration when non-combatant tasks were assigned to the military, and the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the Cold War brought renewed hope in reducing conflicts and enjoying the long-awaited peace dividend. Instead, the end of the Cold War has contributed to the expansion of militarization by the US and its influence on militaries in the prolonged wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the expansion of US military power worldwide via bases. The US deployment of military assets to deliver humanitarian assistance has increased after the Cold War.<sup>25</sup> The military was sent to provide humanitarian aid in several countries, including Somalia, Northern

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> Gina Del Tito (2020). AFRICOM: The Militarization of American Foreign Policy or Civilization of the American Military

<sup>25</sup> Gordon Adams and Shoon Murray (2014). Mission Creep: The Militarization of US Foreign Policy, Georgetown University Press, Washington DC



Iraq, and part of Eastern Europe. In addition, the US military played a significant role in the stabilization and reconstruction efforts in Bosnia, Haiti, and Kosovo. However, the US Defense budget exploded after the 9/11 attacks and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.<sup>26</sup>

Despite the increase in the budget, US policymakers and military leaders were cautious and concerned about the military performing civilian functions. Clinton's administration has given more powers to the military in post-conflict reconstruction and its engagement abroad. US troops became involved in NATO Stabilization Forces to restore public services, economic reconstruction, and internal governance issues. Interestingly, the military's role in regional engagement strategies becomes an essential part of the National Security Strategy in which the military is tasked to shape the environment in their designated regional "areas of responsibility". The US military became more involved in various activities and sectors perceived in the past as the exclusive province of civilian agencies and organizations. Several military leaders, scholars, and organizations have become concerned about the US militarization of its foreign policy. Meanwhile, the 9/11, Iraq, and Afghanistan wars changed US foreign policy, and the US policymakers began to use the military for nation-building, reconstruction, and stabilization.<sup>27</sup> Since 9/11, the Department of Defense has expanded its activities and programs into areas that go beyond its core military operations. The Department of Defense has developed its control over the funding of projects and has weakened the culture of civilian foreign institutions. For instance, President George W. Bush's administration underfunded the State Department and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The Defense Department has been given new roles in nation-building, governance, economic development, and humanitarian assistance. Similarly, the

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid

<sup>27</sup> Ibid

military role in stabilization and reconstruction extended beyond combat zones, and because of terrorist activities, the military was given stabilization and institutional building in weak states. The military also performs a security assistance role traditionally performed by the State Department. Against this backdrop, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates warned the US government about the *'creeping militarization of US foreign policy which undermines American's civilian institutions of diplomacy and development that have been undermined and underfunded.'*<sup>28</sup>

Furthermore, the political leadership in the US government has viewed the military as capable of non-combatant missions and given more resources, thereby weakening civilian agencies. The military is tasked to do more instead of the civilian bodies. However, Obama's administration has heeded the concern expressed by the people and instituted the 3Ds approach, which involves "diplomacy, development, defense" based on the "whole-of-government approach". Despite the whole-of-government system, there is a budgetary imbalance between the other civilian sectors and defense. Many were concerned about the Defense's expanded role in development, governance, and humanitarian assistance worldwide. AFRICOM was established in 2008 and has been given many training and development functions focusing on prevention rather than warfighting. Civilians from the State Department are incorporated into the leadership and command positions.<sup>29</sup>

Moreover, the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) based at Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti was established, giving a lot of civilian functions to perform, especially humanitarian assistance. The State Department, on the other hand, has lost its operations to the military, and the Defense Department also interfered in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid

<sup>29</sup> Ibid

domains through Pentagon Special Operations Command (SOCOM) to lead the role of the “global war on terror” instead of the CIA. The civilian foreign policy institutions have lagged in this evolution and become ill-equipped to face the challenges of reconstruction and stabilization efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Defense Department's responsibility continues to grow in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism missions, and many worry about the demise of civilian roles. Today, the DOD has an extensive role in foreign policy strategic planning and military diplomacy.<sup>30</sup>

Nonetheless, the US today has militarized its foreign policy by relying on military instruments to shape, decide, and implement foreign and national security policy choices. The military has become a leading face of how the US engages the world. Civilian institutions have lost ground due to a growing imbalance of authority and capability. The State Department and USAID have become subordinate civilian organizations to the Defense Department's and the military's leadership. The US military has played a significant role after the Cold War challenges that the US faced, including transnational security threats, humanitarian crises, and weak, failed, and failing states. These events have engaged the military in peacekeeping, stabilization, reconstruction, and regime change missions, and police training has shifted to the military.<sup>31</sup> Militarization has emerged due to the expanded military functions from Kosovo, Haiti, Serbia, Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan, which have increased the military roles and dwarfed the positions of civilian bodies such as the State Department and USAID. In contemporary times, the military has been given a post-conflict role in stabilization, nation-building, and reconstruction. Traditionally, the military is designed to perform warfighting and confrontation. It is now

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

performing an international cooperation role to help states strengthen their sovereignty against challenges from transnational and traditional threats. Over the past two decades, the military functions have expanded to include war prevention, partnership building, training, and implementation of foreign policy.<sup>32</sup>

Historically, US foreign policy has focused on countering a peer competitor such as the Soviet Union or economic interests such as a threat to oil trade routes, which play a significant role in foreign policy decisions and military deployment. However, security assistance has become a key pillar of US military strategy training forces in more than 150 countries worldwide. Military diplomacy was once under the domain of civilian institutions and has been transferred to the Defense Department in recent times. The nature of the US military has changed drastically since the Cold War and 9/11, and the military has been forced to adapt to a new threat environment. In addition, the US military has been involved extensively in conducting civilian projects such as building schools, wells, and clinics, responding to artificial and natural disasters, providing support for countries in conflict or recovering from competition, and funding public diplomacy and strategic communication, which were the domain of civilian institutions.<sup>33</sup> In addition, the growing civilian-military imbalance has resulted in the policy world that the military is the primary and the most effective instrument for pursuing national security aims. It becomes a default instrument when national security problems arise. Militarization of US foreign policy is deeply rooted in Cold War history, and contemporary militarization starts with the 9/11 wars, which have given an expanded role to the Department of Defense rather than the civilian institutions. The disparity in size and institutional coherence between the military and civilian institutions is a significant source

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid

<sup>33</sup> Ibid

of the imbalance. In 2013, the Department of Defense budget was \$600 billion, with over 1.5 million active-duty forces, one million in reserve, 770,000 civilians, and 68,000 Special Operation Forces (SOF), more prominent than the personnel of the civilian foreign policy agencies. On the other hand, the State Department employs 19,000 foreign and civil service officers, and USAID employs just over 2,000 personnel. In addition, history has played an important role, particularly in the Cold War, emphasizing the capabilities of the Department of Defense and incentivizing its growth while weakening civilian institutions. Culture also plays a critical role in the imbalance and militarization processes. The military provides focused, planned, and coordinated opportunities to the White House, while the State Department culture slows decision-making processes.

Alternatively, the militarization of US foreign policy affects the US credibility and effectiveness in the world since many nations no longer trust the US, and militarization, therefore, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy with long-term consequences for the point of the civilian bodies. The civilian tools become incompetent if the military has taken its function, and militarization can lead to a blowback because the more the military assumes a central role in US foreign policy, the more it turns to non-core missions. The international community may view US international engagements as wearing a uniform. Similarly, the US's growing reliance on the military instrument of national power risks blowback as many countries view the US as a country that pursues its objectives with military power.

Against this backdrop, the US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan did not increase the US's popularity in the world. The US Africa Command (AFRICOM) headquarters in Africa was rejected because African countries and leaders worried about US engagement in the military with a long period of economic assistance programs, and the expansion of the US military to non-core

missions sent a conflicting signal to armies in other countries. Civilian institutions must strengthen their capabilities, authorities, and funding to improve the 3Ds or whole-of-government approach. The Defense Department must refrain from running development projects such as conflict resolution, disaster management, security sector reform, and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programs. The State Department and USAID must be more prominent in US foreign policy dealings than the military.<sup>34</sup> According to Huntington, the core function of the military is the ‘‘management of violence’’, and other tasks are ‘‘auxiliary vocation’’. He sees military-civilian leadership as objective civilian control, and the military should focus on war preparation and conduct rather than interfering in the activities of the civilian agencies.

#### CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION OF MILITARIZATION AND MILITARISM

The existing literature has yet to show a universally accepted definition of militarization. Scholars and policymakers defined militarization in varied ways. Militarization refers to an increased reliance by policymakers on military instruments to shape and implement foreign and national security policy choices.<sup>35</sup> According to Wellington et al., 2022, the concept refers to a multidimensional process through which several elements, such as military coups, authoritarian regimes, repressive state apparatuses, war, armed conflict, military spending, arms imports, and external military intervention. The authors view militarization as placing ex-military or military personnel in key government positions.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, Wendt and Barnett (1993) define militarization as the accumulation of capacity for organized violence in preparation for a military buildup.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid

<sup>35</sup> Gordon Adams and Shoon Murray (2014). *Mission Creep: The Militarization of US Foreign Policy*, Georgetown University Press, Washington DC

<sup>36</sup> Wellington Garika and Darlington Mahuku (2022). Effects of Militarization on Development and Democracy in Africa, *Journal of Development Economics and Management Research Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 11, 43-54

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) defines militarization as defense expenditure on weapons procurement, training, salaries, operations, and maintenance. Other scholars, such as Luckham (1994), define the term as pervasive symbols of the society, values, and discourses validating military power and preparation for war. Luckham believes militarization includes armaments, troops, military aid, capital resources, human management, and science and technology diverted toward military buildup, dictatorial regime, civilian and military backed by military strength, alliance, war, and military occupation of a foreign land. On the other hand, it is also explained as a means through which civilian organizations resemble the armed forces in uniforms or weapons.<sup>37</sup> Ross (1987) defines militarization as a process by which state resources are allocated to armed forces or military-related activities.<sup>38</sup>

Several scholars have provided many definitions of militarism in the scholarly literature. Militarization and militarism are causally related but different in definitional dimensions. According to Vagts, militarism refers to the domination of military men over civilians or undue preponderance of military demands. Other scholars also define militarism as military contractors, paramilitaries, the stockpile of weapons, state surveillance programs, control over research by national security, and circulation of military imagery in popular culture.<sup>39</sup> The Oxford Dictionary defines militarism as shaping national histories in ways that glorify legitimate military action. Eide and Thee define militarism as the desire to rely on military coercion to handle conflicts. For this study, I will use the militarization definition provided by Conteh-Morgan, which includes military

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<sup>37</sup> Naidu (1985). *Military Power, Militarism and Militarization: An Attempt at Clarification and Classification*, *Peace Research*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2-10

<sup>38</sup> Andrew Ross (1987). *Dimensions of Militarization in the Third World, Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 13, No. 4, 561-578

<sup>39</sup> Hugh Gusterson (2007). *Anthropology and Militarism*, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 36, 155-175

aid, training, military personnel stationed in Africa, bases, private security companies, military coups, intervention, and counterterrorism programs.<sup>40</sup>

#### US COLD WAR MILITARIZATION POLICY IN AFRICA

During the Cold War, the US devoted unwavering support and attention to Europe, Asia, and the Middle East and less help to Africa, which it sees as a “backwater”. Africa is a home of poverty, humanitarian crises, foreign aid, and diseases in global debates. Similarly, the continent receives attention regarding poor governance, corruption and nepotism, state fragility and failure, coups, interstate conflict, and a home for refugees.<sup>41</sup> In the economic spectrum, Africa is described as underdeveloped despite its endowment with natural resources. These resources are exploited during conflicts by foreign powers in Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). At the end of World War II, the Cold War intensified, and African struggles for independence escalated. The European powers and the Cold War superpowers attempted to control decolonization. Moreover, the US decided to promote democracy and self-determination and deployed military might protect governments that accepted its political and economic interests.<sup>42</sup> As the European powers lost their empires in Africa, the US hoped to gain access to the raw materials and markets formerly controlled by the colonial powers. The US used its ideology and interests to shape Africa’s Cold War contests. Local issues dominated the struggle for independence and its aftermath, and the Cold War intervention rendered the conflicts more lethal and resulted in long-lasting matches. The US started to provide massive foreign aid to many African governments because the fear of Soviet communism forced the US to support dictatorships

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<sup>40</sup> Earl Conteh-Morgan (2019). Militarization and Securitization in Africa: A Scramble for Africa? The Role of Great and Emerging Powers, *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 77-94

<sup>41</sup> Stephen Magu (2019). Great Powers and US Foreign Policy Towards Africa.

<sup>42</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War



in Africa. Though the dictatorship was pro-Western and anti-communist, it did not promote the freedom and democracy that Washington claimed to endorse.

Moreover, the US started a formal relationship with the continent in 1958 after Ghana's independence by establishing the Bureau of African Affairs in the US State Department. The Bureau was tasked with developing and managing US foreign policy toward Africa with four foundational pillars: strengthening democratic institutions, supporting African economic growth and development, and advancing peace and security. US policy toward Africa during the Cold War was strategic against the Soviet Union's containment rather than total support for independent African states to run their democratic norms and institutions. The US interest in the continent has taken several trajectories. First, the Soviet influence was contained, and the expansionist policy was prevented, particularly in the new nations of Africa. Second, to sustain Africa as a source of raw materials and strategic minerals for the US industries. Third, to pursue and gain strategic advantage and cooperation by establishing military bases in Africa near the Middle East region.<sup>43</sup> One of the most important events that have drawn the US to the continent of Africa is Congolese independence and the secession of Katanga Province. During the Cold War, the US had a strategic interest in Zaire, now DRC, because of its strategic minerals, especially cobalt and uranium. As a result, when Katanga seceded from Zaire, the US supported the Congolese government in bringing Katanga under Zaire's control.

Furthermore, the US supported several repressive governments and insurgent groups and was involved in proxy wars in the African continent during the Cold War. It helped to overthrow and assassinate Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba of the Democratic Republic of Congo, which several existing literature believed was the genesis of civil war in the country. Several anecdotal

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<sup>43</sup> Stephen Magu (2019). Great Powers and US Foreign Policy Towards Africa

evidence has also shown that the US again played a role in overthrowing Ghana's president, Kwame Nkrumah, and helped sustain Mobutu Sese Seko's regime.<sup>44</sup> The US Cold War policy in Africa consolidated two destructive civil wars that claimed over 4 million lives in DRC and destroyed the country's socio-economic and political system. The existing qualitative literature evidence has indicated that the US provided more than \$1 billion in economic and military aid to the DRC between 1961 and 1990. In addition, the US pressured the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to give loans under relaxed lending conditions to Mobutu's government. This assistance from the US and the International Financial Institutions helped the venal and authoritarian leader rule the country for almost three decades. Mobutu's regime was noted for notorious human rights abuses and repression of political dissents. The US sustained the government until the end of the Cold War, and the DRC civil wars resulted from internal and external factors.<sup>45</sup>

Scholars have argued that the US delivered over \$1.5 billion worth of weaponry to its top arms client states such as Liberia, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and DRC, which has contributed to civil wars and state collapse in many countries in Africa. The ongoing civil war in the DRC was the legacy of the US arms sales and regional policy militarization. It is interesting to note that conflicts in Africa are deeply rooted in the balkanization of the continent by the Western European powers during the Berlin Conference and the US Cold War policies. These unfortunate phenomena by the European powers and the US have contributed to the underdevelopment and poverty of the continent. Several conflicts on the continent were attributed to issues related to the colonial partitioning of the continent without considering the consequences of ethnic diversities and the US

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<sup>44</sup> Horace Campbell (2017). The United States and Security in Africa: The Impact of the Military Management of International System, *Africa Development*, Vol. 42, No. 3, 45-71

<sup>45</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). *Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War*

arms sales to autocratic and corrupt leaders, which are the primary source of conflicts and civil wars in the continent.<sup>46</sup> Mobutu's repressive regime received more than \$400 million in military assistance, and the US weapons transfer and training of militaries for several regional countries escalated the civil war. The militarization of foreign policy in Africa has created violence and political instability in many African countries. For example, the US-trained and built the militaries of eight out of the nine countries that were involved directly in the war that destroyed DRC since Kabila's coup. It has also been estimated that the US weapons that flooded the continent in 1998 totaled \$12.5 million, including substantial deliveries to Chad, Namibia, and Zimbabwe.<sup>47</sup> Uganda's government received \$1.5 million in weaponry, and Rwanda imported most of the weapons used in the genocide from the US. The genesis of most African civil wars could be traced to the US arms sales and training of the African militaries and civilians. The militarization of Africa started by the colonial powers and intensified during the Cold War interventions. During this period, the US government provided grants, low-interest loans, more than \$1.5 billion in arms, and security assistance to independent sub-Saharan African countries selected for their strategic importance in disregarding democracy and human rights. The most significant arms deliveries went to allies, including Sudan, Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Morocco, and the DRC. The US actions have increased the destruction of the continent with prolonged conflicts and wars through militarization. The existing literature pointed out that the US military transferred direct government-to-government weapons deliveries, commercial sales, and funds from the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program to the states involved in the DRC

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<sup>46</sup> Lysias Dodd Gilbert, Ufo Okeke Uzodike and Christopher Isike (2009). The United States African Command: Security for Whom? *The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 9

<sup>47</sup> Ibid

conflict, totaling more than \$125 million since the end of the Cold War.<sup>48</sup> In addition, client regimes in Africa continued to execute and implement foreign policy agendas for the US. For example, the US used Mobutu as a principal conduit to funnel money and military equipment to the rebel leader Jonas Savimbi's insurgent group, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) headed by Holden Roberto to oust the Movement for the Liberation of Angola's government (MPLA).<sup>49</sup> It has been argued that the US supplied \$1.5 billion worth of weapons to African countries during the Cold War, which played a critical role in today's conflicts in most parts of Africa, notably DRC. Nelson Mandela argues that "US foreign policy militarization in Africa has caused more atrocities than any other Western countries" and supported the apartheid regime because the region's strategic location and minerals and its policies destabilized South Africa.<sup>50</sup>

Moreover, the free-market austerity policies imposed by international financial institutions acting through weak post-colonial states during decolonization and the Cold War contributed to struggles over power and resources in the post-Cold War period. Countries that were US client states during the Cold War were engulfed in disastrous conflicts after the collapse of the Cold War, such as Liberia, Somalia, and DRC, and most of the arms and weapons used in the post-Cold War civil wars came from the US. After the collapse of the Cold War, the US reduced the size of its personnel working in the State Department Bureau of African Affairs, and several consulates were closed in the continent. Despite the closure of the consulates, the US continues its engagement with the continent under several conditions, such as a source of natural resources, countering

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<sup>48</sup> Kofi Nsia-Pepira (2014). Militarization of US Foreign Policy in Africa: Strategic Gain or Backlash, *Military Review*

<sup>49</sup> George Klay Kieh Jr. (2009). The State of Political Instability in Africa, *Journal of Developing Societies*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 1-25

<sup>50</sup> Stephen Magu (2019). Great Powers and US Foreign Policy towards Africa

foreign influence, and hunting ground for terrorists and dictators. Africa has never featured heavily on the US global project except for security interests during the Cold War because the continent has little to offer regarding international trade.<sup>51</sup>

After the end of the bipolar balance of power, the International Economic Institutions imposed neoliberal policies on African governments that required help from the institutions and Western Commercial Banks. The ‘Washington Consensus’ policy imposed on the governments created economic hardships and increased political repression, and the US cut off its support for African dictators. As a result, African nations were left with a legacy of looted resources, massive debts, collapsed states, and civil wars over the spoils. The neoliberal reforms promoted privatization, which failed to strengthen African institutions. The economic hardships led to coups and political instability in many African countries instigated by the influx of Cold War weapons.<sup>52</sup>

#### US POST-COLD WAR POLICY IN AFRICA

The US faced different security threats in Africa during the post-Cold War, including a challenge from Islamic extremism. As a result, the US provided security assistance to neighboring African countries to contain rogue states, particularly Libya and Sudan. It is imperative to note that the US victories in the Cold War and the Gulf War brought optimism about its role in the “new world order” in resolving conflicts through direct intervention in Africa. However, the death of US military personnel in Somalia changed its policy toward Africa during the post-Cold War. The desire to contain rogue states and Islamic extremism in Africa led to its support for anti-Western and anti-democratic regimes and movements. The militarization policy continues through the sales of military equipment to most countries in sub-Saharan Africa through the Excess Defense

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid

<sup>52</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). Foreign Intervention in Africa After the Cold War

Program and Commercial sales.<sup>53</sup> Before the 9/11 attacks, the war on terror played a minor role in US and African relations. Its military intervention in Somalia in 1993 was triggered by the threat to regional stability and a growing concern about protecting civilian lives in a region critical to US interests. Although the US provided monetary and material support to UN peacekeeping operations in the 1990s, after the death of the soldiers, it avoided multinational operations that might involve US troops. Instead, the US sought to enhance the capacity of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), subregional organizations like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and individual African countries to play a major in conflict resolution by providing them with military equipment, training, funding, and logistical support. Against this backdrop, the US blocked the UN intervention in the 1994 Rwanda genocide because it did not consider Rwanda a place of economic and strategic interests. Clinton's administration provided \$20 million in security assistance to Uganda, Eritrea, and Ethiopia to protect the nations against non-state armed groups aided by Sudan. Unfortunately, these countries, in turn, provided arms to insurgent groups in Sudan. As a result, the security assistance given to these countries fueled conflicts in the region. Also, the US's increased aggressive approach to Islamic extremism resulted in anti-Western and anti-democratic regimes throughout Africa and the Middle East. The US continues to militarize its policy by supplying military equipment through the Excess Defense Program to countries such as Uganda, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana. On the other hand, commercial sales continued, and exports from 1991-1995 totaled more than \$23 million, including significant deliveries to Nigeria, Uganda, Botswana, Zambia, South Africa, and Namibia. Militarization of the continent continues despite the numerous conflicts on the continent.<sup>54</sup> Africa became the

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<sup>53</sup> [http://ips-dc.org/peace\\_and\\_military\\_policy\\_in\\_africa/](http://ips-dc.org/peace_and_military_policy_in_africa/)

<sup>54</sup> Ibid

spotlight of the US after the bombing of its embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 by al-Qaeda. These catastrophic events informed US officials about the militant Islamic presence in East Africa and the vulnerability of the governments in the region. Clinton's administration responded by bombing and increasing foreign aid to countries in the area against al-Qaeda networks present in the region and various affiliated groups in the Sahel and West Africa.<sup>55</sup> US policy militarization affected stability in DRC because US Special Forces continued to train militaries in Angola, Chad, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, where armed conflicts were increased among states in the Great Lakes region. Between 1995 and 1998, US Special Forces conducted Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) in thirty-four African countries. The US Special Forces trained Rwanda soldiers who invaded DRC in 1996, and several other African military personnel trained by the US forces have committed atrocities and political violence on the continent. US policy militarization has indebted several African nations to the US, including DRC, owing US 150 million to the Defense Department; Liberia, Somalia, and Sudan, owing US 160 million.<sup>56</sup>

More importantly, US policy toward Africa changed during Clinton's administration. Clinton established the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which became the cornerstone of US economic and trade policy toward Africa and provided duty-free access to the US market.<sup>57</sup> Despite the trade policy established by Clinton's administration, there was no adequate security policy to assist the continent against its perennial wars and conflicts. However, the US incorporates Africa into its security policy after the 9/11 attacks. The dramatic change in the US policy towards Africa was due to three crucial factors: the US war on terror, natural

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<sup>55</sup> Nicolas Van De Walle (2009). US Policy Towards Africa: The Bush Legacy and Obama Administration, *African Affairs*, Vol. 109, No. 434, 1-21

<sup>56</sup> William Hartung and Bridget Moix (2000). *Deadly Legacy: US Arms to Africa and the Congo War*, World Policy

<sup>57</sup> UStr.org

resources, especially oil and natural gas, and counter-Chinese political influence and investment in the continent, which the US views as a national security interest.<sup>58</sup> In 1997, the ‘‘neoconservative or neo-cons’’ and Project for New American Century (PNAC) were formed. The US dependency on oil reached a critical stage. The neoconservatives made energy security their 2000 election campaign, which led to the establishment of the National Energy Policy Development Group (NEPD), which published the Cheney Report in 2001, demonstrating that US energy use has reached 17 percent and is projected to increase to 32 percent by 2020. This report singled out sub-Saharan Africa as the key source of the US future oil supply and forecast that by 2015, twenty-five percent of US imported oil would come from the Gulf of Guinea. In 2002, the US imported fourteen percent of oil from sub-Saharan Africa and again forecasted that in 2007, the US would import more crude oil from Africa than the Persian Gulf. The report highlights Africa’s strategic importance to US economic development, urging President Bush to define African oil as a *‘strategic national interest and a resource the US must choose to control through military force.’* President Bush established the US African command structure to gain constant access to African oil.<sup>59</sup>

Interestingly, the US enjoyed diplomatic and humanitarian relations with African nations under President George Bush's administration. The president supports the African Union and sub-regional communities such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and empowers these organizations to promote conflict resolution, economic development, and cooperation between African states. The

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<sup>58</sup> Jose de Arimateia Cruz and Laura Stephens (2010). The US Command and AFRICOM: Building Partnership or Neocolonialism of US-Africa Relations, *Journal of Third World Studies*, Vol. 107, No. 426, 111-120

<sup>59</sup> Jeremy Keenan (2008). US Militarization in Africa: What Anthropologists should know about AFRICOM, *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 24, No. 5



president's establishment of AFRICOM also involved working with African leaders to combat transnational threats from the continent. In addition, the Bush administration also established the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the largest international health initiative dedicated to a single disease, funded at US\$15 billion and destined for sub-Saharan Africa. Similarly, the administration again established the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), one of the most critical policy instruments to promote economic development in developing countries, including Africa. The MCC program was a massive success in Africa, and many African leaders and intellectuals often cite President Bush as '*Africa's best American President*'.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, the US developed military, diplomatic, economic, and humanitarian relations with African nations that extended after the Cold War and 9/11.

The militarization of the continent by the US also involves increasing deployment of troops and accumulation of capacities such as arms transfer and military bases due to war on terrorism, piracy, domestic rebellion against incumbent regimes, and protection of geopolitical and economic interests. Some scholars define African militarization as peacekeeping activities, anti-piracy, military training, and advising and strengthening African militaries through joint training exercises. The US militarization of Africa in the post-Cold War was consolidated, leading to several ethnoreligious conflicts, and foreign intervention has become a common feature in African politics.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Herman Cohen (2020). *US Policy Toward Africa, Eight Decades of Realpolitik*, Published by Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.

<sup>61</sup> Alexander Wendt and Michael Barnett (1993). *Dependent State Formation and Third World Militarization*, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 321-347

## US MILITARIZATION OF AFRICA POST-9/11

US foreign policy militarization toward Africa began in the Cold War, post-Cold War, and intensified during President George W. Bush's administration after the 9/11 attacks. Africa, which several US administrations viewed through a non-strategic lens, has been incorporated into the US National Security Strategy. President Bush declared that *'failing states now threaten America more than strong nations.'* US policy experts and policymakers, after the 9/11 attacks, viewed *'weak, failed, and ungoverned spaces'* of Africa as a terrorist sanctuary that poses a significant threat to its geopolitical interests.<sup>62</sup> Africa has also become strategically important to the US because of its energy security, the war on terror, and the prevention of Chinese political influence and predatory investment in the continent.<sup>63</sup> The US National Security Strategy 2006 stated that the *'US recognizes that its security depends on partnering with African nations to strengthen fragile and failing states and bring ungoverned areas under effective control.'*<sup>64</sup> In addition, the US provides security assistance programs for regimes willing to act as surrogates, particularly in countries abundant in oil and natural gas. Africa gained importance because of the global war on terror and energy resources, and terrorism activities have gotten traction after the attacks on the US. The global terrorist attacks data indicated that terrorists mostly come from weak and failed states like Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Data on foreign jihadists in Iraq has demonstrated that twenty-five percent came from the North and the Horn of Africa.<sup>65</sup> The militarization intensified after the

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<sup>62</sup> Letitia Lawson (2007). US Africa Policy Since Cold War, Strategic Insights, Vol. 6, Issue 1, Center for Contemporary Conflict

<sup>63</sup> Dennis Penn (2008). The Militarization of US Foreign Policy, JFQ Issue 51, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid

<sup>65</sup> Kofi Nsia-Pepira (2014). Militarization of US Foreign Policy in Africa: Strategic Gain or Backlash, Military Review

9/11 attacks. The US established several counterterrorism programs to combat the threats in the region, particularly the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region.

In 2002, the US established the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), with 1,800 US military personnel stationed in Djibouti. The CJTF-HOA's primary responsibility was deterring, disrupting, and countering terrorist threats in Somalia, Kenya, and Yemen and providing counterterrorism assistance to African militaries. The CJTF-HOA was later moved to a permanent base at Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, the first permanent US military base on the continent.<sup>66</sup> Similarly, the militarization policy continued when the US again established the Pan Sahel Initiative (PSI), a counterterrorism program for the Sahel region to enhance border security throughout the region against arms smuggling, drug trafficking, and the movement of transnational terrorists in the northern and the Sahel region, which includes Chad, Niger Mali, and Mauritania. In 2005, it was replaced by the Trans-Saharan Counter Terrorism Initiative (TSCTI), which assigned US military personnel to eleven African states in North and West Africa to counter the activities of Islamist militants in the Sahel region with a branch of Operation Enduring Freedom-Trans Sahara (OEF-TS) as a military component of the TSCTI. The East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative was established in 2003 to provide training services to military forces in Kenya, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Uganda, and Tanzania.<sup>67</sup>

These organizations combat the global war on terror and train African personnel for counterterrorism and border capabilities. The US footprint in the continent was unprecedented and also created “family bases” which include “forward operating bases (FOB) or lily pads, cooperative security locations (CSL), and contingency locations (CL) with over 3,000-5,000

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<sup>66</sup> Nicolas Van Walle (2009). US Policy Toward Africa: The Bush Legacy and Obama Administration, Africa Affairs, Vol. 109, No. 434, 1-21

<sup>67</sup> Daniel Volman (2009). US Militarization Programs in Africa, Current African Issues 43

troops to control ungoverned spaces in the continent.<sup>68</sup> Besides the counterterrorism programs, the US also established International Military Education and Training (IMET), which trains African military officers in US military schools. Almost all African countries participate in the military capacity-building program. IMET trained 14,731 students from Africa since its inception. The militarization of US foreign policy in Africa can also be explained through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program, which the US uses to sell military equipment to African countries through the Department of Defense. Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) allows the sale of police equipment to foreign military forces, paramilitary units, police, and other government agencies. For example, in 2008, US firms delivered more than US\$175 million worth of police hardware for Algeria, US\$2 million for Botswana, US\$3 million for Kenya, US\$19 million for Morocco, US\$17 million for Nigeria, and US\$61 million for South Africa.<sup>69</sup> The African Coastal and Border Security (ACBS) program supplies specialized military equipment to patrol and defend African countries' land borders and coastal waters. African militaries were trained in intelligence gathering and airborne surveillance.<sup>70</sup> The Excess Defense Articles (EDA) program provides surplus military equipment to selected African countries and Base Access Agreements for cooperation security locations and forward operating sites through which base access agreements are signed with several African countries. This allows the US to use local military facilities, especially bases, for surveillance and forward active ground combat.<sup>71</sup> It is important to note that the US uses the facilities of Kenya, Djibouti, and Ethiopia to attack Islamic Court Union members in Somalia who are affiliated with

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<sup>68</sup> Jeremy Keenan (2008). US Militarization in Africa: What Anthropologists should know about AFRICOM, *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 24, No. 5

<sup>69</sup> Daniel Volman (2009). US Militarization Programs in Africa, *Current African Issues* 43

<sup>70</sup> Lysias Dodd Gilberts, Ufo Okeke and Christopher Isike (2009). The United State African Command: Security for Whom? *The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 9

<sup>71</sup> Ibid

al-Qaeda. Africa's policy was also militarized by establishing Naval Operations in the Gulf of Guinea. US forces operate regularly in West Africa to protect the security of the rich oil region of the Gulf of Guinea against militant groups in Nigeria. The militarization of US policy in Africa creates violence, deaths, social malaise, frustration, hopelessness, and anger, which resulted in armed conflicts, piracy, religious radicalism, and terrorism caused by Boko Haram in Nigeria, al-Shabaab in Somalia and other al-Qaeda-affiliated groups in the Maghreb and the Sahel region.<sup>72</sup>

The US established the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) during Clinton's administration after the genocide in Rwanda to train African forces because of criticism from African leaders and politicians replaced with the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program. Through ACOTA, the US trained more than 248,000 peacekeeping forces from twenty-five African countries for the United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU) peacekeeping operations. ACOTA was incorporated into the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) in 2004. The GPOI is the US government-funded security program to enhance UN and regional peacekeeping, and these organizations contribute to the militarization of US policy in Africa. On the other hand, the GPOI is a multilateral organization that trains troops, mostly from African countries, for peacekeeping. AFRICOM took the functions of CJTF-HOA and TSCTI when it was established in 2008. AFRICOM becomes the US's most significant militarization combatant command in Africa. It was formed to protect America, Americans, and American interests and the counter threat posed by al-Qaeda affiliates such as al-Shabaab in Somalia, Boko Haram in Nigeria, and al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).<sup>73</sup> Militarization became the US post-Cold War and post-9/11 statecraft for Africa. On the other hand, AFRICOM outsourced its

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<sup>72</sup> David Wiley (2012). Militarizing Africa and African Studies and the US Africanist Response, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 55, No. 2, 147-161

<sup>73</sup> Ibid

capabilities to private security companies (PSCs), which employ and train African forces. For example, Blackwater holds US\$109 million contracts in Iraq, and DynCorp International received US\$1.1 billion from the US government to train a new Afghanistan police force. The PSCs perform traditional core military tasks once considered the sole province of government, such as training troops, humanitarian response, post-conflict reconstruction, and security sector reform. Other private security companies include Pacific Architects and Engineers, Northrop Grumman, Triple Canopy, Blackwater, DynCorp International, Armor Group, and Military Professional Resource Incorporated (MPRI) across Africa maintained offices and have contracts to train and equip African militaries in peacekeeping operations contributing to the US militarization policy.<sup>74</sup> Thus, the role of PMCs in Africa could also be explained as the US's growing interest in African resources and competition with China in the “new scramble and the war on terror”.<sup>75</sup> PMCs have also been involved in African security issues through peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and security sector reform. The militarization has made the PMCs in African countries answerable to the US government instead of the host nation. The US has an unprecedented military footprint in the continent of Africa. According to AFRICOM reports, in 2017, the US maintained 6,000 military forces and 1,500 contractors, totaling 7,500 in the continent. About 1,800 were deployed in joint combat missions across 13 nations, and more than 4,000 were designated to fight al-Shabaab in the Horn of Africa. The US-East Africa missions are focused on Kenya, Djibouti, and Somalia, and West Africa is concentrated in Chad, Mali, Nigeria, and Niger in the Sahel region.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Kwesi Aning, Thomas Jaye and Samuel Atuobi (2008). The Role of Private Military Companies in US-Africa Policy, *Review of Africa Political Economy*, Vol. 35, No. 118, 613-628

<sup>75</sup> Kwesi Aning, Thomas Jaye and Samuel Atuobi (2008). The Role of Private Military Companies in US-Africa Policy, *Review of Africa Political Economy*, Vol. 35, No. 118, 613-628

<sup>76</sup> Earl Conteh-Morgan (2019). Militarization and Securitization in Africa: A Scramble for Africa? The Role of Great and Emerging Powers, *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 77-94

AFRICOM, the US's most prominent militarization policy post-Cold War, published a jaw-dropping list of US military footprints in the continent. The list divides the US military footprints into "enduring footprints" (permanent base) and "non-enduring footprints or lily pads" (semi-permanent base). The US has 13 enduring footprints and 17 non-enduring footprints on the continent.<sup>77</sup> This indicates that the US policy militarization in Africa has covered the social, economic, political, and military life of all Africans. Several scholars and Defense Secretaries criticized the Defense Department's new function of '*global train and equipped*' as militarization. AFRICOM also helps coordinate naval operations along the African coastline. The US Navy deploys two aircraft carrier battle groups off the coast of West Africa, maintaining maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.<sup>78</sup> Critical statements from three high officials appeared in the existing literature regarding using the military in US foreign policy. For instance, Charles Krauthammer notes that '*America's unprecedented preponderance of political, military, and economic assets can be deployed in any conflict in any part of the world it chooses to involve, and* in the 1998 interview, Madeleine Albright states, that '*the US can decide to use force anytime and anywhere because we are America, we are the indispensable nation*'. Finally, Hillary Clinton argues that '*US foreign policy is built on 3Ds concept*. She believes the approach will bridge the gap between the US government's civilian and non-civilian agencies, including DOD, Department of State, and USAID, which design and implement US foreign policy. The diplomats, development experts, and others in the US government must collaborate to support a common goal.<sup>79</sup> However, other statements justified the US militarization because the US has the power, capabilities,

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<sup>77</sup> Thetricontinental.org

<sup>78</sup> Ibid

<sup>79</sup> Christopher Coyne (2011). The Political Economy of the Creeping Militarization of US Foreign Policy, Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy, Vol. 17, Issue. 1

freedom, and liberty to implement any foreign policy without considering the effects on the recipient nations.

The war on terror, like the Cold War, boosted foreign military presence in Africa and increased external support for repressive regimes again. Therefore, US involvement in the continent has been pronounced and intensified in the post-9/11 to fight the growing capabilities and threats of violent extremist groups such as al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and other Islamist militants in Mali and the Sahel contributed to US increased footprints on the continent.<sup>80</sup>

AFRICOM's establishment in Africa was met with resistance because many Africans see it as the militarization of US foreign policy and fear reintroducing Cold War-era arms sales and US support for repressive regimes. Several African nations expressed concern that AFRICOM's presence on the continent might attract terrorist attacks because of the US war records in Iraq and Afghanistan despite the soft power mandate to build a stable security environment. Why is the military leading an organization primarily responsible for the Department of State? Africans are worried about the US's overreliance on the military to carry out its policies and weaken the roles of DOS and USAID. Thus, many have agreed on Obama's administration's "three-pronged" whole-of-government approach to conducting procedures in the continent. And the 3D process can provide a solution for the demilitarization of US policy in Africa. The DOD oversees security issues, the State Department conducts diplomacy, and USAID is responsible for implementing development programs.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Jennifer Cooke (2013). US Engagement in Africa

<sup>81</sup> Dennis Penn (2008). Africa Command and the Militarization of US Foreign Policy, National Security Agency



Despite the US's unprecedented military footprints on the continent, African states with high corruption and weak government terrorism are still on the rise. Figures from the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) have shown that deaths linked to terrorist attacks have declined by 59 percent between 2014 and 2019; however, terrorism has increased in Africa dramatically. Violent Extremist organizations are thriving in Africa and expanding across borders.<sup>82</sup> More importantly, Islamist insurgencies in Africa have three main geographical areas of operation. First, the Horn of Africa has an al-Shabaab activity, including Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda. Second is the Sahel region of West Africa, which involves the Ansar Dine, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and the Lake Chad region, which involves Boko Haram activity in Nigeria, Niger, and Cameroon. Boko Haram becomes the deadliest VEO in Africa. Its lethality in 2013 was 109, which increased to 867 in 2014, but the lethality in 2020 was 13, 059 representing a 30 percent increase and displacing 2.3 million people. Despite US policy militarization in the continent, the VEOs' activities have persisted and expanded. The US has around 6,000 troops in Africa, France 5,400, and 18,000 UN peacekeeping operations in Mali through the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSMA) to fight terrorist organizations, but VEOs continue to increase. The US spent over US\$11.5 trillion between 2001 and 2019 on security and defense-directed programs to prevent future attacks. It is worth noting that terrorist attacks against American interests in Africa started in 1993 with the battle of Mogadishu, where American soldiers were killed in Somalia, and the 1998 al-Qaeda terrorists bombed US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam.<sup>83</sup> The US decided to militarize its aid in the last two decades, shifting from humanitarian aid to military assistance and assisting nations in combatting violent extremism. In the aftermath

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<sup>82</sup> Alexandre Marc (2021). Twenty Years After 9/11, Jihadi Terrorism rises in Africa.

<sup>83</sup> Bob Wekesa and Siviwe Rikhtso (2021). 9/11 and Africa: Reflecting on Two Decades of US-Africa Policies and Interests.

of Mogadishu, the US evacuated its military forces from Somalia, and the Clinton administration adopted a policy of disengagement. However, after the dual attacks on the embassies, Washington invested in counterterrorism strategies using overt and covert security forces in Kenya and Ethiopia. After 9/11, Bush's administration viewed African problems from a security prism where poverty, poor governance, civil wars, weak militaries, and corruption as a national security risk to the US.<sup>84</sup> The existing scholarly literature points out that the root causes of VEOs in Africa are embedded in internal issues, especially the quest for global identity and the search for purpose among marginalized and frustrated youth and ethnic grievances, not poverty, corruption, and the US militarization policy in exacerbates African conflicts in the continent.<sup>85</sup>

#### EFFECTS OF US POLICY MILITARIZATION IN AFRICA

The war on communism and the war on terror have strengthened autocratic regimes that have abused civilian populations and increased local support for violent opposition groups in Africa. President George W. Bush's administration's war on terror became the new anti-communism in Africa. Domestic unrest by local grievances was mistaken for "international terrorism" as communist aggression during the Cold War. In Africa, autocratic governments appealed to the US to support and join the fight against terrorism. The repressive African regimes used US military aid to suppress internal dissent, and US policies undermined the goals they purported to promote. Instead of maintaining peace and stability, US counterterrorism policies strengthened repressive regimes and opened the door to domestic warlords and foreign occupiers. The unrest caused by local grievances transformed into violent extremism in new territories.<sup>86</sup> The

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid

<sup>85</sup> Ibid

<sup>86</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). *Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War*, Ohio University Press

securitization of US-Africa policy privileged military security over human security that focused on poverty, disease, climate change, and governance. The Department of Defense controlled humanitarian and development assistance programs previously under civilian institutions. In addition, it controls counterterrorism initiatives and supplants USAID's human security/human rights agenda. The US war in Iraq and Afghanistan contributed to violence and instability. As a result, Washington focused on countries rich in oil and natural gas or strategic to the war on terror. Such lands were controlled by corrupt authoritarian regimes that distributed resource proceeds to their cronies and loyalists. These regimes deployed US military equipment and training against political opponents and community activists. Due to this, US military assistance increased domestic repression and intensified local grievances.<sup>87</sup> Similarly, the war on terror aimed to promote stability and peace and provoked an insurgency in Somalia that consumed thousands of civilian lives and destabilized the region. The US policy of militarization in the area brought greater insecurity, not peace. Several African states believe increased militarization fuels terrorism and anti-American sentiment in Africa. This has shown that military power is not a solution to terrorist threats; instead, it will attract more terrorist groups to the continent. Thus, the volatile regions in Africa will continue to experience more lethality, as witnessed in the Horn of Africa, Lake Chad, and the Sahel regions of Africa.<sup>88</sup> Some African experts also argue that the US militarization of policy in Africa will trigger a reciprocal militarization of China's African policy in the future. These scholars say that China might expand its military cooperation with African countries through pacts, joint exercises, intelligence gathering, exchange, and training, increase weapons sales, deploy military forces, establish bases, and finally set up the Chinese Africa

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid

<sup>88</sup> Berouk Mesfin (2009). *The Establishment of AFRICOM, An African Perspective*

Command. Thus, African interests could be trampled upon by the US and China, a repeat of the Cold War.<sup>89</sup>

Furthermore, the free-market austerity policies imposed by international financial institutions (IFIs) on weak postcolonial states during decolonization and the Cold War contributed to deadly struggles over power and resources in the post-Cold War period. Some dictators were driven from power; sometimes, neighboring states intervened to further their interests. Like its Cold War antecedent, the War on Terror increased foreign military presence in the African continent and generated new external support for repressive governments. It is important to note that the US Army sales and remnant arms from the Cold War led to an escalation of violence in many parts of Africa. The US military and covert operations in Africa intensified strife and undermined the prospect of peace and security. Foreign politics and intervention in Africa often did more harm than good. The war on terror intensified conflicts, and foreign responses to instability rendered local conflagration more lethal. In addition, the US emphasizes quick military action to divert attention from political, economic, and social grievances at the root of African conflicts. The post-9/11 policies in Africa are counterproductive because they increase terrorism rather than decrease it. Foreign powers continued to engage in African affairs and contribute to intra-continental conflicts. African warlords, dictators, and dissident movements were supported by extracontinental forces who fought to control their neighbor's resources.<sup>90</sup> The US supports repressive regimes, warlords, and foreign occupiers, sometimes intensifying local support for anti-

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid

<sup>90</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). *Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War to War on Terror*, Ohio University Press

government insurgencies. International terrorist organizations seized the opportunity to harness local grievances and expand to new areas/territories.<sup>91</sup>

Besides, the US accepted human rights violations in some African countries in return for counterterrorism cooperation. For instance, repressive regimes in Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco banned Islamic fundamentalist parties and arrested thousands of militants. This led to the emergence of homegrown guerrilla organizations due to the outlawed political parties. Repressive African regimes played the US international terrorist card to obtain American funds and military assistance as communism loomed during the Cold War. The security forces trained by the US were used to crack down on internal opposition groups and fight regional wars. Instead of winning hearts and minds, US intervention often rendered local populations appealing to international terrorist organizations.<sup>92</sup>

Some African states declared non-state actor's terrorist groups to garner US attention. For instance, the governments of Tanzania and Uganda announced that minority Muslim election protesters were terrorists. Also, Ethiopia branded groups fighting the government terrorist organization, and the president of Uganda labeled the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) and Allied Democratic Front (ADF) terrorist groups trying to overthrow a legitimate government to obtain more security assistance. African governments focused on threats from non-state actors because government elites could mobilize support for domestic and international agendas. This has helped most African governments manage internal social and political unrest by using repressive responses.<sup>93</sup> Several African countries wanted to appease the US and introduced counterterrorism

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid

<sup>92</sup> Ibid

<sup>93</sup> Claire Metelits (2016). Challenging US Security Assessment of Africa, *African Security*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 89-109

laws that threatened human rights and widened religious fissures in the continent. The US's heavy-handed approach to counterterrorism affected fragile democracies, and many countries in the Horn of Africa used the war on terror to achieve their political goals and closed all channels of peace talks to end conflicts.<sup>94</sup> These actions complicated the search for peaceful solutions to conflicts. Meanwhile, many countries have neglected issues about poverty and development, and the US focused on counterterrorism programs instead of developmental programs, which led to violent extremism and the spread of Islamist ideas and terrorism. Counterterrorism programs in the Horn of Africa stoked the embers of internal conflicts and heightened the risk of proxy wars across the Horn of Africa. The more outstanding parts of US counterterrorism initiatives failed to tie together poverty eradication, conflict resolution, and peace-building strategies, which can prevent extremism and terrorism from thriving in the Horn.<sup>95</sup>

AFRICOM, which is claimed to provide security and peace in the African continent, is now used to bomb Libyan citizens and contributed to the disintegration of the country into civil war after Qaddafi's assassination in 2011. The intervention of NATO and AFRICOM in Libya demonstrates the extent to which the US policy militarization in Africa is promoting chaos and unrest in a stable country whose leader wanted to use its resources to promote economic integration and lay the foundations for the transformation of Africa. This durable and peaceful nation was thrown into civil war. President Obama publicly admitted that the Libyan intervention was the biggest mistake of his presidency and blamed David Cameron, the British prime minister, for the US role in Libya.<sup>96</sup> In addition, the British Parliamentary Committee Report in September 2016

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<sup>94</sup> Kagwanja Peter (2010). Counterterrorism in the Horn of Africa: New Security Frontiers, Old Strategies, *African Security Review*, Vol. 15, No. 3, 72-86

<sup>95</sup> Ibid

<sup>96</sup> John Tirpak (2011). *Bombers over Libya*

concluded that lies undergirded the Libya war, which created over 1,700 armed factions militias after Gaddafi's assassination and the regime's collapse led to a refugee crisis and arms sales in neighboring countries. The Sahel countries are yet to recover from the spillover effects of insecurity in Libya.<sup>97</sup>

Military institutions have taken control of civilian institutions, affecting individual freedoms such as speech, association, assembly, press, and democratic decision-making, controlled by the governments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Citizens' freedoms are contained when the military has come to power. The US militaristic and interventionist policy in Africa restrains individual freedoms due to its support for authoritarian regimes. Militarization sometimes produces unjust class structures through a small segment of the population controlling the considerable wealth of the nations, and this minority depends on the military for survival. As a result, a society that creates powerful military apparatuses uses these institutions to enhance its power at the expense of civilian institutions in times of threat.<sup>98</sup>

The US policy of militarization in Africa promotes military intervention in Africa. Military personnel toppled civilian regimes and were sometimes replaced by pro-US army governments, a typical example of Mobutu's regime in DRC and Ghana under Kwame Nkrumah. Advanced weapons are sold to poorer African countries, exacerbating a series of conflicts and wars on the continent. Besides, militarization contributes to human rights violations, arbitrary arrests, detention, and execution. Great powers' involvement in African political affairs causes conflict and instability among African countries and produces repressive state apparatuses under both civilian and military regimes.

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid

<sup>98</sup> Michael Klare (1978). *Militarism: The Issue of Today*, Bulletin of Peace Proposals, Vol. 9, No. 2, Institute for Policy Studies, Washington DC

Third-world countries have also become militarized in recent years. Due to policy militarization on the continent by great powers, especially the US and France, their defense expenditures in arms imports have increased from 44 percent in the 9/11 global war on terror. Some scholars have argued that growing military expenditures contribute to development, while others found a negative correlation. This shows that militarization has both positive and negative effects on a nation.<sup>99</sup> It has also been argued that policy militarization promotes public goods such as roads, communication systems, and other infrastructural investments that are critical and vital for development. Militarization contributes to human capital development, and military training influences modern attitudes and values that scholars view as a key to a nation's development. The training teaches discipline that promotes valuable skills in the civilian job market.<sup>100</sup> Some scholars also argue that militarization negatively affects development because the maintenance of military force consumes many resources despite human capital investment. Military expenditures consume vast resources, affecting investment and capital formation. As a result, national leaders, civilians, and the military use the armed forces to protect corrupt and repressive regimes and dismantle the opposition, a common feature in African politics.<sup>101</sup> The adverse effect of militarization in third-world countries, particularly Africa, suffers from socio-economic developments such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure, contributing to massive unemployment.

In addition, third-world countries that lack investment and demilitarization tend to benefit from civilian government expenditures when the defense budget declines. High arms imports

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<sup>99</sup> Brad Bullock and Glen Firebaugh (1990). Guns and Butter? The Effects of Militarization on Economic and Social Development in Third World, *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 231-266

<sup>100</sup> Robin Luckham (1982). French Militarization in Africa, *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 24, 55-84

<sup>101</sup> Ibid



reduce health and educational expenditures, especially under a military regime. A study has indicated that domestic revenues are used to purchase war machines and armaments to protect and strengthen the power of the political elites to suppress international political movements that seek social change, including the redistribution of wealth. Domestic militarization exacerbates existing national inequalities, and recruitment into the military is restricted to groups and communities that are privileged and powerful in society.<sup>102</sup>

On the other hand, leading US military officials are among the most vocal advocates against the militarization of US foreign aid to Africa. They are against the US cutting economic and humanitarian assistance and favoring the military in a poverty-stricken environment, which can create more conflicts in the continent. These leading military officials are against the US choosing military bases over schools and view this as a recipe for militant groups to hurt vulnerable Africans and US interests by shifting away from development. They believe civilian bodies should be responsible for foreign aid rather than the military. According to Alexander Laskaris, the “US is prepared to send peacekeepers to conflict zones in Africa but unwilling to guarantee peace.”<sup>103</sup> Other experts in US foreign policy toward Africa argue that US-Africa policy must focus on strengthening good governance and economic growth and less on military operations. Mr. Grant Harris, Special Assistant to President Obama and Senior Director for African Affairs at the White House, argues that US foreign policy toward Africa should be focused on “strengthening democratic institutions, advancing peace and security, development, trade and investment, and economic growth”. Harris posits that US policy has shifted from these goals, and US-African policy is being militarized. Similarly, the US must avoid seeing the continent through the soda

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid

<sup>103</sup> <https://borgenproject.org/the-militarization-of-u-s-foreign-aid-to-africa/>

straw of counterterrorism and provide holistic solutions to instability and conflicts to achieve its goal of eradicating violent extremism in Africa.<sup>104</sup> In addition, US policy is centered on military, security, and weapon sales to corrupt leaders, and governments should be shifted to promote governance and economic growth, which help address African poverty problems.

Similarly, a former deputy assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs, Amanda Dory, argues that the US must help African governments develop their poor governance system to enjoy domestic legitimacy because these African countries had recently achieved independence from their colonial power. The US must invest in Africa to create jobs for the young populations, which can turn them away from radicalization or joining terrorist organizations because of financial benefits.<sup>105</sup> For the continent to thrive economically, the US must limit its policy of militarization and focus on economic development through job creation.

According to David Rodriguez, a former Commander of the US Africa Command, Africa needs security, governance, and development, which are interdependent. However, the US should not focus only on counterterrorism programs involving al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). With development, Africa can achieve security.<sup>106</sup>

Also, former Commander of US Africa Command, Townsend, asserts that Africa is an essential continent that the US cannot ignore for China and Russia because the continent is rich in strategic minerals, cobalt and tantalum, and other critical resources needed in 21<sup>st</sup>-century technological development. In addition, Africa has several choke points that help international countries transport crude oil to various destinations, and the sea lines of communication are vitally

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<sup>104</sup> Justin Chapman (2017). US-Africa Policy Becoming Militarized, Experts Say

<sup>105</sup> Ibid

<sup>106</sup> Ibid

essential to the US. Therefore, the US is assisting fragile, failed, and ungoverned spaces to prevent violent extremist organizations in the continent from guaranteeing security to protect both the US economy and security interests and preserve African governments against VEOs operating in Africa. The US is a preferred partner and never a colonial power, and several African nations view the US as an honest broker, not a predator.<sup>107</sup>

Besides, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates warned about the Department of Defense taking control over the funding of projects, which has weakened the culture of civilian foreign policy institutions and described US foreign policy as “creeping militarization” undermining “American’s civilian institutions of diplomacy and development”.<sup>108</sup>

Similarly, the former US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton 2009, also argued that the US must combine hard and soft power into smart strategies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century because the US alone cannot address all the problems in the global system and the world cannot handle the issues without the US. Therefore, the US must use smart power instruments to resolve the issues of the contemporary international system. Joseph Nye defines smart power as combining hard and soft power resources into practical strategies.<sup>109</sup> Against this backdrop, Hillary Clinton becomes a staunch supporter and advocate of smart power as an instrument of US foreign policy in the contemporary international system. She believes the US should foster better relationships with the global community through increased partnerships and development assistance. In addition, Clinton asserts that it might be a mistake for the US government to depend solely on hard and soft power

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid

<sup>108</sup> Gordon Adams and Shoon Murray (2014). *Mission Creep: The Militarization of US Foreign Policy*, Georgetown University Press, Washington DC

<sup>109</sup> Joseph Nye (2013). *Hard, Soft and Smart Power*, The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy, Political Science, International Relations, and Political Institutions

as US foreign policy statecraft. She argues that ‘‘US foreign policy in the contemporary time must be built on 3Ds diplomacy, development, and defense.’ The diplomats, development experts, defense, and others must work together to achieve a common goal instead of policy militarization. The 3Ds approach should be the core instrument of US foreign policy in tackling transnational threats, the war on terror, and issues regarding weak and failed states, notably in Africa. This admission from the former Secretary of State has indicated that the US must not rely solely on hard power instruments to address problems facing African countries. Instead, smart power strategies must be used to win the hearts and minds of the violent extremist organizations in Africa. The US can demystify the perception of militarizing its foreign policy in Africa by implementing an integrated 3Ds approach or the whole-of-government concept, which Obama’s administration instituted. The 3Ds approach supports three equal pillars of engagement: diplomacy, development, and defense, working together to address threats such as terrorism, poverty, health, and pandemic issues in Africa rather than overreliance on the military.

Despite the adverse effects of the US policy militarization in Africa, the policy also brings positive results to the continent. The fundamental goal of US foreign policy is to promote peace and stability and to spread its values and norms in the global system, such as democracy, human rights, and economic development.<sup>110</sup> Some scholars also argue that militarizing US foreign policy promotes favorable conditions. First, the US presence promotes global and external security for the host nation. The host nation gets protection and stability through the US presence, which supports economic and political development. In addition, a friendship with the US also deters interstate rivals from aggressive behavior and dissuades internal political opponents from promoting political instability. Second, the US military aid/presence causes government

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<sup>110</sup> James Meernik (2008). US Foreign Policy and Regime Instability, Strategic Studies Institute

expenditures on the host nation's security to be reduced. The regime utilizes its resources on economic and social development programs that can lead to the nation's prosperity. Third, the US military presence accelerates the local economy and provides jobs for citizens involved in businesses that supply US army needs. The population also benefits from US educational, economic, and military interactions.

#### GREAT DEBATE SURROUNDING US FOREIGN POLICY MILITARIZATION PROMOTING INSTABILITY OR STABILITY IN SELECTED AFRICAN COUNTRIES

This dissertation offers a unique and fresh perspective on the highly debated topic of US foreign policy militarization in Africa. It diverges from the standard narrative that this approach has sown seeds of instability. The study provides a comprehensive view illuminating how US foreign policy also plays a significant role in fostering stability. Providing military aid and training to the selected African countries has yielded notable successes and reassured the effectiveness of US counterterrorism programs. For instance, the considerable weakening of terrorist organizations like Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, the Lord Resistance Army, Islamic State West Africa Province, and ISIS-affiliated groups. This, along with the training and equipment provided, has empowered the security forces in these nations to disrupt and dismantle violent extremist organizations, thereby enhancing security and mitigating terrorism threats. Therefore, the US counterterrorism programs have contributed to stability and demonstrated their potential for significant impact, particularly in Uganda.<sup>111</sup> US support helps in securing porous borders, which terrorists and criminal networks often exploit. As a result, better border security reduces the flow of illegal arms, drugs, and human trafficking, contributing to stability.

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<sup>111</sup> Alexis Arieff & Lauren Ploch (2012). The Lord's Resistance Army: The US Response, Congressional Research Service

US training programs are pivotal in professionalizing militaries from selected African countries, underscoring the importance of liberal norms such as democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and civilian control of the armed forces. These programs also foster discipline, leadership, and adherence to international standards of conduct. This results in developing more competent and reliable military forces that can effectively manage internal and external threats as they arise. The internalization of liberal norms by armed forces in certain countries, notably Nigeria, is a deterrent to coups, which were rampant during the Cold War and post-Cold War. In this context, US logistical and advanced military equipment, a crucial component of US foreign policy, enhances the operational capabilities of the forces from the selected African countries. The US security assistance and training programs were instrumental in the Multinational Joint Task Force in the Lake Chad Basin region's successful recapture of the contested territories from Boko Haram, ISWAP, and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The selected African nations' security assistance and training programs have been crucial in maintaining stability, primarily in Uganda. Additionally, logistical support, a key strength of US foreign policy, facilitates efficient responses to crises, be it natural disasters, humanitarian emergencies, or conflict situations, thereby bolstering stability in the chosen nations and other African countries.<sup>112</sup>

Additionally, US-led exercises like AFRICOM's Flintlock and African Lion bring together military forces from the selected countries and other African nations. These exercises are designed to improve interoperability, foster trust, and encourage collaboration among regional forces, which is crucial in addressing transnational threats. The US military assistance often supports regional security initiatives like the G5 Sahel Joint Force and the African Union's peacekeeping missions.

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid

By enhancing the capability of these initiatives, the US helps to build a collective security architecture that can address regional instability more effectively.

Moreover, the US military training programs include components on human rights, the rule of law, and civilian military control. This promotes adherence to democratic principles and reduces the likelihood of military abuses, contributing to more stable and just societies. The training emphasizes the importance of positive civil-military relations, ensuring that military forces respect civilian authority and work in cooperation with government institutions. Thus, it fosters a more stable political environment and reduces the risk of military coups. In addition, US training programs also prepare militaries from the chosen nations for humanitarian assistance and disaster response. This enhances the capabilities of the forces to handle natural disasters effectively, mitigating the impact on civilian populations and contributing to stability. For example, US military aid and training have helped Kenya's forces become more effective in counterterrorism operations against al-Shabaab. This has contributed to greater regional security and reduced the terrorist threat. Also, after the Liberian civil war, the US supported restructuring and training the Armed forces, which was instrumental in maintaining peace and stability, promoting a professional military that respect democratic governance and human rights. In addition, the US collaborates with the selected countries through counterterrorism and counterinsurgency programs to combat threats from Islamist jihadist organizations through intelligence sharing and joint operations. This helps stabilize regions affected by extremist groups like Boko Haram and al-Shabaab.

On the other hand, the evidence from the existing literature has demonstrated that the US has suspended its military aid and training programs to the selected countries during coups and human rights violations against the populations to promote stability. In addition, the Leahy law also prohibits the US from providing security assistance and military training to any foreign armed

forces that have been implicated in human rights abuses or involved in coups. Alternatively, the US also imposes military and economic sanctions on countries that have been involved in violating liberal norms. The US applies these measures to promote stability in the selected countries. For instance, the US suspended military aid and training programs in Mali because of military-political intervention. In addition, the US suspended security assistance and training programs in Nigeria because of human rights violations. Again, the US suspended its military aid and training programs when Uganda passed the Anti-Homosexuality Act and was declared ineligible to participate in AGOA in 2024. Also, Niger and Gabon were suspended from AGOA because of military coups. Against this background, US foreign policy militarization toward the chosen countries also promotes stability, evident in the extant literature. Furthermore, the US foreign aid channeled through USAID supports infrastructure projects, agricultural development, and entrepreneurial ventures, which leads to sustainable development and creates jobs, reducing poverty and social unrest. The US has made significant investments in health initiatives, such as the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), which improve health outcomes and increase the life expectancy of many African nations and populations. Regarding global health security, the US collaborates with African countries to strengthen their capacity to detect and respond to health threats like Ebola. This proactive approach helps prevent health crises that could destabilize societies.

In conclusion, US military aid and training contribute significantly to stability in the selected countries by enhancing the security capabilities of the chosen African nations, fostering regional cooperation, and promoting good governance and human rights. These efforts help create a safer, more secure environment conducive to economic development and political stability.



On the other hand, US troops in the selected African countries promote stability through various means, including enhancing security, supporting humanitarian efforts, and fostering regional cooperation. The US troops play a crucial role in counterterrorism efforts by targeting and dismantling domestic and transnational terrorist networks such as al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, and ISIS affiliates. The presence of the troops helps disrupt plots and reduce the operational capabilities of the terrorist groups, thereby promoting regional stability. In addition, US troops in the chosen countries provide training, advising, and assistance to the militaries and security forces. This improves local forces' tactical skills, operational effectiveness, and professionalism in handling security challenges independently.

In addition, US troops are often deployed to provide immediate assistance during natural disasters and humanitarian crises. The logistical capabilities, medical support, and engineering expertise help mitigate the impact of disasters, support recovery efforts, and stabilize affected regions. Alternatively, the US military medical teams contribute to health initiatives, including disease prevention and treatment programs. For example, the US efforts to control the outbreak of diseases like Ebola enhance public health security and stability in the affected regions. Also, the US troops in the selected African countries help build the capacity of African militaries through training programs that focus on leadership, intelligence, and operational planning. When these capabilities are strengthened, forces in various countries will be better equipped to maintain security and domestic stability. The US troops support regional security initiatives, such as the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram and the G5 Sahel Joint Force against Islamist jihadist organizations such as al-Qaeda in the Islamic of Maghreb (AQIM), Ansar Dine, and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). By providing training, intelligence, and logistical support, US troops enhance and address the effectiveness of cross-

border threats. Besides, US troops assist in training and equipping African peacekeeping forces, and their support for the African Union and the United Nations peacekeeping missions contributes to stabilizing conflict zones and maintaining peace. Furthermore, the presence of US troops acts as a deterrence against aggression by hostile state and non-state actors. The US troops' strategic presence reassures allies and partners of US commitment to regional security. Also, the US troops stationed in selected countries provide a rapid response capability to emerging threats and crises. Thus, their ability to deploy quickly helps contain conflicts and prevent them from escalating. Typical examples are US troops in Somalia who have supported Somali forces in their fight against al-Shabaab, providing training, intelligence, and direct support for counterterrorism operations. This has helped degrade the terrorist group and improve security in the region. Again, during the outbreak of Ebola in 2014 and 2016, US troops were deployed to West Africa to build treatment centers, provide medical care, and support containment efforts. Their involvement was crucial in controlling the outbreak and stabilizing the affected countries.

In sum, the presence of US troops in Africa, notably chosen nations, contributes to stability by enhancing security, supporting humanitarian efforts, fostering regional cooperation, promoting governance, and providing strategic deterrence. The US's efforts help create a safer and more stable environment conducive to development and prosperity.

Furthermore, US intervention in Africa encompasses diplomatic, economic, military, and humanitarian efforts to promote stability. The US plays a critical role in mediating conflicts and supporting peace processes. It facilitates negotiations and provides diplomatic support that helps to resolve disputes and foster long-term peace. For example, the US is involved in mediation efforts in South Sudan and supports peace agreements in Sudan and Ethiopia. In addition, US diplomatic efforts promote democratic governance, transparency, and the rule of law. Through the

Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), the US invests in the next generation of African leaders, encouraging democratic values and practices. Additionally, the US intervention helped African nations combat violent extremist organizations' threats through training, intelligence, and equipment, which enhanced the capabilities of the chosen nations. For instance, the US supports regional economic and security initiatives, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the G5 Sahel Joint Force. These initiatives promote economic integration and regional stability. Also, US intervention in Somalia helped stabilize regions of Somalia by combating al-Shabaab and supporting local structures. The US assisted in rebuilding Liberia's armed forces after the civil war and supported democratic elections, contributing to the nation's stabilization and recovery. Against this backdrop, the US intervention in Africa and selected countries addressed security threats, fostering economic development, democratic governance, humanitarian assistance, and promoting regional cooperation. Thus, US intervention creates a more stable and secure environment in Africa.

Overall, then, a substantial portion of the existing qualitative literature argues that the US military aid, training of militaries, US troops stationed in selected African countries, and intervention contribute to stability in the selected African countries through counterterrorism programs used to defeat violent extremist organizations, suspension of military aid and training programs whenever human rights violations and military intervened in politics and non-military programs initiated by the US in the chosen African nations.

On the other hand, as discussed at length above, other portions of the existing literature argue that US policies in selected African countries contribute to instability. US military aid and training programs in Africa are intended to enhance security and stability, yet they may create instability, especially when comprehensive mechanisms such as transparency and accountability

are not implemented. US military aid often bolsters the power of authoritarian regimes that prioritize control over democratic principles and human rights. Some of these regimes use enhanced military capabilities to suppress political opposition and civil dissent, which can lead to long-term instability and uprisings. A typical example is President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda. The US has supported authoritarian regimes and viewed Uganda as a reliable security partner against terrorism and also for geopolitical reasons. In addition, the US primarily focuses on counterterrorism programs, and military assistance can lead to the militarization of certain regions, which can exacerbate conflicts and increase violence as military solutions are prioritized over political and social issues. Also, trained and well-equipped military forces may feel empowered to intervene in politics, sometimes leading to coups, notably in Mali and Burkina Faso, where military officers trained by the US forces have overthrown democratically elected governments.

Moreover, US military equipment and training skills acquired by the African militaries have been used to commit human rights abuses. This affects local stability and damages US foreign policy's credibility and moral standing in countries where violations have been committed. Training and equipping military forces without robust oversight can lead to a lack of accountability. In addition, trained soldiers and units might engage in corruption, extortion, or abuses against civilians, which can lead to resentment and resistance from the local population. The US military actions, such as drone strikes and counterterrorism operations, can result in civilian casualties and collateral damage. This can foster anti-American sentiment, radicalize local populations, and provide propaganda material for extremist groups. For example, US security assistance and training have provided support for Boko Haram, and the Nigerian military has been accused of human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings and torture, which have exacerbated local grievances and fueled the further insurgency. In Somalia, US military support for the government

and its efforts against al-Shabaab have been criticized for contributing to civilian casualties and displacement, which can undermine efforts to stabilize the country. Although US military aid and training aim to enhance security and stability, the abovementioned factors must be managed to avoid exacerbating existing tensions or contributing to human rights violations. In addition, effective oversight, accountability, and a holistic approach that includes political, economic, and social dimensions are crucial to mitigating these risks.

Furthermore, the presence of US troops can be perceived as a violation of national sovereignty, leading to resentment among local populations and governments. This can fuel nationalist and anti-American sentiments, undermining the legitimacy of both the host government and US efforts in the country. In addition, violent extremist groups such as al-Shabaab and various Islamist jihadist organizations in Mali can exploit the presence of US troops to bolster their recruitment strategy, portraying themselves as defenders against foreign occupation. This can lead to increased support for terrorist organizations and a rise in radicalization. It is worth noting that US drone strikes and military operations intended to target terrorists can result in civilian casualties, and this incident can provoke anger and hostility among local populations, leading to violence and retaliation. Moreover, military operations can lead to the displacement of civilians, exacerbating humanitarian emergencies and creating instability.

Alternatively, the presence of US troops and security assistance strengthened dictatorial regimes that prioritized maintaining power over addressing the needs of their populations. This creates an avenue for human rights abuses and suppression of political opposition, fostering long-term instability.

On the other hand, some academic scholars have argued that the influx of US military aid and advanced weaponry can escalate conflicts by intensifying violence and prolonging civil wars

in selected African countries. Increased availability of weapons can lead to proliferation beyond the intended recipients, which can fall into the hands of non-state actors and criminal groups, further destabilizing the region. Some authoritarian African regimes used U.S. military aid to solve security problems but neglected the political, economic, and social strategies essential for long-term stability. This imbalance can perpetuate underlying issues that drive conflict in the selected nations. For instance, the US military operations in Somalia, Niger, and Libya have been criticized for contributing to instability.

Meanwhile, US military support, including arms and training, can escalate conflicts by increasing the capabilities of local forces to engage in prolonged violence. In addition, US direct intervention in domestic political affairs can be perceived as neocolonialism, which undermines local autonomy and sovereignty, which can lead to a backlash against the US and national regime acting as complicit. The 2011 NATO intervention, supported by the US, led to the collapse of Gaddafi's government, which resulted in a power vacuum that created a prolonged conflict among various armed groups. This has created instability that affects the region's proliferation of weapons and increased migration flows. Also, the US military operations in Somalia against al-Shabaab resulted in civilian casualties, fostering local resentment and complicating peacebuilding efforts. In the Sahel region, the US support for counterterrorism operations strengthened authoritarian regimes that use military assistance to suppress political opposition and civil society, exacerbating grievances that fuel insurgencies. In conclusion, the aim of this dissertation is to enhance our understanding of whether and how US foreign policy toward African countries enhances or detracts from security and stability there.

### CHAPTER III

#### BACKGROUND OF SECURITIZATION THEORY

Security studies emerged as an academic and professional field after World War II. Until the later years of the Cold War, it was considered a sub-discipline of international relations. Anglo-American thinking largely influenced the field and maintained a predominant military focus. The academic scholars sought to safeguard the state with a scientific agenda to protect the nation-state from discernible threats and maintain the status quo. This positivist approach, which assumed ontological underpinnings of rationalism and realism, faced profound challenges at the close of the Cold War, marking a significant paradigm shift in security studies. Since the collapse of the Cold War, security studies have undergone considerable changes. The Copenhagen School, through its intellectual journey, has presented an alternative method of analyzing security based on a social constructivist theoretical understanding by formulating the securitization concept. This social constructivist approach to the conceptualization of security was first presented in a 1989 Working Paper, 'Security the Speech Act': Analyzing the Politics of A Word by Ole Weaver. On the other hand, Weaver Ole, Barry Buzan, and Jaap de Wilde at the Center for Peace and Conflict Research Institute in Copenhagen further developed the constructivist approach to security and published a series of works on societal security in Europe and their seminal book published in 1998 *Security: A New Framework of Analysis* extensively expands the conceptual understanding of securitization and its practical application, and the scholars become known as 'Copenhagen School.'<sup>113</sup> The School designed and developed the securitization theory to understand the changing dynamics of security in contemporary times. The Copenhagen School presents the concept of securitization theory to represent a different approach through which the international

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid

environment framed security in the multipolar world where security is no longer the primary domain of national defense and politics.<sup>114</sup> In addition, the Copenhagen School rejects the traditional narrow state-centric and military meaning of security by providing a ‘constructivist thinking’ which has widened and deepened the definition of security. The scholars' securitization concept is consistent with the constructivist paradigm, which views security as a ‘social construction.’ Buzan et al. (1998) see security as a ‘speech act’ socially constructed through discourse. Scholars argue that security can no longer be defined in terms of threats and military force being in the hands of the state. The theory focuses on the politics of security and often uses it to analyze security agenda-setting. Buzan et al. 1998 studied security across five sectors: the military, economic, political, societal, and environmental. The Copenhagen School describes securitization as an intersubjective and socially constructed process by which a referent object is acknowledged and deemed to be protected.<sup>115</sup> This provides a narrow definition of security relating to ‘survival and existential threat’ to retain the focus of the traditional security studies agenda. Securitization is, thus, an intersubjective establishment of an existential threat that demands ‘urgent and immediate attention and requires extraordinary measures to counter the threat. Scholars have drawn the concept from J.L Austin’s language theory and view security as a speech act that makes security a special and unique language. Meanwhile, Buzan et al. 1998 argue that security threats are created when elites or actors label something a security threat and the relevant audience accepts this designation. The Copenhagen School delineates five main features of the securitization theory, such as referent object, securitizing move, securitizing actor, speech act, and

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid

<sup>115</sup> Catherine Charrett (2009). A Critical Application of Securitization Theory: Overcoming the Normative Dilemma of Writing Security, International Catalan Institute of Peace



audience, and the scholars have succeeded in deconstructing the reified meaning of security.<sup>116</sup> Securitization is a process by which non-politicized or politicized issues are elevated to become part of the security agenda. In International Relations, securitization refers to the process by which states determine threats to national security based on subjective instead of objective assessments of perceived danger. The concept of securitization provides a fresh take on the debate between those who maintain that security is subjective (what is perceived as a threat) and those who claim that threats are objective (what constitutes a threat). The central argument is not if threats are real but how a specific issue is socially constructed.<sup>117</sup> Security is an intersubjective concept with no objective meaning.<sup>118</sup> The speech act brings something into effect, and uttering security can be viewed as an act by which all kinds of issues, such as military, political, economic, societal, and environmental, can be staged as threats. Moreover, not every security issue qualifies as securitization. Securitization as a speech must fulfill three critical criteria.

1. Claims that a referent object is existentially threatened.
2. Demands the right to take extraordinary countermeasures to deal with the threat.
3. Convinces the audience that rule-breaking behavior to counter the threat is justified.

The Copenhagen School argues that threats can be natural or perceived and that security arguments will always exist in the future, sometimes hypothetically. Thus, one cannot apply objective standards to security. States, actors, and political elites must securitize an issue correctly to avoid political consequences because it can cause chaos and disaster to a nation. In securitization, the audience plays a significant role in accepting the referent object that requires emergency action or

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<sup>116</sup> Paul Williams & Matt McDonald (2018). *Security Studies: An Introduction*, Third Edition, Published by Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London, and New York

<sup>117</sup> Ibid

<sup>118</sup> Williams F.S Miles (2012). Deploying Development to Counter Terrorism: Post-9/11 Transformation of US Foreign Aid to Africa, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 55, No. 3, 27-60

extraordinary measures. As a result, the concept focuses on the actions and choices made by actors to shape and manipulate the security agenda. Buzan et al. 1998 believe that the securitizing interaction of an actor and audience is vital to moving an issue from the regular political schedule to the security agenda. The process involves the claim made by a securitizing actor and legitimization by the audience.<sup>119</sup> This underscores the importance of the audience in the securitization process, making them feel involved and essential in the security discourse. In addition, to avoid the destruction of the referent object, measures must be taken to move the issue from everyday politics into the extraordinary security realm. Scholars conceptualize security as a speech act through which verbal and textual materials transmit a threat from actor to audience. The audience either accepts the claim or rejects the securitization. The audience must receive the claim for legitimization or securitization to be successful. The legitimization of an issue depends on the context, and successful securitization requires the claim to resonate with the audience.<sup>120</sup> Security moves take politics beyond the established rules of the game and frame the issue as a special kind of politics or above politics. Buzan et al. (1998) equate security with survival and security discourse, and problems are labeled security when extraordinary measures are needed to protect the referent object. Once an issue is successfully securitized, it must be treated differently with emergency measures to the threat with national defense or state-centered solutions to protect the survival of the referent object.<sup>121</sup>

As a result, Buzan et al. 1998 argue that because securitization requires emergency measures outside democratic control, scholars prefer desecuritization to securitization as a method

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<sup>119</sup> Robin Walker & Annette Seegers (2012). Securitization: The Case of Post-9/11 United States African Policy, *Journal of Military Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 22-45

<sup>120</sup> Ibid

<sup>121</sup> Michael Williams (2003). Words, Images, Enemies: Securitization and International Politics, *International Security Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 47, No. 511.531

of solving problems. Desecuritization involves moving an issue of the security agenda back into the realm of public political discourse, and ordinary political disputes or issues are reversed and moved out of the ‘*threat*’ zone and dealt with by democratic rules in the political system—for example, the transformation of European security after the Cold War.<sup>122</sup> Securitization theory is a theoretical tool of analysis that analysts use to trace the incidence of both securitization and desecuritization.<sup>123</sup>

On the other hand, the Copenhagen School argues that when something is labeled security, a referent object is threatened and needs extraordinary measures to ensure survival. Therefore, the issue is moved from everyday politics to emergency politics, requiring swift decisions without the standard rules and regulations of policymaking. Securitization is based on power and capability and how social and political issues are constructed.<sup>124</sup> In addition, securitization also occurs in cases where security is not mentioned; for example, in matters of defense, securitization is institutionalized. According to the Copenhagen School, the success of securitization lies with the relevant audience of the speech act. The audience accepts the designation of something as an existential threat to something that is valued. As a result, the audience plays a crucial role in the securitization theory and in accepting the discourse. Although non-state actors become parts of the model, the process remains dominated by powerful actors in privileged positions. However, the success of securitization does not depend solely on extraordinary measures but rather on the acknowledgment of security threats by the audience, such as political elites or institutions like the military.<sup>125</sup> The success of the securitization concept is affected by a process that Buzan et al. 1998

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid

<sup>123</sup> Ibid

<sup>124</sup> Rita Taureck (2006). Securitization Theory and Securitization Studies, *Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 9, 53-61

<sup>125</sup> Antonio Does (2013). Securitization Theory

called facilitating conditions, which refers to the conditions that affect the likelihood of successful securitization. The facilitating needs come in two forms: linguistic, grammatical, and contextual. The first aspect concerns speech acts and the extent to which they follow the logic and grammar of security. For example, the narrative creates an existential threat. The second aspect depends on the securitizing actor and their societal position. For example, are the securitizing actors occupying a position of authority, or do they have legitimacy? A securitizing actor is a person or group that performs a securitizing move. A successful securitizing actor is usually in a position of authority but, occasionally, an official source. The securitizing move implies an attempt by an actor to present something as an existential threat to a referent object. These factors affect audiences' acceptance of the securitizing move, and issues can be treated with extraordinary measures.<sup>126</sup> Buzan et al. 1998 argue that public issues range from non-politicized (matters not dealt with by the state) to politicized (issues dealt with within the political system and the public demands government actions) to securitize. Thus, securitized issues are moved from regular/everyday politics to security politics because they have been presented as existential threats requiring emergency measures outside democratic regulations.

