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# THE EXPANSION OF TERRORISM IN IVORY COAST

**MA Thesis**

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## Abstract

The aim of the research is to examine the history of terrorism in West Africa, its causes and current manifestations in Côte d'Ivoire, and the West African response to Terrorism. A proper analysis has been done on terrorism in West African countries including Ivory Coast and Mali, the two most impacted nations in the sub region. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) counterterrorism policy has also been covered in this research along with the issues and difficulties that Ivory Coast is facing in the current political environment throughout the world as well as the variables that influence its capacity to react. Furthermore, the study critically analyses the terrorist threat in West Africa and the measures taken by Sahel countries to counter this threat. During this research secondary qualitative methodology has been used for an excellent assessment of research that takes a systematic and iterative approach to finding, selecting, and analysing almost all high-quality studies and collecting and classifying data from these studies. This research has made several unique contributions examining the history of terrorism in West Africa, its causes and current manifestations in Côte d'Ivoire, and the West African response to Terrorism. Furthermore, this research has also made recommendations for specific actions and mechanisms to enable Côte d'Ivoire and West African countries prevent or successfully respond to terrorist acts.



**Keywords:** Terrorism, Counterterrorism, ECOWAS, West Africa, causes



## Özet

Araştırmanın amacı Batı Afrika'nın terörizm tarihini araştırmak, bunun Fildişi Sahili'ne olan güncel etkilerini ve Batı Afrika'nın terörizme olan cevabını incelemek. Bu durumdan en çok etkilen ülküler arasında yer alan Fildişi Sahili ve Mali gibi Sahraaltı ülkelerinde uygun bir araştırma yapılmıştır. Aynı zamanda Batı Afrika Devletleri Ekonomik Topluluğu'nun (ECOWAS) terörizm karşıtı politikası, Fildişi Sahili'nin güncel siyasi çerçeve de karşılaştığı zorluklar ve harekete geçme kapasitesini etkileyen unsurlar ele alınmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra araştırmada Batı Afrika'daki terörizm tehdidi ve Sahel ülkelerinde bu tehdide karşı alınan önlemler eleştirel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Bu araştırma boyunca ikincil nitel metod kullanılmıştır bunun amacı mükemmel bir

değerlendirme olmuştur. Bunun için ayrıca sistematik ve tekrarlamalı bir yaklaşım, ayıklama ve yüksek kaliteye sahip araştırmalar analiz edilmiştir. Bu analizlerden veri elde edilmiştir. Bu araştırma Batı Afrika'daki terörizm tehdidini analiz etmede birçok katkı sağlamıştır. Bu tehdidin Fildişi Sahili'ndeki sebepleri ve güncel etkileri ve Batı Afrika'nın bu tehdidi karşı olan tavrı incelenmiştir. Aynı zamanda bu çalışmam Fildişi Sahili'nin ve Batı Afrika ülkelerinin terör saldırılarına karşı durması ve başarılı bir şekilde engellenmesi için: bir takım belirli önerilerde bulunmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Terörizm, Terörle mücadele , ECOWAS , Batı Afrika, Nedenler

**LIST OF ABBREVIATION**

**ECOWAS:** Economic Community of West African States

**AU:** African Union

**UNDP:** United Nations Development Programme

**MNLA:** National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad

**OAU:** Organisation of African Unity

**AQIM:** Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb

**MUJAO:** Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa

**GIABA:** Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa

**AILCT:** International Counterterrorism Academy

**ACSRT:** African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism

**JNIM:** Jamaat Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin

**MINUSMA:** United Nation Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

**TSCTP:** Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Partnership

**AFISMA:** African-led International Support Mission

**CTC:** Counter-Terrorism Committee

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# INTRODUCTION

Côte d'Ivoire has been embroiled in political turmoil on and off since 2000, but has largely been free from the threat of Islamic extremism. In June 2015, however, Islamist militants in Mali began to attack closer to the border with Côte d'Ivoire. Attacks started to be recurrent in the northern border areas of Côte d'Ivoire, including the Comoé national park area in the north-east. There is a risk of a terrorist attacks elsewhere in Côte d'Ivoire, including in Abidjan. A terrorist attack took place at Grand Bassam near Abidjan on 13 March 2016, the attackers re-asserted the place of Al-Qaida as firmly on the map of international jihadism. And, tactically, it extended the range of Islamic terrorism to a country which has been spared its travails. These groups remain intent on demonstrating capability and increasing influence across the region. AQIM mainly operates in the Sahel due to the porous nature of the borders. Indeed, the region is vulnerable due to the precarious conditions of the people on the ground and lack of rule of law that contribute to the vulnerability or motivation of the people in the Sahel to likely join extremism and islamist movement. The hypothesis of this study is as follow; the emergence of terrorism in the sub region especially in Ivory Coast and its harmful influence on peace, security and development is a cause for concern, indeed Ivory Coast is threatened by numerous terrorist group which destabilizing the country. The fight against terrorism demands viable long term solutions that take into account the linkages between counterterrorism, the rules of law and human rights and socio-economic development. However, it is important to counter these attacks in order to prevent terrorists from anchoring in Ivory Coast. There are not much available scholars on terrorism in Ivory Coast, which help to understand terrorist actions. this research will explore the history of terrorism in Ivory Coast and the response of Ivorian authorities against terrorist groups. The case study of Ivory Coast is recent, researchers do not have enough updated information about it since the occurrence of terrorist attacks were not frequent. This research will bring the problems faced by the authorities to deal with terrorist actions and point out possible solutions in order to counter those attacks.

The research article is divided into three parts. The analysis of terrorism in Ivory Coast first section focuses on an overview of terrorism in Ivory Coast. This part is talking about the biggest terrorist groups that operating in the north region and evaluating the threats and the weaknesses of its actions. The ECOWAS counterterrorism policy is covered in the second section. In this part, domestic and global counter solutions are given. Ivory Coast has sent a large number of troops to the north in response of those attacks. The third section looks at the issues and difficulties that Ivory Coast is facing in the current political environment throughout the world as well as the variables that influence its capacity to react. Most of the borders in the north are porous and there are many ungoverned spaces around the vast boundary line.

## 1 Background

The largest and most important of West Africa's French-speaking country is Côte d'Ivoire. Côte d'Ivoire was an economic superpower in the decades after independence in 1960, with a wealth based primarily on agriculture, particularly cocoa (Bencherif, 2021). It is home to West Africa's largest French immigrant group. West Africa has made significant progress toward democracy, economic growth, and development in the previous decade, following a long period of conflict, social unrest, and political instability.

Despite this progress, the emergence of Terrorism in the sub-region and its harmful influence on peace, security, and development is cause for concern. The frequency and intensity of strikes evidences the increasing sophistication of terrorist organisations in the sub-region in several West African countries in recent years.

This is partly due to an increase in the frequency of attacks by Boko Haram, a Nigerian terrorist group that carried out 137 attacks in 2012 compared to 30 in 2011. Boko Haram carried out 365 terrorist incidents in 2012, killing 132 people. Terrorists and extremists, particularly members of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), are becoming more radicalized and migrating south across the Sahel region into Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, exacerbating the situation (Bavdaž, et al., 2020). AQIM has been linked to terrorist groups such as Boko Haram in Nigeria, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), and Ansar Eddine in Mali and Niger, and has made tactical partnerships with them. Al-Qaida in the

Islamic Maghreb has been able to assist Boko Haram and other terrorist groups with training and logistical support because to these ties (Battera, 2021).

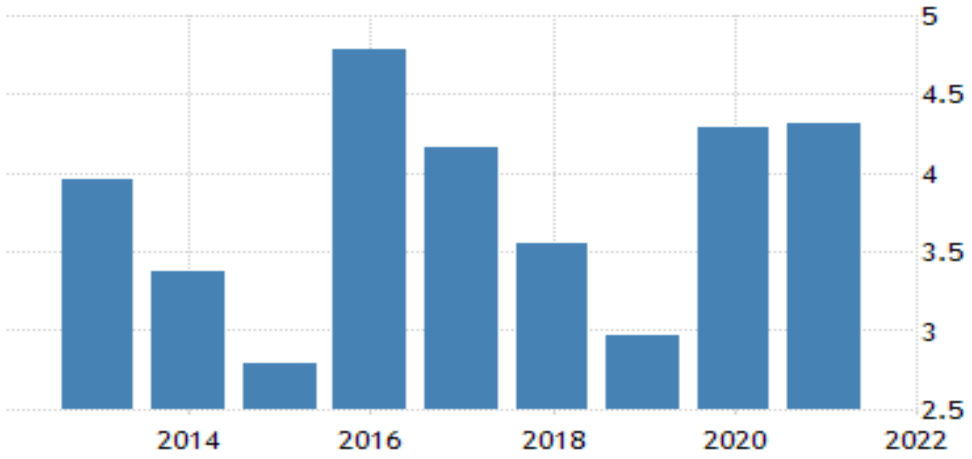



*Figure 1: Ivory Coast Terrorism Index, 2021*

The figure 1 shows the Ivory Coast Terrorism Index assesses Terrorism's direct and indirect consequences, such as the number of lives lost, damages, property loss, and psychological concerns. It is a composite score that assesses countries based on the impact of Terrorism, ranging from 0 (no effect) to 9 (significant impact) (highest impact). The terrorist Index in Ivory Coast averaged 3.29 from 2002 until 2021, reaching an all-time high in 2016 and a record low of 0 in 2011 (Ivory Coast Index, 2021). In 2020, the index went from 4.28 to 4.31 in 2021. There are terrorist organisations established in the region that operate from there, as well as terrorist organisations that are not based in West Africa but draw a large percentage of their income from the region's activities (Akanji, 2022). This is especially true in the case of drug trafficking, which frequently enters Europe via pre-existing West African networks and occasionally originates in South America. For various reasons, West Africa is prone to terrorism and it is financing. Political instability, ethnic and communal violence, pervasive corruption, widespread poverty, and significant unemployment and underemployment, particularly among young people, plague the sub-region. Terrorists and terrorist organisations can take advantage of these shortcomings, especially when young people are involved. The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) 2012 Human Development Report ranked 15 of the 16 ECOWAS countries as deficient in human development, illustrating the region's issues. "West Africa's economy is dominated by informal activity," according to GIABA in 2011 (Adu, 2022).

A region-wide share of 70-80 percent of GDP is likely representative. Most of the region's human development issues are caused by poor governance and inadequate public institutions. Most West African countries have porous borders, with many unregulated areas along major boundary lines. Terrorist groups can take advantage of this gap by establishing training bases for their members and transporting and distributing weapons across the sub-region, as not all countries have effective control over their borders and demarcation lines (Akran & Udeagbala, 2022). Terrorism's catastrophic impacts, such as loss of life, property devastation, insecurity, underdevelopment, and reputational harm, have caused ECOWAS authorities and governments to recognise the necessity for quick action to counter the menace. They want to know not only what the terrorist organisations are like and how they operate, but also, and most critically, how to stop them from operating in the sub-region. ECOWAS member nations have passed legislation to combat (Aleman, 2018).

Terrorism and terrorist financing, developed institutional frameworks, boosted investigative and law enforcement capabilities, and improved coordination between national and international organisations to confront this threat. To increase regional counter-terrorism activities, a regional counter-terrorism action plan was prepared in 2011 with the support of various stakeholders. ECOWAS Heads of State and Government also accepted the ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its Implementation Plan, as well as the Political Declaration on a Common Approach to Combating Terrorism, at the Summit held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on the 26th and 27th of February 2014. The Strategy and Implementation Plan, particularly, establish a foundation for counterterrorism in West Africa (Abu et al., 2021).

It is obvious that terrorism directly and negatively affects human rights, with serious consequences for victim’s rights to life, liberty, and personal safety. In addition to these direct costs to individuals, terrorism damages civil society, delays social and economic progress, and destabilises governments. The exercise of human rights is also significantly impacted by all of these circumstances. Individual protection is a primary responsibility of governments since personal safety is a fundamental human right. In order to safeguard their citizens and others from the threat of terrorist acts and to hold their perpetrators accountable, states have a duty to uphold human rights.

However, in recent years, severe issues with human rights and the rule of law have frequently resulted from the actions taken by States to combat terrorism. While legal and practical protections to avoid torture, such as routine and independent monitoring of detention facilities, have frequently been disregarded, some States have employed torture and other forms of ill-treatment to combat terrorism (Akran & Udeagbala, 2022). By sending back suspects of involvement in terrorism to nations where they face a substantial risk of torture or other severe human rights violations, other States transgress their commitments under international law. In some locations, the formal justice system's effectiveness and the independence of the judiciary are both compromised by the prosecution of civilians in special tribunals.

Human rights advocates, journalists, minorities, indigenous peoples, and members of civil society are all silenced through the deployment of repressive tactics. The rights of many individuals to exercise their economic, social, and cultural freedoms are threatened by the redirection of funds intended for social programmes and development aid to the security industry. Terrorism, according to Kofi Annan, is any act intended to kill or seriously harm civilians or non-combatants with the intention of intimidating a population or pressuring a government or international organisation to take a certain action or refrain from taking one (Aluko, 2021). Terrorism has become more common in West Africa in recent years. In fact, a number of groups in the sub-region have turned more frequently to the traits (or acts) of terrorism outlined in international documents like the UN Charter.

Terrorist attacks, suicide bombings, kidnappings, thefts, mass killings, planned killings, acts of piracy and destruction of public and private property, as well as the burning and desecration of religious and sacred sites, according to the 1998 Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. The main terrorist organisations in the sub-region are Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQMI), the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA), Boko Haram, and Ansaru (as well as Ansar Dine or Ansar Eddine) in northern Nigeria, as well as Mulabiyoun and the Front for the Liberation of Masina (FLM) in Mali (Amartey, 2022).

In order to undermine peace, security, and stability in the sub-region, these groups have carried out deliberate and frequently repeated violent attacks on citizens, government officials, infrastructure, state institutions, and national and international organisations. As a result, various strategies to address and combat the issue have been developed and put

into practise by state and non-state actors in the sub-region, most notably the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in partnership with domestic and foreign (state and non-state) actors such as the United States, France, the African Union, the European Union, and the United Nations. Therefore, it is important to look how each of these countries has responded (Bavdaž, et al., 2020).

The function of ECOWAS will not be discussed. Instead, it will concentrate on the problems that the organisation has addressed, the difficulties it is currently facing due to the current state of world politics, the elements that affect its capacity to address these difficulties and the expansion of terrorism in Ivory Coast. The study is based on a content analysis of secondary data taken from academic journals, books, internet resources, and official ECOWAS and ECOWAS-affiliated publications, as well as other multilateral organisations working in the sub-region to combat terrorism including the UN and AU (Bachelard Birou Mbima, 2021).

Given the growing number and sophistication of terrorist actions in West Africa, more must be done to confront the problem. Terrorist groups have evolved operational strategies that make it impossible for law enforcement to prevent assaults, exposing the information gap in West Africa regarding terrorist financing. The lack of solid understanding of the methods and procedures used by terrorists and their associates to gather, move, and use monies to carry out their activities is one of the critical problems hampering attempts to combat money laundering and terrorism financing in West Africa.

The Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa ( GIABA ) commissioned five specialists (one from Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal) to perform baseline research of Terrorism and terrorist finance in their respective countries to provide relevant and up-to-date information for this typology project. Terrorists and terrorist groups rely on money to meet their personal, operational, and organisational demands (Babo, 2019). To prevent them from becoming active, it is critical to identify and cut off their funding sources. Those who sponsor terrorist organisations and acts will be arrested, investigated, and prosecuted, which will serve as a deterrence to others. Terrorist assets will be frozen, seized, and confiscated, which will serve as a deterrence. The impact of terrorism financing on peace, security, and prosperity makes it all the more crucial to understand and manage it.

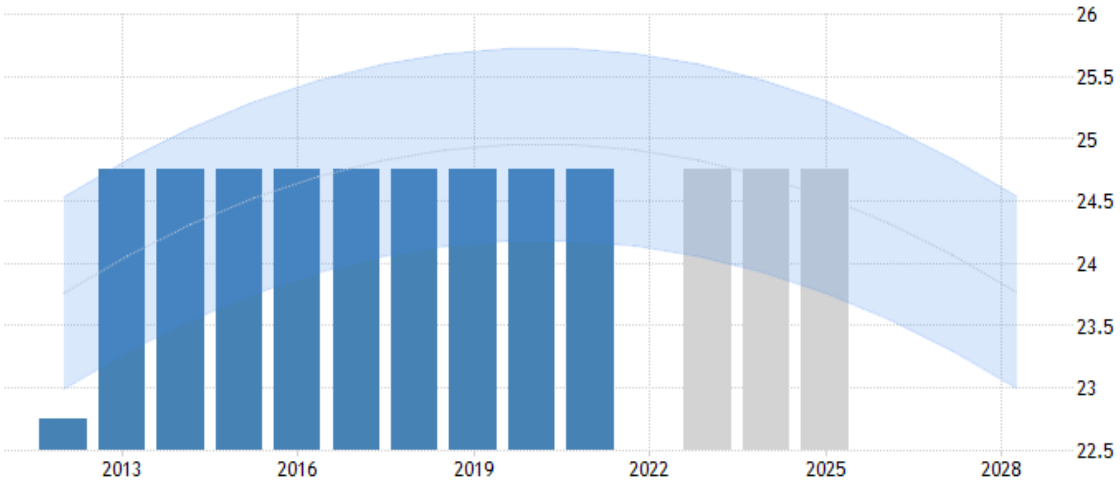



*Figure 2: Ivory Coast Security Rate Index, 2021*

The figure 2 shows the Ivory Coast's Social Security Rate, which is a monetary assistance from the state to help people in inadequate situation or with no income. The Social Security Rate is a significant source of revenue for the Ivory Coast government because it helps fund various social programs such as safety, health care, and other assistances.

**Research Aims and Objectives**

This study aims to answer the following question: What measures can West African states take for terrorist threat in the Sahel more effectively? The study critically analyses the terrorist threat in West Africa and the measures taken by Sahel countries to counter this threat. The exact objectives of the study are:

- Examine the history of Terrorism in West Africa, its causes and current manifestations in Côte d'Ivoire, and the West African response to Terrorism.
- To determine whether there are any vulnerable locations in West Africa.
- To investigate Côte d'Ivoire's response to the emergence and threat of Terrorism in West Africa.
- To make recommendations for specific actions and mechanisms to enable Côte d'Ivoire and West African countries prevent or successfully respond to terrorist acts.

**Research Questions**

The research questions on which the whole research is based are as under;

- What is the history of Terrorism in West Africa, what are the causes and current manifestations of Terrorism in Côte d'Ivoire, and what can West Africa do about it?
- What parts of West Africa might be in risk and how has Côte d'Ivoire reacted to the rise of Terrorism in West Africa and its threat along with the policies and mechanisms?

**Research Methodology**

To analyse these research questions qualitative research is selected for analysing data that has already being tested and proved right based on the mass data collected. The research employs interpretivism approach, relying on previous scholarly to describe the scope of terrorism and the challenges that face different actors involved in the counterterrorism in the Sahel region and more precisely in Ivory Coast. For the purpose of this study, this research particularly acquires information from articles, online databases of journals and books.

The primary source of data collection was secondary academic sources containing relevant data to the study. The core of the selected research approach is to conduct research for the attainment of the mass data for the justification of the accuracy and updated data about the expansion of the terrorism in Ivory Coast that will be grounded upon the first-hand experience.

**Significance of the Study**

The main problem statement in this research study is that the Sahel region of West Africa has been subjected to purposeful and systematic terrorist acts, posing a threat to the peace and security of the countries and regions affected. Terrorists have targeted Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Côte d'Ivoire. Mali has had more terrorist attacks than any other West African country, with 725 individuals murdered in 199 acts of Terrorism between 1990 and 2014, including 178 perpetrators (Africa Intensive Forum, 2020). The United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have all lent their support to the fight against Terrorism (Bencherif, 2021).

As a result, while there have been occasional triumphs, terrorist actions in the region continue. The fundamental flaw in this research is that it focuses on Terrorism, which occurs in practically every part of Ivory Coast, especially in the Northern part. Terrorism's prevalence in Côte d'Ivoire has never been emphasized. As a result, this research will focus on the prevalence in Côte d'Ivoire. Some researchers have been conducted on the terrorism in the Sahel but not on Ivory Coast because the threat was not high. Now the case of Ivory Coast is becoming problematic because attacks started to be recurrent and create insecurities into the population. Although Ivory Coast has experienced political upheaval since 2001, the country has mostly been spared the menace of Islamist Terrorism. But in June 2015, jihadists started carrying out assaults along the Ivorian border. Al-Qaeda's radicalization is not regarded as a huge issue, but Hezbollah would gain much support. According to a 2015 survey by the Institute for Security Studies in Africa, a sizable portion of Lebanese living abroad in the Ivory Coast believe that Hezbollah is a nationalist movement as opposed to a terrorist organisation (Antinori, 2019).

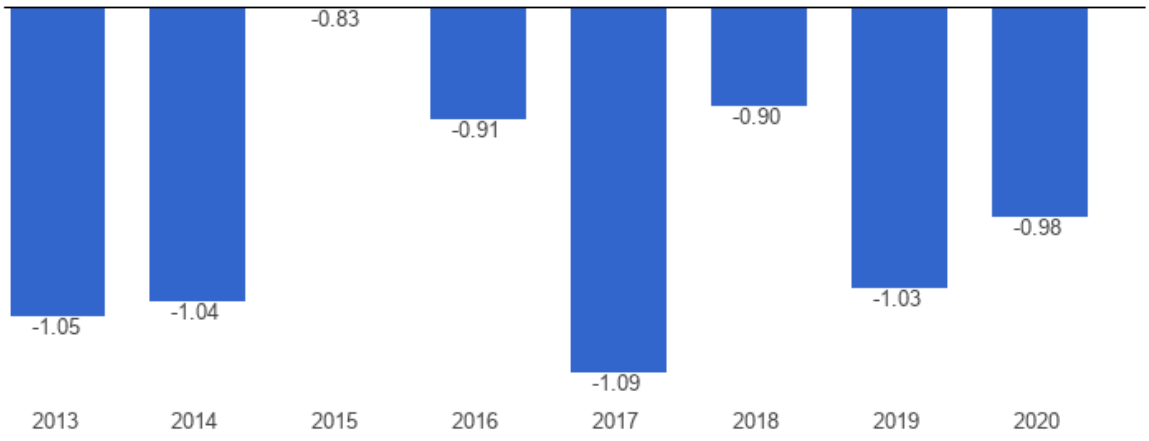



*Figure 3: Ivory Coast Political Stability , 2021*

This graph shown the Ivory Coast‘s Political Stability public perceptions of the government's chances of being destabilized or overthrown through unconstitutional or violent tactics, such as politically motivated violence and Terrorism. The index is a composite of various other directories and those from the Economist Unit (intelligence), the International Economic Forum, and the Political Risk Facilities.

Through this research many Ivorians will be able to realize the expansion of terrorism which is taking advance on terrirories in the country and will have an overview on terrorist actions into the Sahel. Moreover, this thesis will bring solutions and recommendations for government in order to increase their panels of security actions for a better security level. Indeed, future researchers may explore other solutions and go deeper into researches on Terrorism in Ivory Coast in other to concise the studies, what have been done before and what's need to be done for a better understanding of the functioning of terrorists group. More Ivorian's have enlisted in overseas conflicts like Lebanon and Syria, however exact numbers are unknown. In the northern section of the Comoé National Park in Côte d'Ivoire, jihadist camps were found in 2020. Côte d'Ivoire has recently increased regional and global efforts to counter the escalating threat of Terrorism. It has actively boosted border security, backed counterterrorism initiatives by the African Union, ECOWAS, and the United States, and served as a logistical hub for France's Operation Barkhane in neighbouring Mali. Although the Ivorian government has not yet participated in any attacks against ISIS, Côte d'Ivoire is also formally a member of the multinational coalition combating ISIS in Syria (Antinori, 2019).

The national anti-terrorism and law enforcement regulations in Côte d'Ivoire were further strengthened in 2014 and 2015. In 2014, the government introduced several anti-terrorism laws that make it illegal to support or recruit terrorists and grant permission for phone taps and night-time searches. Following the al-Qaeda attacks in March 2015, the Ivorian government committed 81 billion CFA francs ($136.3 million) to counterterrorism efforts and launched a comprehensive national counterterrorism investigation that resulted in the arrest of more than 80 suspects, at least 16 of whom were charged with direct involvement in the attacks (Anyim, 2019).

## CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF TERRORISM IN IVORY COAST

### 1.1 Weber conceptual of terrorism

The term was initially used in the 1790s to describe the terror employed by the revolutionaries against their adversaries during the French Revolution. Mass guillotine killings were part of the Reign of Terror carried out by Maximilien Robespierre's Jacobin movement.

The three major elements of terrorism are political philosophy, organisational design, and brutality. Terrorism uses violence against the civilian populace to frighten people and spread panic. The organisational and hierarchical structure of terrorism can be better understood using Weber's theories of authority. It can be helpful to understand how terrorist organisations use political ideology to attract new recruits using the sorts of action and ethics. State and politics cannot be sociologically defined in terms of their objectives, according to Weber (2004: 132).

Terrorist organisations' core ideologies are based on the ethic of conviction**;** which Weber calls irrational (Erol Bulut,2019). For terrorist groups, it is crucial to carry out their actions in the name of pretended ideals such as equality, a just and peaceful world, and the rights of all peoples. In this case, as the victims had no motivation to alter the established system, they are accountable for their own deaths. Weber attributes the lack of radicalism in legal politics to the ethic of responsibility. One could consider terrorism to be a form of corrupt or radicalised politics. Members of terrorist organisations are kept from reflecting on their acts by removing any sense of accountability. A crucial component of organisational continuity is the refusal to challenge the justification of actions.

The causes, effects, and organisational structure of terrorism have been the subject of several research. From the standpoint of Weber's ideas of ethics, action, and different sorts of authority, this study sociologically tackled the problem of terrorism in Ivory Coast. The Weber theory will help to understand terrorist organisations actions and behaviour in different standpoint of ethic. The analysis reveals that terrorist organisations frequently have a strong sense of conviction, value-driven behaviour, and charismatic leadership. Terrorist organisations can take a more flexible stance in terms of operations and shield themselves from criticism thanks to the ethic of conviction and value-based

action. Because they may avoid the strict bureaucratic framework of governmental control, terrorist groups are better able to enlist new members. Terrorist groups' members can function largely freely through a network of tiny subgroups without a central command due to the organisations' adaptable and scattered organisational structures. The organisational structure and operational level of terrorist organisations cannot usually be explained by rational choice theories. Irrationality and flexibility, particularly in contemporary terrorism, lead to the internationalisation of terrorist organisations. In light of these facts, the battle against terrorism must take into account this adaptable and illogical structure. This is a planet that has discovered its existence outside of reason.

### 1.2 Terrorism in Ivory Coast

The main threat to Côte d'Ivoire comes from Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQ-M) and its affiliated groups, which continue to try to demonstrate their capabilities and increase their influence throughout the region (Ehigiamusoe & Lean, 2018). Al-Qaida operates mainly in the Sahel region. Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger are part of the Sahel area. Still, because of the areas of borders, the threat could spread to other neighbouring countries in the region, including Côte d'Ivoire. The risk is greatest in northern Côte d'Ivoire's border territories, especially in the Comoé National Park area in the northeast (Edu-Afful, 2022).




*Figure 1: Terrorism in Ivory Coast (Institute for security studies., 2020)*

The threat is extreme in northern Côte d'Ivoire's border areas. In June 2015, however, Islamist militants in Mali began to attack closer to the border with Côte d'Ivoire. Months later, Côte d'Ivoire suffered the first al-Qaeda terrorist attack on its soil, when three AQIM gunmen stormed a beach resort east of Abidjan, killing 19 people. Today, the two leading dangers are believed to come from Malian-based groups Ansar al-Dine (AAD) and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) (Bloomberg). In some ways Ivory Coast is the largest and most important country in francophone West Africa. In the decades after independence in 1960, Ivory Coast was an economic powerhouse with wealth mostly based on agriculture, especially on cocoa. It hosted the largest French expatriate community in West Africa. The country has long been an immigration magnet from the other West African francophone countries, which are poorer. Nevertheless, even with renewed prosperity, remaining internal division provide an opening for jihadi groups. As elsewhere in West Africa, the south, centred of Abidjan is predominantly Christian and much more prosperous than the north. İn effect the south dominates the north. The north is predominantly Islamic and many northern residents feel marginalized by a southern francophone elite that is predominantly Christian. For example, on March 28, two fighters and three attackers were murdered in an attack on a military position near Kafolo, near the Burkina Faso border (Dibba & Asal, 2022). On June 11, 2020, an attack on a military checkpoint near Kafolo on the Burkina Faso border killed 11 troops and a gunman. On June 11, 2020, in Gbeya, Kanyasso, another attack occurred: unknown people started firing on a security post. The risk of terrorist attacks is also present in other parts of Côte d'Ivoire, notably in Abidjan, where a terrorist attack on March 13, 2016, in Grand Bassam, near Abidjan, killed 18 people, including several foreigners (de Montclos, 2018). Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQ-M) claimed responsibility for the attack. Other attacks against resorts, guesthouses, cafes, and eateries visited by immigrants are possible and may arise without notice.

### 1.3 Al-Qaida's Regional Momentum

"Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb" (AQIM) appeared against the backdrop of the Algerian civil war and the suppression of radical Islamist insurgencies by government forces in the 1990s. The US attack on Iraq in 2003 demonstrated the ability of states in West Africa, including the Ivory Coast and many others, to stem the tide of terrorism in the district and reverse current support for fundamental Islamism. The successful

dismantling and reintegration of the Salafist Group for Prayer and Combat (GSPC) in Algeria is a testament to this. As a result, the remains of radical Islamist groups in the Maghreb, Europe, and the Sahara-Sahel are seeking stronger transnational coordination (Davies, 2018).

The resurgence of the GSPC in the new al-Qaeda (AQIM), either for survival (the nationwide Salafist crowds in Libya, Tunisia, and Morocco have lost their original power bases) or as part of a joint alliance, has elevated the Maghreb terrorism to a new level of effectiveness and international attention, and the deadly attacks against foreign targets in Algeria in 2007 demonstrate that offensive and communications capabilities have increased (Dannels, 2018). Moreover, the successful dismantling of terrorist cells in North Africa may have prompted Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb to intensify its operations in the Sahel. Despite a significant reduction in the number of arson attacks in Algeria, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb continues to carry out car bomb attacks and suicide attacks in Algeria, targeting police, security forces, and, in exceptional circumstances, foreign workers.