Buzan et al. 1998 posit that securitization theory focuses on the role of political actors, such as political leaders who articulate and label threats. These actors can influence the public and impact legitimate state policy with their power and legitimacy. Therefore, elites speak security through institutional voice, and security is constructed from the perspective of those with political power.<sup>127</sup> States that perceive a threat to national security can securitize sectors and take stringent

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<sup>126</sup> Paul Williams and Matt McDonald (2018). *Security Studies: An Introduction*, Third Edition, Published by Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London, and New York

<sup>127</sup> Siddharth Sethi (2015). *What is Security? Securitization Theory and Its Application in Turkey*

measures to enhance their security without public debate and democratic process. A typical example is the Patriot Act after 9/11.

Securitization theory has widened and deepened the perspective of security studies by deconstructing the reified meaning of '*power politics*' of realists and unveiling the securitizing power of speech acts when it comes to defining an issue as an existential threat, decoupling it from everyday politics and promoting the discourse analysis to a method that can critically evaluate securitization process.<sup>128</sup> The main argument conceptualized by the Copenhagen School of International Relations claims that security issues are socially constructed through discourse. Securitization theory as a mode of analyzing security processes has gained much importance and prominence in recent years, and several academic scholars and authors are using the concept in various security politics fields. These interdisciplinary works include the study of securitization of varying issues such as terrorism, transnational crime, immigration, women's rights, religion, disease, natural disasters, and identity.<sup>129</sup>

Balzacq et al. 2016 assert that one of the most cited definitions of securitization theory is when a securitizing actor uses a rhetoric of existential threat, thereby taking the issue from everyday politics to security politics. Balzacq et al. 2016 argue that securitization is an articulated accumulation of practices whereby heuristic artifacts (policy tools, emotions, etc.) are contextually mobilized by the securitizing actor, who works to prompt audiences to build a coherent network of implications (feelings, sensations, thoughts, and intuitions) about the vulnerability of a referent object that has been under existential threat which needs to be protected through extraordinary

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<sup>128</sup> Mattia Giubilei: What are the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Securitization Paradigm?

<sup>129</sup> Catherine Charrett (2009). A Critical Application of Securitization Theory: Overcoming the Normative Dilemma of Writing Security, International Catalan Institute of Peace

measures.<sup>130</sup> According to Balzacq et al. 2016 the critical underlying idea of the securitization paradigm is that an issue is given sufficient saliency to win the audience's permission, which enables those authorized to handle the problem to use whatever means deemed appropriate. In other words, securitization combines the politics of threat design with threat management. Balzacq et al. 2016 believe the theory's core concepts are the securitizing actor, the referent object, the audience, the context, and the adoption of specific policies.<sup>131</sup> To Balzacq et al. 2016 securitization theory addresses three essential questions:

1. What makes something a security issue?
2. What kind of responses does this call for?
3. What are the specific consequences of agreeing that something is a threat?

In contrast, the securitization theory observes that the "security-ness" of an entity stems from interactions between a securitizing actor and its audience. For this reason, Balzacq et al. (2016) argue that designating something as a security issue exists in the social life sector, and the security domain does not comprise military matters. Therefore, securitization theory is closely related to social constructivism, with the work that examines language, the status of practice interaction with a speech act, and the power of argument in world politics.<sup>132</sup>

Also, the securitization process has made the theory fluid and adaptable and has become an influential approach in security studies in recent years. The concept has pushed issues in different theoretical directions, and some scholars have diverse views about security and securitization in academic literature. Some believe security is a state of being or a condition.

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<sup>130</sup> Thierry Balzacq, Sarah Leonard, and Jan Ruzicka (2016). Securitization Revisited: Theory and Cases, *International Relations*, Vol. 30, No. 4, 494-531

<sup>131</sup> Ibid

<sup>132</sup> Ibid

However, realists view security as a condition for the state to strive to survive in an anarchic international system. In addition, the Welsh School and human security approaches also consider security to be the welfare of human beings. In contrast, constructivist approaches, poststructuralists, and securitization theorists believe security is a process or practice.<sup>133</sup>

## CRITICISMS OF THE SECURITIZATION CONCEPT

Despite the phenomenal success of the paradigm, the theory has come under fierce criticism from scholars for a failure to address the normative implications within the theory. The most significant criticism of the securitization theory is centered on the speech act. The theory critics argue that Copenhagen School needs to pay more attention to other actions that might bring security into being. The speech act is one of many communication methods. Images and visual representations, such as media coverage, are crucial in securitization. In 2003, Michael Williams argued that images played a vital role in communication and cited the 9/11 attacks, how news organizations broadcast the images affecting audiences, and the implication for securitization. Similarly, Williams attacks the Copenhagen School for being ‘politically irresponsible and lacking basis from which to evaluate threat, enmity, and emergency critically.’ Lene Hansen (2011) studied the publication of Prophet Muhammad cartoons in a Danish newspaper, and the controversy it caused demonstrated the role of images in audiences’ understanding of visual securitization. In 2002, Huysmans argued that ‘language’ is a communicative and mediating instrument that brings social practices into a particular communicative and standardized framework. Therefore, language has a symbolic power of security as a word and a concept, and its invocation articulates a specific rationality. Thus, security is a political technology that interlocks a system of knowledge,

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<sup>133</sup> Paul Williams and Matt McDonald (2018). *Security Studies: An Introduction*, Third Edition, Published by Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London, and New York.

representations, practices, and institutional forms that flow in particular directions.<sup>134</sup> In addition, securitization can be misapplied to referent objects that are not threatened and create negative securitization by the political elites or people in authority. Huysmans 2011 also contends that the Speech Act is one of the many means to securitize an issue, and other processes include a systematic collection of data, programming algorithms, and CCTV footage; therefore, the Speech Act is not the only avenue through which issues can be securitized in a state.<sup>135</sup>

Balzacq et al. (2016) criticize the Copenhagen School for the underdevelopment of audiences in theory. The scholars argue that the audience does more than sanction securitizing moves. According to Balzacq et al. 2016 the concept performs two main functions, including moral support and supplying the securitizing actor with a mandate, such as a vote in the legislature, which serves as a policy to address a threat. Balzacq et al. (2016) argue again that before the Iraq invasion, British Prime Minister Tony Blair did not receive the moral support of the audience (public opinion) but secured a formal agreement with another audience (the Parliament) to invade Iraq. This suggests that further studies are needed on the audiences' acceptance of a threat.<sup>136</sup>

Balzacq (2005) argues that although the audience's acceptance is needed for successful securitization, the framework of securitization theory does not focus on the audience's status and nature. Thus, the success of securitization depends on the audience because effective securitization must be '*audience-centered*.' Against this backdrop, the securitizing actor needs the moral support of the public for its securitization to be effective and successful. However, the moral support from the public is not enough and highlights the importance of formal support from policymaking

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<sup>134</sup> Catherine Charrett (2009). A Critical Application of Securitization Theory: Overcoming the Normative Dilemma of Writing Security, International Catalan Institute of Peace

<sup>135</sup> Ibid

<sup>136</sup> Thierry Balzacq, Sarah Leonard, and Jan Ruzicka (2016). Securitization Revisited: Theory and Cases, International Relations, Vol. 30, No. 4, 494-531



institutions to adopt a fair policy to counter a security threat; therefore, the securitizing actor aims to convince several audiences.

In contrast, Balzacq argues that securitization is audience-centered and criticizes Copenhagen School for focusing excessively on the *'speech act'* at the expense of context's importance in determining securitization's success. Balzacq posits that elites are the crucial members of the audience to be convinced to obtain the legitimacy of emergency measures, which contributes to the role of power in securitization theory. Furthermore, the Copenhagen School's failure to conceptualize the audience's importance leaves the audience as passive recipients of elite speech acts. As a result, the elites speak about security, and the analysts study securitization.

Similarly, the securitization theory has been criticized for failing to incorporate context into the approach. Balzacq et al. (2016) posit that context is crucial in securitizing moves. Scholars argue that security's semantics combine textual meaning acquired through language (written or spoken), cultural significance, and knowledge gained through historical interactions. Scholars believe that the purpose of security depends on the contextual pronouncement, which can be shaped, and some actors can articulate security discourse better than others, depending on the context. As a result, context empowers, disempowers actors, promotes, and limits a specific outcome.

McDonald 2008 argues that the Copenhagen School's focus on elites serves to *'marginalize the experiences and articulations of the powerless in global politics'*, and the securitizing actor must also convince formal institutions such as the parliament and Congress to act. McDonald again argues that the concept is narrow and problematic because it needs to include social and political contexts in its application. Another major criticism against the securitization theory was that its conceptualization reinforces traditionalist or realist views of how securitization

processes emerge. Thus, the uncritical application of securitization theory reproduces the subjectivities of fear that state power and order are required to manage threats in society.<sup>137</sup> Other scholars also argue that despite Buzan et al. (1998) social constructivist approach to defining security threats, their security analysis does not challenge the dominant or militarized view of security but accepts it as the truth about security. Securitization theory thus feeds into the logic that immediate and undemocratic state action is the only method to manage security threats, which can sometimes result in negative securitization of a sector.<sup>138</sup>

Furthermore, a lack of normative criteria to critically evaluate securitization processes prevents security analysts from challenging negative securitization discourses from being carried out. This has allowed people in authority to securitize anything and everything at any time, and the concept has committed to a methodological objectivism whereby any violent or irrational politics must be viewed as another form of a speech act with an objective treatment.<sup>139</sup>

On the other hand, securitization theory raises numerous ethical questions, such as whether issues should be '*securitized or desecuritized*' in a state because security issues are dramatized to become a supreme priority. Through this process, non-politicized or politicized problems are elevated to security that requires urgent measures that bypass public debate and democratic procedures.

Because securitization requires emergency measures outside of democratic control, the Copenhagen School recommends desecuritization as a preferable problem-solving method.<sup>140</sup> Buzan et al. 1998 suggest that desecuritization is the best option for the long term. Moreover, some scholars criticized desecuritization because the Copenhagen School still links politics and security,

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<sup>137</sup> Catherine Charrett (2009). A Critical Application of Securitization Theory: Overcoming the Normative Dilemma of Writing Security, International Catalan Institute of Peace

<sup>138</sup> Ibid

<sup>139</sup> Ibid

<sup>140</sup> Ibid

where security is associated with extraordinary, militarized, and state-centered politics. As a result, McDonald 2008 asserts that security is a failure of everyday politics rather than a contestation for a change. Thus, the theory has no fundamental concept for change beyond desecuritization. Other scholars argue that desecuritization might provide an avenue for positive change. Still, the desecuritization image is under-theorized because Buzan et al. (1998) have little idea about the desecuritization of an issue.<sup>141</sup> And the approach continues to raise questions about ‘*security politics*.’. Nonetheless, several studies demonstrate that both the theoretical assumptions of securitization theory and empirical applications of these assumptions are helpful when analyzing different policy and security issues, and the concept can be applied to a broad range of issue areas, contexts, and actors.<sup>142</sup>

#### SECURITIZATION AS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is grounded in the transformative securitization theory, a seminal concept in international relations. Pioneered by Buzan et al., this theory revolutionizes our understanding of security, redefining it as a ‘speech act’ and social construction. It posits that states perceive threats to national security subjectively, not objectively. The securitization concept, a cornerstone of this theory, expands the scope of security by encompassing non-politicized and politicized issues, providing a vital framework for comprehending contemporary security dynamics and challenging traditional security paradigms. This clear definition and understanding of securitization is crucial for the audience to feel informed and transparent about its implications in security.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid

<sup>142</sup> Ibid

<sup>143</sup> Paul Williams & Matt McDonald (2018). *Security Studies: An Introduction*, Third Edition, Published by Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London, and New York

The study aims to build on the work of Abrahamsen's 2005 securitization of Africa's development and humanitarianism as a security threat to Western nations. I have decided to use the securitization theory for this dissertation because Africa has been securitized after the 9/11 attacks. President George W. Bush and US policymakers, through a speech act, securitized Africa, which legitimized the global war on terror in the continent. Washington's new 'security-development' discourse was transported across the Atlantic from Downing Street following the publication of Tony Blair's Commission for Africa in 2005. The New Labor policies on Africa reveal how Blair's securitization of Africa assisted Britain's dealings and interactions with the continent in shifting from a discourse of 'development/humanitarianism' to risk/fear/security in such a way that Africa is mentioned in the context of the 'war on terrorism' and the dangers the continent posed to Britain and the international community.<sup>144</sup> The New Labor securitized Africa's poverty and underdevelopment as dangerous to Britain and the global system. Blair emphasized the threats posed by the marginalization and exclusion of classes and the role of aid and development in containing threats from Africa. Consequently, the British government merged the development and security agenda as mutually constitutive. As a result, Africa's underdevelopment and poverty have shifted from 'development/humanitarianism' categories to 'risk/threat/security'.<sup>145</sup>

US foreign policy toward Africa evolved significantly after the attacks. The continent was securitized because US policymakers and decision-makers viewed Africa's weak and failed states and ungoverned spaces as an existential threat to the homeland. The Department of Defense introduced its post-9/11 National Security Strategy (NSS), which showed emerging security threats from Africa. President George W. Bush acknowledged in his NSS 2006 that weak states could

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<sup>144</sup> Rita Abrahamsen (2005). Blair's Africa: The Politics of Securitization and Fear, *Alternative*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 55-80

<sup>145</sup> Ibid

threaten the US national interests, and poverty, weak institutions, and corruption could make fragile states vulnerable to terrorist networks and drug cartels within their borders. US policymakers also believed that ungoverned African spaces and under-governed territories would become breeding grounds for terrorist organizations to launch attacks on the homeland. Through the Speech Act, the former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice also argued that weak and poorly governed states have become a security threat because of globalization, where states are interdependent, creating new opportunities and challenges from transnational threats like terrorism. Through securitization, the US has now viewed African poverty and underdevelopment, which was previously considered through humanitarian and development lenses, as a security threat to the US and its national interests. In addition, the US also associated failed African states, weak institutions, and ungoverned spaces as a sanctuary for violent extremist groups. Against this background, the US has established unprecedented counterterrorism and training programs in Africa to counter Islamist jihadist organizations in the continent. The securitization of Africa has led to the creation of the Pan-Sahel (PSI), the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), The East Africa Counterterrorism Initiative (EACTI), and the Maritime Security Initiative (MSI) in the Gulf of Guinea. The primary objective of these counterterrorism programs is to deter, disrupt, and counter-terrorist organizations on the continent. The securitization of the continent also led to the creation of Africa Command, aka AFRICOM. Africa gained prominence in political science and international relations literature due to the securitization of the continent as a hub for terrorist organizations planning to attack the US. The securitization of the continent also contributed to the establishment of non-military programs, notably the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Securitization portrays the

continent as a source of trouble instead of opportunity, and several scholars believe the US securitized the continent because of oil, which President Bush considered a strategic national interest, a resource the US might choose to control through a military force.<sup>146</sup>

The existing literature has shown that the US global war on terror and linking a military idea of security to development have adversely affected many African countries. AFRICOM is the US's most militarized policy in Africa, rooted in the 'security-development discourse' which has now become the US aid policy. In addition, AFRICOM reflects the US's securitization and recognition of Africa's new strategic importance to its national security strategy.<sup>147</sup>

The securitization of Africa is not a question of representation or a symbolic act; instead, it has political implications and a strategy that united African countries that opposed the US's establishment of AFRICOM headquarters on the continent. Alternatively, the fear that Africa's underdevelopment and poverty might give rise to hostile actions toward the US and international community helps define the continent's unity and mobilize political and public support for the war on terror. Securitization policies are meant to win, contain, and destroy the external enemy or threat emerging from the continent. Because of the globalized world's interdependence and interconnectedness, failed states can no longer be separated from advanced nations; therefore, winning over failed states predominates US policies.<sup>148</sup>

Some scholars argue that Africa's development/humanitarianism was securitized to categories of risk, threat, and danger because of the US disastrous humanitarian intervention in Somalia and the bombing of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salam by al-Qaeda. These

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<sup>146</sup> Jeremy Keenan (2008). US Militarization in Africa: What Anthropologists Should Know About AFRICOM

<sup>147</sup> Ibid

<sup>148</sup> Rita Abrahamsen (2005). Blair's Africa: The Politics of Securitization and Fear, *Alternative*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 55-80

historical facts might contribute to the US securitization of failed, failing states, weak political institutions, ungoverned spaces, poverty, and underdevelopment as the possible root causes of terrorism on the continent.<sup>149</sup>

Despite the securitization of African poverty, underdevelopment, failed states, and ungoverned areas and territories, the continent plays a significant role in the global system because of its natural resources. According to the evidence from the existing literature, Africa's poverty and underdevelopment have become the main drivers of conflict and insecurity. Thus, issues previously within the development realm are now framed as security requiring emergency measures. This is summed up in the catchphrase, 'There can be no development without security and no security without development.'<sup>150</sup> The development-security nexus has become crucial because the military and other security institutions benefit from development assistance. In addition, the securitization of the continent has contributed to the US's unprecedented military footprint, with US troops deployed and stationed at Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti.<sup>151</sup> Nonetheless, the growing interdependence and interconnectedness of the modern world through globalization have contributed to the securitization of Africa as a transit point for transnational terrorism, crime, drug, and human trafficking, which the US views as a threat to its national security. Thus, securitization becomes an essential foreign policy instrument for the US to combat threats emerging from Africa. As a result, Africa is placed within the logic of fear, and economic development programs that can assist the continent in coming out of poverty and

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid

<sup>150</sup> Rita Abrahamsen (2018). Return of the Generals? Global Militarism in Africa from the Cold War to Present, *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 49, No. 2, 19-31

<sup>151</sup> Ibid

underdevelopment are neglected. Instead, the US focuses primarily on security policies.<sup>152</sup> Africa is relegated to the Hobbesian state of nature without order, where criminal organizations and terrorist networks obtain weapons, money, diamonds, and oil outside the conventional trading and financial system.

Meanwhile, the securitization of Africa's weak and failed states comes with both a blessing and a curse. Western liberal capitalist democracies provide a new policy agenda for Africa and direct resources to the continent, and these policy prescriptions address some of the problems confronting the continent. Scholars have argued that solid research is needed to ensure that today's threat perceptions are grounded with empirical evidence that can help to overcome the problems associated with failed nations instead of exacerbating north-south cleavages. Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary-General, spoke to the Council on Foreign Relations regarding the securitization of the continent, which should not only focus on security but also include global health because threats to security or disease are a threat to all. Annan asserted that people of the world would not enjoy security, development, and justice when many states are fragile; therefore, the underlying causes of fragility must be addressed. The securitization of Africa was unacceptable because several problems facing the continent today resulted from artificial borders created by European powers and subsequent decolonization after World War II. Also, the bipolar balance of power between the two superpowers further distorted institutional development in the continent due to several proxy wars created by the US and the Soviet Union.<sup>153</sup> Securitization of Africa's poverty and underdevelopment to security threats might not solve the continent's challenges

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<sup>152</sup> Rita Abrahamsen (2005). Blair's Africa: The Politics of Securitization and Fear, *Alternative*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 55-80

<sup>153</sup> Stewart Patrick (2007). Failed States and Global Security: Empirical Questions and Policy Dilemmas, *International Security Review*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 644-662



because the false paradigm model states that Africa's poverty and underdevelopment are directly related to the policy of the Global North and its International Financial Institutions. Against this background, the US and Western nations must refine their policies toward the continent, strengthen institutions, and promote economic development, which can resolve the problems confronting Africa instead of securitization and proliferation of counterterrorism programs on the continent.

On the other hand, some scholars and policymakers have argued that the connection between state weakness and transnational terrorism is complex. Walter Laqueur 2003 asserts that all the forty-nine countries designated by the UN as Least Developed hardly experience any terrorist attacks, and countries in the Middle East are not weak. Still, terrorist groups are profound in the region. As a result, other variables and dynamics, including political, religious, cultural, and geographic factors, must be considered. Similarly, terrorism in most of the weak and failed states is not transnational; instead, it is local political grievances. In sum, fragile and failed states can provide valuable assets to transnational terrorist networks, but not in all cases.<sup>154</sup>

Conversely, empirical data on global terrorist attacks show that between 1991 and 2007, most terrorists came from weak and failed states such as Somalia, Afghanistan, Sudan, and Algeria. Similarly, statistical evidence based on data collected from individual terrorists before 9/11 has indicated that several terrorists come from low-income authoritarian countries in conflict, and most terrorist groups used failed and weak states as their primary base of operations, according to Marshall and Gurr, 2005. These fragile states provide transnational terrorist organizations with sanctuary, and ungoverned areas become a source of ideological support, bases for training and indoctrination, which gives the groups access to weapons, conflict experience, financial resources, pool to recruits, transit zones, and targets of attack. This perception is prominent within advanced

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid

market democracies, notably in the US. A few empirical analyses supported this assertion by the US and explored the connection between state failure and transnational security threats. However, the quantitative scholarly community must provide adequate empirical evidence to clarify and map the relationship between failed states and specific transnational spillovers.<sup>155</sup>

## SECURITIZATION IMPLICATIONS FOR AFRICA

Securitization of Africa has given the continent a negative image wrapped up in a politics of fear that may contribute toward hostility and suspicions toward African people, particularly in Western capitalist democracies. Securitization can lead to the deterioration of race relations in the US, leading to strict immigration control and asylum laws and erosion of civil liberties during terrorist threats. In addition, the securitization of Africa has nothing to offer Africa's underdevelopment and poverty; instead, it exacerbates Africa's problems by putting the continent's citizens in a state of fear and has benefitted the US economic and security interests.<sup>156</sup>

Another significant adverse effect of securitization has discouraged trade, investment, and tourism, depleted national income, and displaced African communities. Scholars were against the US counterterrorism operations in Africa after 9/11 and advocated for 'soft counterterrorism.' They believe soft power, the ability to get what you want rather than coercion or payment, should be adopted as counterinsurgency and counterterrorism approaches to win people's hearts and minds.<sup>157</sup> In contrast, counterterrorism operations also embrace non-military activities, and the US must concentrate on soft power programs that can assist the continent in achieving development and economic growth, such as non-military programs, instead of focusing on security issues. The

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid

<sup>156</sup> Rita Abrahamsen (2005). Blair's Africa: The Politics of Securitization and Fear, *Alternative*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 55-80

<sup>157</sup> Williams F.S Miles (2012). Deploying Development to Counter Terrorism: Post-9/11 Transformation of US Foreign Aid to Africa, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 55, No. 3, 27-60

US must promote democracy and good governance as an effective mechanism for African governments to take control over their ungoverned territories. Since policymakers and the executive branch of government believed uneducated and unemployed youth were potential recruits for terrorist organizations, they must be provided with skills, knowledge, and gainful employment to drive them away from terrorist groups.<sup>158</sup>

On the other hand, the securitization of Africa has adversely affected vital development areas such as social development, human rights, and governance reform. Western capitalist democracies have promoted security agendas, and the US supported repressive authoritarian regimes during the global war on terror, which destroyed many democratic norms and human rights. The existing literature has shown that many 'illiberal nations in Africa that emerged from civil wars and guerrilla wars welcome the securitization and militarization policy because it has helped these authoritarian, repressive, illiberal nations to consolidate power. The US securitization and militarization are producing many illiberal states benefiting from the securitization paradigm. Interestingly, some African countries have also benefited from the securitization of the development hypothesis to establish illiberal, authoritarian regimes in staying power, such as the regime of Paul Kagame of Rwanda and Mele of Ethiopia. Rwanda and Uganda have benefited from the securitization of development because of their relationships with the US.

In sum, US securitization of the continent will not contribute to developing or enhancing African security. Instead, it will benefit US economic and security interests and African governments interested in repressing minority groups. Securitizing Africa's poverty, underdevelopment, failed states, and ungoverned areas is a security threat to the US national security because the activities of violent extremist organizations on the continent will not eliminate

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid

the problems facing Africa. Instead, the US must assist African governments in addressing the underlying root causes of the conflict drivers on the continent. The US must promote economic development and help strengthen democratic institutions and policies to win the hearts and minds of the extremists.

#### ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS OF THE US SECURITIZATION OF AFRICA

On the other hand, through a speech act, US President George W. Bush and policymakers securitized African poverty, underdevelopment, humanitarianism, failed states, and ungoverned or under-governed territories or spaces to a category of threat/risk/security/danger. However, the US the US securitization of Africa after the 9/11 attacks was meant to bring stability to a continent plagued by civil wars. In addition, the securitization of Africa after the 9/11 attacks promoted the continent to the global system, which encouraged the international community to assist Africa in tackling problems affecting economic development and maintaining stability. The continent has been affected by several non-state armed groups, which the US presidents, policymakers, and influential state officials believed could help address Africa's problems in promoting stability and peace. It is important to note that the significant issues confronting Africa come from non-state armed groups fighting the government. Therefore, the US deemed it fit to securitize the continent to help address the perennial problems facing the continent and eliminate instability created by violent extremist organizations that affect the continent's economic development and peace. Against this background, the US securitized Africa, increased military aid, trained African militaries, deployed several US military personnel and intervened directly to promote stability. Scholars and economic theories posit that a country can only attain economic development and prosperity through peace and stability. Thus, the US believes securitization of Africa can bring peace and stability through its increased military assistance and training of the militaries to counter

violent extremist groups that have found sanctuary in the ungoverned areas of the continent, creating instability that prevents economic development. Through securitization, the US has elevated and promoted these political, economic, and social issues into the helm of security, showing the US preparedness to assist the continent in restoring peace and stability. Thus, the US securitization of Africa brings the continent to the limelight and the international community is prepared to address Africa's problems. This has driven the US readiness from the former mantra that states that African solutions to African problems which was coined by the eminent political economist George Ayittey.<sup>159</sup> The US believes strongly that Africans alone cannot solve the continent's problems; therefore, the securitization of the continent is in the interest of Africa and the US to promote stability that can contribute to economic development and strengthen democratic political institutions. The US has assisted the international community uniting to address issues facing Africa to bring peace, economic development, and stability. The main drivers of conflict in Africa are centered on poverty, failed states, weak political institutions, and ungoverned areas that have become a breeding ground for both domestic and transnational terrorist organizations. Against this backdrop, the US has established several counterterrorism programs in the continent to restore peace and stability. Despite the negative implications associated with the concept of securitization, the securitization of Africa by the US was meant to prevent chaos and violence created by non-state armed groups and to guarantee peace and stability. These twin factors promote economic development in a state, which was the US primary objective for the continent.

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<sup>159</sup> [issafrica.org/iss-today/African-solutions-to-african-problems](http://issafrica.org/iss-today/African-solutions-to-african-problems)

## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH DESIGN/METHODOLOGY

The study uses statistical techniques to analyze the data and examine the research questions and hypotheses. In addition, the researcher uses a dynamic panel model analysis to determine a causal relationship between the study's independent, lagged dependent, and response variables. The data on instability is discrete/counts of events (terrorism casualties, civil wars, coups, and anti-government demonstrations). A dynamic panel data model will be applied with lagged variables to eliminate the data's endogeneity, unobserved heterogeneity, omitted variables, and simultaneity problems with Arellano and Bover's 1995 system generalized method of moments (GMM).

Furthermore, the study employs a mixed methods research design to examine the research question. Mixed methods research is viewed in contemporary times as the third methodological movement and an approach that has offered several opportunities in social sciences.<sup>160</sup> My primary research question in the study is 'How has the militarization of US foreign policy affected instability in Africa? Mixed methods research involves using quantitative and qualitative data in a single study. Quantitative research involves collecting and analyzing numerical data, while qualitative uses narrative or experimental data. According to Creswell & Plano Clark 2011, mixed methods design integrates quantitative and qualitative data within a single study. In combining quantitative and qualitative data, mixed methods research uses the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research while using their weaknesses to provide an integrated, comprehensive understanding of the topic and phenomenon under investigation.<sup>161</sup> The researcher used the mixed

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<sup>160</sup> Louise Doyle, Annie-Marie Brady & Gobnait Byrne (2009). An Overview of Mixed Methods Research, *Journal of Research in Nursing*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 175-185

<sup>161</sup> Elizabeth Halcomb & Louise Hickman (2015). Mixed Methods Research, *Faculty of Science, Medicine, and Health Papers Part A*.2656

methods design because it is the best research design to address the phenomenon under study. Mixed methods research design is now considered a legitimate alternative to the two primary traditional methods. In recent years, mixed methods have emerged as a dominant paradigm in social sciences.

In addition, mixed-methods design is ‘research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using quantitative and qualitative approaches in a single study.’<sup>162</sup> According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), mixed methods research is the third paradigm capable of bridging the gap between the quantitative and qualitative approaches. The methods move beyond quantitative and qualitative arguments and focus on the usefulness of both paradigms and how they can be used in a single study to maximize each other's strengths and weaknesses.<sup>163</sup>

According to Creswell and Plano Clark 2007, mixed-methods research helps answer research questions that quantitative and qualitative methods cannot answer. The approach can use a qualitative paradigm to illustrate quantitative findings and help better understand the phenomena under investigation.

Furthermore, Creswell and Plano Clark 2007, identified four main typologies of mixed methods design; however, the study uses what Creswell et al., 2003 referred to as ‘sequential or explanatory design which consists of phases beginning with the quantitative phase and followed by the qualitative dimension. This aims to enhance the quantitative results. The researcher employs nested analysis to focus first on the quantitative analysis, run all the statistical tests, and use the results to direct the qualitative case studies to determine the research outcome. Similarly, the

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<sup>162</sup> Louise Doyle, Annie-Marie Brady & Gobnait Byrne (2009). An Overview of Mixed Methods Research, *Journal of Research in Nursing*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 175-185

<sup>163</sup> Ibid

quantitative results will provide a robust conclusion. As a result, the mixed method design will give an in-depth understanding of and analysis of the phenomena under study.

On the other hand, the statistical analysis of the nested design will guide the case study selection. One major strength of the nested design is that the small-n analysis provides credibility to the observed statistical relationship between variables in the study. The Nested analysis combines statistical analysis with surveys, a large sample of cases within a single study, and Small-n and L-n analyses. Alternatively, using the nested analysis means that the study will begin with quantitative analysis (Large-N) first based on the availability of a quantitative dataset with enough observation for statistical analysis, which will guide the small-n research in the study. Therefore, the nested analysis provides a more robust basis for causal inference than separating the Small-N and Large-N.<sup>164</sup> The study uses a nested analysis technique to overcome the limitations of a single procedure, and the method offers richer insights into the phenomenon under study. Adopting a single research design will help the researcher capture information that might be missed. The method answers the limitations of quantitative and qualitative techniques and will offer robust conclusions to the research findings.

Furthermore, despite the numerous benefits of mixed methods research, the approach has been criticized in recent years. The criticism has focused on the belief that quantitative and qualitative research cannot be mixed in a single study as they have different ontological (nature of reality) and epistemological (how we know what we know) origins.<sup>165</sup> Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004 argue that researchers might find conducting a mixed methods design challenging and

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<sup>164</sup> Evan Lieberman (2005). Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 99, No.3

<sup>165</sup> Louise Doyle, Anne-Marie Brady & Gobnait Byrne (2009). An Overview of Mixed Methods Research, *Journal of Research in Nursing*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 175-185



stressful if the quantitative and qualitative phases are undertaken simultaneously. According to Creswell (2012), mixed methods research is time-consuming because the researcher must collect and analyze two diverse data types that require expert knowledge. In addition, Ivankova et al., 2006 also posit that researchers need time and adequate resources to undertake distinct steps of an investigation. The researchers must know sufficient quantitative and qualitative methods and how to integrate the data to achieve the desired outcomes.<sup>166</sup>

The study uses the method to test and determine the causal relationship between the independent (US foreign policy) and the dependent (political instability) variables. The study aims to predict scores and describe the relationship between variables in the context of US foreign policy militarization and securitization and its effects on selected African nations. In addition, the study uses a mixed methods design because using a single approach, especially a qualitative method, might not capture or provide robust conclusions about US foreign policy militarization's effect on the continent. However, the quantitative paradigm will provide the study to capture the actual impact of US foreign policy since the statistical analysis offers in-depth explanations of the phenomena under investigation. However, the extant literature on US foreign policy militarization and its adverse effects provides solid evidence demonstrating the impact of the policy on chosen African countries. This study examines the relationship between US foreign policy militarization and its negative impact on the selected African countries. Exploring causal relationships allows me to understand better if US foreign policy militarization causes instability in selected African countries which can assist in future policymaking.

In conclusion, the nested analysis will provide a better understanding and findings of the research question than a single design because the design integrates data from different sources,

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid

and the researcher can better understand the phenomena under investigation. Plano Clark and Ivankova 2016, posit that the strengths of quantitative methods overcome the weaknesses of qualitative approaches and vice versa.<sup>167</sup>

On the other hand, the study seeks to use panel data analysis to answer the research question and hypotheses. Panel data analysis has become a popular form of longitudinal data analysis among contemporary social and behavioral science researchers. A panel is a cross-section or group of people surveyed periodically for research purposes.<sup>168</sup> Panel data analysis studies a subject within multiple sites, regularly observed over a defined period. Due to repeated observations of cross-sections, panel data analysis permits researchers to study the dynamics of change in a short time series.<sup>169</sup> The combination of time series with cross-sectional data enhances the quality and quantity of data in ways that would be impossible using one of these dimensions. In addition, panel data are valuable for providing empirical solutions to social science puzzles.<sup>170</sup>

#### DYNAMIC PANEL DATA MODEL ANALYSIS-SYSTEM GENERALIZED METHOD OF MOMENTS-GMM

The study aims to use dynamic panel data model regression to eliminate and remove unobserved heterogeneity, endogeneity, omitted variables, measurement errors, and simultaneity between the explanatory and response variables in the study. Dynamic panel data models have become extensively applied in several empirical studies across social science fields in recent years. The models include both cross-sectional effects and a lagged dependent variable and are powerful

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<sup>167</sup> Nancy Leech and Anthony Onwuegbuzie (2009). Typology of Mixed Methods Research Design

<sup>168</sup> Robert Alan Yaffe (2003). A Primer for Panel Data Analysis, ResearchGate Publication

<sup>169</sup> Ibid

<sup>170</sup> Gregory Wawro (2002). Estimating Dynamic Panel Data Models in Political Science, Political Analysis, Vol. 10, No. 1, 25-48

tools for dealing with omitted factors whose effects persist over time. The dynamic panel data models inform the researchers that the past matters or that researchers need to account for the past when confronted with variables and endogeneity problems. A classic feature of the dynamic panel data model is the inclusion of one or more lags of the dependent variable on the right-hand side of the regression equation. This means that the interpretation of the history of the models is centered on the lagged dependent variable.<sup>171</sup> In addition, including the lagged dependent variable changes the performance of the righthand side variable, which indicates a conditional effect on the independent variables, while the influence of the lagged dependent variable measures the past.

Also, the lagged dependent variable provides persistent estimates of the dependent variable. The lagged dependent variables are based on the past values of the time series, and the models use one or more lagged dependent and instrumental variables to control the endogeneity problem, with Arellano and Bover's 1995 Generalized Method of Moments (GMM), which efficiently estimates the dynamic panel models.<sup>172</sup> The GMM advanced by Arellano and Bover 1995 eliminates the problems of unobserved heterogeneity, endogeneity, omitted variables, measurement errors, and simultaneity in the research. This GMM technique is used when the lagged dependent variable depends on its past realizations. The GMM methods yield unbiased estimates because the lagged dependent variable helped eliminate autocorrelation problems and capture the dynamics of the phenomenon under investigation.

Alternatively, regarding the lagged dependent variable, the extant literature presents a case against using lagged dependent variables with Ordinary Least Squares (OLS), notably Achen 2000. Achen argues that lagged dependent variables are dangerous for checking autocorrelation because

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<sup>171</sup> Alan Piper (2022). What Does Dynamic Panel Analysis Tell Us About Life Satisfaction? Review of Income and Wealth, Series 0, No. 0

<sup>172</sup> Ibid

the coefficient estimates can be biased. On the other hand, scholars now treat Achen's argument concerning using lagged dependent variables with skepticism.<sup>173</sup> Keele and Kelly (2006) argue that lagged dependent variable models are appropriate because they solve autocorrelation problems. When one detects autocorrelation problems in an OLS regression, the lagged dependent variable eliminates serial correlation in the model. The lagged dependent variable improves the model, and the effects of the variables disappear.

Furthermore, the lagged values improve the model's fit and alter the coefficients. Consequently, when one or more lagged dependent variables are added as explanatory factors, the autoregressive terms take on enormously significant coefficients, improving the fit and the effects of other variables. In addition, the lagged dependent variables are included in the model if one expects that the current level of the dependent variable is heavily determined by its past status. The exclusion of the lagged dependent variable can lead to omitted variable bias, which might provide unreliable and inconsistent results. Alternatively, using the lagged dependent variables in the model represents a situation where the researcher thinks the explanatory variable might have a statistical relationship with the response variable.<sup>174</sup>

On the other hand, the endogeneity bias in the model can lead to inconsistent estimates and incorrect inferences, contributing to misleading conclusions and inappropriate theoretical interpretations. Therefore, the study uses a GMM model to control for the sources of endogeneity: unobserved heterogeneity, simultaneity, and dynamic endogeneity, which affect the coefficients' results. Endogeneity in regression refers to the condition in which an explanatory variable

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<sup>173</sup> Luke Keele & Nathan Kelly (2006). Dynamic Models for Dynamic Theories: Ins and Outs of Lagged Dependent Variables, *Political Analysis*, Vol. 14, 186-205

<sup>174</sup> Christopher Achen (2000). Why Lagged Dependent Variable Can Suppress the Explanatory Power of Other Independent Variables, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan

correlates with the error term, which can lead to wrong inferences, misleading conclusions, and incorrect theoretical interpretation. The error term represents the effects of variables omitted from the equation, and the dynamic system generalized method of the moments model (GMM) is widely used to address panel data. The endogeneity sometimes results from measurement error, omitted variables, and simultaneity, which can be addressed theoretically by reviewing the literature and empirically using statistical techniques to ensure the data is adequately investigated.<sup>175</sup> Measurement errors are common problems in social science research. This happens when the constructs of interest cannot be perfectly measured, the estimates are inconsistent, and the error affects other variables. Similarly, omitted bias occurs when the researcher tests the validity of the construct without including other essential variables; therefore, it is helpful to use multiple dimensions of constructs.<sup>176</sup> Finally, simultaneity happens when two variables concurrently affect/cause each other to have a reciprocal feedback loop, and the problem can be solved using instrumental variables.

Empirical evidence in the existing literature has shown that several scholars have used a system generalized method of moments (GMM) propounded by Arellano and Bover 1995 to eliminate the problem in the dynamic panel models because it is more effective and efficient than other methods. The study employs the system generalized method of moments for two crucial reasons. First, the GMM allows both the lagged dependent variables and endogenous explanatory variables to be instrumented. Second, system GMM permits the effects of time-invariant variables

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<sup>175</sup> Subhan Ullah, Pervaiz Akhtar, & Ghasem Zaefarian (2018). Dealing with Endogeneity Bias: The Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) for Panel Data, *Industrial Marketing Management*, Vol. 71, 69-78

<sup>176</sup> Ibid

to be identified, and using the system GMM ensures that the study investigates the dynamics differently than the typically fixed effects estimated lags investigation.<sup>177</sup>

The study applies dynamic panel analysis for right-hand side lagged variables, such as terrorism casualties, civil wars, coups, and anti-government demonstrations. The research seeks to determine their effects on the dependent variables regarding US foreign policy towards Africa. The study employs the system GMM because it allows one or more lagged variables to improve the model's fitness. In addition, the system GMM estimator provides an efficient approach to solving endogeneity problems in the regression of dynamic panel models. Through the GMM system, the researcher can create panel-style instruments with endogenous regressors used in dynamic models. The system GMM removes endogeneity by transforming the data, and transformation refers to a statistical process where a variable's past value is subtracted from its present value. According to Roodman (2009), the GMM system solves the problem of endogeneity in dynamic panel models. The GMM outcomes treat all variables as exogenous. Also, the GMM determines which regressors are to be treated as exogenous and endogenous variables in the dynamic panel models. Roodman 2009 argues that researchers should report the number of instruments generated in the regression, which should be included in the result table; the coefficient of the lagged variables is critical and should be explained.<sup>178</sup>

Arellano and Bover 1995 and Blundell and Bond 1998 developed the generalized method of moments (GMM) model, which is more applicable to dynamic panel data. The cause-and-effect relationship in dynamic panel data is underlined as dynamic over time. For instance, it may not be the current year's terrorism affecting/causing instability; instead, the previous year's casualties

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<sup>177</sup> Alan Piper (2022). What Does Dynamic Panel Analysis Tell Us About Life Satisfaction? Review of Income and Wealth, Series 0, No. 0

<sup>178</sup> Ibid

could play a significant role. These dynamics are captured through dynamic panel data estimation techniques, such as lags of the dependent variables as explanatory variables. The lagged values of the dependent variables are used as instruments to control endogenous relationships. Consequently, the system GMM model used in the panel data analysis provides consistent results in the presence of different sources of endogeneity: unobserved heterogeneity and simultaneity. The GMM removes endogeneity, and the number of observations is reduced, enhancing the efficiency of the GMM. Similarly, the GMM transforms data in two ways: first-difference (one-step) and second-order transformation (two-step). It is worth noting that the first-difference (one-step) GMM has a few limitations in solving endogeneity problems in dynamic panel analysis. For example, if a variable's current value is missing, then the first-difference transformation (where a variable's past value is deducted from its current value) could result in the loss of several observations.<sup>179</sup> Arellano and Bover (1995) recommended using a second-order transformation (two-step) or system GMM to avoid potential data loss through first-difference analysis GMM.

According to Roodman 2009, the second-order transformation (two-step) applies 'forward orthogonal deviations,' which implies that instead of subtracting the previous observations of a variable from the current value, the two-step GMM model subtracts the average of all future available observations of a particular variable. Therefore, two-step GMM prevents unnecessary data loss. As a result, two-step GMM provides more efficient and consistent estimates for the coefficients in a balanced panel dataset, according to Arellano & Bover, 1995. Including lag-dependent variables changes the model's static nature to a dynamic panel data model, and the two-

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid

step relies on internal instruments (lagged values) to address the different sources of endogeneity in the data.<sup>180</sup>

The system GMM estimator improves the precision of the regression results and reduces conclusion bias. Much of the recent academic literature on dynamic panel estimation has focused on using system GMM to improve dynamic panel regression outcomes affected by unobserved heterogeneity, endogeneity, and measurement error. The system estimator offers a powerful alternative that can overcome many disappointing features of the first-difference (one-step) transformation.<sup>181</sup> The dynamic panel models were created specifically to address the problems of endogeneity. The literature on two-step estimators is more effective and efficient than one-step estimators; therefore, several scholars in the extant literature have recommended system GMM. The study uses Arellano & Bover's 1995 system GMM with Stata command `xtdpdsys`. This command uses instrumental variables of endogenous variables that lag in differences and levels (difference system GMM) to address the endogeneity problems.<sup>182</sup> The lagged dependent variables included as regressors give the dynamic panel models persistence and coefficients of the lagged dependent variables have indicated the effects it has on the dependent variables. In addition, the lagged dependent variables as regressors are a parsimonious method of accounting for the persistent effects of explanatory variables in the past and can help eliminate serial correlations.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid

<sup>181</sup> Richard Blundell, Stephen Bond & Frank Windmeijer (2000). Estimation in Dynamic Panel Models: Improving the Performance of the Standard Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) Estimator, No. W00/12, Institute for Fiscal Studies Working Paper

<sup>182</sup> Romilio Labra & Celia Torrecillas (2018). Estimating Dynamic Panel Data: A Practical Approach to Perform Long Panel, *Revista Colombiana de Estadística*, Vol. 41, Issue 1, 31-52

<sup>183</sup> Ibid



## OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS AND MEASUREMENTS OF CONCEPTS

Military aid is foreign aid for programs primarily to benefit the recipient government's armed forces or aid that subsidizes or enhances military capability.<sup>184</sup> On the other hand, military aid is a record of US military assistance to the recipient country in tens of millions of constant 2019 US dollars.<sup>185</sup> The US uses military aid as a foreign policy tool and spends more than eleven billion dollars annually on direct military assistance to foreign governments and substate groups. In addition, the US also uses military aid or arms transfers as a quid-pro-quo for government compliance.<sup>186</sup> Military assistance excludes humanitarian and non-military development programs funded by the US Department of Defense, categorized as 'economic assistance.' Economic assistance, on the other hand, refers to foreign aid for programs with development or humanitarian objectives. For example, development aid programs foster sustainable economic progress and socio-political stability in developing countries. Similarly, humanitarian aid programs focus on alleviating humanitarian emergencies, natural and artificial disasters, and conflict associated with failed or failing states.<sup>187</sup> The study uses data from the USAID military aid Greenbook for 54 African countries from 1995 to 2020, structured as a panel dataset. The Greenbook measures military aid in terms of Military Assistance Programs, Foreign Military Credit Financing, and Transfers of Excess Defense Articles. This measure, however, excludes military assistance for

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<sup>184</sup> USAID from the American People, US Overseas Loans and Grants, Obligations and Loan Authorization, 1945-2019

<sup>185</sup> Ibid

<sup>186</sup> Patricia Sullivan, Brock Tessman & Xiaojun Li (2011). US Military Aid and Recipient State Cooperation, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 7, 275-294

<sup>187</sup> USAID from the American People, US Overseas Loans and Grants, Obligations and Loan Authorization, 1945-2019

economic development, captured in a separate measure of economic aid given for counternarcotics, counterproliferation, and commercial and military sales.<sup>188</sup>

The study uses US military aid as an independent variable to predict civil wars on the continent. US military aid to selected African countries is a US million-dollar obligation in current/constant US dollars. According to the USAID Greenbook, five of the top ten US military aid recipients are repressive authoritarian African regimes such as Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Uganda.<sup>189</sup>

#### US TROOPS/MILITARY PERSONNEL DEPLOYED IN AFRICA

US troops are defined as Special Operations Forces (SOF) deployed in Africa to perform counterterrorism operations, reassure allies, deter rivals, support humanitarian missions, and train African military forces. The US deployed hundreds of thousands of military personnel during the post-war period. These deployments become a foreign policy tool for US deterrence and the protection of the liberal international order.<sup>190</sup> The US troops include the army, air Force personnel stationed at US bases, marines on an amphibious assault ship in the Gulf of Guinea, navy personnel on an aircraft carrier, army green berets, and navy seals.<sup>191</sup> The study uses datasets from the Department of Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) and DMDC datasets of US troops deployed in chosen African countries between 1995 and 2020. In addition, the study focuses on the US troops deployed/stationed in Africa. On the other hand, the US has maintained many small deployments throughout Africa, composed of Special Operations Forces units concentrated on

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid

<sup>189</sup> Ibid

<sup>190</sup> Michael Allen, Michael Flynn, Carla Martinez Machain & Andrew Stravers (2020). *Outside the Wire: US Military Deployments and Public Opinion in Host States*, American Political Science Review, Published by Cambridge University Press

<sup>191</sup> Michael Allen, Michael Flynn, & Carla Martinez Machain (2022). *US Global Military Deployments, 1950-2020*, Conflict Management and Peace Science, Vol. 39, No. 3, 351-370

counterterrorism and military training operations. These US Special Operations Forces are deployed in the Lake Chad basin, Sahel, and the Horn of Africa.<sup>192</sup> The study aims to investigate if there is a causal link between US troops stationed in selected African countries and terrorist attacks in those countries. The study measures US troops deployed in selected African countries by the number of military personnel stationed in the country.

## US MILITARY TRAINING

McLauchlin et al. (2022) define US military training as formal or informal instructions to international students in the US or overseas by US army officers or employees of the US, contract technicians, contractors (including teaching at civilian institutions), correspondence courses, technical, educational, training aid, and military advice to foreign military units and forces under 1961 Foreign Assistance Act, Section 644 (n), 22 USC, 240 (n).<sup>193</sup> Training of other countries' armed forces is an important foreign policy instrument for the US. The study utilizes the Security Force Monitor (SAM) dataset from the Foreign Military Training Report (FMTR) from the Department of Defense and the State Department. The data provides raw uncoded data about individual training, including objectives, equipment and training activities, forces characteristics, students, course names, specific locations, and dollar value. SAM maintains three datasets: arms sales, security sector assistance, and foreign military training.<sup>194</sup> The study focuses on data on foreign military training in African countries between 1995 and 2020. In addition, the Foreign Military Training Report provides comprehensive information on US training regarding costs and the number of trainees in each African nation. The SAM data sources have several limitations in

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid

<sup>193</sup> Theodore McLauchlin, Lee Seymour, and Simon Martel (2022). Tracking the Rise of US Foreign Military Training: IMTAD-USA, A New Dataset and Research Agenda, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 59, No. 2, 286-296

<sup>194</sup> Security Sector Monitor, Center for International Policy, Washington DC

the study. First, the reports do not identify military contractors. Second, the data includes total budgets and trainees for classified and unclassified activities but excludes details on classified activities and omits training by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Third, the data needs to capture training objectives that vary across countries.<sup>195</sup>

The study measures training giving armed forces, individual students, course names, civilian training, cost of the training, and number of personnel trained. The FMTR data covers 1999 to 2016 foreign military training worldwide; however, the study centers on military training US military personnel have given to selected African militaries, not the cost of training. The study aims to test a hypothesis between US military training and coups in several African countries to determine whether US training has any causal link with the coups on the continent of Africa. McLauchlin et al. 2022 coded binary variables for overall program objectives regarding military performance, counterterrorism, counternarcotics, human rights, gender, civil-military relations, democratization, and good governance in their study.

## US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

Military intervention is the movement of regular troops or forces (airborne, seaborne, shelling, etc.) of one country into another country's territory or territorial waters or forceful military action by troops stationed by one government inside another in the context of a political issue or dispute. Paramilitaries and government-backed militias, private security forces, and other military units that are not part of the regular uniformed military of the state are excluded.<sup>196</sup> Military interventions are conscious decisions by national leaders, and the event must be

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<sup>195</sup> Theodore McLauchlin, Lee Seymour, and Simon Martel (2022). Tracking the Rise of US Foreign Military Training: IMTAD-USA, A New Dataset and Research Agenda, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 59, No. 2, 286-296

<sup>196</sup> Jeffrey Pickering & Emizet Kisangani (2009). The International Military Intervention Project: An Updated Resource for Conflict Scholars, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 46, No. 4, 589-599

purposeful, not accidental. The study of US intervention has received significant attention in academic literature. However, the empirical evidence is inclusive, and several scholars have started to examine the consequences of US non-military interventions. For example, Pickering & Kisangani 2009, posit that there were 690 interventions during the Cold War, and 400 occurred during the post-Cold War between 1990 and 2005.

Similarly, Kushi and Toft (2022) define military intervention as instances of international conflict outside of normal peacetime activities that involve threats, displays, or use of military force by officials in US government channels directed toward government, official representatives, official parties, property, or territory of another sovereign state.<sup>197</sup> According to Kushi and Toft 2023, the Congressional Research Services (CRS) reported 392 US military interventions and 188 interventions from 1992 to 2017. In addition, Kushi and Toft used the following variables in the study: no hostilities, threat of force, display of force, usage of force, and war. The scholars coded no hostilities as 1, the threat of force 2, display of force 3, usage of force 4, and war 5. The extant literature on US military interventions has not provided any meaningful dataset on US military interventions in chosen African countries. As a result, the study utilizes the US Congressional Research Services' data supplied by Torreon & Plagakis (2022) to construct an African interventions dataset. The dataset concentrates on the US interventions from 1995 to 2020, and the study uses binary/dichotomous variables, security, and humanitarian interventions. The study codes interventions, whether security/humanitarian, as 1 or the absence of intervention as 0.

On the other hand, security interventions are defined as acts or actions of a response military force undertaken to prevent an adversary from achieving their objectives and prevent or

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<sup>197</sup> Sidita Kushi & Monica Duffy Toft (2023). Introducing the Military Intervention Project: A New Dataset on US Military Interventions, 1776-2019, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 67, No. 4, 752-779

mitigate the losses associated with a security incident. Finally, humanitarian intervention is using the military in a state to achieve socio-economic goals such as keeping people alive and communities functioning by providing necessities without the approval of its authorities. Humanitarian interventions have become prevalent since the end of the Cold War when scholars were concerned about the relationship between state sovereignty and human rights, politics and ethics, and peace and security. Using military means to achieve socioeconomic objectives to address humanitarian crises prevents additional violence and suffering.<sup>198</sup>

## DEPENDENT/RESPONSE VARIABLES

The study's dependent variables examined the relationship between US foreign policy militarization as an explanatory variable and instability as a response variable. The study focuses on four response variables of interest: terrorism, civil wars, coups, and anti-government demonstrations.

## TERRORISM

Oxford Dictionary defines terrorism as ‘the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in pursuing political aims.’ However, security studies scholars criticized the definition of being subjective; as a result, there is no universally accepted definition for the concept. Global Terrorism Database (GTD) 2022 defines terrorism as ‘acts of violence by non-state actors, perpetrated against civilian population intended to cause fear, and achieving a political objective.’ This definition excludes violence initiated by governments (state terrorism) and open combat between opposing forces, even if they are non-state actors. In addition, for an act to be considered terrorism, it must be violent, have political, economic, religious, and social

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<sup>198</sup> [www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/security\\_intervention](http://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/security_intervention)

purposes, and target non-combatants.<sup>199</sup> The study uses the GTD definition, including domestic and international terrorism. The study is centered on terrorist activities in Africa, especially casualties/fatalities in various countries. The research utilizes data from the Global Terrorism Database, which records terrorist events from 1970 to 2020. Alternatively, the study concentrates on terrorist incidents from 1995-2020 relating only to African countries. Terrorism is operationalized using terrorist fatalities in selected African countries recorded by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Response to Terrorism (START) Global Terrorism Database (GTD).<sup>200</sup> The database provides a systematic and comprehensive event of terrorist activities in the global system. In addition, the GTD includes routine data on domestic, transnational, and international terrorist incidents. Additionally, an action must satisfy the following criteria to be classified as terrorism.<sup>201</sup>

- The incident must be intentional.
- The perpetrators must be sub-national actors.
- The incident must be violent.
- The action/act must have political, economic, religious, and social purposes.
- The incident must target non-combatants.

Furthermore, the GTD is a discrete or counts data, and terrorist incidents and fatalities are recorded for each country for each year in the study. The number of terrorism fatalities/deaths for selected African countries is taken directly from the Global Terrorism Dataset. In addition, the researcher creates dichotomous variables coded as 1 to indicate an attack had occurred and 0 for the absence of an attack in the year. Finally, the study uses dynamic panel data models to predict whether there

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<sup>199</sup> Global Terrorism Database (2022). University of Maryland

<sup>200</sup> Ibid

<sup>201</sup> Ibid

is a causal link between the US troops stationed/deployed in selected African countries and terrorism activities in the continent.

## COUPS

The Cline Center for Advanced Social Research defines ‘coups as organized efforts to effect sudden and irregular (illegal or extra-legal) removal of the incumbent executive authority of a national government or to displace the head of the highest levels of one or more branches of government.’<sup>202</sup> This irregular transfer of power has significant consequences for the nation’s citizens. To satisfy the above definition, the following criteria must be met:

- An actor or group of actors must initiate the event.
- Actors targeted to be removed from office must include the incumbent exercising control over national policy. These include presidents, prime ministers, and dictators.
- A relevant coup event must be credible, short-term, and directly threatening an incumbent leader or leaders.
- Initiators must use irregular means to seize or remove the incumbent. This is done using threat, coercion, or force.
- An outcome of a coup can be classified as realized or unrealized. For example, a coup that removes or displaces the targeted incumbent is called realized, whereas a coup that fails to unseat the incumbent from power is called unrealized.

On the other hand, Powell and Thyne 2011 define coups as ‘illegal and overt attempts by the military or other elites within the state apparatus to unseat the sitting executives.’<sup>203</sup> According to the Coup Agency and Mechanism, a successful coup occurs when plotters unseat the incumbent

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<sup>202</sup> Cline Center Coup d’Etat Project Dataset 2022. University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

<sup>203</sup> <https://militarycoups.org>



for ten days. The study employs data from the Cline Center for Coup Project Dataset and Coup Agency and Mechanism (CAM) data. The datasets cover all military coups in the global system from 1950 to 2020, and 477 coups were recorded. CAM data use success or failure variables for an agency for coups and elite and combat variables. The study uses the dependent variable coup to test the hypothesis that the US military training of African militaries has any causal link/relationship with coups in the selected African countries. Several scholars have provided anecdotal evidence of a significant correlation between the US military trainees and coups in Africa. However, empirical evidence is needed to accept or refute the anecdotal evidence. Therefore, the study focuses only on coups events in chosen African countries between 1995 and 2020. The researcher creates binary variables, which are coded 1 and 0. For example, countries that witnessed a coup in a particular year are coded 1, and the absence of a coup is coded 0. Coups are operationalized as realized and unrealized.

## CIVIL WARS

Correlates of War defines a civil war as at least 1,000 battle deaths during each year of the war.<sup>204</sup> According to Nicholas Sambanis 2004, an armed conflict should be classified as a civil war if it has met the following criteria:

- War occurs within the territory of a state member of the international system with a population of 500,000 or more.
- The parties are politically and militarily organized and have publicly stated political goals.
- The government must be a principal combatant through its military or militias.
- The central insurgent organization must be locally represented and recruited locally.

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<sup>204</sup> Meredith Sarkees (2007). The COW Typology of War, Defining and Categorizing Wars, Version 4 of the Data

- The start year of the war is the first year that the conflict causes at least 500 to 1000 deaths. However, the war is not civil if the conflict has not caused 500 casualties or more in the first year.<sup>205</sup>

In addition, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) defines state-based armed conflict as a ‘‘contested incompatibility that concerns the government or territory where the use of armed forces between two parties, of which one is the state’s government, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a calendar year.’’<sup>206</sup> The study utilizes the Civil/Armed Conflict Dataset from the joint project between the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, and the Center for the Study of Civil War at the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO) version 22.1. The central unit in the dataset is ‘‘state-based armed conflict.’’ The separate elements of the definition are operationalized as follows.<sup>207</sup>

- Use of armed force: This implies using arms that can result in deaths.
- Arms: Any material or manufactured weapons and sticks, stones, fire, etc.
- 25 deaths: A minimum of 25 battle-related deaths per year.
- Party: A government of a state or any opposition organization or alliance of organizations
- Government: The party controlling the capital of the state.

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid

<sup>206</sup> Davies, Shawn, Therese Pettersson & Magnus Oberg (2022). Organized Violence 1989-2021 and Drone Warfare, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 59, No. 4

<sup>207</sup> Gleditsch, Nils Peter, Peter Wallensteen, Mikael Eriksson, Margareta Sollenberg & Havard Strand (2002). Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 39, No. 5, 615-637

- Opposition organization: Any non-governmental group of people having announced a name for their group and using armed forces to influence the outcome of the stated incompatibility.
- Dyad: A dyad consists of two conflicting parties, and at least one must be the government of a state.
- State: A state is an internationally sovereign government controlling a specific territory or an internationally unrecognized government controlling a particular territory whose sovereignty is not disputed by another internationally recognized sovereign government previously controlling the same environment.
- Incompatibility: This relates to government or territory.

The researcher creates a binary/dichotomous variable to interpret the civil war in selected African nations. All years of civil war are coded 1, and all years of no civil war are coded 0. The researcher hypothesizes that an increase in US military aid might lead to civil war in the continent. Therefore, the study aims to determine if there is a correlation/relationship between civil wars and US military assistance.

## ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS

An anti-government demonstration is any peaceful or violent public gathering of at least 100 people that expresses opposition to government policies or authority, excluding demonstrations of an anti-foreign nature.<sup>208</sup> The researcher defines anti-government demonstrations as protests or riots involving the citizens of a country voicing their opposition to government policies and authority, including demonstrations against foreign policies. The study

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<sup>208</sup> Dan Braha (2012). Global Civil Unrest: Contagion, Self-Organization, and Prediction, PLOS ONE, Vol. 7, Issue 10

uses anti-government demonstrations as one of the response variables of interest to test a hypothesis about US interventions in selected African nations contributing to anti-government demonstrations. Additionally, the study seeks to determine if there is any causal relationship between interventions and anti-government demonstrations. The study employs the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) 2022 dataset. ACLED collects data on political violence and demonstration activity worldwide, but this research centers on anti-government demonstrations only in Africa between 1995 and 2020. ACLED refers to the demonstrators as rioters and protesters involved in spontaneous demonstrations that may or may not continue beyond a discrete event. These demonstrations are directed at the government, government institutions, businesses, or private institutions.<sup>209</sup> The study measures anti-government demonstrations as protests or riots. The researcher created binary variables 1 and 0. A demonstration in all years is coded 1, and the absence of a demonstration is coded 0.

## CONTROL VARIABLES

The extant literature on US foreign policy militarization and instability utilizes many control variables. However, the study selects control variables based on theoretical considerations regarding the explanatory and response variables. The control variables protect the study's independent and dependent variables to avoid inconsistent and undue bias in the research conclusions.<sup>210</sup> Control variables are included in the regression analysis to estimate the causal effect of the predictor and response variables. In addition, the control variables are not variables of interest to the researcher; therefore, they are held constant in the study, preventing biases like omitted variable bias from affecting the research outcomes or from having any impact/effect on

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<sup>209</sup> <https://acleddata.com>

<sup>210</sup> [Scribbr.com/methodology/control-variable/](https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/control-variable/)

the response variables; thus, thus allowing the variables of interest to affect the response variables. These variables are not interested in the study's objectives, but the researcher controls them because they can influence the research outcomes.<sup>211</sup> Furthermore, control variables help the researcher to establish causal relationships between the predictor and the response variables in the study.<sup>212</sup>

The study uses control variables to enhance the study's internal validity by limiting the influence of confounding and other extraneous variables. This helps the study /researcher establish a robust causal relationship between the variables of interest, reducing bias in the study's findings. Similarly, they are essential empirical tools that help create replicable, verifiable data from observations and estimate authentic causal relationships between the predictor and response variables.<sup>213</sup>

To capture the actual nature of the dynamic panel data model, I include a few control variables that have been found to substantially impact the dependent variables: terrorism casualties, coups, civil wars, and anti-government demonstrations. First, the regime type, particularly the level of democracy in a society, should have a negative effect on these events. Because more democratic nations provide outlets for citizens' grievances against their governments, such as legal protests, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the power to change officeholders through regular and free elections. These opportunities should diminish the attractiveness of more violent forms of protest, increase stability, and decrease the incidence of terrorism and war. The control variables selected from the study's literature reviews include US

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid

<sup>212</sup> [Statisticsbyjim.com/basics/control-variables/](https://statisticsbyjim.com/basics/control-variables/)

<sup>213</sup> [Thoughtco.com/controlled-variable-definition-609094](https://thoughtco.com/controlled-variable-definition-609094).

oil imports, GDP, annual growth, GDP per capita, total population, maternal mortality, and regime type.

## US OIL IMPORTS

The Asia Pacific Energy Research Center defines energy security as the ability of an economy to guarantee the availability of energy resource supply in a sustainable and timely manner, with the energy price being at a level that will not adversely affect the economy's economic performance.<sup>214</sup> According to Kruyt et al., 2009, energy security is divided into four main categories: availability, accessibility, affordability, and acceptability. Availability refers to the geological existence which provides an uninterrupted supply for the smooth functioning of the economy.<sup>215</sup> Similarly, Sovacool & Brown 2010, operationalized energy security in terms of availability and affordability. First, the availability dimension includes oil import dependency, and affordability is centered on energy prices.<sup>216</sup> Therefore, energy security in this study is operationalized as the quantity of oil the US imports from oil-producing African countries. Also, the US oil import data comes from the US Energy Information Administration (EIA). The US oil data was in monthly thousand barrels, which the researcher has transformed into annual barrels for clarity and efficient statistical analysis. The data in the study covers 1995 to 2020 US oil imports from oil-producing countries in the continent, and US oil imports account for US dependence on African oil.

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<sup>214</sup> Aliaksandr Novikau (2021). Conceptualizing and Redefining Energy Security: A Comprehensive Review, World Scientific Publishing Company

<sup>215</sup> Bert Kruyt, D.P van Vuuren, H.J.M de Vries and H. Groenenberg (2009). Indicators for Energy Security, Energy Policy, Vol. 37, 2166-2181

<sup>216</sup> Benjamin Sovacool & Marilyn Brown (2010). Competing Dimensions of Energy Security: An International Perspective, Annual Review of Environment and Resources, Vol. 35, 77-108

## RESOURCE CURSE

According to Kurecic & Seba, 2016 resource curse occurs when a natural resource abundance in developing countries becomes associated with poverty and underdevelopment. Since the seminal article written by Auty in 1994 on the natural resource curse hypothesis, a plethora of academic literature has been reported to determine the causal relationship between natural resources and economic growth. Developed nations have been blessed with abundant natural resources, but it has become a curse in several developing countries, particularly sub-Saharan Africa. The theoretical and empirical literature associated the curse with Dutch disease, rent-seeking, commodity price volatility, and weak and poor institutions.<sup>217</sup> The study uses resource curse/resource dependence as one of the control variables measured as GDP annual growth rate percentage to determine the growth rate of oil-producing and exporting African nations in the study. In addition, I use the resource curse as a control variable to understand why sub-Saharan African countries with abundant natural resources are affected by underdevelopment and poverty. The GDP growth is based on annual percentages, and the data comes from the World Bank's Development Indicators (WDI).<sup>218</sup> Additionally, Sachs and Warner's 1995 empirical studies have shown that developing nations' higher dependence on natural resources reduces economic growth. They measure GDP annual growth in terms of agricultural raw materials, fuel, food, and mineral exports to GDP. Besides, Easterly & Levine 1997 suggest that the underdevelopment of Africa was due to a high degree of ethnic fragmentation, and Collier and Gunning 1999 also attribute it to institutional weaknesses. Acemoglu et al., 2001 also argue that weak institutions, colonial rule,

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<sup>217</sup> Kazeem Bello Ajide (2022). Is Natural Resource Curse Thesis an Empirical Regularity for Economic Complexity in Africa? *Resource Policy*, Vol. 76

<sup>218</sup> [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

slave trade, and high mortality rates due to high malaria incidence affect the continent's economic growth and development.

## TOTAL POPULATION

On average, more populated countries experience more terrorist attacks because terrorist groups can recruit more potential supporters, according to Piazza, 2006. In addition, primarily populated countries provide a broad audience for intimidation and delivery of terrorist messages and additional costs of counterterrorism measures because they might suppress citizens' rights. Therefore, an urban population can be associated with higher terrorist activity, as terrorists choose the most crowded places to carry out their nefarious attacks, non-combatants, which are more profound and typical in cities than in rural settlements.<sup>219</sup> In this study, a state's population is related to the level of terrorist activity. Terrorism is more likely to occur in states with a large population because it is difficult for the government to provide the needs of every citizen or make everybody happy, regardless of how the incumbent governments address citizens' grievances, and large populations are potential targets for terrorists according to Dreher & Gassebner, 2008. Some scholars, such as Meernik 2008, argue that countries with huge populations affect terrorism. Because citizens in countries with large populations have grievances, they want the government to address.<sup>220</sup> The government's inability to redress such grievances can cause some people within the population to turn to terrorist activities due to the incumbent government's failure to satisfy their demands, or they are dissatisfied with government policy. In addition, instability is also associated with failed dysfunctional states, and a state with a vast population is more likely to

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<sup>219</sup> Nauro Campos & Martin Gassebner (2009). International Terrorism, Political Instability and the Escalation Effect, *Economics and Politics*, Vol. 25, Issue 1, 27-47

<sup>220</sup> Fabrizio Carmignani & Abdur Chowdhury (2010). Why Are Natural Resources A Curse in Africa, but not Elsewhere? School of Economics Discussion Paper No. 406, The University of Queensland, Australia



experience various forms of unrest, particularly terrorist attacks. The more significant the size of the population, the more likely it is for a group of people within a society whose grievances against the government need to be addressed satisfactorily. As a result, states with large populations exhibit more signs of domestic unrest, terrorist attacks, and sometimes involvement in the war. The study measures the total population of African countries using the World Bank's World Development Indicators data.<sup>221</sup> In addition, states with high levels of development are more stable than those with underdevelopment and poverty. An economy that produces wealth for its citizens and equally distributes resources hardly creates unrest since its citizens are gainfully employed and have a prosperous future.<sup>222</sup>

#### GDP PER CAPITA

GDP annual growth and GDP per capita play a critical role in a state. Countries with high GDPs are prosperous and guarantee stability because the government provides the social and economic needs of the citizens, such as employment and an even distribution of the nation's resources. In contrast, in less developed countries, a significant number of the population lives in poverty, and this can serve as an avenue for people to recruit vulnerable groups to participate in terrorist acts.<sup>223</sup> Similarly, poverty and instability are very profound in nations with low GDP because of weak institutions and poor law enforcement, and judicial systems are vulnerable to penetration and exploitation by transnational terrorist groups. As a result, transnational terrorism has a prominent foothold in Africa, and it is no coincidence that al-Qaeda found sanctuary in Sudan in the 1990s. The GDP annual growth rate determines a country's economic health, and GDP per

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<sup>221</sup> [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

<sup>222</sup> James Meernik (2008). US Foreign Policy and Regime Instability, Strategic Studies Institute

<sup>223</sup> Fabrizio Carmignani & Abdur Chowdhury (2010). Why Are Natural Resources a Curse in Africa, but not Elsewhere? School of Economics Discussion Paper No. 406, The University of Queensland, Australia

capita measures the population's standard of living.<sup>224</sup> Therefore, nations with a weak GDP growth rate and low GDP per capita provide an avenue for social, economic, and political disaster for the population. Several people, especially the younger generation, are recruited by terrorist organizations, creating chaos in the nation due to poverty.<sup>225</sup> Terrorist groups can quickly recruit the more youthful population or the youth through incentives such as money because of the high unemployment rate. As a result, less developed nations with low levels of development are more susceptible to terrorist activity than wealthy nations. Thus, economic differences can affect a state's terrorist activity. States that can provide their citizens with a better standard of living and economic opportunities are less vulnerable to terrorist activity.<sup>226</sup> On the other hand, the GDP per capita provides a proper understanding of the standard of living of the nation's population, and a country with a high GDP per capita has an effective and efficient economy. Therefore, the GDP per capita is a reliable measure of the economic state of a nation from an individual perspective. On the other hand, GDP per capita determines a country's standard of living.<sup>227</sup> In addition, the GDP per capita helps governments to understand how the economy grows with its population. It measures economic output per person, and GDP per capita is expressed in the current local currency, the constant local currency. The data for GDP per capita comes from the World Bank's World Development Indicators.<sup>228</sup>

## MATERNAL MORTALITY

Maternal mortality/deaths refer to the annual number of female deaths from any cause related to pregnancy or its management (excluding accidental or incidental causes) during

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<sup>224</sup> Ibid

<sup>225</sup> Ibid

<sup>226</sup> Ibid

<sup>227</sup> Ibid

<sup>228</sup> Ibid

pregnancy and childbirth or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy, expressed per 100,000 live births, for a specified period. However, the various ratios and rate calculations included only maternal deaths occurring before the end of the 42-day reference period.

In addition, the maternal mortality ratio is defined as the number of maternal deaths during a given period per 100,000 live births during the same period. The maternal mortality ratio is calculated by dividing recorded maternal deaths by total recorded live births in the same period and multiplying by 100,000. The measurement requires information on the pregnancy status, the timing of death, and the cause. The data on maternal mortality are obtained through the databases maintained by the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank Group. Also, the maternal mortality ratio is measured by the number of maternal deaths during a given period per 100,000 live births during the same period. Nonetheless, the data suffer from underreporting maternal mortality due to misclassification and incomplete death registration. The maternal death in the study is used as a proxy for poverty and controls for lack of health facilities and high incidence of malaria and other diseases affecting pregnant mothers due to poverty.<sup>229</sup>

## REGIME TYPES

One of the prevalent ideas in the existing literature on international relations is that domestic political patterns are linked to foreign policy via the regime type (democracy, autocracy, and anocracy). Since the 21<sup>st</sup> century, regime type has played a significant role in a nation's foreign policy. First, the regime type of a nation plays a crucial role concerning the behavior of the

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<sup>229</sup> Ibid

population of the state, or citizens in the state behave in a particular way based on the state's regime type. Democratic nations allow citizens to express their grievances against the government through legal protests, freedom of speech, freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of the press, and the power to change political leadership or officeholders through free and fair elections. These opportunities are given to citizens in democratic states to discourage violent forms of protest, increase regime stability, and decrease the incidence of terrorist attacks and war. James Meernik (2008) empirically studies US foreign policy and regime instability and finds that individuals become less interested in violent methods to express their dissatisfaction with the government as political competitiveness increases. Research conducted by Khokhlov & Korotayev 2022 found that political regime or regime types and the level of socioeconomic development play a crucial role in state terrorism. The research findings have indicated that democratic governments are prone to terrorism because of the openness of the executive recruitment process and the competitiveness of political participation. In addition, citizens in democratic nations enjoy the freedom of movement, associations, speech, press, and religion.<sup>230</sup> Li 2005, finds that democratic participation reduces transnational terrorist incidents in a country, while government constraints increase the number of incidents, subsuming the effect of press freedom.<sup>231</sup>

The study uses the Polity5 dataset for regime types compiled by the Center for Systemic Peace (CSP) 2020. The Polity dataset is the most widely used database on political institutions among Political Scientists and international relations scholars. The Polity5 dataset assesses institutional democracy and autocracy on a scale of -10 (solid autocratic) to +10 (strong

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<sup>230</sup> Nikita Khokhlov & Korotayev (2022). Internet, Political Regime and Terrorism: A Quantitative Analysis, *Cross-Cultural Research*, Vol. 56, No. 4, 385-418

<sup>231</sup> Quan Li (2005). Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents? *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 49, No. 2, 278-297

democratic). Furthermore, democratic and authoritarian features are measured separately, and the two scores are summed up to give the final Polity Score. Solid autocratic states score from -10 to -6 on the combined Polity Scale. Anocracies are politically weak central governments or regimes that mix democratic and authoritarian features, scoring from -5 to +5 on the combined Polity Scale. Alternatively, states are considered democratic if they score +6 to +10 on the combined Polity Scale. For a state to qualify as a democracy, its Polity Score must cross the threshold from autocracy or anocracy to democracy.<sup>232</sup>

Democracy is measured using the Polity5 dataset. The core measurements of the Polity index focus on the openness of competition for executives, recruitment, constraints placed on the chief executive, and competitiveness of political participation. The polity variables measure the state's democratic features (+1 to +10) and autocratic features (-1 to -10) and sum these separate scales to provide the Polity Score (-10 to +10). The study codes democracy as (+1), autocracy as (-1), and an anocracy as (0). The regime type is essential to regime leaders' strategies to limit or prevent coups. According to Marshall, Jaggers & Gurr 2011, the Polity5 dataset uses 21 measures of autocracy and democracy, where -10 is a consolidated autocracy, and +10 is a consolidated democracy, including 0. The study uses the regime type as a control variable focusing on African nations.<sup>233</sup>

## AIMS OF THE STUDY

The study's primary purpose is to determine the causal link/relationship between US foreign policy militarization and political instability in Africa. The researcher is more interested in the study's causal inference between the independent variable, US foreign policy, and the

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<sup>232</sup> [www.systemicpeace.org](http://www.systemicpeace.org)

<sup>233</sup> Ibid

dependent variable, political instability. The study again aims to understand the effects of US foreign policy militarization and securitization that have affected the continent. The researcher intends to test a few hypotheses in the study.