The threat and capabilities of AQIM must also be assessed in light of the nature and complexity of its links with Al-Qaida. AQIM has provided recruits for Al-Qaida operatives in Iraq. 8 and 24 percent of al-Qaeda recruits in Iraq are likely to be from Algeria (Edu-Afful, 2022). Most importantly, most of Al-Qaida in Iraq's foreign fighters in North Africa come from countries where Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb has little influence, such as West Africa, Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya.

### 1.4 Evaluating Threats and Weakness

While ransom payment remains the preferred method of ending kidnappings, the slight number of cases and the absence of reliable data on AQIM operations in the Sahel-Saharan region prevent conclusions from being drawn about operational patterns or tactical trends. However, the nature of the target by humans (tourists and European workers) and the preferred areas of operation (Niger and Mali) are two key pointers: 1) the scope of AQIM operations remains tied to its Algerian control unit, and 2) the objectives of its communications strategy appear to overcome and pay for the absence of effective resources to undermine and challenge the safety of state authorities and the management of land in the Sahel (Chuku, Abang & Isip, 2019).

Despite indications of increased recruitment by Al-Qaida in the Maghreb at the regional level, the organization has failed to convincingly demonstrate the existence of a pan-area structure, let alone a free agreement across the borders. Instead, its ability to act as a meta-network providing logistical and strategic support in the country called Europe and West Africa has made threat assessment and preventive measures more complex and unpredictable. Moreover, AQIM's enthusiastic ideology and great strategies have not generated the kind of popular support that could endure a full-scale revolution or stimulus internal conflict in the area (Daniel Chigudu, 2021).

While major Islamist doctrines have infiltrated the region and have been able to exploit social and financial desperation, the understanding, syncretic but traditional Islam of the Sahel has proven to be a tough barrier against Islamist extremist attempts to destabilize one of the region's fragile states. Despite a serious lack of a comprehensive assessment of the situation, domestic terrorism in West Africa lacks deep planning and operational dimensions to pose a reliable threat to regional strength or nation-states (Coccia, 2018).

Al-Qaida in the Maghreb can continue operations because weak and failed states dominate the Sahel. Moreover, it benefits directly from the abuses of the state to justify political inertia and consolidate authoritarian power by invoking the threat of terrorism within the country. Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb is involved in trafficking, money laundering, and drug trafficking in the Saharan Sahel, Mali, West Africa, and elsewhere, providing minimal financial support and steady recruitment while expanding its transnational reach in one of the world's poorest regions. The Sahel and West African regions feature the world's largest concentration of failed states and some of the world's poorest nations (Collado, 2021).

Half of the countries in the Sahel and West Africa suffer from some form of instability; West African and Sahelian countries account for 11 of the 26 countries most at risk of further collapse and 6 of the 18 countries with the greatest increase in the risk of instability from 2008-2010 (Boesch et al., 2021). According to the Human Development Index and the Failed States Index, most Sahelian countries are among the worst performers. At the same time, many more are dependent on multilateral institutions for debt repayment and development assistance.

The United Nations Security Council has even informed of increasing or developing security threats in West Africa, in particular extremist activities in the Sahel, maritime uncertainty in the Gulf of Guinea, and illegal drug trafficking that threaten regional strength and have potential implications for international security (Boukhars, 2020). Security problems in the Sahel can thus be traced back to severely underdeveloped areas lacking minimum services, infrastructure, and state control. In Mali and Niger, Al-Qaida in the Maghreb operates where state functions cannot meet the local population's most basic needs.

| CEN-SAD Members | Failed States Index Rank (1-60) (Freedom House) | Peace and Conflict CIDCM (Highest Risk Score) (Univ. of Maryland) | Human Development Index (128-169 Rank) (UNDP) | Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) (IMF/World Bank) | Fragile States (World Bank)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Benin | | 16 | 134 | X | |
| Burkina Faso* | 35 | | 161 | X | |
| Central African Republic | 8 | 17.6 | 159 | X | X |
| Chad* | 2 | 16.6 | 163 | X | X |
| Cote D'Ivoire | 12 | 19.5 | 149 | X | X |
| Djibouti | | 28.2 | 147 | | |
| Egypt | 49 | | | | |
| Eritrea | 30 | | | X | X |
| Gambia | | | | X | X |
| Ghana | | | 130 | X | |
| Guinea Bissau | 22 | 20.2 | 164 | X | X |
| Liberia | 33 | 22.7 | 162 | X | X |
| Libya* | | | | | |
| Mali* | | 25.9 | 160 | X | |
| Morocco | | | | | |
| Niger* | 20 | 33.1 | 167 | X | |
| Nigeria | 14 | 25.6 | 142 | | X |
| Senegal | | | 144 | X | |
| Sierra Leone | 29 | 23.3 | 158 | X | X |
| Somalia | | 16.9 | | X | X |
| Sudan* | 3 | | 154 | X | X |
| Togo | 47 | | 139 | X | X |

*Figure 2: Dr. Anouar Boukhars, 2020*

The terrorist threat in the Maghreb and Sahel is not only due to economic and social difficulties or stalled democratization reform processes but also stems from states quest

for internal stability and their inability to efficiently contain jihadism and together address the safety challenges in the Sahel (north-eastern Mauritania, south-western Algeria, northern Mali, and Niger). The current conflict in North Africa, including the overthrow of the Ben Ali command in Tunisia, has failed to demonstrate the active participation of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb or associated groups, irrespective of the economic and radical motivations for the protests (Bros, Desdoigts & Kouadio, 2019).

Terrorism is not a credible alternative to social rejection or political inflexibility. However, the new state into the Maghreb is a more fluid environment that offers new opportunities for Al-Qaida into the Maghreb to capitalize on popular demands and exploit divisions to advance its agenda. One example is Mauritania, a politically unstable country with poorly equipped security forces: a series of events between 2006 and 2008 made the country one of AQIM's favourite targets. The Sahara-Sahel region is neither a governmental space nor a land without a master. Complex historical and human dynamics intersect in the region: from tribal communities to colonial rule to numerous geopolitical and spiritual divisions, the Sahel is fraught with primary tensions that can be triggered by external intervention (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019).

Control in the Sahel depends on entry and control over markets, capital movements, and trade means, which requires interaction with indigenous and marginalized communities. AQIM has gained operational support and training centres in the Sahel and its neighbours (such as Libya, Mali, and Nigeria) but has formed resident and strategic agreements with Tuaregs in Niger and Mali (but not with Salafist or other dissatisfied movements), most notably in Mauritania - the hinterland is increasingly used as an AQIM region, and as a sanctuary in northern Mali (Binder et al., 2021).

But the changing relationship between the AQIM and the local groups it chooses to work with (those with ethnic claims, such as the Tuareg, or those with ideological claims, such as the Mauritanian Jihad Education Group) makes any prospect of AQIM's development uncertain. Another key factor is the possible involvement of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb in cocaine trafficking, with cocaine traveling from Latin America to Western Europe via West Africa. If confirmed, the growing operational capacity of AQIM, joined with the ongoing security breakdown and instability in the Maghreb, could worsen instability throughout the expanse (Duffett et al., 2018).

Despite reliable reports of excessive growth in drug trafficking in West Africa, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports anecdotal evidence of increased drug trafficking across the Sahara to Europe and slight evidence that Malian and Nigerian rebels are involved in trans-Saharan trafficking. Although cocaine major routes from southern and western Africa and heroin flow from eastern Africa appear to join through Sahel and Algeria, there is no planned consideration of the Sahel region or possible links to terrorism. Similarly, INTERPOL notes an emerging trend in cocaine trafficking from the Sahel through the West African sea route (but mentions Mali), which is consistent with the UNODC cocaine seizure maps (Davies, 2018). In this particular context, the lack of concerns by overseas governments in their treatment of their abducted nationals does not address the strategic roots of AQIM in the Sahel and the fact that Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb may rely on criminal networks - particularly drug trafficking - to channel funds and acquire weapons.

### 1.5 AQIM's Growing Threats

Al-Qaeda's presence into the Maghreb and Sahel appears to be limited, but in light of the current confusion and management change in North Africa, the positive aspects of the threat must be reassessed. Terrorism and weak supremacy alone cannot enlighten the regional aspects that have allowed AQIM to gain a foothold in the Sahara and the Sahel (Dahiru Aminu & Raja, 2021).

In this context, the Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP) focuses on building the capacity of moderate Islamic cities in the Sahel (Mali, Mauritania, and Niger) to contain AQIM and prevent its access to sanctuaries, which may not have the desired effect and lacks strategic influence. Without a regional combination strategy that links the Maghreb, the Sahel, and West Africa, the region will remain without a long-term solution (Clara et al., 2020). The competing ambitions of Algeria and former Libya to occur in the region - and given that some intersecting regional organizations lack the necessary geographic scope and security instruction need to be mitigated by a multidimensional security mechanism that allows for consultation, data sharing, and effective planning.

Sahel should also focus on reforming the governance deficit, which is essentially a criminal rather than a governmental or conceptual issue. Fighting crime and exploitation in government and safety institutions would undermine the clandestine financial and

logistical support of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (Coccia, 2018). As conflict involves control of illegal activity, the combination of law execution and military issues can weaken the rising links between international criminal networks, terrorism, and the state and its security apparatus.

In fighting terrorism, the US and Europe have the potential to secondary governance reform to the need to maintain stability and help save the young Sahelian state. The current wave of complaints and the overthrow of authoritarian regimes in North Africa not only highlights the limits of governance but may mean less kind cooperation with the United States and its European allies in the fight against terrorism. The new state zone into the Maghreb could facilitate new sanctuaries for jihadists and opportunistic extremists, further destabilizing the Sahel states through an effect and continued failure of governance. The Sahel countries should fear themselves more than terrorism (Collado, 2021).

### 1.6 The Rise of Terrorism in the Region of West Africa

The diversity of ECOWAS member states creates a complex set of vulnerabilities in the region. Among the countries in the region are many of the world's poorest. Poor areas are predominantly rural, and the main rural activity is agriculture or livestock farming. However, these livelihoods depend on many non-agricultural sources of income, including migration (Ehigiamusoe & Lean, 2018).

Biophysical patterns of climate, vegetation, soils, and river basins predate these political boundaries and affect livelihoods, including the movement of people and resources through the area. For example, trade in food and livestock between coastal and arid areas is an ancient practice. The regional growth of urban poverty is linked to rural livelihood issues as rural economies adapt to urban markets and households seek to combine urban and rural livelihoods with improving their situation.




*Figure 3: The Habari network,2022*

The history of West Africa combines great times and destructive conflicts. While the contemporary situation reflects this history in terms of the deep bonds between the peoples of the region, divisions have also emerged due to differences between English and French-speaking countries, political and economic developments, and other factors. A discussion of contemporary vulnerability issues will not attempt to explain the impact of past economic, political and social conditions; however, we recognize that the causes of many of the underlying injustices of vulnerability are deep-rooted (de Montclos, 2018).

Several researches explored the issues of vulnerability where narrow technical approaches, such as technologies to improve crop productivity or water systems, can support vulnerability and poverty reduction goals. We also see opportunities to progress in all areas of development (education, health, economic development, and governance) to create opportunities, safety nets, and a better set of formal and informal resources and support that people can rely on to meet the challenges of environmental variability.

The challenges of environmental variability in the region are exacerbated by environmental poverty and other pressures, exacerbating people's livelihood difficulties. Some environmental degradation issues in the region, such as soil degradation, have been studied in depth over time, while other environmental issues have only recently been studied in more depth, such as the sustainability of groundwater resources.

Vulnerability, as referred to in this thesis, is the ability to suffer damage or loss due to environmental shocks or stresses. To understand who may be affected and to what extent, this analysis examines exposure patterns (exposure to various stress and disturbances), vulnerability (the likelihood that such exposure will result in harm), and resilience (the ability to recover) (Dahiru Aminu & Raja, 2021). As vulnerability to environmental stress may be worsened by other stress, this research examines interactions with several of this stress. For individuals exposed to environmental stressors, losses vary considerably for many reasons.

Vulnerability depends on the availability of adaptive resources, or what the sustainable livelihoods approach calls forms of capital: the human, financial, economic, social, and physical assets that people can draw on to help them cope with the demands of environmental shocks and stresses. In West Africa, as elsewhere, vulnerability to environmental stress depends on subsistence farming practices and opportunities, such as irritated or rain-fed agriculture, as well as physiological factors, such as advanced age, chronic illness, or disability. People's resilience to stress reflects their ability and access to household, community, market, and government systems and resources that can help them continue to function and recover.

These include agricultural price support, food price subsidies, and household loans. These systems are evolving throughout West Africa for several reasons, including government economic policy and political stability. Vulnerability is linked to power and entitlement in social relations and the distribution of resources at different levels of social organization. Patterns of access or entitlement to these resources, and the ability to distribute them, vary within communities (Dai, 2018). These variations reflect other social patterns of empowerment and marginalization prevalent in West Africa and most countries around the world, such as gender inequality, ethnic disparities or illiteracy, and the extent to which a person's health and income depend on environmental factors.

In some cases, poverty and vulnerability may be mutually reinforcing, but poverty is not the same as vulnerability. Within a community, household vulnerability reflects assets, capabilities, and resource access. In West Africa, people can supplement their family farm income with precarious work, produce charcoal for sale, sell handicrafts, or brew beer. Repeated losses exacerbate poverty and vulnerability as people are often forced to sell assets such as livestock to make ends meet. It can take a long time for households to

recover this support. These losses can lead to people slipping from better conditions to poverty or from temporary poverty to long-term poverty (Coccia, 2018).

### 1.7 Restrictions to ECOWAS's (Economic Community of West African States) Counterterrorism Efforts in West Africa

Although ECOWAS has been active, pragmatic, and proactive in the fight against terrorism in West Africa's sub-region, its efforts have been controlled by two main factors. The first is the lack of will and pledge on the part of the government and its member countries or their unwillingness to apply counterterrorism choices and officially binding mechanisms. This is because although ECOWAS is an institute that provides a platform for the countries of the region to discuss, formulate and develop responses to regional challenges, the organization's member states have often not fully cooperated with the institution to achieve this goal.

For instance, several ECOWAS members states, notably Cape Verde, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria, did not submit their 2015 yearly reports (2015) to GIABA. It making difficult to assess the funding of terrorism and money laundering cases in these countries and to identify areas where they might benefit from GIABA's technical assistance (Boukhars, 2020). A second challenge facing ECOWAS in its efforts to fight terrorism in the sub-region is the political environmental setting. Thus, we can observe a less responsive government with the aim of staying in power in order to make arbitrary decisions. In this regard, this kind of government are more likely to fall rapidly into division that might arise within the political pectrum in the society.

The increase in terrorist activity following the delayed positioning of AFISMA forced France, at the insistence of the transitional management of Mali, to occur militarily under the banner of Operation Serval to counter the terrorists' southward offensive (United Nation, 2013). However, the distribution of French troops in the state prompted African countries, mainly the Republic of Chad and the eight ECOWAS member states - Benin, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Nigeria, Guinea, Senegal, Togo, and Ghana - to deploy AFISMA with the economic and logistical support of France, the European Union, the United States, and the United Kingdom, which provided troops and covered the costs.

Although ECOWAS is a multidimensional intergovernmental set up to encourage economic combination and growth, its command and scope have been expanded over the years to include safety issues, including the fight against terrorism (Boesch et al., 2021).

Peace, safety, and stability are, without a doubt, necessary components of effective local integration and socio-economic development. To that end, ECOWAS has created several legally required instruments, including agreements and protocols on fight prevention and resolution, diplomacy, corruption, light weapons, and the prevention of all the drug abuse, illicit drug trafficking, and organized crime, the majority of which also apply to terrorism (Bros, Desdoigts & Kouadio, 2019). In the fight against terrorism, ECOWAS works as an institution with state and non-state actors at the regional and international levels. At the regional level, ECOWAS provides a platform for cooperation among member states in the growth and implementation of counterterrorism measures.

### 1.8 Jihadi Activity in Ivory Coast

In the early hours of March 28, 2021 some 60-armed men confronted two small military connections in Kafolo and Kolobougou on the Ivory Coast border with Burkina Faso. The attackers murdered at least three militaries and injured others. No group has appealed concern for the attack, but the media speculates that the criminals may be jihadists from neighbouring Burkina Faso, where the Islamist groups are gradually active. There have been previous attacks in the same area. The year of 2020 saw the killing of 14 militaries and gunmen by "jihadists," also near the Kafolo. However, there is an increasing concern that the latest attacks suggest that the jihadist rebels are growing their influence, as they have done in neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso (Carodenuto, 2019).

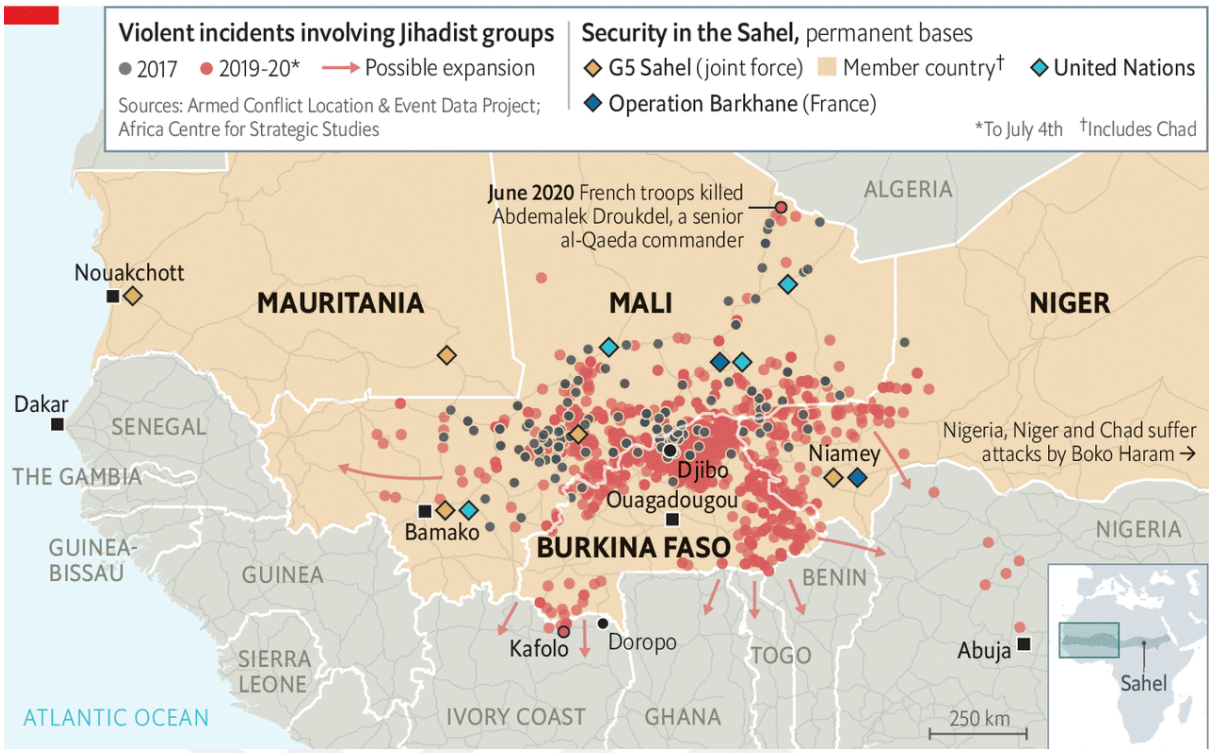



*Figure 4: Jihadists in the Sahel threaten west Africa's coastal states (Boesch et al., 2021)*

Ivory Coast has long attracted migrants from other, poorer French-speaking countries in West Africa. But even as it regains its prosperity, internal divisions remain, providing opportunities for jihadi groups (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). As with West Africa, the south, centred on Abidjan, is mainly Christian and much wealthier than the north. Indeed, the south controls the state. The north is mainly Muslim, and many northern populations feel marginalized by the French-speaking elite of the mainly Christian south. In addition to the differences between North and South, there are also differences between 'natives' and immigrants from other parts of French-speaking West Africa, particularly Burkina Faso (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019).

The local population is predominantly Christian, while the immigrants are predominantly Muslim. Therefore, Côte d'Ivoire is similar to other African hotspots – Mali, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Mozambique, the Central African Republic, northern Nigeria, and Niger - where marginalized Muslim populations provide opportunities for radical jihadism. However, except for Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire is much larger and more economically important than the other countries. If jihadi radicalism prevails, this will have serious consequences for West Africa beyond Côte d'Ivoire (Cruz, D'Alessio & Stolzenberg, 2020).

### 1.9 Terrorist groups

The terrorist threat to Ivory Coast come mainly from abroad, from powerful Islamist groups in neighbouring Mali, for example, “Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb” (AQIM) and AAD, which is led by AQIM functioning Kounta Dallah and strategic in part by a man called Ould Nouwayely (Duffett et al., 2018).

In 2018, alleged jihadists were found near Comoé National Park in the country's north. Following Bakayoko's statement, Malians, Mauritanians, some Ivorian’s, and two Ivorian fighters were detained in connection with the attack. While there are few details about whether and how the Ivorian soldiers became radicalized, the suspects are believed to have lived close to the terrorists and linked with the bomber's driver before the attack. In August 2016, the fighters were found guilty of conspiracy to support terrorists by a military court and sentenced to 11 years in prison (Davies, 2018).

While Ivorian’s are considered reluctant to deal with violent regional Islamist groups such as al-Qaeda, support for the foreign terrorist organization Hezbollah is considered strong. While Ivorian’s are generally perceived to be disassociated from regional Islamist groups such as Al-Qaeda, support for the foreign terrorist organization Hezbollah is perceived to be high. Pierre Gaho Oulata, chairman of the security and defence committee of the Ivorian National Assembly, also believes that former militants from the 2003 and 2009 civil wars should be monitored to guarantee they do not take up arms with powerful Islamist groups. However, the threat has not yet materialized (de Montclos, 2018). It exists many terrorist groups that terrorize the sahel and its population. The main one are Boko Haram, Al Qaeda, Al-Mourabitoun, Ansar al Dine and Hezbollah.

Boko Haram is one of the most dangerous terrorist groups in Nigeria, despite the country's high level of insecurity. The group's actions and the harm they have inflicted are the best examples of this. For instance, the fundamental objectives of Boko Haram include the abolition of the Nigerian state and everything that is not Islamic. In spite of Nigeria's constitution's secularism and under the direction of a radical Islam that rejects democracy, education, and Western ideals as corrupt and corrupted, the group aims to establish an Islamic caliphate in northeastern (Enaifoghe, 2018). Armed attacks were initially made

in the northeast, mainly in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states, on state security personnel and public facilities such schools, clinics, and government buildings.

Most of the victims of Boko Haram's actions have been women and girls; some of them have been kidnapped, raped, forced to marry warlords, sold into prostitution and sexual slavery, used as human shields against attacks by government forces, and even used as bomb shelters.

AQIM, the North African division of al-Qaeda, operates from neighbouring Mali and has approved attacks in the Sahel, notably in Algeria, Libya, Niger, Tunisia, and Mauritania. On March 13, 2016, 3 gunmen linked to AQIM launched the group's first-ever terrorist activity in Ivory Coast, killing 19 individuals on the coastline of Grand Bassam. In March 2016 attack, which was later found to have been planned by Kounta Dallah, originally from Mali, raised questions about the threat posed by AQIM internal recruitment in Côte d'Ivoire (Kohnert, 2022).

Al-Mourabitoun is a powerful terrorist organization that split from Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in 2011 but officially re-joined the group in 2015; Dec. Al-Mourabitoun is led by prominent Algerian bomber Mokhtar Belmokhtar and aims to create an Islamic state in West Africa. Al-Mourabitoun has demanded responsibility for several terrorist outbreaks in the Sahel and a deadly gun and prisoner attack in the Malian state Bamako in November 2015 (Kabosha, 2020). In March 2016, when AQIM launched its attacks on Ivory Coast, Al-Mourabitoun and AQIM publically operated under the same banner. However, the groups are assumed to have retained a degree of self-sufficiency. Of the three murderers linked to the Grand Bassam attack, two - Hamza al-Frani and Abu Adam Ansari - allegedly belonged to Al-Mourabitoun, while the third - Abdel Rahman al-Frani - was said to be a supporter of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (Jones & Markusen, 2018).

Ansar al-Dine “(Movement of Defenders of the Faith or AAD)” was created in November 2011 by Malian Tuareg militant Iyad Ag Ghali “(cousin of AQMI leader Hamada Ag Hama)"AAD is a mainly indigenous movement of the Tuareg and Berber Arabs in northern Mali, working closely with AQIM. Together in seeking to implement Sharia law. Many of the members are Tuaregs who fought with Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi

and returned to Mali after the fall. Although AAD has no presence in Côte d'Ivoire, its fighters have been exposed to carrying out attacks on the country.

Members of the Lebanese society in Côte d'Ivoire are well-known for providing financial support to Hezbollah, as stated by United State Department's OSAC. Hezbollah - an Iranian-backed terrorist organization based in Lebanon and listed on the US list - reportedly receives major support in Côte d'Ivoire, which is home to the world's fourth-leading Lebanese movement after Brazil Colombia, and Canada. There are 70,000 and 110,000 Lebanese citizens in Côte d'Ivoire, 70 percent of whom are followers of Shia Islam.

Côte d'Ivoire suffered its first attack by al-Qaeda on its ground, the first major act of violence in the state, and later the end of the second war in 2011. The March 2016 attack in Grand Bassam - which killed 18 individuals, 14 civilians, and 3 Ivorian fighters - came after AQIM attacks in neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso following major terrorist attacks. These attacks came months after a series of attacks by Islamists in Mali near the border with Côte d'Ivoire (Pathak, 2021).

On March 13, 2016, three gunmen released fire on a resort in Grand Bassam, on the state's southeast coast, 23 miles east of Abidjan. The violence began around the middle of the day when the criminals opened fire on bathers after drinking beer at a nearby bar, shooting indiscriminately at diners and sunbathers in a resort located in front of three hotels: The Hotel du Quai, the Khao Lak Beach and the Etoile du Sud, the latter of which is particularly frequented by foreign tourists and expatriates. According to witnesses, the perpetrators were dressed in civilian clothes under black hoods and carrying various weapons, grenade belts, and Kalashnikovs (Koné et al., 2020).




*Figure 5: Al Qaeda attack which killed 18 in Ivory Coast (Kohnert, 2022)*

AQIM, al-North Qaeda's African branch, claimed responsibility for the attack almost immediately, issuing a message in four languages on Tweet and Telegram: Arabic, French, Spanish, and English. AQIM claimed three militants were responsible for the incident, identifying the attackers as Hamza Fulani, Abu Adam Ansari, and Abdel Rahman Fulani, despite initial reports claiming four gunmen were present. The first two activists, Hamza al-Fulani and Abu Adam al-Ansari are believed to belong to al-Mourabitoun (Khadka, 2020). This terrorist party split from Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in 2012 but officially joined the group in December 2015 (Jones & Markusen, 2018).

The third perpetrator, Abdul Rahman al-Fulani, is suspected of belonging to the Saharan branch of AQIM. Following this attack, Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara started three days of national grief on March 15, 2016. In the days resulting from the attack, the administration also launched a nationwide hunt for Kanta Dara. This Malian national supposedly organized the Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb attack. Over the next few weeks, the government detained more than 70 people, most of whom appeared to have been smuggled in from neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso (Koné et al., 2021).

Since then, nearly a dozen suspects have also been detained in Côte d'Ivoire and neighbouring countries such as Mali and Senegal. in April 2015, the government announced that it would allocate 80 billion CFA francs (US$1.38 million) to the fight against terrorism. The AQIM attack in Grand Bassam was the first Al-Qaeda attack in Côte d'Ivoire, following two other Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb attacks in the region: in neighbouring Burkina Faso in January 2015 and in neighbouring Mali in November 2016. This attack followed two other Islamist terror attacks in southern Mali near the Ivorian border (Hoffman & Furlan, 2020).

## CHAPTER 2: COUNTERTERRORISM AND ACTIONS

### 2.1 Domestic Counter Radicalism

In recent years, the Ivorian government has strengthened its counterterrorism and policing laws in reaction to the increasing threat of terrorism. In February 2016, the Ivorian government approved a bill to support counterterrorism laws and comply with global standards by prohibiting employment and encouraging terrorism and extremist activities. Under this law, those convicted of terrorism-related offenses risk a custodial sentence of 20 to 30 years and a fine of CFAF 5 to 55 million. Since then, the government has continued to tighten counterterrorism and policing laws (Eze & Frimpong, 2021).

In 2015, the Ivorian government approved new counterterrorism laws that allow officials to tap telephone lines and conduct counter-terrorism searches at night while spreading the imprisonment period for terrorism suspects without formal charges to 96 hours. In the same month, the government also banned overseas imams from campaigning in the northern part of the country near the border with Mali (Gilbert et al., 2020). Following the November 2015 attacks in neighbouring Mali, Ivory Coast stepped up safety measures and allocated extra resources to strengthen its northern border. In January 2017, French authorities warned Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal that Islamist militants planned to use car bombs to attack major capitals and traveller destinations, including coasts. (counter extremism project, 2021)

According to an unnamed official, the Ivorian management asked spiritual leaders and Muslim cultural organizations to inform the police of new members and doubtful activities. The government also held joint exercises with UN peacekeepers to train to respond to militant attacks, a United Nations statement. Following the March 2015 Grand Bassam attack, Ivory Coast increased its counterterrorism budget to better protect its borders from terrorist infiltration. In 2016, the government allocated 70 billion CFA francs (US$136.3 million) for counterterrorism. According to the Ivorian government, these funds will be used for capacity building and unit training, strengthening intelligence agencies and border safety measures, improving the operational capacity of the country's defence and security services, and better training the armed forces (Frew et al., 2018).