## CHAPTER V

## THEORETICAL ARGUMENT BASED ON THE HYPOTHESES

The theoretical argument is the logical and conceptual reasoning behind an idea, theory, or proposition. It involves the development of an analytical framework, analyzing relevant concepts and principles, and examining supporting evidence or reasoning to support or refute a claim. On the other hand, theoretical arguments are predicated on abstract ideas or concepts rather than empirical evidence or observations. These arguments often involve the development of hypotheses or theories that seek to explain the relationship between different variables.<sup>234</sup> In addition, a theoretical argument focuses on presenting and supporting a hypothesis or theoretical framework based on existing knowledge, principles, or theories. It aims to comprehensively understand and interpret a subject matter predicated on theoretical perspectives and supporting evidence.<sup>235</sup>

In many disciplines, including philosophy, science, and social sciences, theoretical arguments explore relationships between concepts, explain phenomena, and have practical applications. They propose hypotheses and build models that can be used to solve real-world problems. Theoretical ideas, often based on existing knowledge, empirical observations, or previous research, aim to provide a deeper understanding or explanation of a subject.<sup>236</sup>

The strength of a theoretical argument lies not only in its logical coherence, internal consistency, and ability to account for relevant evidence or observations but also in its ability to withstand counterarguments. Considering counterarguments and potential limitations when formulating or

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<sup>234</sup> Cynthia Grant & Azadeh Osanloo (2014). Understanding, Selecting, and Integrating A Theoretical Framework in Dissertation Research: Creating the Blueprint for your House, *Administrative Issues Journal*, Vol. 4, Issue 2

<sup>235</sup> Ibid

<sup>236</sup> Ibid

evaluating a theoretical argument is not just important; it's essential. This practice allows for a robust and comprehensive analysis, fostering critical thinking.<sup>237</sup>

Theories are formulated to explain, predict, and understand phenomena and, in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limit of critical assumptions. For example, constructivists believe that the world is socially constructed through intersubjective interactions, that agents and structures are mutually constituted, and that conceptual factors such as norms, interests, and identity are central dynamics of world politics. Social construction influences the meaning and practices associated with concepts.<sup>238</sup>

## HYPOTHESES

A hypothesis is a precise, testable statement of what the researcher (s) predict will be the study's outcome. This involves proposing a relationship between two variables: the independent and dependent variables. In addition, the fundamental requirement of a hypothesis is that it can be tested to support or reject a claim. Karl Popper proposes falsifying hypotheses to demarcate science from non-fiction in research. For instance, observing a black swan can falsify the hypothesis that 'all swans are white.' For Popper, science should disapprove of a theory rather than support theoretical assumptions.<sup>239</sup> Furthermore, the hypothesis is a proposed explanation for a phenomenon, an educated guess, or a guess based on information you already know.<sup>240</sup>

Similarly, a hypothesis is an idea or reason based on known facts that have not yet been proven.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Ibid

<sup>238</sup> Paul Williams & Matt McDonald (2018). *Security Studies: An Introduction*, Third Edition, Published by Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London, and New York

<sup>239</sup> [www.simplypsychology.org/what-is-a-hypotheses.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/what-is-a-hypotheses.html)

<sup>240</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org>

<sup>241</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org>



Cooper & Schindler 2008 state that hypotheses are propositions formulated for empirical testing. Therefore, in this study, I use hypotheses to predict the outcome of the relationships among the tested variables.

#### MAIN HYPOTHESES IN THE STUDY

**H<sub>1a</sub>:** The higher the level of US military aid to an African country, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks in that country.

**H<sub>1b</sub>:** The higher the number of security interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks that country.

**H<sub>1c</sub>:** The higher the number of US humanitarian interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks in that country.

**H<sub>1d</sub>:** The higher the number of US troops deployed in an African country, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks in that country.

**H<sub>1e</sub>:** The higher the number of US military trainees in an African country, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks in that country.

**H<sub>2a</sub>:** The higher the level of US military aid to an African country, the greater the likelihood of civil war in that country.

**H<sub>2b</sub>:** The higher the number of US security interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of civil war in that country.

**H<sub>2c</sub>:** The higher the number of US humanitarian interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of civil war in that country.

**H<sub>2d</sub>:** The higher the number of US military troops deployed in an African country, the greater the likelihood of civil war in that country.

**H<sub>2e</sub>:** The higher the number of US trainees in an African country, the greater the likelihood of civil war in that country.

**H<sub>3a</sub>:** The higher the level of US military aid to an African country, the greater the likelihood of coups in that country.

**H<sub>3b</sub>:** The higher the number of US security interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of coups in that country.

**H<sub>3c</sub>:** The higher the number of US humanitarian interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of coups in that country.

**H<sub>3d</sub>:** The higher the number of US military troops deployed in an African country, the greater the likelihood of coups in that country.

**H<sub>3e</sub>:** The higher the number of US military trainees in an African country, the greater the likelihood of coups in that country.

**H<sub>4a</sub>:** The higher the level of US military aid to an African country, the greater the likelihood of anti-government demonstrations in that country.

**H<sub>4b</sub>:** The higher the number of US security interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of anti-government demonstrations in that country.

**H<sub>4c</sub>:** The higher the number of humanitarian interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of anti-government demonstrations in that country.

**H<sub>4d</sub>:** The higher the number of US military troops deployed in an African country, the greater the likelihood of anti-government demonstrations in that country.

**H<sub>4e</sub>:** The higher the number of US trainees in an African country, the greater the likelihood of anti-government demonstrations in that country.

## US FOREIGN POLICY AND REGIME STABILITY

US foreign policy is designed to promote positive relations and maintain stability in the global system. It aims to foster friendly and cooperative relationships. In addition, the US uses many policy instruments to effect change or influence the domestic political affairs of foreign regimes through troops stationed in foreign nations, economic and military assistance, and covert use of military personnel.<sup>242</sup> These policy instruments have helped the US to achieve some of its foreign policy goals, such as democratization, human rights, and economic development. The fundamental purpose of US foreign policy is to promote peace and stability in a region, and the US's footprint in other nations' domestic policy increases through diplomatic missions and the presence of military personnel deployed in various countries.<sup>243</sup> Similarly, the US troops' presence in host nations and military aid alleviate governments' reduce their resources on security and better spending on socioeconomic programs and projects that can further the nation's prosperity. In addition, the US uses its presence and military assistance to compel change in foreign regimes' domestic policies while stimulating the local economy of the host countries and providing jobs for nationals who are involved in businesses that contract with and supply the US military; this can open avenues for the nations citizens to take part in educational, economic, and military interactions with the US.<sup>244</sup> Therefore, I test four hypotheses regarding US foreign policy towards Africa after the Cold War and post-9/11.

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<sup>242</sup> James Meernik (2008). US Foreign Policy and Regime Instability, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

<sup>243</sup> Ibid

<sup>244</sup> Ibid

## CAUSAL MECHANISMS AND THEORETICAL ARGUMENTS IN THE STUDY

### US military aid and training programs contributions to stability in Africa

US military aid and training programs in Africa are not just about the US exerting its influence but about a shared commitment to promote stability, enhance security, build capacity, and foster regional cooperation. A significant body of academic literature supports the view that these programs, including US security assistance and the training of militaries, contribute to stability in Africa. These contributions are made through four main casual mechanisms: counterterrorism and counterinsurgency programs that have been extensively used to defeat violent extremist organizations promoting liberal norms and values, fostering regional cooperation, and humanitarian and non-military programs.

#### Enhancing security and counterterrorism in Africa

The US military aid and training programs help African countries strengthen their capabilities to combat terrorist organizations such as Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, the Lord's Resistance Army, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and Islamic State of Iraq and Syria affiliates. Through enhanced training and military equipment, local security forces have become more effective in disrupting and dismantling these terrorist groups, improving security and reducing the threat of terrorism, which has led to stability. In addition, the military aid and training programs for African countries are also a joint effort to foster regional stability in the Great Lakes regions, the Horn of Africa, and the Sahel and Sahara Desert. US security assistance and training assist in securing porous borders, which terrorist organizations and criminal networks often exploit. Better border security reduces the flow of illegal arms, drugs, and human trafficking, contributing to overall stability.

### Liberal norms and values foster stability

The US training programs focus on professionalizing African militaries, emphasizing the importance of democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and civilian control of the armed forces in respective African countries, which fosters stability and peace. The training in liberal norms and values aims to discourage military intervention in politics through coups, promoting a future where democratic principles and other values are internalized, thereby promoting stability on the continent. Internalizing liberal norms and values reduces the likelihood of military abuses, contributing to stability. In addition, the training emphasizes the importance of positive civil-military relations, ensuring that the armed forces respect civilian authority and cooperate with government institutions, which fosters a stable political environment and reduces the risk of military intervention in politics.

### Fostering regional cooperation in Africa

The US military aid and training programs support regional security initiatives, such as the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram and the G5 Sahel Joint Force, including countries such as Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger, and Mauritania. The US provides training, intelligence, and logistical support, enhancing regional efforts' effectiveness to address cross-border threats, leading to stability. In addition, the US security assistance, training, and equipping support for the African Union and the United Nations peacekeeping missions, notably the African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM), contributes to stabilizing conflict zones and maintaining peace. This helps manage and resolve conflict, reduce violence, and promote long-term stability.

US humanitarian assistance and non-military programs in Africa promotes stability

The US also fosters stability and peace through non-military and humanitarian aid programs, notably the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI). In addition, the US also provides humanitarian assistance to African countries during natural or artificial disasters, which promotes stability. Humanitarian aid addresses problems relating to refugee migration and internally displaced people on the continent, contributing to stability. In conclusion, US security assistance and training contribute to stability through counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, liberal norms and values, sanctions, humanitarian aid, and non-military programs.

US military aid and training programs contribute to instability in Africa

The existing academic literature demonstrates that US military assistance and training programs can inadvertently contribute to African instability. This can occur through four main causal mechanisms: the proliferation of arms, facilitating human rights abuses, exacerbating local rivalries, and through the side-effects of counterterrorism.

The proliferation of arms

The US military aid/training increases the availability of weapons in a region, which enables insurgent groups to arm themselves, and this contributes to instability. The influx of US weapons into conflict zones can exacerbate ongoing conflicts, making them more lethal and protracted. US weapons in Africa can quickly get into the hands of Boko Haram and al-Shabaab when this assistance lacks oversight mechanisms such as accountability and transparency. Some African militaries were accused of selling US military equipment to al-Shabaab in Somalia, contributing to instability in the region.

### Empowering autocratic leaders

US military aid/training programs can bolster the power of authoritarian regimes that prioritize maintaining control over democratic principles and human rights. US security assistance and training increases the local government's coercive capability, and these regimes may use enhanced military capabilities to suppress political opposition and civil dissent, leading to long-term instability and uprisings. Authoritarian governments can divert military aid to unintended uses, including bolstering private militias or corruption increasing violence and instability. When coupled with local forces' failure to internalize liberal norms and values, this can lead to local governments abusing their population, which encourages protests and creates opportunities for insurgencies to gain control of volatile regions.

### Exacerbating local rivalries

Security assistance and training programs can exacerbate local rivalries in some circumstances, contributing to broader regional instability. When military aid is provided to one group or faction over others, it can create or deepen power imbalances. This favoritism can lead to resentment and injustice among excluded people. Alternatively, strengthening already dominant groups can make them more assertive and aggressive toward marginalized communities, increasing the potential for conflict. In addition, the US security assistance and training programs can also lead to sectarian divides. Aid that disproportionately benefits one sect can exacerbate existing tensions. For instance, if US security assistance is seen as favoring one ethnic or religious group, it can increase sectarian violence. Similarly, military aid//training can lead to ethnic rivalries, whereas security assistance can unintentionally reinforce ethnic divisions and rivalries.

## Counterterrorism operations

Counterterrorism operations in countries infested/plagued by violent extremist organizations have sometimes led to civilian casualties and local grievances, which can fuel instability and anti-American sentiment. For example, the US drone strikes and military operations intended to target terrorists can result in civilian casualties and collateral damage. These incidents provoke anger and hostility among the local population, leading to cycles of violence and retaliation. Also, military actions can lead to the displacement of civilians, exacerbating humanitarian crises and creating conditions for instability in Africa. In conclusion, US foreign policy toward Africa can promote stability and economic development in several ways, but it may also produce unintended consequences that contribute to instability in other ways.

## BRIEF BACKGROUND OF US TROOPS

The US military deployment has shaped the international system since the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Military deployment becomes a US foreign policy instrument, and thirty percent of its troops are deployed overseas across hundreds of locations in the global system.<sup>245</sup> These deployments have been central to US foreign policy during the emergence of the liberal international order in the post-World War II period. In addition, the US deploys troops abroad to deter, threaten, and interact with other global, regional, and minor powers in the international system and react to emergent threats and disasters globally since it is the only country with power-projecting capabilities. Deployment of troops abroad helps the US establish social, political, and economic order and spheres of influence.<sup>246</sup> A literature review has shown the general pattern of US military deployments in the global system. The US troops' deployments were stable post-World

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<sup>245</sup> Michael Allen, Michael Flynn & Carla Martinez Machain (2022). US Global Military Deployment, 1950-2020, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 351-370

<sup>246</sup> Ibid



War II, and the end of the Cold War saw a sharp and steady decline in the US presence in Europe. In addition, the largest US military deployments for non-combat zone participation include Germany, Japan, and South Korea. The primary aim of these deployments is to protect the host nations and foster regional stability. More importantly, non-invasion deployments are a standard method of deterring third-party states from attacking the host nations. On some occasions, troops deployed in the territory of these nations send a credible signal that the host nation can be defended if attacked, and the troops' presence serves as a form of extended deterrence—for instance, US troops in Japan and South Korea. In addition, these troops provide security for the host nations by deterring invasion to promote regional stability in their stationed area.<sup>247</sup>

The literature on US troop deployments abroad is divided into qualitative and quantitative categories/dimensions. The quantitative dimension focuses on security and positive and negative externalities of US troop deployments overseas. Braithwaite & Kucik 2017 argue that troops deployed abroad increase the governmental stability of the host nations by sending signals of their commitment to the host, promoting the rule of law, and reducing civil conflict. Allen et al., 2020 argue that the US military supports regional stability. On the other hand, Stravers and El Kurd's 2020 research found that US military presence correlates with dictatorship, indicating that peace comes with less political openness and increased repression. Moreover, Nieman et al. 2020 posit that power competition in the global system drives US troop deployments abroad.<sup>248</sup> Again, the existing literature on US troops' deployment as a foreign policy instrument has found that the deployment of troops significantly benefits the host nations' economies. It is worth noting that the

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<sup>247</sup> Carla Martinez Machain & Clifton Morgan (2013). The Effect of US Troop Deployment on Host States' Foreign Policy, *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 39, No. 1, 102-123

<sup>248</sup> Michael Allen, Michael Flynn & Carla Martinez Machain (2022). US Global Military Deployment, 1950-2020, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 351-370

US military deployments in the global system are influenced by several factors, such as counternarcotic, humanitarian, civic-assistance missions, and counterterrorism operations in the Middle East and Africa. The specific task of US troop deployments varies dramatically across the international security environment. Overall, trends in US troop deployments follow strategic priorities, and the US presence is concentrated in Europe, East and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and recently in Africa. The deployment of US troops abroad also signals American foreign policy interests and a solid commitment to a particular region. The anecdotal literature has demonstrated that US troops in the host nations lead to better human rights practices by the host government.<sup>249</sup> Jones and Kane (2012) argue that the presence of US troops leads to the remarkable economic growth of the host nation through the diffusion of financial institutions via American troops. Specifically, the presence of troops involved in cross-cultural exposure and the host nation internalizes US values and norms, such as human rights, property rights, and good governance, promoting economic growth and development. Machain and Morgan 2013 find that states that host US troops are more likely to reduce their troop levels while relying on US troops' security.

However, after the 9/11 attacks, there was a significant variation in the distribution of US military personnel throughout the post-World War II period, with a substantial increase in locations that have historically hosted large US military deployments. There has been a significant change in the US's overseas military posture after 9/11. US military deployments have grown in the Middle East and North Africa during the wars in the region.

In contrast, the broader geographic spread of US military personnel after the 9/11 attacks has become a critical consequence of the US's war on terror. One of the most significant

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<sup>249</sup> Sam Bell, Chad Clay, and Carla Martinez Machain (2017). The Effect of US Troops Deployments on Human Rights, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 61, No. 10, 2020-2042

developments in post-2005 was a dramatic increase in troop deployments throughout Africa. The US strategic priority in Africa increased in the 1990s through military intervention in Somalia and counterterrorism operations after al-Qaeda bombed US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. After the 9/11 attacks, the US military and security agencies pursued the ‘global war on terror’ in Africa due to failed, weak, and ungoverned spaces believed to become hotspots for terrorist groups. The US grand strategy shifted from more significant and permanent bases toward smaller deployments spread across the global system, particularly in Africa. The US established the US African Unified Combatant Command, AFRICOM, in 2008, and its footprint has expanded dramatically due to the global war on terror.<sup>250</sup> On the other hand, the US deployed approximately 6,000 military personnel across Africa and has created a permanent military base in Djibouti at Camp Lemonnier since 2002. These Special Operations Forces (SOF) support African partners and allies to increase African nations’ security capabilities and stabilize the region. Specifically, the permanent base at Camp Lemonnier serves as a critical outpost for surveillance and combat operations against al-Qaeda and other extremist organizations in the continent.<sup>251</sup> The Special Operations Forces are the most highly trained military personnel, specializing in counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and direct-action combat raids, and most of their missions are shrouded in secrecy. In 2019, fourteen percent of US Special Operations Forces were deployed in twenty-two African countries, the most significant percentage of any region except the greater Middle East.<sup>252</sup> According to the White House War Powers notifications, several US troops are deployed in the Horn of Africa, especially Somalia, because of al-Shabaab, Lake Chad basin, and the Sahel in West Africa due to Boko

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<sup>250</sup> Michael Allen, Michael Flynn & Carla Martinez Machain (2020). US Global Military Deployment, 1950-2020, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 351-370

<sup>251</sup> Kathryn Watson (2017). Where Does the US Have Troops in Africa and Why?

<sup>252</sup> Nick Turse, Amanda Sperber & Sam Mednick (2020). Exclusive: Inside the Secret World of US Commandos in Africa

Haram and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) to conduct airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations to assist counterterrorism operations.<sup>253</sup> In addition, host nations of US troops become targets of attack from non-state actors hostile to the US, and troops' presence also increases conflict because it provokes adversaries and encourages allies to adopt reckless policies.<sup>254</sup> The higher the level of US troops/military personnel deployed in an African country, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks in that country.

The projection of military power is a fundamental instrument in global politics. Thus, the US has maintained overseas deployments of hundreds and thousands of military personnel during the post-war period. However, this deployment became a foreign policy tool for US deterrence and the protection of the liberal international order.<sup>255</sup> Some scholars argue that US troops deployed abroad promote socioeconomic, political, security, and spheres of influence policy with its allies in the global system. Against this background, US troops deployed in selected African countries can positively and negatively influence the host nations, and these troops are deployed with the consent of the host nations to promote and guarantee regional stability.<sup>256</sup> On the other hand, a review of the existing literature also demonstrates that the primary goal of US troop deployment abroad is to maintain regional stability.

I hypothesize that the higher the number of US troops deployed in selected African countries, the greater the terrorist attacks in various nations. This is the primary hypothesis in the

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<sup>253</sup> Joshua Keating (2023). US Troops Are Deployed in Dozens of Countries: Where Are They and Why? *Africa: The War's New Frontier*

<sup>254</sup> O'Mahony, Priebe, Frederick, Kavanagh, Lane, Johnson, Szayna, Hlavka, Watts, & Povlock (2018). *US Presence and the Incidence of Conflict*, Rand Corporation

<sup>255</sup> Michael Allen, Michael Flynn & Carla Martinez Machain (2022). *US Global Military Deployment, 1950-2020*, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 351-370

<sup>256</sup> Michael Allen, Michael Flynn, Carla Martinez & Andrew Stravers (2020). *Outside the Wire: US Military Deployments and Public Opinion in Host States*, *American Political Science Review*, Published by Cambridge University Press

study, along with other hypotheses attached to the terrorist attacks as the response variable. My theory is that the presence of US military personnel stationed in selected African countries can contribute to terrorist attacks in the chosen nations because the troops in host nations faced widespread opposition from sections of the population and non-state actors, especially during the war on terror. Anecdotal evidence also shows that terrorist groups increase attacks, particularly in the volatile regions of selected African countries such as the Sahel, Lake Chad basin, and the Horn, which are occupied by extremist violent groups Boko Haram, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and al-Shabaab where US counterterrorism operations have increased. The presence of military personnel provokes these terrorist groups to increase attacks on both the host nations and the neighboring countries, which contributes to instability in the continent. To test this hypothesis, the dependent variable in the study is a terrorist attack, and the independent variable is US troops deployed/stationed in the continent. I use datasets from the Department of Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), datasets of the US troops deployed in Africa between 1995-2020, and the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) for terrorist attacks in the continent. The GTD contains count/event data on terrorist attacks in every country in the global system from 1970-2020. The presence of US troops is statistically significant in supporting the hypothesis in the study. This empirical evidence shows that US troops deployed in the selected African countries affect terrorism casualties. This has demonstrated an association between US troops and terrorist attacks, which suggests that US troops deployed in selected African countries are more likely to contribute to terrorist attacks in deployed nations. However, the strength of the relationship between the explanatory and the response variables is weak. A high correlation coefficient between an independent and dependent variable indicates that the independent variable strongly influences the

dependent variable. As a result, a causal relationship has not been established between the response and predictor variables because correlation does not imply causation.<sup>257</sup>

On the other hand, the increase in terrorism casualties in chosen African countries could also be explained in terms of the region's volatility, which has led to the rise in the US troops in these areas. Also, the ungoverned spaces of selected African nations have become a sanctuary for terrorist groups like al-Shabaab in Somalia, Boko Haram in Nigeria, and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in northern Mali. For example, empirical evidence has shown that for the past two decades, Nigeria has recorded the highest number of terrorism casualties 28, 925, followed by Somalia 13, 047, and Algeria, 10,303.<sup>258</sup> This indicates that terrorist activities are higher in the regions where extremist violent organizations are present as compared to other African states, which have recorded zero casualties despite the presence of US troops in those countries like Eswatini, Botswana, Gambia, Mauritius, Comoros, etc. My main guess is that there are other contributory factors leading to the formation of terrorist organizations in those regions other than the presence of US troops as a primary factor contributing to the attacks.

Empirical research conducted by Khokhlov & Korotayev 2022, found that political regimes and the level of socioeconomic development play a crucial role in terrorism in a state. The research findings state that democratic governments are prone to terrorism because of the openness of executive recruitment and the competitiveness of political participation. In addition, the research also cites the proliferation of the internet as one of the factors connected to the intensity of the

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<sup>257</sup> Julia M. Rohrer (2018). Thinking Clearly About Correlation and Causation: Graphical Causal Model for Observational Data, *Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, 27-42

<sup>258</sup> Global Terrorism Database (2022). University of Maryland

terrorist attacks, mainly in democratic states compared to autocratic regimes.<sup>259</sup> Furthermore, countries with large populations experience more terrorist attacks because terrorist groups can recruit more potential supporters since the government cannot satisfy the needs of everybody or make everyone happy, regardless of how the incumbent governments address citizens' grievances.<sup>260</sup> Additionally, empirical evidence has indicated that countries with low GDP are affected by terrorist activity because of high unemployment among the younger population, which has made these nations become recruitment centers for violent extremist organizations. Against this backdrop, states with high levels of economic development are more stable than less developed nations.<sup>261</sup> The primary goal of US troop deployment in selected African countries is to maintain regional peace and stability rather than chaos and instability in the deployed nations.

On the other hand, I hypothesize that as the number of US military trainees in selected African countries increases, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks in those countries. My theory in the study regarding the hypothesis is that an increase in US military trainees in chosen African countries will lead to more terrorist attacks on the continent. However, the empirical evidence demonstrates a negative and statistically significant relationship between terrorist attacks and US military trainees in selected African countries. This shows that as US military trainees increase, terrorist attacks in the chosen nations decrease. Therefore, the empirical evidence does not support my hypothesis in the study. The dynamic panel model's predictor and response variables have an opposite or inverse relationship. Again, I hypothesize in the study that as the

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<sup>259</sup> Nikita Khokhlov & Andrew Korotayev (2022). Internet, Political Regime and Terrorism: A Quantitative Analysis, *Cross-Cultural Research*, Vol. 56, No. 4, 385-418.

<sup>260</sup> Quan Li (2005). Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents? *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 49, No. 2, 278-297

<sup>261</sup> James Meernik (2008). *US Foreign Policy and Regime Instability*, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

number of US security interventions increases in chosen African countries, the greater the probability of terrorist attacks. I theorize that US security interventions in the selected African countries can influence terrorist attacks. However, the empirical results do not provide evidence that supports my hypothesis in the study. My final hypothesis regarding terrorist attacks in the study states that the greater the US humanitarian interventions in chosen African countries, the greater the probability of terrorist attacks on the continent. Surprisingly, the empirical evidence or analysis provides no support for this hypothesis. Therefore, US humanitarian interventions in selected African countries have no association with terrorist attacks in the selected nations in the dynamic panel data model.

#### BRIEF BACKGROUND OF US MILITARY ASSISTANCE

US military assistance began after World War II, with a bipolar balance of power between the two superpowers. Military aid has become a foreign policy tool to assist warring parties that are considered strategically important. Since the demise of the Cold War, the US has furnished military aid as part of peacemaking and peacekeeping initiatives in Africa. The US spends more than 11 billion dollars annually on direct military assistance to foreign governments and substate groups.<sup>262</sup> Military assistance is viewed as a quid-pro-quo with the expectation of compliance from the recipient government. According to the 2007 State Department report, *'Security cooperation remains a critical foreign policy instrument that allows the US to advance its national security interests worldwide and building partner nation security capacity is one of the most critical strategic requirements for the US to promote international security, advance its interests and prevail in the war against terrorism.'*<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> Patricia Sullivan, Brock Tessman, & Xiaojun Li (2011). US Military Aid and Recipient Cooperation, Foreign Policy Analysis, Vol. 7, No. 3, 275-294

<sup>263</sup> Ibid



On the other hand, US foreign assistance is categorized into economic and military assistance. Financial assistance is foreign aid for programs that foster sustainable, broad-based economic progress and socio-political stability in developing countries. Humanitarian aid programs focus on alleviating humanitarian emergencies, natural and artificial/artificial disasters, and problems resulting from conflict associated with failed and failing states. In addition, economic assistance captures US voluntary contributions to multilateral organizations, non-military security assistance, and humanitarian and non-military development programs funded by the US Department of Defense (DOD). Military assistance is a foreign aid program primarily for the benefit of recipient government armed forces or aid that subsidizes or enhances military capability. Notably, military assistance excludes humanitarian and non-military development programs.<sup>264</sup>

According to Watts et al. 2018, during the Cold War, the US aims to maintain partnerships with African governments and prevent regimes from slipping into the Soviet Orbit. During this period, good governance, human rights, peace, and stability were not the overarching goals of the US military assistance to nations in the global system. The US was willing to provide military aid to autocratic and corrupt repressive governments while steering aid away from Soviet allies and partners. In addition, the US, during the Cold War, emphasized international alignment over domestic stability as a primary goal of its military aid policies, which exacerbated conflict on the continent, and military assistance was given to authoritarian and corrupt governments to prevent them from being Soviet allies.<sup>265</sup> In contrast, the US provides less aid to repressive governments

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<sup>264</sup> US Agency for International Development (USAID) 1945-2019. US Overseas Loans and Grants, Obligations and Loan Authorizations

<sup>265</sup> Stephen Watts, Trevor Johnson, Matthew Lane, Sean Mann, Michael McNerney, and Andrew Brooks (2018). Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of US Security Assistance in Africa from Cold War to the Present, Rand Corporation

in the post-Cold War era. *Watts et al.* 2018 find no robust statistical relationship between security sector assistance and the incidence of political violence across Africa in the post-Cold War period.

Furthermore, the US has expanded military aid to African countries after 9/11 to fight the war on terror. According to data collected by the Security Assistance Monitor (SAM), funding to train and equip foreign security forces increased over 300 percent after 9/11. Alternatively, between 2015 and 2020, the US delivered 4.8 billion dollars in military aid to sub-Saharan Africa, and Kristen Harkness at the University of St. Andrew argues that most US military assistance is channeled to repressive, coup-proofed authoritarian regimes undemocratic states where citizens dissatisfied with government policies join extremist groups and increase political violence. In Africa, autocratic and anocratic leaders use military aid, mainly weapons, military equipment, and combat training skills in extrajudicial killings in low and middle-income recipient states.<sup>266</sup> Additionally, US military assistance to African countries strengthens military partnerships and capabilities, promoting the capability-building and professionalism of security forces. Counterterrorism initiatives are also provided to African states to disrupt and respond to terrorist threats in the region. The State Department administers US peace and security assistance to Africa under Title 22 of the US Code. Somalia and Kenya have become the top countries receiving Title 22 counterterrorism assistance.<sup>267</sup>

The existing literature on post-Cold War US military aid has shown that human rights and democracy play a critical role in allocating military assistance. First, the US is interested in promoting human rights abroad, especially after the collapse of the Cold War. Second, democracies are believed to be more peaceful toward each other. Therefore, promoting democracy is viewed as

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<sup>266</sup> Patricia Sullivan (2023). *Do No Harm: US Aid to Africa and Civilian Security*.

<sup>267</sup> Tomas Husted, Alexis Arieff, Lauren Blanchard, and Nicolas Cook (2022). *US Assistance for Sub-Saharan Africa: An Overview*, Congressional Research Services

an investment in international cooperation, peace, and stability. Democratic nations are considered less threatening to US interests and are amenable to pursuing liberal foreign policy interests like human rights. As a result, regime types became determinants of the US military aid to recipient nations post-Cold War. However, some scholars argue that revoking assistance to developing countries predicated on human rights conditionality can exacerbate economic problems and overall prospects of peace and stability, undermining the US's overarching goals of political and economic development.<sup>268</sup> Academic researchers have linked armed imports and human rights abuses in developing countries as some of the causes of instability and argue that US arms transfer to developing countries impedes democratization instead of promoting it. More importantly, Maniruzzaman's 1992 empirical research finds that arms transfer positively correlates with the probability of coup d'état and the length of military rule in the continent. Kinsella and Tilleman's 1995 empirical evidence also shows that arms transfer from great powers encourages client states to adopt aggressive foreign policies toward their neighbors. Similarly, Sanja 1999, argues that both the US and Soviet arms transfers to promote regional stability instead resulted in political and military destabilization of relations between the recipient nations. Furthermore, Craft and Smaldone (2002) found that arms transfer to sub-Saharan Africa strongly predicted states' armed conflicts. The US uses military assistance as leverage to compel recipient nations' cooperation to achieve its security, economic, and strategic interests.<sup>269</sup> Some scholars focus on the effect of US foreign aid on democracy and human rights in the recipient states, and others in the extant literature have researched whether US military assistance induces UN voting compliance. However, Kegley

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<sup>268</sup> Tijen Demirel-Pegg & James Moskowitz (2009). US Aid Allocation: The Nexus of Human Rights, Democracy and Development, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 46, No. 2, 181-198

<sup>269</sup> Patricia Sullivan, Brock Tessman, & Xiaojun Li (2011). US Military Aid and Recipient Cooperation, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 275-294

and Hook 1995, find no relationship between the US military aid to recipient states and UN voting, although Congress enacted a law empowering the president to withhold aid from countries that consistently voted against the US in the UN.<sup>270</sup>

Conversely, insecure political leaders use military assistance to consolidate power, particularly in developing countries. This behavior of some leaders provokes violent opposition because military aid strengthens the security forces of the recipient state, and this generates a moral hazard that encourages exclusionary power consolidation with the expectation that continued military assistance will help control violent blowback.<sup>271</sup> The study indicates that US military aid increases anti-regime violence in new democratic and personalist regimes and intensifies a cycle of conflict despite its primary aim to maintain stability.<sup>272</sup> The main objective of US military assistance is to provide competent, inclusive, and apolitical security forces willing to support US policies, defend the recipient regime, and uphold democratic norms. Research has shown that military assistance creates problems when the priorities of the recipient governments diverge from those of the US. Boutton argues that military assistance can increase terrorism because it incentivizes recipients to sustain terrorism to receive support from the US. Therefore, US military aid creates moral hazards for regimes, particularly new democracies, personalist, single-party, and military governments. As a result, military assistance exacerbates the violence in personalist regimes because political power is limited to the leader and regime elites.<sup>273</sup>

According to Acemoglu and Verdier 2004, personalist leaders use US military assistance to create extractive institutions that enable an individual or a small group of people to use power

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid

<sup>271</sup> Andrew Boutton (2021). Military Aid, Regime Vulnerability and the Escalation of Political Violence, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 51, 507-525

<sup>272</sup> Ibid

<sup>273</sup> Ibid

to transfer society's resources to themselves. These predatory and exclusionary policies and behavior create violent opposition toward the regime. Boutton finds strong empirical evidence that US military assistance increases domestic political violence, especially in new democracies, personalist, and military regimes. Classic examples in Africa are Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso. These governments are fragile democracies in which successive governments have neglected to address communal conflicts, leading to a significant escalation of disputes. Although military aid supports new or transitioning regimes, particularly democracies, the assistance facilitates order and consolidates democratic government. However, the empirical results have demonstrated that US military aid causes destabilization, and new democratic regimes that receive no military assistance experience less political violence than those that receive it.<sup>274</sup>

Blanken and Sullivan 2017, argue that military assistance in the post-conflict environment decreases incentives for good governance, weakens civilian control over the armed forces, and provides regimes with more effective tools of repression. The existing literature has indicated that military aid in weapons, finance, training, advice, and other forms of military assistance affects the quality of peace in countries struggling to recover from internal armed conflicts. In addition, human security impacts cross-border flows of weapons, military equipment, military financing, and other lethal assistance are a significant concern for non-governmental and international organizations, particularly volatile regions of Africa. Rand researchers 2014 examined the effect of military aid on a country's stability and political development. The findings indicate a small association but a statistically significant reduction in state fragility. Moreover, the reduction in state fragility is witnessed in democratic regimes, and military assistance directed at police education, counternarcotics, and law enforcement was associated with more excellent stability.

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<sup>274</sup> Ibid

Other scholars also argue that weapons, ammunition, and military equipment in fragile, conflict-affected states encourage repression, discourage good governance, and fuel violence. Collier et al. 2008, provide compelling evidence that military assistance should be prevented in post-conflict societies struggling with the problem of economic recovery and the threat of recurring conflict.<sup>275</sup> Prevention of terrorism is one of the challenges facing nation-states in contemporary times, particularly after 9/11. The urgency and importance of this problem create solid incentives for US policymakers to design efficient counterterrorism policies. Against this backdrop, military aid has come to the forefront of US foreign policy as a counterterrorism tool.<sup>276</sup> The war on terror has played a prominent role in increasing US foreign aid, and most aid is directed to countries where terrorist organizations have gained a foothold. The US has expanded military assistance to recipient states cooperating with the counterterrorism campaign. According to Bueno de Mesquita & Smith 2009, foreign aid can be used as a counterterrorism tool to bolster the capabilities of a state fighting terrorists or buy counterterrorism cooperation from states in Africa. This is true with al-Qaeda and its affiliates in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region of Africa, which threatens the US and its allies' interests. The US increases military aid to countries where al-Qaeda and its affiliates are present. Heinrich et al. 2017 find that the US increases military assistance to countries where terrorist groups are common such as Nigeria, Somalia, Mali, Niger, Cameroon, Uganda etc. Also, some domestic audiences spur resentment toward countries accepting US aid to fight terrorism, and Savun & Philip 2009 argue that this can attract terrorist attacks.<sup>277</sup> For example,

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<sup>275</sup> Leo Blanken and Patricia Sullivan (2017). Foreign Military Assistance and the Quality of the Peace in Post-Conflict Countries

<sup>276</sup> Burcu Savun, and Daniel Tirone (2017). Foreign Aid as Counterterrorism Tool: More Liberty, Less Terror, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1-29

<sup>277</sup> Tobias Heinrich, Carla Martinez Machain, & Jared Oestman (2017). Does Counterterrorism Militarize Foreign Aid? Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 54, No. 4, 527-541

there was a dramatic increase in Niger's military aid from 11.8 million dollars in 2012 to 33 million dollars in 2014. According to the Congressional Research Services, the US provided over 500 million dollars in military assistance to Somalia between 2010 and 2020.<sup>278</sup> According to Thrall & Dorminey 2018, US arms sales have increased after 9/11, encouraging states to vote at the UN and support pro-Western and pro-US foreign policies. A study in sub-Saharan Africa has demonstrated that arms transfers are significant positive predictors of increased probability of conflicts in Africa. Several scholars argue that US military aid can exacerbate conflict, particularly when given to weak states, because it can be diverted to non-state armed actors. Classic examples in Africa when US military assistance has been given to al/Shabaab terrorist groups. The higher the level of US military aid to an African country, the greater the likelihood of civil war in that country.

Political realists believe military aid is a US policy tool that originated during the Cold War to influence the political judgments of recipients.<sup>279</sup> Notably, US military assistance is given for political and security interests; however, it has also been used to advance and reward democracy, human rights protections, and other goals that can promote stability and peace in foreign nations. In addition, US military assistance depends on the regime type and targets democratic nations or countries in a democratic transition.<sup>280</sup> On the other hand, the provision of military aid wins critical friends in foreign regimes and militaries but also provokes anger and resentment from those outside the government who are against how the incumbent governments use military assistance. Research conducted in sub-Saharan Africa indicates that arms transfers are significant and positive

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<sup>278</sup> Elias Yousif (2023). US Security Assistance to Somalia.

<sup>279</sup> Tomohisa Hattori (2001). Reconceptualizing Foreign Aid, *Review of International Economy*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 633-660

<sup>280</sup> Daniel Yuichi Kono & Gabriella Montinola (2012). The Uses and Abuses of Foreign Aid: Development Aid and Military Spending, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 3, 615-629

predictors of increased probability of civil wars in Africa. This empirical evidence suggests that recipient nations in sub-Saharan Africa are more involved in civil wars than other areas.<sup>281</sup> Brzoska & Pearson 1994 found a positive relationship between arms imports and civil wars. Similarly, Booth & Vale's 1999 research found that weapons flow to sub-Saharan Africa increases domestic instability and political violence. In addition, Collier and Hoeffler's research findings have indicated that economic factors contribute to the risk of civil wars. Therefore, the risk of a state involving in civil war is higher if the level of per capita income is low and the state depends on primary commodity exports.<sup>282</sup>

I hypothesize that increasing US military aid to chosen African countries increases the likelihood of civil wars. US weapons and arms sales to selected African nations can contribute to civil wars because Africa is a continent endemic to civil wars, and the US continued support of arms, weapons, and military equipment exacerbates conflict, and peace and stability elude the selected African nations. In addition, the independent variable in the study is military aid, and the dependent variable is civil war. I use US Agency for International Development Greenbook data for the explanatory variable and the Uppsala Conflict Dataset for the response variable civil war in the study.

I test the primary hypothesis, and the empirical evidence has produced a negative relationship between military aid and civil wars in selected African countries. The findings of my empirical results do not support the hypothesis. This implies that other factors unrelated to US military aid might contribute to civil wars in the chosen countries. Against this backdrop, Schmidt

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<sup>281</sup> Cassady Craft & Joseph Smaldone (2002). The Arms Trade and the Incidence of Political Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 39, No. 6, 693-710

<sup>282</sup> Paul Collier & Anke Hoeffler (2002). Military Expenditure: Threat, Aid, and Arms Race, Policy Working Paper 2927.



2020, believes African civil wars are not caused by religion or ethnicity but rather by deep structural inequalities such as poverty, underdevelopment, political repression, and the devastating impact of climate change. On the other hand, I hypothesize again that as the US security interventions increase in chosen African countries, the greater the likelihood of civil wars in the selected countries. The empirical evidence of the hypothesis demonstrates a positive association with civil wars in chosen African nations. Therefore, the result supports the hypothesis. However, the strength of the relationship is weak, although a correlation exists between civil wars and US security interventions. This association might come from the US increased counterterrorism operations driven by the war on terror and the militarization of Africa, especially after the post-9/11. The interventions were motivated by the war on terror, which exacerbated local conflicts and shifted attention from political and socioeconomic grievances that formed the root of the conflicts. In addition, I hypothesize that as the US humanitarian interventions increase in chosen African countries, the greater the probability of civil wars in the continent.

Meanwhile, the empirical evidence in the dynamic panel data model shows no support for humanitarian intervention and African civil wars. This implies that civil wars in selected African countries do not affect humanitarian interventions. I must explain why US humanitarian interventions in chosen African nations do not influence civil wars in selected countries. Humanitarian intervention occurs when the military intervenes in a state to achieve socioeconomic objectives such as keeping people alive and communities functioning by providing necessities without the consent of its authorities. Sovereign states are given the right to use force when an unjust injury is inflicted on innocents. According to Robert 1993, humanitarian military intervention occurs in a state without the approval of its authorities to prevent widespread suffering or deaths among the population. Thus, the collapse of empires and the bipolar balance of power

has given geo-strategic significance to humanitarian intervention because state sovereignty and non-intervention removed the threat of superpower war.<sup>283</sup> A permissive environment has been created, and the United Nations become a more robust and active decision-making multilateral organization. Furthermore, the '*new world order*' began in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, and Western governments could now use the United Nations Security Council's authorization to launch interventions to protect and provide aid to affected civilians. The '*norm of responsibility to protect*' becomes the centerpiece of humanitarian literature, which has changed states' sovereignty in protecting human rights and emphasized the government's protection of citizens' lives in their territory. However, if a state cannot fulfill its obligations and responsibilities, other UN-authorized governments have the right to act/intervene, including military force.<sup>284</sup>

The existing literature outlines two schools of thought to explain why states engaged in humanitarian interventions after the collapse of the Cold War: realist and liberal arguments. Realists believe national interests, power, prestige or image, domestic political factors, and international normative advancement guide US humanitarian interventions. According to realists, the US intervenes in foreign nations to bolster or replace a regime through a covert activity and demobilize an aggressive group or government to end domestic conflict and promote democratic processes. Therefore, self-interest becomes an antecedent for US humanitarian intervention.<sup>285</sup> On the national interest hypothesis, other scholars from the realist camp argue that the US intervention occurs to bolster or assist allies, block a regional hegemon, or counterbalance an internal power. Thomas Frank and Nigel Rodley say that using the norm of humanitarian intervention provides an

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<sup>283</sup> Taylor Seybolt (2008). *Humanitarian Military Intervention: The Conditions for Success and Failure*, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Oxford University Press

<sup>284</sup> Ibid

<sup>285</sup> Alynna Lyon & Chris Dolan (2007). *American Humanitarian Intervention: Toward A Theory of Coevolution*, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 46-78

opportunity for realpolitik, self-interested pursuits, and abuse of strong states over weak states. For example, Art and Jervis argue against humanitarian intervention, saying that ‘no agency exists above the individual states with authority and power to make laws and settle disputes; *therefore, humanitarian intervention has no solid base.*’ In addition, humanitarian intervention enhances the US strategic interests in the sphere of influence, substantially and negatively impacting developing countries’ perceptions.<sup>286</sup> As a result, realist arguments are embedded in the notion of sovereignty established under the Peace of Westphalia, which prohibits states’ interference in the domestic affairs of other countries or in respect of the norm of non-interference. Against this background, realists are skeptical about the US motives of sacrificing its military personnel abroad in the name of humanitarian intervention. For this reason, realists believe strongly that US humanitarian intervention is another foreign policy instrument used to pursue national interests, such as securing oil or extending power interests.<sup>287</sup> Realists reiterate that morality has no place in military engagement. Against this backdrop, realists contend that national interests were the primary motives when the US government invokes humanitarian intervention to justify its military operations. For instance, the US intervention in Somalia to export its values, Haiti to discourage the massive flow of immigrant refugees, the incursion in Kosovo and Bosnia to preserve NATO’s political credibility, and the invasion of Iraq in 2003 to secure the US oil supply.<sup>288</sup> The most extraordinarily volatile and lethal conflicts in the 1990s involved Sudan, Rwanda, Angola, Somalia, Burundi, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. However, the selectivity of US humanitarian

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<sup>286</sup> Mohammed Ayoob (2004). Third World Perspectives on Humanitarian Interventions and International Administration, *Global Governance*, Vol. 10, 99-118

<sup>287</sup> Seung-Whan Choi (2013). What Determines US Humanitarian Intervention? *Conflict Management & Peace Science*, Vol. 30, No.2, 121-139

<sup>288</sup> Ibid

intervention, such as Kosovo and Haiti, proved that strategic interests impact decision-making processes and that the US targets specific countries.<sup>289</sup>

On the other hand, liberals argue that the primary purpose of the US humanitarian intervention is to promote economic and moral interests involving natural resources such as oil, iron, and copper, protect victims of human rights violations, and manifest America's ethical obligations and responsibilities as a world leader. This assertion is based on anecdotal evidence/observations rather than systematic observation; therefore, academic and policy elites need empirical evidence to justify their claim. In addition, liberals view human rights as an essential norm that the US uses to promote peace and stability in the global system. In this vein, liberals believe the US intervenes in the domestic affairs of other nations to promote and protect human rights violations. Against this background, the US deploys its troops abroad to advance its political and economic interests in the global system.<sup>290</sup> Against this background, liberals underscore the legitimacy of the US using military force against countries violating human rights.

Overall, liberal perspectives advance the argument that the US is justified in launching humanitarian intervention abroad in response to human rights violations unrelated to US vital interests.<sup>291</sup> Interestingly, empirical research conducted by Choi (2013) has demonstrated that US humanitarian interventions are consistent with liberal claims. The research outcome indicates that US humanitarian interventions preserve norms and moral values rather than pursue national interests.<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> Ibid

<sup>290</sup> Ibid

<sup>291</sup> Ibid

<sup>292</sup> Ibid

In sum, humanitarian intervention does not contribute to civil war because the United Nations Security Council authorizes it under the norm of responsibility to protect and respond to governments that suppress the human rights of its people, thus saving lives and relieving suffering or distributing food to prevent starvation. Therefore, the US military conducts humanitarian intervention with a humanitarian mission rather than economic, security, and strategic interests. For example, the US military intervention in Somalia in 1992/3 was considered humanitarian since US soldiers were dispatched to protect the victims of human rights abuses.<sup>293</sup> Furthermore, I hypothesize in the study that the probability of civil wars on the continent increases as the number of US military trainees increases in selected African countries. The empirical evidence in the dynamic panel data model shows a positive statistically significant relationship between US military trainees and civil wars in the selected African countries. This indicates that there is a correlation between the explanatory and response variables. However, this association does not mean that US military trainees are causing civil wars in the chosen countries because correlation does not imply causation. Other factors in selected African countries might be responsible for civil wars.

#### BRIEF BACKGROUND OF US MILITARY TRAINEES

Training of foreign militaries has become a US foreign policy instrument after the collapse of the Cold War. Foreign military personnel are trained in the robust use of sophisticated weapons and equipment sales programs, and this became part of the US military global strategy to achieve its foreign policy goals after World War II. The International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act was passed in 1976 and stipulates that these programs aim to transmit the US military's professional values and norms, namely respect for democratic values, human rights, and civilian

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<sup>293</sup> Ibid

control of the armed forces of recipient states. The training, on the other hand, seeks to professionalize and strengthen the armed forces of the recipient nations. The US-trained 2,395,272 foreign military officers between 1999 and 2016, spent over 14.8 billion dollars worldwide, and sold training worth 4.9 billion dollars. Training of foreign military officers has recently increased due to transnational security threats like terrorism, insurgency, and drug trafficking. Security assistance for foreign military trainees focuses on human capital.<sup>294</sup> On the other hand, training influences recipient armed forces, norms, and practices. The training aims to improve local partners' military capacity to avoid the dangers of sending arms and cash to various governments. Several government agencies referred to training in terms of military assistance, security assistance, security cooperation, building partner capacity, and training and equipment. The US military is defined as formal and informal instruction of international students in the US or overseas by officers or employees of the US, contract technicians, contractors (including teaching at civilian institutions) or correspondence courses, technical, educational, and military advice to foreign military units and forces established by Foreign Assistance Act, Section 644 (n), 22 USC. 2403 (n).<sup>295</sup> McLauchlin et al. 2022 build their research on Savage & Caverley's work, which found that the US International Military Education and Training (IMET) trainees increase coup risk; however, McLauchlin et al. research found little evidence of a relationship between US training and coup risk in their study.

Furthermore, the US trains foreign military officers to increase security and promote liberal norms among the trainees. The effect of aid on foreign military training (FMT) has grown as the

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<sup>294</sup> Theodore McLauchlin, Lee Seymour & Simon Pierre Martel (2022). Tracking the Rise of the United States Foreign Military Training: IMTAD-USA, a new Dataset, and Research Agenda, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 59, No. 2, 286-296

<sup>295</sup> Ibid

US and other states shift resources into security assistance partner capacity building and operations to increase donor influence and recipient political stability and development. In 2015, the US-trained 76,400 students from 154 countries at the cost of 876.5 million dollars and provided 300 million dollars of this training as aid. Moreover, the US foreign military training is a foreign aid that increases the military's human capital of the recipient nations. Foreign military training improves the competence of trainees within the army and the government, and the competence reduces the risk of coups. US trainees also impart the US soft power that future leaders can utilize to address coup issues. Savage and Caverley, 2017 research found that military officers trained by the US International Military Education and Training and Countering Terrorism Fellowship (CTFP) programs increase the probability of a military coup. In addition, Ruby & Gibler 2010 argue that the US engages in foreign military training to promote liberal norm transmission and civilian control of the state.<sup>296</sup> Talmadge 2015 finds that military skills improved through training and can be used against the regime. For instance, IMET-trained officer Amadou Sanogo led the 2012 coup in Mali, and German-trained officer Moussau Dadis Camara was the leader of the 2008 coup in Guinea. Lamin Sanneh was a US trainee who instigated the unsuccessful coup in Gambia. On the other hand, Thyne 2010 suggests that hostility toward the government can encourage the military to intervene to preserve a good relationship with the US.

Besides, Mainov & Goemans (2014) indicated that the US willingness to tie foreign aid to democracy in the post-Cold War era has helped reduce the number of coups and increased the probability that coup leaders will reinstate elections in a short time. Foreign military training creates a sense of professional identity and new social ties. The prestige associated with training

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<sup>296</sup> Jesse Dillion Savage & Jonathan Caverley (2017). When Human Capital Threatens the Capital: Foreign Aid in the form of military training, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 54, No. 4, 542-557

facilitates the organization of coups by giving trainees officers more influence over their peers. Small groups carry out coups, and foreign military training can help create a network of reliable plotters that can work together without fear of defection. For example, four junior officers instigated the 1994 coup in Gambia, and three were trained in the US.<sup>297</sup> Savage & Caverley, 2017 empirically found that successful coups are strongly associated with IMET training. Increasing trainees' human capital is likely to increase resource demands on the regime and the military's ability to remove the regime should its needs not be met. The scholars find a robust empirical relationship between US training of foreign armies and military-backed coup attempts despite focusing on norm promotion and civilian control of the government. The theory suggests that trained military officers become autonomous from the regime, increasing the propensity for coups. Despite the adverse effect, US training programs for foreign militaries build trust between the US and foreign officers and expand cooperation to respond to future threats effectively. In addition, the combined training and education of foreign officers in the US is a positive force multiplier that makes the US military effective in defense partnerships and promoting its influences abroad.<sup>298</sup> Fabian 2020 argues that IMET programs promote regional stability and decrease the likelihood of armed conflict. In addition, Fabian 2020 theorizes that the more education and training foreign military personnel receive in the IMET programs, the better the students will understand the professional norms and values, the military's role as an instrument of national power, civil-military relations, and cooperation. Military assistance in arms and equipment transfer improves the recipient state's military capabilities through better hardware. In contrast, the training programs

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<sup>297</sup> Ibid

<sup>298</sup> Diana Myers (2018). The Importance of Educating Foreign Military Officers



improve the recipient state's human capital, which helps guarantee peace and stability.<sup>299</sup> Specifically, foreign military officers' exposure to US security institutions via military education, training, and other engagements encourages their adoption of the US ethos of military professionalism, respect for human rights, and civilian supremacy. Fabian 2021 argues that the U.S. training foreign military personnel in using powerful weapons and equipment sales programs became part of the US global military strategy to achieve its foreign policy goals. Research conducted by Fabian 2021 indicates that US-trained foreign officials respect democratic values, particularly human rights, and many trainees were against intervention in domestic policymaking.<sup>300</sup> The primary objective of the US training foreign military personnel is to transmit military professional values and norms of human rights, democracy, and civilian control of the armed forces. As a result, the US military is critical in diffusing global military culture and shaping norms and ideas worldwide. Fabian's 2021 empirical research establishes that US military training programs achieve their goals by transmitting democratic values to foreign soldiers who spread them among national armed forces in their nations.<sup>301</sup> On the other hand, critics argue that improved training and education might lead security forces to perceive themselves as more competent than their civilian counterparts. Additionally, some scholars say that US security sector assistance has been given to repressive security institutions in the name of strategic interests, such as Uganda, where President Museveni has ruled for almost four decades, and Cameroon's President Paul Biya ruled over four decades, contributing to political violence in the African continent.

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<sup>299</sup> Sandor Fabian (2020). Training Foreign Militaries for Peace: US-IMET and Militarized Interstate Disputes 1976-2007, *Journal of Strategic Security*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 43-61

<sup>300</sup> Sandor Fabian (2021). US-led Educated Foreign Soldiers learn Democratic Values Study Shows-Though America also Trains Future Dictators

<sup>301</sup> Ibid

Instead of students internalizing the liberal norms, some African trainees from selected countries were involved in human rights violations and coups. Anecdotal evidence shows that US trainees have recently engaged in coups in some selected countries. According to Carpenter 2022, US-trained forces have overthrown at least four governments in West Africa.<sup>302</sup> Turse 2022 argues that since 2008, US-trained officers have attempted at least nine coups and succeeded in eight across West Africa. For example, three times in Burkina Faso, three times in Guinea, and three times in Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Gambia also witnessed coups. The four most recent coups on the continent include Burkina Faso in 2022, Guinea in 2021, and two times in Mali between 2020 and 2021. This indicates that US training programs for African military officers are not achieving the program's primary objective, which is norm promotion, especially democracy, human rights, and civilian control of the armed forces. Several scholars have recently labeled US training schools, counterterrorism training, and equipment as incubators for future African coup leaders.<sup>303</sup> Similarly, arms supplies and military trainees have overthrown several civilian governments in sub-Saharan Africa, such as Madagascar in 2009, Guinea in 2008, Mauritania in 2008, and Niger in 2010. The Malian civilian government was overthrown in 2020, and most military officers involved in the coup received training from US IMET. Unfortunately, this was the second time in 8 years that US-trained officers in Mali were involved in a coup. Because of the current wave of coups in selected African countries, many commentators were suspicious about a link between US training and African coups.

Empirical research by Savage and Caverley (2017) found that US foreign military training doubles coup risk in recipient states, limiting their analysis to IMET, which focuses on norm

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<sup>302</sup> Ted Galen Carpenter (2022). The US Military is Training Third World Coup Leaders Again

<sup>303</sup> Lee Seymour and Theodore McLauchlin (2020). Does US Military Training Incubate Coups in Africa? The Jury Is Out

promotion. Savage & Caverley 2017 argue that foreign training grants recipients credibility and power within officers, which they can use to rally officers against weak civilian governments. In contrast, Seymour & McLaughlin's 2020 research found no relationship between US military training and coups. Similarly, researchers at the RAND Corporation also analyzed the link between US military training and coups in Africa. The findings have shown no correlation. Some scholars argue that US training focuses on technical and tactical expertise more than democratic norms, and military professionalism is affecting foreign military trainees to assimilate liberal norms. On the other hand, Risa Brooks argues that American military personnel have not demonstrated neutrality in politics, and the trainees internalize this behavior and applied in their home countries. Therefore, US military personnel must promote military professionalism to become apolitical, which must help foreign military officers to internalize the liberal norms. In addition, Professor Sharan Grewal provides evidence that US officers increasing politicization affects foreign trainees' internalization of liberal norms, such as respect for human rights, democratic values, and civilian control of the armed forces.<sup>304</sup> Since the collapse of the Cold War, US foreign military training has been based on norms promotion, but evidence suggests that US-trained militaries launch coups, subvert the rule of law, and oppress those they should protect.

Foreign military training is a form of security assistance that modifies the recipient's military behavior by increasing warfighting capacity and transmitting a set of professional norms and ideas about the standard of appropriate behavior. In Africa, 90 percent of the countries receive training in liberal norms each year. Much training imparts human capital and technical skills, and the US creates competent and more liberal armed forces capable of providing security while avoiding repressive and corrupt behavior that affects stability. In addition, training in foreign

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<sup>304</sup> Ibid

militaries is an instrument of foreign influence that the US government can use to shape the recipient countries' military doctrines and operations procedures. Research conducted by Renanah Miles Joyce finds that US training in Africa reduces military involvement in politics and human rights violations.<sup>305</sup> The higher the number of US military trainees in an African country, the greater the likelihood of coups in that country.

Foreign military training has become the most popular US foreign policy statecraft since the collapse of the Cold War, particularly in norms promotion. This program aims to transfer the US military professional values and standards, such as respect for democratic values, human rights, and civilian control of the armed forces, and the primary goal of the training programs is to strengthen and professionalize the armed forces of the participating selected African countries. Sandor posits that US military training programs equip foreign army trainees to transfer norms and values they have internalized to their counterparts' homes. This training has offered a pathway for the US to influence the army officers' beliefs to align with its preferences.<sup>306</sup>

I hypothesize in the study that increasing US military training in selected African countries increases the likelihood of coups. My theory is that the more military officers trained by the US from chosen African countries, the greater the probability of coups in the continent. Military training is the explanatory variable, and the response variable is a coup. I use Security Force Monitor (SAM) data from the Foreign Military Training Report (FMTR). This data comes from the Department of Defense and the State Department. However, the coup data comes from the Cline Center for Coup Project and Coup Agency and Mechanism (CAM). My hypothesis is based

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<sup>305</sup> Renanah Miles Joyce (2022). *Soldiers' Dilemma: Foreign Military Training and Liberal Norm Conflict*, International Security, Vol. 46, No. 4, 48-90

<sup>306</sup> Renanah Miles Joyce (2022). *Soldiers Dilemma: Foreign Military Training and Liberal Norm Conflict*, International Security, Vol. 46, No. 4, 48-90

on the premise that US-trained military officers in selected African countries are more likely to remove or unseat the incumbent civilian presidents in chosen African countries. I test the hypothesis, and the empirical results failed to support my hypothesis that the higher the level of US-military trainees in selected African countries, the greater the likelihood of coups. This indicates that other factors might be responsible for coups in the selected African countries instead of US military training programs. The empirical results have shown no relationship between US military trainees and coups. Additionally, I hypothesize again that as US military aid increases in selected African countries, the probability of coups in selected countries increases. The empirical results have shown a positive and statistically significant relationship between military aid and coups. This indicates a correlation between US military aid and coups. This can be explained by the fact that US military aid to selected African countries in terms of arms sales, weapons, and other equipment affect/influence coups in chosen nations. The US has increased military assistance to selected African countries, notably Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda, after 9/11 as a counterterrorism tool, which might be the reason for the association between the response and the predictor variables in the dynamic panel data model. However, the association between coups and US military aid does not establish a causal relationship because correlation does not imply causation in research, as the existing literature has pointed out. Other factors besides US military assistance could be responsible for coups in chosen African countries. Collier and Hoeffler 2005, argue that African governments and regimes face coups and civil war challenges because of low income and lack of economic growth. According to Collier and Hoeffler 2005, standard indicators of grievance, such as political repression and economic inequality, do not feature as significant influences. Coup theory suggests that greed and grievance are the primary determinant factors of coups in Africa. The greed motivation for coups in Africa comes from rent from natural resources

and foreign aid. Thus, the continent's problem emanates from poor governance due to poor economic performance, which increases coup risk. African regimes can only overcome this menace if economic development, growth, and political reforms are improved.

On the other hand, I hypothesize in the study that as the US security interventions increase in selected African countries, there is a greater likelihood of coups in the chosen countries. I test this hypothesis, and the empirical evidence indicates a positive and statistically significant relationship between coups and security interventions. This shows a positive correlation/association between coups and security interventions in selected countries. This suggests that US security interventions affect coups on the continent. The possible reason might be due to the global war on terror after 9/11 and the militarization of military aid as a counterterrorism tool. In addition, I hypothesize that as the number of US military troops stationed in selected African countries increases, the likelihood of coups on the continent increases. However, the empirical evidence in the dynamic panel model failed to support the hypothesis. This implies US military personnel stationed in chosen African nations have no correlation with coups in those countries.

#### BRIEF BACKGROUND OF US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

The study of military interventions has received considerable attention in the scholarly literature. Foreign military intervention has become a common phenomenon in recent times.<sup>307</sup> The US has been involved in numerous foreign interventions throughout its history. Foreign interventions become routine endeavors in international relations, especially in response to

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<sup>307</sup> Abel Escriba-Folch & Joseph Wright (2015). *Foreign Pressure and the Politics of Autocratic Survival, Military Intervention, and Regime Change*

intrastate conflicts.<sup>308</sup> The US foreign policy was influenced by two dominant schools of thought, isolationism and interventionism, which either discourage or encourage foreign intervention in terms of military, diplomatic, and economic. Interventionism refers to the political practice of governments interfering in the political affairs of other countries by staging military or economic interventions. In other words, interventionism can be explained as an action taken by a government to influence the political or economic affairs of another country or interfere in the territory or domestic affairs of another state with military force.<sup>309</sup> Economic opportunities drove the US to foreign interventionism in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, during post-World War II, the US adopted a foreign policy of containment and embraced espionage, regime change, and proxy conflicts. After the demise of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the US enjoyed a unipolar moment as the sole superpower. The US continued its interventionist foreign policy across the global system. More importantly, the 9/11 attacks changed the international security environment and its policy of interventionism in contemporary international politics.<sup>310</sup> The US has undertaken almost 400 military interventions since the country's founding. However, the US interventions have increased and intensified recently, with the military intervening over 200 times after World War II.<sup>311</sup> Scholars have argued that the trajectory of US interventionist trends in the post-Cold War is predicated on '*contingent sovereignty*,' which challenges the traditional or Westphalian principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states and

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<sup>308</sup> Sidita Kushi and Monica Duffy Toft (2022). Introducing Military Intervention Project: A New Dataset on US Military Interventions, 1776-2019, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 0, No. 0, 1-28

<sup>309</sup> <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com>

<sup>310</sup> [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

<sup>311</sup> Sidita Kushi and Monica Duffy Toft (2022). Introducing Military Intervention Project: A New Dataset on US Military Interventions, 1776-2019, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 0, No.0, 1-28

the US has evolved past its Cold War doctrine of containment toward acting on norms related to humanitarian interventions. Kushi and Toft 2022, define US military intervention as an intervention that encompasses international conflict or conflict outside of normal peacetime activities in which the purposeful threat, display, or use of by official US government channels is explicitly directed toward the government, authorized representatives, official forces, property, or territory of another state actor.<sup>312</sup>

On the other hand, military intervention is defined as an intervention that occurs with or without the consent of the targeted government. Direct intervention is undertaken by a state with or without a UN mandate. In contrast, indirect military intervention involves creating and running military bases in foreign countries or on the African continent or covert operations, funding, military logistical support, and training international troops such as UN troops, regional (ECOWAS, the African Union), and African national troops or the use of private military companies.<sup>313</sup> Peceny 1999, defines indirect military intervention as covert operations, intelligence gathering, arms sales, and financing and training of armies and militias in other states.

According to Pickering and Kisangani 2009, there were 690 interventions during the Cold War, and over 400 interventions occurred between 1990 and 2005. Democracies and autocracies played crucial roles in military intervention post-World War II. The existing literature has shown that autocracies have used military force against dictatorships than democracies. However, the highest number of military interventions by democratic nations occurred during decolonization in Africa and Asia. Pickering and Kisangani 2009 argue that 48 percent of military interventions were carried out for a regime change, 43 percent were associated with the US, United Kingdom, and

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<sup>312</sup> Ibid

<sup>313</sup> Catherine Gegout (2018). *Why Europe Intervenes in Africa: Security, Prestige and the Legacy of Colonialism*, Oxford University Press



France, and 49 percent also involved international organizations. Democratic powers and international organizations are the main interveners in the global system.<sup>314</sup> For instance, the US used military intervention to depose several autocratic regimes in Latin America, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Haiti.

Many scholars compare military intervention to economic sanctions because both are coercive tools that impose costs on the target regime. Military intervention, whether humanitarian or change-targeted regimes, entails coercive violence, and much of the empirical literature focuses on the intentions of the state or the organization conducting the intervention. Democratic countries usually promote democracy through interventions, mainly associated with US military interventions and less accurate with the UK and France. However, the US interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan provide a cautionary tale about the prospects for democratic regime change. Similarly, regime change in Libya produces a worse regime than Gaddafi's.<sup>315</sup> According to Pickering and Kisangani 2009, military intervention is divided into several forms, such as humanitarian, supportive, territorial, and hostile, and intervention has recently become expected in the international scene. Humanitarian intervention has gained legitimacy on normative grounds rather than access to resources and territorial expansion as in previous centuries.<sup>316</sup> The US has evolved past its Cold War doctrine of containment toward norms based on humanitarian intervention. However, the US interventions in Bosnia, Kosovo, Libya, and Somalia were humanitarian interventions but failed to achieve their humanitarian and democratization objectives. Instead of

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<sup>314</sup> Abel Escriba-Folch and Joseph Wright (2015). Foreign Pressure and the Politics of Autocratic Survival, Military Intervention, and Regime Change

<sup>315</sup> Ibid

<sup>316</sup> Jeffrey Pickering and Emizet Kisangani (2009). The International Military Intervention Dataset: An Updated Resource for Conflict Scholars, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 46, No. 4, 589-599

spreading democracy, these interventions transform target states into illiberal democracies.<sup>317</sup> Furthermore, some academics contend that the US uses force abroad without clear organizing principles, and thus, military missions have had disastrous long-term and unintended consequences.

Several international relations scholarships or paradigms have been incorporated into military intervention projects. Liberals believe military interventions reflect international moral obligations, especially in democratic nations, and such perspectives have become more common since the collapse of the Cold War when multilateral military interventions abroad became frequent due to humanitarian disasters in the global system. Democratic governments are more likely to export liberal values through multilateral humanitarian military interventions than autocratic leaders. Furthermore, liberals view interdependence as a critical factor in state behavior. In contrast, Finnemore 2003, argues that neither realist nor liberal international relations models account for military intervention trends. According to Finnemore 2003, realism also fails to explain the evolution of interventions, whether unilateral or humanitarian multilateral missions that do not match polarity changes or the interstate system's power distribution. Liberalism is ill-equipped to explain why illiberal non-democratic states tend to follow similar norms regarding intervention behavior.<sup>318</sup> On the other hand, idealist or normative perspectives failed to account for the lack of humanitarian military intervention during the Rwanda genocide in Africa. Constructivists also believe that the norm of human rights has been abused by the 'responsibility to protect' as a driving US military intervention in regions of internal violence.

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<sup>317</sup> Sidita Kushi and Monica Duffy Toft (2022). Introducing the Military Intervention Project: A New Dataset on US Military Interventions, 1776-2019, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 0, No. 0, 1-28

<sup>318</sup> Ibid

Academics have researched whether superpower intervention promotes democracy or dictatorship in the global system. Gleditsch et al. 2004 studies find that intervention by democratic countries positively affects democratic reform in a short period and later generates political instability in the long term. Alternatively, Rueschmeyer et al. 1992 studies focused on US military interventions and found democratization and economic interests as primary goals for US interventions. Meernik 1996 also finds that US military interventions positively affect democracy promotion, and regime change has experienced more democratization.<sup>319</sup> The most cited ideological driver in the extant literature on US military intervention is democracy promotion. The US has used democracy promotion as the rationale for interventions since its earliest days and recent intervention in the Middle East. Rand researchers found democratization one of the significant norm-driven objectives for US military interventions. Other scholars have found that military intervention in resource-poor countries can destabilize democracies. In addition, humanitarian intervention is driven by ideological factors, mainly the norm of responsibility to protect. This concept serves as an ideological driver of humanitarian interventions that are not transactional or political. Several scholars in the academic literature believe that the responsibility to protect is a solid ideological motivator for intervention among Western nations.<sup>320</sup>

Conflicts in Africa have demonstrated the need for foreign intervention to prevent violent extremist organizations from expanding their areas of operations and attacking vulnerable states and populations. The US military personnel have directly intervened in Africa since the 1980s, and

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<sup>319</sup> William Easterly, Shanker Satyanath, and Daniel Berger (2008). *Superpower Interventions and their Democracy: An Empirical Inquiry*, Brookings Global Economy & Development

<sup>320</sup> Jennifer Kavanagh, Bryan Frederick, Nathan Chandler, Samuel Chara, Timothy Heath, Ariane Tabatabai, Edward Geist, and Christian Curriden (2021). *Research Report*, Rand Corporation

the intervention's main motive is security, economic, prestige, and humanitarian interests.<sup>321</sup> The US has withdrawn from direct military intervention in Africa after 18 military personnel were killed in Somalia in the 1993 battle for Mogadishu. Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD) was established, which ended US participation in UN peacekeeping operations in Africa. In addition, the PDD led to the US strategy of establishing the 'African solution to African problems' in which the US would lead in training African peacekeeping forces and building partnership capacity but would not directly intervene militarily.<sup>322</sup> The US launched the African Contingency Response Initiative (ACRI) after the Rwanda genocide to train African militaries to conduct peacekeeping operations. However, the US military intervention in the continent started again after al-Qaeda and its affiliates bombed its embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and post-9/11 changed the international security environment and the US policy of interventionism, especially in Africa. After 9/11, Africa has been labeled a terrorist sanctuary, especially by the US, because of its failed states and ungoverned spaces. Furthermore, the 9/11 attacks and the US strategic culture of indirect military intervention in Africa led to the establishment of the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) in Djibouti to train, equip, deploy, and sustain African intervention forces for peace enforcement in Somalia. The US also established several counterterrorism operations in Africa, including Pan-Sahel Initiative (PSI) covering Mali, Chad, Niger, and Mauritania and later changed to Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP) expanded to cover nine countries.<sup>323</sup> During the war on terror, the US intervened indirectly in Africa and launched its first permanent military base in Djibouti at Camp Lemonnier. The counterterrorism initiatives were

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<sup>321</sup> Catherine Gegout (2018). *Why Europe Intervenes in Africa: Security, Prestige and the Legacy of Colonialism*, Oxford University Press

<sup>322</sup> Stephen Burgess (2019). *Military Intervention in Africa: French and US Approaches Compared*, *The Air Force Journal of European, Middle East, and African Affairs*, Vol. 1, No. 1

<sup>323</sup> Ibid

created to win the people's 'hearts and minds and fight the al-Shabaab terrorist organization in the Horn of Africa. Similarly, counterterrorism initiatives were established in the Sahel region of West Africa to fight al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Boko Haram in Nigeria.<sup>324</sup>

On the other hand, the US strategy toward sub-Saharan Africa 2012 states that the US will focus on partnerships with African countries and regional organizations, strengthen democratic institutions, economic growth, peace, and security, and promote development. In addition, the US trade and aid policies highlight its primary concerns about security and financial interests, not humanitarian issues. Democratic enlargement is promoted through aid to spread market economies and democracy in Africa, and US assistance to countries in the continent is now based on grants instead of loans. Regarding trade, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) passed in 2000 broadened trade in Africa while enhancing US trade and challenging the ties between Africa and Europe. China has overtaken the US as a major trade partner in Africa, and securing a stable oil supply has become a strategic national interest for the US. Petroleum accounts for 74 percent of the total US imports from sub-Saharan Africa, and oil-rich nations were accorded special treatment with free arms under the Pentagon's Excess Defense Articles Program. Nigeria and ECOWAS states identify energy security priorities as receiving significant military assistance and areas where military and counterterrorism strategies must be implemented.<sup>325</sup> Notably, the US established the unified combatant command AFRICOM in 2008 to protect America, Americans, and American interests against threats emerging from Africa. It was created to oversee US defense policy in the continent. The US has now found a massive military footprint in Africa to provide civilian and military support for African states and regional organizations, particularly policies

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<sup>324</sup> Ibid

<sup>325</sup> Catherine Gegout (2018). *Why Europe Intervenes in Africa: Security, Prestige and the Legacy of Colonialism*, Oxford University Press

against terrorism. The higher the number of US security interventions in an African country, the greater likelihood of anti-government demonstrations in that country.

The US uses military force to project its primacy and hegemony to influence international politics and effect political changes in foreign nations. Some regimes and groups support US unilateral military action in some crises. However, others view its force utilization as arrogance and self-appointed police in global politics. Many governments and individuals think military moves the US undertook in several countries, particularly Africa, serve its national interests and will not benefit Africans, enhance security, or prevent wars on the continent; instead, they will help the US military, US defense, contractors, US oil companies, and African governments interested in repressing minority groups.<sup>326</sup> Also, US troops deployed in foreign nations to provide peace and regional stability sometimes their presence provoke the citizens of the host nations, which can cause violence and political and social unrest.<sup>327</sup>

On the other hand, military force has become US currency throughout its history on behalf of friendly relations and the promotion of liberal ideals such as democracy and human rights. The US military plays a significant role in the democratization process in the international system. One of the primary goals of US military strategy in the 'Annual Defense Report 2000' is fostering a global environment in which 'democratic norms and respect for human rights are guaranteed.'<sup>328</sup> Scholars have found that the utility of the US using military force to promote regime stability, democratization, and the promotion of human rights and military operations undoubtedly

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<sup>326</sup> Jeremy Keenan (2008). US Militarization in Africa: What Anthropologists should know about AFRICOM, *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 24, No. 5

<sup>327</sup> James Meernik (2008). US Foreign Policy and Regime Instability, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

<sup>328</sup> Lethia Williams & Daniel Masters (2011). Assessing Military Intervention and Democratization, *Democracy, and Security*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 18-37

influences democratic transition. Specifically, US policymakers and decision-makers have designed policies to facilitate peace, human rights, and democratic transitions or compel other nations to accept their values. Classic examples are Japan and Germany after World War II. In addition, the US motive for military intervention in Africa is based on security interests, particularly after 9/11, and prestige and humanitarian interests were demonstrated in Somalia in 1992/3, Darfur in Sudan in 2003/5, and indirect intervention in Libya in 2011 and Chad in 2014.<sup>329</sup> Research conducted by Meernik 1996 found a correlation between democracy promotion and US intervention in foreign nations.<sup>330</sup>

I hypothesize that increased US military intervention in selected African countries increases anti-government demonstrations. The independent variable in the study is military intervention, and the dependent variable is anti-government demonstrations. My premise regarding the primary hypothesis is that the more the US intervenes in the domestic affairs of selected African nations, the greater the anti-government protests against US intervention. In addition, the existing datasets on US military and humanitarian interventions in Africa have not provided any meaningful datasets on US interventions in Africa. Due to difficulties in acquiring data, I used the Congressional Research Service (CRS) provided by Torreón and Plagakis (2022) to construct the intervention data. I use dichotomous variables where I code security/humanitarian interventions as 1 or the absence of intervention as 0. I test the hypothesis, and the empirical results provide no correlation between military intervention and anti-government demonstrations. This has shown that US military intervention in Africa does not affect anti-government protests in the continent.

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<sup>329</sup> Catherine Gegout (2018). Why Europe Intervenes in Africa: Security, Prestige and the Legacy of Colonialism, *Actors in Military Intervention: A Global Perspective*, 89-134

<sup>330</sup> James Meernik (1996). United States Military Intervention and the Promotion of Democracy, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 33, No.4, 391-402

Other factors may be affecting anti-government demonstrations in Africa. The empirical evidence failed to provide an association between the two variables in the study.

Jacob Lewis's empirical research indicates that anti-government demonstrations in chosen African countries are linked to corruption, accountability, transparency, poverty, inequality, and government economic policies rather than US intervention. Recent examples in Burkina Faso, South Africa, and Sudan have demonstrated that corruption in incumbent governments and public institutions contributes to anti-government demonstrations.<sup>331</sup>

Furthermore, I hypothesize that the higher the number of US military troops deployed in selected African countries, the greater the probability of anti-government demonstrations. The empirical evidence in the dynamic panel data model does not support my hypothesis. This shows that US troops deployed in the continent have no relationship/correlation with anti-government demonstrations in Africa. Similarly, I hypothesize again that the higher the US military aid to selected African governments, the greater the likelihood of anti-government demonstrations. The empirical result failed to support my hypothesis. My theory is that as the US increases military aid to selected African countries, especially authoritarian, repressive governments, to receive counterterrorism compliance during the global war on terror, the anti-government demonstrations in chosen African countries would increase because of suppression and violations of human rights. However, I hypothesize in the study again that as US military trainees increase in selected African countries, the probability of anti-government demonstrations increases. The empirical evidence demonstrates no support for the hypothesis. This indicates that an increase in US military trainees in selected African countries does not affect or influence anti-government demonstrations on the

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<sup>331</sup> Jacob Lewis (2021). Corruption Perceptions and Contentious Politics in Africa: How Different Types of Corruption have shaped Africa's Third Wave of Protest, *Political Studies Review*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 227-244



continent. This means other factors in selected African countries are responsible for anti-government demonstrations that are not directly linked to US military trainees. I believe anti-government protests in Africa are primarily due to high corruption and bribery, economic inequality, high unemployment, poverty, underdevelopment, and high inflation.

## CHAPTER VI

### EMPIRICAL RESULTS AND DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

#### EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF TERRORISM CASUALTIES AND DISCUSSION

The study uses a dynamic panel data model with Arellano-Bover 1995 and Blundell-Bond 1998 system generalized method of moments (GMM) and Stata syntax (*xtdpdsys*) to address the problems of unobserved heterogeneity, endogeneity, omitted variable bias, measurement errors, and simultaneity in the data. Table 6.1 shows the results of a dynamic panel data model using military aid, security, and humanitarian interventions, US troops, US military trainees, and lagged dependent variables as explanatory variables explaining the occurrence of terrorism casualties as response/outcome variables.

On the other hand, the study also includes control variables such as total oil imports, GDP annual growth rate, GDP per capita, total population, maternal mortality, and regime type in the dynamic panel model. These control variables are employed to determine their confounding effects on the model's explanatory and response variables. In addition, the control variables are used to capture the causes of instability in the continent. The correlation coefficients in the regression measure the strength of the relationship between the explanatory and response variables, and all coefficients in the model represent discrete/count variables. Notably, a high correlation coefficient between an explanatory and a response variable indicates that the explanatory variable strongly influences the response variable. In addition, the coefficients demonstrate how terrorism casualties change for a one-unit increase in the number of US troops deployed in the explanatory variables.

Moreover, the regression analysis shows that US troops stationed/deployed in selected African countries have a positive coefficient of 0.309 and are statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.05 in the dynamic panel data model. The empirical evidence shows that the US troops

deployed in the chosen countries affect terrorism casualties. Therefore, an association/relationship exists between the response variable terrorism casualties and US troops deployed/stationed in selected African countries, which is the explanatory variable. The positive association implies that as the explanatory variable, US troops deployed in the selected African countries, increases, the response variable, terrorism casualties, also increases. On the other hand, US military trainees in the model record a negative coefficient of -0.0245, which is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.05. This empirical result can be interpreted as the increase in the number of US military trainees in selected African countries, terrorism casualties decrease. These two variables have an inverse relationship, meaning both variables run in opposite directions in the dynamic panel data model.

In addition, the lagged dependent variable in the model records a positive coefficient of 0.395 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. This implies that terrorism casualties in the previous year play a tremendous role in future terrorism casualties. As a result, an association/correlation exists between terrorism casualties and the lagged dependent explanatory variable.

Furthermore, the control variable GDP per capita has a positive coefficient of 0.0933 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. This indicates that countries with high GDP per capita are associated with higher rates of terrorism casualties. Similarly, the control variable total population also records a positive coefficient of 0.0000115 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. This means terrorism casualties are associated with countries with large populations in Africa. Empirical evidence from the Global Terrorism Database affirms the claim that terrorism is higher in countries with large populations. For example, Nigeria recorded the highest terrorism casualties for the past two decades of 28, 925. In addition, high GDP

per capita and total population control variables are correlated with a higher probability of terrorism casualties in Africa. This has shown an association between the response variable and the two control variables that have recorded positive coefficients and are statistically significant.

In summary, the empirical results have indicated that countries with high GDP per capita and large populations are more likely to be affected by terrorist attacks. Additionally, the control variable, US total oil imports, has a negative coefficient of -0.00365 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. This also implies that as total oil imports increase, terrorism casualties decrease; therefore, an inverse relationship exists between terrorism casualties and US total oil imports from rich oil-producing African countries. Interestingly, the coefficients of other explanatory variables, such as military aid, security, and humanitarian interventions, are insignificant in the model, meaning these predictors or explanatory variables do not significantly affect terrorism casualties in the continent. The discussion section considers the statistically significant explanatory variables, focusing primarily on US troops deployed on the continent and statistically significant control variables in the model.

TABLE 1. PREDICTING TERRORISM CASUALTIES ACROSS AFRICA, 1995-2020

Terrorism Casualties	System GMM
Lag terrorism casualties	0.395*** (16.16)
Military aid	6.42e-08 (0.60)
Security interventions	6.847 (0.12)
Humanitarian interventions	37.32 (0.32)
US troops	0.309* (2.29)
US military trainees	-0.0245* (-2.33)
Total oil imports	-0.00365*** (-11.45)
GDP growth annual rate	1.553 (0.98)
GDP per capita	0.0933*** (5.48)
Total population	0.0000115*** (13.23)
Maternal mortality	0.217 (1.81)
Democracy	-41.68 (-0.67)
_cons	-464.7*** (-6.25)
N	756
Number of Groups	49
Number of Instruments	299

t statistics in parentheses

\* p&lt;0.05, \*\* p&lt;0.01, \*\*\* p&lt;0.001

The most significant finding from Table 1 regression results is the positive coefficient for the explanatory variable US troops deployed in selected African countries. The US troops deployed in Africa have a positive coefficient of 0.309 and are statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.05. The size of the coefficient predicts the enormity of the variables' impact on the response/outcome variable. This implies that as US troops increase, terrorism casualties also increase in the chosen African countries. Therefore, countries hosting US troops stand at high risk of growing terrorism casualties. The empirical evidence has demonstrated that US troops deployed in selected African countries are statistically significant. At the same time, the rest of the independent variables are insignificant; the study concludes that the presence of US troops affects terrorism casualties. This means a positive relationship/association exists between US troops deployed in chosen countries and terrorism casualties.

On the other hand, the coefficient of US troops 0.309 demonstrates a weak correlation/relationship between the predictor and the response variables at a p-value less than 0.05. However, a high correlation coefficient between the predictor and response variables indicates that the explanatory variable strongly influences or affects the response variable. Although the empirical evidence of US troops' presence is statistically significant, the strength of the association in the model is weak; therefore, I cannot affirm that US troops deployed in chosen African nations cause terrorism casualties since correlation does not imply causation. Also, the US military trainees record a negative relationship between terrorism casualties, which indicates that as US military trainees increase, terrorism casualties decrease. In other words, the two variables have established an inverse relationship in the model. Therefore, US military trainees do not affect terrorism casualties in selected countries. US military trainees do not influence terrorism casualties

in selected African countries because the two variables run in opposite directions in the regression analysis.

Alternatively, a positive coefficient indicates a positive relationship between the explanatory and response variables, while a negative association/relationship shows that as the explanatory variable increases, the response variable decreases. In addition, the nature or the size of the coefficient predicts/determines the intensity of the effect the independent variable has on the response. In this vein, the coefficient measures the strength of the relationship between the predictor and the outcome variables in the model. Empirically, the presence of US troops influences terrorism casualties in selected African countries.

Meanwhile, I can also argue that US troops are statistically significant in the dynamic model because the US has increased its troops' presence in chosen African countries after 9/11 during the global war on terror to undertake counterterrorism operations, train host nations' military forces, and provide security assistance such as the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative, East Africa Counter Terrorism Initiative and the Global Peace Operations Initiative to defeat the activity of violent extremist organizations in the volatile regions of Africa, especially the Sahel, Lake Chad basin and the Horn of Africa. Similarly, the statistical significance between the US troops and terrorism casualties could also be explained by the US sending more troops to the volatile regions where terrorist organizations have a strong foothold.

On the other hand, the control variables, GDP per capita and total population have a positive coefficient and are statistically significant. The positive and statistically significant GDP per capita means countries with high GDP are affected mainly by terrorism and nations with large populations. This happens because it is difficult for the government to make everyone happy in the

state regardless of how it addresses complaints and grievances. Similarly, economic differences play a significant role in a state's terrorist activity. In addition, the total population has a positive coefficient and is statistically significant in the model, which indicates a positive relationship/association between terrorism casualties and the total population. In other words, as the total population increases, terrorism casualties also tend to increase. On average, countries with large populations, like Nigeria, experience more terrorist attacks than less populated nations because terrorist groups can recruit potential supporters from large populations. Alternatively, terrorism is associated with a large population because it is difficult for political leaders to address all grievances presented by the citizens dissatisfied with some aspects of government policy.

Furthermore, the coefficient of total oil imports is negative and statistically significant. This indicates that US oil imports from rich African oil-producing nations have a negative relationship with terrorism casualties, which implies that as US oil imports increase, terrorism casualties decrease. Because the oil variable fails to achieve significance in the dynamic panel data model, it is fair to say US troops stationed/deployed in Africa are not on the continent to secure the economic interests of the US in terms of oil supply. Empirical evidence has shown that terrorist activities are concentrated in the volatile regions of Africa such as the Sahel, Sahara, Lake Chad basin, and the Horn of Africa. For the past two decades, Nigeria has recorded the highest terrorism casualties due to the activities of Boko Haram and other violent extremist groups in the country. Additionally, Somalia has become the second-highest country to record terrorism casualties because of the terrorist activities of al-Shabaab, and Algeria has occupied the third spot due to the activity of al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in Northwest Africa.

Similarly, US troops deployed in countries such as Comoros Island, Eswatini, Gambia, Mauritius, and many others have not recorded terrorism casualties or attacks, which means US



troop's presence is not a primary factor responsible for terrorism casualties in the continent. Other factors might contribute to terrorism casualties in the selected African countries. Finally, the lagged dependent variable also has a positive coefficient. It is statistically significant in the model, representing the model's history by measuring its past. The lagged dependent variable enhances the model's persistence and demonstrates its effect on the response variable.

In conclusion, the coefficients of some of the explanatory variables, such as military aid, security, and humanitarian interventions, and other control variables, including GDP annual growth rate, maternal mortality, and democracy, are not statistically significant, meaning these variables do not significantly affect terrorism casualties, the response variable in the model.

#### AVERAGE MARGINS EFFECTS OF EXPLANATORY VARIABLES ON TERRORISM CASUALTIES

Regression models provide unique opportunities to examine the impact of predictors on a specific outcome. The effects of these predictors are explored and determined through the coefficients of the covariate variables. A one-unit increase in the independent variable is associated with a change in the outcome variable, and the findings explain the impact of the predictors on the outcome variables.<sup>332</sup>

Margins are statistics calculated from predictions of a previously fit model at fixed values of covariates and averaging or integrating over the remaining covariates. The margins command estimates response margins for specified covariates values and presents the results in a table.<sup>333</sup> However, marginal effects are methods by which the effects of the explanatory variables in a linear model can be made more meaningful in the regression model. Additionally, marginal effects for

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<sup>332</sup> Mark Bounthavong (2018). Estimating Marginal Effects

<sup>333</sup> Stata.com

categorical variables are easier to read and understand than discrete or continuous variables in a model. The marginal effects measure the impact of an instantaneous change in one variable on the outcome variable while all other variables are held constant in the model.<sup>334</sup> I use the **dydx** option to calculate the marginal effects of independent variables on the various dependent variables. The **dydx** means the difference in the dependent variable for a change in the explanatory variable, and this provides the average marginal effects of different explanatory variables in the model. The average marginal effect uses actual observed values of covariates to calculate the predicted probability for each explanatory variable. On the other hand, the fixed and observed values of the predictor variables are administered, and the predicted values are averaged in the study. Margins and marginal effects provide a prediction that helps researchers interpret a study's model.<sup>335</sup> The average marginal effect affects the probability of the predictors in the research. This is an average change in probability when the explanatory variable increases by one unit. Therefore, the average marginal effect of a one-unit increase in military aid is a 2.98 increase in terrorism casualties. This helps the researchers understand how changing the military assistance predictor affects the expected probability of terrorism casualties. This indicates a 2.98 increase in a year of military aid to selected African countries, and the likelihood of terrorism casualties increases by 298 percentage points. All the predictors record positive coefficients in the model. This indicates that the independent variables increase in the model as the dependent variable increases. On the other hand, the effects of marginal effect at means and average marginal effect are the same because the model is a linear regression. The probability of US troops affecting terrorism casualties is 0.028, and US military trainees are also 0.023.

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<sup>334</sup> Mark Bounthavong (2018). Estimating Marginal Effects

<sup>335</sup> Richard Williams (2012). Using the Margins Command to Estimate and Interpret Adjusted Predictions and Marginal Effects, *The Stata Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 308-331

## LAGGED DEPENDENT AND LAGGED INDEPENDENT EMPIRICAL RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study's regression results for lagged dependent and lagged independent variables are reported using dynamic panel data models. Arellano-Bover 1995 and Blundell-Bond 1998 system generalized method of moments (GMM) was applied to provide efficient and consistent regression results for both lagged variables. Political scientists use lagged explanatory variables to reduce/alleviate endogeneity concerns in the data.<sup>336</sup> Despite the popularity of lagged explanatory variables in reducing endogeneity, scholars have a few theoretical results to determine the effectiveness of lagged explanatory variables in a dynamic panel data model. Bellemare et al. 2017 argue that explanatory variables never provide a permanent solution to endogeneity problems in observational data; instead "Monte Carlo" results have proved that using lagged explanatory variables worsens the endogeneity problems. However, a generalized method of moments (GMM) estimations helps reduce endogeneity and unobserved heterogeneity.<sup>337</sup> Meanwhile, Bellemare et al. 2017 provide three reasons why the lagged independent variable might appear on the right-hand side of a regression model. First, theoretically, the effect of an explanatory variable operates with only a one-lag period. Second, lagged explanatory variables serve a statistical function. Third, scholars and researchers also propose using lagged values of the explanatory variables to estimate the effects of the independent variables on the response variable. On the other hand, the lagged explanatory variables are used in the dynamic panel data models when the researcher thinks the explanatory variables might have a statistical relationship with the response variable. In addition, Bellemare et al. (2017) also posit that the lagged explanatory variables address the concerns of

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<sup>336</sup> Marc Bellemare, Takaaki Masaki & Thomas Pepinsky (2017). Lagged Explanatory Variables and the Estimation of Causal Effect, *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 79, No. 3, 949-963

<sup>337</sup> Ibid

causal inference, simultaneity, reverse causality, and endogeneity in the dynamic panel model. The study finds that the lagged explanatory variables have no direct effect on the dependent variable or the unobserved confounders. Thus, lagged explanatory variables mitigate the endogeneity problem by reducing the bias in the dynamic panel model like lagged dependent variables. Therefore, lagged independent variables are necessary for the regression model to predict the future.<sup>338</sup>

McKinnish 2002 argues that the empirical results of lagged explanatory variables have shown that estimated lagged effects in the model must be interpreted cautiously because they are subject to biases due to omitted variables and measurement errors in the data.<sup>339</sup> Scholars also believe that using the lagged dependent variable in the model eliminates autocorrelation problems, and the lagged dependent variable captures the dynamics of the phenomenon under investigation. Autocorrelation means the degree of correlation between the values of the same variables across different observations in the data, and autocorrelation measures the relationship between a variable's current and past values.<sup>340</sup> The lagged dependent variables are applied to test autocorrelation and unspecified spurious correlations in the model. Meanwhile, the extant literature presents a case against using lagged dependent variables with ordinary least squares (OLS), notably Achen 2000. Achen 2000, argues that using a lagged dependent variable is dangerous for checking autocorrection because the coefficient estimates can be biased.<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> Ibid

<sup>339</sup> Terra McKinnish (2002). Interpreting Lagged Effects of the Lagged Independent Variable: How Does the Local Economy Affect Welfare Caseloads?

<sup>340</sup> [www.statisticssolutions.com](http://www.statisticssolutions.com)

<sup>341</sup> Christopher Achen (2000). Why Lagged Dependent Variable Can Suppress the Explanatory Power of Other Independent Variables, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan

Consequently, when one or more lagged dependent variables are added as explanatory variables, the autoregressive terms take on significant coefficients, thus improving the model's fitness and the effects of other variables. Autoregressive refers to a time series model that uses observations from previous time series steps as input to a regression equation to predict the value at the next step. The variable of interest is forecast using a linear combination of past values of the variables.<sup>342</sup> More importantly, the lagged dependent variable is included in the model if one expects that the current level of the dependent variable is heavily reliant on its past status. Excluding the lagged dependent variable can lead to omitted variable bias, which might make the results unreliable and inconsistent. Alternatively, using the lagged dependent variables in the model represents a situation where the researchers think the explanatory variable might have a statistically significant relationship with the response variable in the model.<sup>343</sup>

#### EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF LAGGED DEPENDENT VARIABLE, TERRORISM CASUALTIES, AND LAGGED INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Table 2 shows the results of terrorism casualties of the dependent variable and applied lagged dependent and independent variables to address endogeneity, simultaneity, causal inference, and omitted variable problems in the data and control variables. In the dynamic panel model, lagged dependent variable, terrorism casualties, lagged US military trainees, and lagged military aid are statistically significant. The lagged terrorist attack variable records a coefficient of 0.460 and is statistically significant with a p-value of less than 0.001. Additionally, lagged military aid also records a coefficient of 0.000000333 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.01. Finally, lagged US military trainees hold a coefficient of 0.0722 with a p-value less than

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<sup>342</sup> [Otexts.com/fpp2/AR.html](http://Otexts.com/fpp2/AR.html)

<sup>343</sup> Luke Keele and Nathan Kelly (2006). Dynamic Models for Dynamic Theories: Ins and Outs of Lagged Dependent Variables, *Political Analysis*, Vol. 14, 186-205

0.001 in the regression model. The dynamic panel model shows a positive relationship between the lagged dependent and the response variables. The lagged dependent variable represents the model's history by measuring its past. This positive relationship means that as the response variable increases, the lagged dependent variable, which measures the variable, also tends to increase. For example, it may not be the current year's terrorism casualties causing instability; instead, the previous year's terrorism casualties could play a substantial role in the model. Also, the lagged values of the dependent variables are used in the model to control endogenous relationships in the study. The empirical evidence has shown that the lagged terrorism casualties affect the response variable. It can be interpreted that terrorism casualties of the previous year influence future terrorism casualties in the model.

Furthermore, lagged military aid records a positive coefficient of 0.000000333 and is statistically significant with a p-value of less than 0.01 in the model. This indicates a positive relationship between the response and lagged independent variables. This empirical evidence suggests that US military aid of the previous year influences or affects future terrorism casualties. In other words, the lagged explanatory variable increases as the response variable increases. Similarly, the lagged US military trainees' variable also accounts for 0.0722 and is statistically significant with a p-value of less than 0.001. This demonstrates a positive association between the response and lagged explanatory variables. This means that as the lagged US military trainees' explanatory variable increases, the response variable terrorism casualties tends to increase. A positive coefficient indicates an association/correlation and the variable's effect on the response variable. The positive association means that US military trainees of the previous or past year will affect future terrorism casualties, which is the response variable in the study. Additionally, two control variables in the model have a positive coefficient and are statistically significant. These are

GDP per capita and total population. The GDP per capita accounts for a positive coefficient of 0.103 with a p-value of less than 0.001, and the total population also records a positive coefficient of 0.00000881 and is statistically significant with a p-value of less than 0.001. This indicates a positive correlation or association between the response variable and the two control variables with positive coefficients in the model. Alternatively, the control variable total oil imports record a negative coefficient of -0.00332 and are statistically significant with a p-value of less than 0.001. Overall, three control variables were statistically significant and associated with terrorism casualties. On the other hand, lagged security, humanitarian interventions, and lagged US troops and control variables maternal mortality and democracy are insignificant in the model. Democracy, the regime-type variable, does not display any relation to terrorism casualties in the empirical model. The study's discussion will focus on the lagged explanatory and control variables that are statistically significant in the dynamic panel model.

TABLE 2. LAGGED DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES PREDICTING  
TERRORISM CASUALTIES

Terrorism Casualties	System GMM
Lag terrorism casualties	0.460*** (18.66)
Lag military aid	0.000000333** (2.94)
Lag security interventions	-61.11 (-1.01)
Lag humanitarian interventions	144.6 (1.34)
Lag US troops	0.118 (0.83)
Lag US military trainees	0.0722*** (6.46)
Total oil imports	-0.00332*** (-10.20)
GDP annual growth rate	1.655 (1.03)
GDP per capita	0.103*** (5.78)
Total population	0.00000881*** (10.20)
Maternal mortality	0.229 (1.84)
Democracy	-61.27 (-1.03)
_cons	-492.9*** (-6.79)
N	756
Number of Groups	49
Number of Instruments	318

t statistics in parentheses

\* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001



The most significant findings from Table 2 are the coefficients of lagged dependent variable terrorism casualties, lagged military aid, lagged US military trainees, and the coefficients of control variables total oil imports, GDP per capita, and total population in the model. A positive coefficient exists between lagged terrorism casualties and the response variable terrorism casualties. The lagged dependent variable captures the history of the model, and the whole history of the dynamic panel model has a significant effect and influence on current terrorism casualties. The positive coefficient means an increase in the lagged dependent variable leads to an increase in the response variable terrorism casualties. Notably, the correlation coefficient measures the strength and intensity of how the lagged dependent variable affects terrorism casualties in selected African countries. The positive relationship between the lagged dependent and response variable terrorism casualties implies that the current terrorism casualties involve the previous year's lagged terrorism casualties in the continent. In addition, the lagged dependent variable terrorism casualties in the model has shown that history matters in addressing future issues. The correlation coefficients' size predicts the variables' strengths and weaknesses and how they have affected the response. The positive relationship between terrorism casualties and the lagged dependent variable means that the terrorism casualties of the previous year influence the current terrorism casualties in the model.

Moreover, lagged military aid has a positive coefficient, which indicates a positive relationship/association between terrorism casualties and lagged military assistance. This implies that as lagged military aid increases, terrorism casualties also increase in the model. In other words, US military aid in previous years in Africa directly influences and affects current terrorism casualties. Therefore, the empirical evidence has shown that US military aid to chosen African nations influences or affects terrorism casualties.

Besides, lagged US military trainees also record a positive coefficient demonstrating an association between terrorism casualties and lagged US military trainees in chosen African countries. This implies that an increase in the number of US military trainees in the previous years in selected African countries affects current terrorism casualties. As US military trainees increased in the last year, terrorism casualties also increased in the current/present year. In addition, a positive correlation exists between terrorism casualties in the continent and previous or lagged US military trainees.

Furthermore, GDP per capita records a positive coefficient, interpreted as increased terrorism casualties; GDP per capita also increases in chosen African countries. This implies that chosen African countries with high GDP per capita experience high terrorism casualties. Therefore, an increase in GDP per capita affects terrorism casualties in selected African countries. GDP per capita influences terrorism casualties in chosen African countries, especially in countries with countries with high GDPs. These findings support Khokhlov & Korotayev's 2022 research outcomes that terrorist attacks are predominant among countries with high GDP per capita. Similarly, the total population accounts for a positive coefficient, which indicates an association/relationship between the two variables in the model. This means that as the total population increases, terrorism casualties also increase. In other words, countries with large populations in Africa experience high terrorist attacks. Khokhlov & Korotayev's 2022 research outcomes indicate that countries with huge populations witness a high volume of terrorist attacks.

In addition, US total oil imports from oil-rich producing countries in the continent record a negative coefficient in the model. The negative relationship can be interpreted as US oil imports increasing in the continent and terrorism casualties decreasing. This has demonstrated an inverse/negative relationship between the control variable total oil imports and response variable

terrorism casualties in the dynamic panel data model. Significantly, US oil imports from oil-rich African countries do not influence terrorism casualties in the model. In addition, the empirical evidence has shown that lagged security and humanitarian interventions and lagged US troops and control variables GDP annual growth rate, maternal mortality, and democracy were insignificant in the model. These variables have not affected or influenced terrorism casualties in Africa.

#### EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF CIVIL WARS AND DISCUSSION

Table 3 displays the results of the response variable civil war in the dynamic panel model. The coefficients of explanatory variables security interventions and US military trainees in chosen African countries are positive and statistically significant in the dynamic panel data model. Security interventions have a positive coefficient of 0.147 and are statistically significant, with a p-value less than 0.05. This implies that as security interventions increase, civil wars also increase. Therefore, the dynamic panel data model has a positive association/correlation between security interventions and civil wars. As US security interventions increase in Africa, civil wars increase in the continent. Meanwhile, US military trainees also have a positive coefficient of 0.0000353 and are statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.01. This positive coefficient explains the relationship between the two variables. As US military trainees increase, civil wars increase, indicating a positive association or correlation between the two variables. A high correlation coefficient between the explanatory and response variables suggests that the explanatory variable strongly influences or affects the response variable, and the coefficient's size predicts the explanatory variable affects the dependent variable. Also, the lagged dependent variable in the model obtains a positive coefficient of 0.129 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. This implies a positive relationship between the two variables. Therefore, an increase in the lagged dependent variable leads to an increase in the response variable. On the other hand, the

lagged dependent variable measures the past and provides a persistent estimate of the response variable. The empirical results demonstrate that two control variables in the dynamic panel model have recorded negative coefficients and are statistically significant. The US total oil imports have a negative coefficient of  $-0.00000178$  and are statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. The negative coefficient means as total oil imports increase, civil war on the continent decreases. As a result, the two variables have an inverse relationship in the model. Alternatively, the GDP annual growth rate also records a negative coefficient of  $-0.00348$  and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.05. As the GDP annual growth rate increases, civil war will decrease on the continent, which has exemplified an inverse/negative relationship between the response and the control variables. Finally, the total population variable has a positive coefficient of 6.57 with a p-value less than 0.001. This indicates a positive association between population and civil wars. The size of the coefficient measures the strength and the intensity of the effect on the response variable. As the total population increases, civil war tends to increase in the chosen African countries. The lagged dependent variable measures the past, which has a positive coefficient of 0.129 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001 in the model. Other explanatory variables, such as military aid, humanitarian interventions, and US troops deployed, are insignificant and have no effect on civil war, the response variable in the model. The discussion focuses predominantly on positive and statistically significant predictors like security interventions and US military trainees, with less emphasis on the lagged dependent variable and its implications for the model.

TABLE 3. PREDICTING CIVIL WARS ACROSS AFRICA, 1995-2020

Civil Wars	System GMM
Lag civil wars	0.129*** (4.34)
Military aid	-1.93e-10 (-1.82)
Security interventions	0.147* (2.47)
Humanitarian interventions	-0.0854 (-0.76)
US troops	0.000238 (1.69)
US military trainees	0.0000353** (3.06)
Total oil imports	-0.00000178*** (-5.30)
GDP annual growth rate	-0.00348* (-2.21)
GDP per capita	-0.00000229 (-0.13)
Total population	6.57e-09*** (4.66)
Maternal mortality	-0.0000870 (-0.67)
Anocracy	-0.0223 (-0.50)
_cons	0.128 (1.36)
N	756
Number of Groups	49
Number of Instruments	282

t statistics in parentheses

\* p&lt;0.05, \*\* p&lt;0.01, \*\*\* p&lt;0.001

The most significant findings of the empirical results are the explanatory variables that have positive coefficients and are statistically significant in the dynamic panel data model. The security interventions explanatory variable in the model has a positive coefficient of 0.147 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.05. A positive coefficient signifies a positive relationship between security interventions and civil wars. This implies that civil war also tends to increase as security intervention increases. In addition, the coefficient measures the strength of the relationship between the explanatory and the response variables. The empirical evidence in the model shows that US security interventions in selected African countries affect civil wars in the continent. Moreover, the empirical result indicates a positive association between civil wars and security interventions. For example, the US security interventions in chosen African countries become profound after the 9/11 global war on terror. The US established several counterterrorism operations in the continent, and these initiatives influenced civil wars in selected African countries. However, the strength of the relationship is weak because the coefficient of the independent variable records a p-value less than 0.05 in the model. Moreover, the dynamic panel model shows that US military trainees, an explanatory variable, have a positive coefficient of 0.0000353 and are statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.01. This indicates a positive relationship between US military trainees and civil wars on the continent. These empirical results have demonstrated an association between civil wars and US military trainees in selected African countries, implying that as civil wars increase, the number of US military trainees also tends to increase. Therefore, US military trainees have affected and influenced civil wars in chosen African countries.

On the other hand, the lagged dependent variable has a positive coefficient of 0.129 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. This shows a positive relationship between the lagged dependent and the response variables. This indicates that the history of the lagged

dependent variable in the dynamic panel data model positively influences current civil wars in the continent. In addition, the lagged dependent variable affected civil wars on the continent, implying that US current foreign policy and events enormously influenced measuring the previous year's civil war. The lagged dependent variable's positive and statistically significant result can also be explained as civil wars in the last year played a tremendous role in future wars.

Furthermore, control variables such as total oil imports and GDP annual growth have negative coefficients but are statistically significant. This implies that the response variable decreases as total oil imports and GDP annual growth increase. These two control variables have inverse relationships with civil wars. However, the total population records a positive coefficient of 6.57 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. This means a positive correlation exists between civil wars and the total population. Precisely, coefficients measure the strength of the relationship between the two variables, and the association between civil wars and total population in Africa is tremendously muscular. In addition, the empirical evidence has indicated that as the total population increases, civil wars on the continent also increase. Civil wars in selected African countries significantly affect the total population, which explains why chosen African countries' civil wars are associated with countries with high populations in the model. Other independent variables, such as humanitarian interventions, US troops, and military aid, are insignificant in the model.

Also, the US security intervention violence in chosen African countries was linked to its interests in resources, particularly energy security, using counterterrorism operations as justification, which has exacerbated civil wars in Africa. The US security interventions are dominated in the regions where terrorist threats are prevalent, such as the Horn of Africa, the Sahel,

and Lake Chad basin, occupied by terrorist organizations like Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, and al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

Additionally, the US declared in 2002 National Security Strategy that Africa required a security strategy. This has led the US to build military bases in and outside Africa to deal with African security issues and provide civilians and military support for African states and organizations. This contributed to the establishment of the unified combatant command AFRICOM in 2007. In addition, the US has been involved in direct African military operations since the late 1980s and acted with multilateral organizations in Somalia in 1993, the Liberian conflict in 2003, and intervened in Somalia in 2006—it also led NATO operations in Libya in 2011 and temporarily presence in South Sudan in 2013. Notably, the US's massive security presence and interventions in the continent might contribute to the statistically significant positive association between civil wars and security interventions. Therefore, US security interventions in selected African countries affect civil wars. On the other hand, training of armed forces of foreign countries becomes a US foreign policy tool to promote liberal norms of democratic values, respect for human rights, and civilian control of the armed forces, which have led to the US's unprecedented military footprint in selected African countries. These training programs for African militaries, both abroad and domestically, could also explain the statistical significance and effect of these programs on civil wars on the continent.

#### AVERAGE MARGINAL EFFECTS OF EXPLANATORY VARIABLES ON CIVIL WARS

The average marginal effects of the explanatory variables in the model have shown that security interventions record a positive coefficient of 0.373 and are statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. US military trainees are also 0.198 and are statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. The probability of military aid affecting civil wars on the continent is -



1.01, security interventions 0.373, humanitarian interventions 0.284, US troops -0.000, and US military trainees 0.198 are recorded in the model.

## EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF LAGGED DEPENDENT CIVIL WARS AND LAGGED INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Table 4, shows the results of dependent, lagged dependent, lagged independent, and control variables in the dynamic panel data model with the system generalized method of moments (GMM). The lagged dependent variable, civil war, is statistically significant and has a positive coefficient of 0.207 with a p-value of less than 0.001. A positive coefficient indicates that as the lagged dependent variable increases, the dependent variable also increases. This means that the response and the lagged dependent variables have a positive association/correlation in the model. In addition, lagged military aid demonstrates a negative coefficient of -4.68 and is statistically significant with a p-value of less than 0.001. The negative coefficient indicates that the dependent variable decreases as the lagged military aid increases. This means the two variables have an inverse/negative relationship in the model. The two variables run in opposite directions in the dynamic panel data model. Besides, the lagged independent variable of US military trainees records a positive coefficient of 0.0000294 with a p-value of less than 0.05. The coefficient measures the size and strength of the relationship between the two variables; the higher the coefficient, the greater the effect on the response variable. Moreover, a positive coefficient shows that as lagged US military trainees increase, the dependent variable civil war increases in the model. Meanwhile, two control variables have recorded negative coefficients, such as total oil imports and GDP annual growth rate. In addition, total oil imports account for a negative coefficient of -0.00000139 and are statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. Also, the GDP annual growth rate records a negative coefficient of -0.00370 and is statistically

significant with a p-value less than 0.05 in the model. The negative coefficients can be explained by the fact that as total oil imports and GDP annual growth rate increase, civil war decreases in the model. These two variables have a negative relationship in the model. Besides, the total population records a positive coefficient of 8.17, which is statistically significant with a p-value of less than 0.001. The positive coefficient means that civil war increases as the total population increases. This shows a positive relationship/ association between the two variables.

Specifically, lagged security and humanitarian interventions, lagged US troops, and control variables like GDP per capita, maternal mortality, and anocracy do not exhibit a statistically significant relationship to civil war in the model. This implies that the variables do not affect civil wars in selected African countries.

TABLE 4. LAGGED DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES PREDICTING CIVIL WARS IN AFRICA

	System GMM
Civil Wars	
Lag civil wars	0.207*** (6.65)
Lag military aid	-4.68e-10*** (-3.32)
Lag security interventions	-0.0788 (-1.33)
Lag humanitarian interventions	-0.116 (-1.11)
Lag US troops	0.000118 (0.82)
Lag US military trainees	0.0000294* (2.47)
Total oil imports	-0.00000139*** (-3.90)
GDP annual growth rate	-0.00370* (-2.44)
GDP per capita	-0.0000212 (-1.24)
Total population	8.17e-09*** (5.06)
Maternal mortality	-0.0000420 (-0.32)
Anocracy	-0.00426 (-0.11)
_cons	0.109 (1.11)
N	756
Number of Groups	49
Number of Instruments	297

t statistics in parentheses

\* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001

The most prominent findings of the empirical results in the model include the lagged dependent variable civil war and lagged explanatory variables military aid and US military trainees, which are statistically significant with control variables, including total oil imports, GDP annual growth rate, and total population. The lagged dependent variable, civil wars, has a positive coefficient of 0.207 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. The positive coefficient between the response and the lagged dependent variables increases as the previous and current civil wars increase. This shows a positive relationship between the two variables. The positive relationship means the past/last civil wars affect recent civil wars on the continent. This indicates that the previous civil wars have tremendously influenced current civil wars in chosen African nations. On the other hand, this can be interpreted as the US's current foreign policy and events that influenced and affected last year's civil wars in selected African countries. The path dependence in the dynamic panel model is exemplified in the coefficient or lagged value of the dependent lagged variable civil wars. Furthermore, lagged military aid records a negative coefficient, implying an inverse/negative relationship between the two variables. It can be interpreted that as lagged military aid increases, civil war decreases. Thus, the US's previous military assistance to chosen African countries did not influence and affect present civil wars.

The lagged explanatory variable, US military trainees, accounts for a positive coefficient and is statistically significant in the dynamic panel model. This indicates a positive relationship between the response and the lagged US military trainees' variables. The positive association between the two variables implies that US military trainees' lag increases as civil wars increase in chosen African countries. Alternatively, as lagged, US military trainees increased in the previous year; the current civil wars increased in the continent. Therefore, the increase in last year's lagged US military trainees affects recent civil wars in chosen African countries. The statistical analysis also

shows two control variables negatively correlated with the civil wars in selected African countries. This includes total oil imports and GDP per capita. The negative relationship can be interpreted as civil wars decreasing in the continent, total oil imports, and an increase in GDP per capita. As a result, the two control variables have a negative/inverse relationship with the response. In other words, civil wars decrease as US total oil imports and GDP per capita increase on the continent. In addition, the total population records a positive coefficient of 8.17, which is statistically significant with a p-value of less than 0.001. The coefficient measures the size and strength of the relationship between the response and the total population variables. The empirical evidence has shown that the total population strongly influences civil wars in selected African countries because the size of the coefficient determines the intensity of the effect the control variable has on the response variable. The positive relationship implies that the total population increases as civil wars increase on the continent. In other words, civil wars are high in countries with large populations in selected nations in Africa.

In contrast, lagged security and humanitarian interventions, lagged US troops, and two control variables, maternal mortality, and anocracy, are insignificant in the model. This means these variables do not affect civil wars in chosen African countries in the model.

## EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF COUPS AND DISCUSSION

This dynamic panel model displays the results of response, explanatory, lagged, and control variables. The US military aid variable records a positive coefficient of 2.84 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.01. This indicates a positive correlation/association between military aid and coups on the continent. The correlation coefficient is a statistical measure that indicates the strength and direction of the relationship between the response and explanatory variables in regression analysis. A high coefficient between an independent and dependent variable

suggests that the independent variable strongly affects the dependent variable. In other words, the coefficient size for each explanatory variable predicts the enormity of the effect that variable has on the response variable. A positive coefficient means that coups in selected African countries increase as military aid increases.

Furthermore, the security interventions explanatory variable in the model has a positive coefficient of 0.0947 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.05. This implies a positive relationship exists between security interventions and coups in selected African nations. The two variables have established a positive relationship/association in the model. It can be interpreted that as security interventions increase, coups also tend to increase in the continent. In addition, the lagged dependent variable in the model records a negative coefficient of -0.151 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. The negative association has indicated that as the lagged dependent variable increases, the response variable, coups, decreases. Similarly, two control variables in the dynamic panel data model, total oil imports and total population have negative coefficients and are statistically significant. The control variable, US total oil imports from oil-rich countries in Africa, records a negative coefficient of -0.00000166 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.01. This implies that as US total oil imports increase, coups the response variable decreases. As a result, the two variables have an inverse relationship between coups and total oil imports from rich oil-producing countries in Africa. The GDP per capita variable has a positive coefficient of 0.0000292 with a p-value less than 0.05 in the dynamic panel data model. This indicates that coups in the chosen countries increase as GDP per capita increases. This shows that a positive association exists between GDP per capita and coups. Finally, the total population, a control variable in the model, records a negative coefficient of -7.87 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. This indicates that a negative relationship

exists between coups and the total population. This also can be explained by the fact that the response variable decreases as the total population increases. The discussion section focuses on the implications and interpretations of the statistically significant explanatory, control, and response variables. These variables include military aid, security interventions, lagged dependent variables, total oil imports, GDP per capita, and total population.

TABLE 5. PREDICTING COUPS ACROSS AFRICA, 1995-2020

Coups	System GMM
Lag coups	-0.151*** (-4.59)
Military aid	2.84e-10** (2.98)
Security interventions	0.0947* (2.14)
Humanitarian interventions	0.0355 (0.39)
Us troops	-0.0000193 (-0.20)
US military trainees	0.00000444 (0.51)
Total oil imports	-0.00000166** (-3.07)
GDP annual growth rate	-0.000634 (-0.56)
GDP per capita	0.0000292* (2.09)
Total population	-7.87e-09*** (-4.36)
Maternal mortality	0.000165 (1.57)
Anocracy	-0.00716 (-0.22)
_cons	0.0927 (1.11)
N	756
Number of Groups	49
Number of Instruments	173
t statistics in parentheses	



The most significant findings in the models are military aid and security intervention coefficients. In the model, military aid has a positive coefficient and is statistically significant. This shows that a positive correlation/relationship exists between coups and military assistance. This demonstrates that coups in selected African countries increase as US military aid increases. The empirical results have shown that US military assistance to chosen African countries affects coups on the continent. Therefore, a positive relationship exists between coups and military aid provided to nations on the continent. More importantly, the coefficient measures the strength of the relationship/association between military aid and coups as the response variable. In addition, the coefficient value predicts the enormity of effects on the response variable in the model. The results of the military aid in the model have shown that US military aid to selected African governments is affecting coups in the chosen nations. The coefficient in the model shows a strong relationship between coups and military assistance. Therefore, the more military aid selected African governments receive from the US, the more coups are staged in the chosen countries in Africa. Thus, a positive correlation between the two variables does not imply causation.

Furthermore, the explanatory variable security interventions in the model have a positive association/correlation with the response/outcome variable coups in the dynamic panel model. This means that coups increase as US security interventions increase on the continent. This again indicates that US security interventions in selected African countries affect/influence coups in the chosen countries. As US security interventions become predominant in chosen African nations, more coups are experienced. Despite the positive relationship/correlation, the strength of the relationship between US security interventions and coups in selected African countries is weak, with a p-value less than 0.05, which means US security interventions in selected African countries have minimal effects on coups. In the model, the coefficient of the lagged dependent variable is

negative -0.151 and is statistically significant, with a p-value less than 0.001. The negative correlation implies that the response variable decreases as the lagged dependent variable increases. This demonstrates an inverse correlation between the response and lagged dependent variables. In other words, the lagged dependent variable does not affect the outcome variable, and previous coups experienced in the chosen African nations have no direct link to current coups.

On the other hand, the control variable, total oil imports, records a negative coefficient and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.01 in the model. In addition, the negative correlation also means that as US total oil imports increase, coups decrease in chosen countries in Africa. This has indicated an inverse/negative relationship between coups and US total oil imports from oil-rich African countries. In other words, US oil imports from rich oil-producing African countries do not affect coups. It is worth noting that the size of the coefficient predicts the enormity of the variable effects on the response variable. Besides, the model's control variable, GDP per capita, has a positive coefficient and is statistically significant. This demonstrates a positive correlation/association between the response and the control variables. This means GDP per capita affects coups, and countries with high GDP per capita witness high coups on the continent. Alternatively, the response variable coup also increases as GDP per capita increases. Finally, the total population, a control variable, has a negative coefficient and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. This implies that the outcome variable coup decreases in the selected African countries as the total population increases. In other words, the two variables have a negative/inverse relationship in the dynamic panel data model. Also, this indicates that the total population does not affect coups in selected African countries. Meanwhile, the GDP annual growth rate, maternal mortality, and anocracy control variables are insignificant and do not affect coups

in the model. In conclusion, the explanatory variables of humanitarian interventions, US troops, and US military trainees also do not affect coups and are insignificant in the model.

#### AVERAGE MARGINAL EFFECTS OF EXPLANATORY VARIABLES ON COUPS

The model's average marginal effects of the explanatory variables have shown that military aid and security interventions have recorded positive coefficients. In contrast, the other predictors have recorded negative coefficients. The probability of the military aid affecting or influencing coups in chosen African countries is 5.11, security interventions 0.032, humanitarian interventions -0.32, US troops -0.000, and US military trainees record -9.16 in the model.

#### EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF LAGGED DEPENDENT COUPS AND LAGGED INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Table 6 reports empirical results on response variable coups, statistically significant lagged explanatory, and control variables in the model. These variables include lagged dependent variable coups, lagged military aid, total oil imports, and total population. The lagged dependent variable coups have a negative coefficient of -0.229 and are statistically significant, with a p-value less than 0.001. This indicates that the response variable decreases as the lagged dependent variable increases. In addition, lagged military aid accounts for a positive coefficient of 3.82 and is statistically significant, with a p-value less than 0.001 in the dynamic panel model. Therefore, a positive coefficient means that coups increase as the lagged explanatory variable military aid increases. The two variables are positively correlated in the model. In other words, the previous increase in military aid affects current coups in the continent.

Furthermore, total oil imports record a negative coefficient of -0.00000134 and are statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.05. This negative relationship indicates that increased total oil imports lead to decreased coups in chosen African countries. These two variables

have an inverse relationship in the model. Finally, the control variable's total population records a negative coefficient of -6.13 with a statistically significant p-value less than 0.001. This indicates a negative association between the response and control variables in the model. This negative correlation implies that as the total population increases, coups also decrease on the continent. On the other hand, lagged security, humanitarian interventions, lagged US troops, and lagged US military trainees and control variables GDP annual growth rate, GDP per capita, maternal mortality, and anocracy are statistically insignificant in the empirical model. This means the variables do not influence or affect coups in selected African nations.

TABLE 6. LAGGED DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES PREDICTING  
COUPS IN AFRICA

Coups	System GMM
Lag coups	-0.229*** (-7.36)
Lag military aid	3.82e-10*** (3.97)
Lag security interventions	-0.0406 (-0.91)
Lag humanitarian interventions	0.0205 (0.24)
Lag US troops	-0.0000681 (-0.69)
Lag US military trainees	0.00000295 (0.34)
Total oil imports	-0.00000134* (-2.43)
GDP annual growth rate	-0.000766 (-0.68)
GDP per capita	0.0000209 (1.65)
Total population	-6.13e-09*** (-3.38)
Maternal mortality	0.0000332 (0.31)
Anocracy	0.0418 (1.38)
_cons	0.116 (1.41)
N	756
Number of Groups	49
Number of Instruments	179

t statistics in parentheses

\* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001

The most significant findings of Table 6, are the coefficients of the lagged dependent, lagged independent military aid, and statistically significant control variables such as total oil imports and the total population in the dynamic model. The lagged dependent variable coups have a negative coefficient and are statistically significant. This implies that the lagged dependent variable increases, coups the response variable decreases. Therefore, US foreign policy in the previous year did not contribute to the present coups on the continent. The two variables have established a negative/inverse relationship in the model, and the variables move in opposite directions. In addition, the lagged independent variable, military aid, records a positive coefficient and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.001. This means that the lagged military aid increases and the response variable coups decreases. There is a positive correlation/relationship between the two variables. An increase in US military aid in the last year has contributed to more coups currently on the continent.

Furthermore, the US total oil imports from oil-rich producing countries in Africa are negatively associated with coups. The negative relationship can be interpreted as an increase in total oil imports leading to a decrease in coups in chosen African countries. The variables move in opposite directions in the model, meaning the US oil imports from oil-rich African countries do not influence coups in the selected nations. Similarly, the total population variable accounts for a negative coefficient, meaning that the response variable can decrease as the total population increases. In other words, both variables have a negative relationship, which can be explained by the fact that the country's population does not influence coups in selected African countries.

## EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Table 7 reports the empirical results of anti-government demonstrations, the outcome/response, and the model's explanatory and lagged dependent and control variables. The explanatory variables in the model are insignificant, which indicates that the variables have no direct effect on the response variable in the model. On the other hand, all the control variables in the model are insignificant except for the total population, which has a negative coefficient of -5.30 and is statistically significant, with a p-value of less than 0.05. It can be interpreted that as the total population increases, the response variable anti-government demonstrations decreases, which shows the two variables have an inverse relationship in the dynamic panel model. Furthermore, the implication of the coefficients and statistically significant variables will be discussed in the next section.

TABLE 7. PREDICTING ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS ACROSS AFRICA,  
1995-2020

Anti-Government Demonstrations	System GMM
Lag antigovernment demonstrations	0.0405 (1.33)
Military aid	2.56e-10 (1.54)
Security interventions	0.0763 (0.84)
Humanitarian interventions	0.0304 (0.17)
US troops	0.0000255 (0.15)
US military trainees	-0.00000524 (-0.29)
Total oil imports	-0.00000130 (-1.81)
GDP annual growth rate	0.000160 (0.07)
GDP per capita	-0.0000134 (-0.56)
Total population	-5.30e-09* (-2.45)
Maternal mortality	-0.0000977 (-0.52)
Democracy	-0.0709 (-0.89)
_cons	0.690*** (5.28)
N	756
Number of Groups	49
Number of Instruments	261

t statistics in parentheses

\* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001



The empirical results of anti-government demonstrations in the study have shown that all the explanatory variables in the models are insignificant and have no direct influence on the response variable of anti-government demonstrations. Additionally, all the control variables are negligible except for the total population, which negatively correlates with anti-government demonstrations in the dynamic panel model. The negative correlation in the model implies that as the total population increases, anti-government demonstrations decrease. Therefore, the two variables have established an inverse relationship in the dynamic panel model, which means the control variable's total population has no direct effect on anti-government demonstrations.

Meanwhile, I believe the explanatory response and several control variables are insignificant in the model because anti-government demonstrations in selected African countries are linked with governments' economic failures such as corruption and bribery, poverty and economic inequality, inflation, and high unemployment are contributory factors; instead of US interventions in the continent. Research conducted by Harris and Hern 2019 identified economic conditions, poor service delivery, low wages, electoral malpractices, and coups as factors that drive the African population towards anti-government demonstrations. African demonstrators lacked revolutionary intention, and in many of these protests, citizens demanded a change in government policy instead of advocating for a regime change.<sup>344</sup> In addition, the existing literature has shown that anti-government demonstrations in Africa in the 1980s were linked to neoliberal economic policy, especially structural adjustment reform imposed on African countries by the International Monetary Fund.<sup>345</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> Adam Harris & Erin Hern (2019). Taking to the Streets: Protest as an Expression of Political Preference in Africa, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 52, No. 8, 1169-1199

<sup>345</sup> Subhasish Ray (2007). Reformers with Repression? The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Africa 1990-2000, Conference Paper

## AVERAGE MARGINAL EFFECTS OF EXPLANATORY VARIABLES ON ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS

The model shows that military aid records a positive coefficient of 1.63 for affecting anti-government demonstrations. The probability of other explanatory variables affecting anti-government demonstrations in selected African countries is negative with the following coefficients: The likelihood of security interventions affecting anti-government demonstrations in the model records -0.255, humanitarian interventions -0.023, US troops 3.06, and US military trainees -.000.

## EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF DEPENDENT, LAGGED DEPENDENT, AND LAGGED INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Table 8 outlines the results of the anti-government demonstrations, the response variable, and the lagged independent and control variables in the model. The lagged military assistance in the model records a positive coefficient of 3.46 and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.05. A positive coefficient means that as the lagged explanatory variable military aid increases, the response variable anti-government demonstrations also increases. This shows that the two variables have a positive association/relationship in the model. In addition, the coefficient measures the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables in the regression model. A high coefficient indicates the enormity of the effect on the dependent variable. The coefficient in the model measures the size and strength of the relationship between anti-government protests and the lagged independent explanatory variables. The empirical results of the lagged security, humanitarian interventions, lagged US troops, lagged US military trainees, and all the control variables, including total oil imports, GDP annual growth rate, GDP per capita, total

population, maternal mortality, and democracy, are statistically insignificant in the dynamic panel model. This means the variables do not affect anti-government demonstrations in the model.

TABLE 8. LAGGED DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES PREDICTING ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS ACROSS AFRICA, 1995-2020

Anti-Government Demonstrations	System GMM
Lag anti-government demonstrations	0.0368 (1.21)
Lag military aid	3.46e-10* (2.02)
Lag security interventions	0.116 (1.32)
Lag humanitarian interventions	0.0841 (0.51)
Lag US troops	-0.0000210 (-0.14)
Lag US military trainees	-0.0000306. (-1.84)
Total oil imports	-0.00000126 (-1.78)
GDP annual growth rate	0.00118 (0.56)
GDP per capita	-0.00000941 (-0.42)
Total population	-3.39e-09 (-1.55)
Maternal mortality	-0.000313 (-1.75)
Democracy	0.0783 (1.16)
_cons	0.686*** (5.46)
N	756
Number of Groups	49
Number of Instruments	280
t statistics in parentheses	
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001	

The most crucial variable in the results is the lagged explanatory variable of military aid. This variable has recorded a positive coefficient. In addition, the positive coefficient means a positive relationship exists between anti-government demonstrations and the lagged military assistance. In other words, as the lagged independent military aid variable increases, anti-government demonstrations also increase in the model. This can be interpreted as the US's previous year's military aid to selected African governments influencing and affecting anti-government protests in the present time. On the other hand, US military assistance to chosen African states in the last year has played a substantial role in the current year's anti-government demonstrations. A positive relationship exists between the two variables in the dynamic model. In addition, all the other lagged independent and control variables do not affect anti-government demonstrations in the model because they are statistically insignificant.

## CONCLUSION

In summary, the use of Arellano-Bover 1995 and Blundell-Bond 1998 system generalized method of moments (GMM) addressed and removed unobserved heterogeneity, endogeneity, omitted variable bias, measurement error, and simultaneity from the data, and this has made the empirical results robust, efficient and consistent. The study's empirical results indicate that US troops, security interventions, military aid, and US military trainees have influenced or affected US foreign policy toward Africa in the dynamic panel data model.

The study finds support for the primary hypothesis that the higher the number of US troops deployed in selected African countries, the greater the probability of terrorist attacks. This shows that US troops stationed in chosen African states affect terrorism casualties. However, this positive correlation between the US troops and terrorism casualties does not imply causation in the model because other factors in the continent might be responsible for the positive association in the

model. I surmise that the positive correlation might be driven by the volatility of security conditions in the regions with an increase in US military presence because of the activities of violent extremist organizations such as the Horn of Africa, al-Shabaab's stronghold, the Sahel, and Sahara regions dominated by Boko Haram and al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb and other terrorist groups in the Lake Chad Basin. In addition, the statistical analysis has demonstrated that terrorist attacks/casualties are not uniform in Africa; therefore, one cannot say definitively that the presence of US troops on the continent causes terrorism. In contrast, the primary goal of US troop deployments abroad is to maintain peace and regional stability. On the other hand, I cannot use the result of the nested analysis to draw a robust conclusion of causation; therefore, qualitative research in a mixed-method approach must be explored. This approach would add proper context to the dynamic panel data model by providing a solid conclusion of the positive association.

Furthermore, the empirical evidence supports the hypothesis that civil wars are more likely as US security interventions increase in selected African countries. This suggests that US security interventions in chosen states affect civil wars. This positive relationship/correlation might be associated with the US national security policy after the 9/11 attacks. US foreign policy toward chosen countries and other African countries has changed dramatically due to the change in the global security environment. Africa's poverty and underdevelopment have been securitized and militarized as a threat, fear, risk, and security because of the US global war on terror. Also, Africa's failed states and ungoverned spaces have been securitized as terrorist sanctuaries in post-September 11. In addition, the US established several counterterrorism operations after the attacks, and its military activities were unprecedented in the chosen states. This might be a possible reason leading to the positive association between the US troops and terrorism casualties in the model. Some scholars argue that US militarization and securitization of the continent might be due to the

global war on terror, energy security, and counter Chinese political influence and investment, which the US views as a national security threat to its economic and geopolitical interests. US security interventions in selected African nations have become imperative for the US military to protect America, Americans, and American interests from threats that might emerge from the chosen states. This led to the establishment of the unified combatant command AFRICOM in 2008.<sup>346</sup> These activities of the US on the continent might contribute to the positive relationship between civil wars and security interventions. Moreover, conflict literature indicates that inequality, political rights, ethnic polarization, and religious fractionalization are not good predictors of civil wars, according to Collier & Hoeffler, 2004. In addition, Collier & Hoeffler's 2004 research found that the primary determinant factor for civil wars is income from export commodities. Scholars suggest that developing countries diversify their economies to prevent dependence on natural resources.

Similarly, the statistical analysis also supports the hypothesis that as the number of US military trainees increases in selected African countries, the greater the probability of civil wars in chosen countries increases. The positive association has shown that US trainee officers influence civil wars in selected countries. The correlation between the two variables does not mean that US military trainees cause civil wars in selected African countries. Other factors might explain why trainees are involved in civil wars, such as government mismanagement of the economy of the state resources or flagrant violation of democratic norms. Trainees in selected African countries have internalized liberal values and standards, and high corruption and poverty created by political leaders compelled some trainees to engage in civil wars with the incumbent government to gain

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<sup>346</sup> Catherine Gegout (2018). *Why Europe Intervenes in Africa: Security Prestige and Legacy of Colonialism, Actors in Military Interventions, Global Perspective*, Online ISBN: 9780190943288

control of natural resource extraction locations against government mismanagement. This type of conflict is primarily between government forces and rebel groups, common in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia, Sudan, Angola, Rwanda, and other African countries. Given the variables' statistical significance and substantive effects, the findings are consistent and robust.

On the other hand, the primary hypothesis that states an increase in US military trainees in chosen African nations means a greater probability of coups supports the empirical results in the dynamic panel data model. The positive relationship between the US Army trainees and coups might result from the fact that the trainees internalized liberal norms such as democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Some of the trainees became disillusioned with the political leaders' high corruption and mismanagement of the economy, and these factors impelled a few US trainees in the selected African countries to initiate coups. Qualitative evidence has demonstrated that US trainees instigated coups in selected African countries, especially in West African nations like Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Chad in recent years. Meanwhile, Savage and Caverley's 2017 empirical research also found that the US IMET training programs are strongly associated with coups. These researchers argue that increasing trainees' human capital will likely increase resource demands on the regime and improve the military trainees' ability to remove the regime should its needs not be addressed. The research finds a robust empirical relationship between US training of foreign militaries and military-backed coup attempts despite focusing on norm promotion and civilian control of the government. Despite the positive association between the US military trainees and coups in selected African nations, the primary objective of the programs is to promote liberal norms and civilian control of the army. The correlation might also be due to several



counterterrorism initiatives the US has established in the continent during the global war on terror to train many African militaries to deter, disrupt, and counter-terrorist activities.

Moreover, I find support for the hypothesis that US security interventions increase in chosen African countries, the higher the probability of coups. This positive relationship demonstrates that US security interventions influence coups in the selected African countries. However, the correlation between the two variables in the dynamic panel model does not affirm causation because other factors in the African continent might be responsible for the positive relationship. The US security interventions affect almost every African country; however, coups are primarily concentrated in West Africa. Therefore, I believe the style of administration of the West African political leaders may be influencing coups in the region, such as corruption and bribery, nepotism, and mismanagement of the economy.

Additionally, the empirical evidence shows a positive and statistically significant relationship between coups and military aid. The results support the hypothesis that increasing military assistance to chosen African nations is more likely to increase coups on the continent. The US military aid to selected African countries influenced coups on the continent. During the Cold War and post-Cold War, the US provided military assistance to several African states, both democratic and repressive authoritarian regimes. However, coups in the continent are prevalent among new democracies, particularly in West Africa. This means other factors might be responsible for coups in selected African countries despite the positive relationship between the two variables. Interestingly, the model's hypotheses regarding anti-government demonstrations were insignificant, implying that US foreign policy toward Africa does not initiate anti-government demonstrations. Notably, the empirical results have indicated that the control variable, US total oil imports in the dynamic panel model, recorded a negative coefficient and was statistically

significant in all the models. This uniquely implies that US total oil imports from African-rich nations increase as dependent variables decrease. Therefore, a negative relationship exists between the dependent and control variables, total oil imports. This has indicated that total oil imports do not affect US foreign policy toward Africa. The empirical results are consistent and robust, looking at the variables' statistical significance and substantive effects on US foreign policy toward Africa. In conclusion, I have found a solid statistically significant average marginal effect of US military trainees and military aid in the model.

Future studies should focus on a particular geographic region of Africa instead of evaluating US foreign policy toward selected countries. For example, future studies can focus only on West or Horn of Africa countries. Beyond academic interests, this study has broad policy implications. The study's findings will contribute to scholarly knowledge and guide future US foreign policy toward the chosen countries. In addition, the US should continue to promote democracy, good governance, and economic development in the selected countries instead of focusing primarily on security and military agendas. In summary, the empirical evidence supports several of the hypotheses, and for those hypotheses that failed to affirm my propositions in the study, I leave such analysis for future research.

TABLE 9. THE STUDY'S VARIABLES

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables
Military Aid	Terrorist Attacks
Security Interventions	Civil Wars
Humanitarian Interventions	Coups
US Troops	Anti-Government Demonstrations
US Military Trainees	

TABLE 10. EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY'S HYPOTHESES

<b>H1a:</b> The higher the level of US military aid to an African country, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks in that country.	Failed/ Lag Supported
<b>H1b:</b> The higher the number of US security interventions in African country, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks in that country.	Failed
<b>H1c:</b> The higher the number of US humanitarian interventions in African country, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks in that country.	Failed
<b>H1d:</b> The higher the number of US military troops deployed in African country, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks in that country.	Supported/Lag Failed
<b>H1e:</b> The higher the number of US military trainees in an Africa country, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks in that country.	Opposite/Lag Supported
<b>H2a:</b> The higher the level of US military aid to an African country, the greater the likelihood of civil war in that country.	Failed/Lag Opposite
<b>H2b:</b> The higher the number of US security interventions an Africa country, the greater the likelihood of civil war in that country.	Supported/Lag Failed
<b>H2c:</b> The higher the number of US humanitarian interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of civil war in that country.	Failed
<b>H2d:</b> The higher the number of US military troops deployed in an African country, the greater the likelihood of civil war in that country.	Failed
<b>H2e:</b> The higher the number of US military trainees in an African country, the greater the likelihood of civil war in that country.	Supported/Lag Supported
<b>H3a:</b> The higher the level of US military aid to an African country, the greater the likelihood of coups in that country.	Supported/Lag Supported
<b>H3b:</b> The higher the number of US security interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of coups in that country.	Supported/ Lag Failed
<b>H3c:</b> The higher the number of humanitarian interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of coups in that country.	Failed
<b>H3e:</b> The higher the number of US military trainees in an African country, the greater the likelihood of coups in that country.	Failed
<b>H4a:</b> The higher the level of US military aid to an African country, the greater the likelihood of anti-government demonstrations in that country	Failed/ Lag Supported
<b>H4b:</b> The higher the number of US security interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of anti-government demonstrations in that country.	Failed
<b>H4c:</b> The higher the number of US humanitarian interventions in an African country, the greater the likelihood of anti-government demonstrations in that country.	Failed
<b>H4d:</b> The higher the number of US military troops deployed in an African country, the greater the likelihood of anti-government demonstrations in that country.	Failed
<b>H4e:</b> The higher the number of US military trainees in an African country, the greater the likelihood of anti-government demonstrations in that country.	Failed

## CHAPTER VII

### STRUCTURE OF THE NIGERIA CASE STUDY

The case study on Nigeria is meticulously organized into four main components, each serving a specific purpose in my comprehensive analysis.

1. The study's first and most crucial segment is a data-driven exploration. This section, which forms the bedrock of the study's analysis, highlights significant shifts in our explanatory and response variables over time. It is this exploration that allows me to delve into the impact of US security assistance and training on the Nigerian armed forces, terrorist attacks, civil wars, coups, and protests. By understanding the changes in these variables, I can better explain why they occurred in specific years, thereby providing strong internal and external reliability of our research methodology.
2. The second segment presents a comprehensive and meticulous analysis of the historical context, which furnishes the pertinent background of Nigerian politics during decolonization and independence and the factors influencing instability/stability. This in-depth and comprehensive analysis is paramount in comprehending the intricate dynamics of Nigerian politics and its far-reaching ramifications on the country's security situation.
3. The third segment thoroughly and comprehensively investigates and analyzes the shifts in security assistance and US military training for the Nigerian armed forces. It also features a distinct part delineating significant changes in the study's instability variables. This comprehensive and thorough approach is crucial in comprehending the effects of these shifts and their implications for US foreign policy and stability in Nigeria.
4. The fourth and concluding section provides an exhaustive understanding of the factors leading to instability in Nigeria and their implications for US foreign policy. This section

amalgamates the causes of the shifts and deliberates on whether they elucidate the changes and variations in US foreign policy. It also scrutinizes the intricate dynamics between instability and changes in US foreign policy, which will significantly assist the audience in comprehending the effects of US foreign policy toward Nigeria.

TABLE 11. VARIATIONS IN THE INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Nigeria	Year	Military Aid	US Troops	US Trainees	Terrorist Attacks	Civil Wars	Coups	Protests
	1995	0	30	0	1	0	0	0
	1996	0	32	0	24	0	0	0
	1997	0	32	0	107	0	0	0
	1998	0	22	0	9	0	0	0
	1999	132427	26	0	134	0	0	0
	2000	15174891	24	129	0	0	0	0
	2001	22856819	24	79	3	0	0	0
	2002	9357803	22	285	28	0	0	0
	2003	130704	28	321	28	0	0	0
	2004	0	32	127	41	1	0	0
	2005	1612838	42	60	19	0	0	1
	2006	2497999	48	397	254	0	0	0
	2007	2306403	46	2419	82	0	0	0
	2008	2564961	12	5174	72	0	0	0
	2009	3844152	10	9122	316	1	0	0
	2010	3349723	12	2022	117	0	0	0
	2011	12705272	12	5320	447	1	0	0
	2012	14541648	40	6020	1506	1	0	0
	2013	11253858	56	6264	2015	1	0	0
	2014	11396200	70	569	7775	1	0	0
	2015	4497458	74	568	5567	1	0	0
	2016	4667933	32	987	2174	1	0	1
	2017	3654392	16	233	1809	1	0	0
	2018	15174014	18	194	2577	1	0	0
	2019	22125395	14	129	1718	1	0	0
	2020	0	62	0	2102	1	0	0

The US security assistance to Nigeria increased astronomically after the attacks. The increase in military aid could be associated with changes in the global security environment during the post-9/11 period and the global war on terror paradigm, which several African countries supported. Statistical data shows that Nigeria had zero military aid between 1995 and 1998, which might be associated with frequent military intervention in politics and gross human rights violations perpetrated against civilian populations, notably during Abacha's regime. Meanwhile, statistical data has demonstrated that between 2005 and 2009, Nigeria received the lowest security assistance from the US. During this period, the US launched new counterterrorism programs, which expanded its membership to cover countries from the north and west of Africa, affecting Nigerian military assistance. More significant security assistance was diverted to the Sahel and the Sahara. Another critical reason that might have led to the decrease was the death of the founder of Boko Haram. Several members were arrested and sent to prison, and this has brought calmness and stability to the most volatile region in Nigeria. The security forces were able to destroy several Boko Haram networks. These factors have affected US military aid to Nigeria. On the other hand, between 2001 and 2011, Nigeria received the highest US military assistance due to ethnoreligious violence between the Muslims and Christian communities in the north regarding the introduction of Sharia Law and also the violence in the oil-rich Niger Delta region in Nigeria. Empirical data again indicates that security assistance from the US increased between 2014 and 2019. During this period, Boko Haram has intensified its terrorist activities against civilian populations, and President Jonathan declared a state of emergency. In addition, the US increased security assistance to Nigeria because Boko Haram had kidnapped several schoolgirls in northern Nigeria, and the US and many other countries provided extensive military aid to the government of Nigeria used to rescue and liberate the abducted schoolgirls. The increase was also due to Boko Haram's



declaration of allegiance to the Islamic State, and the African Union authorized the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) with US support to fight the violent extremist organization in the Lake Chad region. Other events that led to an increase in security assistance involved the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) atrocities committed in north Nigeria and the Lake Chad region. Nigerian government during this period purchased several military equipment from the US to counter Boko Haram and ISWAP activities.

Moreover, statistical data shows that between 1995 and 1999, the US security forces provided zero training to Nigerian security forces. During this period, US foreign policy toward Nigeria was minimal because of frequent coups and gross human rights abuses by authoritarian leaders. In other words, the US organized no training programs in Nigeria because the government was military, and the US provided training to regimes that welcomed liberal norms, including democracy, respect for human rights, good governance, accountability, and transparency. Statistical data demonstrates that the highest US military training of the Nigerian armed forces was recorded in 2009. Training of the Nigerian security forces began when the country transitioned to civilian rule. The US military personnel trained Nigerian security forces to counter Boko Haram. The violent extremist organization was formed not long after and involved in several despicable activities, which led to the extrajudicial killing of the leader. The members of the insurgent organization asserted the need to avenge the founder's death. The group has been involved in many terrorist attacks, which led to an increase in the training of the Nigerian security forces to maintain stability in the north.

Similarly, 2011 and 2013 also show the period of increased US military training of the Nigerian security forces. Boko Haram's attacks escalated and led to an increase in training of the security forces. The Salafist jihadist organization became a transnational organization and attacked

offices of multilateral organizations. On the other hand, the US security forces increased the training programs also due to the activities of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). MEND also attacked oil installations and kidnapped several foreign workers in the Niger Delta rich-oil region. Moreover, statistical data indicates that the lowest training programs were recorded in 2014 and 2019. During this era, President Buhari purchased over 1.6 billion from the US to fight Boko Haram, reducing training. Alternatively, Nigerian armed forces also canceled some of the advanced training the US military personnel organized due to undue access to its military secrets.

On the other hand, statistical data has shown that terrorist attacks in Nigeria decreased between 2001 and 2011. During this period, the global war on terror policy was instituted, Nigeria moved to constitutional government, and the US increased its military assistance to maintain stability. Also, the activities of Boko Haram and MEND were not escalated. However, statistical evidence has shown that the highest terrorist attacks were recorded in 2014 and 2015. Boko Haram attacks and lethality have reached their pinnacle, and the sect has become the deadliest terrorist group. Boko Haram has made worldwide news and become a local and international household name. More importantly, 2016 and 2020 also have indicated increased terrorist attacks by Boko Haram. The Islamic State recognized the group, and its terrorist attacks intensified and expanded to the Lake Chad Basin with ISWAP.

Besides, statistical evidence demonstrates that conflicts and civil wars were common in Nigeria between 2011 and 2020. These were due to several factors, including non-state armed groups fighting the Nigerian government. The groups have engaged the Nigerian government in armed conflicts to establish an Islamic state with Sharia law, and MEND also wanted to control the oil-rich Niger Delta region. Also, the separatist Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) are fighting

to secede. Statistical data indicates anti-government demonstrations between 2005 and 2016. Nigerian citizens engaged in a series of protests against the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) and other government actions, including human rights abuses, corruption, and economic mismanagement. Other demonstrations were linked to the failure of the government to provide security to the citizens against kidnapping and insurgent groups' killings of innocent civilians and security forces brutalities.

The central argument in the case study is to investigate how US military assistance and training of the Nigerian security forces affect instability in Nigeria. The case study is grounded on the statistical outcomes of military aid and US military personnel training of the Nigerian armed forces with response variables of terrorist attacks, coups, civil wars, and anti-government demonstrations. The study seeks to examine the effects of the explanatory variables on the response and its contributions to political instability or stability in Nigeria. In addition, the study aims to explore the impact of security assistance and training of the Nigerian security forces on Boko Haram, ISWAP, and MEND insurgent groups. The study aims to employ qualitative evidence from the existing literature to determine a causal link between military aid, training of the Nigerian security forces, and instability. On the other hand, the study aims to understand the events leading to the fluctuations in security assistance and instability in Nigeria. The study defines fluctuation as increasing or decreasing US military aid and training programs for Nigerian security forces. Also, the case study aims to examine both variables of interest to determine whether the variables influence or affect each other. For example, two-way or bidirectional relationships have occurred when both the response and explanatory affect each other. The central goal of the study is to explain the connection between the explanatory and response variables and their effects using a process tracing methodology and historical analysis based on both primary and secondary sources. Process

tracing is helpful in case studies because it describes how and why a change occurred and has become a fundamental qualitative analysis tool in recent times. In addition, processing tracing describes the political and social phenomena and contributes to and evaluates causal claims in a study. Against this background, John Gerring views process tracing as detective/forensic work.<sup>347</sup> Process tracing methodology assists in examining historical and archival documents, interviews, transcripts, and other sources to see whether the causal process a theory hypothesizes is evident in the case. The specific events and processes within the case help identify the study's causal factors. In addition, causal factors cannot be manipulated in a case study because they are observational and non-experimental. The study does not depend on the quantity of evidence or observations but on the quality and how the evidence is analyzed and connected with the research question to achieve the study's goals. On the other hand, the case will examine the role of US military equipment such as arms sales, weapons, ammunition, aircraft, armor vehicles, unmanned aircraft, surveillance drones, and military equipment purchased by the Nigerian government through Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and determine their contributions in political instability in Nigeria. The case study will address the following questions: What explains the fluctuations in US military assistance to Nigeria? To what extent does US military assistance affect political instability in Nigeria? How did an increase in US security assistance affect violent extremist organizations in Nigeria? How did US security assistance affect human rights in Nigeria? To what extent does US military aid cause or promote stability in Nigeria? The study's findings will contribute to academic knowledge and guide future US foreign policy toward Nigeria.

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<sup>347</sup> John Gerring (2017). *Case Study Research, Principles and Practices, Second Edition, Strategies for Social Inquiry*, Published by Cambridge University Press

## BACKGROUND AND DRIVERS OF INSTABILITY IN NIGERIA

The British colonial powers integrated Nigeria and gained independence in 1960.<sup>348</sup> Nigeria's first republic adopted Westminster parliamentary democracy, which collapsed after six years through a military coup. Nigeria is a vast and complex nation with over two hundred fifty ethnic groups and several religions. As a result, the country's post-independence politics featured political violence, especially during national, state, and regional elections. The country witnessed a three-year civil war when Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu declared Biafra independent. The civil war lasted for three years and claimed over three million people and several million were internally displaced.<sup>349</sup> The US and Nigeria developed a harmonious relationship after independence, and the country abandoned the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy in favor of American presidential democracy in 1979.<sup>350</sup> Surprisingly, the US-style presidential democracy was short-lived when the military intervened in politics. Nigeria's political landscape and democratic trajectory were affected by political instability due to frequent changes in the regime. Political violence has become Nigeria's political culture, culminating with coups instigated by ethnicity, religion, and political corruption.

Furthermore, Nigeria's political climate during Abacha's regime in the 1990s was chaotic, with severe human rights violations. The country became a pariah state with several sanctions from the international community and global governance institutions. Two-thirds of Nigeria's fifty years of post-colonial rule have alternated between military and civilian regimes, contributing to

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<sup>348</sup> Henry Ani Kifordu (2011). *Ethnic Politics, Political Elite, and Regime Change in Nigeria*, *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Vol. 11, No. 3

<sup>349</sup> Clay Arnold, Department of Government, Public Service and International Studies, University of Arkansas

<sup>350</sup> Sunday Omotuyi & Modesola Vic Omotuyi (2020). *Nigeria and Great Powers: The Impacts of the Boko Haram Terrorism on Nigeria's Foreign Relations*, *The Rest, Journal of Politics and Development*, Vol. 10, No. 1, Center for Strategic Research and Analysis

instability that affected the weak institutions bequeathed by the colonial masters. However, the sanctions were lifted after the death of Abacha when Nigeria transitioned to a democratic civilian government under the leadership of Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999. Nigeria is Africa's most populous nation, the largest economy, and the highest oil-producing country, with over 200 million people.<sup>351</sup> Nigeria plays a tremendous role in international peacekeeping, diplomatic, and military roles on the continent and the West Africa sub-region.<sup>352</sup> The country depends on oil and agriculture, and despite the diversification of the economy, crude oil sales continue to become a primary source of export earnings. Nigeria's gross domestic product (GDP) 2022 recorded 477 billion dollars. However, the country still faces significant human development challenges, ranking one hundred and fifty-one of one hundred and fifty-seven countries in the World Bank 2020 Human Development Index (HDI). The culture of political corruption has hindered the nation's economic growth and development, and Nigeria is deeply affected by ethnic-religious conflicts, terrorism, kidnapping, banditry, maritime piracy, and the rule of law challenges.

During the post-Cold War, wealth, power, and resource inequalities led to numerous local and regional conflicts. The disparity between the north and south in the 21<sup>st</sup> century contributed to the formation of insurgent organizations in northeastern Nigeria, particularly Boko Haram and the Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP). Most of the conflicts in Nigeria have resulted from political, economic, and social structures with multi-causal historical grievances to single-issue rivalries rooted in religious, ethnic, and regional differences. More importantly, ethnoreligious conflict in Nigeria is rooted in the Muslim north and the Christian south.<sup>353</sup> Nigeria

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<sup>351</sup> Tomas Husted & Lauren Ploch Blanchard (2020). Nigeria: Current Issues and US Policy, Congressional Research Service

<sup>352</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War: Sovereignty, Responsibility, and the War on Terror, Ohio University Press

<sup>353</sup> Ibid

is faced with other militant organizations in the Middle Belt, such as the Fulani herders and the Christian farmers. Meanwhile, in the south, the militant group the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) in the rich-oil region has created insecurity around the Gulf of Guinea area for decades.