The government has also made several arrests following the attacks. According to the Ivorian interior minister, more than 80 people, most believed to be foreigners, have been

detained in connection with the Grand Bassam attack. In August 2016, two Ivorian fighters were sentenced by a military court for violating instructions and conspiring to support terrorists. The soldiers, who lived close to the terrorists and communicated with the bomber's driver before the attack, were punished with 11 years in jail and a fine of 100,000 CFA francs. In early 2016, suspects from Mali and Mauritania linked to the Grand Bassam attack were also detained in Senegal (Gonedelé Bi et al., 2019).

The country has also pledged to incorporate the fight against terrorism into its immigration policy. Bruno Koné, Ivory Coast Minister of Posts and Information and Communication Technology (ICT), called for biometric identification of people arriving in the country, saying that while the state must "continue to respect the principle of free movement," the Ivorian government must not "show complacency. “In June 2020, Côte d'Ivoire and France created the International Institute against Terrorism (ACT), located in the countries near the economic capital of Abidjan (Fituni, 2021).

The counterterrorism academy will strengthen the Sahel region's capacity to fight the jihadist threat. Participants in International Counterterrorism Academy (AILCT) will obtain counter-terrorism training from Special Forces. In June 2021, President Alassane Ouattara announced that Côte d'Ivoire would use 1.6% of its Gross Domestic Product on buying military equipment to stop terrorists from arriving in the state. In November of the same year, Ivorian Prime Minister Patrick Achi declared that the state would support border safety in the north of the country to stop the spread of Islamist rebel movements from neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso (Eugene & Abdussalam, 2022).

The prime minister also stated that the government would quicken all the investment in schools, offices, hospitals, and jobs in northern Côte d'Ivoire to "give our young people jobs and keep them away from the temptations of terrorists."Achi gave the example of more than US$340 million already invested in constructing a dry port and an agro-industrial centre in the important northern border town of Ferkessédougou. The plan is part of a series of funds that will last until 2022 and aims to promote the local dispensation of crops such as cotton and cashew nuts (Fredson, 2020).

### 2.2 Global Counter Extremism

The U.S. Department of State's Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) has positively rated Côte d'Ivoire's counterterrorism efforts.2021 On March 14, OSAC

reiterated that the risk of terrorism in Côte d'Ivoire is moderate. In 2016, OSAC noted that the Ivorian government has traditionally supported U.S. counterterrorism efforts and the African Union (of which Côte d'Ivoire is a member) in neighbouring Mali's peacekeeping efforts. According to a U.S. State Department report, the government actively supports ECOWAS and AU operations in Mali to combat Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. Côte d'Ivoire also funds police and armed forces for UN international relations operations, particularly the "Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali" (MINUSMA) (Igwe, Ochinanwata & Madichie, 2021).

In January 2021, four Ivorian UN peacekeepers were blown up in central Mali when their convoy was attacked with an explosive device. Although no responsibility was claimed for the crime, the Timbuktu region of Mali is home to Islamic activists linked to Al-Qaeda and ISIS. In addition, the country is a logistical base for French operations in Barkhane, Mali. In December 2015, Saudi Defence Minister Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud announced that 34 countries with majority Muslim populations and faiths intended to join an international coalition to fight ISIS. Countries mentioned include Ivory Coast, although the Ivorian government has not yet been involved in any airstrikes against ISIS (Pathak, 2021).

Ivorian government officials work with regional governments and international organizations in counterterrorism efforts. The country is a logistical base for the French Operation Barkhane in Mali. The governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Mali have also worked closely on border security, particularly following the November 2015 Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb attack in Bamako. Côte d'Ivoire is a member of several international organisations, including INTERPOL and ECOWAS. The state participates in ECOWAS' Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), a FATF-like organization dedicated to combating money laundering and terrorist financing in the district (Jafarzadeh & Shuquan, 2022).

In May 2020, the armed forces of Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso launched Operation Como in the Ferkessédougou region of the north eastern Côte d'Ivoire to push extremists away from their common border. On May 24, the operation reportedly killed eight suspected terrorists, captured 36 others, destroyed a terrorist base, and seized a cache of weapons, materiel, and electronic equipment. The terrorists were known to have sought

refuge in bases in Côte d'Ivoire during attacks on Burkina Faso. Still, a source in the Ivorian army said that these terrorist bases no longer existed.

In June 2017, the UN ended its international relations mission in Côte d'Ivoire and withdrew its remaining troops and almost all civilian workers. The UN noted that the country had accomplished political stability and financial growth, although safety sector reform objectives have not been met. Côte d'Ivoire has hosted UNOCI since April 2003 and was initially mandated to implement the January 2004 peace agreement. As of March 2015, the country had over 4,000 UN personnel, including nearly 5,000 soldiers (Idrissa, 2019).

Though, by June 2017, at the end of UNOCI's deployment, this number had been reduced to no soldiers, 154 UN civilian staff and volunteers, and 241 local civilians. In announcing the withdrawal of UNOCI on June 3, 2018, the Permanent Representative of France to the United States, François Delattre, acclaimed the governmental unity, economic growth, and social unity achieved in Côte d'Ivoire but said that "major challenges" remained in terms of safety sector reform and the reintegration of "ex-combatants." In July 2018, Ivorian soldiers were met with at least two separate attacks on army bases by disgruntled soldiers. The soldiers demanded payment of bonuses and salary increases (Khadka, 2020).

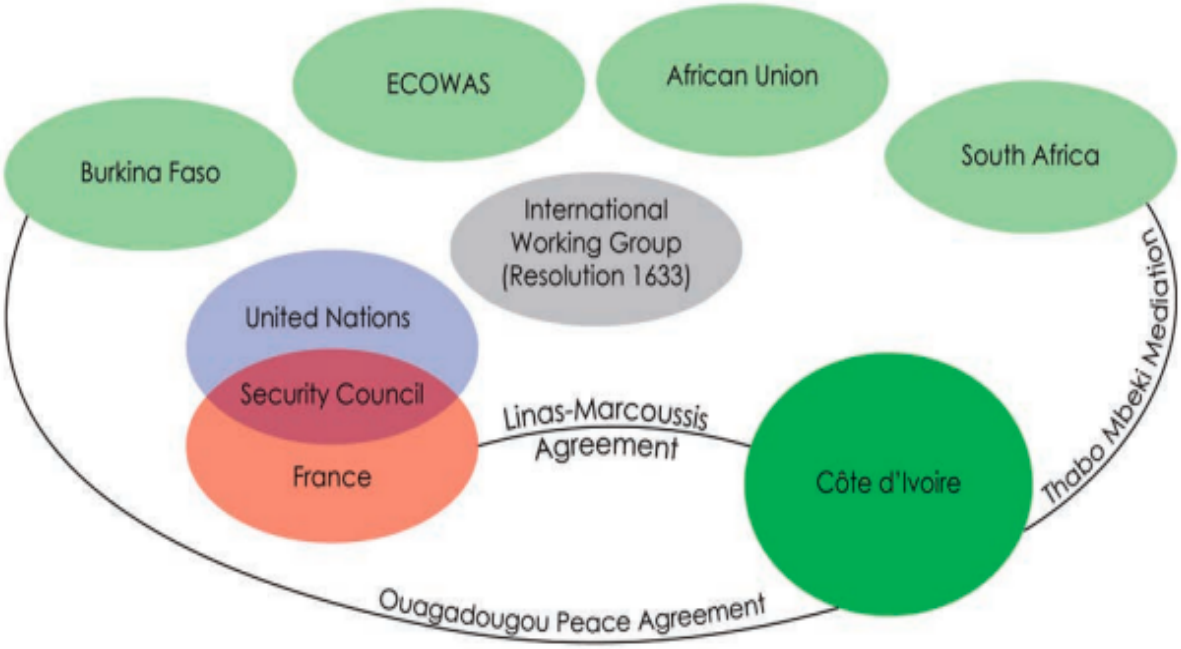


*Figure 1: United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (Khadka, 2020)*

## 2.3 African Union

The African Union (AU) has implemented several anti-terrorism frameworks that emphasise collaboration and categorise violent extremism and terrorist acts as crimes. Following the change from the OAU to the AU, these frameworks have been improved and enlarged. The AU Plan of Action on Preventing and Combating Terrorism was adopted at the AU High Level Governmental Meeting on Preventing and Struggle with Terrorism in Africa, which took place in Algeria in September 2003. Its goal is to provide as a firm foundation for member states' pledges to fight terrorism under the 1999 Convention and other international agreements (Fituni, 2021).

The Action Plan includes effective counter-terrorism strategies to deal with Africa's security issues in the areas of law enforcement, border security, countering terrorist financing, and international information exchange. An effort to improve global cooperation is the creation of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT). The Centre seeks to assist in achieving the primary goals of the AU in the fight against terrorism. In the fields of research, analysis, information management, and dimensional building, it will carry out a wide range of operations. As a part of the AU Peace and Security Council, the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism was created (Fituni, 2021).

The Centre is answerable to the Peace and Security Council because of this structure, which is compliant with the Protocols to the African Union Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism. It should be mentioned in this context that the Centre's branch companies are of a unique type. These units consist of national and regional principal, early warning and prevention systems, lists, and equipment. The coordination of these units' diverse duties and responsibilities continues to be a common barrier in the AU's bureaucratic structure. One of the numerous issues with the AU's execution of counterterrorism policies is the issue of bureaucratic control.

Other significant difficulties facing the AU include enhancing the regional structure to address the terrorist threat and improving response coordination. These difficulties include a lack of personnel and financial resources as well as the difficulty for AU member states to muster the required political will on certain topics. Several difficulties were outlined by a panel of the AU Committee of Experts, including (a) the unpredictable nature of member states' commitments; (b) the lack of support resulting from limited experience with supply, human resources, and mission systems; and (c) the lack of growth of the African Backup Force's own capitals, including business resources (Eze & Frimpong, 2021).

### 2.4 Standby Forces of ECOWAS

The spread of terrorism- and insurgency-related conflicts in West Africa has once again brought attention to the necessity of advancing the ECOWAS security agenda. Along with a development agenda, this agenda aims to maintain peace and stability in the area (Jafarzadeh & Shuquan, 2022). A strong security framework is required in order to advance this agenda. The following requirements serve as the foundation for the ECOWAS military vision. In order to achieve a level of autonomy in terms of troops and logistical funding to respond to internal or external local crises or pressures to peace and safety, including terrorism or environmental terrorism, it is important for ECOWAS to identify, establish, organise, and maintain a regional military inclination capability. There are several obstacles to implementation and execution that must be overcome in order to achieve the goals outlined in the vision discussed above. The boundaries of ECOWAS military operations to combat insecurity in West Africa have been set on a legal, institutional, and operational level.

The ECOWAS-adopted Protocol on the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Management, Maintenance of Peace, and Security, however, offers the necessary institutional and legal backing for collective security in the West African sub-region. The Protocol, which gave ECOWAS the authority to intervene in the internal problems of its member states, represented a turning point in the organization's departure from the traditional concept of non-interference (Hoffman & Furlan, 2020). It is hard for regional organisations to intervene without a reliable system to build and maintain armed troops. The ECOWAS Standby Force is a vital move that would make it simpler and quicker to mobilise forces to respond to complicated events.

A defined force structure and composition are necessary for the use of a collective standby force for quick deployment to hotspots in West Africa. A specified regional reserve force, well-trained and equipped and ready to deploy when necessary to respond to a crisis or threat to peace and security, is how the "ECOWAS Standby Force: Concept and Structure plan describes its make-up. The main issue is that it is exceedingly challenging for the ECOWAS standby force to deploy a force that is well-trained and equipped to a crisis location. The high level of equipment procurement corruption and the exorbitant expenditures of military training, as recently seen in West Africa, make this argument all strong (Idrissa, 2019).

### 2.5 Multidimensional Response through the Accra Enterprise

One of the founding members of the Accra Initiative, a global platform for security cooperation and partnership. The Accra Initiative, which includes Mali and Niger as observers Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Togo, and Côte d'Ivoire intends to stop the spread of terrorism from the Sahel region and to fight violent extremism and transnational organized crime in border regions. It has a central point in each of the participating nations as well as a permanent secretariat at the National Safety Secretariat in Ghana. Since its beginning, the Accra Initiative has made it possible for member governments to share information and data on private sector and transnational organized crime, as well as to hold regular meetings of security ministers and chiefs of security and intelligence agencies. Between member nations, there have also been several cross-border security operations (Jones & Markusen, 2018).

Operation Koudanlgou I was carried out in the border regions of Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Togo in June 2017. Operation Koudanlgou II was also conducted in October 2018 by Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana. Operation Koudanlgou III was carried out by Ghana and Togo together a year later. These actions led to the detention of alleged militants and momentarily disrupted the operations and activities of terrorist groups. However, these were irregular operations with a small geographic scope and a short duration (typically three or four days). Additionally, communication between Ghanaians who speak English and French has occasionally been delayed by the language barrier. The Accra Initiative also places little emphasis on socioeconomic, civil, and governance issues in favour of a military-centric approach (Pathak, 2021).

## 2.6 Ivory Coast and Mali, the Issues of Terrorism: Development, Character, and Concerns

Radical Islamic groups are closely linked to terrorism in Mali. Ivory Coast and Mali are two neighbours's country that share common future. İndeed the northern part of Ivory Coast is mostly Muslim and welcomed different people from different culture especially sheepman coming from Mali and Burkina Faso sometimes from Niger. While Islam is the most prevalent religion in Mali and the north part of Ivory Coast, four interrelated factors have allowed radical Islamist groups to develop throughout the country. Firstly, the persistent poverty and food shortages caused by the government's economic mismanagement and the country's increasing desertification. This has culminated in a society of unemployed and unhappy young people, prone to radicalisation and religious deception. Secondly, there is the struggle for self-determination of the Tuareg people in the Azawad region of northern Mali, which has been going on since 1962 (Jafarzadeh & Shuquan, 2022).

Over the years, this agitation has been organised and conducted under different names, such as the Mouvement national de l'Azawad (MNA) in the 1960s, the Mouvement populaire de l'Azawad (MPA) in the 1990s and the Mouvement national de libération de l'Azawad (also known as the Mouvement national de libération de l'Azawad) in the 1990s. However, the Tuareg quest for self-determination in the 1950s and 1970s eventually led to the violent rebellion for Azawad independence in the 1990s. This was due to the continued intransigence of the government in the face of complaints of neglect and marginalisation, exacerbated by growing poverty, unemployment, and desertification in the north of the country (Fituni, 2021).

The Taman Assets Peace Agreement and the National Peace Pact, which focused on the demilitarisation of the region and the demobilisation and integration of rebel fighters into the Malian army, were part of a peace agreement signed between the government and the rebels after a military solution to the rebellion failed. However, due to the government's inability to implement the peace agreement, the rebellion resurfaced in 2006 and lasted until 2012. The third and fourth factors were the return of the Tuaregs and the entry of heavy weapons into northern Mali, respectively. The Tuaregs had worked as mercenaries for President Muammar Gaddafi during the Libyan Arab Spring, which lasted from February to October 2013 (Enaifoghe, 2018).

Due to the poor socio-economic situation in the country, extremist Islamists and returning Tuareg rebel fighters have managed to infiltrate the north of the country. The influx of heavy weapons and the support of Islamic extremists, particularly the Islamist group Ansar al-Din, fuelled the rebellion in the north. As a result, the conflict between government forces and the Tuareg under the banner of the MNLA intensified, particularly between January and March 2011, resulting in the death of several Malian soldiers and the conquest of the towns of Menaka, Aguelhok and Tessalit in the Azawad region by the MNLA (Kouadio & N'Guessan, 2021).