On the other hand, the existing qualitative literature on Nigeria's political violence and conflict has identified several non-state armed groups as the primary drivers of instability. These groups include Boko Haram, ISWAP, MEND, Fulani herders, Christian farmers, and separatist Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Boko Haram was formed by Muhammed Yusuf in 2002 as a non-violent Salafist religious group influenced by Saudi thinkers who rejected Sufi teachings and focused on the moral deterioration of Nigerian society influenced by Western culture. The extant qualitative literature on the formation of Boko Haram points out several reasons and narratives. However, the economic and political narratives in the literature have captured my attention. The literature uses two theories to explain the economic causes of the group. According to Ted Gurr's relative deprivation theory, economic conditions are sources of frustration in a society, which can lead to aggression and insurgency. The frustration-aggression theory explains that aggression is caused by frustration when people or society are denied the necessities of life. In addition, Collier and Hoeffler have argued that economic opportunity and greed can also cause insurgency in a society. The economic hardship in northeastern Nigeria has resulted in frustration and aggression, which has led to the formation of Boko Haram to challenge the northern political elites and the federal government. The level of poverty and inequality between northeastern Nigeria and the south was one of the mobilizing factors of the Boko Haram insurgency.<sup>354</sup> Meanwhile, Barbara

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<sup>354</sup> Wisdom Oghosa Iyekepolo (2016). Boko Haram: Understanding the Context, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 12, 2211-2228

Harff argues that extreme religious ideology also serves as a significant factor in fomenting insurgency, and individuals with extreme ideologies who seek to attain political power use insurgency as an instrument to achieve their goals. These religious leaders believe political elites are corrupt and decide to wage war against the immorality they established with the federal government of Nigeria to create a pure Islamic state ruled by Sharia law.<sup>355</sup> Thus, economic and religious factors in the environment play causal roles in the inception of the insurgent group. Muhammed Yusuf, the leader, capitalized on the political climate in northeastern Nigeria to create the organization to raise awareness of the plight of the people. The group's teachings were centered on Salafi Sunni Islam and rejected Western culture, influence, and Christianity, as well as a moderate form of Islam. Although Boko Haram criticized Western cultural influences, the group does not oppose Western technology. The group wanted to diminish poverty and promote economic development caused by poor governance by the federal and state governments' economic and political marginalization of the region.<sup>356</sup>

Furthermore, the extant qualitative literature on instability in Nigeria has identified the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) as another driver causing instability in Nigeria. Although the disparity favors the southern region, there was poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment in the oil-rich Niger Delta region. Oil production causes pollution and environmental degradation, destroying fishing and agricultural industries and creating a significantly impoverished population. The federal government and the corrupt patronage system use the oil revenue, and the region benefits little from the oil proceeds. Successive governments failed to implement the Raisman Commission Report of 1958, which states that fifty percent of

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<sup>355</sup> Hannibal Goitom (2014). Nigeria: Boko Haram, Report for the US Department of Justice

<sup>356</sup> Ibid



the oil revenue must be allocated to the Niger Delta, twenty percent to the federal government, and thirty percent should be distributed among other states based on population.<sup>357</sup> The unequal distribution of oil wealth and the environmental and economic destruction caused by foreign oil companies contributed to widespread protests and violent actions in the 1990s by the militant groups that emerged in the region, resulting in destabilizing oil and gas facilities and the kidnapping of foreign oil workers.<sup>358</sup>

Another critical driver identified in the existing literature on Nigeria's political instability is the ethnoreligious conflict between the Muslim-Fulani herders and Christian farmers in the central Middle Belt of Nigeria. The north-south binary ignores the Middle Belt, where Fulani herders, who are primarily Muslim, and farmers of diverse ethnicities, who are Christians, coexisted peacefully in the past. However, drought and desertification caused by climate change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have led to violent water and grazing land clashes. The Fulani are nomadic pastoralists based in northern Nigeria, and desertification has forced them to move southwards in search of water and grazing pastures. The Christian farmers view Fulani herders as a threat to their agricultural lands, which creates ethnoreligious conflicts between the groups.<sup>359</sup> In addition, the violent clashes between the groups have increased in recent times due to the failure of the Nigerian security forces to protect the farmers against constant violence from the Fulani herders. As a result, both groups have formed militia groups to protect each other. Bandits protect the Fulani herders,

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<sup>357</sup> Raj Grundlingh and TS Abejide (2013). The Politics of Resource Control in Nigeria: Example of Niger Delta Region, 1990s-2010, Kuwait Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review, Vol. 3, No. 2

<sup>358</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War: Sovereignty, Responsibility, and the War on Terror, Ohio University Press

<sup>359</sup> Ibid

while vigilante groups support Christian farmers. These groups have increased in the Middle Belt of Nigeria, which has contributed to ethnoreligious conflicts in the region.<sup>360</sup>

On the other hand, the existing qualitative academic literature on Nigeria's instability has also pointed to the emergence of separatist movements in southeast Nigeria in 2020 as another significant driver causing political violence and the fear of a return to large-scale ethnic conflict in the region. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) aims to restore the would-be breakaway state of Biafra, which led to the three-year civil war during the post-independence. The Igbos, the third-largest ethnic group in Nigeria, believe the federal government of Nigeria has marginalized them by refusing to address their historical grievances, such as disputes between Muslim herders and Christian farmers, which resulted in several ethnoreligious conflicts. The violence escalated in 2020 when the Nigerian security forces raided meetings conducted by IPOB members, and the government's action forced the members to launch its armed wing, the Eastern Security Network (ESN).

In conclusion, political instability is a common feature in Nigerian politics that can be traced to several factors, such as the integration of Nigeria by the colonial powers, Boko Haram, ISWAP, MEND, Fulani herders, Christian farmers, and IPOB. The primary root causes of these non-state armed groups' grievances are economics, ethnicity, and religion. Nigerian political elites promote political instability, especially during national, state, and regional elections with religion and ethnicity. The federal government of Nigeria must address the root causes of the causal drivers of the non-state armed groups, most especially Boko Haram and MEND. The economic marginalization and sociopolitical exclusion of northern Nigeria and environmental degradation

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<sup>360</sup> Andrew McGregor (2017). *The Fulani Crisis: Communal Violence and Radicalization in the Sahel*, Vol. 10, Issue 2

historical grievances of Boko Haram and MEND should be addressed to pave the way for economic growth, development, peace, and stability in the sub-region.

## US FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD NIGERIA

The US and Nigeria established diplomatic relations immediately after independence. However, the relationship between the two countries became strained due to a series of military coups and a post-independence civil war. Meanwhile, economic relations were unaffected since US multinational Corporations started oil production in 1964.<sup>361</sup> During the periods of military and civilian rule, successive governments committed gross human rights abuses, which led to the suspension of security assistance. However, US-Nigeria relations improved after the country transitioned to a civilian government. Since transitioning to a democratic regime, both nations have enhanced their security cooperation on salient issues of mutual interest to strengthen their ties, primarily on regional security and peacekeeping. The US and Nigeria are trade partners, and the US total foreign direct investment was 5.5 billion dollars in 2019, concentrated primarily in the petroleum and wholesale sectors.<sup>362</sup> Trade between the two nations in 2022 totaled over 8.1 billion, and Nigeria became the US second largest export destination in sub-Saharan Africa. Also, the US has developed several non-military programs, from which Nigeria has benefited to ensure stability on the continent. Some of these programs include the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), the Global Health Initiative (GHI) and the Feed the Future Initiatives (FFI).<sup>363</sup> Similarly, the US established the US-Nigeria Council on Trade and Investment, the Binational

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<sup>361</sup> Kairn A. Klieman (2012). US Oil Companies, the Nigerian Civil War, and the Origins of Opacity in the Nigerian Oil Industry, *Journal of American History*, Oxford Academic

<sup>362</sup> Tomas Husted & Lauren Ploch Blanchard (2020). Nigeria: Current Issues and US Policy, Congressional Research Service

<sup>363</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2014). Africa and the War on Terror

Commission (BNC), and the US-Nigeria Commercial and Investment Dialogue (CID). Nigeria has become a US strategic partner for energy security and imports over 5.5 billion dollars of US products annually.<sup>364</sup>

#### US SECURITY AND COUNTERTERRORISM POLICY IN NIGERIA

Foreign military assistance has become a US foreign policy instrument for a sphere of influence since the Cold War, especially in Africa. However, the policy has been improved to help nations build their national security to prevent 21st-century transnational threats, particularly from non-state actors. The Nigerian government supported the US global war on terror policy after the 9/11 attacks. Nigeria has become Africa's second-largest recipient of US military assistance after Egypt. The US military assistance to Nigeria strengthens peacekeeping, maritime, and border security, combats transnational crime, and supports civilian law enforcement and counterterrorism operations. Nigeria uses security assistance from the US to counter threats posed by extremist organizations and also aims to professionalize Nigerian armed forces and police through training and equipment.

The US military assistance to Nigeria also helped promote liberal norms and values, such as respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law, and civilian control over the armed forces. Nigeria has benefitted from the African Contingency Operations and Training Assistance (ACOTA) program, which was established to train and equip African militaries deployed for peacekeeping in conflict regions.<sup>365</sup> On the other hand, the US provides counterterrorism assistance to Nigeria through the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP)—the

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<sup>364</sup> Victor Chidubem Iwuoha (2019). United States Security Governance in Nigeria: Implications on Counterterrorism Strategies Against Boko Haram, *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 8, 1175-1194

<sup>365</sup> Halley Clotey (2023). US-Nigeria Relations, Harvard Model Congress

inter-agency work to eliminate violent extremist organizations in Nigeria and other West African countries. The TSCTP consists of ten countries from West and North Africa, and the US also provides training and equipment to Nigerian security forces and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in the Lake Chad Basin, including Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria to counter and defeat Boko Haram and ISWAP in the region. In addition, the US and Nigeria's counterterrorism operations are meant to defeat violent extremist groups operating primarily in northeastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad area.<sup>366</sup> The US engages with Nigeria through bilateral, regional, and multinational organizations like ECOWAS, MNJTF, the Global Coalition, and the African Union to defeat Boko Haram and ISIS-affiliated groups. More importantly, security cooperation between the two nations focuses on maritime and border security, military professionalism, counterterrorism operations, defense trade, and strengthening security sector governance. Nigeria participated in several bilateral and multilateral military exercises with the US, including African Lion, Flintlock, and Obangame Express, to tackle violent extremist organizations. The government of Nigeria purchases US military equipment and training of the security forces through Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and buys or gets free military equipment through Excess Defense Articles (EDA) where unwanted military defense equipment is offered to countries at a reduced cost.

## MILITARY ASSISTANCE

Since the end of World War II, the US has spent over 3.75 trillion dollars in foreign aid to foreign nations in the global system.<sup>367</sup> US foreign aid varies due to geographical, economic, and

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<sup>366</sup> US Security Partnerships and the Protection of Civilians (2022). The Case of Nigeria and the Nigerian Armed Forces (NAFs), A Collaboration Between Brown University, Security Assistance Monitor, and InterAction

<sup>367</sup> USAID

national interests. Between 1946 and 2021, the US spent 49.9 billion each year on foreign aid. Foreign aid is money that one country voluntarily transfers to another, such as a gift, grant, or loan. US foreign aid is divided into economic, military, and humanitarian emergencies. In addition, foreign aid has become a US foreign policy instrument because of the success of the Marshall Plan, which provided economic assistance to restore the infrastructure of post-war Europe.<sup>368</sup> On the other hand, US foreign aid is based on national security, commercial and humanitarian interests. Foreign aid programs started to decline after the collapse of the Cold War. However, the rise in US military assistance globally was influenced by the geopolitical outlook of the US government shaped by the events of the 9/11 attacks.<sup>369</sup> The US provides foreign aid to promote stability, national security interests, and humanitarian needs, strengthen democratic institutions and cooperation, and improve healthcare.

After the emergence of the US unipolar moment due to the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the primary objective of US foreign policy is to maintain close relationships with allies and partners in the global system. To achieve this goal, the US has funded programs and projects that include arms transfer, training and education, joint exercises, and deploying US military personnel overseas. The program was extended after the 9/11 attacks with the critical purpose of protecting the US security interest through counterterrorism operations, preventing rogue states from gaining strategic areas of economic interests, particularly access to natural resources, open markets, and trade routes, counternarcotics and international organized crimes, support post-conflict rebuilding, professionalizing security forces, improve human rights, democratic institutions, and civilian

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<sup>368</sup> Ibid

<sup>369</sup> Oeindrila Dube & Suresh Naidu (2014). Bases, Bullets and Ballots: Effects of US Military Aid on Political Conflict, NBER Working Paper 20213

control over the armed.<sup>370</sup> Moreover, military assistance decreased in the 1990s, but the international Military Education and Training grew from 97 percent in 1993 to 122 percent in 2002. In addition, much of the security assistance the US provides developing nations is centered on peacekeeping, border security, and professionalism, which are the primary rationales for providing arms and training to strategic countries. Military assistance is given to countries cooperating in the global war on terror to pursue al-Qaeda organizations. The IMET program teaches military trainees and civilian officials about Western concepts of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and free markets to expose African militaries to Western standards and doctrine. Countries cooperating with the US during the war on terror received weapons and equipment, especially mobility and communications equipment, training in counterterrorism techniques, and border control, which the US Special Operations Forces offer.<sup>371</sup>

Between 2002 and 2019, the US spent almost 300 billion on security assistance and trained at least one million foreign military personnel. According to the Security Assistance Monitor, the US funding for training and equipping programs increased by more than three hundred thousand percent after the attacks. The US spent 4.8 billion in military aid in sub-Saharan Africa between 2015 and 2020. The goal of the security assistance is to reduce the threat posed by violent extremist non-state actors.<sup>372</sup> Lethal military aid, such as weapon systems, ammunition, combat training, and combat assistance, significantly affect the use of force against civilians more than non-lethal security assistance. As a result, lethal security assistance has a more significant impact on state violence than non-lethal, affecting human rights and the rule of law. Thus, an increase in lethal aid

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<sup>370</sup> Adam Isacson & Nicole Ball (2006). *US Military and Police Assistance to Poorly Performing States*, Center for Global Development

<sup>371</sup> Ibid

<sup>372</sup> Patricia Sullivan (2023). *Do No Harm: US Aid to Africa and Civilian Security*

raises the risk of civilian harm at the hands of state security forces, while non-lethal security assistance discourages extrajudicial killing in a state. Against this backdrop, US lethal military assistance, especially in Africa, must be given to countries with effective legislative and judicial institutions to avoid human rights violations. Non-lethal assistance must be encouraged, such as professional military education, security sector reform, and defense institution building. The US must consider the recipient countries' institutional systems and the nature of the security forces should determine the type of military assistance the country should receive to decrease the risk of human rights abuses.<sup>373</sup>

Military assistance is foreign aid for programs primarily for the benefit of recipient government armed forces or aid that subsidizes or enhances military capability. It excludes humanitarian and non-military development programs funded by the Department of Defense. The US provides military assistance to poor countries in maintaining control over their territories to fight terrorism, counterinsurgency, and drug trafficking. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, increasing numbers of scholars have viewed military assistance as an instrument of power projection for influence in the era of great power competition.<sup>374</sup>

## CAUSAL LOGIC OR ARGUMENTS

### What Explains the Fluctuations or Variations in US Military Assistance to Nigeria?

This case study section explains the events that led to fluctuations in US military assistance to Nigeria and investigates the events that have led to fluctuations and changes in US military personnel training for Nigeria's security forces. The case study will use qualitative evidence from the extant literature to explain fluctuations in both independent variables. Why does fluctuation in

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<sup>373</sup> Ibid

<sup>374</sup> USAID Green Book (2020). US Overseas Loans and Grants



the US security assistance to Nigeria matter? Fluctuation in the case study refers to the periods when US security assistance increased and decreased or periods of ups and downs in the military aid to Nigeria. The case study will provide evidence from the literature to support the ups and downs of military assistance to Nigeria. US security assistance to Nigeria fluctuated between 1995 and 2020, and the reasons for the fluctuations should interest scholars and students of international relations, political science, and history, Nigerian scholars of international relations, and the general public in the global system. Statistical data from USAID shows that the US did not provide Nigeria with military aid between 1995 and 1998. The qualitative evidence has indicated that the US failure to supply Nigeria with security assistance was due to frequent military interventions in politics and gross human rights violations perpetrated against innocent Nigerian populations. Military interventions in Nigerian politics became incessant after independence from the colonial masters, and human rights abuses were pervasive. As a result, Nigeria became a pariah state in the 1990s during Abacha's regime when the government committed unprecedented human rights violations, especially the execution of the environmentalists Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight members of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) in the Niger Delta region. Against this backdrop, the international community, in solidarity with the Nigerian population, including the US, imposed political, diplomatic, economic, and military sanctions on Nigeria. These sanctions against Nigeria were lifted after the death of Abacha when the country transitioned to a civilian government.<sup>375</sup> Similarly, the Leahy law also prohibits the US from providing military assistance to a foreign nation whose armed forces are implicated in human rights violations.<sup>376</sup> The US

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<sup>375</sup> Clay Arnold, Department of Government, Public Service, and International Studies, University of Central Arkansas

<sup>376</sup> Lauren Ploch Blanchard (2023). Nigeria: Overview and US Foreign Policy, Congressional Research Service

provides military aid to foreign countries to promote global stability, advance national interests, address humanitarian needs, foster diplomatic cooperation, and strengthen democratic institutions. The US has taken these measures against Nigeria to promote stability. These were significant reasons US security assistance decreased, and Nigeria recorded zero military aid in those years.

On the other hand, the qualitative evidence in the literature demonstrated that after the US replaced the Pan-Sahel Initiative (PSI), a counterterrorism program for the four Sahelian countries Chad, Niger, Mauritania, and Mali, with the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), the membership was increased to ten countries from West and North Africa, including Nigeria to prevent terrorist groups in the region. The expansion of the TSCTP counterterrorism program affected Nigerian military assistance when the number of countries increased from four to ten. In addition, the US had to provide military aid to all the member countries, which led to the reduction. Another primary reason that has led to the decrease in security assistance to Nigeria was the death of the Boko Haram leader Yusuf Muhammed by the Nigerian security forces. The death affected the potency and resiliency of the organization in the northeastern region. During this period, the Nigerian armed forces, police, and the Nigerian government declared victory over Boko Haram, and several leading figures and members were arrested.<sup>377</sup> A significant number of those arrested were sent to prison, which reduced the Salafi Jihadist attacks on innocent civilians. Due to the above qualitative evidence from the existing literature, the US reduced security assistance to Nigeria. In short, the US military aid to Nigeria was decreased due to human rights violations, the prohibition of Leahy law, the expansion of counterterrorism operations, and the Nigerian government and security forces' declaration of victory over Boko Haram.

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<sup>377</sup> Saskias Brechemacher (2019). Stabilizing Northeast Nigeria After Boko Haram, Working Paper, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Meanwhile, qualitative literature evidence has demonstrated that after Nigeria returned to multiparty democracy, ethnic violence affected the country's northeastern region in 2000 due to the introduction of Sharia law in nineteen states. The ethnoreligious conflict ensued between the Muslims and Christians living in the northern parts of Nigeria. The President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, intervened in the ethnoreligious violence and pleaded with the governors of the north to reconsider their decision on the Sharia law to restore peace and stability. During this period, the US has increased military assistance to the Nigerian government to maintain law and order and protect the country's infant democracy against military intervention. The introduction of Sharia law, which led to the ethnoreligious conflict in the north, has affected the nation's nascent democratic institutions, especially in the northern parts of Nigeria.<sup>378</sup> During the early years of the Nigerian democratic government and the ethnoreligious conflict in the north, the US provided significant security assistance to Nigeria, which has militarized Obasanjo's government, and his leadership style failed to strengthen civil democratic tenets that would guarantee democratic consolidation in Nigeria.<sup>379</sup>

On the other hand, the qualitative evidence has also explained the fluctuations in the US military assistance to Nigeria in terms of environmental and political violence taking place in the same period in the oil-rich Niger Delta region. Several militant groups emerged in the area to demand self-government because of the Nigerian government's mismanagement and corruption of the oil revenue, which plunged the communities into poverty, underdevelopment, and environmental degradation. In addition, the armed groups in the area also called for the independence of the region due to the federal government of Nigeria's economic marginalization

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<sup>378</sup> Philip Aka (2002). *The Dividend of Democracy: Analyzing US support for Nigerian Democratization*, Third World Law Journal, Vol. 22, No. 2, 225-280

<sup>379</sup> Ibid

and socio-political exclusion from the oil and gas revenue.<sup>380</sup> The armed groups in the Niger Delta region, mainly MEND, attacked oil installations, assets of multinational corporations, and the Nigerian government and kidnapped foreign workers for ransom in the area. During this period, the US increased Nigeria's security assistance to counter the militant groups in the region and protect US economic interests.

More importantly, after 9/11, the US policymakers believed terrorism was associated with failed, weak, and failing states in regions with poverty, underdevelopment, and ungoverned spaces, which have become fertile grounds for Islamic militant groups and the introduction of the global war on terror. The government of Nigeria supported the global war on terror policy, and the US increased security assistance to Nigeria during the period. The infant democracy was facing severe challenges in 2001, primarily ethnoreligious conflict in the northeastern region, and insurgent groups in the Niger Delta region forced the US to increase military aid to Nigeria to maintain law and order and also to protect its economic interests in the area.<sup>381</sup> The US imports a significant quantity of crude oil from Nigeria and needs stability in the Niger Delta region for a constant oil flow without interruption.<sup>382</sup>

Meanwhile, Boko Haram re-emerged in 2010 under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau to challenge the Nigerian government and local political elites for control over northeastern Nigeria. The insurgent group's discourse has evolved, and its teachings were centered on violence and

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<sup>380</sup> Mustapha Kulungu (2021). Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) Constitutes a Threat to the US National Security, Open Access Library Journal, Vol. 8, ISSN Online: 2333-9721

<sup>381</sup> Daniel Tonwe, Godwin Uyi Ojo, and Iro Aghedo (2011). Greed and Grievances: The Changing Contours of Environmentalism in Nigeria's Niger Delta Region, Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol. 20, 45-66

<sup>382</sup> Nicholas Van De Walle (2009). US Policy towards Africa: The Bush Legacy and Obama Administration, Journal of African Affairs, Vol. 109, No. 434, 1-21

killings. Boko Haram has vowed to avenge the death of the founder, who was killed in police custody and started to attack the security forces, especially in northeastern Nigeria. The terrorist organization assassinated several politicians in the north, leading to the 2011 national elections. The group opposed Western culture, the system of government, and the candidacy of Jonathan Goodluck, a southern Christian, and planned to disrupt the polls. Against this backdrop, the US increased military assistance for Nigeria to help protect the upcoming presidential and legislative election against Boko Haram's disruption.

Furthermore, Boko Haram intensified its attacks against the civilian populations after the national elections. The terrorist group has increased its violence and attacked the United Nations building in Abuja and the National Police Force headquarters. Boko Haram's terrorist attacks expanded to the oil-rich Niger Delta region. The sect has increased its attacks and kidnapping spree in several areas in northeastern Nigeria. In addition, Boko Haram has become a transnational terrorist organization and declared its allegiance to several foreign terrorist groups, primarily Islamic State (ISIS), al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al-Shabaab, and senior al-Qaeda members in Pakistan.<sup>383</sup> After the Islamic Jihadist declaration of allegiance to foreign terrorist groups, the African Union authorized the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), supported by the US, to fight the contested territories under Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) control in the Lake Chad Basin, including Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. Boko Haram attacks and atrocities increased when it abducted 276 Chibok schoolgirls in 2014. The US security assistance to Nigeria increased significantly to counter and defeat Boko Haram. In addition, the US deployed military

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<sup>383</sup> Odoh Samuel (2015). *Fostering Nigeria-US Relations and Partnership in Tackling Terrorism and Global Insecurity*, International Affairs and Global Strategy, Vol. 3

advisors, light aircraft, eighteen member groups, eighty Special Operations Forces (SOFs), reconnaissance aircraft, and unmanned surveillance drones to help the Nigerian government and armed forces liberate the kidnapped schoolgirls.<sup>384</sup>

Additionally, the US military assistance continued to increase because of the violence created by Boko Haram and the ISWAP in the Lake Chad Basin and northeastern Nigeria. ISWAP also abducted 110 girls from Dapchi in 2018 and expanded its territories in the neighboring countries.<sup>385</sup> The US increased military assistance to Nigeria to defeat insurgent groups in northeastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin and minimize humanitarian emergencies. In sum, the US increased military aid to Nigeria to control ethnoreligious conflict, violence in the Niger Delta region, the global war on terror, Boko Haram's terrorist attacks, the abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls, the abduction of Dapchi girls, national elections, and Boko Haram's declaration of allegiance to foreign terrorist organizations. In conclusion, the fluctuations in US security assistance to Nigeria were based on qualitative evidence demonstrating increases and decreases in the case study.

#### To What Extent Does US Military Assistance Affect Political Instability in Nigeria?

This case study segment offers a roadmap to explain how US military assistance to Nigeria contributes to political instability. While US foreign policy contributions to political unrest in Nigeria are complex and nuanced, empirical evidence has indicated that US military assistance and training of Nigerian armed forces have contributed to political instability. As shown by the existing qualitative literature, political instability in Nigeria has been influenced by internal and external factors. The US has significantly shaped Nigeria's political and economic landscape since

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<sup>384</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). *Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War: Sovereignty, Responsibility, and the War on Terror*, Ohio University Press

<sup>385</sup> Tomas Husted (2022). *Nigeria: Key Issues and US Policy*, Congressional Research Service

the Cold War. During the Cold War, the US engaged in geopolitical interventions to advance its strategic interests, supporting the opposition's political actors in other countries, including Nigeria. In addition, the US has no solid and coherent policy toward Nigeria. Instead, the policies are designed for Africa, promoting democracy, human rights, economic reform, and conflict resolution.<sup>386</sup> Historically, the US provided military assistance to various Nigerian governments, and these interventions could have had unintended consequences for political stability. In addition, colonial political and economic practices, Cold War alliances, and the global war on terror after the 9/11 attacks could contribute to political instability in Nigeria. After the collapse of the Cold War, the US was one of the great powers that championed decolonization primarily to promote democracy and self-determination.<sup>387</sup> The global war on terror has boosted the US foreign military presence and increased support for both democratic and repressive regimes, including Nigeria. The US increased its footprint in Nigeria through military assistance, which some regimes used to abuse the civilian population, and increased local support for violent opposition groups.

Furthermore, security assistance, which is meant to promote peace and stability in Nigeria, was used by some regimes to suppress internal dissent, and these policies undermined the purported goals of military aid. This led to political unrest, and violent extremist organizations seized the opportunity to promote their local grievances and gain a foothold in new territories. Nigeria's support of the global war on terror has contributed to an increase in security assistance and security cooperation through counterterrorism operations against Salafi jihadist organizations.<sup>388</sup>

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<sup>386</sup> Elizabeth Normandy (1997). US-Nigeria Relations in Historical Perspective, *Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 25, No. 1

<sup>387</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2014). *Africa and the War on Terror*

<sup>388</sup> Ibid

Moreover, post-9/11 has compelled the US to reassess its African policy and focus on three critical areas. The US paid more attention to underdevelopment, and states with weak political institutions were viewed as breeding grounds for political extremism/terrorism. In addition, the US strengthened its military alliance with states that supported the global war on terror through the setting up of military bases, funds, training, and an increase in military equipment, including Nigeria. Similarly, the US securitized African policy privileged military security over human security that focused on poverty, disease, climate change, and governance. The failed, weak states and ungoverned areas have been securitized as a sanctuary for terrorism, and Africa's poverty and underdevelopment have been shifted from development and humanitarianism categories to threat/security.<sup>389</sup> The US Department of Defense has taken control of humanitarian and development programs and replaced the civilian institutions/agencies. On the other hand, Nigeria has been securitized heavily after 9/11 because of poverty and a sizeable Muslim population. In addition, the US also focused on countries that are rich in oil and natural gas and strategic to the war on terror, and Nigeria was no exception. Nigeria's military assistance and training of the Nigerian forces increased, which led to domestic repression and intensified local grievances. Islamic jihadist groups emerged in several countries during the Iraq war in 2003 against the US misconception of Islam.<sup>390</sup> Boko Haram was established around the same period. For example, Nigeria's support for the US global war on terror led to a series of anti-American protests, according to Edward R. Royce, the Chairman of the sub-committee on Africa.<sup>391</sup> Why does US

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<sup>389</sup> Rita Abrahamsen (2005). *Blair's Africa: The Politics of Securitization and Fear*, *Alternative*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 55-80

<sup>390</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). *Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War: Sovereignty, Responsibility, and the War on Terror*, Ohio University Press

<sup>391</sup> The US House Subcommittee on Africa (2001). *Africa and the Global War on Terror*



security assistance affect Nigeria's instability matter? The case study will use qualitative evidence from the academic literature to answer the causal or empirical question.

The case study critically analyzed speeches from Boko Haram's founder, Yusuf Muhammed, and its new leader, Abubakar Shekau. The speeches have indicated their resentment against the US global war on terror policy and US military aid to the Nigerian government. However, the qualitative literature did not provide a definitive link between their speeches and Boko Haram terrorist attacks.<sup>392</sup> On the other hand, the qualitative literature lacks primary evidence to demonstrate a robust causal link between US foreign policy militarization and political instability in Nigeria in the case study.

Moreover, secondary source evidence from scholars, academic researchers, human rights organizations, political analysts, journalists, and global governance institutions has argued that US military assistance, such as sales of military equipment, weapons, arms, helicopters, logistics, funds for counterterrorism operations, warplanes, training, and equipment programs, contributes significantly to political instability in Nigeria. The case study aims to investigate critically the effects of US military equipment and those purchased by the Nigerian government through Foreign Military Sales for the armed forces and their impact on political instability.

In addition, the US supplies Nigeria with over 650 million dollars in military assistance annually and 3 billion in security assistance grants between 2010 and 2015. Similarly, the US donated a warship and other military equipment worth over 11 billion to Nigeria in 2016.<sup>393</sup> Security cooperation between the US and Nigeria has helped Nigeria purchase military equipment

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<sup>392</sup> Elodie Aparé (2015). *The Words of Boko Haram, Understanding Speeches by Muhammed Yusuf and Abubakar Shekau*, *African Contemporaine*, Vol. 255, 41-69

<sup>393</sup> Onyinye Chukwujekwu & Izuchukwu Ukoh (2023). *An Appraisal of US Military Aid and Security Education in Nigeria*

through Foreign Military Sales in 2017 at 593 million dollars, including 12 A29 Super Tucano, light attack aircraft, and weapons. Also, in 2022, the US sold 12 AH1Z Cobra attack helicopters and other systems for 997 million dollars.<sup>394</sup> Other purchases include munitions and rocket propellants, unmanned aircraft, drones, targeting systems, bomb equipment, and surveillance systems. Several Congress members expressed dissatisfaction with US security cooperation and the sale of military equipment to Nigeria's federal government. Nigerian armed forces used this equipment to commit a series of human rights violations against Nigerian civilians. Against this backdrop, human rights and civil society organizations criticized the US for contributing to Nigeria's political instability. The groups argue that despite human rights abuses by the Nigerian military, the US continues to supply military assistance and sales of military equipment to the Nigerian government. For instance, the security forces use these weapons and equipment against citizens, especially during anti-government demonstrations or protests. As a result, several human rights groups, civil society organizations, political analysts, scholars, and journalists accused the US of contributing directly or indirectly to political violence and conflicts in Nigeria. Recently, the Nigerian armed forces used US aircraft to kill one hundred and sixty innocent civilians in an internally displaced camp in 2017. According to Brown University's Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Studies, the Security Assistance Monitor (SAM) at the Center for International Policy and InterAction accused the Nigerian armed forces of committing human rights abuses with US military aid.<sup>395</sup> Despite Leahy law prohibiting the US from providing or selling military assistance to a foreign military implicated in human rights violations, US military assistance continues to be delivered to the federal government of Nigeria. Furthermore, despite the forces'

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<sup>394</sup> Lauren Ploch Blanchard (2023). Nigeria: Overview and US Foreign Policy, Congressional Research Service

<sup>395</sup> Nick Turse (2022). New Report: Decades of US Military Aid Has Been a Disaster for Nigeria

violations of international humanitarian law, corruption, and absence of accountability for civilian abuses, US weapons and arms continued to flow to Nigeria, and research has indicated that 2020 saw the highest influx of direct commercial weapons sales to Nigeria.

Historically, the US has been a supplier of arms and military assistance to Nigeria. At the same time, this support has been aimed at addressing security concerns; the Nigerian military has a long history of abusing civilians. The US arms sales and military aid contribute to political instability and exacerbate internal conflicts or repression in Nigeria. Military assistance the US provides to the federal government of Nigeria lacks adequate oversight and mechanisms for accountability and transparency, which allows the Nigerian armed forces to commit human rights violations with impunity. In addition, the US military assistance to Nigeria failed to address the root causes of conflict because it lacked a comprehensive strategy that included diplomatic and governance components. While military aid can play a role in addressing security challenges, security assistance must be part of a comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying causes of instability.

Additionally, the qualitative evidence from existing literature has shown that the US training and equipment programs for Nigerian armed forces have contributed to political instability. The extant literature has indicated that the US military personnel trained over 41,000 Nigerian armed forces between 2000 and 2020. A significant number of this training involved peacekeeping operations and an education program involving the International Military Education and Training (IMET). Training Nigeria's security forces primarily aim to improve the forces' professionalism and promote liberal norms and values such as democracy, respect for human rights, and civilian control of the armed forces. However, the Nigerian armed forces failed to internalize liberal norms. Instead, they used the new skills acquired through training and equipment

programs to commit human rights violations against innocent citizens. However, the US has requested the Nigerian government to hold the armed forces accountable for human rights abuses, which some scholars have viewed as a US double standard because the arms, weapons, and new technical and marksmanship skills were acquired through US training and equipment programs which the security forces used to commit human rights abuses.<sup>396</sup>

Nigerian security forces received counterinsurgency and counterterrorism training to defeat violent extremist groups in northeastern and southern Nigeria through the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) program. As US support for the TSCTP and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in the Lake Chad Basin increased, Boko Haram and ISWAP, also expanded their attacks against civilians in the region creating a humanitarian emergency, and millions of people were internally displaced. As a result, the US counterterrorism operations in the area have intensified the conflict, which involved the US participating in Nigeria's political violence. On the other hand, Nigerian armed forces used counterterrorism operations skills to commit gross human rights abuses against civilian populations. For example, security forces engaged in torture, unlawful and arbitrary killings, forced disappearance, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, and detention. Human rights organizations and civil society groups continued to express concerns about US security cooperation with Nigeria, mainly through the sales of military equipment that the forces use to commit abuses. Thus, the US training and equipment programs have contributed to the Nigerian security abuses against innocent civilians. Although military assistance and training and equipment programs aim to transform Nigeria's

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<sup>396</sup> Onyinye Chukwujekwu & Izuchukwu Ukoh (2023). An Appraisal of US Military Aid and Security Education in Nigeria

armed forces into professionals to fight terrorism, insurgency, maritime piracy, and transnational crime, the troops used the newly acquired skills to abuse civilians.<sup>397</sup>

On the other hand, the deployment of the US Navy to patrol and protect America's economic interests in the Gulf of Guinea has led to an increase in violence between the Nigerian armed forces and the armed insurgent groups in the region, especially the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) which attack the assets of both federal government of Nigeria and the US multinational corporations and the Nigerian armed forces in the region. The region has been plagued with security crises, such as the kidnapping of foreign workers and Nigerian citizens working for corporations and the federal government for ransom, suicide attacks, drug and human trafficking, and sea robbery. The militant groups in the region increased their attacks because of the presence of the US Navy deployed in the area, Nigerian armed forces, and US multinational corporations.<sup>398</sup>

In conclusion, the evidence and the findings from the primary and secondary qualitative literature have not shown any solid causal relationship between the explanatory and the response variables. The causal factors include US military assistance, training of Nigerian security forces, and evidence from the literature including human rights abuses, US military equipment and weapons, speeches by Muhammed Yusuf and Abubakar Shekau, the Global War on Terror policy, US Congress members, support of both autocratic and democratic and the presence of US Navy in the Gulf of Guinea.

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<sup>397</sup> Saskia Brechenmacher (2019). Stabilizing Northeast Nigeria After Boko Haram, Working Paper, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

<sup>398</sup> Mustapha Kulungu (2021). Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) Constitutes a Threat to the US National Security, Open Access Library Journal, Vol. 8, ISSN Online: 2333-9721

## How did US Military Assistance Affect Human Rights in Nigeria?

Nigeria's military has a long history of abusing civilians, but Washington wants to assist in restructuring the force and restoring its prestige.<sup>399</sup> The qualitative literature on US military assistance and the Nigerian armed forces' human rights abuses has documented extensive violations on the forces since independence from the colonial powers. Nigerian security forces' abuses of the civilian populations have received much attention in the scholarly literature, especially after the 9/11 attacks and during the US global war on terror. Why was US security assistance's effect on human rights in Nigeria important? Scholars, international law organizations, human rights organizations, global governance institutions, political analysts, civil society organizations, advocacy groups, and journalists worldwide are concerned about human rights violations in Nigeria and have become interested in understanding the effects of US military assistance to the Nigerian government and its contribution to human rights abuses in Nigeria. In other words, US military aid to the Nigerian military and police bodies that abuse human rights has been a source of much contention in recent times. Several critics question US engagement or security assistance to Nigeria with a force that has a long history of abusing civilian populations. The US has invested significantly in security cooperation with Nigeria over two decades ago, supplying warplanes, weapons, training, and equipment to support counterterrorism operations and foster professionalism among Nigerian armed forces to fight non-state armed groups, especially Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). According to a report from Brown University's Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Studies (CHRRHS), the Security Assistance Monitor (SAM) and InterAction have found that despite the substantial military aid provided, the Nigerian armed forces failed to defeat the terrorist groups, instead committed grave

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<sup>399</sup> Douglas Farah (2000). *US To Help Nigeria Revamp Its Armed Forces*

human rights abuses in the name of counterterrorism without consequence from the US. The Nigerian armed forces often used security assistance to abuse civilians instead of protecting them.<sup>400</sup> In addition, the US has revamped and mentored the Nigerian army since the country transitioned to constitutional rule. However, the security forces continued to be implicated in gross human rights violations and crimes under international law, including extrajudicial executions and incommunicado detentions. According to Brown University, between 2000 and 2022, the US facilitated more than two billion in security assistance, notably weapons and military equipment sales, and has conducted over forty-one thousand training courses for Nigerian military personnel to support counterterrorism efforts to defeat Salafi jihadist terrorist organizations and also promote cooperation on maritime and border security to strengthening military professionalism. Despite these programs and activities, Nigerian armed forces continued to use US military equipment to commit human rights violations against civilians.<sup>401</sup>

According to Amnesty International, between 2011 and 2021, ten thousand Nigerian civilians died in Nigerian military custody after being detained for crimes related to Boko Haram atrocities. In August 2021, according to Amnesty International, hundred fifteen people were killed by Nigerian military personnel in the southeastern part of Nigeria. Human rights abuses increased during the first state of emergency declared against Boko Haram in 2011 in northern Nigeria. The armed forces have been given discretionary powers to detain and arrest suspects. During this period, the security forces committed a series of human rights violations against both civilians and Boko Haram suspects in detention. The second state of emergency was declared again in 2013 by President Jonathan, and Nigerian armed forces have been given discretionary powers. The military

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<sup>400</sup> Nick Turse (2022). New Report: Decades of US Military Aid Has Been A Disaster for Nigeria

<sup>401</sup> Ibid

personnel used the powers to abuse citizens, especially Boko Haram suspects, wives, and children. The military has the power to search and detain, and Nigerian citizens' constitutional rights and freedoms were removed. Despite the abuses, the US military assistance continued to flow to the Nigerian government. Amnesty International reported that 950 people have died in military detention in 2013.<sup>402</sup>

On the other hand, Lauren Woods, the director of the Security Assistance Monitor, argues that US training of the Nigerian armed forces in civilian protection and human rights issues is not a panacea to solve the abuse problems; instead, security forces that violate human rights must be prosecuted. However, the situation is different in Nigeria because the armed forces embroiled in human rights abuses are left with impunity. In addition, the US State Department's report found credible evidence of unlawful and arbitrary killings, forced disappearances, and degrading treatment committed by the Nigerian government. This has indicated that US training of the Nigerian armed forces program is insufficient to minimize human rights abuses among security forces since the forces failed to internalize liberal norms. The US sold 12 Super Tucano warplanes, bombs, and rockets to the Nigerian government 2017, the largest in US foreign military sales in sub-Saharan Africa. In the same year, the Nigerian armed forces committed heinous crimes with the US military equipment. For example, an airstrike aimed at Boko Haram terrorists killed more than two hundred civilians, and 160 civilians were also killed in a displaced persons camp in Rann, Nigeria. According to the Intercept, a US secret document revealed that the attack was US-Nigeria operations. Similarly, in 2023, Nigerian armed forces conducted an airstrike that killed scores of civilians at a religious festival, and Amnesty International reports that 120 villagers were killed

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<sup>402</sup> Charlotte Rohrer (2019). Effect of Foreign Aid on Political Violence: Case Study of Nigeria and Sierra Leone



when celebrating the birthday of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. The Nigerian government failed to prosecute those involved in these despicable crimes, and the US military aid continued to the Nigerian government.<sup>403</sup> These are typical examples of how the Nigerian armed forces continued to abuse Nigerian citizens with lethal US security assistance.

More importantly, the Nigerian government purchased almost one billion military equipment through foreign military sales from the US in 2021. Congress approved the purchase despite human rights abuses against a civilian population. On the other hand, Congress members Jacobs and Smith called on President Biden to review security assistance and cooperation programs with Nigeria. According to the members of Congress, the US must undertake a risk assessment of the civilian casualties and abuses before the deal. Critics argue that the one billion military equipment the Nigerian government has purchased will worsen civilian harm by the army personnel. Lauren Wood suggests that the US must limit its lethal military assistance to Nigeria since the government has failed to hold the armed forces accountable for human rights abuses. Sara Jacobs told ‘Intercept Paper’ that the US must push the Nigerian government for accountability and justice for civilians who were killed, and the State Department must do more about human rights abuses in Nigeria.<sup>404</sup>

Charles Kwuelum 2022 argues that the US’s arms sales to Nigeria will promote further violence, and armed forces will engage in human rights abuses rather than defeating Boko Haram. According to Kwuelum, despite the twenty-five million dollars earmarked for human rights-related training for the Nigerian armed forces in connection with civilian protection from harm, this cannot solve the problem of abuses because Nigerian government consistently failed to prosecute

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<sup>403</sup> Nick Turse (2024). Blinken Visits Nigeria As Questions Swirl About Civilian Deaths and US Security Ties

<sup>404</sup> Ibid

perpetrators. According to Kwuelum, it has been reported that US-supplied weapons killed nine civilians in Yobe State. Since Nigerian security forces have a long history of abusing civilians, the US must provide non-lethal military assistance to the government to ensure the forces are adequately trained to comply with international human rights and humanitarian standards. In addition, the US-Nigeria security cooperation must address the root causes of violence in Nigerian communities instead of the Nigerian government purchasing large quantities of military equipment that is used to harm civilians. More weapons will not address Nigeria's security crisis, Kwuelum emphasizes.<sup>405</sup>

According to Patricia Sullivan (2023), the US must provide lethal military aid to countries with effective legislative and judicial institutions to avoid human rights violations. In contrast, non-lethal assistance must be encouraged in fragile states, such as professional military education, security sector reform, and defense institution-building. Lethal security assistance raises the risk of extrajudicial killing, while non-lethal aid appears to have a dampening effect. In addition, the US should consider the recipient countries' institutional context, and the state of the security forces should determine the type of military assistance that can decrease the risk to human rights like Nigeria. Military education for officers and defense institution building mitigates potential civilian harm.<sup>406</sup> It is worth noting that the US has helped Nigeria to revamp its military forces after the nation moved to a multiparty democracy and provided significant quantities of security assistance to the government and armed forces still implicated in human rights violations, there is a likelihood that US military equipment has contributed to human rights abuses in Nigeria.

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<sup>405</sup> Charles Kwuelum (2022). *More Weapons Won't Solve Nigeria's Security Crisis*

<sup>406</sup> Patricia Sullivan (2023). *Do No Harm: US Aid to Africa and Civilian Security*

Another critical avenue through which Nigerian security forces used military assistance to commit human rights abuses during anti-government demonstrations. The government of Nigeria authorized the security forces to use military aid to suppress civilians and opposition parties during protests. An increase in security assistance increases repression, which exacerbates human rights abuses. In 2020, in an anti-government demonstration against the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) violence and brutality to the civilian populations, many protesters were killed by the Nigerian security forces. According to Amnesty International, the Nigerian government failed to prosecute the perpetrators, and during pro-Biafra demonstrations, one hundred and fifty protestors were murdered by the security forces. Again, the government has done nothing to investigate the killings and punish those who committed the crime. Despite the continuous human rights abuses by the security forces and massive corruption among senior military officials, the US security assistance continued to flood into Nigeria. Between 2017 and 2022, the Nigerian government spent one billion and five hundred and ninety thousand on US military equipment through foreign military sales. In 2016, some members of Congress expressed their dissatisfaction with human rights abuses by the Nigerian armed forces. Still, the Trump administration argues that fighting terrorism would take precedence over other concerns.<sup>407</sup> This means the administration was aware of the human rights violations committed by the Nigerian military personnel with the US military equipment. Alternatively, the US military aid in Nigeria contributes to corruption because the US does not implement a comprehensive mechanism for accountability and transparency, which allows recipient countries to adopt exclusionary policies. In addition, a high level of military aid

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<sup>407</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). *Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War: Sovereignty, Responsibility, and the War on Terror*, Ohio University Press

can increase the likelihood of the recipient country engaging in human rights abuses, which is familiar to Nigerian armed forces.<sup>408</sup>

Most importantly, scholars, political scientists, policymakers, governments, international relations graduates, history students, political analysts, and journalists expressed deep interest in understanding how US security assistance promotes stability in Nigeria's political system. However, why does US military assistance affect instability in Nigeria matter? In international relations theory, realism emphasizes the importance of power and self-interest in state behavior. From a realist perspective, military aid is often seen as a tool for advancing the strategic interests of the donor state. Therefore, states provide security assistance to allies or partners to strengthen their security and influence in key regions. Realists argue that states are primarily concerned with survival and maximizing their relative power to other states, and military aid serves to achieve these goals.<sup>409</sup> In contrast, liberal theories of international relations focus on institutions, norms, and cooperation among states. As a result, liberals argue that military aid can promote stability, democracy, and human rights worldwide. Against this background, liberals believe military assistance is not solely driven by self-interest but can serve humanitarian and democratic objectives. States may provide military aid to support allies, foster peacekeeping efforts, or promote democratization and development in recipient countries.<sup>410</sup> To understand the two international relations theories and their application to the US provision of military aid to Nigeria, I deem it necessary to understand the primary objective of US military aid to foreign nations in the global system. According to the USAID document, the US provides military aid to advance its

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<sup>408</sup> Mara Karlin (2017). Why US Military Assistance Programs Disappoint, Brookings

<sup>409</sup> Paul D. Williams and Matt McDonald (2018). Security Studies An Introduction, Third Edition, Published by Routledge Taylor & Francis Group

<sup>410</sup> Paul William, Matt McDonald, & Cornelia Navari (2018). Security Studies An Introduction, Third Edition, Published by Routledge Taylor & Francis Group

national security interests, strengthen democratic institutions, foster diplomatic cooperation, and address humanitarian needs, economic development, and global stability. The qualitative literature on the effect of US military aid on Nigeria provides much evidence of US policy engaging in instability. However, the evidence has also indicated that US foreign policy toward Nigeria does promote stability in the region. This evidence can be deduced from why US military assistance and instability fluctuate in Nigeria. Evidence has shown that military aid and US training of Nigeria's security forces have contributed to human rights violations. However, the extant literature demonstrates that the US often takes measures against the Nigerian government to reduce the abuses through suspensions, sanctions, and the Leahy law. Classic examples include sanctions against Abacha's regime when nine environmentalist activists were executed; in 2003, President George W. Bush suspended military aid to Nigeria because of human rights abuses. In 2014, President Obama blocked the transfer of a US-origin helicopter from Israel to Nigeria due to human rights violations. More importantly, the Leahy law prohibits military assistance to a foreign military implicated in human rights abuses. In addition, members of Congress expressed their dissatisfaction with the US's continued security cooperation with Nigeria despite the Nigerian government's inability to fix its poor human rights record. The US took stability measures to guarantee peace and strengthen democratic institutions in Nigeria. During this period, there was a decrease in military assistance to Nigeria as a form of punishment, which explains one of the reasons for the fluctuation in military aid to Nigeria. This has shown a two-way causality or bidirectional relationship between the explanatory and the response variables. In other words, a two-way causality occurs when two variables mutually influence each other in a study. This indicates a change in one variable cause a change in the other and vice versa. In this case, a change in military assistance will impact instability in Nigeria. As a result, the effects run in both

directions, evident in the case study. The classic two-way causality or bidirectional relationship occurs through economic, diplomatic, political, and military sanctions, which the US saw as stability measures.<sup>411</sup> The study finds a two-way causal relationship between security assistance and instability.

Furthermore, several internal factors also contribute to the fluctuation of instability in Nigeria. The first significant factor was associated with the death of the founder of the Salafist Islamic Jihadist organization, Boko Haram. The terrorist group cells went underground for almost a year to mobilize and recruit new members and new leaders. During this time, Boko Haram's instability decreased in northeastern Nigeria, and US security assistance to Nigeria also decreased. Meanwhile, after Abubakar Shekau declared himself a new leader, the organization's attacks increased when the leader vowed to avenge the extrajudicial killing of the sect's founder. Evidence from the literature has demonstrated that US military aid also increased in the periods Boko Haram's attacks increased. Second, terrorist attacks were reduced when several members of the jihadist group fled northeastern Nigeria to the Lake Chad Basin region. Again, the security assistance increased when the African Union authorized the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to recapture the contested territories from Boko Haram and ISWAP. Third, President Jonathan declared a state of emergency to decrease Boko Haram attacks in the north. Fourth, the president declared amnesty and called on the members to lay down their weapons. During this period, some group members defected, and the government organized deradicalization and reintegration programs for the defected members. The federal government also established a Special Committee on Dialogue and Peaceful Resolution of Security Challenges to dialogue with

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<sup>411</sup> Joan T. Schmit, & Katherine L. Phelps (1985). Two-Way Causality Between Insurance and Liability, *Marquette Law Review*, Vol. 69, Issue 1

the Salafist jihadist organization leaders and political elites in the northern region to address the demands and grievances of the group.<sup>412</sup> On the other hand, the government of Nigeria has also established new projects in the north to address the south and north binary in terms of poverty, unemployment, and the socioeconomic inequality narrative of Boko Haram. The Nigerian government established '*Almajiri Islamic education*,' which targets vulnerable Muslim youths that the sect could exploit with financial incentives. The schools spread over many parts of the northern region to prevent terrorist groups from recruiting young, disillusioned youths. The federal government increased revenue allocation from three to thirteen percent for the oil-rich Niger Delta inhabitants in the region. It is worth noting that the US military assistance increased amid all the Nigerian government's initiatives, and political instability has reduced during all these periods. This explains why military aid and instability fluctuate in Nigeria. The study's causal argument has shown that the explanatory and response variables affect both directions, and the case study contributes to the academic literature by providing a more comprehensive analysis of the two-way causality between military assistance and instability. The US measures against the Nigerian government and security forces implicated in human rights abuses through sanctions and the Leahy law demonstrate US preparedness and readiness to maintain stability by pushing the federal government to improve its poor human rights record. Similarly, speeches from former Secretary of State and former ambassadors to Nigeria have also demonstrated US readiness to assist the Nigerian government to establish stability. In 2009, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton argued the failure of governance at federal, state, regional, and local levels in Nigeria created a disconnection between the rich and poor. In addition, lack of transparency and accountability has

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<sup>412</sup> Adeyeri Segun (2013). Conflict and Political Instability in Nigeria, International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Science, Vol. 2, No. 10

affected the legitimacy of the government and contributed to the rise of groups that embrace violence and reject the authority of the government. Clinton also challenged the government to address the root causes of insurgent groups and their grievances, which must be addressed for peace and stability to prevail.<sup>413</sup> Terrence McCulley, the former ambassador to Nigeria between 2010 and 2013, openly criticized the government of Nigeria's disproportionate use of force, which he argues cannot be used to defeat Boko Haram. McCulley appealed to the Nigerian government to address corruption, political repression, human rights abuses, poverty, transparency, and accountability. Similarly, former Secretary of State John Kerry also asked the government and the security forces to tackle the root causes of why people join militant organizations and government, and the troops must gain the trust of the citizens of Nigeria.<sup>414</sup> Furthermore, former US Ambassador John Campbell describes Nigeria as a failed state in West Africa because over twenty-five million dollars were spent on human rights-related training for the armed forces. Despite the training, the troops could not internalize the liberal norms and values to protect the civilian populations. Campbell suggests that US-Nigeria security cooperation must address the historical causal drivers of violence because excessive force will continue to exacerbate the violence and insecurity in Nigeria. Another significant factor contributing to the US stability nexus in Nigeria was the establishment of a new Nigerian Army Special Operations Command (NASOC) to stop al-Qaeda and Islamic State's influence in West Africa and the Transnational Police Unit (TPU) was also created by the US to assist in drug trafficking in the northeast Nigeria to allow Nigeria Police Force (NPF) to focus on civilian criminal issues. These influential personalities' arguments and the

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<sup>413</sup> Daniel Agbibo (2013). The Ongoing Campaign of Terror in Nigeria: Boko Haram versus the State, *International Journal of Security & Development*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1-18

<sup>414</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt (2018). *Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War: Sovereignty, Responsibility, and the War on Terror*, Ohio University Press



creation of new forces have contributed to the US stability hypothesis in Nigeria. The literature's qualitative evidence indicates that military assistance from the US also promotes stability.

In summary, military aid contributes to human rights abuses in Nigeria using US military equipment that kills civilians, represses opposition parties, and suppresses Nigerian citizens during anti-government demonstrations. In contrast, security assistance also reduces instability and promotes stability through sanctions, the Leahy law, and the creation of new security forces in Nigeria.

How did an increase or rise in US military assistance affect violent extremist organizations in Nigeria?

The evidence from the existing qualitative literature demonstrates the effect of an increase in US military aid on violent extremist groups in Nigeria, especially Boko Haram, ISWAP, and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). The sect increased its attack after Abubakar became the leader, and the US increased security assistance for Nigeria to counter and defeat the Salafist jihadist Islamic group. An increase in military aid has reduced group attacks, and a significant number of Nigerian military personnel were trained to counter violent extremist organizations in Nigeria. The insurgent group attacked security forces and innocent civilians, including government institutions, government officials, churches, mosques, schools, bars, and restaurants. Despite an increase in US security assistance, Boko Haram's violence started to increase, and the group came to be known as one of the world's deadliest extremist groups. The group's violence was concentrated in northeastern Nigeria; however, everything changed when it attacked essential buildings belonging to multilateral institutions in Abuja and Lagos. The violence has spread beyond northeastern Nigeria, and in 2013, the US designated Boko Haram and a splinter group Ansaru, a 'foreign terrorist organization' (FTO). Boko Haram was first thought of as an

organization formed by a group of people dissatisfied with the performance of the Nigerian government, and many political and security analysts believe it posed only domestic problems and had no international dimension to elicit global attention.<sup>415</sup> Boko Haram has become successful in its attacks and declared its allegiance to foreign terrorist organizations, notably the Islamic State. Despite the increase in US military assistance, Nigerian armed forces and the police could not defeat the organization. The Salafist Islamic terrorist organization became the deadliest insurgent group in 2014. The sect employed various strategies, such as suicide attacks and bombings, to achieve its political and socioeconomic goals. The violent extremist organization targets soft locations for its attacks. Boko Haram came into international prominence in 2014 when the group abducted 276 schoolgirls in northeastern Nigeria. The US deployed drones and surveillance aircraft to assist the Nigerian armed forces in finding the kidnapped schoolgirls. Boko Haram's terrorist attacks increased in lethality against innocent civilians after it declared allegiance to the Islamic State. The group has made worldwide news and became a household name during the abduction of the schoolgirls. The group intensified its attacks outside Nigeria, especially in the Lake Chad Basin area. According to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED) program report, seventy-two percent of fatalities occurred outside Nigeria,<sup>416</sup> and eighty-one percent remained in Nigeria. The Salafi Jihadist terrorist organization conducted 2,800 terrorist attacks, and more than 31, 000 casualties were recorded.<sup>417</sup> With the US increase in security assistance, the Multinational Joint Task Force's role was expanded to capture most of the territories in the borders of Cameroon, Chad, and Niger under the sect's control. The US designated ISWAP

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<sup>415</sup> Odoh Samuel (2015). *Fostering Nigeria-US Relations and Partnership in Tackling Terrorism and Global Insecurity*, International Affairs and Global Strategy, Vol. 3

<sup>416</sup> ACLED Report on Boko Haram

<sup>417</sup> <https://acleddata.com/crisis-profile/boko-haram-crisis/>

as a terrorist organization in 2020. Both Boko Haram and ISWAP continued to attack civilians in the region and created a humanitarian emergency crisis, and millions of people were internally displaced. Nigerian armed forces and MNJTF recaptured most of the contested territories from the violent extremist organizations.<sup>418</sup> Boko Haram is still resilient in northeastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin region. The group funds its operations through criminal activity, such as bank robberies, high-profile kidnappings for ransom, assassinations for hire, human and drug trafficking, cattle rustling, and extortion, with an estimated annual revenue of 25 million dollars.

In addition, the MEND militant group in the Niger Delta region also continues to attack oil installations and infrastructure and the Nigerian armed forces. The group has created a security crisis in the area, including the kidnapping of foreign workers for ransom, drug trafficking, and piracy. In conclusion, despite the increased security assistance to Nigeria, the non-state armed groups continued to prevail because of the failure of the Nigerian government to address the historical grievances and the root causes of the conflict drivers. The US has provided significant military aid to Nigerian armed forces. Still, all the militant groups continued to persist, which shows that hard power alone cannot solve the problem. Instead, the Nigerian government must also rely on soft power to address the insurgents' conflict drivers and grievances.

What explains the increase and decrease in US training of Nigerian armed forces?

The study's statistical data on US military personnel training the Nigerian security forces comes from the Security Assistance Monitor (SAM). According to quantitative empirical evidence, US military personnel organized no training program for Nigerian security forces in the 1990s. However, qualitative evidence has demonstrated that the US had no systematic policy toward

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<sup>418</sup> Saskia Brechemacher (2019). Stabilizing the Northeast Nigeria After Boko Haram, Working Paper, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Nigeria during those periods due to the government's disregard for liberal norms and values. Meanwhile, the US started to train the security forces after adopting a constitutional government. The troops were trained in professionalism, peacekeeping, border, maritime security, and fighting violent extremist groups to maintain peace and stability. Training of the Nigerian security forces increased significantly in 2009, which was the peak of insurgent groups in northern Nigeria fighting the federal government, state governors, political elites, and security forces. The US military personnel increased training programs for the security forces due to an attempted suicide attack made by a Nigerian militant, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, on an American airliner and the subsequent rise in Islamic terrorist organizations. Another significant reason leading to the increase was the activity of the militant group MEND in the Niger Delta area. The group embarked on the destruction and disruption of assets of the Nigerian government, multinational corporations, and US economic interests. Also, during this period, several Nigerian military forces received training in the US International Military Education and Training (IMET) program in the US to promote liberal norms and values, including democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and civilian control of the armed forces. Furthermore, training of the Nigerian security forces continued to increase when the violent extremist organizations increased their attacks, leading to the national and legislative elections against disruption. Insurgent groups increased their attacks in both the south and north. The group leader was designated 'Special Designated Global Terrorists' (SDGT), and the US placed a seven million dollar reward on Shekau's head for information leading to his capture or murder.

Moreover, evidence from the qualitative literature has indicated that US training of the security forces decreased when President Buhari came to office because of counterinsurgency operations, which helped recapture some of the contested territories in the north. Training of the

troops was also reduced because the Nigerian officials canceled some of the advanced infantry training by the US military personnel for fear of undue access to its military secrets and also to protest the US government's refusal to sell lethal weapons to the federal government.<sup>419</sup> In addition, mistrust between the two nations also contributed to reduced training programs for the armed forces. Another factor leading to the decrease in the training of the Nigerian security forces was the Nigerian government's overreliance on hard power as the only mechanism to defeat the violent extremist groups that the US opposes and forces abuses of the civilians.

## CONCLUSION

In sum, the case study depends on primary sources as direct evidence, which comes from US policymakers, extremist group leaders, government officials, and statements from current and former US presidents. However, the primary sources include official correspondence, congressional records, diaries, memoirs, and other sources valuable to the case study, as well as sources that explain events and the fluctuations in the US military assistance and training of the Nigerian armed forces. In contrast, the actions of President Obama, barring the transfer of a US-origin helicopter to Israel, the speeches of violent extremist organization leaders, speeches from former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and John Kerry, Members of Congress, statements from former US ambassadors to Nigeria Terrence McCulley and John Campbell were primary evidence in the study. The primary sources provide direct evidence relating to the case study and are more convincing to readers than documents from journal articles, which address historical interpretations. On the other hand, secondary sources include journal articles, peer-reviewed publications, government or private sector databases, newspapers, magazines, non-governmental

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<sup>419</sup> Victor Chidubem Iwuoha (2019). United States Security Governance in Nigeria: Implications on Counterterrorism Strategies Against Boko Haram, *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 8, 1175-1194

organizations, libraries or archival materials, and the Internet. Evidence from human rights organizations regarding Nigerian security forces violations of human rights, journal articles about counterterrorism operations, the presence of the US Navy in the Gulf of Guinea, the role of US global war on terror in Nigeria, US military equipment in the hands of Nigerian armed forces, and Nigerian Special Operations Command were secondary source evidence in the study. Similarly, the existing literature's primary and secondary sources support two-way causality in the case study. In other words, US foreign policy militarization through security assistance, US training of Nigerian security forces, and Nigeria's political instability show a bidirectional causal relationship. Lastly, the case study's evidence indicates that US military assistance promotes stability in Nigeria through sanctions and Leahy law. The evidence of two-way causality demonstrates that US military assistance is not a single causal factor contributing to instability in Nigeria.

On the other hand, since the case study findings depend on an inductive approach, the literature needs to provide sufficient or substantial evidence to prove a causal relationship between the study's explanatory and response variables. Therefore, it is crucial to approach discussions about the role of US military assistance and the training of Nigerian security forces in contributing to political instability in Nigeria with a nuanced perspective. The effects of the explanatory and response variables can be complex and vice versa. Thus, the US must put a comprehensive mechanism in place, or a conditionality attached to the military assistance to enforce transparency and accountability to prevent corruption in recipient countries like Nigeria from adopting exclusionary policies to avoid human rights abuses. More importantly, countries with weak and ineffective legislative and judicial institutions like Nigeria must be given non-lethal security assistance to prevent gross human rights abuses from the security forces.

## CHAPTER VIII

### STRUCTURE OF THE MALI CASE STUDY

The case study on Mali is categorized into four main sections.

1. The first section, driven by statistical findings, meticulously outlines the timings of critical shifts in the explanatory and response variables. It particularly underscores the periods when US military assistance and training of the Malian armed forces, terrorist attacks, coups, civil wars, and anti-government demonstrations occurred, highlighting the urgency and impact of these shifts on the variables' increased or decreased value. The central goal of the case study is to explain why changes occurred in the explanatory and response variables in specific years, instilling confidence in the thoroughness and reliability of our research methodology.
2. The second section, a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of the historical context, will explain the relevant background of Malian politics during decolonization and independence and the factors contributing to instability/stability.
3. The third section, pivotal for our analysis, explains the significant shifts in military aid and US military personnel training of the Malian armed forces. It also includes a separate section that describes the critical changes in the study's instability variables. This section is crucial for understanding the impact of these shifts and their implications for US foreign policy and the stability of Mali.
4. The fourth and concluding section, the culmination of our research, provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to instability in Mali and their implications for US foreign policy. It synthesizes the causes of the shifts and discusses whether they explain the changes and variations in US foreign policy. It also explores the

complex relationship between instability and changes in US foreign policy, leaving the audience feeling informed and enlightened.

TABLE 12. VARIATIONS IN THE INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Mali	Year	Military Aid	US Troops	US Trainees	Terrorist Attacks	Civil Wars	Coups	Protests
	1995	255022	12	0	2	0	0	0
	1996	238035	12	0	0	0	0	0
	1997	229356	12	0	0	0	0	1
	1998	2794362	12	0	0	0	0	0
	1999	1433155	12	0	0	0	0	0
	2000	389285	12	1314	0	0	0	0
	2001	781754	12	1221	0	0	0	0
	2002	474129	14	660	0	0	0	1
	2003	420704	10	263	0	0	0	0
	2004	0	10	68	0	0	0	0
	2005	0	12	88	0	0	0	1
	2006	0	18	1460	0	0	0	0
	2007	62072	16	899	20	1	0	0
	2008	282611	12	309	55	1	0	0
	2009	506896	10	834	30	1	0	0
	2010	714125	12	1620	1	0	0	0
	2011	2375922	8	332	5	0	0	0
	2012	1.45E+08	18	35	53	1	1	0
	2013	22097772	24	0	137	1	0	0
	2014	3244873	34	70	125	1	0	0
	2015	790634	46	17	269	1	0	0
	2016	6533297	26	112	182	1	0	0
	2017	1642912	32	301	363	1	0	0
	2018	1256709	20	855	584	1	0	0
	2019	2549331	26	513	826	1	0	0
	2020	0	44	20	566	1	1	0

US security assistance to Mali post-9/11 changed drastically compared to post-Cold War years. The variations could be attributed to the US global war on terror paradigm or the Sahel and Sahara regional security dynamics. Statistical data indicates that Mali received zero military aid



from the US between 2004 and 2006. This might be due to violent clashes between the Malian government and minority ethnic groups or human rights violations against Malian populations. In addition, the empirical data also demonstrates that 2007 recorded the lowest military aid Mali received because the US wanted to avoid the destruction caused by the Malian security forces during the 1990s rebellions when several minority ethnic groups of civilians in northern Mali were murdered more than the insurgent groups or human rights abuses committed by the armed forces during the rebellion contributed to the reduction in the aid. On the other hand, US security assistance to Mali increased between 2012 and 2013. This increase was associated with the Tuareg rebellion in alliance with Islamic jihadist organizations against the Malian government and the military coup that removed the civilian government from office. In addition, the increase was also associated with the Malian government's return to civilian rule in 2013 and France's intervention to drive away the rebels and violent extremist groups from the essential cities captured during the conflict.

Furthermore, statistical data shows that US military personnel training for the Malian armed forces increased between 2006 and 2010. The crucial factor that led to this increase was the Tuareg rebellion, which erupted due to the central government's continued political exclusion and economic marginalization of the group. The US increased the training programs to promote stability between the Malian government and the rebels in the north. The second factor that contributed to the increase was the threat posed by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in northern Mali and the Sahel. In addition, empirical evidence has indicated that training of the Malian security forces decreased between 2012 and 2020. The decrease in the training of the Malian armed forces was due to the rebellion, activities of the Islamic terrorist organizations, human rights violations, and the US suspension of training because of the coups. On the other

hand, statistical data has shown that terrorist attacks in Mali decreased between 2010 and 2011. These periods featured the absence of inter-communal strife between the Malian government and the Tuareg rebels, and the presence of Islamic jihadist groups was limited. AQIM was the only violent extremist group known in northern Mali. Also, during this period, the central government signed several peace accords with the insurgent groups to address the underlying root causes of the insurgent groups in northern Mali. In contrast, empirical evidence indicates that between 2018 and 2019, terrorist attacks increased significantly in Mali. Several factors contributed to increased terrorist attacks in the years outlined above. During this period, AQIM's Sahel branch merged with two Malian extremist groups to form the Union for Supporting Islam and Muslims (JNIN), and the Islamic State Greater Sahara (ISGS) increased their attacks in both central and northern Mali because of the failure of the Malian government to implement another Algiers Accord signed in 2015. Similarly, the increase was also due to instability in the neighboring Sahelian countries, which spilled over to Mali.

Moreover, statistical and empirical data show Mali recorded a coup in 2012 and 2020. In 2012, Mali's democratically elected president, Amadou Toumani Toure, aka ATT, was removed from power through a military coup by disgruntled junior officers who were humiliated and defeated by Tuareg rebels and Islamic terrorist groups. The armed forces accused the president of its failure to provide adequate military equipment and ineffective response to deal with the insurgents. However, Mali transitioned to a constitutional government. Also, in 2020, Malian armed forces again overthrew President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and blamed him for Mali's economic woes, corruption, and mismanagement of the country. According to statistical data, Mali has witnessed conflict or civil war between 2007 and 2009. These were the periods of the Tuareg second rebellion against the central government. However, between 2010 and 2011, zero conflict

was recorded because the Malian government signed several peace accords to address the root causes of the conflict. The central government failed to implement the peace agreements it signed in the abovementioned years. In addition, empirical data demonstrates that the Malian conflict returned between 2012 and 2020. The dispute erupted because of the failure of the central government to implement several peace accords signed in the previous years with the Tuareg rebels. Finally, statistical analysis has shown that anti-government demonstrations were recorded in 1997, 2002, and 2005. In 1997, Malians demonstrated against neoliberal policies imposed on the country by International Financial Institutions and the austerity measures associated with the policy, which led to economic instability and massive unemployment. In addition, in 2002 and 2005, Malians again engaged in non-violent protests against President Amadou Toure's administration's financial instability and the severe drought that affected food security.

The primary argument in the case study is to examine the effect of military assistance and US training of the Malian armed forces on political instability in Mali. The case study aims to explore the impact of security assistance and training of the Malian security forces on the Tuareg rebellions and the activities of the al-Qaeda-affiliated terrorist groups in Mali, such as al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Ansar Dine, and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa with French acronym (MUJAO). In addition, the case study on Mali focuses on two crucial independent variables selected based on the statistical, empirical findings, such as military aid and US training of Malian security forces and outcome variables: terrorist attacks, civil wars, coups, and anti-government demonstrations. Furthermore, the study aims to use both primary and secondary source qualitative evidence to address the causal empirical questions or arguments regarding the impact of the independent variables on the response. The study again will examine the effect of US military equipment and training of the forces on instability in Mali.

More importantly, the case study will address the following causal arguments or empirical questions: What explains the fluctuations in US military assistance to Mali? How did US security assistance affect instability in Mali? How did US military aid affect human rights in Mali? To what extent did an increase in US military assistance affect violent extremist organizations in Mali? To what extent does US military aid promote stability in Mali? What explains the fluctuations in terrorist attacks in Mali? What accounts for protests or antigovernment demonstrations in Mali? Finally, how did US military aid and training affect the 2012 and 2020 coups in Mali? In addition, the case study will address changes and events that occurred in specific years that contributed to the increase and decrease in security assistance and training programs for Mali's armed forces. The study will use qualitative evidence from the existing literature to explain events leading to policy changes in Mali. The case study addresses the overarching causal argument in the study of whether the two independent variables affect instability or whether the effect runs in both directions. Additionally, the case study will focus significantly on the activities of the Tuareg ethnic group in northern Mali and the role of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Similarly, the case study will also focus on the domestic events and factors driving the Tuareg rebellions in Mali. These empirical causal arguments in the study will provide the researcher with a better understanding of both internal actors' roles and US military assistance and training of the Malian security forces' effects in Mali. Significantly, the study will apply process tracing techniques to understand events and changes that contributed to policy changes. An essential feature of a case study is that its evidence in the qualitative literature is observational, which prevents researchers from influencing the outcomes. Similarly, researchers care much about the analysis and connectivity of the evidence to achieve the study's goals. Process tracing assists researchers in exploring historical and archival

documents to establish whether the causal logic a theory presumes is found in the case. Finally, the case study will use empirical and qualitative evidence to draw the study's conclusion.

## BACKGROUND AND DRIVERS OF INSTABILITY IN MALI

Mali is one of the countries that comprise the Sahel region in West Africa. Other countries include Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal. The Sahel is one of the world's poorest regions, and four countries are landlocked, except Mauritania and Senegal. In addition, the six nations were former French colonies, and all achieved independence in 1960.<sup>420</sup> Mali and Senegal formed a Mali Federation, which was short-lived because of ideological differences.<sup>421</sup> Mali has become a country that shares a border with seven African countries. At independence, Mali faced profound political, geographic, and economic challenges, some of which persisted into the present and became the underlying causes of Mali's current problems. Mali's populations consist of several ethnic groups, and Modibo Keita was elected as the president of the Mali Federation and remained after the dissolution of the federation. On the other hand, Mali, like many other African nations, experienced a series of military coups and conflicts and became the epicenter of political turmoil post-independence.<sup>422</sup> The nation faces significant challenges with its weather and depends on natural rainfall for its agricultural produce, which affects food production and security. Geographical challenges jeopardize the nation's political and economic development, national identity, and unity. Despite diverse ethnic groups, Malian society lived relatively peaceful inter-ethnic and inter-religious tolerance, attributed to Islam after independence. A military coup under the leadership of Mousa Traore overthrew the authoritarian president Keita. The Traore

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<sup>420</sup> Alex Thurston (2012). *An Alternative Approach to US Sahel Policy*, Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft

<sup>421</sup> Dona Stewart (2013). *What Is Next For Mali? The Roots of Conflict and Challenges to Stability*, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

<sup>422</sup> Ibid

regime accepted a structural adjustment program from the IMF to increase foreign direct investment and shift the country toward a free market economy.<sup>423</sup> Despite the benefits of the structural adjustment program, government reform, and revenues from foreign companies, the government failed to undertake credible developmental programs, and government officials were involved in corruption. On the other hand, Mali has several natural resources, but the nation remains one of the poorest countries in the world. The benefits accumulated from multinational corporations remained in the hands of elites and the executive branch of government.<sup>424</sup> President Traore was removed from office through a military coup, and the country returned to civilian rule in 1992.

After the transition, Mali has become a darling democracy for Western governments, which praised the newly elected president's development programs. Political and civil rights are respected, and Malians are proud of multiparty democracy. Donors rewarded Mali for its democratization with substantial increases in foreign aid, and the nation has undergone a modest transformation of steady economic growth, a decline in poverty, and rapid urbanization. Due to constant development, Mali has attained high-income levels and political stability for two decades. More importantly, democratic theory suggests that structural transformation contributes to democratic consolidation, as witnessed in Mali. Civil society organizations emerged in their numbers, as well as the liberalization of the media. For example, several government-controlled news outlets emerged, and radios, print media, satellite TV, and the internet occupied public space.<sup>425</sup> In addition to political liberalization, the government also embarked on a decentralization

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<sup>423</sup> David Gutelius (2007). Islam in Northern Mali and the War on Terror, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 1

<sup>424</sup> Ibid

<sup>425</sup> Nicole Van De Walle (2012). Foreign Aid in Dangerous Places: The Donors and Mali's Democracy, WIDER Working Paper, No. 61

policy to resolve the north-south development dichotomy between the central government and the minority ethnic groups in northern Mali. Interestingly, during the Konare regime, support for democracy was high. However, when ATT came to office, Malians started to lose confidence in the ideology. The new government formed a coalition described as a 'consensus politics, different from his predecessor's administration, which incentivized corruption and encouraged patronage politics among the elites. Against the backdrop, support for democracy started to wane, and discontentment increased dramatically in the country. Democracy was entrenched in Mali for two decades, but 2012 the military intervened in Malian politics to seize power. After the military intervention, Mali has been affected by overlapping security, political, and humanitarian crises, which have impacted the army's capabilities to fight insurgents and violent extremist organizations.<sup>426</sup> Political instability has featured predominantly in Malian politics since the Cold War, and some scholars have associated it with environmental degradation, colonial borders, religion, political exclusion, and economic marginalization of the Tuareg ethnic group in northern Mali. Others also associated the instability with the post-Cold War emergence of Islamic terrorist organizations and the post-September 11 increase in jihadist groups.

Environmental degradation scholars believe instability in northern Mali was caused by desertification, which resulted from an absence of forests, water, arable land, and population explosion. Thomas Homer-Dixon put forward this argument and explains that conflicts in several world regions result from environmental resources supply-induced scarcity. The Sahel is prone to instability because it is affected by environmental-induced conflicts due to pastoralism, rainfed agriculture, and irrigation farming.<sup>427</sup> Meanwhile, Homer-Dixon's argument for the environmental

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<sup>426</sup> Alexis Arieff (2013). Crisis in Mali, Congressional Research Service

<sup>427</sup> Emizet F. Kisangani (2012). The Tuaregs Rebellion in Mali and Niger and the US Global War on Terror, *International Journal on World Peace*, Vol. 29, No. 1, 59-97

desertification hypothesis was challenged and criticized by Tor Benjaminsen. Benjaminsen argues that the desertification hypothesis as a primary driver of conflict has yet to be empirically evidenced in the literature. Therefore, the concept is a subjective claim because the Sahel and Sahara Deserts existed in pre-colonial Africa, and colonial scientists have used desertification to describe the region since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. As a result, conflict in the Sahel, especially in Mali, cannot be attributed to the desertification hypothesis.<sup>428</sup>

On the other hand, the first critical driver in the instability literature regarding Mali was the imposition of arbitrary state borders created by the European colonial powers. Scholars argue that the new boundaries satisfied colonial strategic and economic interests without considering pre-colonial cultures and socioeconomic divisions. Colonialism froze societies within fixed borders to the detriment of ethnic groups. These new boundaries ran through different socio-political dimensions with other social groups, leading to the split of many communities. Because of this, Tuareg ethnic groups split into five different African countries such as Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, and Niger. The new frontiers closed the movements of the nomadic Tuaregs, and the dissatisfied groups rebelled against their government. The rigidity of new judicial statehood affected nomadic pastoralists, and as a result, fixed colonial borders played a significant role in Mali's decolonization conflicts.<sup>429</sup>

Another critical factor in Mali's instability literature is the Tuareg rebellions against the Malian government. Successive presidents failed to address the underlying root causes of the Tuareg rebellions, which have become a recurrent problem between the minority ethnic groups and the central government. Tuaregs are nomadic pastoralists living in northern Mali, which is

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<sup>428</sup> Ibid

<sup>429</sup> Ibid



under decades of political and economic marginalization by various Malian administrations. The region has suffered from underdevelopment and poverty, and the Malian governments deliberately neglected the area, which has resulted in inequality between the north and south. Because of this discrimination, the Tuaregs have led a series of uprisings against the central government since independence, but their grievances remain unaddressed. Their grievances concern political exclusion, economic marginalization, and the central government's failure to undertake developmental projects in the region to close the gap between the North and South.

Furthermore, religion has become another crucial factor identified as a driver in the existing instability literature. Malians have long been associated with moderate Sufi Muslim doctrine. However, political liberalization in the 1990s contributed to an increase in the Islamization of the public discourse by preachers from Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Pakistan to reform the Malian Islamic region. The reformists were critical of traditional Sufi practices that they believed were inferior to Islam. Reformists from various countries emphasized Islamic orthodoxy and orthopraxy/correct practice and condemned Sufi practices. In addition, reformists' discourse was centered on Salafist Islam, which has added another layer to the conflict in northern Mali. Some Malians followed the reformist form of Islam and rejected the Sufi orthodoxies and beliefs. The Tuaregs adopted the reformist Salafist doctrine, which is a radical form of Islam.<sup>430</sup>

Another critical driver associated with Mali's instability identified in the literature was the activities of the terrorist groups. The Algerian violent extremist organization, the Salafi Preaching and Combat Group, was chased out by Algerian authorities and created a haven in northern Mali and the Sahel region. The group has found sanctuary in the swaths of ungoverned areas north of

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<sup>430</sup> Stephanie Pezard & Michael Shurkin (2013). *Toward A Secure and Stable Northern Mali Approaches to Engaging Local Actors*, RAND Corporation

Mali and engaged in hostage-taking kidnapping of Westerners, and drug trafficking. The GSPC expanded to other Sahelian countries, including Mauritania and Niger. The GSPC 2007 declared allegiance to al-Qaeda and rebranded itself al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and other Islamic allies like Ansar Dine and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) took advantage of Mali's inability to control its territorial integrity in the north.

On the other hand, the instability literature on Mali also featured frequent military coups as another driver. Democracy has been consolidated in Mali for over two decades, which brought stability to the country. However, after the military coups, Mali faced political and security crises from various domestic insurgent groups and transnational terrorist organizations. The groups have engaged in criminal enterprises such as drug and human trafficking and arms and cigarette smuggling, which have become their valuable funding sources, contributing to Mali's political instability.<sup>431</sup>

#### US FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD MALI

The US and Mali established diplomatic relations after independence from the French. Bilateral relations improved significantly when Mali transitioned from a one-party system to a multiparty democracy. However, the two countries experienced strained relations when Mali's democracy was destabilized, and armed rebellion overtook the north of the country. Mali remains one of the poorest countries in the world and stands at the bottom of the Human Development Index (HDI). According to the United Nations Commodity Trade Database on International Trade (COMTRADE), Mali's exports to the US in 2019 were 11.2 million dollars. The US exports to Mali in the same year were 89 million dollars, and the US imported 5 million goods. In addition, the US provides tremendous economic, military, and humanitarian assistance to Mali to strengthen

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<sup>431</sup> Sussan D. Wing (2013). Mali: Politics of Crisis, *African Affairs*, Vol. 112, No. 448, 476-485

democracy and economic development and reduce poverty. Similarly, the US offers bilateral foreign and development aid for education, health, governance, and peacebuilding to guarantee stable democracy and regional security and combat non-state armed groups.<sup>432</sup> Mali is a US focus country and benefits from several US non-military programs such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the Security Governance Initiative (SGI), Global Climate Change (GCC), Feed the Future (FTF), Water for the World (WFW), the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS/Relief (PEPFAR) and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).

#### US COUNTERTERRORISM POLICY TOWARD MALI

The Pan-Sahel Initiative (PSI) was established after the 9/11 attacks as a part of the global war on terror program to enhance the border capabilities of Mali, Mauritania, Chad, and Niger to prevent transnational terrorist organizations from making the Sahel their sanctuary. In addition, the PSI was created to protect the US national security interests in Africa and, again, provide training and equipment to regional militaries. Meanwhile, the PSI was rebranded in 2005 to become the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP). The TSCTP members were extended from four to ten, including countries from West and North Africa. The aims of the TSCTP were also extended to emphasize regional security, economic development, and democratic governance. The counterterrorism operations in Mali addressed emergent threats, eliminated terrorist sanctuaries, and foreclosed future terrorist access to the country.<sup>433</sup> Mali has become the US critical security partner because of the Islamic jihadist activities in the north and the Sahel region. The US intervened in Mali directly because of the activities of extremist groups. On the other hand, Malian

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<sup>432</sup> [ustr.gov/countries-regions/africa/mali](http://ustr.gov/countries-regions/africa/mali)

<sup>433</sup> Alexis Arieff (2013). Crisis in Mali, Congressional Research Service

armed forces participated in several US training programs, such as the Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) team, the Joint Planning and Assistance Teams (JPATs), and Flintlock. With support from the US, France, and other international actors, Mali has hosted foreign troops since 2013, especially the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSMA), a UN peacekeeping operation, and French military forces stationed there for counterterrorism missions.<sup>434</sup>

## CAUSAL ARGUMENTS OR QUESTIONS

What are the crucial factors that account for the fluctuations in US military assistance to Mali?

This case study segment delves into the intricate and multifaceted factors contributing to the fluctuations in US military assistance to Mali. It draws upon the literature's primary and secondary qualitative evidence to outline the events that have influenced fluctuations in Mali's security assistance. In addition, the case study will also elaborate on the changes and events that have impacted the US military personnel training of the Malian security forces, underscoring the role of political changes and security situations in aid levels. In this context, fluctuation is defined as an event that has either increased or decreased the US military aid or training programs in Mali. The US and Mali had a fractured relationship during the authoritarian one-party regime. However, relations improved when the nation returned to constitutional democratic rule. Mali became attractive to foreign direct investment from the US, Western countries, and multinational corporations when the government moved toward privatization and liberalization of its trade regimes.<sup>435</sup> This led to an influx of Western donors, and the US has provided significant

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<sup>434</sup> Stephen Tankel (2020). US Counterterrorism in the Sahel: From Indirect to Direct Intervention, *International Affairs*, Vol. 96, No. 4, 875-893

<sup>435</sup> David Gutelius (2007). Islam in Northern Mali and the War on Terror, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 1

humanitarian assistance to Mali. Military aid to Mali increased because the country transitioned to civilian rule and the Tuareg rebellions in the 1990s.<sup>436</sup> The Tuareg minority group has a long history of conflict with the central government because of the region's political and economic exclusion. The US increased military assistance to Mali to help stabilize northern Mali and address the humanitarian crisis that emerged from the rebellion between the Malian government and the Tuareg rebels. In addition, US security assistance continued to increase after the 9/11 attacks, and the government of Mali supported the global war on terror policy. The US became interested in Mali and the Sahel to prevent the ungoverned spaces from becoming violent extremist organizations breeding grounds. Given this context, the Sahelian governments recognized the need to collaborate with the US and France, whose pivotal roles in addressing the Tuaregs' rebellion cannot be overstated. The US and France's presence in Mali and the Sahel provided crucial security in the region due to the severe regional security implications of the rebellions for the entire area. As a result, military assistance to Mali increased.

The Tuaregs' fourth rebellion was another critical factor contributing to increased US security assistance to Mali. After the collapse of Gaddafi's regime, the Tuaregs who served in Qaddafi's Islamic Legion returned home to northern Mali with sophisticated weapons and warfighting experience to form the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), a rebel group prepared to fight the central government and declared northern Mali independence. The US increased military aid to Mali to fight the Tuareg separatists' 2012 rebellion and the Islamic jihadist organizations that joined the uprising.

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<sup>436</sup> Gregory Chauzal & Thibault Van Damme (2015). The Roots of Mali's Conflict, Clingendael CRU Report

Another important event that contributed to the increase in military aid to Mali was the French intervention in northern Mali when the insurgent groups and Islamic terrorist organizations captured vital cities in the north, declared independence, and imposed Sharia law in the region. With an increase in US security assistance, the French military forces recaptured the cities and drove the rebels and violent extremist groups away from the area. The French troops transferred power to Malian armed forces and the UN-authorized African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), with technical and logistical support from the US.

On the other hand, US security assistance to Mali increased in 2013 after the country returned to civilian government after the coup. The US supported Mali in organizing elections to help contain extremist groups in northern Mali and the Sahel. During this period, the US increased its humanitarian assistance to Mali by 119.3 million dollars in allocation and 445.9 million to all other Sahelian countries.<sup>437</sup> The US Congressional Delegation to Mali, under the leadership of Senator Christopher Coons informed reporters that the US would resume direct military support for Mali's security forces after democracy was restored. Furthermore, the activities of Islamic jihadist organizations in northern Mali contributed to an increase in US military aid to Mali. Evaluating the threat posed by AQIM and affiliated groups was a critical factor driving the rise in US security assistance to the Malian government. Against this backdrop, the US established counterterrorism operations in the Sahelian countries to confront the challenges and threats emanating from these organizations because their activities threatened regional security, western targets, and regional, US, and other Western country's economic and security interests.

More importantly, the empirical data has shown that military aid to Mali increased significantly between 2018 and 2019. The increase in security assistance in the years outlined

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<sup>437</sup> Alexis Arieff (2013). Crisis in Mali, Congressional Research Service

above was due to a merger between AQIM's Sahel branch and two local affiliates to form the Union for Supporting Islam and Muslims (JNIN) and the activities of the Islamic State of Greater Sahara (IS-GS). The activities of JNIN and IS-GS caused the US military aid to increase in these specific years to counter and defeat the violent extremist groups.<sup>438</sup> US security assistance to Mali still focuses on counterterrorism, professionalization, and structural reforms. In addition, US support for MINUSMA in Mali continues to increase. In 2019, it allocated 347 million; in 2020, 356 million to help maintain stability in Mali.<sup>439</sup>

Conversely, several factors contributed to the decrease in US military assistance to Mali in 2007. The first crucial reason was the 2006 Tuareg rebellion. The US reduced Mali's military aid to avoid a repeat of the destruction caused by the Malian security forces during the 1990s rebellions when more civilians were killed in northern Mali than the Tuareg rebels. The Malian security forces committed gross human rights violations in the 1990s against innocent civilians in the north. Another factor that led to the decrease in security assistance was the Malian government, and the Tuareg separatists signed two crucial peace agreements to end the conflict. This includes the Algiers and Sebha Accords, which aim to bring a permanent solution to the historical grievances causing the conflict. The Algiers Accord, which the Algerian government brokered, called for greater autonomy for the Tuareg region, economic development, and a more expansive role of Tuaregs in the security forces. The central government incorporated several minority ethnic groups into the Malian security forces, which reduced the conflict and contributed to the decrease in security assistance to Mali. On the other hand, military assistance decreased because the central government and the Malian security forces committed human rights abuses during the 2006

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<sup>438</sup> Alexis Arieff (2020). Crisis in Mali, Congressional Research Service

<sup>439</sup> Ibid

rebellion. The US Leahy law prevents the US from supplying military aid to armed forces implicated in human rights violations.<sup>440</sup> In addition, the ‘flames of peace’ also played a significant role in the decrease in Mali's security assistance. During this period, weapons captured from various warring factions were destroyed as a symbol of peace.<sup>441</sup> Similarly, Mali was designated under the Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2008, which affected the country and contributed to the decrease in US military aid. It is worth noting that Mali received no security assistance from the US between 2004 and 2006. According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), bureaucratic differences over programs and funding problems led to the suspension of peacebuilding and counterterrorism programs in Mali.<sup>442</sup> Thus, domestic and regional security dynamics influenced the fluctuation of US security assistance to Mali.

In conclusion, the US military assistance to Mali fluctuates because of internal or domestic insurgent threats to the Malian government and regional security dynamics from transnational terrorist organizations to Mali's territorial integrity. Similarly, security assistance also fluctuates due to human rights concerns and changes in government leadership through military coups or democratic elections, which affect US security assistance to Mali.

On the other hand, the US security personnel train Malian security forces in counterterrorism and professionalization programs to improve the force's capabilities. In addition, the armed forces also receive training through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program in the US military schools, where the officers are taught liberal norms and values, notably democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and the civilian control of the armed forces.

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<sup>440</sup> Dona Stewart (2013). What is Next for Mali? The Roots of Conflict and Challenges to Stability, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

<sup>441</sup> Emizet F. Kisangani (2012). The Tuaregs' Rebellion in Mali and Niger and the US War on Terror, *International Journal on World Peace*, Vol. 29, No. 1, 59-97

<sup>442</sup> Walter Pincus (2013). Mali Insurgency Followed Ten Years of US Counterterrorism Programs



Through these training programs, the US has the power to suspend training of the Malian security forces for human rights concerns or when a democratically elected president is removed from office through a military coup. Malian security forces are trained in counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations to maintain domestic and regional stability. The counterterrorism operations focus on offensive military operations, and the troops are taught tactical army capabilities to fight and operate in the desert.

The statistical data shows that US training of the Malian armed forces increased between 2006 and 2010. This increase could be attributed to several factors and events. After the 9/11 attacks, the US government increased its focus on counterterrorism because of the activities of violent extremist groups. Also, Mali is in the Sahel region, an area that has become a concern because of terrorist groups and the potential for destabilization. US military personnel training increased in the years outlined above because of the third Tuareg rebellion, which erupted due to the Malian government's continued discrimination. During this period, the training of the Malian security forces increased to guarantee and restore domestic stability threatened by the rebel groups in the north. President ATT failed to endorse the peace accord because it was too favorable to Tuareg separatists and believed the uprising could be addressed militarily, hence the increase. In addition, the increase in training also resulted from rising terrorist threats from AQIM and its allies in northern Mali and the Sahel. The growing threat posed by the groups prompted an increase in US engagement in training the Malian armed forces to enhance their capabilities to counter extremist groups. On the other hand, the Sahel region has witnessed growing instability, including armed conflicts, political unrest, and illicit trafficking, which heightened the importance of increasing the capacity of Malian armed forces to address both terrorism and broader security

threats in the region.<sup>443</sup> The US military personnel increased training in the above years to strengthen the capabilities of the Malian armed forces to focus on areas such as counterterrorism tactics, intelligence gathering, border security, and military operations. These capacity-building efforts aimed to enhance effectiveness and professionalism. Meanwhile, the training of the Malian armed forces decreased between 2012 and 2020. Qualitative secondary evidence from the existing literature has shown several reasons for the decrease. The first significant factor that led to the decline in training of the armed forces was the defect of the Tuareg armed forces to join the 2012 uprising initiated by the Tuareg separatists. Amidst the uprising, the disgruntled armed forces overthrew the constitutional government through a military coup, and the US suspended the training program with Mali. This happened because US law prohibits America from providing training to foreign security forces that removed civilian government from power. Another reason that contributed to the decrease in training was allegations against the Malian government, and the armed forces engaged in human rights violations. The Malian armed forces carried out another coup in 2020, again leading to the suspension and cancelation of all multinational exercises, such as Flintlock with Malian armed forces and train and equip programs until the military regime transitions to civilian rule. The US trains the Malian security forces to promote civilian control over the armed forces, democracy, and professionalism. Malian armed forces failed to internalize liberal norms and continued intervening in politics. These events contributed to the decrease in the training of the Malian security forces.

In short, the fluctuations in US training of Malian armed forces were influenced by Mali's internal security environment and also threats posed by the transnational terrorist organizations to

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<sup>443</sup> Gregory Chauzal & Thibault Van Damme (2015). *The Roots of Mali's Conflict*, Clingendael CRU Report

the sovereignty of Mali. Similarly, changes in training can also be associated with the political climate of Mali, such as changes in political leadership through a military coup, which can result in the suspension of training programs and return to constitutional rule, leading to increased training. Finally, allegations of human rights violations by Malian security forces can lead to the suspension or reduction in training. Overall, the fluctuations in the training of the Malian armed forces were influenced by the security environment, both domestic and regional dynamics, changes in political leadership, whether military or constitutional government, and human rights abuses were identified in the literature.

What explains the fluctuations in terrorist attacks in Mali?

Mali has been affected by overlapping security, political, and humanitarian crises. Domestic insurgent groups and transnational Islamist extremist jihadist groups have expanded their presence in the country's vast Sahara and Sahel regions after the 2012 coup that removed the civilian government from office and has offered terrorist organizations a sanctuary in northern Mali.<sup>444</sup> Statistical data has indicated that terrorist attacks in Mali decreased between 1995 and 2011. After Mali transitioned to constitutional rule, it experienced relatively stable governance, discouraging terrorist activities except for Tuareg rebellions. In addition, Mali signed several peace agreements with minority Tuareg ethnic groups and integrated over three thousand Tuareg rebels into the Malian armed forces and civil service. As a result, the Tuareg rebel group, the People's Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MPLA), was disbanded based on the Tamanrasset Accord. The peace agreements that the central government signed with various insurgent groups,

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<sup>444</sup> Alexis Arieff (2013). Crisis in Mali, Congressional Research Service

notably the Tuareg separatists, contributed to the decrease in terrorist activities in the years outlined above.<sup>445</sup>

Another factor that contributed to the decrease in terrorist attacks was the government of Mali's support of the global war on terror after the 9/11 attacks, which led to the creation of counterterrorism operations in northern Mali and the Sahel. The US has established a counterterrorism program in the north of Mali and the Sahel to address terrorist threats and prevent their access to future territory. The global war on terror focused on countries where governments struggled to exert sovereignty over territories, and this has helped Mali to reduce terrorist attacks in northern Mali. On the other hand, the counterterrorism initiatives established by the US increased Malian security forces' capabilities to track and keep terrorist groups in check. The Malian government has implemented effective counterterrorism measures, including intelligence gathering, law enforcement operations, and border security, which enhanced security measures to disrupt terrorist networks and prevent individuals from engaging in extremist activities. Against this background, the US counterterrorism strategy created in Mali and the Sahel reduced the threat of terrorism in the 2000s.<sup>446</sup> The scope of the new counterterrorism program expanded beyond security cooperation and included development, which has assisted the US and the Malian government in tackling conflict drivers. These initiatives also contributed to the reduction and decrease in terrorist attacks.

Regional cooperation between Mali and other Sahelian countries and external actors also assisted in reducing terrorism in the years outlined in the study. Mali cooperated with the US,

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<sup>445</sup> Dona Stewart (2013). What is Next for Mali? The Roots of Conflict and Challenges to Stability, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

<sup>446</sup> Stephen Tankel (2020). US Counterterrorism in the Sahel: From Indirect to Direct Intervention, *International Affairs*, Vol. 96, No. 4, 875-893

France, and other Sahelian countries in intelligence sharing, which helped Mali in taking pre-emptive measures against domestic insurgent groups and Islamic terrorist organizations in the north. During this period, Mali cooperated with the members of the counterterrorism program. The US helped Mali address the factors that compelled individuals to join terrorist organizations, including economic, identity, religious, revenge, and motivation. In addition, France, other Western countries, and non-governmental organizations have assisted Mali in resolving conflict drivers and decreasing terrorism. Intelligence sharing through the TSCTP helped Mali in tracking insurgent and jihadist leaders and destroying their networks and camps.

Furthermore, the limited presence of insurgents and extremist groups in the periods outlined also assisted in the decrease of terrorist attacks as compared to later years in northern Mali. In 2003, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) was the only known Islamic terrorist group north of Mali, which rebranded AQIM when it pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda. Because of the limited presence of insurgent groups and Islamic jihadist organizations, attacks were less as compared to 2011 upwards in northern Mali. Alternatively, the broader Sahel region experienced relative stability during the abovementioned years, with fewer conflicts and less pronounced spillover effects from frontier countries. As a result, regional stability contributed to the decrease in cross-border terrorism and insurgent activities.

Moreover, the empirical data has demonstrated that terrorist attacks in Mali increased between 2017 and 2020. During this period, terrorist attacks increased in lethality, notably when AQIM's Sahel branch and offshoot al-Mourabitoun and two Malian insurgent groups merged to form the Union for Supporting Islam and Muslims (JNIN) an Islamic acronym in 2017. This group has carried out a series of terrorist attacks since the merger because of the weaknesses of the Malian

government and the US-designated the group foreign terrorist organization.<sup>447</sup> JNIN attacked the Sahel Group of 5 headquarters in central Mali, and the Islamic State in Greater Sahara (ISGS), which is linked to al-Qaeda, expanded its presence and operational capabilities in Mali. These groups capitalized on grievances, tribal conflicts, and ungoverned spaces to recruit members and launch attacks, which has led to an increase in terrorist attacks in the years outlined.

Another significant factor contributing to an increase in terrorism was regional instability. Instability in neighboring countries such as Burkina Faso and Niger spilled over to Mali, exacerbating the security situation. This emerged from cross-border movements of militants, weapons, and resources that facilitated coordination and collaboration among terrorist groups operating in the Sahel. In recent times, because of frequent coups and the US suspension of military assistance and training programs, Mali's security forces have struggled to contain the growing threat of terrorism due to logistical challenges, insufficient training, and corruption. In addition, inadequate border control allowed the Islamic jihadist members to travel freely to Mali, facilitating the planning and execution of attacks. Limitations of US counterterrorism operations affect the Malian government, and several terrorist groups have exploited the US's less active role in the country to carry out more attacks. Despite the presence of international forces, including the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the French military operations, terrorist groups continued to operate and launch attacks. In addition, the limitations of these interventions, coupled with civilian casualties, might have fueled resentment and provided propaganda for jihadists' increase in terrorist attacks.<sup>448</sup>

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<sup>447</sup> Alexis Arieff (2018). Conflict in Mali, Congressional Research Service

<sup>448</sup> Ibid

Moreover, terrorist attacks increased in Mali due to the central government's failure to implement the 2015 Algiers peace accord between the insurgent groups and the government of Mali, which has added to the deterioration of security in northern Mali and the increase in attacks. Terrorist groups active in Mali include ISGS, JNIN, Ansar Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front (MLF). The groups have increased their territories in the north with tactical cooperation between ISGS and JNIN.<sup>449</sup> Their activities have increased in quantity and lethality because of weaknesses in governance, scarce resources, and an increase in intercommunal violence in central Mali. Mali depends on MINUSMA and French forces to help maintain stability and secure northern and central Mali. However, JNIN intensified its attacks in 2019, and the prospects for regional and international counterterrorism efforts deteriorated further when the Malian government officially terminated its defense cooperation treaty with France and the European Union's operations. The military government pulled out of the G5, which has diminished Mali's regional counterterrorism capacity, and the junta asked the UN peacekeeping force, MINUSMA, to withdraw from the country, which has contributed to an increase in terrorist attacks.

Mali has hired the Wagner Group to fill the security vacuum created by the departure of the regional and UN peacekeepers. Terrorist attacks have doubled in Mali, and the country is on the brink of civil war as the Tuareg rebels and Islamic groups consolidate power in northern Mali. JNIN has capitalized on the departure of the UN MINUSMA to launch several attacks.<sup>450</sup> The growing strength of violent extremist organizations in Mali and the Sahel exacerbates the humanitarian crisis in Mali and the Sahel. The weaknesses of the Malian government and institutions created a security vacuum that JNIN and ISGS filled with indiscriminate attacks on

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<sup>449</sup> <https://2017-2021.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2019/mali/>

<sup>450</sup> <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violent-extremism-sahel>

government forces and civilians. Because of the departure of the international actors and peacekeeping forces, JNIN and ISGS violence has increased seventy percent since the departure of the foreign troops.

In conclusion, terrorist attacks have increased in the years outlined in the study due to the central government's inability to address social, economic, and political problems between the Tuareg rebels and also weak governance, corruption, and ethnic tensions created an environment conducive to terrorist activities in north and central Mali. Overall, an increase in terrorist attacks was due to Mali's constant coups, which has led the US to suspend vital military assistance, training of Malian armed forces, Mali's termination of defense treaty with France and the European Union, expansion in Islamic jihadist groups, and the departure of the UN MINUSMA. In addition, a decrease in Mali's terrorist attacks resulted from peace agreements signed by the central government and the Tuareg rebels, the US counterterrorism programs, a limited number of Islamic jihadist groups, and regional stability in Sahelian countries.

What accounts for anti-government demonstrations or protests in Mali?

Mali has been a democratic nation in West Africa since 1992, while other countries in the subregion struggled to accept the ideology. Malian democracy was achieved through extensive, peaceful public protests against Traore's decades-long military regime after the collapse of the Cold War. The protestors were against the president's authoritarian one-party system and the International Monetary Fund austerity measures imposed on the Malian population. Although there was no revolution in the internet and social media networks, the citizens of Mali could use anti-government demonstrations to remove the president from office, a constitutional government was established with regular elections and political and civil rights were respected. 1992 marked the beginning of multiparty democracy in Mali. Mali has become a darling democracy for Western



governments. Statistical analysis shows that protests or anti-government demonstrations have become common in Mali between 1997 and 2005. Donors rewarded Mali for its democratization with substantial increases in foreign aid in the years outlined above.<sup>451</sup> It is worth noting that anti-government demonstrations in Mali occur for many reasons, notably economic, social, political, regional, and external factors. The protests in 1997 emerged from economic instability resulting from neoliberal policies imposed by the international financial institutions on Malian citizens. The structural adjustment programs contributed to the economic inequality gap between the rich and poor, with a high cost of living and massive unemployment. On the other hand, the demonstrators also demanded that the central government address the Tuareg grievances to prevent further rebellions in the future. During these demonstrations, the Malian armed forces massacred over a hundred protesters. The central government imposed a curfew, which did not prevent the demonstrations from continuing. The security forces committed human rights violations, and the perpetrators of the horrific were not prosecuted. Meanwhile, in 2001, the Malians protested against the central government's proposed constitutional referendum mooted by President Konare, which would guarantee him impunity of prosecution, which the public felt threatened the independence of the judiciary. The anti-government demonstrations against the referendum continued until the protestors' demands were met. During these protests, the Malian security forces used excessive force against the demonstrators. In addition, a few protestors were killed. Similarly, in 2005, Malian citizens again protested against neoliberal policies and austerity measures that affected the citizens of Mali. The policies have led to economic instability and massive unemployment among

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<sup>451</sup> Nicolas Van De Walle (2012). Foreign Aid in Dangerous Places: The Donors and Mali's Democracy, WIDER Working Paper, No. 61

the youth.<sup>452</sup> Malians engaged in the mammoth anti-government demonstrations that lasted for three months and called for the government of Ibrahim Keita to resign because of election irregularities, kidnapping of the opposition leader Soumalia Cisse, mismanagement, corruption, insecurity, and insurgency, mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic, and economic weakness. In addition, the protesters were also against Keita's government when the constitutional court overturned parliamentary election results for thirty members to give an incumbent government's political party an advantage in the parliament. The demonstrations were led by a non-partisan organization known as the June 5 Movement Rally of Patriotic Force (M5-RFP), composed of opposition party leaders, civil society organizations, and supporters of an influential Imam Mahmoud Dicko and the head of Mali's High Islamic Council. The president deployed security forces to disperse the protestors, and eleven people were killed in the process. Also, the government ordered the arrest of the organizers of the protest, former ministers, and religious leaders. Interestingly, protest in Mali symbolizes a profound governance deficit, which is invariably followed by a military coup. For instance, anti-government demonstrations against President Moussa Traore's and Ibrahim Keita's governments led to a military coup.<sup>453</sup>

In sum, citizens of Mali engage in anti-government demonstrations primarily against election irregularities, mainly when an incumbent government used its influence and position to turn the results in its favor. In addition, insecurity is another factor that causes Malians to demonstrate against their government, particularly the historical grievances of the Tuareg ethnic minority group, which successive presidents have neglected, which contributed to the expansion

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<sup>452</sup> Stephen Zunes & Katherine Nesbitt (2009). *Mali's March Revolution 1991*, International Center on Nonviolent Conflict

<sup>453</sup> Media Foundation for West Africa (2020). *Anti-Government Protest Triggers Massive Violence in Mali*

of Islamic jihadist organizations, causing instability in the country claiming the lives of innocent civilians. Similarly, the government's economic policies contribute to poverty, unemployment, and high cost of living, compelling Malians to protest to effect change in government policy.

How did US military aid and training of Malian armed forces affect the 2012 and 2020 coups in Mali?

Since independence, Mali has experienced a series of coups. However, the case study will delve critically into the 2012 and 2020 coups to better understand what factors motivated the Malian armed forces to remove democratically elected presidents from office. In addition, several schools of thought have associated these coups with US military assistance and training of the Malian armed forces as a cause of both coups. Others argue that the US has played a significant role in the coups because the coup leaders were US-trained officers. The study will employ qualitative evidence from the existing literature to determine whether US security assistance and training programs played a role in the military coups.

The 2012 rebellion in northern Mali, in which the separatists defeated Malian security forces, marked the turning point that led to the coup. Disillusioned junior officers held the government of Amadou Toumani Traore, aka ATT, responsible for the defeat and orchestrated a military coup that removed him from office. The soldier's accusations against the central government for its failure to provide adequate military equipment to combat the insurgent groups and Islamic groups further underscore the gravity of the situation. The coup shocked the international community, which viewed Mali as a poster child democracy that was more stable than its neighbors.<sup>454</sup> On the other hand, Malian political analysts, journalists, and Malian Islamic

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<sup>454</sup> Sergei Boeke and Gillian De Valk (2021). The Unforeseen 2012 Crisis in Mali: The Diverging Outcomes of Risk and Threat Analyses, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 44, No. 10, 835-854

scholars also blamed the deposed president for the failure to implement several peace agreements signed between the central government and the insurgent groups. ATT failed to resolve the north-south development dichotomy, which has existed for several decades. A US-trained officer led the coup, Amadou Sanogo, and this direct involvement underscores the potential influence of US military assistance in the events. The coup created a severe security crisis and a collapse of the Malian armed forces, which helped the Tuareg rebels and Islamic jihadist groups in northern Mali to expand their territories. Meanwhile, the regional organizations ECOWAS and the Continental Organization of the African Union mobilized the international community to prevent the junta from being recognized. The Tuareg, in partnership with the Islamic groups, declared an independent northern Mali a Tuareg State of Azawad, and a Sharia law has been imposed.<sup>455</sup>

Also, some academic scholars blamed the political and constitutional crises in Mali on the collapse of Qaddafi's regime by the US-led NATO because Tuareg served in Gaddafi's Islamic Legion and returned home with heavy weapons and extensive warfighting experience to orchestrate the rebellion that led to the coup. Some scholars were also skeptical about the efficiency of US counterterrorism programs because the US provided millions of military aid and decades of training to Malian armed forces. Still, the troops were defeated by the insurgents and jihadist groups, which has confused many people to question the effectiveness of the training the troops received from the US military forces. Another group also accused the high-ranking generals of corruption as one of the grievances since the generals often purchased the wrong parts to siphon defense money. In addition, many scholars and political analysts believe the US training programs

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<sup>455</sup> Dona Stewart (2013). What is Next for Mali? The Roots of Conflict and Challenges to Stability Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

were associated because US trainees carried out nine coups in many African countries and succeeded in eight.

Secondary qualitative evidence from the existing literature has shown that the 2012 coup was primarily motivated by grievances among Malian armed forces for the humiliation of being defeated by the Tuareg rebels and Islamist jihadist organizations because of the central government's incompetence to provide the troops with the necessary military equipment.<sup>456</sup> On the other hand, although US military aid and training programs existed in Mali before the coup, their direct influence on the events of 2012 is still unclear. Critics also pointed out that despite the military training and equipment the Malian armed forces received from the US, the soldiers still faced challenges regarding corruption, discipline, and operational effectiveness in fighting counterinsurgency and counterterrorism.

In 2020, another US-trained officer, Assimi Goita, overthrew a civilian government through a military coup and accused the president of corruption, interference in national elections, insecurity, and economic hardships as a justification for the coup. The coup leader participated in several US military exercises and training to counter extremist groups in Mali and the Sahel. Gen Carter Ham, the Commander of AFRICOM, has admitted that the US made mistakes in its training programs for Malian armed forces by focusing too much on tactical and technical issues instead of values, ethics, and military ethos.<sup>457</sup> Research shows that strengthening military effectiveness without making governing institutions strong promotes successful coups, which can also increase the likelihood of civil war. In addition, coups can be discouraged when donors provide a

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<sup>456</sup> Ibid

<sup>457</sup> Robbie Gramer and Chloe Hadavas (2020). The US Military Trained Coup Plotters in Mali

comprehensive mechanism of transparency and accountability for security assistance to the recipient nation like Mali.

According to Nick Turse 2020, the US-trained officers have led coups in Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mauritania, and Gambia. However, the US has spent millions of dollars establishing stability in the West African countries. Instead, the training programs produced coup leaders, creating instability in their countries, contrary to the training objectives, which aimed at promoting stability and eliminating conflict and extremism. Why were US-trained officer coups common in West Africa?<sup>458</sup>

Seymour and McLauchlin (2020) conducted empirical research regarding the ‘foreign training causes hypothesis’ and posited that foreign training in modern militaries aimed at strengthening civil-military relations. Therefore, frequent coups in coup-prone countries do not significantly affect training programs. The scholars argued that a vital factor that must be examined is the kind of training undertaken, and the country’s political climate will explain why the coup happened.<sup>459</sup> Seymour and McLauchlin also argued that the US should not focus too much on elite units because such units can cause problems in dysfunctional states like Mali.

Furthermore, critics again argued that the underlying crisis of coups, especially in West Africa, stemmed from the US, France, and other Western donors' security assistance, which focused on counterterrorism gains instead of promoting institutional building. Peter Pham, a US Special Envoy for the Sahel region, told a US Institute of Peace audience that the coup that overthrew Ibrahim Keita in 2020 was carried out because of the irregularities surrounding the

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<sup>458</sup> Nick Turse (2020). US-Trained Officers Have Led Coups

<sup>459</sup> Lee J. M. Seymour & Theodore McLauchlin (2020). Does US Military Training Incubate Coups in Africa? The Jury Is Still Out

March 2020 elections. Thus, the coup was initiated because of a legitimacy crisis and not a poor economy.

In short, some commentators have argued that the training of Malian security forces focused too much on technical and tactical expertise to the detriment of internalizing democratic norms and standards of military professionalism. However, the main goals of the training programs focus on norms and values such as the promotion of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and civilian control over the armed forces, were placed in the back seat as the US, France, and the European Union focused on counterterrorism operations to defeat Islamic jihadist organizations. In addition, Risa Brooks argues that these norms do not prevent US military forces from entering politics in America. Sharan Grewal finds that the growing politicization of American officers is being transferred to the Malian armed forces, affecting the importance of norms. The US and other international actors injecting significant resources into fragile states' armed forces like Mali is a risky business that can lead to unwanted consequences in Mali. The US, France, and other international actors must invest in economic development and institutional building instead of security-centric and elite unit programs in Mali. The impact of military training and security assistance on coups in recipient states remains limited and difficult to determine.

In sum, the US military assistance and training programs might have influenced the capabilities and conduct of the Malian armed forces to some extent; internal political dynamics, socioeconomic grievances, and governance challenges drove Mali's coups. Moreover, the effectiveness of US security assistance and training programs is to promote stability and democratic governance in Mali, and the US demonstrated this when it suspended Mali's military assistance and training programs after the coups. The US military aid and training programs might have influenced the capabilities and conduct of the Malian armed forces to some extent. Domestic

political dynamics, socioeconomic grievances, and governance challenges primarily drove Mali's coups. However, the effectiveness of US military assistance and training programs in promoting stability and democratic governance in Mali remains a subject of debate and scrutiny.

To what extent does US military assistance affect instability in Mali?

This case study section provides a detailed analysis of the effect of US military assistance on Mali. In the 1990s, the government of Mali implemented a political liberalization and decentralization policy. The political liberalization contributed to the revolution and expansion in mass media, television stations, the internet, community organizations, and competition among national, regional, and local leaders in Mali. In addition, the decentralization policy has given northern leaders more control over their territories and autonomy than previous administrations. The policy began to address the north-south development dichotomy and the economic and political marginalization grievances of the Tuareg minority ethnic groups in northern Mali.

The US security assistance to Mali increased post-9/11 when Mali supported the global war on terror. America established counterterrorism programs in Mali and the Sahel to counter extremist groups and domestic insurgents. The creation of the counterterrorism programs affected the decentralization policy that has given autonomy to northern cities, which the Tuareg ethnic minority was demanding from the central government was taken away by the US global war on terror policy. The US has funneled millions of dollars to the central government through the PSI and other aid programs. However, the Malian government used these funds to develop the south and neglected the north. The central government's policy to deny the north of the counterterrorism funds generated more poverty in the north and widened the north-south development gap again. As a result, northern Mali leaders were aggrieved by the US counterterrorism that destroyed the decentralization policy introduced to bridge the gap between the north and the south. The PSI has



become a political instrument that promotes development in the south, and the central government has continued to marginalize northern Mali. The minority ethnic groups in the north have realized that the Malian government and the US global war on terror policy have destroyed the decentralization policy and made the region economically disenfranchised.

Another factor by which US military assistance has negatively impacted Mali's instability was the military and security-focused engagement with Mali. The US Regional Security Framework for Mali focused on the military and increasing the Malian security forces' capabilities to combat Islamic jihadist extremist groups, not on economic development, national-level institutional building, or developing solid national governance and addressing economic conflict drivers in Mali. The counterterrorism programs focused solely on monitoring extremist organizations in Mali, the Sahel, and the Sahara Desert. The central government has used the programs to settle scores against individual groups, exacerbating the Mali crisis. The US, France, and the European Union have invested millions of dollars in counterterrorism operations in Mali instead of strengthening institutions that can guarantee sustainable stability. For example, the US has two counterterrorism strategies: PSI with a 7.5 million budget and the TSCTP with a 500 million dollar budget. France also created Plan Sahel, a counterterrorism program with 58 million Euros, and the EU launched the Strategy for Security and Development (SSD), with 600 million Euros, all focused on fighting Islamic jihadist organizations in Sahel and Sahara.<sup>460</sup> The US and other international actors concentrate on security and counterterrorism operations to address transnational threats in Mali, worsening the internal political crisis. According to Ibrahim Yahaya, a Sahel security analyst, the US, France, and other Western donors are responsible for some of the

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<sup>460</sup> Gregory Chauzal & Thibault Van Damme (2015). The Roots of Mali's Conflict, Clingendael CRU Report

security crises in Mali because too many resources have been pumped into the military, which has changed the security landscape in Mali. Western investment has shifted the balance between the political class and the army. Mali has doubled its military spending as a percentage of GDP. Parliamentary oversight remained weak as the military became powerful, and civil society organizations lacked the access and expertise to become effective watchdogs in Mali.<sup>461</sup> In addition, Mali's crisis is political and economic rather than military. Therefore, the US's long-term stability and resilience against extremists depend on an approach directed toward economic development and strengthening political institutions. Similarly, the Malian government must invest in political, social, and economic development to resolve Mali's instability problems, notably the north-south development dichotomy.<sup>462</sup>

On the other hand, the US military assistance also affected Mali's instability through the pressure the US exerted on the Malian government to control market capital flows and prevent separatists and terrorists from gaining influence in ungoverned areas in Mali and the Sahel. The inhabitants in the north and the minority ethnic groups saw the policy as an attack on Islam. Since the global war on terror rhetoric, both the US and the Malian government have labeled them as terrorists. For example, the former US ambassador Huddleston referred to the people in the north as 'Salafist terrorists,' and these types of inflammatory statements and the pressure from the US to suffocate the region from their smuggling enterprise, their only source of livelihood intensified instability between the central government and the minority ethnic groups. The US policies and

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<sup>461</sup> Ena Dion & Joseph Sany (2021). After Two Coups, Mali Needs Regional Support to Bolster Democracy

<sup>462</sup> Dona Stewart (2013). What Next is for Mali? The Roots of Conflict and Challenges to Stability, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

programs affected the northern citizens of Mali because funds directed to the programs provided no development in the region.

Another factor through which the US security assistance has affected instability in Mali was the French intervention. Although French intervention ousted the Islamist jihadist groups from the main cities in the north, it did not address the economic and political grievances; instead, it created a humanitarian crisis in the north. In addition, the US supported the intervention in northern Mali with ground troops, tankers, bombers, aircraft to transport French troops to the north, intelligence, and logistical support for the operations. The French and US interventions in the north generated a vast number of internally displaced people and refugees, and many minority ethnic groups fled to neighboring countries such as Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania, and south Mali. Also, the intervention and conflict increased the smuggling of arms, weapons, drugs, human trafficking, and cigarettes.<sup>463</sup>

On the other hand, US military assistance affected Mali's instability through human rights abuses. Malian security forces trained by US military personnel used security assistance to abuse innocent Malian populations. The armed forces committed human rights violations in conflicted affected areas, which has fueled resentment among local populations, especially in the north. Corruption is another critical factor through which the US military aid has affected Malian instability. The Malian government and high-ranking military generals have been involved in several corruption scandals because of the excessive quantity of security assistance to Mali, and the US failed to implement a comprehensive policy mechanism to guide transparency and accountability. This has assisted the central government and military officials to siphon money meant for the forces with impunity. As a result, the central government and political elites had no

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<sup>463</sup> Ibid

incentive to build a capable military force to drive violent extremist groups in the north, and the Malian government spent less on the military because of the pervasive nature of corruption and the deficiencies also affected the Ministry of Defense, which was poorly administered with ineffective institutional capacity. Mali received the most extensive security assistance, but the armed forces were not proficient tactically in coordinating operations because of corruption and government neglect of the military. Corruption has become endemic in Malian politics due to excessive security assistance from several international actors.<sup>464</sup>

In conclusion, US military assistance negatively affected Mali through security-military-centric counterterrorism operations, human rights abuses, corruption, and humanitarian crises. Security assistance that is perceived to support repressive or corrupt regimes can exacerbate existing grievances within Malian society, especially Tuaregs, which can further instability, such as various rebellions caused by minority ethnic groups in Mali. Conversely, military assistance that addresses the underlying political, social, and economic issues can promote sustainable stability.

The case study seeks to use evidence from the qualitative literature to understand the effect of US military assistance on Mali. The study will apply the existing evidence to determine whether US security assistance affects Mali positively or negatively or to draw a better conclusion. In addition, the extant evidence will guide the researcher in determining whether the effect of US military assistance on Mali is a bidirectional relationship or a two-way causality. This means both variables have affected each other in the study. In other words, the evidence will help the researcher determine if US military assistance promotes stability or instability in Mali. The case study aims

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<sup>464</sup> Stephen Tinkel (2020). US Counterterrorism in the Sahel: From Indirect to Direct Intervention, *International Affairs*, Vol. 96, No. 4, 875-893

to apply '*the instability-stability hypothesis*' to assess the effect of US military assistance on Mali. The primary goal of US military aid to Mali is to promote internal and regional stability, but sometimes, the assistance can produce unintended adverse consequences. The US changed the PSI counterterrorism program, which was security-centric in focus, to TSCTP to expand its focal point in addressing socioeconomic issues driving violence in Mali and the Sahel. The TSCTP has taken a comprehensive and whole-of-government approach towards terrorism and development initiatives in Mali. The TSCTP aimed to tackle conflict drivers, especially in northern Mali, to guarantee regional peace and stability. On the other hand, the US suspended its military aid to Mali when the military removed the democratically elected president from office in 2012. In addition, the US also canceled Flintlock exercises that were scheduled to take place in Mali after the coup. Also, coup-related restrictions did not apply to humanitarian assistance, which is defined in Mali as health and food security. The US has become the leading provider of humanitarian assistance in Mali and allocated 445.9 million dollars to the Sahel between 2012 and 2013 and 119.3 million for drought and conflict-related areas in Mali. In addition, the US terminated the 461 million dollars allocated to Mali through MCC to improve and build an international airport in Bamako.<sup>465</sup> The US has demonstrated that its military assistance to Mali promoted domestic and regional stability. Alternatively, the Leahy law also prohibits the US from supplying security assistance to a foreign nation whose armed forces are involved in a military coup.

Furthermore, the US suspended security assistance to Mali when Malian armed forces were accused of committing human rights violations. The security forces executed several civilians during the conflict in the north. Military aid to Mali was suspended because of human rights abuses. This again indicates that the US provides military assistance to Mali to maintain stability,

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<sup>465</sup> Alexis Arieff (2013). Crisis in Mali: Congressional Research Service

leading to economic development. Johnnie Carson, Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of African Affairs, 2013 testified before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs that the crisis in Mali resulted from poor governance, weak democratic institutions, and a lack of development and economic opportunities in the country, contributing to the instability. Senator Carson argues that the restoration of democracy and negotiations with minority ethnic groups in northern Mali are necessary to restore stability. Therefore, the Malian government must address the economic and political marginalization questions, and the US should continue to provide humanitarian assistance to the region. Such statements from Carson have demonstrated the US's willingness to bring stability and peace to Mali and assist in addressing conflict drivers through the expansive role of the TSCTP.<sup>466</sup>

Similarly, the US has taken similar military measures that removed a civilian president, Ibrahim Keita, from office in 2020. Again, the US suspended and canceled security assistance and all multinational exercises involving Mali until a democratic government was restored. The sanctions, suspensions, and cancelations imposed on Mali concurrently affect both military aid and instability. In other words, the explanatory and the response variables have affected each other in the case study. Therefore, a bidirectional relationship or a two-way causality has occurred between the two variables of interest.

In sum, the evidence from the extant qualitative literature has demonstrated that US military aid affects Mali's political instability negatively and positively. The negative evidence includes counterterrorism programs that destroyed decentralization policy, notably in northern Mali, security-military focused policy, corruption involving the Malian government and high-

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<sup>466</sup> Johnnie Carson (2013). The Crisis in Mali: Interests and International Response, Bureau of African Affairs Before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington DC

ranking generals affected the capability of the armed forces, humanitarian emergency created by French and US interventions in the north, and human rights violations by the Malian armed forces. At the same time, the US sanctions, suspensions, cancelations, and statements from Senator Carson have shown the positive effects of US military aid on Mali.

How did US military assistance and training programs affect human rights in Mali?

Academic scholars, political analysts, security analysts, policymakers, international studies students, and political science graduate students have become interested in understanding the effects of military assistance on human rights in Mali. Human rights violations are prominently featured in Mali's instability literature. The US has become a critical security assistance supplier to Mali since the collapse of the Cold War and during the global war on terror policy after 9/11. During the rebellion and Islamist occupation of the north, human rights abuses became predominant in the north during and after the coup. Malian armed forces committed atrocities against Tuareg rebels and other minority ethnic groups in the north. In addition, Malian armed forces detained, tortured, and executed alleged rebel collaborators and members of rival units. The armed forces involved in these despicable atrocities used US and French military equipment to commit these crimes in Mali. The junta failed to investigate those soldiers who committed the heinous crime, and the perpetrators were left unpunished. Malian security forces were implicated in several human rights abuses, and according to Amnesty International, the majority of the victims were Tuaregs, Arabs, and Mauritania nationals. For example, Islamic preachers traveling to a conference in Bamako were murdered in a military camp because they were linked to jihadist Islamic groups. In addition, nine of the preachers came from Mauritania, and the central

government apologized to the Mauritania government and promised to investigate the killings. Still, nothing was done, and the perpetrators were never prosecuted.<sup>467</sup>

According to Human Rights Watch 2012, after the coup initiated by Amadou Sanogo, twenty soldiers loyal to the coup leader disappeared and were feared dead. Human Rights Watch documented that there was a counter-coup in 2012, and twenty-one armed forces implicated in the counter-coup vanished without a trace. Despite Sanogo's direct involvement in the forced disappearance of the soldiers and torture, the US-appointed him to take charge of the security sector reform of the Malian army.<sup>468</sup> After the French intervention in Mali and the defeat of the jihadist groups in the north, Malian forces carried out enforced disappearance in the frontline areas and regions captured by armed groups. Amnesty International has found that security forces involved in the extrajudicial killings of over forty civilians the army accused of having a link to the armed groups and violent extremist organizations in the north.<sup>469</sup> Again, the crime was not investigated, and the perpetrators were never prosecuted.

On the other hand, the US reported on human rights violations in Mali in 2000. The report states that the president of Mali respected its citizens' human rights. However, security forces reported torturing and killing suspects in custody. Malian security forces committed extrajudicial killings, and the Judiciary also continued to be influenced by the executive branch and the courts involved in massive corruption.<sup>470</sup>

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<sup>467</sup> Amnesty International (2013). Agenda for Human Rights In Mali, Amnesty International Publications

<sup>468</sup> Testimony (2012). Statement: Testimony Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Subcommittee on African Affairs, Addressing Developments in Mali: Restoring Democracy and Reclaiming the North

<sup>469</sup> Amnesty International (2013). Agenda for Human Rights in Mali: Amnesty International Publications

<sup>470</sup> United States Department of State (2001). US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights



According to Nick Turse, the US has provided billions of dollars in military assistance to Mali and its neighbors for over two decades, and the Malian government's armed forces are using US weapons and training tactical skills to commit human rights abuses and terrorize civilians they are meant to protect. In addition, Malian security forces tortured detainees to force confessions regarding their membership in Islamist groups. According to Human Rights Watch, Malian security forces were involved in executions, forced disappearances, and incommunicado detentions. However, these abuses against the troops did not prevent the US from supplying security assistance to Mali. It has been argued that the US only suspended military aid to Mali whenever there was an army coup. Against this background, scholars, human rights organizations, activists, advocacy groups, and journalists accused the US of participating in human rights violations in Mali. For instance, during anti-government demonstrations, security forces used US and French military equipment and weapons against demonstrators and several innocent Malians.

Furthermore, the UN MINUMA, Human Rights and Protection Division (HRPD) found that 700 civilians were murdered, and the Malian security forces extrajudicially killed 195. Similarly, human rights abuses related to counterterrorism operations increased by Malian security forces in recent times. The Malian government uses the security forces to suppress dissent or target political opponents.

In short, the Malian government and security forces used US training programs designed to enhance their capabilities, such as counterterrorism and counterinsurgency, to commit gross human rights violations against the Malian citizens they are meant to protect. Similarly, the US failure to provide accountability and transparency mechanisms within the Malian security sector, such as training on investigating and prosecuting human rights abuses, allowed forces to engage in abuses.

How did an increase in or rise in US military assistance affect violent extremist organizations in Mali?

Since the post-Cold War, Mali has been affected by overlapping security, political, and humanitarian crises, mainly through Tuareg rebellions. Despite the challenges facing Mali, the US has become a critical player in Mali's domestic affairs after the terrorist attacks and the global war on terror. The US increased military assistance and security cooperation with Mali to maintain internal stability over domestic insurgent groups, especially in the north. Also, the US security policy changed dramatically toward Mali and the Sahel region when the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GPSC) in 2003 abducted Western tourists in the area. Against this background, the US launched counterterrorism and counterinsurgency programs in Mali and the Sahel to prevent violent extremist organizations from using the swaths of ungoverned areas and territories as breeding grounds to launch future attacks against the West.<sup>471</sup> Northern Mali and the Sahel have become international focus. Despite endemic corruption in the central government of Mali, the US and other external actors continued to increase Mali's military aid and training programs to guarantee domestic and regional stability. The security conditions and dynamics in northern Mali and the Sahel started to deteriorate due to the central government's failure to exercise solid control over its territorial integrity, which benefited GPSC in expanding its territories in the north. AQIM has consolidated its position in the north despite the increase in security assistance to the central government. The security dynamics in the north were exacerbated after the collapse of Qaddafi's regime in 2011 when the Tuaregs living in Libya returned home to form the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) to free three regions from the central

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<sup>471</sup> Emizet F. Kisangani (2012). The Tuaregs' Rebellion in Mali and Niger and the US Global War on Terror, *International Journal on World Peace*, Vol. 29, No. 1, 59-97

government's control and create an independent homeland for Tuaregs in northern Mali. The separatist group 2012 engaged in a rebellion against the Malian state in an alliance with Islamic jihadist groups, which remains the most relevant event that changed the political trajectory of Mali.<sup>472</sup>

In addition, the Tuareg rebels and the Islamist jihadist groups, including AQIM, Ansar Dine, and the Movement for the Unity and Jihad of West Africa with the French acronym (MUJAO), defeated the Malian security forces and gained control over the region. The Tuareg and the violent extremist organizations declared northern Mali an Islamic caliphate. Although the US military aid and security cooperation with Mali increased to fight the groups' pervasive corruption, the Malian government's continued failure to address the underlying root causes and internal divisions in the Malian security forces affected their capabilities and unity to defeat the violent extremist organizations. The rebellion was met with a coup, and the US suspended its military assistance and security cooperation with Mali. The US efforts to strengthen governance and maintain stability in northern Mali, the Sahel, and the Sahara were hampered by the frequent military interventions in Malian politics, which has affected the effectiveness of the US programs to counter the extremist groups in the regions. Moreover, the suspension of military assistance and the training programs have aggravated the security problems, which has given the jihadist groups leverage to expand and capture more territories in the north. In addition, this development has helped terrorist organizations in northern Mali and the Sahel to recruit new fighters and launch cross-border attacks. The suspension of the programs reduced Malian's security forces' capacity to deploy in the affected areas in the north. Meanwhile, Mali returned to constitutional government

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<sup>472</sup> Nicolas Van De Walle (2012). Foreign Aid in Dangerous Places: The Donors and Mali's Democracy, WIDER Working Paper, No. 61

in 2013 with a civilian government, and the US resumed its military assistance and security cooperation with Mali to defeat the violent extremist groups. After Mali transitioned to democratic rule, France intervened in northern Mali to recapture the contested territories with the support of the US to drive the extremist groups from the region. The US provided resources, logistics, intelligence, and ground troops, which led to a successful recapturing of the cities in the hands of the groups. Because of pervasive corruption and continued internal divisions in the army coupled with a lack of capacity to project force against the Islamist jihadist organizations, the French security forces handed over power to AFISMA with the support of the US. The US continued to support AFISMA's annual budget of 500 million dollars.

On the other hand, after the US and French security forces recaptured the vital cities, Mali witnessed a military coup again in 2020. The US again suspended military aid and security cooperation with Mali. However, because of the inconsistency of US military assistance due to frequent military intervention, Mali faces severe security and governance crises in the north. The government of Mali signed a series of peace accords with the separatists in the north, but provisions remain unimplemented. Against this background, signatory armed groups continue to reassert territorial control in the vast desert of northern Mali. The Islamist insurgency has spread from the north to stable central Mali, where jihadists have leveraged inter-ethnic grievances and local resentment toward state actors. The jihadists have proven resilient and transformed the evolving conflict to their advantage.<sup>473</sup> Due to policy concerns, the US also suspended some legally permissible programs that have assisted the terrorist and rebel groups to grow in strength.

Moreover, despite constant military intervention in politics, US military assistance has affected violent extremist organizations in several ways in northern Mali and the Sahel. The

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<sup>473</sup> Alexis Arieff (2020). Mali's Crisis, Congressional Research Service

military aid has been involved in direct action against extremist groups through airstrikes, drone strikes, and special forces operations that targeted key leaders, training camps, and logistical networks of the groups and disrupted their operations. Also, the US has provided training and assistance to Malian security forces to enhance their counterterrorism capabilities, including training in counterinsurgency tactics, intelligence gathering, and border security measures. Through these operations, the US aims to strengthen Malian security forces' capacity to confront the threats of extremist organizations in northern Mali. In addition, US military assistance in Mali is part of broader efforts to promote regional security cooperation, which includes support for regional initiatives such as the G5 Sahel Joint Force, which bring together troops from Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mauritania to combat terrorism and organized crime in the Sahel. Besides the military aid, the US has provided humanitarian and development assistance to address the root causes of extremism in Mali. This includes support for governance and economic development programs to improve stability and reduce grievances that can fuel extremism.<sup>474</sup>

Alternatively, the crisis has negatively impacted the US military assistance, training programs, and counterterrorism operations, and the Islamist jihadist organizations have expanded their territories in north and central Mali. Today, state actors remain absent from the north, and signatory armed groups have not disarmed or maintained parallel administrative structures in some areas in the north. New armed groups have emerged since 2015, and the Malian government's to implement the peace agreements contributes to the further destabilization of Mali, notably north and central Mali. The north has become a sanctuary for terrorist organizations, the very problem the US wanted to address, but its programs were severely affected by the military's frequent

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<sup>474</sup> Michael Shurkin, Stephanie Pezard, & Rebecca Zimmerman (2017). *Mali's Next Battle: Improving Counterterrorism Capabilities*, RAND Corporation

intervention in politics. The Malian junta has replaced French troops with a Russian private military company, the Wagner Group. Deadly terrorist groups and other actors have occupied several parts of Mali, contributing to the upsurge in political instability and violence. Transnational organizations such as JNIN, ISGS, Ansar Dine, and MUJAO have occupied northern Mali, and the US has scaled back its programs and footprint in Mali due to the constant military intervention in politics in Mali.<sup>475</sup>

In conclusion, the effect of US military assistance on violent extremist organizations in Mali is complex due to the political and constitutional crisis that faced Mali between 2012 and 2020. Mali received unprecedented security assistance from the US during post-Cold War and post-9/11 to combat domestic insurgent groups and transnational terrorist groups. However, the Malian government and security forces could not defeat the groups due to the Malian armed forces' constant political intervention, which has affected the US counterterrorism and counterinsurgency programs in northern Mali and the Sahel region. Mali's conflict landscape is also complex, with multiple armed groups, ethnic tensions, and competition over resources contributing to instability. The US military assistance has targeted extremist organizations but failed to tackle the underlying historical grievances or resolve the broader political and socioeconomic factors driving the conflict. Moreover, the effectiveness of US security assistance in defeating violent extremist groups depends on the central government's policy implementation strategy, the capacity of the security forces, and the level of coordination among international actors and regional dynamics in the Sahel region. It is worth noting that despite the US efforts to strengthen the Malian armed forces, governance, corruption, and internal divisions have persisted, undermining the effectiveness of US-trained units and hindering broader efforts to stabilize the country. The US

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<sup>475</sup> Alexis Arieff (2020). Crisis in Mali: Congressional Research Service

security assistance failed to eliminate violent extremist organizations because of constant coups and the Malian government's inability to address the underlying root causes of extremism.<sup>476</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In sum, the case study's findings regarding the US contributions to Malian instability, based on the existing secondary qualitative literature, have demonstrated evidence of what I termed an 'instability-stability nexus.' In terms of instability, US military assistance has been used by the Malian security forces to commit human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, torture, and forced disappearances. These abuses undermine the efforts to build trust with the local populations and contribute to grievances that fuel instability. Similarly, some scholars have argued that excessive military assistance and overreliance on counterterrorism programs that focused too much on tactical and technical issues instead of values, ethics, and military ethos might contribute to the US-trained officers carrying out coups in Mali. However, no statistical evidence in the literature has proven this analysis. On the other hand, looking at the trends of US military aid to Mali from the extant literature, instability drives US military aid to Mali. The US security assistance increased whenever there were rebellions and an increase in violent extremist groups' atrocities against civilian populations. In contrast, the US military assistance and training programs also contributed to stability in Mali. The primary goal of the assistance is to strengthen democracy and governance and reduce poverty through economic development in Mali. The US suspended military aid and security cooperation with Mali when the armed forces intervened in politics to restore stability or whenever human rights violations were identified. Empirical evidence from the literature shows that the US rebranded the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) program, which was expanded to address underlying conflict drivers in Mali. In addition, the

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<sup>476</sup> Ibid

Leahy law is another powerful US stability instrument prohibiting military aid to foreign nations involved in removing democratically elected civilian governments from office or engaged in human rights abuses to maintain domestic and regional stability. In addition, the US has provided extensive non-military economic programs and humanitarian assistance to promote domestic and regional stability in Mali. As I have observed the trends of US security assistance from the qualitative evidence, I am convinced that instability is the significant factor driving the increase.



## CHAPTER IX

### STRUCTURE OF THE SOMALIA CASE STUDY

The Somalia case study is diligently classified into four main sections, each serving a particular purpose in my analysis.

1. The first section of the study, fortified by the statistical findings, is a testament to the robustness of the analysis. These findings, more than mere data points, are the cornerstone of the study, providing a clear understanding of the shifts in the explanatory and response variables over time. This section maps the periods when US military assistance and training of the Somali armed forces, terrorist attacks, civil wars, coups, and anti-government demonstrations occurred, highlighting the urgency and impact of these shifts on the variables' increased or decreased value. The primary aim of this section is to elucidate the reasons behind these changes in specific years, instilling confidence in the thoroughness and reliability of the research methodology and keeping the audience informed and engaged.
2. The second section of the study, provides the audience with a comprehensive understanding. It traces the trajectory of Somali politics from the era of decolonization and independence, illuminating the factors contributing to the country's instability and stability. This detailed historical analysis is pivotal in comprehending the intricate dynamics of Somali politics and their implications on the current security landscape, leaving the audience with a profound sense of the depth and breadth of the research.
3. The third section of the study, is designed to provide the audience with a strong sense of the reliability of the findings. It examines and analyzes the shifts in the Somali armed forces' military aid and US training. The section also includes a dedicated part that outlines

significant changes in the study's instability variables. This comprehensive approach is pivotal in understanding the effects of these shifts and their implications for US foreign policy and stability in Somalia, leaving the audience with a strong sense of the reliability and validity of the findings.

4. The fourth and concluding section offers a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to instability in Somalia and their implications for US foreign policy. It is designed to leave the audience feeling enlightened. It synthesizes the causes of the shifts and discusses whether they explain the changes and variations in US foreign policy. The section further delves into the intricate relationship between instability and changes in US foreign policy, providing a comprehensive understanding that leaves the audience feeling informed and enlightened.

TABLE 13. FLUCTUATIONS IN THE INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Somalia	Year	Military Aid	US Troops	US Trainees	Terrorist Attacks	Civil Wars	Coups	Protests
	1995	0	820	0	29	1	0	0
	1996	0	750	0	28	1	0	0
	1997	0	600	0	145	0	0	0
	1998	0	231	0	0	0	0	0
	1999	0	80	0	9	0	0	0
	2000	0	70	0	36	0	0	0
	2001	0	68	0	3	1	0	0
	2002	0	72	0	6	1	0	0
	2003	0	56	0	7	0	0	0
	2004	0	70	0	2	0	0	0
	2005	4957220	18	0	20	0	0	0
	2006	0	38	0	22	1	0	0
	2007	60368139	54	0	408	1	0	0
	2008	0	529	0	436	1	0	0
	2009	3.18E+08	400	0	381	1	0	0
	2010	1.19E+08	386	0	295	1	0	0
	2011	86287324	178	16	344	1	0	0
	2012	2.19E+08	173	3	783	1	0	0
	2013	2.91E+08	310	1061	660	1	0	0
	2014	1.47E+08	106	1	1589	1	0	0
	2015	11788890	232	494	1455	1	0	0
	2016	153938	350	4	1583	1	0	0
	2017	1.28E+08	285	1158	1917	1	0	0
	2018	2.4E+08	220	1680	1144	1	0	0
	2019	1.54E+08	155	9	860	1	0	0
	2020	0	148	0	885	1	0	0

Since Somalia was declared a failed state in the 1990s, and the US disengagement and withdrawal of its military personnel from Somalia due to the death of eighteen soldiers during the battle for Mogadishu, the US played no significant role in the country until al-Qaeda bombed its embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam. Though the US started counterterrorism programs in the region to apprehend or kill the perpetrators, the US did not provide security assistance to Somalia. Statistical data has indicated that Somalia received zero military aid from the US between 1995 and 2008. The zero military assistance might be associated with the collapse of the central government when Somalia was declared a failed state. Several non-state armed groups-controlled Somalia's territorial sovereignty. Meanwhile, empirical evidence demonstrates that Somalia received the highest security assistance from the US in 2009. During this period, the US provided the highest military aid to the Somalia Transitional Federal Government, the African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM), and Somali security forces, and since the departure of Ethiopian security forces from Somalia to counter and defeat the remnants of Islamic Courts Union, al-Shabaab, and several clan-based non-state armed groups from the country and prevent these insurgent groups from gaining territories. In addition, US military assistance to Somalia increased in 2012 and 2013. The increase in this period was due to the US official recognition of the new Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). Due to US recognition and changes in Somalia's security landscape, several scholars have considered Somalia a 'fragile state' instead of a 'failed state.' On the other hand, US military aid to Somalia decreased between 2014 and 2016. A critical reason for the decrease in security assistance might be due to al-Shabaab loss of several territories that were previously under its control to the Somali Federal Government because of a series of military offensives from AMISOM and the US airstrike also killed the leader of the terrorist organization. The Federal Government of Somalia has offered amnesty to al-Shabaab fighters who have

surrendered and renounced violence. The US appointed its first ambassador to Somalia in more than twenty-two years. In addition, security assistance to Somalia was also reduced because of corruption within Somalia National Army forces and human rights violations leveled against the security forces.

Moreover, US military aid increased between 2018 and 2019. During this period, the Trump administration intensified the fight against al-Shabaab with increased airstrikes and expanded advisory support. The president has argued that Somalia has become a terrorist haven, and the government lacks command and control of its territory, which limits the effectiveness of its national capabilities. In addition, the US increased counterterrorism operations and was directly involved in the fight against al-Shabaab. Airstrikes doubled during this period, President Trump approved more than seven hundred advisors, and US forces conducted partnered ground operations. AFRICOM recorded forty-seven airstrikes in 2018 and sixty-three in 2019 against al-Shabaab.

Meanwhile, between 1995 and 2010, the US military recorded zero training for Somali security forces. This might be due to the country's volatility since Somalia has no recognized central government. In addition, statistical data shows that US military personnel training for Somali security forces started in 2011. During this period, the US armed forces began to train Somalia National Army forces because Ethiopian security forces defeated the Islamic Courts Union, and al-Shabaab were chased out from the capital, Mogadishu. Alternatively, the US military started to train the troops to defeat al-Shabaab in other parts of Somalia. On the other hand, statistical analysis shows that 2014 recorded the lowest training of Somalia National Army forces. The decrease in training might be due to al-Shabaab's loss of territories and the killing of the leader in a US airstrike. Also, the decrease might be due to human rights abuses committed by the Somali

security forces. In addition, US training of the Somali security forces increases between 2017 and 2018. Training increased during these periods because the US officially recognized the Federal Government of Somalia and established its first permanent diplomatic mission in Somalia in 1991. Similarly, training increased because the Federal Government of Somalia developed a conditions-based Transitional Plan for assuming security responsibility from AMISOM by the end of 2021.

Furthermore, statistical data shows that between 1996 and 2006, a few terrorist attacks were recorded. During this period, Somalia was a failed state ravaged by civil war, and credible terrorist groups were absent. In addition, terrorist attacks in Somalia were moderate between 2007 and 2013, according to empirical statistical data. During this period, the US and AMISOM intervened directly in Somalia to defeat al-Shabaab and restore peace and stability. Meanwhile, between 2014 and 2018, recorded the highest terrorist attacks in Somalia. Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria Somalia (ISIS-Somalia) intensified terrorist attacks. The US airstrikes killed the leader of al-Shabaab, Ahmed Godane, and the militant group increased its attacks against civilians, Somali security forces, AMISOM forces, and the US forces.

Moreover, statistical data indicates that between 1995 and 2020, Somalia was engulfed in civil wars from non-state armed groups, notably al-Shabaab. Alternative empirical evidence has suggested that Somalia has not witnessed any military intervention since Siad Barre's government was overthrown in 1969. In addition, statistical data has indicated zero anti-government demonstrations in Somalia. Due to the unstable nature of the country, the citizens of Somalia have no viable, legitimate government that can address their grievances.

The purpose of Somalia's case study is to investigate how US military assistance and training of Somali security forces affected political instability in Somalia. In other words, this case study focuses on two critical, independent variables selected based on the statistical findings:

military aid and US training of Somalia's security forces and response variables: terrorist attacks, civil wars, coups, and anti-government demonstrations or protests. The study aims to use both primary and secondary source qualitative evidence to address the causal questions or arguments regarding the effect of the explanatory on response variables. More importantly, the case study on Somalia will address the following causal arguments or empirical questions: What explains the fluctuation in US security assistance to Somalia? How did US military assistance affect instability in Somalia? How did US military aid and training of Somalia's security forces affect human rights in Somalia? To what extent does the US military aid and training program promote stability? What explains the fluctuations in terrorist attacks in Somalia? To what extent did an increase in US military aid affect violent extremist organizations in Somalia? In addition, the case study will apply process tracing techniques to understand events and changes that contributed to policy variations in Somalia. Finally, the case study's conclusion will be based on empirical evidence from the existing scholarly literature.

## BACKGROUND AND DRIVERS OF INSTABILITY IN SOMALIA

The Horn of Africa has become a critical geo-strategic and most disputed region. The area stretches from the Arabian Sea to the Indian Ocean and comprises six weak and politically unstable countries, including Somalia. In addition, the region has become a strategic location since the establishment of the Suez Canal, and the Red Sea has become a vital communication line connecting Europe and Asia.<sup>477</sup> Today, the area has become an integral part of a superpower competition. In addition, the Horn of Africa has been inhabited by different ethnic, religious, and cultural groups, and this diversity has generated deep-seated antagonism, distrust, and ill-will,

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<sup>477</sup> Stephen Burgess (2009). Stabilization, Peacebuilding, and Sustainability in the Horn of Africa, *Strategic Studies Quarterly*

which nurtured fierce nationalistic values, beliefs, and attitudes that have exacerbated the political and ideological differences between the states in the region. These centrifugal forces have caused the Horn of Africa to become a region of unending political upheaval, social instability, economic chaos, armed conflicts, and a battleground for several savage conflicts.<sup>478</sup> This condition enabled the great powers to intervene in the region's domestic affairs and spread their influence. During the Cold War, the area became the US-Soviet domain of competition for spheres of influence.

European powers divided Somalia into three central regions. The British colonized the north, the Italians in the south, and the French controlled the Djibouti area. Somali people have a distinct cultural, ethnic, and linguistic identity, which colonial powers overlooked in creating new Somalia's borders. During World War II, Italian Somalia and the Ogaden region were combined with Ethiopia to appease King Menelik.<sup>479</sup> Similarly, the British in 1950 gave part of Somali territory to Kenya. British and Italian Somalia gained independence in 1960 and merged to become the Republic of Somalia. Somalia became a democratic nation with a single homogeneous ethnic group. In addition, all Somalis are Muslims and share the same language and culture. The Somali territory under French control became independent as Djibouti in 1977. The politics of the Republic of Somalia were centered on clan allegiance, and unifying Somali communities in Ogaden, French Somaliland, and northern Kenya dominated Somalia's foreign policy after independence.<sup>480</sup> Somalia engaged in an irredentism war with Ethiopia in 1967 over Ogaden during the regime of Osman Daar, marking the first time Somalia was involved in war after independence. Somalia was defeated in the Ogaden War, a trajectory that has changed Somalia's

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<sup>478</sup> Muhabie Mekonnen Mengistu (2015). The Root Causes of Conflicts in the Horn of Africa, *American Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 28-34

<sup>479</sup> Afyare Abdi Elmi & Abdullahi Barise (2010). The Somalia Conflict: Root Causes, Obstacles, and Peacebuilding Strategies, *African Security Review*, Vol. 15, Issue 1, 32-54

<sup>480</sup> [britannica.com/topic/history-of-somalia](https://www.britannica.com/topic/history-of-somalia)



political landscape. In 1969, General Mohamed Siad Barre seized power through a military coup. Siad abolished political parties, suspended the constitution, and ruled by the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC).

On the other hand, the Siad Barre regime denied Somalis political participation and filled his regime's appointments with members of his clan, excluding other clans or ethnic groups. The US imposed economic sanctions on Somalia after the coup, and Barre's authoritarian regime was supported by military assistance from the Soviet Union. The president dissolved the SRC and formed the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP). A referendum approved a new constitution, general elections were conducted, and Siad Barre was elected as a civilian president in 1980. Meanwhile, the president was reelected in 1986. Somalia's defeat in the Ogaden War affected the stability of Siad Barre's regime and caused it to face clan pressure. In addition, several Somali politicians called for the resignation of the president. More importantly, two opposition parties were formed with the support of other clans, namely the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) and the Somali National Movement (SNM). These groups were supported by Ethiopia and Kenya and waged an anti-government guerrilla war against Siad Barre's government. In 1991, the United Somali Congress and several other armed groups ousted the authoritarian president from power. These two guerrilla groups caused Somalia to degenerate into a bloody civil war that lasted for the past three decades war.<sup>481</sup> Since Barre's dictatorial regime collapsed, Somalia has become a failed state without a central government.<sup>482</sup> Continuous violent conflicts have affected the central and southern parts of Somalia. The Republic of Somaliland declared independence, gradually built its state structures, and embarked on a path towards democratization. In addition,

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<sup>481</sup> Johnathan Chan (2021). *An Analysis of the Civil War in Somalia*

<sup>482</sup> Sabine Donner, Hauke Hartmann, Claudia Harterich and Sabine Steinkamp (2022). Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index Country Report, Somalia

Puntland has declared a semi-autonomous regional state in northeastern Somalia, with its governance institutions, and was integrated into the Federal Member States (FMS) of Somalia's government system.<sup>483</sup>

Evidence from the qualitative extant literature demonstrates that drivers of instability in Somalia are associated with internal and external factors. Several internal and external actors have played a crucial role in the various stages of the conflict in Somalia. The first internal factor identified by the existing literature was competition for power and resources, which created clan-based militias to protect Somalia's scarce water, livestock, and pastoral nomadic lifestyle. After independence, access to the country's resources became a critical problem because political patronage predominantly featured in civil service, and corruption became pervasive in all government institutions. In addition, Siad Barre's regime built new institutions to consolidate power that would benefit its clan members, and opposition groups were outlawed.<sup>484</sup> The president's clan political elites controlled the state's power and purse. Another internal driver observed in the extant qualitative scholarly literature was linked to President Siad Barre's repressive and authoritarian administration. During the Somalia-Ethiopia Ogaden War, some military officers attempted to overthrow Barre's regime. After the failed coup attempt, Barre's government started to use excessive force against coup plotters and their clans. This nefarious behavior of the autocratic president and its officials served as the genesis of the civil war when other clans opposed the government's use of excessive force. In addition, political and business elites also depend heavily on the state apparatus to protect and advance their business interests.

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<sup>483</sup> Ibid

<sup>484</sup> Afyare Abdi Elmi & Abdullahi Barise (2010). The Somalia Conflict: Root Causes, Obstacles, and Peacebuilding Strategies, *Africa Security Review*, Vol. 15, Issue 1, 32-54  
*Review*, Vol. 15, Issue 1, 32-54

Somalia's politics is clan-centered, and clans with weak firepower are disadvantaged since mobilization to threaten armed violence against rival groups is based on clan firepower. Against this backdrop, clan-based violence served as one of the root causes of Somalia's conflict. Also, Somali citizens have experienced twenty-one years of repressive government of Siad Barre. Barre's regime prevented dissent and relied on excessive use of force and collective punishment to suppress opposition, and many civilians were killed and imprisoned. This despicable behavior compelled several Somali citizens to join opposition forces to fight his government.<sup>485</sup> On the other hand, Ethiopia has armed the opposition groups during the tension between the two nations over Ogaden. This helped the opposition groups to attack Barre's regime from Ethiopia. Additionally, tribalism also plays a significant role in the civil war. Clan fighting dominates the conflict, especially in the southern parts. Although Somalia is a homogeneous ethnic group, there are several subgroups, each with its practices and clans. Clans form the bedrock of Somali society, and identity and political exploitation promote instability.

Colonial legacy was the third significant external driver in the extant academic literature. The European colonial powers partitioned Somalia into five segments. The British occupied the northern region, and the Italians occupied the southern region. The French occupied Djibouti. In addition, the British gave the Ogaden region to Ethiopian King Menelik as a sign of appeasement, and the other two Somali territories remained under the control of Ethiopia and Kenya. Ethiopia continued to interfere in Somalia's domestic affairs, and the two countries supported opposition parties in their respective countries to overthrow their governments. Somalia and Ethiopia have had unstable relations throughout history based on irredentism created by European powers. Somalia's Ogaden territory British colonial powers gave to King Menelik as a sign of appreciation

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<sup>485</sup> Ibid

contributed to some of the root causes of Somalia's instability. In conclusion, the existing literature identifies competition for power and resources, military repression, and colonial legacy as critical drivers contributing to instability in Somalia.

## US FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD SOMALIA

The US established diplomatic relations with Somalia after the country gained independence. However, the two countries experienced strained relations when Mohamed Siad Barre toppled the civilian government. The US imposed economic sanctions on Barre's government until the country returned to constitutional government in 1980. Somalia degenerated into a civil war and subsequently became a failed state with drought, famine, and humanitarian disaster. The US intervention in Somalia began with the humanitarian assistance established by the United Nations to assist Somalia's population dying from hunger and starvation. The UN Security Council established the United Nations Operation Somalia (UNOSOM) to monitor the ceasefire and the delivery of humanitarian aid. In addition, President George H. Bush authorized a US-led United Task Force (UNITAF) in Somalia to protect the delivery of humanitarian assistance, known as 'Operation Restore Hope.' The UNITAF aimed to subdue warlords and armed factions to provide humanitarian relief and handed the initiative to a UN operation called the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) II.<sup>486</sup> In 1993, the Somali armed factions in Mogadishu killed eighteen US military personnel, and President Clinton ordered the withdrawal of the US troops from Somalia in 1994. On the other hand, the US closed its embassy in Somalia during the height of the civil war in 1991, which was re-opened in 2018. The US has been the most significant humanitarian assistance donor to Somalia, and its policy aligns with its strategic aims

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<sup>486</sup> Ted Dagne (2007). *Somalia: Current Conditions and Prospects for a Lasting Peace*, Congressional Research Service

across several administrations to stabilize Somalia by building a compelling set of Somali state institutions.<sup>487</sup>

## US COUNTERTERRORISM POLICY IN SOMALIA

The US has considered the Horn of Africa as a significant source of terrorism, particularly after the 9/11 attacks and the bombing of its embassies in Kenya and Tanzania by al-Qaeda operatives. In addition, the area has come under intense scrutiny by US counterterrorism specialists because the region is filled with weak, corrupt, and warring states.<sup>488</sup> Somalia became a theater of US counterterrorism operations during the global war on terror. In addition, the US Presidents and policymakers became concerned that Somalia's ungoverned spaces could become a fertile ground for Islamic terrorist organizations since the country cannot control its territorial integrity due to the absence of a compelling central government.<sup>489</sup> Meanwhile, the US believes instability in the Horn of Africa might threaten the shipping lanes on the Somali coast. Against this background, when the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) dislodged the Somali warlords supported by the US to control Mogadishu, President George W. Bush's administration assisted Ethiopian armed forces and Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in overthrowing the ICU. The Islamic Courts Union was defeated and driven out of the capital, Mogadishu, and Ethiopian troops protected the TFG. The US worked with various local and international partners to stabilize Somalia, including Kenya, Uganda, the African Union, the UN, the European Union, and Somali forces.