Ivory Coast and the West African sub-region face a refugee crisis due to the brutality of terrorists and radical Islamist groups in areas under their control and the ongoing war between them and the government. For example, in February 2013, there were some 377,000 internally displaced persons, 150,000 of whom crossed the border into neighbouring Mali in search of safety. The Sahel region and the country suffered from food shortages due to terrorist activities, which also affected agriculture and the supply and distribution of food to humanitarian organisations (Idrissa, 2019).

However, the following section explores the problems and difficulties encountered by ECOWAS as an institution in responding to terrorism in the sub-region.

### *2.7 Critical Subjects/Issues*

ECOWAS was founded as a multinational intergovernmental organisation to support economic integration and development, but over time, its goal and purview have been broadened to cover security matters, including as the battle against terrorism. Indeed, effective regional integration and socioeconomic development depend on maintaining peace, security, and stability. To this end, ECOWAS has created a number of legally binding documents, such as conventions and protocols on conflict prevention, management, and resolution, peacekeeping, combating corruption, banning small arms and light weapons, and preventing drug abuse, illegal drug trafficking, and organised crime, the majority of which also apply to terrorism (Goerzig, 2019).

ECOWAS collaborates as an institution with state and non-state entities at the regional and global levels in the fight against terrorism. ECOWAS offers a forum for member states to collaborate on the creation and execution of counterterrorism policies at the regional level. For instance, in 2007, the Heads of State and Government of the Economic

Community of West African States (ECOWAS) discussed the growing impact of terrorism and money laundering in the region and urged all member states to pass legislation as well as to take into consideration updated anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing standards and related international instruments (Frew et al., 2018).

At the international level, ECOWAS keeps in touch with a number of nations in and outside of Africa as well as development partners including the UN, EU, AU, and World Bank on terrorism and related issues. For instance, ECOWAS and the US government inked a multi-year security and development deal in 2014. A trans-Saharan collaboration is outlined in the agreement in order to support democratic institutions, trade, investment, and other aspects of peace, security, and counterterrorism. The UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), both of which were established in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 1364 and 1623 to strengthen UN member states' ability to prevent acts of terrorism both inside and outside of their borders, respectively, are regional partners of ECOWAS (Goerzig, 2019).

The creation of counterterrorism institutions and tools is one of the many policies that ECOWAS has adopted as part of this collaboration. The Intergovernmental Action Group against Money-Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism in West Africa is one of the important anti-terrorism organisations established by ECOWAS. On December 10, 1999, ECOWAS established GIABA as a body to fight money laundering. In 2006, however, it enlarged its remit to include fighting the funding of terrorism, which is on the rise in the area and is fuelled by illegal cash. In order to preserve the security, integrity, and stability of the financial institutions in the region, it is the responsibility of GIABA to ensure that ECOWAS member nations recognise, adopt, and put into practise international measures to combat money laundering and terrorist funding (Jafarzadeh & Shuquan, 2022).

This thesis has demonstrated that ECOWAS has responded to terrorism in West Africa in different ways. However, as much as its efforts have been shown to have yielded some positive results, it has also revealed the lack of political will and absence of commitment by its member states to implement and enforce decisions on counterterrorism, as well as the role of the international political environment in its counterterrorism initiatives. The fact, however, that terrorism in the sub region has not ceased, as evidenced by continued

attacks, though mostly on soft targets, by Boko Haram in Nigeria's northeast (The Nation 2017) and the series of terrorist attacks in Mali, including attacks in 2015 by AQIM on the Radisson Blue Hotel and in 2017 on the ''Le Campement Kangaba resort, east of Bamako'', and in Burkina Faso in March 2018, means that ECOWAS needs to redouble its efforts, show more commitment to the fight against terrorism and the United Nations (UN) must give priority attention to sub-regional counterterrorism initiatives.

## CHAPTER 3: RESULTS ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The prime aim of this chapter is to develop the results and provide the findings based on the previous study literatures to investigate on the expansion of terrorism in Ivory Coast. This part of the research also makes efforts on the exploration of multiple reviews of distinct academic literatures on the concept of expansion of terrorism in Ivory Coast (Zulkarnain, 2020).

### 3.1 Findings Based on the Evaluation of Research Objectives

The research focus on the expansion of terrorism in Ivory Coast through qualitative methodology. The following are the main results and findings concluded based on the research topic.

**RO1: Examine the history of Terrorism in West Africa, its causes and current manifestations in Côte d'Ivoire, and the West African response to Terrorism.**

It has been identified that terrorism in the continent of Africa has been raised in the past several decades. The non-state terrorist groups have majorly targeted the citizens of Africa in their violence campaigns. From several popular countries of Africa including Nigeria, Mali, Mozambique, and the continent of Africa have witnessed never ending violence killing the population of innocent citizens. The results gathered from Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) have clearly shown that in the year of 2015, there were almost 400 attacks on the civilian population in the region of Africa which left more than 1000 dead. This number of attacks and deaths started to rise more during the year of 2020 in which there were almost more than 7000 attacks leaving 13000 casualties as shown in figure. The terrorism has been exceedingly rising in the region of Africa as in the year of 2020, Africa listed among the Worlds' topmost threatening countries according to the global agencies of terrorism (Zimmerer, 2019).

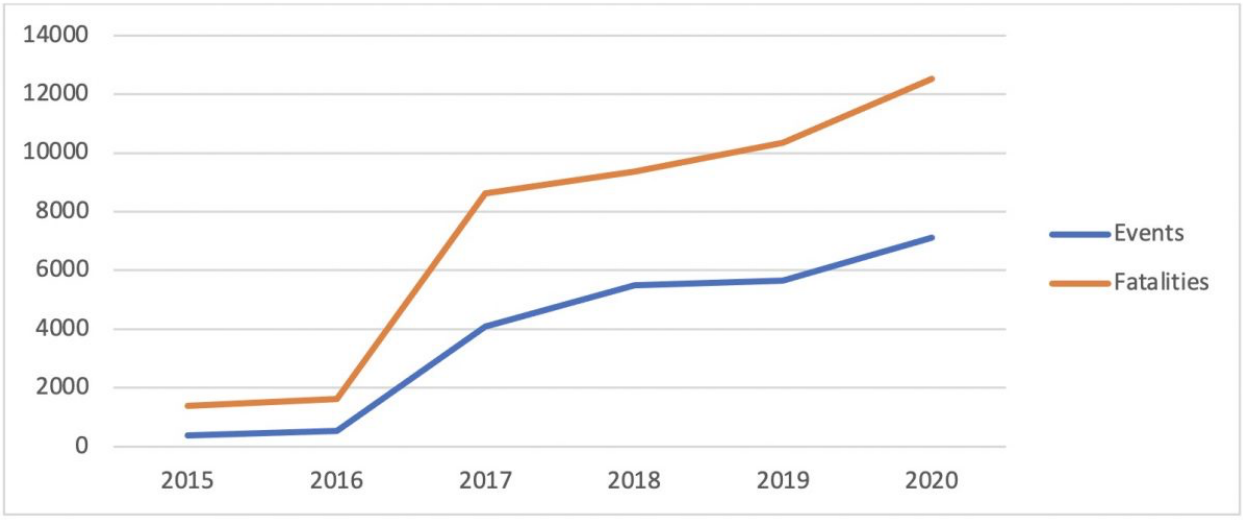



*Figure 1. Violence against civilians in Africa, 2015–2020. Source: ACLED.*

The rise in terrorism has become significantly important in the region of West Africa. This is due to an increase in the number of terror attacks in West Africa, which have resulted in many deaths and property destruction. In West Africa, there is significant concern about the rise of terrorism. In the sub-region, the source of finance for terrorist operations has also been a matter of concern. Several reasons have contributed to this issue, including the prevalence of huge, informal, income-based economies; the prevalence of political insecurity; regional and communal violence; extensive bureaucracy; economic stagnation; excessive unemployment; and underemployment.

Significantly, terrorist organizations and their investors raise funds from sources and channel them with the help of both official and unofficial networks to support their operations. All of these problems have a negative impact on the subregion's peace, security, and development. Lack of social cohesiveness, weak institutions, corruption, bad governance, and improper economics resulting in poverty and growing unemployment have only exacerbated the phenomenon of terrorism in several African areas. According to Wyss (2002), existing studies on terrorism that have been targeted in the literature may provide a few explanatory avenues to explain the development of terrorism.

It has also been looked into how forces and terrorists devise their targeting methods, as well as the potential benefits of alternative methods.Some of these targeting tactics can be attributed to external reasons like inter-organizational competition or internal factors like ideological explanations or principal-agent difficulties. At first, the continent's marketplace of violence is filled with a variety of armed groups vying for dominance, control, and access to resources, many of which are associated with significant international terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State (ISIS) and Al-Qaeda.

This rivalry between terrorist groups can lead to increased civilian targeting. Second, the theological reasons for violence used by African armed organizations are linked to the reckless targeting of people. While there are many other factors that contribute to terrorist attacks in Africa, these two are particularly crucial in understanding the huge increase in civilian targeting. This has been discussed in the previous studies that show that terrorist organizations such as Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda, and the Islamic State have operated in West Africa in recent years. Domestic and global actors have attempted to prevent and fight against the terrorist operations, but their interventions have not produced the desired results. Although there are other sources of instability in Nigeria as well, Boko Haram is perhaps the most active terror organization in the country (Xuhua et al., 2019).

This has been the result of their group operations and the harm they have caused to the people of Nigeria. For example, Boko Haram's principal objective was the devastation of the Nigerian government, and whatever that is, it is not Islamic. Following the example of extreme Islam, which condemns Western education, democracy, and Western ideals as corrupt and evil, the organization aspired to establish an Islamic Sharia-enabled caliphate in northeast Nigeria, in violation of the country’s constitution related to modernity. In the first instance, armed attacks were conducted against state security officers and public property, such as schools, hospitals, and government offices, in the northeast, primarily in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states (Williams, 2018).

The violent acts of terrorism were later widened to civilian populations and private residences, which include houses, farmlands and farming communities, churches, masjids, and conventional rulers' palaces in north-eastern states, as well as Kaduna and

Adamawa, Kano, Kwara, and Bauchi states, which are all outside the country's northeast geopolitical zone. During the process, horrible crimes like beheading and cremation of persons, rape, and kidnapping were performed, and thousands of people were domestically and cross-border displaced to neighboring nations (Xuhua et al., 2019).

It has been identified that the female civilians were indeed the most affected persons by Boko Haram's operations, as they were abducted, raped, pushed into marriage with commanders, trafficked into sex trade and trafficking, used as human shields against government forces, and used as bomb bearers. Boko Haram's activities, particularly its mindless mass killings, destruction of property, and determination to dismember Nigeria, have compelled the Nigerian government to establish an antiterrorism framework that includes hard (army), soft (non-military, such as consultation and collaboration), and legal strategies.

The risk of violent terrorism in Côte d'Ivoire is primarily viewed as external. People from Burkina Faso are suspected of carrying out the attacks, taking advantage of the border's permeability. Several occurrences, however, have happened far from the frontier, suggesting that persons associated with extremist organizations are active in Ivorian territory. Although persons from neighboring nations are suspected of giving knowledge, supplies, and financial resources to the organizations, they are effectively integrated into the socioeconomic fabric of Ivorian towns. The authorities of Côte d'Ivoire must not make the same mistake as other countries in the area by seeing the danger solely as an external issue. Violent jihadism is often the outcome of both external and internal dynamics (Tomaszewski, Zarestky, & Gonzalez, 2020).

The ability of Côte d'Ivoire to prevent the development of violent extremism has been determined by Mali and Burkina Faso’s activities in their respective border territories. Better military and border management coordination with these nations, as well as with Ghana, will be critical in limiting the threat. It has been suggested that the Ivorian authorities must also win the respect and trust of its border populations, some of whom are dissatisfied. People living along these borders face appalling conditions, with limited access to medical and educational services, economic opportunities, and security.Improving living circumstances will reinforce the significance and authority of

the state. Residents should also be engaged in the identification of solutions to the dangers of violent terrorism (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018).

The government must recognize the dangers that the community faces because it is stuck between the acts of security officers on the one side and jihadists on the other. Côte d'Ivoire will not necessarily follow the same path as other nations in the area, like Burkina Faso; however, the threat should not be ignored. The catastrophic repercussions of terrorism and terrorist funding have sparked a considerable interest in mitigating the danger among the agencies and government bodies of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), based on a firm knowledge of terrorist groups' and financiers' methods (Iutiaeva, I. R. 2021).

West Africa's history is a mix of glorious eras and catastrophic battles. While the overall scenario reflects this historical root of the region’s strong links, gaps have also formed as a result of disparities between English- and French-speaking nations, political and economic changes, and other causes. An examination of modern vulnerability concerns will not seek to explain the influence of historical economic, political, and social situations, yet the nations should realize that many of the fundamental inequities of vulnerability have long roots. We are investigating vulnerability issues where limited technical options, such as crop production or water systems, might help with susceptibility and poverty alleviation goals.

The West African countries also see opportunities to advance in all aspects of improvement (education, wellbeing, industrial progress, and democratic accountability) to create incentives, safety nets, and a more comprehensive set of formal and informal resources and support on which people can rely to deal with the challenges of climatic variables. Environmental poverty and other factors aggravate the region's environmental variability issues, aggravating people's livelihood difficulties. Some environmental degradation concerns in the country, such as soil deterioration, have been examined in detail throughout time, whereas others, such as the viability of groundwater supplies, have just recently been investigated in depth (Suh, 2019).

The fast collapse of Afghanistan under the threat of the Taliban brings back the terrifying prospect that global Islamist terrorist organizations may once again find a

haven in which they can rebuild and prosper. These organizations also focus on Africa, where Islamist organizations are on the rise. Two decades after the 9/11 incident, terrorists are waging a terror campaign over most of the continent. A scenario in which extremist militants overtake a nation like Mali, with its corruption, absence of democratic cohesiveness, and weak military forces, is plausible; it almost occurred in 2013. Reflecting on Afghanistan's lessons for Africa is critical, as Western governments have grown highly hesitant to deepen their commitment to battling these insurgencies after the Afghanistan catastrophe (Stritecky & Bures, 2021).

Terrorism related to extreme Islamist movements has declined since 2014, when it set a record in terms of both attacks and casualties. Terrorism has dropped even more steeply outside of nations undergoing Islamic insurgencies, implying that many groups' ability to execute violence against citizens outside of their regions of daily operations has been severely limited. According to the Global Terrorism Index, which tracks terrorist occurrences throughout the world, deaths attributable to terrorist acts decreased by 60 percent between 2014 and 2019, bringing the total to approximately 14,000, with most of them tied to nations with Islamic insurgencies. However, mortality has increased drastically in many parts of Africa. Many lessons may be gained from the Afghanistan crisis, and nations like France are beginning to alter their approach (Vasilopoulos, 2018).