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<sup>487</sup> Paul D Williams (2020). Understanding US Policy in Somalia's Current Challenges and Future Options, Research Paper

<sup>488</sup> Tim Docking (2004). Terrorism in the Horn of Africa, US Institute of Peace

<sup>489</sup> International Crisis Report (2023). Out of the Box: How to Rebalance US Somali Policy

On the other hand, al-Shabaab emerged to resist the Ethiopian army's intervention in Somalia. The group is an Islamist Sunni jihadist armed group formed in the 2000s to establish an Islamic state in Somalia, whose central idea is the opposition to a Western-backed government. The Ethiopia-led intervention turned al-Shabaab into a large and well-funded jihadist insurgency group, and the US mission in Somalia involves both political and military dimensions. In the political spectrum, the US focuses on building effective Somali state institutions, including security forces, primarily the Somali National Army (SNA) and regional and federal police forces. The US security interest in Somalia since 2006 was to reduce the threat posed by al-Shabaab. As a result, the US provided military training, equipment, and funds to support the African Union operations, bilateral support to Somali neighbors to help build the Somali National Army, and frequent military operations in Somalia.<sup>490</sup> The US officially intervened in Somalia in 2007 for the first time since it withdrew its military personnel from the country after the death of US forces in Operation Restore Hope. Similarly, the African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM) was established in 2007 to assist federal Somali authorities in fighting al-Shabaab to restore peace and stability in Somalia. The US has provided financial, logistics, training, equipment, and advice to AMISOM and the Somali National Army. Since 2007, the US has spent 2.5 billion dollars on counterterrorism operations in Somalia.<sup>491</sup> Moreover, the primary goals of US counterterrorism programs in Somalia are to promote political and economic stability, prevent Somalia from becoming a terrorist sanctuary, and reduce the country's protracted humanitarian crisis.

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<sup>490</sup> Paul D. William (2020). Understanding US Policy in Somalia's Current Challenges and Future Options, Research Paper

<sup>491</sup> Eniola Anuoluwapo Soyemi (2023). Making Crisis Inevitable: The Effects of US Counterterrorism Training and Spending in Somalia, Waston Institute, International and Public Affairs

## CAUSAL MECHANISMS OR QUESTIONS

What explains the fluctuations in US military assistance to Somalia?

The case study delves into events and factors contributing to fluctuations in US military assistance to Somalia. It focuses on qualitative evidence from the existing literature to explain the factors leading to the changes in US security assistance to Somalia. In the study's context, fluctuation is defined as an event that has either increased or decreased US military assistance or training programs in Somalia. The scholarly literature has attributed fluctuations in US security assistance to Somalia to several factors and events in the 1990s, such as changes in US foreign policy priorities, shifts in Somalia's political landscape, security concerns, and humanitarian crises. The US and Somalia had fractured relations when the military intervened in politics. However, a friendly relationship was established when the country transitioned to constitutional rule. Significantly, the level of US military aid to Somalia has often correlated with the country's political stability and security situation. During periods of relative stability or when the US perceived progress in Somalia's governance and security institutions, military aid might have increased. Conversely, during heightened instability, such as political unrest, human rights abuses, and corruption among Somali security forces, military assistance might have been reduced or suspended. In the 1990s, during the collapse of Siad Barre's regime after two decades in power due to weak governance and interclan warfare, Somalia degenerated into a civil war. The country became a failed state with no central government to exert control over Somalia's territorial sovereignty. Against this backdrop, the US suspended all security assistance to Somalia, serving as the first significant decrease or fluctuation in US military aid to Somalia. Another primary reason that led to the reduction or absence of US security assistance to Somalia was the withdrawal of the US security forces from Somalia after the killing of US military personnel deployed to

deliver humanitarian assistance, monitor the ceasefire, and provide stability in Somalia. In addition, the US military assistance to Somalia decreased when the US airstrikes killed the leader of the terrorist organization and several prominent and high-ranking personnel. In addition, the military aid to Somalia decreased in 2016 when al-Shabaab lost much of the territory it once controlled, and US airstrikes again killed many fighters in a training camp. The US was successful in the decapitation strategy against the terrorist organization, which made US actions in Somalia part successful. The weakening of the group's ability to cause atrocities to US military personnel, the Somali National Army, and AMISOM forces contributed to a decrease in military aid to Somalia. Also, the US security assistance to Somalia decreased when the US suspended its military aid to the Somali National Army, citing corruption. Another factor that led to a decrease in US security assistance to Somalia was the reduction of the African Union Mission in Somalia forces.<sup>492</sup> In conclusion, the US military aid to Somalia decreased because of US disengagement from Somalia after the demise of the US forces, the decapitation of the al-Shabaab leader and prominent members, corruption, and the weakening of the terrorist group.

In contrast, several factors and events contributed to increased US military assistance to Somalia between 2009 and 2013. AMISOM was established to restore peace and stability in Somalia after Ethiopian armed forces chased away the Islamic Courts Union from Mogadishu and the US designated al-Shabaab as a foreign terrorist organization in 2008. In 2009, the US security assistance to Somalia increased astronomically when Ethiopian security forces withdrew. During this period, al-Shabaab terrorist attacks increased, and the group transformed its structure and strategy when it declared its allegiance to al-Qaeda. Members of the Somali diaspora launched an

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<sup>492</sup> Seth Jones, Andrew Liepman, & Nathan Chandler (2016). Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia, Assessing the Campaign Against Al-Shabaab, RAND Corporation



online fundraising forum for a transnational jihadist cause for the organization. In addition, the US provided security assistance to the Somali National Army in areas such as tactical engagement, logistics, and communication capabilities to counter al-Shabaab insurgency. Al-Shabaab's territorial control expanded after the Ethiopian troops withdrew, seized several territories and had freedom of movement in 2010. On the other hand, the US has increased its counterterrorism operations against the terrorist group and conducted several airstrikes against various targets in Somalia.<sup>493</sup> In addition, during this period, the US provided logistical support and resources for AMISOM forces to counter al-Shabaab and prevent the insurgent group from gaining territory. The formation of the Somali Federal Government in 2013 also led to an increase in security assistance. The US recognized the Somali Federal Government for the first time in twenty-two years, leading to increased security assistance and training and equipment programs for Somali security forces. The increased military assistance helped the group pursue al-Shabaab in the south and central Somalia. Alternatively, an increase in security assistance helped the Kenyan armed forces and clan militias launch an air and ground offensive against al-Shabaab, and the terrorist group withdrew from the capital. In addition, the US also uses 'the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (2001 AUMF) and Collective self-defense principles to target al-Shabaab directly. This has opened the door for the US to use more extensive lethal operations against the terrorist jihadist organization.<sup>494</sup>

Another significant factor that led to an increase in military assistance to Somalia between 2018 and 2019 was al-Shabaab and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria Somalia branch terrorist attacks intensified with unprecedented lethality in both Somalia and neighboring countries against

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<sup>493</sup> Ibid

<sup>494</sup> Oona Hathaway & Luke Harting (2022). *Still At War: US and Somalia*

civilians, Somali National Army, AMISOM forces and countries participating in the African Union Mission for Somalia, especially Kenya, and Uganda. Also, the US counterterrorism operations increased for regional powers and peacekeeping forces tremendously during these periods due to al-Shabaab and other violent extremist organizations' atrocities in Somalia and surrounding countries. Furthermore, the Trump administration also intensified the fight against al-Shabaab based on increased airstrikes and expanded advisory support. The US, under President Trump, continued to target al-Shabaab and its members under 'Presidential Policy Guidance' (PPG) introduced during Obama's administration and new rules that superseded PPG. The Trump administration introduced the 'Principles, Standards, and Procedures' (PSP) guidance, giving operational commanders more power to strike a broader range of targets than PPG.<sup>495</sup> In sum, US military assistance increased due to security concerns and counterterrorism operations, the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops, AMISOM forces, and capacity building and institutional reform in Somalia.

Overall, the fluctuation in the US military assistance to Somalia is the result of counterterrorism operations, regional dynamics, support for AMISOM forces, corruption, human rights violations, and US disengagement from Somalia.

What accounts for the fluctuations in terrorist attacks in Somalia?

Somalia became a failed state in the 1990s, with several non-state armed groups fighting to influence the nation with their Islamic ideologies. Statistical data has shown that terrorist attacks between 1995 and 2006 were few. This could be attributed to the absence of credible jihadist organizations and non-state armed groups fighting for political influence. After the collapse of Siad Barre's regime, the Al Itihaad al-Islamiya (AIAI) emerged as one of the radical armed groups in

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<sup>495</sup> Ibid

Somalia. More importantly, al-Qaeda members were against the US deployment of military personnel in the Horn of Africa. As a result, Osama bin Laden supplied arms and weapons and trained warlords to fight US armed forces in the region. After the US disengagement from Somalia, the AIAI expanded its activities to target Ethiopian interests. On the other hand, Ethiopian troops and Somalia clan militias conducted a series of military operations against the AIAI, which suffered and split due to ideological and strategic differences.<sup>496</sup> The warlords and clan leaders exerted much influence and leveraged over a fragmented and failed state. The Sharia Courts that implemented justice in Mogadishu and other areas in Somalia merged to form the Islamic Courts Union to create an Islamic community to unify the country under Islam rather than clan allegiance. The governance vacuum allowed jihadist organizations to thrive, and in 2006, the ICU took power in Somalia to overcome the US-backed secular warlords. In 2006, with US support, Ethiopian troops invaded Somalia to fight the ICU. Al-Shabaab was formed in 2000 and incorporated into the ICU as a radical youth militia. The invasion of Somalia marked the radicalization of the group.

Moreover, between 2009 and 2011, Al-Shabaab's territorial control expanded. In 2009, the terrorist organization pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda and welcomed the organization's core members into its leadership. The group took control over several cities in the north and west of Mogadishu, and in 2010, it had freedom of movement in southern Somalia. Al-Shabaab terrorist attacks intensified when it attacked civilians watching the World Cup in Kampala as a retaliation for Uganda's role in AMISOM. The group killed more than a hundred Transitional Federal Government politicians, civil servants, and parliamentarians.

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<sup>496</sup> Seth Jones, Andrew Liepman & Nathan Chandler (2016). Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia, Assessing the Campaign Against Al-Shabaab, RAND Corporation

In 2011, al-Shabaab terrorist attacks started to decline when AMISOM launched several offensives against the terrorist group, recaptured many contested territories, and suffered huge losses. In addition, al-Shabaab was defeated and chased out of the capital, Mogadishu, with the support of Kenyan armed forces, the Somali National Army, and clan militias. In 2012, al-Shabaab has increased its activities to Kenya for its role in Somalia. AMISOM and the Somali National Army continued to make territorial gains and increased their control in former strongholds. Territorial losses affected the group's finances, recruitment, and popular support.

On the other hand, despite the territorial losses, al-Shabaab increased its terrorist attacks, including hotels, restaurants, supreme courts, airports, the presidential compound, and the UNDP compound, and assassinated more than a hundred security officials, politicians, and civil servants in 2013 and 2014. In addition, al-Shabaab successfully attacked Kenya's Westgate mall and killed several people in 2013. In the same year, the US airstrike killed the group's leader, Ahmed Godane, which affected the group's strategy, and internal fissures began to emerge.<sup>497</sup> In 2015, Al-Shabaab's terrorist attacks decreased due to a series of offensives from AMISOM. Despite the efforts of AMISOM, al-Shabaab remains a lethal organization capable of attacking and killing combatants and non-combatants.

Furthermore, in 2016, AMISOM recaptured almost all the contested territories from al-Shabaab, and the US strikes also killed several fighters in training camps. The US drones and airstrikes reduced the group's ability to operate in a cohesive manner, which has limited its ability to control local areas. The US has taken away the battlefield leaders with valuable skills, resources, and connections, affecting the group's cohesiveness in 2016.

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<sup>497</sup> Ibid

Meanwhile, other factors have affected and weakened al-Shabaab's resiliency in Somalia outside the US, and AMISOM offensives, including the war in Iraq and Syria, attracted many Somali diaspora fighters who moved away from Somalia toward foreign battlefields. Richard T. Thorton, head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's field office in Minnesota, asserts that Somali-Americans have turned away from al-Shabaab and are drawn to the Islamic State. Another factor that has weakened the activities of al-Shabaab was internal divisions over support of the Islamic State. The leadership structure became fractured by competition between Ahmed Abdi Godane, who embraced global jihad and foreswore Somalia's clan structure. In addition, Mukhtar Robow, one of the high-ranking leaders in al-Shabaab, preferred the Somali clan structure, and these fissures affected leadership decision-making. Also, al-Shabaab's support base and recruitment were affected by the drought in East Africa, which resulted in famine, and the group's decision to ban international non-governmental organizations operating in its territories weakened the terrorist group since several youths were no longer interested in joining. The organization's reputation suffered because it decided to ban humanitarian aid organizations, forcing some supporters to turn away. Similarly, since the military defeat, the jihadist organization also suffered a significant decline in revenue, and its support plummeted in Somalia and neighboring countries. Al-Shabaab lost several territories it once controlled through a series of AMISOM offensives, notably Operation Linda Nchi (2011), Operation Sledge Hammer (2012), Operation Eagle (2014), Operation Indian Ocean (2014), and Operation Jubba Corridor (2015). The US and other Western country's direct action operations, such as training, advising, and assisting AMISOM countries, the Somali National Army, and Somali Clan militias coordinated efforts helped in weakening or decreasing al-Shabaab leadership. In addition, al-Shabaab's internal divisions and defections within the organization and several leadership miscalculations during the drought in East Africa

affected the group's cohesiveness. Despite the weakness, al-Shabaab and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria Somalia (ISIS-Somalia) intensified unprecedented attacks in both Somalia and neighboring countries in 2018. Al-Shabaab remains resilient, controls part of the country, and earns revenue of over one hundred and fifty million dollars annually through illicit taxes and mafia-style extortion in Mogadishu and other government-controlled areas. According to the African Union statistics, over 3,500 mobilization forces have been killed by al-Shabaab since 2007.<sup>498</sup> The lethality of al-Shabaab terrorist attacks in 2017 and 2018 was due to a new internationally backed military campaign against the group by the Somali government and an increase in the US airstrikes.

In conclusion, the fluctuations in terrorist attacks in Somalia were due to chronic political instability, including power struggles and a lack of effective governance, creating an environment where terrorist groups could thrive, changes in the group's strategy, internal fissures and dynamics, recruitment drives, leadership changes, and limited resources can result in fluctuations in their activity. Other factors include counterterrorism efforts by AMISOM, Somali government forces, and international partners such as the US intensifying military operations against al-Shabaab. The group responds with a surge in attacks to demonstrate resilience and undermine public confidence in the government's ability to provide security. In addition, leadership disputes and changes within al-Shabaab can lead to fluctuation in attack patterns, and internal disagreements can reduce operational capabilities or increase violence as factions vie for dominance. Similarly, access to resources such as finances and weaponry affects al-Shabaab's operational capabilities. However, increased funding or external support can increase attacks, while resource shortages can cause a decline. Also, al-Shabab's control over territories in Somalia can impact their ability to launch attacks, and losing territories to Somali and AMISOM forces can limit their operational bases and

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<sup>498</sup> Lauren Ploch Blanchard (2019). Somalia, Congressional Research Service

reduce attack frequency. Conversely, gaining control of new territories can provide more opportunities for launching attacks. Regional politics and international interventions influence al-Shabaab's activities. For example, conflict in neighboring countries or changes in international military assistance to Somalia can lead to shifts in al-Shabaab's attack strategies, leading to fluctuations. Understanding the terrorism landscape and the fluctuations in Somalia requires a multidimensional analysis considering all the above factors and their interplay over time.

To what extent do US military assistance and training programs affect instability in Somalia?

US military assistance and training of the Somali National Army have had a significant mixed impact on instability in Somalia, influencing both security dynamics and the overall conflict environment. The US security assistance has both positive and negative consequences for Somalia. While US military aid has aimed to support the Somali government in combating violent extremist groups like the Islamic Courts Union and al-Shabaab and building the capacity of Somali security forces, there have been instances where military aid inadvertently contributed to instability in Somalia. The first central area of US military assistance that affected instability in Somalia was the US support of the Ethiopian intervention in 2006 to fight the Islamic Courts Union. Though the invasion helped to overthrow the ICU, several academic scholars and political analysts criticized it as a potential threat to regional stability. The US support of the invasion inflamed the civil war instead of helping to achieve peace among several non-state armed groups because Ethiopia and Somalia have had unstable relations throughout history based on the irredentism of the Ogaden region.<sup>499</sup> Another factor contributing to both instability and stability identified in the existing academic literature is US counterterrorism operations. The US has conducted direct

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<sup>499</sup> Afyare Abdi Elmi & Abdullahi Barise (2010). The Somali Conflict: Root Causes, Obstacles, and Peacebuilding Strategies, *African Security Review*, Vol. 15, Issue 1, 32-54

counterterrorism operations, including drone strikes and US Special Operations Forces (SOF) raids targeting al-Shabaab leaders and the terrorist group's infrastructure. These operations have disrupted al-Shabaab's command and control structures, leading to periods of reduced insurgent activity and instability. The operations sometimes resulted in civilian casualties. These incidents can fuel resentment and anti-American sentiment among the Somali population, undermining trust in the Somali government and its international partners and potentially providing propaganda for violent extremist group recruitment like al-Shabaab. In addition, the US's direct involvement in Somalia and the presence of the Special Operations Forces in Somalia since 2007 contributed to the escalation of the civil war and intensified al-Shabaab's terrorist attacks.

In addition, there have been allegations of human rights violations and abuses committed by Somali security forces trained and supported by the US, including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, and torture. These abuses also erode public trust in government, fuel grievances, and contribute to instability by alienating communities and driving support for violent extremist groups. On the other hand, concerns were raised about the diversion of US military aid and equipment to unauthorized or unintended recipients within Somali security forces, and this undermines the effectiveness of security assistance programs, which can contribute to corruption and weaken the capabilities of legitimate security forces creating opportunities for extremist groups to exploit leading to instability.<sup>500</sup> Corruption and mismanagement within Somali security institutions contribute to instability and weaken the government's ability to maintain security and governance.

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<sup>500</sup> Ted Dagne (2007). *Somali: Current Conditions and Prospects for a Lasting Peace*, Congressional Research Service



Another area affecting instability in Somalia is the US support for various Somali security actors, including regional militias and clan-based forces. This can lead to fragmentation and competition within the security sector, undermining coordination and exacerbating intercommunal tensions. This can fuel conflict between rival factions, leading to instability. In addition, the US support of the Somali security forces has influenced internal political dynamics, exacerbating rivalries among clans and political factions. This increased tensions and conflict, undermining overall stability.

Moreover, US training of the Somali security forces aimed to build the capacity of the Somali National Army (SNA) and other security forces. Enhanced training and equipment have improved the effectiveness of Somali troops in combating violent extremist groups and securing territories, contributing to reductions in instability in some areas. In addition, the US training programs for Somali security forces have focused on the professionalization and operational capabilities of Somali security forces. The security forces are trained to conduct counterinsurgency operations, which can reduce al-Shabaab's territorial control and influence, thereby decreasing overall instability. On the other hand, US military training programs may focus primarily on technical military skills without adequately addressing broader governance, accountability, and oversight mechanisms within the Somali security sector. As a result, weak governance and lack of accountability can undermine stability by fostering corruption, abuse of power, and human rights violations.<sup>501</sup> Although the US military aid and training of Somali security forces have boosted security forces to counter violent extremist organizations such as al-Shabaab, this has not always translated into improved governance or political stability. Focusing on military solutions has sometimes overshadowed efforts to build inclusive political institutions essential for long-term stability.

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<sup>501</sup> Ibid

In addition, an increase in US security assistance can lead to a rise in terrorist attacks against Somali security and the US military personnel deployed in Somalia. A typical example occurred between 2014 and 2018; al-Shabaab intensified its terrorist attacks when the US military aid increased, which caused the death of the leader, and several leading figures were eliminated from the battlefield. The increase in the US military assistance intensified the civil war between the Somali security forces, and al-Shabaab has indicated a bidirectional causality. This type of causality occurs when a change in one variable causes a change in other variables. Also, when the US suspended security assistance to the Somali National Army because of corruption, the suspension affected both military assistance and the civil war in Somalia simultaneously. This has demonstrated that the fluctuation in military aid affects Somalia's civil war. However, the increased civil war in Somalia causes a rise in US security assistance. Thus, the existing qualitative literature evidence has shown that as al-Shabaab's atrocities increase, the US security assistance also increases to counter and defeat the terrorist organization to maintain stability. Thus, the arrow of bidirectional causality starts from instability in Somalia to US military aid. Instability in Somalia influencing the US military assistance.

In conclusion, while US military aid to Somalia has aimed to bolster its security and stability, its effectiveness has been mixed with unintended consequences and challenges complicating efforts to promote lasting peace and development. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that prioritizes governance, accountability, respect for human rights, and community engagement alongside military assistance. In addition, US training programs have boosted Somali security forces to disrupt al-Shabaab operations. The effects of instability have been mixed, and unintended occurrences undermined long-term stability. Somalia requires a

balanced approach integrating military support with political, economic, and governance initiatives.

The US security assistance and training of Somali security forces might inadvertently contribute to unintended consequences. The primary goals of US military assistance and training programs are to promote peace and stability in Somalia, and this has been demonstrated in the US counterterrorism operations against al-Shabaab, notably the decapitation strategy that eliminated several leading figures and drove the violent organization from the capital and other significant cities to deny al-Shabaab a sanctuary in Somalia. Security assistance and training programs helped mitigate security threats and contribute to stability. In recent years, the US has shifted towards a more comprehensive approach, investing in development, diplomacy, and supporting Somali-led peace processes.

How did an increase or rise in US military assistance affect violent extremist organizations in Somalia?

Non-state armed groups emerged in Somalia during Siad Barre's regime and the Ogaden War with Ethiopia. Two opposition parties were formed with the support of clans, which became guerrilla groups operating from Ethiopia and aimed to overthrow Barre's government. The Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) and the Somali National Movement (SNM) brought war, devastation, and famine to Somalia. After becoming a failed state, the two guerrilla groups became Somalia's primary warring factions. Several unsuccessful peace conferences were held to address the warfare in the 1990s.<sup>502</sup> In addition, a radical group, the Al Itihaad al-Islamiya (AIAI), was also formed aimed at toppling Barre's regime and establishing an Islamic State based on Sharia law, including parts of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti under irredentist claims. During that period,

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<sup>502</sup> [britannica.com/topic/history-of-somalia](https://www.britannica.com/topic/history-of-somalia)

Somalia was declared a failed state, and the SSDF, SNM, and AIAI became the most powerful insurgent groups in Somalia. The US intervened with multinational forces to provide humanitarian assistance to the Somali people, which ended in a disaster. As a result, the US disengaged and withdrew all the military personnel from Somalia. In 2000, the remnants of the AIAI Wahhabi Islamist group, primarily youths, reformed the group, which became known as ‘al-Shabaab,’ which means ‘youth.’<sup>503</sup> The group was incorporated into the Islamic Courts Union as a radical youth militia, which controlled Somalia in 2006.

Furthermore, the US became concerned about the Horn of Africa and Somalia after the 9/11 attacks. President George W. Bush and policymakers believed Somalia and its ungoverned areas would become a fertile ground for Islamic jihadist organizations. Against this background, the US security policy toward the region post-9/11 changed dramatically to deny al-Qaeda and other violent extremist groups a sanctuary in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. To deny insurgent groups a haven in Somalia, the US supported Ethiopia and the Transitional Federal Government to invade Somalia to drive away the Islamic Courts Union. Meanwhile, the invasion was successful but marked the development of the radicalization of al-Shabaab. The hostility between al-Shabaab and Ethiopia has assisted the group in recruiting thousands of volunteers to resist the intervention and occupation through a guerrilla-style strategy and severed ties with all other insurgent groups in Somalia.<sup>504</sup> The ICU was disintegrated, but al-Shabaab survived and mounted guerrilla attacks. The TFG entered Mogadishu after the ICU was chased out, and the African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM) was formed with US support to maintain peace in the capital in 2007.

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<sup>503</sup> Daniel E. Agbiboa (2014). Terrorism without Borders: Somalia’s Al-Shabaab and the Global Jihad Network, *Journal of Terrorism Research*, Vol. 5, Issue 1

<sup>504</sup> Ibid

Moreover, the US intervened in Somalia directly to counter and defeat the al-Shabaab insurgency. The group's popularity started to grow, and the US designated the group a foreign terrorist organization in 2008. The US and other Western countries have adopted a three-pronged approach to weaken and defeat the violent extremist group in Somalia, namely indirect engagement, robust intervention, and tailored engagement. The indirect engagement strategy involves other forces, excluding the US military personnel, conducting targeted strikes and training local Somali security forces. This counterterrorism and counterinsurgency strategy has been implemented to reduce local population blowback that might inflame direct US military involvement. The indirect engagement strategy includes providing all military assistance and actions against al-Shabaab to Somali government forces, non-state actors (Somali clan militias), other Western governments, and regional powers such as Kenya and Ethiopia. However, the strategy became a threat to US interests in East Africa when al-Shabaab joined al-Qaeda in 2012.<sup>505</sup> This strategy was adopted in the mid-2000s, and despite US direct engagement, al-Shabaab leaders saw the US as an enemy because of its unwillingness to accept Somalia to become an Islamic state. Al-Shabaab generated a wave of radical nationalist and religious sentiment among Somalia at home and abroad against Ethiopia's intervention. The terrorist jihadist group used effective media propaganda against Ethiopia, and the group has become a provider of economic and political goods and services to Somali populations. Against this backdrop, al-Shabaab became a de facto government in critical sectors, providing education, justice, security, healthcare, food, and local-level administration. In 2010, the group became the strongest, most well-organized, wealthiest, and best-armed military group that

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<sup>505</sup> Seth Jones, Andrew Liepman & Nathan Chandler (2016). Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia, Assessing the Campaign Against Al-Shabaab

controlled the largest territory in southern Somalia, a significant blow to the US indirect engagement strategy.

On the other hand, the robust intervention involves direct and large-scale US military involvement in fighting al-Shabaab. This strategy includes various US military, political, and other steps to degrade and defeat insurgent groups. The US used this strategy in the 1990s when it participated in the UNITAF and UNOSOM II. During the UNITAF, the US deployed 28,000 military personnel in Somalia to provide security and humanitarian assistance. In addition, it is easy to build public support for robust engagement in Somalia, but the strategy has put American soldiers and government officials at greater risk.

Furthermore, a tailored engagement strategy involves a light US military footprint, notably Special Operations Forces in Somalia, to conduct limited strikes, train Somali security forces, and advise, assist, and accompany local forces in degrading al-Shabaab. The SOFs work with local partners, including the host nation, other countries, or non-state actors, such as tribal and clan forces. The US's direct engagement in Somalia includes covert action through intelligence gathering and sharing among partners. The example of tailored US engagement involves precision air strikes from drones and helicopters to capture or kill terrorists. Others involve raids, free hostages, and target finances of terrorist groups. More importantly, the US uses a tailored engagement strategy to weaken and degrade al-Shabaab in Somalia.<sup>506</sup>

The increase in US military assistance to Somalia has had a significant impact on violent extremist organizations (VEOs) operating in the country, particularly al-Shabaab, the primary militant group in Somalia. Increased US military aid has enabled more robust and sustained counterterrorism operations against al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab started to decline in 2011 due to

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<sup>506</sup> Ibid

AMISOM's offensive, and the US pursued a tailored engagement strategy. The AMISOM-led ground operations and coordination, the US and other Western countries' efforts to build partner capacity and conduct kinetic strikes, and the internal flaws in the group's strategy contributed to its decline. The group started to suffer significant casualties during these operations, and AMISOM played a critical role in al-Shabaab's decline in Somalia. The US, AMISOM, and other partners recaptured several territories from the group. In addition, Kenya and Ethiopian armed forces played crucial roles in military offensives launched to retake territories from al-Shabaab. The group again suffered another significant blow in 2012 when AMISOM and the Somali National Army launched Operation Sledge Hammer. The US provided resources and logistics to all the participants in the fight against the terrorist group. Again, in 2014, AMISOM and Somali National Army forces conducted two significant operations that remarkably reduced al-Shabaab's territories under its control.

More importantly, the US and other Western nations' security assistance to AMISOM, the Somali National Army, and non-state actors contributed to the weakening of al-Shabaab. Several studies have shown that US military assistance and training of the Somali security forces improved the performance of the participants fighting the jihadist extremist groups. Meanwhile, the US direct action and information gathering and sharing, surveillance, and reconnaissance to AMISOM countries conducting ground operations and US airborne platforms such as the Global Hawk unmanned surveillance aircraft and airstrikes that target al-Shabaab operatives have weakened the group's strength.<sup>507</sup>

Moreover, between 2014 and 2016, the US airstrikes killed several of al-Shabaab's high-ranking personnel, including the leader. The US decapitation strategy in Somalia was successful,

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<sup>507</sup> Ibid

and this has affected the group's effectiveness. The drone strikes reduced the violent extremist organization's ability to operate cohesively, and this has limited its ability to control local areas. The US has taken away the battlefield leaders with valuable skills and connections, which affected the group's cohesiveness. Other factors that have contributed to the decline of al-Shabaab's resiliency in Somalia outside the US and AMISOM offensives include the war in Iraq and Syria. Several Somali diaspora fighters were attracted away from Somalia toward foreign battlefields. Richard T. Thorton, head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's field office in Minnesota, asserts that Somali-Americans have turned away from al-Shabaab and drawn to the Islamic State. Another factor that affected the group was internal divisions over support of the Islamic State, and leadership fissures affected decision-making. Moreover, the drought in East Africa affected the terrorist group's support base because of its resulting famine, and this has affected its recruitment strategy. Also, the terrorist group's decision to ban international non-governmental organizations operating in its territories weakened the organization since several youths were no longer interested in joining.<sup>508</sup>

In conclusion, al-Shabaab lost several territories it once controlled through a series of US airstrikes and AMISOM offensives. In addition, the US and other Western countries' direct operations, such as training, advising, and assisting AMISOM countries, the SNA, and Somalia clan militias, coordinated efforts to weaken al-Shabaab's leadership structure. The group's internal divisions, defections, and leadership miscalculations affected the organization's cohesiveness. Alternatively, the tailored engagement strategy of the US, which combined local ground forces with precision strikes and training from the US Special Operations Forces, contributed to the loss of territory, finances, cohesion, and recruitment. Despite the US, other Western countries,

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<sup>508</sup> Ibid



AMISOM, and Somali National Army forces' activities in weakening al-Shabaab, the group remains capable of conducting terrorist attacks in Somalia and neighboring countries. Overall, targeted counterterrorism operations against al-Shabaab include airstrikes, drone strikes, special operations raids, and support for Somali security forces in conducting ground operations against militant strongholds and leadership targets, disruption of VEO networks and operations through increased US military assistance. This has degraded their capabilities and undermined their ability to carry out attacks. Also, the increase in US security assistance has pushed al-Shabaab out of critical territories and reduced their influence in Somalia. Somali security forces supported by US-trained units and equipped with US resources have been able to reclaim previous territories under al-Shabaab's control and limit its ability to generate revenue and recruit new members. Despite the above efforts, al-Shabaab has demonstrated resilience and adaptability in response to increased pressure from Somali and international security forces. The group has shifted tactics, decentralized operations, increased asymmetric attacks targeting civilians and security forces, and exploited governance gaps and local grievances to maintain their relevance and resilience.

## CONCLUSION

In sum, the US military assistance and training of Somali security forces have produced unintended consequences through counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations, which affected instability in Somalia. However, the primary objectives of the US presence in Somalia are to counter, reduce, degrade, and defeat the threat posed by al-Shabaab and other al-Qaeda-affiliated Islamist jihadist organizations in Somalia to maintain peace and stability in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. The US military assistance and training of Somali security forces and AMISOM have disrupted and degraded al-Shabaab. In addition, the US must use a holistic approach that integrates military support with political, economic, and governance initiatives to maintain long-term stability in Somalia. On the other hand, the case study's findings have shown a bidirectional

causality. This means that the explanatory and response variables in the study have mutually affected each other. In other words, security assistance and US training of Somali security forces influenced instability variables and vice versa. However, the direction of the causal arrow begins with instability, which influences the increase in military aid. This has demonstrated that instability is the critical factor driving US military aid to Somalia. Increased instability in Somalia contributes to a rise in US security assistance to Somalia. The empirical qualitative evidence in the existing literature has indicated that instability in Somalia contributes to increased US security and training of the Somali security forces. A classic example of the study's findings could be viewed through the lens of US Operation Restore Hope, launched in the 1990s to monitor humanitarian relief and maintain security in Somalia. The US intervention in Somalia in the 1990s was influenced by instability created by the various non-state armed groups to restore stability in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. In addition, after the 9/11 attacks, the US again intervened in Somalia after its disengagement strategy from Somalia and the withdrawal of US military personnel regarding the battle of the Mogadishu disaster. The second intervention in 2007 was also related to instability created by Islamic jihadist groups, notably al-Shabaab in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. The US intervened to combat and degrade al-Shabaab and transnational terrorism in Somalia to restore peace and stability. Similarly, the US involvement in the international coalition engaged in various maritime security to counter Somali piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden attests that the US's primary aim in Somalia is maintaining stability. For instance, the US suspended security assistance for Somalia in 2017 because of corruption within the Somali National Army; clear empirical evidence shows the US presence in Somalia is to guarantee stability. In addition, evidence from the qualitative scholarly literature demonstrates that through US diplomatic, humanitarian, and military actions, Somalia has moved from a failed state to a fragile nation. Overall, US military

aid and training programs for Somali security forces have aimed to enhance the capacity of Somali security forces to combat terrorist groups like al-Shabaab and stabilize Somalia. The US must encourage the use of smart power and reconciliation strategies between the federal government and federal member states as a viable alternative for establishing strong governance, security, and prosperity for all Somalis.

## CHAPTER X

### STRUCTURE OF THE UGANDA CASE STUDY

The case study on Uganda will be divided into four main sections.

1. The first section summarizes the timings of critical shifts in the independent and dependent variables based on the empirical findings. Specifically, it describes the periods when US military aid and training of the Ugandan armed forces, terrorist attacks, coups, civil war, and anti-government demonstrations or protests increased or decreased. The central purpose of the case study is to explain why shifts or variations occurred in the explanatory and response variables in those specific years.
2. A second section will highlight relevant historical context regarding the background of Ugandan politics during decolonization and independence and drivers of instability/stability.
3. The third section will explain the significant shifts in military assistance and US military personnel training for the Ugandan armed forces. Similarly, a separate section will describe the essential changes in the study's instability variables.
4. The fourth or concluding section will summarize the findings regarding the causes of the shifts and discuss whether they explain that changes in US foreign policy caused instability, instability caused changes in US foreign policy or both.

TABLE 14. FLUCTUATIONS IN THE INDEPENDENT AND RESPONSE VARIABLES

Uganda	Year	Military Aid	US Troops	US Trainees	Terrorist Attacks	Civil Wars	Coups	Protests
	1995	215908	14	0	145	1	0	0
	1996	6637336	19	0	413	1	0	0
	1997	6498930	10	0	239	1	0	0
	1998	6344317	12	0	81	1	0	0
	1999	448781	12	0	75	1	0	0
	2000	356123	10	0	297	1	0	0
	2001	0	18	3	56	1	0	0
	2002	0	14	7	173	1	0	0
	2003	1481975	14	13	231	1	0	0
	2004	3538142	22	61	193	1	0	0
	2005	2937946	22	188	80	1	0	0
	2006	487598	20	201	0	1	0	0
	2007	466149	16	2153	2	1	0	0
	2008	744089	10	2069	3	1	0	1
	2009	4742417	76	2358	11	1	0	0
	2010	20565851	55	923	75	1	0	1
	2011	12775924	46	5547	0	1	0	1
	2012	67779108	108	5597	5	1	0	1
	2013	27042411	104	5579	0	1	0	0
	2014	331175027	110	3589	98	1	0	1
	2015	28864622	84	4157	4	1	0	1
	2016	12671858	162	3127	75	1	0	1
	2017	5304348	122	8560	7	1	0	1
	2018	74075533	84	6609	17	1	0	0
	2019	1.21E+08	34	70	2	1	0	1
	2020	0	32	0	20	1	0	1

The US military assistance to Uganda after the Cold War has undergone critical variations due to changes in the geopolitical environment, human rights concerns, and Uganda's role in regional security dynamics. Statistical data has shown that the US military assistance to Uganda decreased between 2006 and 2008 when the Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF) chased away the Lord's Resistance Army terrorist group from northern Uganda, and human rights violations leveled against the Ugandan armed forces. In addition, US security assistance to Uganda increased between 2010 and 2019. The increase in military aid in 2010 occurred because of the role of US President Obama and the Congress enactment of the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009, the US-Uganda counterterrorism operations and security cooperation and the regional security threats to promote stability in the Great Lakes region. On the other hand, the statistical data has demonstrated a decrease in the US training of Ugandan security forces between 2001 and 2006. During this period, the US military provided training to select units of the Ugandan armed forces as part of broader efforts to enhance Uganda's military capacity and capabilities, particularly in counterterrorism operations and regional stability after the 9/11 attacks. In addition, Uganda faced internal security challenges from the Lord's Resistance Army in the northern region. As a result, the US training initiatives have included support for Ugandan forces engaged in counterinsurgency operations, focusing on tactics, techniques, and procedures for combating asymmetric threats. Furthermore, the empirical data indicates an increase in US training of the Ugandan armed forces between 2011 and 2018. Several factors influenced the increase, including regional security concerns, counterterrorism efforts, and Uganda's role in peacekeeping missions.

On the other hand, statistical analysis demonstrates that terrorist attacks in Uganda increased between 1996 and 1997. After the Cold War, Uganda experienced an increase in terrorist attacks, which were influenced by a range of factors, including domestic politics, regional conflicts, and international terrorism. The Lord's Resistance Army rebels intensified the surge in terrorist attacks during this period. The insurgent group adopted brutal tactics and committed widespread human rights abuses. The LRA insurgency increased in northern Uganda, targeting civilians, government installations, and security forces, and the group attacks included massacres, abductions, and mutilations, causing significant casualties and displacement of the civilian population. Also, the Allied Democratic Forces attacks escalated against civilians and the Ugandan armed forces in western Uganda. Conversely, terrorist attacks decrease in Uganda between 2007 and 2020 due to various reasons and events. The decrease was attributed to Uganda's implementation of robust counterterrorism measures in response to previous terrorist attacks, particularly the 2005 Kampala bombings, for which the Somali Islamist jihadist group al-Shabaab claimed responsibility. Moreover, Uganda experienced fluctuations in civil war and conflict, primarily driven by domestic or internal dynamics, regional factors, and efforts at peacebuilding. Finally, the empirical analysis shows that Uganda has witnessed increased protests between 2009 and 2020 due to various social, political, and economic grievances and problems resulting from the policies of the Ugandan government.

The case study aims to use the existing qualitative primary and secondary sources of evidence to address the study's research question. Significantly, the case study seeks to address the following questions: How did US military aid affect instability in Uganda? To what extent did an increase in US security assistance affect violent extremist organizations in Uganda? What explains the fluctuations in US military aid in Uganda? What explains the fluctuations in terrorist attacks

in Uganda? How did US security assistance affect human rights in Uganda? How did US military assistance affect civil wars and conflict in Uganda? To what extent did the US security assistance and training of Ugandan security forces affect anti-government demonstrations or protests? Furthermore, the case study will examine the causal factors contributing to fluctuations in military aid, training of the Ugandan armed forces, and instability in Uganda to determine a bidirectional relationship, whether both independent and dependent variables affect each other. In addition, due to the lack of primary source qualitative evidence in the literature, the case study will depend heavily on secondary source evidence to draw the study's conclusions. The secondary source evidence includes online information, magazines, articles, newspaper articles, libraries, and archival documents.

Conversely, primary source evidence includes congressional records, diaries, memoirs, official correspondence from US policymakers, violent extremist group leaders, government officials, and speeches from former and current US presidents. These materials provide essential information to the study, and readers find it more convincing and exciting. However, due to insufficient literature on primary source evidence, peer-reviewed publications are used for the study's findings. A case study is essential for gaining comprehensive knowledge about a phenomenon under investigation in the real world. On the other hand, process tracing as a qualitative tool is vital in case study research because it delineates how and why a change occurred in a policy. Case study evidence is observational and non-experimental, which prevents researchers from manipulating the findings. Similarly, researchers are not concerned about the quantities of qualitative evidence but how the researcher analyzes and connects the evidence to achieve the study's objectives. Process tracing helps the researcher examine archival and historical documents and interview transcripts to determine whether the causal mechanism a theory hypothesizes is



found in the case. Against this backdrop, the Uganda case study focuses on military assistance and US training of Ugandan security forces and their impacts on instability in Uganda.

## BACKGROUND AND DRIVERS OF INSTABILITY IN UGANDA

Uganda, a landlocked country in Central Africa, gained independence from British colonial authority in 1962.<sup>509</sup> Since independence, Uganda has experienced a turbulent political history featuring putsches, dictatorship, contested electoral outcomes, civil wars, and military interventions. The country espoused the British parliamentary model after self-determination, which collapsed shortly after the prime minister threw the country into political turmoil, suspended the constitution, abolished the monarchical system, and declared Uganda a republic.<sup>510</sup> In addition, the division of government along ethnic, religious, linguistic, and regional cleavages since colonial rule affected Uganda's unity after independence. Military coups became prevalent in the country's independent political history, and political parties were organized along ethnoreligious and regional lines. Uganda's political climate and democracy were affected by political instability due to frequent military interventions. On the other hand, political violence and flagrant human rights violations by various leaders became a common feature in Uganda's post-independence politics.<sup>511</sup> Uganda's political economy was destroyed after the first coup when over seventy thousand Asians were expelled from the country during Idi Amin's authoritarian regime. However, Uganda's political economy improved when Yoweri Museveni came to power with his National Resistance Movement (NRM). The NRM government adopted a Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) to stabilize and reconstruct Uganda's ailing and declining economy. In addition, Museveni's

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<sup>509</sup> James Forest (2014). *US Military Deployment to Africa: Lessons from the Hunt for Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army*, The Joint Special Operations University Press

<sup>510</sup> Frederick Golooba-Mutebi (2008). *Collapse, War, and Reconstruction in Uganda*, An Analytical Narrative on State-Making, Working Paper, No. 27

<sup>511</sup> Frederick Golooba-Mutebi (2008). *Politics and Local Government in Uganda*

administration received support from Western donors, which helped the administration to restore stability and economic growth after prolonged economic instability during the previous governments. Museveni's government established a new type of democracy, which academic scholars called '*movementocracy or no-party system*,' which the president claimed to help eradicate ethnic and religious divisions featured in previous governments, which led to ethnic exclusion, political violence, and chronic instability.<sup>512</sup> After the Cold War, Western donors and US foreign policy were geared toward democratization, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Democracy was used as an ideological argument for foreign aid to force authoritarian African countries to undertake political reform. However, President Museveni objected and argued that Uganda was not ready for multiparty democracy because of Uganda's political turmoil caused by ethnicity and religion after independence. Thus, based on the past political chaos and drama, the movement or no-party system has become a better choice for uniting and eliminating ethnic divisions in Uganda. The US and other Western donors accepted his proposition and supported the regime despite the democratic deficit in Uganda's politics.<sup>513</sup> The NRM has ruled for twenty-five years as a de facto single-party regime under the umbrella of the movement system that restricted political parties from operating on ethnic or religious ideologies. The president justified his movement system as a post-conflict arrangement to enhance unity and prevent ethnic and religious divisions in Ugandan politics. On the other hand, Museveni and his National Resistance Movement reduced ethnic and religious polarization and conflict, allowing national healing and reconciliation despite the democratic deficit.<sup>514</sup> However, in 2005, a referendum was held, which paved the way

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<sup>512</sup> Giovanni Carbone (2003). Political Parties in No Party Democracy, Hegemony and Opposition Under Movement Democracy in Uganda, *Party Politics*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 485-501

<sup>513</sup> Ellen Hauser (1990). Ugandan Relations with Western Donors in the 1990s: What Impact on Democratization? *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 4, 621-641

<sup>514</sup> Ibid

for multiparty democracy in Uganda. Meanwhile, the economy of Uganda depends on natural resources such as copper, cobalt, gold, limestone, tourism, and agriculture. Uganda currently has a population of 45.8 million, with diverse ethnic groups, and twenty-five percent live below the poverty line. Uganda solidifies itself as an island of stability in Central Africa. Alternatively, Uganda plays significant peacekeeping roles in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and assists in maintaining regional stability.

According to qualitative academic literature evidence, political instability in Uganda was associated with several internal and external factors. However, the first factor identified in the existing literature was British colonial rule, which lasted for sixty-nine years. During colonial rule, the British colonial power divided the country into northern and southern regions. The southerners or Buganda people were employed in the civil service because the Buganda ethnic group was hierarchically organized and structured with a semi-militarized political system and a police force that maintained law and order in the kingdom. This ethnic group occupied a superior position in the colonial administration and received preferential treatment over other ethnic groups in the country, which led to the anti-Buganda sentiment among ethnic groups, which persisted post-independence.<sup>515</sup> In addition, due to the north-south dichotomy, the Buganda kingdom enjoyed more autonomy and had the highest socioeconomic prosperity than all other ethnic groups in Uganda. Additionally, the colonial powers introduced Christianity to the Buganda people, which opened the region to Western education and provided better healthcare opportunities. Moreover, the British colonial powers made Luganda the official language of state administration, education, and religion, reinforcing Buganda's cultural superiority and imperialism in Uganda.<sup>516</sup>

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<sup>515</sup> Frederick Golooba-Mutebi (2008). *Collapse, War, and Reconstruction in Uganda, An Analytical Narrative on State-Making*, Working Paper, No.27

<sup>516</sup> Ibid

Furthermore, the divide and rule created resentment and hatred against the Buganda ethnic group when the colonial master rewarded Buganda with parts of Bunyoro's territories under the Buganda agreement as a sign of appreciation for collaboration with the British in defeating Bunyoro in conflict. This territorial reward has remained a historical hostility between the two ethnic groups during the colonial and post-independence eras. As colonialism became entrenched and consolidated, the Buganda ethnic group in the southern region developed more rapidly than all the other regions, and the ethnic group became the most educated in Uganda, which exacerbated regional economic and social inequality among different ethnic groups in the country.<sup>517</sup>

On the other hand, the political instability literature on Uganda identified colonial powers' recruitment strategy for the Ugandan armed forces as another driver for instability. Northern and Eastern Uganda regions served as cheap rural reservoir centers for recruiting unskilled people into the armed forces because of the war-like physical structure of the people of the north. The army was filled with low-intelligence officers that could be manipulated.<sup>518</sup> The Acholi ethnic groups dominated the military force in the 1960s, and other ethnic groups were underrepresented. This pattern of selective recruitment continued after independence, becoming a significant factor in a series of military coups based on ethnic lines in Uganda post-independence. As a result, ethnicity and religious division played a tremendous role in Ugandan politics after independence. The first prime minister led the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), a political party deeply rooted in ethnicity. Obote's administration witnessed the first post-independence political instability when the leader, from the Langi ethnic group, pursued aggressive policies toward Buganda and its institutions with a referendum on territories given to Buganda during British colonial rule. The

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<sup>517</sup> Ibid

<sup>518</sup> P.G. Okoth (1993). History of Military Intervention in Ugandan Politics, *Trans-African Journal of History*, Vol. 22, 35-54

territories were reclaimed, creating a rivalry between Buganda from the south and the national government. Buganda's monarchy was abolished, and Uganda was declared a republic. The ethnic divisions between the Langi and Buganda were pervasive during Obote's administration. Obote's regime established a one-party authoritarian government, which paved the way for years of civil wars and anarchy in Uganda. The country was divided along ethnic lines, and the dismantling of Buganda's monarchy has plunged Uganda into decades of political violence, human rights abuses, and political instability.<sup>519</sup>

Against this backdrop, the Obote administration opened the door for military intervention in Ugandan turbulent ethnoreligious politics established by Obote's administration. President Obote decided to change the recruitment trajectory, where the North dominated the army and recruited people from his Langi ethnic group to ensure the regime's survival. This factionalism, hostility, and tribal and ethnic politics created by the Obote administration led Idi Amin from the West Nile ethnic group to seize power. Public participation in politics during Obote and Amin's regime was limited, political parties were banned, and parliament became a rubber stamp in Ugandan politics. Both administrations committed unspeakable and despicable human rights violations, such as the killing of judges, massacring of armed forces of other tribes, and expulsion of foreigners. After the demise of Amin's government, the state failed to unite the people of Uganda against ethnic divisions. Instead, the country degenerated into several decades of civil war.<sup>520</sup> Political elites and the citizens of Uganda were divided about the political system the government must adopt and practice, whether a no-party or multiparty system. Notably, the return of Obote to

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<sup>519</sup> David Apter (1995). *Democracy for Uganda: A Case for Comparison*, Daedalus, Vol. 124, No. 3, 155-190

<sup>520</sup> Frederick Golooba-Mutebi (2008). *Collapse, War, and Reconstruction in Uganda*, An Analytical Narrative on State-Making, Working Paper, No. 27

active politics after the fall of Amin's regime angered several people, especially the Buganda ethnic group, whose monarchy system was abolished, and the king fled into exile in Britain. A new election was held, and Obote was elected for the second time as president. This victory plunged the country into a civil war by the defeated opposition leader Yoweri Museveni, who suspected election irregularities and vowed to topple the government with its insurgent group, the National Resistance Army (NRA). Museveni recruited several Buganda ethnic groups into the guerrilla group and fought the Uganda government, which he defeated to become president in 1986.<sup>521</sup>

The extant qualitative literature on political instability in Uganda also attributed conflicts in Uganda's neighboring countries as another cause of instability. Uganda has become a victim of a historical antecedent, surrounded by countries affected by internal conflict and weak governments unable to control their territories and borders. This included the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan, which have been impacted by ethnic political violence and civil wars for decades. Conflicts in these countries have increased refugees in Uganda, which has become a security threat to Uganda. This threat escalated the civil war in Uganda because some of the refugees were recruited by various extremist groups participating in the conflict. Sudan was engulfed by civil war when Museveni came to power, and many armed forces loyal to the Ugandan deposed government formed the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA), which the government of Sudan used to fight the Sudanese Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M).<sup>522</sup> As a result, neighborhood turbulence has had spill-over effects that allowed insurgent groups' geographical space to destabilize Uganda because of the proximate governments' inability to control their entire territories.

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<sup>521</sup> Ibid

<sup>522</sup> Ibid

More importantly, frequent government changes have impacted the composition of the armed forces. The Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), created during Obote's regime, returned to northern Uganda to form insurgent groups after the National Resistance Movement came to power. Alice Lakwena, an Acholi spiritual leader, formed a Holy Spirit Movement (HSM), a religious northern rebel group seeking to remove Museveni's government. The group became a religious terrorist organization that rejected the rules of society and believed God decrees violence.<sup>523</sup> However, the group was defeated by the National Resistance Army and fled to Kenya, while Joseph Kony emerged to lay claim to Lakwena's legacy.<sup>524</sup> Joseph Kony formed the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in 1987 to overthrow Museveni's government and establish a new government that would rule Uganda according to the Bible's Ten Commandments. Museveni's administration engaged in conflict with the religious terrorist organization for several decades in northern Uganda. On the other hand, the LRA has its roots in the conflict to honor the Acholi tribe of the north and others in southern Uganda due to Amin's regime's political violence and brutality against the Acholi and Lango tribes, whose members comprised the most substantial number of armed forces during Obote's regime. Dissatisfaction and frustration under Amin's government led to the creation of several insurgent organizations, and the failure of the successive governments to unify the country led to northern instability, setting the stage for rebellions and insurgencies.<sup>525</sup> The historical economic disparity and marginalization of north Uganda, especially the Acholi ethnic group, also led to the rise of several insurgent groups who wanted to overthrow Museveni's

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<sup>523</sup> Frank Van Acker (2004). Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army: The New Order No One Ordered, *African Affairs*, Vol. 103, No. 412, 335-357

<sup>524</sup> Alexis Arieff and Lauren Ploch (2012). The Lord's Resistance Army: The US Response, Congressional Research Service

<sup>525</sup> Chatlani Hema (2007). Uganda: A Nation in Crisis, *California Western International Law Journal*, No. 2, 277-298

government. The group has carried out the most protracted violent Acholi insurgency in Uganda. Joseph Kony, an Acholi from northern Uganda and self-styled prophet atrocities, generated an international effort to capture him.<sup>526</sup>

Furthermore, Karamojong pastoralists and other tribe members have terrorized northern and eastern parts of Uganda for decades. The activities of these groups have led to gross violations of human rights, especially against women and children, and continuous instability has rendered northern Uganda poor and undeveloped, with an estimated sixty-three percent of the population living below the poverty line. The conflict between the LRA and the Uganda government has deep historical roots in ethnic hostilities, colonial-era marginalization of the north, institutional weaknesses, and post-independence conflictual politics where the military always seized power through a coup. In addition, the socioeconomic divisions between the South and North were also attributed to the establishment of more productive ventures, such as agricultural plantations and industrial and commercial centers in the South, which affected the development of the North.<sup>527</sup>

Another driver identified by the political instability literature on Uganda was the transnational terrorist group that has caused havoc and misery to the civilian population in the country. The Allied Democratic Front (ADF) was established in 1995 by Jamilu Mukulu, which operated in western Uganda and the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. This insurgent group also terrorized innocent civilians in the region with a mission to introduce Sharia law or a theocratic government in Uganda. The instability literature on Uganda also views the deinstitutionalization of politics as another cause of instability. The colonial authority established and maintained

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<sup>526</sup> Pamela Faber (2017). Sources of Resilience in the Lord's Resistance Army, CAN Analysis and Solution

<sup>527</sup> Justine Nannyonjo (2005). Conflict, Poverty, and Human Development in Northern Uganda, WIDER Research Paper, No. 2005/47, ISBN 9291907308, The United Nations University, World Institute for Development Economic Research



absolute control over indigenous societies' social and political order through local accessories to advance their policies and interests. After independence, Uganda was affected by ethnic tensions, religious divisions, political exclusion, economic marginalization, inequality between the south and north, and widespread resentment against Buganda ethnic groups. The northern region served only as a reservoir for cheap unskilled labor, where soldiers were recruited, and this has affected post-colonial social transformative goals and the creation of new political structures and institutions. Similarly, the north-south divide is another driver affecting Uganda's national unity. Historical grievances of several ethnic groups were left unaddressed, and Uganda's politics has focused on specific fault lines of social marginalization instead of unity. The government of Uganda lacks a firm commitment to addressing the development gap between the south and north. As a result, economic marginalization has affected northern Uganda with unemployment and poverty, while the south has become industrial and commercial centers. Collier and Hoeffler's 2001 study found that rebellion occurs when grievances such as inequality, lack of political rights, and ethnic and religious grievances are left to fester.<sup>528</sup> This division has helped the LRA to abduct Acholi children and turn them into killers.

Conversely, situational factors were also identified in Uganda's political instability literature as another driver. This has affected national unity and contributed to political violence. Political and military leaders from the Acholi ethnic groups could not protect the interests of the groups. As a result, Alice Lakwena and Joseph Kony, in their twenties, decided to fill the vacuum and address Acholi's historical grievances. These two personalities emerged as leaders offering holistic solutions to Acholi's problems. Kony and Lakwena created a new social hierarchy to mobilize the population to fight against injustices and Acholi's recognition. Several factors have

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<sup>528</sup> Ibid

contributed to the formation of insurgent groups in the north, particularly the civil war in Sudan and Museveni's decision to send armed forces to the north to subdue threats to the National Resistance Movement government. This has led to the civil war and ethnic tension. In addition, the Museveni government renewed northern Uganda's economic and political marginalization, which was witnessed under Amin's regime, and also the proliferation of arms in the region due to frequent wars in the area.<sup>529</sup>

In conclusion, the primary drivers found in Uganda's instability literature include the legacy of colonialism, ethnic and religious divisions, weak state institutions, elite polarization, frequent military interventions, political exclusion, and economic marginalization between the south and north, formation of the Holy Spirit Mobile Movement, the Lord's Resistance Army, the National Resistance Army insurgent group, situational factors, the Allied Democratic Forces and conflicts and civil wars in neighboring countries.

#### US FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD UGANDA

Diplomatic relations were established between the US and Uganda after independence from the British. However, relations became fractious and strained during the post-independence when Uganda experienced profound political violence and gross human rights abuses during Obote and Amin's authoritarian regimes. This led to the embassy's closure, which was re-opened after Idi Amin was removed from power. On the other hand, during the Cold War, the US had no significant geopolitical, business, or trading interests in Uganda, although some US companies worked with Amin's government. However, bilateral ties improved when Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Movement came to power.<sup>530</sup> During Museveni's administration, Uganda witnessed

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<sup>529</sup> Ibid

<sup>530</sup> [cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/uganda/](https://cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/uganda/)

relative stability, economic growth, and improved human rights violations. In 2022, the US exports to Uganda totaled 167 million dollars, while US imports from Uganda in the same year recorded 174 million dollars.<sup>531</sup> In addition, the US foreign direct investment was 104 million dollars in 2022. According to the United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database, Uganda's cotton export to the US in 2020 totaled 348 million dollars.<sup>532</sup> Between 1986 and 2007, the US foreign aid to Uganda totaled 17.4 billion dollars. The US provides Uganda with significant economic, military, and humanitarian assistance and has enjoyed diplomatic relations with Uganda for over three decades. The primary objectives of this assistance are to promote regional stability and advance the US national interests. In addition, the US assistance to Uganda supports economic development, healthcare, strengthening democratic institutions, and fostering diplomatic cooperation.<sup>533</sup> Uganda plays a pivotal role in Central and East Africa, and the assistance provided primarily promotes regional stability and peace. The US invests almost one billion dollars annually in Ugandan communities through thirteen agencies to promote economic development and democratic values. Furthermore, Uganda participates and benefits from the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).<sup>534</sup>

Security cooperation between the two countries increased and strengthened after al-Qaeda bombed US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998. However, relations between the two nations deteriorated when the Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF) intervened in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda in 2000. Relations were restored after the 9/11

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<sup>531</sup> <https://ustr.gov/countries-regions/africa/east-africa/uganda>

<sup>532</sup> [tradingeconomics.com/uganda/exports/united-states/cotton](https://tradingeconomics.com/uganda/exports/united-states/cotton)

<sup>533</sup> Sophia Boehm (2011). *The Politics of American Aid and Conflict in Northern Uganda*

<sup>534</sup> <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-uganda/>

attacks and Uganda's support for the global war on terror. The US increased Uganda's military assistance for counterterrorism cooperation. The country became a dependable US partner promoting stability in the Horn, East, and Central Africa in the Great Lakes regions. Uganda has become the US key security partner in the area, and the security assistance the US provides to Uganda supports its participation in regional stability operations. Since 2007, Uganda has become the most significant contributor of troops to support the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Against this backdrop, Uganda has become the largest recipient of US support, with over two billion dollars for its troop's contribution to AMISOM, including training and equipment.<sup>535</sup> Meanwhile, Uganda's military deployments to AMISOM and the country's willingness to pursue the Lord's Resistance Army in neighboring countries have strengthened US-Uganda security relations in the region. Alternatively, Uganda's anti-LRA military operations have also supported its relationships with Western nations and its reputation as a regional heavyweight.<sup>536</sup> Uganda plays a critical role in US counterterrorism operations, and the Ugandan People's Defense Forces were trained by US military personnel through the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program for the UN-African Union peacekeeping. Meanwhile, the following questions will be addressed in the study. To what extent does US military assistance affect political instability in Uganda? What explains the fluctuations in US security assistance to Uganda? What are the effects of US Military Assistance on Human Rights in Uganda? Or How did US military aid affect human rights in Uganda? How did an increase or rise in US security assistance affect violent extremist organizations in Uganda? To what extent does US military aid promote stability in Uganda?

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<sup>535</sup> Ted Dagne (2011). Uganda: Current Conditions and the Crisis in North Uganda, Congressional Research Service

<sup>536</sup> Ibid

## EMPIRICAL CAUSAL QUESTIONS

What explains the fluctuations in US military assistance to Uganda?

This case study section focuses on events and drivers causing fluctuations in US military assistance to Uganda. The study aims to use both primary and secondary evidence from the literature to explain the factors leading to the changes in the US security assistance to Uganda. In addition, the study defines fluctuations as events causing a decrease or increase in US military assistance to Uganda. On the other hand, the case study will also examine events creating fluctuations in the US training of the Ugandan People's Defense Forces. The US and Uganda had a fractious relationship with previous governments. However, relations between the two countries improved when Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Army came to power after a five-year guerrilla war against the Obote II government. Uganda's economy witnessed relative economic growth and stability when the government accepted neoliberal economic policies from the International Financial Institutions. The nation became attracted to the US and other Western donors, and economic and humanitarian assistance started to flood the country due to the success of the structural adjustment program.<sup>537</sup> The US military aid to Uganda began to increase in the 1990s after the collapse of the Cold War when al-Qaeda operatives in Sudan bombed US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. The US security policy toward Uganda changed dramatically because of its strategic geopolitical location between Kenya and Tanzania. During this period, the National Islamic Front overthrew a democratically elected government in Sudan and called for the transformation of Sudan into an Islamic State that would become the base of an Islamic Revolution in Africa. Sudan has threatened US national security and interests in the region, and the country

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<sup>537</sup> Ellen Hauser (1990). Ugandan Relations with Donors in the 1990s: What Impact on Democratization? *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 4, 621-641

has become a sanctuary for al-Qaeda members and the founder, Osama bin Laden. In addition, Sudan sponsored the Lord's Resistance Army, fighting Museveni's government in northern Uganda to overthrow the regime. The US designated Sudan as a state that sponsors terrorism and increased Ugandan security assistance to help bring stability to the region.<sup>538</sup> On the other hand, relations between Sudan and Uganda also deteriorated when Sudan provided bases, arms, weapons, landmines, rocket-propelled grenades, and training to the Lord's Resistance Army rebels. The Sudanese government continued to support the LRA to destabilize the region and the government of Uganda. Against this backdrop, the US increased Uganda's military aid in the 1990s to support the Uganda government and assisted the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in overthrowing the government of Khartoum.<sup>539</sup> Due to the threat posed by Sudan to US national security interests in the region, the US has imposed comprehensive economic sanctions on the al-Bashir regime, which has become a breeding ground for al-Qaeda operatives. The US increased Uganda's security assistance in the 1990s as a part of broader efforts to promote stability and security in the region and also to address humanitarian needs in northern and western Uganda, created by the conflict between the Ugandan government, Allied Democratic Forces, and the Lord's Resistance Army. Similarly, an increase in US military assistance to Uganda was influenced by regional security dynamics, including conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan.

Another critical event that contributed to the US increase in Uganda's military assistance after the 9/11 attacks were the country's support for the US global war on terror paradigm. During this era, the US became concerned with violent extremist organizations, especially in Africa, and

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<sup>538</sup> Raymond L. Brown (2003). American Foreign Policy Toward Sudan: From Isolation to Engagement, National War College

<sup>539</sup> [www.fas.org/world/para/spla.htm](http://www.fas.org/world/para/spla.htm)

President George W. Bush promised 150 million dollars to African governments to deal with extremism and radicalization. The LRA conflict and atrocities against the civilians and children continued in northern Uganda. The US declared the LRA a terrorist organization, and the relations between Uganda and Sudan improved immediately after the September 11 attacks. The US increased Uganda's security assistance for its support of the global war on terror to fight and defeat the LRA in northern Uganda. During this period, Uganda emerged as a critical partner to the US in counterterrorism operations and security cooperation in East Africa. On the other hand, security assistance increased to support Uganda's participation in regional counterterrorism operations, particularly in Somalia, as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and domestic counterinsurgency. The increase in security assistance post-9/11 helped the Ugandan government to adopt a peaceful resolution mechanism that led to the Amnesty Act that provides remission to those combatants who surrendered and renounced the use of arms against the government. The Northern Uganda Crisis Response Act, passed by the US Congress, and the Amnesty Act played a crucial role in the conflict between Museveni's government and the LRA. The resources provided by the US helped in the resettlement, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants. The US offered humanitarian assistance to affected areas and assisted in northern Uganda's reconciliation, recovery, and development initiatives. The increase in military aid stabilized and provided humanitarian assistance in northern Uganda.<sup>540</sup> On the other hand, conflicts around Uganda's neighboring countries contributed to the rise in the US security assistance post-September 11. Uganda has become a hub center for 1.4 million refugees from countries involved in the conflict and civil wars in the region, particularly the DRC and South Sudan. The US views

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<sup>540</sup> Donald Yamamoto (2005). An Update on the Conflict in Northern Uganda, Statement Before the Congressional Human Rights Caucus

Uganda as a security partner and a nation that can address regional threats and humanitarian needs of refugees and promote stability in the Great Lake region. Thus, humanitarian assistance also plays a crucial role in the US increase in security assistance to Uganda post-9/11. The assistance can address disaster relief, refugee assistance, and support for peacebuilding in Uganda. In addition, the US military aid to Uganda increased after the Somali terrorist group al-Shabaab conducted multiple terrorist attacks in Kampala during the World Cup football games. Security assistance has continued to support Uganda's counterterrorism operations and maintain regional security and stability in the Horn, Central, and Great Lakes regions. The US maintains strong diplomatic and military ties with Uganda, which has led to increased military aid over the years. These strategic partnerships serve mutual interests in security cooperation, intelligence sharing, and countering common threats in the region.

Furthermore, a significant increase in US security assistance occurred when Congress enacted the LRA Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act in 2009. This act requires the US to support multilateral efforts to mitigate the threat posed by the LRA to civilians, children, and young girls and maintain regional stability. The Act has formalized the US commitment to provide political, economic, military, and intelligence support for multilateral operations to protect civilians from the LRA. Congress has increased Uganda's military aid, and President Obama has deployed a hundred US Special Operations Forces to help take Joseph Kony from the battlefield. The African Union has deployed five thousand Regional Task Forces (AU-RTF). This was one of the most extensive counterterrorism operations involving the US and armed forces from Uganda, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.<sup>541</sup> This was

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<sup>541</sup> Ted Dagne (2011). Uganda: Current Conditions and the Crisis in Northern Uganda, Congressional Research Service



the most significant increase in military aid to Uganda and the other countries to promote regional stability against the pocket of the LRA core combatants, creating a humanitarian emergency in the Central African Region.

In sum, the US increased Uganda's military assistance due to the role of Sudanese governments in the 1990s, the global war on terror, counterterrorism operations against both the Lord's Resistance Army and Allied Democratic Forces, al-Shabaab attacks, AMISOM, and the role of African Union Task Force to mitigate threats from regional terrorist organizations and maintain and promote regional stability and peace.

In contrast, several factors and events contributed to the decrease in US military assistance to Uganda, especially between 2006 and 2008. The first significant factor that led to the reduction in Ugandan military aid was the Nairobi Agreement between the Ugandan government and the government of Sudan. The two countries, which supported the Lord's Resistance Army insurgent groups and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army, decided to establish a rapprochement. The two nations pledged their support for working together in the region to maintain stability. The military assistance the US provided to the SPLA was cut off because of the friendly relationship between the two countries. The threat posed by Sudan in the 1990s to US national security interests and regional instability by supporting the LRA has been removed. Both Uganda and Sudan decided to work together and allowed the Ugandan People's Defense Forces to cross the border into southern Sudan to attack the LRA. The rapprochement helped the Ugandan armed forces defeated the LRA in northern Uganda in 2006. In addition, the LRA rebels fled north Uganda to the swaths of ungoverned spaces in the neighboring countries in the Central African Republic, South Sudan, and

the Democratic Republic of Congo.<sup>542</sup> During this period, the US security assistance to Uganda was reduced drastically because the threats posed by the LRA and al-Shabaab were removed. A decrease in US military aid to Uganda during the abovementioned periods could also be attributed to several factors. The decrease can be associated with US foreign policy changes and priorities or strategic assessment that led to a reallocation of resources away from Uganda. The focus of US military aid has shifted to other regions or countries deemed to be of greater strategic importance. A typical example was al-Shabaab terrorist activities in Somalia. In addition, a reduction in military aid was associated with changes in the political landscape of Uganda, and disagreements between the US and Ugandan governments could influence the level of security aid. For instance, the US suspended military assistance when Ugandan armed forces engaged in the DRC and also when the UPDF was accused of human rights abuses. More importantly, a shift in regional security dynamics and changes in the threat environment can influence a decrease in the US security assistance to Uganda. A classic example was the defeat of the LRA in the northern Ugandan conflict. The US counterterrorism strategy changed when the LRA fled to the swaths of ungoverned areas in the central African region.

On the other hand, Ugandan military aid was also reduced when the government was involved in the use of Child Soldiers. Senator Richard Durbin and Sam Brownback introduced legislation restricting US military training, financing, and other defense-related assistance to Uganda.<sup>543</sup> The legislation has affected the volume of military aid the US provides to Uganda, and

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<sup>542</sup> Karen J. Norris (2014). *The Effect of American Involvement in Northern Uganda's Conflict with the Lord's Resistance Army*

<sup>543</sup> Eliza Anyangwe (2009). *US Pledges 246 Million Dollars in Aid to Uganda*

the Obama administration imposed sanctions on Uganda when Museveni's government enacted anti-gay laws.<sup>544</sup>

In conclusion, the US military assistance to Uganda decreased because of human rights violations, changes in counterterrorism strategy, the defeat of the LRA, rapprochement between Uganda and Sudan, the Nairobi Agreement, economic and military sanctions, legislation introduced by the Senators, policy shifts, nature of the political landscape, and regional security dynamics. Overall, the US military aid to Uganda fluctuates due to increases and decreases in the US and Uganda's political environment, security concerns, human rights, strategic interests, and domestic politics and problems.

Training foreign military forces has become US foreign policy after the collapse of the Cold War and the US unipolar moment. The US has funded several programs and projects, including training foreign armed forces, educational programs for foreign military forces in the US, joint exercises, and deployment of US military personnel overseas. The training program aims to protect US national security interests, professionalize armed forces, and inculcate liberal norms and values such as democracy, human rights, the rule of law, civil-military relations, or civilian control of the armed forces.<sup>545</sup> However, the US has the right to suspend training when armed forces commit human rights abuses. The US training of the Ugandan security forces decreased between 2001 and 2006 because of the 9/11 attacks. During this period, the US-trained selected units of Ugandan armed forces to enhance Uganda's military capabilities and prioritize counterterrorism and regional stability in East Africa. Uganda's strategic importance in the region, particularly in peacekeeping operations and its involvement in addressing regional conflicts,

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<sup>544</sup> Reuters (2014). US Cuts Aid to Uganda, Cancels Military Exercise Over Anti-Gay Law

<sup>545</sup> Adam Isacson & Nicole Ball (2006). US Military and Police Assistance to Poorly Performing States, Center for Global

contributed to US support for training selected units to promote stability and security in the broader Great Lakes region. In addition to Uganda's participation in multinational peacekeeping missions, AMISOM highlighted the need for the US to equip and train Ugandan military units for complex and challenging operational environments. The US Training of Ugandan security forces decreased in this era because the US military personnel focused solely on counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations because of internal security challenges from the LRA and the ADF and conflicts in Uganda's borders. The Ugandan forces were trained through the African Contingency Operations and Assistance (ACOTA) program for the UN-African Union peacekeeping. Also, Ugandan training programs decreased when the US suspended the Ugandan armed forces from participation in the African Crisis and Response Initiative (ACRI) program and ended the remaining UPDF training program under the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program because of the troops' involvement in the DRC and Rwanda.<sup>546</sup> The US trains Ugandan armed forces on human rights and the rule of law to prevent human rights abuses and governance issues, promoting respect for human rights and accountability within the Ugandan military. Against this background, the US suspended training for the forces when the UPDF was accused of gross human rights violations in northern Uganda.

Overall, the US policy and decision to train selected units of the Ugandan armed forces between 2001 and 2006 was driven by US strategic interests related to counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, regional stability, and peacekeeping operations. In conclusion, the US training programs for the Ugandan armed forces decrease because of US selective training and

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<sup>546</sup> John Clark (2001). Explaining Ugandan Intervention in Congo: Evidence and Interpretations, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 2, 261-287

prioritization of counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations and suspension due to human rights abuses.

Conversely, according to the statistical analysis, US training of Ugandan armed forces increased between 2011 and 2018. The first significant event that led to the increase in training of the Ugandan armed forces was the declaration of 'Operation Observant Compass' when several Ugandan armed forces were trained for counterterrorism operations in the Central Africa region and the Horn of Africa to address transnational security threats and challenges involving maritime piracy, and arms trafficking to maintain and promote regional stability. In addition, the training of the Ugandan security forces also increased tremendously during this period to enhance the forces' professionalism for its continuous participation in AMISOM and to strengthen their ability to combat extremist threats in the region.<sup>547</sup> In addition to security concerns, US training of Ugandan armed forces also included supporting disaster response capabilities and humanitarian assistance operations. For example, humanitarian emergencies were created in Central Africa during the hunt for Joseph Kony. The training of Ugandan security forces increased through bilateral military cooperation in the abovementioned years. This involves military-to-military engagements, joint exercises, and training programs to strengthen ties and promote interoperability between the armed forces of both nations. In short, numerous factors and events influenced the fluctuations in US training of Uganda's armed forces, which include counterterrorism cooperation, regional stability, bilateral military cooperation, and humanitarian assistance.

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<sup>547</sup> Ronald Atkinson (2009). *From Uganda to Congo and Beyond: Pursuing the Lord's Resistance Army*, International Peace Institute

What explains the fluctuations in terrorist attacks in Uganda?

Uganda is one of the countries in East Africa that has been affected by domestic and transnational terrorism and remains a terrorist target. Statistical analysis has indicated that terrorist attacks in Uganda were higher in the 1990s than in the 2000s. In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, Uganda faced sporadic terrorist attacks, primarily perpetrated by the Lord's Resistance Army rebel group known for its brutal atrocities and human rights violations against civilians.<sup>548</sup> The LRA intensified its insurgency in northern Uganda, targeting civilians, government assets, and security forces. The insurgent group attacks included massacres, abductions, and mutilations, which have caused significant casualties and humanitarian crises among the civilian population in the north. During this period, the Allied Democratic Forces' terrorist activities against the Ugandan government also intensified in western Uganda. In addition, the conflict escalated in the 1990s between the government of Uganda and the LRA because of grievances over political marginalization, economic inequality, and the Acholi ethnic tensions, and the ADF terrorist activities also escalated in western Uganda with the primary purpose of overthrowing Museveni's administration to establish an Islamic state in western Uganda. The ADF has operational bases in west Uganda and eastern parts of the Democratic of Congo. Similarly, in the 1990s, the emergence of international terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda activities in the region brought new challenges to Uganda even though the country has not experienced any major terrorist attacks except domestic attacks from the insurgent groups. The government and the security forces became concerned about transnational terrorism due to the region's volatility. During this period, the US played a significant role in the area and established a strategic security partnership with Uganda to

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<sup>548</sup> Frank Van Acker (2004). Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army: The New Order No One Ordered, *African Affairs*, Vol. 103, No. 412, 335-357

restore stability. On the other hand, the Ugandan government adopted domestic strategies to counter insurgent groups' activities by establishing the Joint Anti-Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) to coordinate activities among military, police, and intelligence officials to counter domestic terrorism after ADF bombed Kampala. The US funds Ugandan police development programs and builds new forensic laboratories to assist the Ugandan government in fighting domestic insurgent groups that are creating instability in the country.<sup>549</sup> The US became worried about regional instability because the LRA conflict with the government spilled over to the neighboring countries, especially Sudan, where the LRA rebels found a haven and support from the Sudanese government. This cross-border pattern of conflict exacerbated regional instability and provided a fertile breeding ground for the rebel group and logistical support for its terrorist activities. Against this backdrop, the US made Uganda its strategic security partner in the 1990s to counter terrorist groups and states promoting terrorism in the region to restore stability. The 1990s represented the most intense period of terrorist activities involving the LRA and ADF. In addition, domestic weaknesses in security and governance affected the Ugandan government's efforts to address the LRA insurgency, such as inadequate military capacity, corruption, and human rights abuses by security forces. As a result, the government struggled to protect civilians from terrorist attacks and provide adequate security and humanitarian assistance in conflict-affected northern Uganda. The US has provided millions of dollars in humanitarian aid to conflict-affected areas in north Uganda since the conflict's inception between the Ugandan government and the LRA. Overall, the increase in terrorist attacks in Uganda during the years outlined above was driven by the escalation of the LRA and ADF insurgencies, regional instability, and weaknesses in security and governance. The

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<sup>549</sup> Beth Elise Whitaker (2010). Compliance Among Weak States: Africa and the Counterterrorism, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 36, 639-662

conflict with the LRA caused widespread suffering and devastation in northern Uganda, which has indicated a need for concerted efforts to address the root causes of the conflict drivers and promote peace and stability in the region.

The Ugandan government signed on to the war on terror paradigm immediately after the attacks to gain solid international support to defeat the terrorist groups in north and western Uganda. The groups continued their terrorist activities against civilians and children in the early 2000s. However, the atrocities reduced drastically when the US increased military assistance and the training of the Ugandan People's Defense Forces to counter the insurgent groups' despicable activities in the country. In 2001, the ADF was degraded and fled to swaths of ungoverned areas in eastern DRC to remobilize through the recruitment of Congolese members.<sup>550</sup> The decrease in terrorist attacks between 2007 and 2020 can be attributed to several factors. The first significant factor was that Uganda implemented robust counterterrorism measures in response to the 2005 terrorist attack that was carried out by the Somali terrorist group al-Shabaab. As US military assistance increased through counterterrorism operations, Uganda enhanced its porous border problems and denied terrorist organizations sanctuary and sponsorship within its frontiers. Intelligence cooperation with international partners significantly the US improved the target of terrorist networks and disrupted plots to mitigate the threat of future attacks. In addition, Uganda's participation in regional peacekeeping, like AMISOM in Somalia, played a significant role in reducing the capacity of terrorist groups, al-Shabaab, to launch new attacks.<sup>551</sup> Contributing troops to stabilize Somalia and weaken extremist groups indirectly helped to reduce the threat of terrorism

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<sup>550</sup> Jared Thompson (2021). Examining Extremism: Allied Democratic Forces, Center for Strategic and International Studies

<sup>551</sup> John Mary Kanyamurwa (2016). Assessment of Policy and Institutional Approaches to International Terrorism in Uganda, Middle East Review of Public Administration, Vol. 2, No. 1



in the region. These mitigation measures and improved counterterrorism training for the Ugandan armed forces assisted in defeating the LRA in northern Uganda, which has contributed to the decrease in domestic terrorist attacks. The violence created by these terrorist groups in Uganda declined, and both groups have regionalized with no clear political purpose or agenda.<sup>552</sup> Another critical factor contributing to the decrease in terrorism was Ugandan collaboration with the international community, notably the US, the African Union, and neighboring countries, to tackle the threat of terrorism in the East African region. Cooperation in intelligence sharing, border security, and joint operations contributed to a more effective response to terrorist threats and activities. Furthermore, Uganda implemented community engagement initiatives and deradicalization programs to prevent radicalization and counter extremist ideologies. These efforts helped to address underlying grievances and promote social cohesion, which drives away the desire for violent extremism and lessens the risk of terrorist recruitment and radicalization in Uganda.<sup>553</sup> Despite political tensions and governance challenges, Uganda maintained a relatively stable political environment. Political stability is critical for practical counterterrorism efforts and allows security forces to focus on addressing security threats without internal distractions. Overall, a combination of proactive counterterrorism measures, regional cooperation, military operations, community engagement, improved security infrastructure, and political stability contributed to the decrease in terrorist attacks in Uganda.