Local insurgencies in Africa do not have the authority to function globally now, but they have a spectacular direct impact on the civilian population's well-being. Since 2009, the Boko Haram insurgency has claimed more than 20,000 lives and forced the displacement of approximately three million people. According to the United Nations (UN), casualties in Burkina Faso increased from approximately 100 in the year 2016 to more than 2,000 in 2019. The number of displaced people increased tenfold to over 600,000, with an additional 30,000 seeking asylum in neighboring countries. Continued insurgency weakens government confidence and generates tensions among residents while exacerbating existing problems (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018).

Mali, a nation that had made great progress toward democracy prior to the 2012 war inside its north, has seen three military dictatorships in the previous eight years, all of which have been tied to a perception that the government is unable to properly manage

these insurgencies. Yet, if Western nations begin to substantially reduce their backing for governments, insurgents may seize control of enormous territory, more efficiently link with global events, and become a worldwide menace. For instance, the Biden government recently cut its backing for the Somalian army against al-Shahab, which has resulted in modest territorial gains for the Islamist organization, according to officials on the ground.

The countries understand that simply discontinuing security measures can be disastrous, and that advancement aid closely regulated by Western governments appears to increase corruption and diminish local organizations; they also understand that ignoring centuries-old local governance mechanisms, even if they do not like or acknowledge them, and sweeping away local players will only postpone a crisis.Hopefully, the US and its partners will be able to comment on and apply some of these principles as they undertake their efforts against Islamic insurgencies in Africa. France is already making hard efforts to make the strategy adjustable in the Sahel region. This has been analyzed: the West African nations do not aim to resolve their issues (Suh, 2019).

**RO2: Determine whether there are any vulnerable locations in West Africa.**

It has been observed that since the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic, the operations of vicious extremist organizations in West Africa have increased. Since January 2021, high-profile assaults in Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali have been documented by organizations linked to Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Although it has been identified that West Africa's coastal area is now the heart of violent terrorism and extremism, the risk is gradually spreading into coastal states around the coast of West Africa, specifically the Gulf of Guinea. Numerous coastal states, including Guinea, have already seen terrorist assaults and reported the existence of terrorist groups in their territory.

Although there have been no direct terrorist attacks in Ghana, the country exemplifies the spreading consequences of violent terrorism and extremism (VET) in coastal states. Kojo Oppong Nkrumah, the information minister, confirmed this in July 2021, stating that "terrorist organizations functioning in West Africa have succeeded in persuading some Ghanaians to support their agenda." Unlike its allies, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina

Faso, which are facing terrorist assaults, Ghana has so far managed to avert assaults despite its vulnerabilities. This raises serious concerns regarding Ghana's apparent resistance to the threat of VET and its response to the pandemic (Smidt, 2020).

Terrorist organizations in West Africa are expected to expand more and more into Benin, Ghana, and Togo in the coming weeks. The presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, and Guinea this year may escalate tensions for terrorist organizations to exploit. As a consequence of the United States' worldwide pullback, armed personnel have left West Africa, abandoning the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas), the G-5 Sahel, and France to take up the slack and hopefully prevent terrorism from spreading deeper into the region. However, armed force alone is insufficient. West Africa must serve as a model for imaginative and collaborative preventive diplomacy that adapts to rising dangers, strengthens local resilience, and averts the next safety and humanitarian crisis.

Global geopolitics has failed in recent years in the face of disastrous crises in Syria, Libya, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Yemen. More collaboration, partnerships, and connections between nation-level, regional-level, and worldwide governments are needed to prevent the spread of terrorist attacks, which could aggravate the fundamental ethnic and political vulnerabilities and lead to a much larger humanitarian disaster. While no type of collaborative action is simple, a coalition of nations, international organizations, and local governments must go beyond primarily military action. Working together and inventively on developmental activities, local governance challenges, and intelligence sharing is the way forward (Sisso, 2019).

It has been determined that this is just going to get worse in the months ahead. Inadequate border police forces, increased terrorist capabilities in Burkina Faso, and an evident willingness to expand operations into nearby nations together indicate an increasing threat in Togo, Ghana, and Benin. Financial and prestige incentives are tied to their expansion into neighboring countries for extremist groups such as the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) and the Jamaat Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM). They might gain access to ports, regulate trade, and profit from the cash produced by expanding their influence over multiple sections of West Africa (Peng, 2022).

It has also been identified that extremist groups might even aim to take over the gold mining sector. Along with terrorist operations intended to exacerbate political turmoil and win local sympathy, there is the possibility of larger-scale assaults against Western forces, such as mining firms, resorts, foreign enterprises, and tourists, in Benin towns such as Porto Novo and Cotonou. Weak border regulations, skilled smugglers, criminal groups, and regional corruption facilitate the flow of these populations into West Africa. West Africa is an important transit location for narcotics smuggling into Europe from Asia and South America. Other items smuggled across borders include people, emigrants, and arms.

Then there is the issue of human security. Burkina Faso is experiencing one of the world's most severe humanitarian and security crises. During the month of February, approximately more than 100,000 people were displaced, largely by Islamist groups. Military attacks on citizens are at their peak, and terrorist groups have exacerbated and exploited ethnic tensions to strengthen their ranks. To avoid the potential for additional terrorist incursions in West Africa, sub-Saharan African regional entities must act quickly. The current crisis is too complex to be handled by a single actor.

Policymakers in the country require greater intellectual ability, local knowledge, research, and analysis on groups like the Islamic State and Ansaroul Islam in Western Africa's decision-making ability, resources, and regional strategy. This would assist surrounding countries in not just disrupting planned assaults but also in countering resource trafficking and propaganda. It would also put a spotlight on suspected links between people traffickers and terrorist organizations. International partners, like the United Nations, should help ECOWAS disseminate accurate intelligence and coordinate actions to stop terrorist groups' attempts to enter a country (Snyder, 2019).

Meanwhile, it has been determined that foreign assistance, including assistance from the United States and other European countries, should be considered for border security among West African states.Border technology is advancing and has included, at the very least, improved efficient biometrics and increased coaching for border security personnel. Drones are assisting in monitoring border crossings and will prevent both arms and human smuggling in the future as they become more precise. The goal ought

to be to better identify those cargoes that are crossing borders, as well as to alert those who are likely to be associated with terrorist organizations and who are seeking to cross.

Vulnerability is influenced by the supply of "adaptive resources," also known as "forms of capital," in the sustainable livelihoods approach: the living person, economic, financial, cultural, and physiological assets that individuals can connect with to assist them while coping with the pressures of ecological shocks and stresses. Vulnerability to stressful conditions in West Africa, as everywhere else, is determined by subsistence farming practices and possibilities, such as irrigated or monsoon agricultural production, as well as physical responses like older age, long-term illness, or impairment. People's stress resilience should reflect their ability and availability to household, society, industry, and state systems and processes that can help them function and recover (Iutiaeva, I. R., 2021).

This has been discussed, and agricultural price assistance, food pricing subsidies, and family loans are examples. These systems are emerging across West Africa for several reasons, involving government economic policies and political stability. Vulnerability is associated with authority and privilege in social relationships, as well as the allocation of resources at various levels of social organization. Access to or the right to these resources, as well as the capacity to distribute them, varies between communities. These differences reflect other social habits of empowerment and marginalization common in West Africa and most nations around the globe, such as gender discrimination, ethnic disparities, or illiteracy, as well as the extent to which a human's health and income are influenced by environmental factors.

It has been shown that hunger and vulnerability could be directly related in some instances, but hunger is not the same as vulnerability. Household vulnerability represents assets, competencies, and resource access within a community. People in West Africa can augment their household farm income with hazardous jobs, sell handicrafts, or make beer. Losses compound poverty and vulnerability since families are frequently obliged to sell assets such as animals to make ends meet. Households may need a long time to recover from this support. These losses can cause people to fall from better to worse situations or from temporary to long-term poverty (Vasilopoulos, 2018).

This has resulted in better governance, humanitarian relief, and development projects that are also required for regional security. Ideologies of jihadi organizations are effectively combated through locally driven development programs.For the very first time in a period of more than 20 years, Togo chose new mayors last summer. It has been identified that such types of changes can create a better social compact between residents and governance, as well as aid in the development of services such as housing and better educational services, and improve the control of security forces. Meanwhile, local individuals may be able to play a much more active role in giving advance indication.

As per the Research Center for International Security, it has been determined that an African non-profit group, the growth of the Inter-Ministerial Council in Togo, can offer improved warning systems of jihadi group infiltration attempts by gathering information like the mobility of persons, weapons, and signs of extremism among the local population. Apart from it, economic actors and relief groups should collaborate to scale up initiatives targeted at fighting violent extremism and terrorist group propaganda, like context-specific reconciliation and locally generated job possibilities (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018).

It has also been identified that by collaborating and involving the security personnel, they will enhance their conduct and relationships with communities. The growing capabilities and geographical control of jihadi organizations in Burkina Faso, as well as recent attacks along its border with Benin and terrorist migration across adjacent countries, demonstrate that the entire region is vulnerable to terrorist groups.Addressing them is indeed a test of endurance. Without new designs for coordinated global action and measures to strengthen regional resiliency against jihadism, the ramifications for West Africa might be disastrous.

Despite the fact that ECOWAS has been proactive, pragmatic, and aggressive in the battle against extremism in West Africa's sub-region, its operations have been hampered by two major causes. The first is a lack of desire and commitment on the part of the administration and its member nations, as well as their refusal to implement counterterrorism options and legally obligatory processes. This is since, despite the fact that ECOWAS is an organization that gives a framework for the region's countries to

discuss, formulate, and respond effectively to geographic obstacles, the organization's member countries have not always fully agreed to cooperate with the organization to achieve this goal.

Several ECOWAS member states, including Guinea, Cape Verde, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria, did not present their 2015 annual reports to GIABA, attempting to make it complicated to evaluate the financing of violent extremism and money laundering cases in these countries and focus on aspects where they might benefit from GIABA's technical assistance. The state of the international and political context, notably high-level political discussions and battles including the AU as well as the United Nations, is a second issue for ECOWAS in its attempts to combat terrorism in the sub-region. The rise in terrorist activity because of AFISMA's delayed location led France, at the request of Mali's transitional government, to take military action under the name of "Operation Serval" to oppose the militants' southerly assault (UN, 2013; Younis, 2021). However, ECOWAS is a multifaceted intergovernmental organization designed to promote economic integration and progress; its authority and scope have extended over time to cover security matters, particularly the battle against terrorism.

Without a doubt, security, health, and consistency are essential components of good local integration and socioeconomic growth. Towards that end, ECOWAS has established a number of legally binding instruments, such as contracts and protocols on crisis prevention, statesmanship, corruption, small arms, and the preventative measures of all drug addiction, unlawful drug trafficking, and criminal enterprises, most of which also relate to terrorism. ECOWAS collaborates as an organization with government and non-governmental organizations at the domestic and global levels in the war against terror. At the provincial scale, ECOWAS provides a venue for member nations to collaborate on the expansion and execution of counterterrorism measures.

**RO3: Investigate Ivory Coast's response to the emergence and threat of Terrorism in West Africa.**

Côte d'Ivoire, normally called Ivory Coast, has seen political upheaval since before 2000 but has mainly avoided the menace of Islamic radicalism. However, in 2015,

Islamist terrorists in Mali started to launch attacks nearer the border with Côte d'Ivoire. A few months later, Côte d'Ivoire had its first al-Qaeda terrorist strike when three AQIM gunmen raided a resort hotel east of Abidjan, shooting 19. Today, the two most dangerous factions are thought to be al-Qaeda and the Malian-based Ansar al-Din (AAD) in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) (Wyss, 2021).

The great majority of individuals linked to the Grand Bassam assaults in March 2016 are thought to be from outside the state. Nevertheless, while indigenous extremism toward al-Qaeda is not thought to be a serious issue and support for the international terrorist organization Hezbollah is thought to be strong, According to 2015 statistics from the Institute for Security Studies in Africa, the majority of Côte d'Ivoire's substantial Lebanese diaspora considers Hezbollah a nationalist movement rather than a terrorist group. Though exact counts are unknown, many Ivoirians have been documented as having participated in international hostilities like those in Lebanon and Syria. In 2019, jihadist barracks were identified north of the Comoé National Park in Côte d'Ivoire (Younis, 2021).

Furthermore, Côte d'Ivoire has increased regional and global efforts to address the rising threat of terrorism in recent years. The country has aggressively increased border security and backed counterterrorism operations by the African Union, the ECOWAS, and the US, as well as serving as a supply base for France's Operation Barkhane in neighboring Mali. Côte d'Ivoire is also a formal member of the multinational coalition against ISIS in Syria; however, the Ivorian administration has yet to join in anti-ISIS bombings. Côte d'Ivoire also strengthened domestic terrorist laws and law enforcement during 2015 and 2016.

In 2015, the government enacted many counterterrorism measures, including legislation criminalizing terrorist recruiting and advocacy, as well as legislation permitting cops to intercept telephone service and conduct overnight searches. Following the year of 2016 al-Qaeda attacks, the Ivorian government committed 100 billion CFA francs (about 140 million USD) to the war against violence and initiated a big nationwide antiterrorism investigation, imprisoning more than 1000 people in connection with the attacks, at least 200 of whom were deemed to be directly involved.

Although the terrorist threat to Cote d'Ivoire is thought to be mostly from outside the nation, from extremist Islamist groups such as AAD and AQIM in neighboring Mali, spearheaded by AQIM agent Kounta Dallah and prepared in part by a guy named Ould Nouwayely, According to Hamed Bakayoko, a government spokesperson, neither of the terrorists participating in al-Qaeda's 2016 Grand Bassam assaults were Ivoirian. During the month of July in 2016, Bakayoko stated that all of the terrorists involved in the assaults "came from external sources" and are driven "by the desire to sow havoc." In 2019, alleged jihadists were discovered in the Comoé National Park, situated in the country's north (Williams, 2018).

It has been identified that Mauritanians, Malians, and many Ivoirians, including a couple of Ivorian troops, have been detained in connection with the assaults after Bakayoko's declaration. Though it was not revealed whether the Ivorian troops were radicalized or not, the suspects were said to have lived near the terrorists' homes and interacted with the attackers' driver prior to the attack.During the year 2016, the troops were found guilty of conspiracy to help terrorist operations in a military tribunal and sentenced to ten years in prison. Although Ivoirians are seen as unlikely to join regional Islamist organizations such as al-Qaeda in promoting violence, support for the foreign terrorist organization Hezbollah is said to be substantial (Younis, 2021).

Hezbollah is said to be substantial. While the threat may not be realized, the head of the National Assembly's Security and Defense Committee in Côte d'Ivoire, Pierre Gaho Oulata, believes that veteran militants from the country's civil wars from 2002 to 2010 should be evaluated to ensure that they do not join violent Islamist organizations.Several Ivoirians are thought to have joined the combat forces in Syria and Iraq, although exact numbers are unknown. As per the Israeli-based Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Center, at least two Ivoirians were reported joining Shiite rebels in Syria during the year 2013 (Zimmerer, 2019).

Furthermore, the Center for Security Studies in Africa (ISS Africa) discovered in 2014 that numerous Ivoirians went to "theatres of violence in Lebanon," where several are thought to have been killed. In addition to this, some Shiite jihadist groups were sent to the Middle East conflict, and Cote d'Ivoire has functioned as a transit hub for militants from surrounding nations. Foreign jihadists from Liberia entered the war during Côte

d'Ivoire's first civil war in 2002, with an estimated 2,000 fighters joining pro-government troops in the country's mainly Christian south and more than 1,000 supporting rebel militant organizations in the country's Muslim-majority north. Sierra Leonean militants also joined Côte d'Ivoire's civil war (Zulkarnain, 2020).