In sum, fluctuation in terrorist attacks in Uganda occurred because of a decrease and increase in terrorist activities in the country. The factors leading to the rise in terrorism include the

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<sup>552</sup> Paul Antoine (2015). ACLED Report About the Lord's Resistance Army and the Allied Democratic Forces

<sup>553</sup> Frederick Golooba-Mutebi (2008). Collapse, War, and Reconstruction in Uganda, An Analytical Narrative on State Making, Working Paper, No. 27

escalation of the LRA and ADF insurgencies, regional instability involving the Sudan civil war, support for the LRA, and weaknesses in Uganda's security and governance, while a decrease in terrorist attacks attributed to the increase in US military aid, counterterrorism measures, regional cooperation, community engagement, improved security infrastructure, and political stability.

What accounts for anti-government demonstrations or protests in Uganda?

Anti-government demonstrations were rare in Uganda during the 1990s because of the government's restrictions on political freedoms and the absence of the Internet and social media platforms. However, protests have become commonplace in Uganda with the revolution in the Internet and the emergence of several social media networks in the 21st century. The 2000s were marked by the introduction of multiparty politics and efforts to establish democratic governance in Uganda. Increased political freedoms and the emergence of opposition parties allowed citizens to express dissatisfaction and dissent and mobilize for political change through protests and demonstrations. Statistical analysis has shown that anti-government demonstrations became prevalent in Uganda between 2009 and 2020. In addition, anti-government demonstrations or protests in Uganda occur for several reasons, primarily political, economic, social, regional, and external factors. Meanwhile, the ethnic division perpetrated by the previous governments also played a vital role in Ugandan protests. The 2009 protest was directly related to ethnic fissures between two ethnic groups. The protest started when the Ugandan security forces asked the Buganda ethnic delegation not to visit the region due to the rift and ethnic division between the two groups. Buganda youth protested the actions of the security forces, which resulted in violence. The violence contributed to the loss of lives of some of the protesters at the hands of the security apparatus due to the excessive use of force. The public and civil society organizations heavily criticized the abuses of the Ugandan security forces and the Museveni administration.

Furthermore, Uganda faced significant economic challenges post-Cold War, including high unemployment, poverty, inflation, and inequality. Economic grievances and concerns about corruption and government mismanagement fueled public discontent and contributed to protests demanding economic reforms and improved living standards. In 2011, anti-government demonstrations were organized by Activists for Change (A4C), a non-partisan group, dubbed the ‘Walk to Work’ campaign to draw the attention of the Ugandan government regarding the high cost of living and the level of corruption among government officials. The opposition parties and various civil society organizations joined the demonstrations, expressing dissatisfaction by boycotting all public transport instead of walking to work.<sup>554</sup> The peaceful protests have generated a violent confrontation between the security forces and the poor protestors in Kampala. Several protestors were arrested and detained, and a number of the demonstrators were killed during the demonstrations. Ugandan security forces always used disproportionate force on the demonstrators because the Ugandan government accumulated massive military assistance from the US, which it used to intimidate Ugandan citizens.

Additionally, a series of protests were conducted in 2014 regarding the electoral process and governance. Uganda’s electoral processes have been a source of contention and protest, and allegations of electoral fraud, irregularities, and lack of transparency are common. Opposition party leaders and their supporters demonstrate against the incumbent president, who has ruled the country for almost four decades. The president contests every election in Uganda, which is marred by voter intimidation and suppression of the opposition parties. Election protests are common in Uganda as the opposition party leaders and supporters express dissatisfaction with the electoral process that declares Museveni president every election. Against this backdrop, Museveni always

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<sup>554</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2012/04/29/uganda-investigate-april-2011-killings-during-protest>

instructed the Ugandan security forces to harass and intimidate voters and opposition supporters with tactics and techniques the president used all the time to win the election. Ugandans protested when Museveni and the National Resistance Movement dominated parliament and amended the constitution two times to favor Museveni to continue ruling for life. In 2018, anti-government demonstrations were joined by ambassadors from the US and France to sensitize the government about violence perpetrated against women. The power of the internet and social media revolution has helped the Ugandans to continue to engage in protests despite the brutality and disproportionate force exercised by the Ugandan security forces. Moreover, in 2020, the Ugandans engaged in nationwide anti-government demonstrations when a presidential candidate for the biggest opposition party was arrested for violating COVID-19 rules that prevented public gatherings. The arrest was politically motivated, and Museveni instructed the state apparatus to intimidate opponents from contesting. Amidst these anti-government demonstrations, the Ugandan security forces used military assistance provided by the US to the government to intimidate the Ugandan citizens from engaging in protests. On the other hand, corruption has become pervasive under Museveni's administration because the Uganda government employed family and ethnic relatives for high-level jobs. The officials engage in patronage politics, which allows state officials to use their positions for private gains. The president consolidated his support among individual elites, which encouraged them to misappropriate public resources for personal gain. All high-level appointments are reserved solely for people in Museveni's circle. Corruption is prevalent in Museveni's government because of the large flow of donor resources, especially from the US and other Western donor countries. Donors allowed the president to undertake a project that appealed to him without investigating the government after completing the project. The government of

Uganda failed to address the endemic corruption that has plagued its administration because of patronage politics.<sup>555</sup>

On the other hand, the government of Uganda has implemented stricter measures to suppress protests, including increased security presence, arrest of activists, and restrictions on freedom of assembly and expression—for instance, the Public Order Management Bill. Overall, antigovernment demonstrations in Uganda are influenced by economic grievances, electoral processes, governance, and social issues.

To what extent does US security assistance affect instability in Uganda?

US military assistance to Uganda can contribute to stability or instability depending on domestic and regional factors. In addition, extant qualitative literature on Uganda's political instability has shown that internal and external factors play a critical role. US military assistance often includes training programs, equipment provisions, and capacity-building efforts to enhance Uganda's military capabilities. Military aid can improve and maintain Uganda's security and stability when adequately implemented by the Ugandan government. For instance, the Ugandan security forces' military equipment, weapons, and training can help defeat domestic insurgencies and mitigate regional threats from terrorist organizations or instability because of regional conflict. Classic examples are civil wars in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan. In these instances, US military aid was used to maintain regional stability. Thus, US security assistance has positive and negative effects on Uganda's political instability. After the Cold War, relations between Uganda and Sudan were strained because the countries supported various insurgent organizations within the region. This unfriendly relationship earned US support for Uganda when

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<sup>555</sup> Roger Tangri and Andrew Mwenda (2008). *Elite Corruption and Politics in Uganda*, *Commonwealth & Comparative politics*, Vol. 46, No. 2, 177-194

militants in Sudan created instability in East Africa. The US established a strategic security alliance with Uganda to prevent Sudan from destabilizing the region.<sup>556</sup> The 9/11 attacks boosted the strategic security alliance created by the US and Uganda, and Uganda supported the US global war on terror paradigm. During this period, the US increased Uganda's military assistance to help the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Sudanese Allied Forces (SAF) to unseat the Sudanese government.<sup>557</sup> The alleged US roles in the region have affected the conflict, civil wars, and political violence, which have exacerbated insecurity. The situation created by an increase in US security assistance led to a humanitarian crisis in northern Uganda and northern Sudan. Several refugees emerged, and many people were internally displaced in both countries due to the government's support of the insurgent groups and increased US military assistance for Uganda. These actions have aggravated the situation in the region and prolonged the conflicts in both countries. Although the US and Uganda have become security partners, the US increased security assistance to support SPLA and SAF against the Sudanese government, creating regional instability instead of stability. Thus, the US and Uganda's proxy war in the region contributed to the deterioration of security and aggravated political instability in the area. On the other hand, Uganda's participation in regional counterterrorism initiatives, such as a fight against al-Shabaab in Somalia and US military aid, can support Ugandan efforts to combat terrorism. This security assistance helps mitigate security threats and contribute to stability in the Central African region.

In addition, US military aid to the Ugandan government and training of the Ugandan armed forces can contribute to political instability through human rights abuses. It is worth noting that if US military aid is provided without sufficient regard for human rights consideration or governance

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<sup>556</sup> Raymond L. Brown (2003). American Foreign Policy Toward Sudan: From Isolation to Engagement, National War College.

<sup>557</sup> [www.fas.org/world/para/splm.htm](http://www.fas.org/world/para/splm.htm)

reforms, it could unintentionally contribute to instability. The government of Uganda and the Ugandan armed forces were accused of committing gross human rights violations with security assistance. President Museveni and the National Resistance Movement amended the constitution in 2005 and 2017. The NRM-dominated parliament changed the two-term constitutional limit on the presidency to hold office to more than two five-year terms and changed the seventy-five-year limit to life. Opposition parties and members of the public complained about the constitutional amendment since the president has ruled for almost four decades. The opposition leaders and the members of the public were beaten, arrested, and detained by the security forces. Museveni used military assistance for political repression and refused to undertake any meaningful political reform. The president used security assistance to legitimize regime survival instead of protecting Ugandan citizens, and the aid created more problems than it addressed. President Museveni's government used US military assistance and armed forces to consolidate political power, and opposition leaders who challenged the status quo have been arrested and detained. Against this background, scholars, political analysts, and journalists criticized the US's continuous supply of military assistance, which affected Uganda's political instability. The US security assistance to Uganda has no effective coordination and oversight mechanisms that can ensure accountability, transparency, and monitoring mechanisms to keep the Ugandan government in check and help mitigate the risk of military aid contributing to instability by preventing misuse or diversion of resources. Museveni has used military assistance to political repression against the Ugandan population.<sup>558</sup>

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<sup>558</sup> Liz Hume (2021). The US Gave Billions to Uganda, and All It Got Was a Human Rights Abuser

On the other hand, the Ugandan People's Defense Forces have been implicated in using US military equipment and other weapons to conduct human rights abuses against Ugandan citizens, primarily the Acholi ethnic group in the north. Human rights abuses are standard when the US supplies military aid without comprehensive oversight mechanisms to hold the Ugandan government and armed forces accountable for their crimes. The US must attach conditionality for military assistance to Uganda to discourage the armed forces and the government from committing abuses against the citizens of Uganda. Although the armed forces were trained and taught about the importance of liberal norms and values, the force failed to internalize those norms. Against this background, the US must implement a mechanism to ensure transparency and accountability and hold human rights violators liable for their actions. For example, in 2005, the International Court of Justice found the Ugandan government and the UPDF guilty of human rights violations in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In addition, a UN report in 2012 also found that the UPDF and the Rwandan government have been supporting a rebel group, M23, in the DRC against the government. The US military equipment has been used to commit abuses, and several scholars have argued that the US failed to suspend military assistance to Uganda despite the evidence. Thus, US military equipment and other weapons were used to cause instability both in Uganda and the neighboring countries by the UPDF.

In addition, the US State Department Human Rights Report 2022 outlines the human rights abuses committed by the Ugandan government against its citizens. Despite the extensive details provided by the US regarding the violations perpetrated by the government and the Ugandan armed forces, military assistance continued to flow to Uganda, which has led scholars and journalists to believe the US contributed to political instability in Uganda. On the other hand, the US engagement of Uganda in security cooperation and counterterrorism operations in the area can also lead to



stability, notably Uganda's participation in AMISOM and the African Union Regional Task Force operations in the Central African Region. A military offensive that led to the decimation of the LRA in northern Uganda, where the UPDF crossed the border into southern Sudan to attack the rebels, created a humanitarian crisis. Several civilians lost their lives, and the military offensive created refugees and internally displaced people in northern Sudan and northern Uganda. The US funded the operations with American military assistance, contributing to the deterioration of security in both countries. Similarly, operations in the Central African Region created a humanitarian emergency and internally displaced civilians. This military offensive has increased instability in northern Uganda, northern Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, and the Central African Republic. It is worth noting that the US has provided military aid, advisors, and funds for operations, and the US has played a crucial role in political violence and conflict in the region. For example, Human rights groups and Advocacy organizations have accused the US of aggravating regional political instability. According to Nick Turse 2017, the US has invested over one billion dollars in hunting Joseph Kony on military bases, military advisors, and intelligence and funded local proxies across the region, contributing to the security deterioration in the area instead of maintaining regional peace and stability.<sup>559</sup> It is also interesting to argue that US actions in the Central Africa region contributed to the instability-stability hypothesis. For instance, instability in neighboring countries, such as conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan, can spill over to Uganda. In such a situation, US military aid addresses regional security challenges, which can indirectly contribute to stability by assisting Uganda in managing external threats. Hellen Epstein also argues how US policy is contributing to instability

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<sup>559</sup> Alexis Arieff and Lauren Ploch (2012). *The Lord's Resistance Army: The US Response*, Congressional Research Service

in many countries in Central Africa that have experienced civil wars and conflicts over the past three decades, and the US and other Western donors have provided security assistance to Museveni's government with a policy of destabilization, which has affected the region's poverty and humanitarian emergencies. The US has supported a dictator and avoided being critical of the failings of the regime because of the security cooperation and counterterrorism roles the government of Uganda and its armed forces have involved in the region. Despite the government's poor human rights records and governance problems, the US continued to provide military aid to the regime to create chaos and humanitarian crises instead of stability. Against this background, the Ugandan government has prolonged the conflict in northern Uganda to receive more military assistance to guarantee and legitimize the regime's survival and continuity with US military assistance.<sup>560</sup>

Additionally, statements from members of Congress, former and current US presidents, ambassadors, and rare interviews conducted by Joseph Kony and the Secretary of State relevant to the case study are incorporated into the study to understand better how US military assistance and training of the Ugandan armed forces affect political instability in Uganda. In 2006, Joseph Kony granted Sam Farmer an interview where Kony accused the Ugandan president and the UPDF of perpetrating false propaganda with the pretense of getting more security assistance and avoiding making meaningful governance and political reforms to assist in the consolidation of democracy. Kony argues that the LRA engaged in the conflict to ensure a proper multiparty democracy has been entrenched in Uganda because Ugandans do not believe in Museveni's movement.<sup>561</sup> The US must be critical of the government of Uganda's democratic deficit and attach conditionality to

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<sup>560</sup> Oumar Ba (2017). The US, Uganda, and the War on Terror

<sup>561</sup> Youtube.com/watch?v=scMHLWzGOd0

Uganda's security assistance, which can compel the government to undertake meaningful political reform.

In addition, Senator Smith, a member of Congress from New Jersey, called on the government of Uganda and the LRA to recommit to a political solution to the northern Uganda conflict. The Senator believes soft power can address the root causes of the conflict instead of hard power. Against this backdrop, President Obama also signed a bill that has committed the US to help provide a lasting solution to the conflict in the northern region. Similarly, Senator Chris Coons of Delaware also talked about US working with regional bodies to end the conflict and bring stability into the area. Significantly, Senator Feingold argues that the US's role in the region is not to invade or use military force but to make a diplomatic effort with intelligence sharing to help restore the lives of people affected by the conflict in northern Uganda.<sup>562</sup>

Alternatively, Ambassador Yamamoto argues about the humanitarian crisis the conflict has created and how the rebels continued to terrorize communities across the three countries. The ambassador calls on the US to support multidisciplinary strategies to assist regional bodies and nations in ending the conflict and paying rewards for information leading to the arrest and conviction of targeted criminals. Amanda Dory, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, African Affairs, also asserts that US military officials are ready to provide advisory services and support to the regional forces to achieve their goals against the LRA. Importantly, these statements have shown the positive effects that US military assistance can have on the conflict in the region. This has indicated that military aid and training of the security forces contribute to the region's stability.<sup>563</sup>

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<sup>562</sup> Subcommittee on African Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations, US Senate 112 Congress Second Session (2012). US Policy to Counter the Lord's Resistance Army

<sup>563</sup> Ibid

On the other hand, recently, academic scholars of political science, international relations, history, security studies, and journalists have become curious about understanding why US military assistance and instability in Uganda fluctuate. The case study aims to draw evidence from qualitative literature to unearth the factors or events leading to the fluctuation in the explanatory and response variables. In addition, the study will use bidirectional relationships or two-way causality to explain the fluctuations in both variables. The US provides security assistance to allies and partners, especially in Africa, to guarantee domestic and regional stability and peace. Against this backdrop, the US takes measures whenever partners' behavior and actions contradict the purpose of the military assistance. However, US military aid sometimes contributes to political instability, knowingly or unknowingly, in the recipient countries, which affects US policy credibility. Between 1998 and 2003, the US suspended military assistance to Uganda when the Ugandan People's Defense Forces intervened in the neighboring countries to restore stability. Security assistance resumed after the troops suspended the intervention. These measures taken by the US have indicated that military aid to foreign nations comes with responsibility, restrictions, and good behavior. This means that whenever the recipient nation's behavior goes contrary to the purpose of military aid, the US has the right to suspend it. Also, the fluctuation in security assistance and instability in Uganda can either increase or decrease. This sometimes comes with positive or negative consequences, particularly when the military assistance relates to violent extremist groups fighting the government of Uganda, such as the LRA or ADF.

An increase in security assistance can also lead to an increase in terrorist recruitment to fight the Ugandan government. A typical example is the 1990s and early 2000s; an increase in US military aid intensified the conflict between the Ugandan government and the LRA, demonstrating a two-way causality. A bidirectional causality occurs when two variables affect each other in a

study. This type of causality happens when a change in one variable causes a change in the other. Alternatively, a two-way causality occurs when the explanatory variable depends on the response and vice versa. Whenever the US imposes sanctions on Uganda, sanctions affect both military assistance and instability simultaneously. Thus, the US actions and measures taken against the Ugandan government regarding human rights abuses demonstrate a bidirectional causality. This shows that fluctuation in US security assistance affects political instability. Also, when the Uganda parliament introduced the Anti-Homosexuality Act in 2014, the Obama administration slapped sanctions on Uganda, which impacted both the military aid and instability.<sup>564</sup>

In 2023, President Biden viewed the Anti-Homosexuality Act in Uganda as a tragic violation of the universal human rights of Ugandan citizens and asked the National Security Council to re-evaluate US engagement with Uganda, including participation in AGOA and PEPFAR. This is another classic two-way causality between the predictor and response variables. Both variables mutually affect and influence each other in the case study. Military assistance and instability have a bidirectional causal relationship in the study. In conclusion, sanctions and Leahy laws caused both military aid and instability to fluctuate, as demonstrated by the existing qualitative literature in the study.

In conclusion, the existing qualitative literature shows that US military assistance affects Uganda's political instability positively and negatively. The negative evidence includes support for SPLA/M, human rights violations by both Ugandan governments and the UPDF, operations that created a humanitarian crisis, counterterrorism operations, and the global war on terror. Moreover, statements from US senators, members of Congress, former presidents, and current have demonstrated positive and stable effects. Besides, US military aid has the potential to

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<sup>564</sup> <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/uganda/forrel-us.htm>

contribute positively to stability in Uganda through capacity-building, counterterrorism operations, and regional security cooperation, and the impact depends on a range of factors, including how aid is implemented, alignment with human rights and governance consideration, and regional dynamics.

How did US military assistance affect human rights in Uganda?

International relations scholars and political science academics expressed a profound interest in understanding the effect of US security assistance on human rights abuses in Uganda. Human rights abuses became common in Ugandan politics after the nation gained independence from the British colonial masters. Uganda witnessed a culture of violence, silence, and economic collapse.<sup>565</sup> The past administrations engaged in human rights violations, particularly against the Acholi ethnic group and the Asian community. Museveni established the Ugandan Human Rights Commission (UHRC) when he came to power to investigate the wrongs and atrocities committed by the previous repressive authoritarian governments. Uganda's first constitution was promulgated in 1995 with the entrenchment of the Ugandan Human Rights Commission.<sup>566</sup> Museveni has become a staunch ally of the US, and the administration plays a crucial role in the region. Uganda has become the largest recipient of US military assistance. Despite Museveni's relative stability and economic growth, his government's history regarding human rights and freedoms in Uganda has been poor. The executive controls the three arms of government, with no well-defined checks and balances, and judicial independence is absent. Political space shrinks, public discourse suffocates, and the regime tames critical voices from journalists and civil society organizations. In

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<sup>565</sup> Susan Dicklitch & Doreen Lwanga (2003). The Politics of Being Non-Political: Human Rights Organizations and the Creation of a Positive Human Rights Culture in Uganda, *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 482-509

<sup>566</sup> Ibid

addition, President Museveni renamed its guerrilla group, the National Resistance Army (NRA), the Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF), which has become the primary human rights abuser in Uganda. The Ugandan government receives one hundred and seventy million dollars annually in US military assistance and security cooperation.<sup>567</sup> Museveni's authoritarian regime uses repressive measures in response to protests and dissent, including crackdowns on demonstrations, arrests of activists and opposition party leaders, and restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly.

The first major human rights violations committed by the Ugandan security forces were associated with protests organized by Ugandan youth based on ethnic divisions between the Buganda and Kayunga groups. During this protest, forty demonstrators were killed by the Ugandan security forces, according to Human Rights Watch.<sup>568</sup> The government of Uganda failed to investigate the killings and prosecute the perpetrators. Against this backdrop, the director of Human Rights Watch Africa expressed her dissatisfaction with the government's failure to prosecute the perpetrators of the killings. The Ugandan security forces often commit human rights abuses with impunity because of the support from the government. The US and other Western donors have supported Museveni's regime and are uncritical of human rights violations because of economic growth, regional stability, and an ally in the global war on terror.<sup>569</sup> These abuses were committed with the US military equipment and weapons.

On the other hand, the second human rights violations executed by the security forces were related to anti-government demonstrations centered on economic challenges facing the country.

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<sup>567</sup> Jonathan Fisher (2012). Managing Donor Perception: Contextualizing Uganda's 2007 Intervention in Somalia, *African Affairs*, Vol. 111, No.444, 404-423

<sup>568</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2010/09/10/uganda-investigate-2009-kampala-riot-killings#>

<sup>569</sup> Jonathan Fisher (2012). Managing Donor Perception: Contextualizing Uganda's 2007 Intervention in Somalia, *African Affairs*, Vol. 111, No. 444, 404-423

The protest was conducted in 2011, and nine demonstrators were killed. Again, the Ugandan government failed to prosecute the perpetrators, and several scholars criticized the US's continuous support of the regime with security assistance. The Uganda government and security forces continued to violate the demonstrators' constitutional rights, and the Ugandan armed forces excessive use of force and weapons to kill innocent civilians with impunity. The US continued to treat the government with leniency despite the abuses, democratic deficit, and election irregularities.

Another significant factor that involved the Uganda security forces committing human rights abuses was post-election violence in 2016. During these demonstrations, the state security apparatus killed twenty-two protesters, and no investigation was conducted into the killing. According to the Amnesty International Regional Director for East and Southern Africa, Deprose Muchena, fifty-four people were killed in 2020 in response to widespread protest over the arrest of a presidential candidate, Robert Kyagulanyi, aka Bobi Wine, while on a campaign trail. The government of Uganda often used security forces to intimidate and harass opposition leaders and their supporters during the election period. The Ugandan authorities shut down the internet on election day, preventing access to information about the election.

On the other hand, the Ugandan government also enacted several laws to restrict the constitutional rights of Ugandan citizens. In 2013, the National Resistance Movement dominated parliament and enacted the Public Order Management Bill (POMB). This law has given the security apparatus discretionary powers, which has limited anti-government demonstrations in Uganda. Many human rights organizations appealed to the government to repeal the law. The law became operational, targeting opposition party leaders. Despite this, the US continued to provide the Ugandan government with military assistance and training of the armed forces to acquire new



skills and continued to abuse civilians. The director of the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative in Uganda, Livingstone Sewanyana, argues that ‘security forces abuse of civilians in Uganda will not affect US-Uganda relations because the president has become US regional stabilizer for counterterrorism operations.’ In addition, Museveni’s administration established the Non-Governmental Organization Act, which has affected journalists and civil society organizations, especially in human rights areas. Also, the National Bureau for Non-Governmental Organizations, a state regulatory body, halted fifty-four civil society organizations' activities in 2021.<sup>570</sup>

Similarly, the president signed the Computer Misuse Amendment Bill 2022, which restricts unauthorized access, interception, recording, or sharing of information and carries a severe fine or ten years imprisonment. The government of Uganda and its authorities continued to criminalize protests and used preventive detention and criminal charges to deter criticism and intimidate Ugandan citizens; antigovernment demonstrations continued, creating more chaos and instability. The government continues to restrict freedom of speech, assembly, and association. The Anti-Homosexuality Act severely affects the LGBTI community and activists. The US failed to attach conditionality to military assistance, and Museveni’s government continued to abuse its citizens.

Furthermore, the government of Uganda and the armed forces used US counterterrorism operations as an avenue to commit human rights violations in Uganda. The government has become a dependable US security partner, ally, regional peacemaker, and stabilizer of the Great Lakes region. The Ugandan armed forces have played a critical role in the Horn, East, and Central Africa. Against this background, the US continues to provide Uganda with more security assistance and training of the security forces. The forces used new skills and counterterrorism strategies to

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<sup>570</sup> James Matshekga (2020). Toothless Bulldogs the Human Rights Commissions of Uganda and South Africa: A Comparative Study of their Independence, *African Human Rights Law Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 68-91

commit more human rights against Ugandans. The US has documented human rights abuses committed by Museveni's government and the armed forces but failed to be critical of the government because the US viewed Uganda as an island of stability. The US continuously supports the regime that brutalizes dissidents, murders non-combatants, arrests and harasses journalists, and silences opposition voices in the country, undermining the goals of counterterrorism operations. Political repression is every day in Uganda, and the nation has never experienced a free, fair, or peaceful power transfer since independence.<sup>571</sup> It is worth noting from the evidence that the Ugandan government and the security forces have committed more human rights abuses after receiving US security assistance and training programs through counterterrorism and security cooperation with the US. In addition, human rights abuses by the government and the state security forces have created more instability in Uganda because Uganda citizens were not deterred by the draconian laws enacted by the government and the brutality of the security forces. The Ugandans continued to protest the government's failed economic policies, corruption, mismanagement of the state resources, governance issues, and post-election demonstrations became the norm despite security forces brutality. The brutality of the Ugandan armed forces and the government's new legislation have increased instability in Uganda. Despite government crackdowns and political repression in response to protests and dissent, antigovernment demonstrations escalated tensions in Uganda, and the citizens continued to exercise their constitutional rights despite security force abuses.

In sum, US military assistance has affected human rights abuses in Uganda through counterterrorism partnerships and training of the armed forces. The forces used US military equipment and weapons to commit those abuses. Although the equipment was meant to enhance

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<sup>571</sup> Mike Brodo (2021). Time to Cut Uganda Museveni Loose from US Military Aid

Uganda's security capabilities, the armed forces used it to suppress dissent, which has resulted in human rights abuses. Similarly, military assistance aimed at supporting Uganda's counterterrorism operations, primarily regional initiatives in Somalia to fight al-Shabaab, has negative implications for human rights in Uganda because counterterrorism operations have resulted in human rights violations. Significantly, US military aid addressing regional security challenges can protect human rights by promoting stability and preventing spillover when applied judiciously.

Overall, US military aid impacts human rights through counterterrorism operations, antigovernment demonstrations abuses, and the Ugandan government laws restricting political freedoms.

How did an increase or rise in US military assistance affect violent extremist organizations in Uganda?

The emergence of insurgent groups in Uganda began when Obote was elected president for the second time. The defeated opposition party leader, Yoweri Museveni, accused the president of election irregularities and waged a five-year guerrilla war with his National Resistance Army until he came to power. Several insurgent groups emerged after Museveni became president to overthrow his government. An Acholi formed the first religious insurgent group, the Holy Spirit Force Movement (HSFM), which aimed to remove the president from office. The movement's discourse was centered on rebellion, and it became a terrorist organization. In addition, the group believed God mandates violence and fought relentlessly with Museveni's armed forces and was defeated.<sup>572</sup> After the defeat of HSFM, Joseph Kony, an Acholi from northern Uganda, established the Lord's Resistance Army to overthrow Museveni's regime and rule Uganda with the Ten

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<sup>572</sup> Frank Van Acker (2004). Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army: The New Order No One Ordered, *African Affairs*, Vol. 103, No. 412, 335-357

Commandments in the bible to reverse the historical grievances of the Acholi people who were affected by economic and political marginalization by Ugandan governments. The group gained a reputation for murder, torture, rape, and abducting children for sex slaves and child soldiers.<sup>573</sup> Similarly, the Allied Democratic Forces were formed by Jamil Mukulu, an Islamic terrorist group based in western Uganda and the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, which wanted to remove the government, and its ideology was centered on Salafi jihadism.<sup>574</sup>

The US security policy toward Uganda changed after the Cold War due to regional instability caused by violent extremist organizations and states in the region that have provided a haven for these organizations. As a result, the US has established strategic security partnerships with Uganda to assist in bringing stability to the volatile region. In addition, the US increased Uganda's military assistance to fight its domestic terrorist groups and the groups creating chaos in the East African region. During this period, there was a rift between the government of Uganda and the Sudanese government regarding Sudan's support for the LRA and the Allied Democratic Forces fighting to overthrow Museveni's regime. In contrast, the Sudanese government also accused Museveni of providing funds and logistics to the Sudanese People's Liberation Army fighting al-Bashir's government in northern Sudan. The US has capitalized on the strained relations to establish a security alliance with Uganda. Museveni's government denounced al-Qaeda's activities in the region, which contributed to the instability in northern Uganda, and decided to work with the US to restore both domestic and regional stability.<sup>575</sup> Uganda's strategic security alliance with the US was boosted when terrorist organizations attacked the US. The nation, without

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<sup>573</sup> Alexis Arieff & Lauren Ploch (2012). The Lord's Resistance Army: The US Response, Congressional Research Service

<sup>574</sup> Jared Thompson (2021). Examining Extremism: Allied Democratic Forces, Center for Strategic and International Studies

<sup>575</sup> Ty McCormick (2015). Is the US Military Propping Up Uganda's Elected Autocrat

hesitation, supported the US War on Terror paradigm, and its security assistance increased astronomically by the US. The US designated Sudan as a state that sponsors terrorism, provides sanctuary to violent extremist organizations, gives logistical and funds to the LRA in northern Uganda, and is a haven for members in the north of Sudan fighting Museveni's administration and committing despicable atrocities against innocent civilians and a humanitarian crisis.

Furthermore, the US has provided extensive counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations, trained the Ugandan People's Defense Forces to fight the LRA and the ADF in northern Uganda, and guaranteed regional stability. Uganda, with US military assistance, has declared total war on the insurgent groups both in the country and outside. After the 9/11 attacks, relations between Uganda and Sudan improved, and the UPDF launched a military offensive in northern Sudan and northern Uganda to defeat the violent extremist groups. The US provided intelligence, funds, and logistics for the operations. The UPDF defeated the insurgent groups that fled the north into the swaths of ungoverned areas in northeastern Congo, South Sudan, and the Central African Republic as a new haven. The LRA rebels were decimated from three thousand at the beginning of the conflict to one hundred core combatants. In addition, the ADF terrorist group was also degraded, and the remnants of core members fled to the eastern Congo and pledged allegiance to the Islamic State.

In 2011, the US provided massive security assistance to the UPDF and the armed forces of the other three countries to pursue Joseph Kony and remove him from the battlefield to stop the atrocities and a humanitarian emergency its rebels created in the Central African region. The African Union also launched a multinational Regional Task Force with five thousand soldiers from the four countries to capture Kony and the core combatants in the area. The increase in US military assistance, including advisors, intelligence, and logistical support, played a critical role in the

decimation of the violent extremist groups in northern Uganda. In 2017, the US and the Ugandan governments announced the withdrawal of forces from the region, and the AFRICOM commander declared that the mission had been accomplished and that the LRA was no longer a threat to the area. The UPDF has become a dependable security partner and stabilizer in the Horn, East, Central, and East Africa, the Great Lakes region, and the US is uncritical of Uganda because of its crucial role in counterterrorism operations in Africa.<sup>576</sup>

In conclusion, increased US military assistance through counterterrorism capabilities, including intelligence gathering, funds, and logistics, and improved coordination, regional cooperation, and intelligence sharing facilitate collaboration between Uganda and neighboring countries to address cross-border threats posed by violent extremist organizations. In addition, US military assistance also targeted military operations against the VEOs through training programs to enhance the skills and professionalism of Ugandan security forces. This has increased the effectiveness of Ugandan forces in disrupting VEO networks and degrading their capabilities. Overall, while an increase in security assistance helped the VEOs like the LRA and ADF to be defeated, the Ugandan government must address both security and socioeconomic factors driving extremism in northern Uganda.

## CONCLUSION

In short, the case study's findings have shown that US foreign policy toward Uganda has produced a stability-instability nexus based on primary and secondary sources of qualitative evidence in the literature. The Ugandan government and the security forces used US military equipment, weapons, arms, and other logistics to cause human rights abuses against Ugandan

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<sup>576</sup> Kristen M. Pearson & Alex Pedersen (2016). Uganda: Perfection of Post-Conflict Stability or Ticking Time Bomb, Institute for National Security Studies Research Paper

citizens, especially political repression and crackdown on anti-government demonstrations or protests. In addition, US military assistance also contributed to a humanitarian emergency in northern Uganda, southern Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, and the Central African Republic, where millions of people were internally displaced.

Conversely, US foreign policy toward Uganda had caused stability, primarily through counterterrorism operations and counterinsurgency strategy that drove away the terrorist groups, the Lord's Resistance Army, and the Allied Democratic Forces, from western and northern Uganda and primary evidence has demonstrated that US policy contributes to restoring peace and stability in the north and west Uganda. Also, the US security assistance and training of the UPDF through AMISOM supports Ugandan efforts to combat terrorism and guarantees regional stability. More importantly, the US counterterrorism operations and regional cooperation among the armed forces from the four central African countries assisted in defeating the LRA and restoring peace and regional stability. Thus, US military aid and training of the Ugandan armed forces played a critical role in counterterrorism operations, making Uganda an island of regional stability and peacekeeper in the Horn, East, Central, and Great Lakes region and a US strategic security partner.

## CHAPTER XI

### CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The empirical results are mixed with many null results, and the independent variables of military aid and training of security forces in the selected African countries have not produced strong support. However, the result of these two explanatory variables was more robust than other independent variables of US troops stationed in the chosen African countries and the US intervention variable. Against this backdrop, the case study will use military aid and US training of the security forces in selected countries with response variables to determine the effect on the dependent variables in the study. I expect all the primary hypotheses to support my theory about US foreign policy militarization in the chosen African countries. However, many of the hypotheses failed to support my proposition in the study. The case studies focused on Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda to investigate how US foreign policy militarization has affected these chosen countries in Africa. Nigeria's case study's findings have shown bidirectional causality. This means that the US security assistance and training of the Nigerian security forces have affected instability. The US increased Nigeria's military aid and training programs for the security forces whenever violent extremist organizations intensified. The direction of the causal arrow comes from increased instability, which has led to increased security assistance and training of the Nigerian security forces. Also, the empirical evidence from the existing literature has demonstrated that when militant groups intensified their atrocities, the Nigerian president purchased more military equipment from the US to counter and defeat the groups. The Nigerian armed forces also used military aid and training skills to commit human rights violations and suppress civilian dissent. The empirical results of the Malian case study have demonstrated a two-way causality, a finding that has significant real-world implications. This means the study's explanatory and response



variables mutually influenced each other. The trend of US military aid and training of the Malian security forces has indicated that instability in Mali drives US security assistance and training of Malian security forces. The qualitative evidence shows that as Tuareg rebels and Islamist jihadist organizations increased in Mali and the Sahel, the US assistance increased. The statistical data also affirmed this analysis that the US provided Mali with the highest military aid to Mali and training of the Malian security forces when the Tuareg rebellions increased. Against this background, the US security assistance and training of Malian security forces increased whenever Tuareg rebellion and violent extremist organizations activities increased in Mali. On the other hand, increased coups in Mali might also be linked to increased military assistance and training when US military personnel focused more on technical and tactical skills to combat violent extremist groups and neglected to focus on liberal norms such as the promotion of democracy, respect of human rights, the rule of law, and civilian control of the armed forces. The causal arrow emerges from instability to increased military aid and US training of the Malian armed forces, underscoring the real-world implications of the research.

Meanwhile, Uganda's case study results have also indicated a bidirectional causality. In Uganda, US security assistance and training of the Ugandan People's Defense Forces have been influenced by the escalation of violence in Uganda and the neighboring countries. US military aid and training of the Ugandan security forces have affected instability. This means that the explanatory and response variables mutually influenced each other in the study. However, the direction of the causal arrow plays a significant role in the audience's understanding of two-way causality. The qualitative empirical evidence demonstrates that the US security assistance to Uganda increased when the Lord's Resistance Army and the Allied Democratic Forces atrocities against civilian populations in northern Uganda increased. The increase in military aid and training

of Ugandan security forces helped defeat the terrorist groups in northern and western Uganda. On the other hand, the US military aid and training of the armed forces from the four neighboring countries, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, and Uganda, intensified when the terrorist group fled to ungoverned areas of these nations. The qualitative evidence has shown that the US increased its security assistance to Uganda to pursue the Lord's Resistance Army founder and other leading figures. It is crystal clear from the study that terrorist atrocities in Uganda and surrounding nations were driving the US security assistance and training to guarantee regional stability in Uganda and neighboring East African countries in the Great Lakes region. In addition, the US increased security assistance to support the African Union Regional Task Force in the area to defeat the violent extremist group. Against this backdrop, the causal arrow emerges from instability to increase security assistance and training of Ugandan security forces. In other words, instability in Uganda and neighboring countries drives US military aid and training programs. In addition, the Ugandan security forces were implicated in committing gross human rights violations, notably suppressing opposition parties and their members during elections and civilian populations during anti-government demonstrations. The US security assistance and training skills were supposed to be used to protect the civilian population, but instead, they were employed to repress the Ugandans. In sum, increased instability in Uganda leads to increased US security assistance and training of Ugandan security forces. However, the US suspended military aid and training programs to Uganda whenever the Ugandan government and security forces were implicated in human rights violations.

In conclusion, the case studies have shown that military aid and training of security forces in selected African countries were connected to terrorist attacks, civil wars, coups, and protests. Although US military aid and training of the security forces were not the driving forces in the

chosen African countries, these independent variables played a role in the response variables as enumerated above. The central theoretical argument in the study has demonstrated that US foreign policy militarization in selected African countries was influenced by the instability facing the chosen countries. The US has supported selected countries in maintaining stability.

To what extent does US military assistance promote stability in selected African countries?

The critical purpose of US military aid to the chosen African countries, including Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda, is to reduce the threat posed by domestic and transnational terrorist organizations. On the other hand, the impact of US security assistance on promoting stability in selected countries varies depending on numerous factors, including the nature of the assistance provided, the local context, and the effectiveness of governance and security institutions in these countries. More importantly, the US has offered various forms of military assistance to Nigeria, including military equipment, weapons, arms, advising, and intelligence support, particularly in the fight against Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). While this military assistance has strengthened Nigeria's capacity to counterinsurgency, the country continues to grapple with governance issues, human rights abuses, and inter-communal conflicts, particularly in the northeastern and Middle Belt regions. The impact of US security assistance on stability in Nigeria has been mixed, with progress in some areas but persistent challenges in others. The US military assistance to Nigeria has helped in maintaining quasi-stability in the Lake Chad Basin region, including Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria. Through the US logistical support, financial resources, and intelligence, the African Union Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) deployed in the region was able to recapture the contested territories controlled by Boko Haram and ISWAP to bring stability into the area. The US uses sanctions, suspension of military assistance, and the Leahy law to promote stability in Nigeria. These measures are adopted

whenever the armed forces or the government of Nigeria have engaged in human rights violations. In addition, the Nigerian government purchased large quantities of military equipment through foreign military sales, which helped in degrading Boko Haram in some parts of northeastern Nigeria. Meanwhile, the US has also undertaken several non-military programs in Nigeria, promoting stability, notably the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), Power Africa, and the Global Health Initiative. These non-military programs promote stability in some of the chosen African nations. Alternatively, the US has provided humanitarian assistance to selected African countries during the atrocities committed by violent extremist organizations in terms of refugee problems, internally displaced persons, or food security in Mali. Humanitarian assistance the US provides to the chosen nations serves as an instrument that contributes to stability.

Moreover, the US military assistance in Mali has primarily focused on counterterrorism efforts, particularly in combating extremist groups such as al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and affiliated organizations. The US security assistance has contributed to tactical gains and occasional successes in disrupting terrorist activities through counterterrorism programs established to stimulate stability, such as the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), and Mali continues to face significant challenges related to governance, ethnic tensions, and the presence of armed groups in the northern region. Broader political and socioeconomic factors have limited the effectiveness of US military assistance in promoting stability in Mali. Despite the challenges, US security assistance helped the French armed forces, and the US ground troops were able to drive Tuareg rebels and Islamist jihadist organizations from the three vital cities in the north to restore stability in the region until the military coup of 2020. During the coup, the US suspended

its military aid to Mali by implementing the Leahy law, which prohibits the US from supplying security assistance to foreign nations that removed the democratically elected president from office. In addition, the US has adopted these measures to force the military junta to return to democratic government, which promotes stability. On the other hand, the US also initiated non-military programs in Mali to foster stability. These programs also involved AGOA, MCC, PEPFAR, PMI, the Security Governance Initiative (SGI), the Global Climate Change (GCC), and the Feed the Future (FTF). Again, the US is the largest humanitarian assistance donor to Mali to address food security emergencies, refugee crises, and internally displaced Malians. These measures contribute to stability.

Furthermore, the US military assistance in Somalia has been primarily aimed at supporting the Somali National Army (SNA) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces to combat al-Shabaab and other militant groups. In addition, the US has conducted counterterrorism operations extensively, including drone strikes against high-value targets in Somalia, and these efforts have weakened al-Shabaab and disrupted its operations to some extent. However, Somalia remains fragile, with ongoing security challenges, political instability, and governance issues. These challenges have constrained the effectiveness of US military assistance in promoting stability in Somalia. Despite this, US security assistance played a critical role in driving al-Shabaab from the capital, and several contested territories under the terrorist organization's control were recaptured, contributing to stability in Somalia.

Moreover, US military assistance to Uganda has focused on various areas, including counterterrorism cooperation, support for peacekeeping operations, and capacity-building efforts. Uganda has been a critical ally of the US in the fight against terrorism in the East African region, particularly in Somalia, where Ugandan troops form the most significant part of the AMISOM

contingent. The US military assistance has contributed to Uganda's military capabilities and its role in regional security efforts, and the country faces internal challenges related to governance, human rights, and political freedoms. The US military assistance has contributed to stability in Uganda by defeating the Lord's Resistance Army and the Allied Democratic Forces. In addition, the US security assistance with the support of the African Union Regional Task Forces helped defeat the LRA in the neighboring countries, including Uganda, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The defeat has encouraged regional stability. More importantly, the US has also enforced its Leahy law and imposed sanctions on Uganda to promote stability whenever the country is engaged in human rights violations. In addition, the US has established several non-military programs in Uganda to promote stability. Socio-political dynamics have influenced the impact of US military assistance on stability in Uganda. Similarly, the US also provided humanitarian aid to Uganda to address the problems of migration refugees and internally displaced persons. These policies foster both domestic and regional stability through US security assistance. In sum, US military assistance has significantly enhanced security forces' capabilities in countering violent extremist organization threats in Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda and promoting stability through counterterrorism operations, sanctions, the Leahy law, non-military programs, and humanitarian assistance programs.

To what extent do US training programs promote stability in Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda?

The US military training programs in Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda are primarily focused on enhancing the capabilities of local security forces to effectively address security threats, promote stability, and contribute to regional security efforts. A vital component of these programs is the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, which is unique in its

approach. It provides education on liberal norms such as democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and the civilian control of the armed forces, aiming to discourage military intervention in politics. In Nigeria, US military training programs have aimed to support the Nigerian military's efforts to combat Boko Haram and other extremist groups in the northeast and address security challenges in different parts of the country. Importantly, training initiatives have focused on improving counterinsurgency tactics, enhancing human rights practices, promoting professionalism within the military, and fostering stability in Nigeria. On the other hand, these programs have contributed to some successes in countering terrorism, especially in the Lake Chad Basin region, which has improved the capabilities of Nigeria's security forces. However, the security forces also faced the challenges of corruption, human rights abuses, and inter-communal conflicts, which continue to undermine stability in Nigeria. Despite the obstacles, Nigerian security forces, through the US counterterrorism programs and the US training support of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), reclaimed contested territories under Boko Haram and ISWAP control to restore stability in the Lake Chad Basin region. Similarly, the US training programs also have assisted the security forces in Nigeria in addressing the security threat created by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) in the oil-rich Niger Delta region. Although the Nigerian armed forces failed to internalize some of the liberal norms, notably respect for human rights, the forces have instilled the norms of democracy and civilian control of the armed forces, leading to political stability in Nigeria. The armed forces in Nigeria have never intervened in politics since the country transitioned to civilian rule in 1999 under the leadership of Olusegun Obasanjo. In addition, the US also suspended its training programs for Nigerian security forces during human rights violations fostering stability. In short, the US training programs for Nigerian security forces have stimulated stability through counterterrorism operations, internalization of norms of

democracy and the civilian control of the armed forces, and US suspension of training programs whenever human rights abuses occur.

Furthermore, the US training programs in Mali have focused on building the capacity of Malian security forces to counter extremist groups and restore stability in conflict-affected areas, particularly in the north. The training programs have included efforts to improve tactical skills, strengthen leadership capabilities, and enhance coordination among security forces to maintain stability in the country. However, the impact of these programs has been limited by governance challenges, ethnic tensions, and institutional weaknesses within the Malian security sector. Additionally, the 2012 coup and subsequent political instability have hindered sustained progress in stabilizing Mali. The US training programs have enhanced democratic consolidation after the 9/11 attacks, which has guaranteed stability until the coup. Nonetheless, the US counterterrorism operations helped establish stability in the north and the Sahel region. Despite the myriad of problems affecting Mali, the US has suspended training programs for Malian security forces during human rights abuses and military intervention in politics to promote stability. In conclusion, the US training programs in Mali promoted stability for a decade until the 2012 coup. In addition, US foreign policy still encourages stability through sanctions and suspension of training whenever the Malian security forces have committed human rights violations or armed forces intervention in politics.

Meanwhile, in Somalia, the US military training programs have sought to strengthen the capacity of Somali security forces, including the Somali National Army (SNA) and the Special Operation Unit known as 'Danab,' to combat al-Shabaab and stabilize the country. In addition, the Danab unit is a highly trained commando force comprising members from multiple clans



throughout Somalia.<sup>577</sup> The US training programs aimed to improve the effectiveness of SNA and elite commando units, enhance command and control structures, and promote respect for human rights and the rule of law. Despite these efforts, Somalia remains politically fragile, and security gains have been uneven, with al-Shabaab retaining the ability to carry out deadly attacks and control territory in some areas. Governance challenges, clan-based politics, and the limited reach of the central government have hampered the effectiveness of the US military training in promoting stability in Somalia. Despite these difficulties, the US training programs helped the Somali National Army successfully drive away al-Shabaab from Mogadishu's capital, promoting quasi-stability. In conclusion, the US military training programs have assisted the Somali National Army and the Danab unit chased away al-Shabaab from the capital. The US also suspended training and security assistance to SNA in 2017 due to corruption fostering stability within the army.<sup>578</sup>

Moreover, in Uganda, US military training programs have focused on enhancing the capabilities of the Ugandan People's Defense Force (UPDF) to address domestic and regional security threats. Training initiatives have included counterterrorism training, peacekeeping operations, border security, and capacity-building efforts. Uganda has been a critical contributor to regional security efforts, particularly in Somalia, as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). More importantly, the US training programs have helped strengthen Uganda's military capabilities and its role in regional stability. However, governance issues, human rights concerns, and political tensions persist. Interestingly, the US training programs for the Ugandan security forces have stimulated major victories and stability in Uganda and neighboring

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<sup>577</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danab\\_Brigade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danab_Brigade)

<sup>578</sup> Seth G. Jones, Andrew M. Liepman, & Nathan Chandler (2016). Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Assessing the Campaign Against Al-Shabaab, RAND Corporation

countries. For instance, counterterrorism and counterinsurgency programs have assisted the Ugandan People's Defense Forces in driving the Lord's Resistance Army in the north and chasing away the Allied Democratic Forces from western Uganda. These terrorist organizations fled to neighboring countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan. Due to US training support, the armed forces in these countries decimated the LRA, and victory was declared in 2017. This has promoted both domestic and regional stability. Similarly, the Ugandan People's Defense Forces have internalized the liberal norms of democracy and civilian control of the armed forces. The country has never experienced any military coup since Museveni came to power. Alternatively, the US suspended training programs for Ugandan security forces whenever human rights violations were committed. The US has suspended Uganda from AGOA, citing human rights abuses promoting stability. In sum, the US training programs for the Ugandan People's Defense Forces have promoted stability through counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations that helped to defeat the Lord's Resistance Army and the Allied Democratic Forces, internalization of liberal norms of democracy, civilian control of the armed forces, and suspension of training programs during human right abuses fostering stability in Uganda and neighboring countries. Overall, US military training plays a crucial role in enhancing the capabilities of local security forces in Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda. However, the effectiveness of the US training programs stability is hampered by socio-political dynamics, governance challenges, and complex security environments, especially in Mali and Somalia. Stability is more pronounced in Nigeria and Uganda because the armed forces respect civilian control over the military. The US training of militaries from the chosen nations focused primarily on promoting liberal values and norms, notably democracy, respect for human rights, civilian control of the armed forces, and defeating terrorist organizations, contributing immensely to

fostering stability in selected African countries. How does US security assistance to selected African countries promote instability?

The US has increased its military footprint in selected African countries after the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent global war on terror. Military assistance to the chosen nations was increased dramatically to counter threats posed by violent extremist organizations and domestic insurgent groups. The US security assistance to selected countries generally aims to promote stability and security in recipient countries. However, in some instances, military aid can inadvertently contribute to instability. In some cases, the US military aid provided to the security forces in the chosen African nations was implicated in human rights abuses and extrajudicial killings. This sometimes undermines trust in government institutions, exacerbates grievances among marginalized populations, and fuels further instability in the chosen countries. For example, the Ugandan People's Defense Forces, the Nigerian armed forces, the Malian security forces, and the Somali security forces were accused of gross human rights abuses in their respective countries. For example, the US has been criticized for allowing Nigeria to purchase over 1.5 billion dollars of military equipment, which critics argue was used to commit human rights abuses against the civilian populations.<sup>579</sup> Several human rights organizations, scholars, civil society groups, and journalists accused the US of contributing to political instability in the chosen countries.

In addition, the US security assistance to governments of the chosen African nations with authoritarian tendencies may strengthen their grip on power, enabling these leaders to suppress dissent, crackdown on the populations, and maintain control through force rather than addressing the underlying grievances. This behavior of some leaders of selected countries contributed to

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<sup>579</sup> Lauren Ploch Blanchard (2023). Nigeria: Overview and US Foreign Policy, Congressional Research Service

instability, typically in Uganda. The US has provided excessive military assistance to the Ugandan government for geopolitical strategic reasons, which the dictatorial president uses to suppress the opposition political leaders and engage in human rights violations. The chosen African presidents take these measures, which contribute to political instability and hinder the development of democratic institutions, notably in Uganda. These actions undermined the purported goals of the military aid. This led to unrest, and violent extremist organizations seized the opportunity to promote their local grievances to gain a foothold in new territories such as Islamist jihadist organizations in Mali.

On the other hand, US security assistance to one country in a region can exacerbate tensions and rivalries with neighboring countries, potentially leading to regional instability or conflict. For example, military aid provided to one faction in a conflict may escalate tensions with opposing factions or neighboring states, prolonging conflicts and destabilizing the region. A typical example of this type of military aid and instability occurred in Uganda. The US created a strategic security alliance with Uganda after the 1998 bombing of the embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and the global war on terror. During this period, the US increased Uganda's military assistance to assist the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Sudanese Allied Forces (SAF) in toppling the Sudanese government. The alleged US roles in the region have intensified conflicts and political violence because the Sudanese government also supported the Lord's Resistance Army to overthrow Museveni's government in Uganda. These actions by the Ugandan government, the US, and the government of Khartoum have created a substantial humanitarian emergency in the region, causing regional instability.<sup>580</sup> Another example through which the US security assistance has

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<sup>580</sup> Raymond L. Brown (2003). *American Foreign Policy Toward Sudan: From Isolation to Engagement*, National War College.

created regional instability was the French and the US direct intervention in Mali. The Islamist jihadist groups were driven away from the cities in the north, which led to a vast number of refugees and internally displaced people. Several minority ethnic groups fled to neighboring countries such as Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania, and south Mali.<sup>581</sup>

Furthermore, US military aid, particularly in the form of weapons and equipment, can contribute to arms proliferation, both within recipient countries and across borders. This proliferation can increase the availability of weapons to non-state actors, fueling conflict and insecurity. For instance, Boko Haram in Nigeria acquired several US-made weapons from corrupt Nigerian security forces. Also, the terrorist group seized many weapons and arms from army bases vacated by the security forces. In Somalia, the al-Shabaab jihadist group bought arms and weapons from corrupt peacekeeping forces. In addition, security analysts in the chosen countries accused the US and other Western donors of providing excessive security assistance, leading to weapons and arms smuggling. Another factor through which US military assistance contributes to instability in selected African countries is military and security-focused engagement with the chosen nations. The US focuses on counterterrorism operations and increased security forces capabilities to combat violent extremist organizations instead of economic development, institutional building, or developing solid national governance to address conflict drivers in selected countries. It is worth noting that the underlying causes of civil wars in the countries chosen are primarily economic drivers, not security.

More importantly, US military aid may undermine good governance and the rule of law in the chosen countries if it lacks adequate and comprehensive oversight mechanisms such as

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<sup>581</sup> Dona Stewart (2017). What Is Next For Mali? The Roots of Conflict and Challenges to Stability, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

accountability and transparency is absent. This can contribute to corruption, human rights abuses with impunity, and weak state institutions, which foster instability and insecurity. For instance, the US military aid to Uganda has no effective coordination and oversight mechanisms to ensure accountability and transparency to keep the government in check and help mitigate the risk of military aid contributing to instability. The president uses security assistance for political repression and dissent against civilian populations.<sup>582</sup> In some cases, security assistance may be diverted from its intended purposes, such as countering terrorism or building security capacities. Instead, military aid is used for other purposes, such as bolstering the ruling elite hold on power or financing corruption. This can undermine the effectiveness of aid programs and contribute to governance failures and instability typical in the chosen African nations.

On the other hand, excessive reliance on military solutions, supported by US military assistance, can contribute to the militarization of societies. This type of militarization can lead to a cycle of violence, repression, and abuses, which undermine long-term stability and exacerbate conflicts. The US security assistance focuses solely on building military capacity without addressing the fundamental socio-economic, political, and governance issues that drive conflicts and may fail to achieve lasting stability. Against this background, military solutions alone are unlikely to be effective mechanisms in promoting stability without addressing root causes. In conclusion, US military assistance contributes to instability through human rights abuses, military and security-focused engagement, counterterrorism, entrenching authoritarian regimes, arms proliferation, and regional power dynamics. Overall, it is essential to consider security assistance's unintended consequences carefully and ensure that military aid programs are designed and

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<sup>582</sup> Liz Hume (2021). The US Gave Billions to Uganda, and All It Got Was a Human Rights Abuser

implemented in a way that contributes to long-term peace and stability. This requires comprehensive approaches that address the root causes of conflicts, promote good governance and respect for human rights, and prioritize smart power and conflict resolution efforts alongside military assistance.

How does US military training program for selected African countries foster/promote instability?

US military training of security forces from selected African countries aims to enhance the capabilities of local security forces to address security challenges posed by violent extremist organizations such as Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, the Lord's Resistance Army, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Ansar Dine, and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) and contribute to stability. However, the training programs could inadvertently promote instability in the chosen nations. In addition to counterterrorism, the security forces were trained in professionalism, peacekeeping, border and maritime security, and liberal norms and values. The first significant area through which training security forces from the chosen nations can lead to instability is when training is focused solely on military tactics and techniques without incorporating principles of human rights, the rule of law, and civilian oversight. This can reinforce authoritarian practices within security forces, which can lead to increased repression, human rights abuses, and lack of accountability, undermining trust in government institutions and contributing to instability. The US military training programs must strike a balance, incorporating a comprehensive approach that includes values, ethics, and military ethos, to avoid these potential pitfalls. Moreover, security forces from selected countries were implicated in human rights violations because of their inability to internalize these norms, which have led to instability. On the other hand, the absence of oversight and accountability mechanisms for trained military personnel can lead to impunity for misconduct. The perception that trained forces are not held

accountable for abuses can also undermine trust in the forces and contribute to instability. However, by implementing more comprehensive and responsible training practices, the potential for positive change and stability in these nations is within reach.

These concerns are not mere theoretical possibilities. There are concrete instances where the US training programs have been implicated in political upheaval. For example, in Mali, two coups that unseated democratically elected presidents were orchestrated by officers who had received training from the US. A US-trained officer's direct involvement in military intervention underscores the potential influence of US military training programs. In Burkina Faso, three armed forces that carried out coups were US-trained military officers. Against this backdrop, scholars, political analysts, and journalists also believed that the US training program was associated with coups. Gen. Carter Ham, the Commander of AFRICOM, has openly acknowledged the US's past missteps in its training programs by focusing excessively on tactical and technical issues instead of values, ethics, and military ethos. This recognition of past errors is a crucial step towards ensuring more effective and responsible training in the future, providing reassurance that lessons are being learned and improvements are on the horizon.<sup>583</sup> Research shows that strengthening military effectiveness without making governing institutions strong promotes successful coups. However, the potential for coups can be significantly reduced when the US training programs provide adequate, comprehensive accountability and transparency mechanisms. This underscores the power and influence of such training programs in shaping the future stability of the chosen nations, highlighting the significant role that the audience, as scholars, policymakers, and military officials, can play in this process.

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<sup>583</sup> Robbie Gramer and Chloe Hadavas (2020). The US Military Trained Coup Plotters in Mali



According to Nick Turse 2020, US-trained officers have led coups in many West African countries, notably Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mauritania, and Gambia. The US has spent millions of dollars establishing stability in West African countries. Instead, the training programs have produced coup leaders who failed to internalize liberal norms and values, creating instability in the region contrary to the training goals, which aimed at promoting stability and eliminating conflict and extremism.<sup>584</sup> Seymour and McLauchlin (2020) conducted empirical research regarding the hypothesis of foreign training causes and argued that foreign training in contemporary times is aimed at strengthening civil-military relations. Thus, frequent coups in coup-prone countries do not affect training programs. The scholars argued that people must focus on the types of training undertaken by US military personnel to the armed forces, which can help explain why coups occur.<sup>585</sup> On the other hand, scholars argue that the US should change its training methods and practices and avoid focusing on elite units because they are susceptible to coups in unstable countries. In addition, other critics argued that coups are expected in West Africa because the US, France, and other Western donors focused on counterterrorism gains instead of promoting institutional building. Training programs that focus excessively on combating insurgent groups, to the exclusion of broader security challenges and underlying drivers of conflict, may inadvertently exacerbate instability. This narrow focus may alienate communities, generate resentment, and fuel recruitment for extremist groups, perpetuating a cycle of violence and instability.

Furthermore, some critics argued that US military training programs have focused on technical and tactical training to the detriment of internalizing democratic norms and standards of military professionalism. The crucial goals of training programs, such as democracy promotion,

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<sup>584</sup> Nick Turse (2020). US Trained Officers Have Led Coups

<sup>585</sup> Lee J. M. Seymour and Theodore McLauchlin (2020). Does US Military Training Incubate Coups in Africa? The Jury Is Out

respect for human rights, the rule of law, and civilian control of the armed forces, have been placed in the back seat, and the US, France, and the European Union have focused primarily on counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations to defeat terrorist organizations. Sharan Grewal argues that the growing politicization of American officers is being transferred to training programs, which is affecting the importance of norms. As a result, the US and the international community must invest in economic development and institutional building instead of security-centric and elite unit programs in the chosen countries.

Moreover, it has been argued that US training programs prioritize technical military skills over broader governance, accountability, and oversight mechanisms and may neglect critical aspects of security sector reform. Therefore, without effective governance and accountability structures, security forces may become prone to corruption, abuse of power, and violations of human rights, contributing to instability. In addition, training programs that benefit certain ethnic or sectarian groups within a country's security forces can exacerbate inter-communal tensions and grievances. This can fuel conflict and instability, particularly in diverse ethnic and religious societies where the perception of favoritism or discrimination can escalate into violence. Also, US training programs that are part of broader military aid packages may inadvertently contribute to negative externalities associated with military assistance, such as arms proliferation, regional tensions, and the militarization of societies. These externalities can have destabilizing effects on neighboring countries and the broader region. In sum, the US military training programs have contributed to instability in the chosen African countries through human rights violations, military-security-centric programs, training programs focusing on technical and tactical expertise, coups, and the absence of oversight mechanisms. Overall, a comprehensive and context-specific approach

that addresses underlying issues and promotes accountability and respect for human rights is essential for the effectiveness of military training programs in contributing to stability.

Previous studies have shown that the US did not play a significant role in Africa during and after the Cold War, despite the countries' historical affinity through the slave trade. The US only engaged Africa for spheres of influence or geopolitical considerations during the bipolar balance of power between the Soviet Union. Africa has been treated as a backwater in official policymaking circles compared to resources and time allocated to other regions in the global system. Although topics such as apartheid in South Africa, famine in Somalia, Ethiopia, and the Horn of Africa received press coverage and have improved public awareness of political and economic issues. In addition, academics associated with history, political science, and international studies have relegated the study of US foreign policy toward Africa to a low-level status. Instead, priority continued to be given to scholarships that focused on traditional security concerns, such as the former Soviet satellite nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, South-East Asia, Central America, and the Middle East. Africa remained poorly neglected by the US policymaking establishment, the public, and academia. This research, however, aims to contribute significantly to understanding the relationship between US foreign policy militarization and African instability, filling a crucial gap in the current academic discourse and emphasizing the importance of this previously overlooked area of study. Its findings are poised to reshape the understanding of US foreign policy in Africa and its implications on the continent's stability, making it a pressing and necessary research endeavor.

During the post-Cold War, US foreign policy toward Africa shifted to promoting democracy, human rights, and a free market economy, which was tied to foreign aid to compel autocratic and repressive governments to move from a one-party system of government.

Democratization became the precondition for all African governments seeking foreign aid and loans from international financial institutions to address their political problems. In addition, several academic scholars criticized US foreign policy militarization in Africa through the promotion of repressive regimes that committed human rights violations with impunity. Meanwhile, US foreign policy toward Africa changed dramatically after the 9/11 attacks, and Africa has been incorporated into the US national security strategy. The study's theory was grounded in the concept of securitization to understand the US's renewed interest in the continent, which had been neglected for several decades. In this research, I examined US foreign policy toward Africa in three main segments: the Cold War, post-Cold War, and post-9/11. The study addressed how US foreign policy militarization affected African instability, focusing on four sample countries: Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda. In this research, I used four explanatory variables: military aid, US troops stationed in Africa, US training of African militaries, and intervention to determine their impacts on response variables: terrorist attacks, civil wars, coups, and anti-government demonstrations/protests. I tested four primary hypotheses in the research with several other hypotheses of interest.

This research took a comprehensive and rigorous approach to examining how US foreign policy militarization affected African instability. The study's findings aimed to predict scores and describe the relationship between variables in the context of US foreign policy militarization and its effects on the sampled countries. The research used a meticulous mixed-method approach to ensure a robust and comprehensive analysis. This approach was chosen because a single design, mainly qualitative, might not capture or provide robust conclusions about US foreign policy militarization's effect on the selected countries. The quantitative method was used to capture the actual impact of US foreign policy, as statistical analysis offers a comprehensive and in-depth

analysis and explanation of the phenomena under investigation. Using a mixed-method design, the research addressed the strengths of quantitative methods to overcome the weaknesses of qualitative approaches and vice versa. The study used dynamic panel model analysis to determine a causal relationship between the explanatory and response variables. The empirical evidence supported one of the primary hypotheses, which stated that the higher the number of US troops deployed in selected countries, the greater the likelihood of terrorist attacks. This has demonstrated that the presence of US troops in the chosen nations contributed to attacks in the volatile regions. However, several results failed to support the hypotheses that US foreign policy militarization affected instability in the sampled countries in the study. The empirical findings were not consistent with my expectations. I had presumed that US foreign policy militarization in the sampled countries contributes primarily to instability. However, the qualitative results regarding the impact of US security assistance and training security forces in Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda were complex and multifaceted, indicating overall that US military assistance and training of the security forces in the chosen nations aimed to enhance the security and stability of the sampled nations. At times, though, these factors have contributed to unintended consequences in the selected countries indicating that instability is promoted inadvertently, while the central US foreign policy promotes security and stability in the sampled nations. The results of the study represent a constructive step toward deepening our understanding of the complex relationship between US foreign policy militarization and African instability.

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LITERATURE

The academic literature has extensively examined US foreign policy militarization and the securitization of Africa after the 9/11 attacks. Scholars, political analysts, government leaders, and many African leaders believe that the US renewed its strategic interest in Africa and sampled

countries after 9/11 due to the global war on terror and energy security and to counter Chinese political and economic interests in the continent. Currently, scholars of political science, international studies, and international relations are concerned about what is happening in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, where French armed forces were ordered to leave the West African countries. Recently, the Nigerien military junta has ordered the US troops out of Niger, which the Pentagon confirmed to complete their withdrawal in September 2024.

Niger's decision was a significant blow to US military operations in the Sahel and the Sahara Desert, which several Islamist jihadist organizations now have used as a sanctuary to carry out domestic and transnational terrorist activities in the regions. This research serves as an effort to contribute to the existing academic literature in three distinct ways. First, the study refuted and debunked previous research that stated that US foreign policy militarization toward Africa promotes instability. The outcomes of this study demonstrate that US foreign policy militarization and securitization were not the sole factors contributing to instability in the sampled nations; other factors, such as domestic non-state armed groups, play a significant role in instability. Second, the study contributes to scholarly literature by showing that the US presence in the sampled countries creates stability and instability. The study's findings have indicated that in Mali, the primary drivers of instability are the internal political and ethnic tensions and Islamist jihadist organizations. The Malian government's inability to address the development dichotomy gap between the north and south and marginalization of the Tuareg ethnic groups have resulted in several rebellions leading to the 2012 coup. The military coup has affected the country, which has provided an opportunity for al—Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Ansar Dine, and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), a French acronym. The US military aid and training have helped Mali's forces improve their operational capabilities, particularly

counterterrorism. In addition, the collaboration with the US military personnel has provided Malian security forces with better equipment and tactical knowledge. This shows that US military assistance and training of the Malian troops aimed to address security threats, promote stability, and contribute to regional security and stability. For instance, the US suspended its assistance to Mali, and the Leahy law also prevented the US from providing security assistance to foreign military intervening in politics—a clear indication of US foreign policy promoting stability.

On the other hand, in Nigeria, the critical drivers of instability are internal factors such as Boko Haram, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) insurgent groups, and pervasive corruption within the Nigerian government has contributed to political instability. The US support has enhanced Nigeria's capacity to combat Boko Haram and other terrorist groups, mainly through intelligence sharing and special operations training. In addition, the training programs have improved tactical proficiency and coordination within Nigerian forces to defeat the groups. The US assistance to Nigeria aimed to support and address security threats from insurgent groups to restore peace and stability in Nigeria and the Lake Chad region.

Furthermore, in Somalia, internal factors, primarily the al-Shabaab jihadist group and a weak central government, contribute to political instability. The US has been directly involved in Somalia, training and providing security assistance to the Somali Federal Government to combat al-Shabaab, enhance the effectiveness of the SNA, and stabilize the country against al-Shabaab and other terrorist organizations. These measures and the US's direct involvement in Somalia were to promote peace and stability. The research has shown that US military assistance has played a critical role in the fight against al-Shabaab, providing training, equipment, and strategic support to the Somali National Army and AMISOM.

Moreover, the study has shown that domestic factors were Uganda's main drivers of instability. These have included the Lord's Resistance Army and the Allied Democratic Forces fighting to overthrow the Ugandan government. Against this backdrop, US security assistance and training programs have focused on enhancing the capabilities of the Ugandan People's Defense Force to address security threats domestically and regionally. The study has demonstrated that the US assistance to Uganda is aimed at maintaining domestic and regional stability. The research shows that US security assistance and training programs to sampled countries such as Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda have enhanced domestic security and promoted regional stability. Finally, the study's mixed-method approach contributes to scholarly literature by providing robust conclusions and a comprehensive understanding of US foreign policy militarization and securitization toward the chosen countries. The mixed-method design has assisted the study's outcomes in refuting previous research showing that US foreign policy is a critical factor of instability in the continent. This research demonstrates that US foreign policy in the sampled countries promotes stability, the cornerstone of US foreign policy.

#### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study sheds light on US foreign policy militarization and securitization in selected African countries, including Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda. It emphasizes how the explanatory variables affect the response variables. In other words, the research examines how US foreign policy militarization affects African instability. The study used a mixed-method design, which combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to offer a comprehensive way to study US foreign policy toward the sampled nations by leveraging the strengths of both methodologies. However, the mixed-method design presents unique challenges and limitations. First, integrating quantitative and qualitative data can be complex, requiring careful planning and methodological



expertise in merging the data. Despite thorough cleaning, there are some statistical limitations regarding the quantitative data, such as missing data, omitted variables, and data duplication. Although the study uses dynamic panel model analysis to address the problems of unobserved heterogeneity, endogeneity, omitted variables bias, measurement errors, simultaneity, and lagged dependent variables between the explanatory and response variables, which provided a robust conclusion, we cannot completely rule out certain bias levels in the findings. Despite a check for robustness, the study can still be missing statistically significant predictors.

In this study, the data collected through mixed-method approaches can be overwhelming, making analysis and synthesis challenging. In addition, involving multiple methods can introduce different types of bias because findings involve subjective judgment, which can affect the study's objectivity. US foreign policy toward the sampled countries and the political context within selected countries can change rapidly, complicating the research process, which requires adaptive strategies. This study focuses on single case studies, which limit the ability to generalize findings to a broader population and trace complex causal mechanisms or logic that can be difficult, mainly when multiple interacting factors are involved. US foreign policy impacts various issues, such as economic, political, security, and humanitarian, which has challenged the study to isolate specific variables. Also, the case study lacks primary sources of evidence. Therefore, the research depends heavily on secondary sources of empirical evidence to draw the case study's conclusions. Against this background, demonstrating causality with high confidence can be challenging, particularly in complex interactions with multiple causal pathways.

## FUTURE RESEARCH

US foreign policy militarization and securitization toward Africa has become a growing research area in international relations, international studies, and political science academic

scholars in recent times, notably after the 9/11 attacks. Scholars have become interested in the area because of renewed and strategic interests in the continent. Based on my research findings, I suggest three pathways that future researchers can pursue to have a comprehensive and holistic view and understanding of US foreign policy toward Africa.

First, although the research outcomes can be applied to other countries in Africa affected by instability, further research should concentrate on a specific part of Africa, which can assist in understanding US foreign policy effects instead of selecting countries from different geographical regions. For example, future research can focus solely on West Africa, East Africa, the Horn of Africa, southern African countries, and North Africa. This can help understand US foreign policy's effects on that particular region.

Second, future research can focus on a specific US foreign policy issue toward Africa or selected countries, including geopolitical competition and influence among great powers (the US, China, and Russia). The research should investigate the strategies and impacts of Chinese and Russian involvement in Africa and compare and contrast these with US policies. In addition, future research can also focus on security and counterterrorism operations to assess their effectiveness and effects on selected nations or human rights and governance. The study can focus on how US policies influence democratic governance, human rights, and anti-corruption efforts in African countries.

Third, methodologically, the research can be developed in many ways. The statistical analysis can be more comprehensive, including several variables, or the study can focus only on a quantitative approach instead of a mixed-method design, which is time-consuming. In addition, future research should incorporate a series of interviews where respondents can express their opinions on the effects of US foreign policy on the respective sampled countries. Recent political

events in French former colonies in West Africa have ordered France's armed forces to leave their respective countries, and Niger's military junta's decision to withdraw US military personnel from Niger will attract scholars to investigate security in the Sahel and Sahara Desert after US departure. The first significant lesson learned from the case studies involving US policy toward Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda is that counterterrorism operations or military solutions alone are insufficient in promoting stability in countries affected by violent extremist organizations. The US has conducted several airstrikes and provided support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces to combat al-Shabaab. Despite some successes, al-Shabaab remains resilient and a potential threat. This underscores the crucial role of political and economic strategies, which must complement military actions.

Second, important lesson learned is that achieving long-term stability requires solid and effective institutions and democratic governance. For instance, in Mali, the 2012 coup and subsequent insurgencies highlighted the fragility of state institutions. The US support for democratic elections and governance reforms has been critical but often hampered by ongoing security challenges.

The third lesson learned is that governments must address the root causes of instability by investing in development. This can promote economic growth and create jobs for the population. For example, in Uganda, US humanitarian assistance has supported health initiatives in fighting HIV/AIDS through PEPFA. This has improved health outcomes and contributed to broader social stability.

Fourth lesson learned from the case studies is that regional cooperation and multilateral engagement enhance effectiveness. The US has worked with regional organizations like the

African Union and ECOWAS in Nigeria to combat Boko Haram. This cooperation has helped in reducing the spread of extremism.

Finally, security partnerships should not overlook human rights abuses. In Nigeria, US support for counterterrorism has been criticized for ignoring human rights abuses by Nigerian security forces. Security assistance must be balanced with human rights considerations to achieve sustainable peace.

On the other hand, the US must reduce its security assistance to the sampled nations and focus more on non-lethal military aid, notably Mali and Uganda. The Ugandan government has received security assistance from the US over thirty years but failed to promote credible democracy. Lastly, the US must restructure or refine its counterterrorism strategies with smart power instead of relying on hard power.

In short, US foreign policy in Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda underscores the need for a comprehensive approach that integrates military, political, economic, and humanitarian dimensions. Effective policy requires understanding the local context, promoting good governance and regional cooperation, and balancing security with human rights.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Key policy recommendations for US foreign policy toward Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda include addressing security issues and human rights, strengthening institutional building, promoting democracy, and fostering economic growth and development.

The US military aid and training programs in Mali, significantly counterterrorism and regional cooperation, have helped combat domestic insurgents and transnational terrorist organizations in the Sahelian countries by establishing the G5 force. In addition, the US policy toward Mali has assisted in addressing humanitarian assistance and providing several non-military programs.

However, the US training programs must focus on liberal norms and military ethos instead of technical and tactical skills. Emphasizing democracy promotion, the rule of law, and civilian control of the armed forces will help the Malian security forces internalize these norms and discourage military intervention in politics, a critical problem facing the country in recent times. Also, a comprehensive oversight mechanism must be implemented to encourage accountability and transparency, holding Malian security forces accountable for their actions.

In the case of Nigeria, the US military aid and training programs have assisted in defeating Boko Haram, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). The US military aid and training programs effectively helped in regional cooperation in the Lake Chad Basin region, and the Nigerian armed forces have internalized the norm of democracy and civilian control of the armed forces for over two decades. Alternatively, the US has provided significant humanitarian assistance and non-military programs that can assist in economic growth and development. However, the US must provide an oversight mechanism for military aid and training programs for Nigerian security forces to prevent human rights abuses and corruption among high-ranking defense officials.

Furthermore, US military aid and training programs in Somalia have helped the country transition from a failed to a fragile state. US direct counterterrorism operations and increased security assistance and training programs helped AMISOM and the Somali National Army drive al-Shabaab from the capital, Mogadishu. In addition, US policy in Somalia promotes regional cooperation and humanitarian assistance for refugees and internally displaced people to promote stability. However, the US must continue to assist the Somali government and federal member states in intensifying counterterrorism efforts against the al-Shabaab terrorist group to establish democracy and strengthen Somalia's political institutions.

On the other hand, US security assistance and training programs, especially counterterrorism operations, regional cooperation, increased assistance, humanitarian aid, and non-military programs, have assisted Uganda in defeating the Lord's Resistance Army, which promotes regional stability. In addition, Uganda has benefited immensely from US humanitarian assistance programs and non-military programs, which have fostered economic growth and development. The Ugandan People's Defense Force (UPDF) has internalized the norm of civilian control of the armed forces. However, the US must implement a comprehensive oversight mechanism to make the UPDF accountable for human rights violations. Similarly, the US security assistance to the Ugandan government must focus on democracy promotion and prevent authoritarianism.

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