Moreover, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which is based in neighboring Mali, has carried out assaults throughout the Sahel, notably in Algeria, Libya, Niger, Tunisia, and Mauritania. During the period of 2016, four AQIM-affiliated militants carried out the group's first terrorist attack in Côte d'Ivoire, murdering 19 people in Grand Bassam, the country's coastal town. The incident, which happened in March 2016 and was later discovered to have been instigated by Malian-born Kounta Dallah, raised concerns about the threat posed by AQIM's domestic recruiting within Côte d'Ivoire. However, in the weeks following the attack, more than 90 people were detained in Côte d'Ivoire, the majority of whom were thought to be foreign nationals by birth, with many of them Malian (Wyss, 2021).

France has already warned Côte d'Ivoire about dangers from neighboring nations. According to a US State Department assessment, the Ivorian administration has actively supported African Union and ECOWAS efforts to combat AQIM in Mali.In addition to this, the nation has acted as a supply base for France's Operation Barkhane. According to a 2015 International Republican Institute study, terrorism was not a prominent cause of fear for Ivoirians before Al-Qaeda's attack in Grand Bassam in 2016. When asked about which sorts of violence they were most concerned about, less than 5% of the polled respondents among 20,000 named terrorism as their top concern (Snyder, 2019).

Finally, the great majority of Ivoirians are thought to have a good attitude toward Americans and the United States. Nevertheless, anti-French sentiments and violence have occurred throughout the country. Though Côte d'Ivoire has mostly avoided local mobilization to support Islamist terrorist organizations, there is some indication of Hezbollah backing overseas.

In response to the growing threat of terrorism, the Ivorian administration has reinforced its counterterrorism and enforcement regulations in recent years. The Ivorian government enacted a measure in 2016 to strengthen counterterrorism legislation and

meet international standards by forbidding employment and sponsoring terrorism and extremism. Those accused of terrorism-related offenses will face a prison term of up to 20 years and a fine of $15 to $56 million under this statute. Since that day, the government has tightened anti-terrorism and policing regulations. The Ivorian government enacted new counterterrorism legislation in 2014, allowing officials to tap phone lines and undertake counterterrorism searches at night as well as extending the jail term for terrorist offenders without legal charges to 96 hours (Peng, 2022).

In the following month, the government prohibited foreign Muslim leaders from advocating in the country's north, close to the border with Mali. During assaults in 2015 in bordering Mali, the Ivory Coast increased security and devoted additional resources to fortify its northern border. In January 2017, French police cautioned Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire that Islamist terrorists planned to strike major capitals and tourist sites, especially coastlines, with vehicle bombs. According to an anonymous source, the Ivorian administration requested that religious figures and Muslim cultural groups inform the police of younger recruits and suspicious actions.

According to a United Nations statement, the government also performed joint drills with UN forces to practice responding to extremist assaults. Following the Grand Bassam incident in the year 2015, Ivory Coast raised its counterterrorism budget in order to better defend its borders against terrorist infiltration. The government committed 80 billion CFA francs (US$140 million) to counterterrorism in 2016. These monies will be used for capacity development and unit training, boosting intelligence services and border security measures, enhancing the operational capability of the government's security and defense organizations, and effectively training the armed forces, according to the Ivorian administration (Stritecky & Bures, 2021).

The country has also promised to implement anti-terrorism measures into its immigration policies. Ivory Coast's Minister of Posts and Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), Bruno Koné, has called for biometric identification of visitors to the country and said that although the nation should indeed "fully respect the concept of free movement," the Ivorian administration must not "show complacency." Côte d'Ivoire and France created the Global Institute against Terrorism

(ACT) in the year 2020 during the month of June in the economic center of Abidjan. The counterterrorism institute will help the Sahel area confront the Islamist menace.

Indeed, the prime minister also declared that the government would accelerate all investments in classrooms, businesses, clinics, and employment in northern Côte d'Ivoire in order to "offer the young people work and keep them away from terrorist temptations." Researchers said that more than US$300 million has already been invested in the construction of a dry port and an agro-industrial center in Ferkessédougou, an important northern border town. The strategy is part of a series of funding initiatives that will run through 2022 and aims to enhance local distribution of crops including cotton and cashew nuts.

**RO4: Recommendations for specific actions and mechanisms to enable Côte d'Ivoire and West African countries prevent or successfully respond to terrorist acts.**

Several West African states, most notably the government of Côte d'Ivoire, are working together to combat terrorist groups such as Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, which claimed responsibility for the December 2007 attack on the UN offices in Algiers, which killed approximately 15 UN officials.Terrorist acts continue to pose "serious risks" to nations bordering the Sahara Desert, according to Algerian Foreign Minister Mourad Medelci. The Foreign Minister said that the threat is exacerbated by the fact that terrorist organizations frequently have connections with criminal organizations, particularly drug and firearm smugglers, who move across distant regions and poorly managed borders (Stritecky & Bures, 2021).

In addition to this, to accomplish the mission, African governments must somehow better manage their counterterrorism and criminal efforts and also enhance the living circumstances of the poorest citizens, according to some African countries' officials. A meeting in Algiers on March 16 among different government officials and the diplomats of a half-dozen additional nations like Chad, Burkina Faso, Libya, Mauritania, Mali, and Niger was one example of rising collaboration against violence among governments in the area. The military leaders of the seven nations met in Algiers the very next month to oversee their security efforts.

Recent reminders of the gravity of the situation, including the kidnapping of many European and African captives in Mali and Mauritania, a strike on an army base in Niger that killed more than four Nigerien soldiers, and an ambush in Algeria's Kabyle region that killed eight security officers, energized cabinet members and generals.Most of the attacks have been committed by Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which is most known for the spectacular attack on the UN headquarters in Algiers in the year 2007. Although it is primarily an Algerian dissident organization, it also has militants from various nations and functions throughout the area.

Other terrorist groups have formed in other parts of Africa, notably in West Africa and the Ivory Coast. Understanding that terrorism has become a continental issue, the Union of Africa (AU) has created a Plan of Action for the Protection and Fighting of Terrorism in West Africa. It highlights the need for governments to reduce poverty, suffering, and marginalization, which can foment dissatisfaction and be exploited by terrorist organizations to attract adherents and justify violence (Smidt, 2020).

Ramtane Lamamra, the African Union's Director for Peace and Security, underlined the organization's commitment to the fight against terrorism in late April. Mentioning that AQIM and other organizations have kidnapped people and sought cash or political concessions in exchange for their release, he encouraged countries to avoid paying ransoms since it may promote more kidnappings. Fighting terrorism, according to Mr. Lamamra, must involve "refusing to succumb to terrorist organizations' extortion." The question of how to react to hostage-taking has sparked significant debate. A court in Mali freed four alleged AQIM members a few days before the Algiers summit, leading AQIM to release a French resident who had been abducted in northern Mali. Mauritania and Algeria have condemned the release of three AQIM prisoners (one Mauritanian and two Algerian) (Sisso, 2019).

The subject was discussed at the Algiers summit. All seven states committed to executing a July 2009 AU decision condemning ransom payments to terrorist groups, as well as a December 2009 UN Security Council action criminalizing any payments to specified terrorist people and organizations. The ministers agreed that terrorist operations, particularly when combined with cross-border trafficking in narcotics, guns, and people, represent a threat and an element of insecurity for the whole area, as well as

an impediment to socioeconomic growth. They asserted that by working together, they would be able to restore to the Sahelian-Saharan area its position as a zone of commerce, peace, stability, and constructive collaboration.

The ministers decided to act in a variety of areas. To sustain the region's peace, security, and socioeconomic growth, regional and bilateral cooperation must be strengthened. Pursuing sustainable development programs to enhance people's living situations, particularly to ensure young people's social and economic integration and combat terrorism and crime through mobilizing local people, governments, regional organizations, and the global community must collaborate to develop an integrated anti-terrorism strategy. Increasing judicial collaboration and surveillance of tax evasion, as well as greater coordination among the seven nations' military high commands,

The Algerian army started a large operation in April against hundreds of alleged AQIM members across the nation. The military leaders of the 7 states then gathered in Algiers on April 13th. According to Algerian army chief of staff General Ahmed Gad Salah, he and his colleagues decided to build an information security cooperation office in Tamanrasset in the region of southern Algeria and to increase cooperative border surveillance to combat terrorists, smugglers, and drug traffickers. General Salah stated that tackling the region's security concerns will make it easier for "our various political administrations to commit themselves to the work of economic development for the sake of our peoples" (Stteck & Bure, 2021).

A top security official stated on Wednesday that the West African nations of Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Ghana, and Togo collaborated in an anti-terror operation. According to Burkina Faso Defense Minister Maxime Kone, 5,720 troops have been deployed to shared borders under a signed agreement agreed in 2017. More than 300 suspects were apprehended, and substantial caches of firearms, ammunition, narcotics, and bomb-making equipment were recovered, according to Kone, during the Koudanlgou 4 Zone 2 operation, which took place from November 21 to November 27. Terrorist groups affiliated with al-Qaeda and Jihadi have targeted Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger in the Sahel area, south of the Sahara Desert (Williams, 2018).

As these gangs' spheres of influence have grown in Ivory Coast and Togo in recent years, the region's nations are attempting to confront them through cooperative operations. Despite the presence of the French military conflict in Barkhane, the European Working Group Takuba, and the UN Financing Multifaceted Structured Stability Mission in the area, the battle against extremism remains a primary priority for Sahel countries. Burkina Faso's administration came under fire when 58 troops were killed in two terrorist strikes in November. The assaults sparked rallies asking for President Roch Kabore's resignation and accusing the administration of failing to combat terrorism.

Since 2015, Al-Qaeda and Daesh or ISIS-linked terrorist organizations in neighboring Mali have carried out frequent strikes in Burkina Faso's north and east. Despite conducting combined combat actions with its neighbor Niger, Burkina Faso has been unable to remove terrorist organizations located in Mali. According to UN figures, over 18,000 individuals were forced to flee the nation this year for security concerns. Violent terrorism is the result of complex economic, political, and social scenarios involving colonial legacies, as well as the impact of global and domestic geopolitical issues that have destabilized governments or exacerbated domestic or sub-regional problems.

The elevation of global human rights and equality that was inhibited by conventional regional customs has also given rise to violent actions. Violent terrorism is the result of complex economic, political, and social scenarios involving colonial legacies, as well as the impact of global and domestic geopolitical issues that have destabilized governments or exacerbated domestic or sub-regional problems.The elevation of global human rights and sex equality that was inhibited by conventional regional customs has also given rise to violent actions. The decision to disband the Sunni-oriented Iraqi Fighting Forces left millions of well-trained Iraqi military officers unhappy and unemployed, with no livelihood opportunities or socio-political re-integration in the country's new structures.

According to reports, several of these are now providing military experience to ISIS. Several West African countries’ political vacuums have led to the creation of a number of armed insurgency organizations that are destabilizing the country and neighboring nations. The international community's foreign policy perspectives on the Israeli-

Palestinian issue continue to create perceptions of a biased approach to development and conflict. European leaders' choice to absorb a significant number of refugees and migrants from conflict-affected nations is fostering nationalist extremism. The underlying reasons for violent radicalism are diverse, multidimensional, and interconnected, and they are related to the structural context in which polarization and perhaps violent radicalism can take root (Wyss, 2021).

Violent extremism is the result of historical, political, economic, and social factors, as well as the influence of global and regional dominant politics. Growing horizontal disparities are frequently regarded as a driver of violent extremism. Critically, feelings of unfairness, human-rights breaches, social-political marginalization, pervasive corruption, or continuous maltreatment of specific communities are all regarded as key push factors instigating violence and terrorism. When all of these horizontal inequities combine in one community, revolutionary uprisings and terrorism are more likely to emerge.

Pathetic political revolutions, with inadequate institutions, law enforcement, and checks and balances, provide a fertile environment for violent radicalism. Weak states, as a result, provide a physical location for extreme organizations.Other structural reasons include rejection of a state's socioeconomic-political structure as well as rejection of society's rising diversity. The everyday presentation and consumption of violence (through multimedia, literature, films, journals, and computer games) must not be overlooked as a contribution to the growth in violent conduct.

Apart from structural factors, people are drawn into drastic and terrorism movements through well-planned manipulation and accompaniment (socialization) processes, which are often facilitated by personal, emotional, or psychological factors such as marginalization, a search for identity and dignity, vengeance for previous mistreatment, a breakdown in interaction between figures of authority and youth, and virtual communities on social media.To prevent individuals from joining violent extremist organizations, a more in-depth examination of the socioeconomic structures of countries at risk of violent extremism is required.Development practice is crucial in laying the groundwork for averting violent extremism.

The UNDP conceptual framework presents multiple interconnected building blocks for a philosophy of change that explains how development might aid in the prevention of violent extremism. The following are the building blocks that will inform global, regional, and national prevention strategies that can stop terrorism to some extent. Firstly, promote a rule-of-law and human-rights-based strategy to prevent terrorism. strengthens the combat against corrupt practices, improves group decision-making, and grows civic space at the national and state levels. It has also been determined that providing appropriate socioeconomic alternatives to violence for vulnerable groups strengthens local governments' capacity for service delivery and security (Solangi et al., 2019).

Encouraging equality between men and women and women's empowerment through reliable internal mediators and working with faith-based organizations and religious rulers to overcome the abusive behavior of religious practices by violent extremists The states should continue to work with advertising to spread human rights and tolerance and try to promote protection of human rights, diversity, and a heritage of worldwide citizenship in colleges and universities. The ways in which violent extremism affects different geographies, sub-regions, and nations vary. Regional research and initiatives will thus play an essential role in UNDP's approach.

## CONCLUSION

Ivory Coast faces daunting security challenges, and, against the backdrops of the region’s weak internal capacities and its peripheral status in the global market, the prognosis for the state's human and regional security over the next two decades appears to be grim. However, through several efforts to prevent terrorism and by making significant progress toward democracy, economic growth, and development in the previous decade, the security environment can witness a significant improvement in the coming years. Despite this progress, the emergence of Terrorism in the sub-region and its harmful influence on peace, security, and development are causes for concern. The increasing frequency and intensity of attacks in several West African countries,

including Mali and Burkina Faso, demonstrates the growing sophistication of terrorist organizations in the subregion. Ivory Coast needs to focus on addressing the root causes of state instability and reforming the public deficit, which is a crime problem, not a state problem. Together with civil society, they must ensure the domestication and implementation of regional norms and standards aimed at strengthening collective peace and security. ECOWAS, for its part, has a responsibility to
promulgate minimum regional norms, standards, and policies with regard to key conflict-inducing issues, including natural resource exploitation, and political and security governance. It should also facilitate the internalization of such standards and monitor compliance within member states.

As much as its efforts have been shown to have yielded some positive results, it have also revealed the lack of political will and absence of commitment by its member states to implement and enforce counterterrorism decisions, as well as the role of the international political environment in its counterterrorism initiatives. This thesis has demonstrated the rapid expansion of terrorism in Ivory Coast, which threatens the population's peace, and pointed out solutions both domestically and internationally.

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