

Situation in Mali

Forum: Security Council

Student Officer: Lee Ji Min, Deputy Chair

Introduction

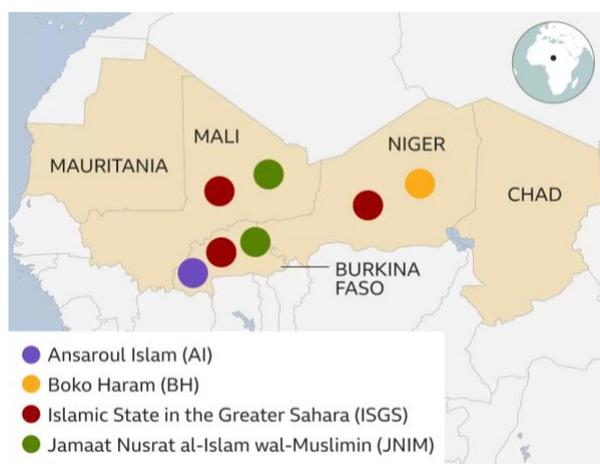
According to the dictionary, terrorism refers to, “the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims.” Among the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, it is known that the increased occurrence of terrorism strongly relates to social inequalities. In other countries, especially the Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) relate the increasing terrorism to the weak institutions and group grievances toward the country’s politics. Since Mali, a country in Western Africa, has serious difficulties among it’s economy, with high population and high unemployment, it is considered a part of the LEDCs by the United Nations.

Terrorists are very likely to conduct attacks against Mali due to its weak government and economy. Mr. Maïga, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mali said Mali is the only country in the world that is simultaneously confronting terrorism, inter communal conflicts, organized crime, and violent acts by individuals. As reported, Mali is continuing to fight tirelessly against this insecurity caused from various terrorist groups such as the jihadists. It is notable that the number of death due to jihadist violence in countries of West Africa including Mali have increased tremendously since 2016.

Background

Recently, groups with links to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic state have been waging larger attacks and are expanding into new territory. The reason why these terrorist groups are so successful is because they thrive in areas where there is either a weak government system. There are two historical events to look at in order to understand how jihadist groups first appeared in West Africa.

The first is the Algerian Civil War. The Algerian Civil War was a civil war in Algeria fought between the Algerian government and various Islamist rebel groups. In 1992, the military staged a coup in order to prevent the Islamist party from winning in a national election, launching the country into a brutal conflict. Eventually, the Islamist fighters fled the country (Algeria), seeking refuge in the deserted areas of northern Mali. The fighters began to rebuild there, engaging in criminal activity and allied with local rebel groups.



Jihadist groups in the Sahel region

MUNiSQ 2023 Security Council

The second historical event is the fall of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. Gaddafi's regime had been a big benefit of the northern Mali, where the population felt neglected by the Malian government in the south. So when Gaddafi's regime collapsed, northern Mali lost its main economic backer. At the same time, fighters and weapons from Libya flowed into the region.

The French military intervened and reclaimed the north from jihadists in only a few days, but they did not completely defeat them.

International Actions

There are several key international actions made by different organizations or nations.

The European Union Training Mission in Mali (EUTM) and the EU Capacity Building Mission (EUCAP) is continuing to train and look after Mali's security forces. Since 2021, EUCAP also takes care of the restoration of government presence in central Mali.

The EU also stressed the importance of fighting for abuses committed by terrorist groups, armed militaries, and Mali's security forces.

The UN Security Council made the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to also support Mali's return to democratic rule. In fact, during the visit of the UNSC in Mali, the members pressured the government to restore democratic rule.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) provides lifesaving assistance to people in Mali who are affected by conflict and facing food shortages in the West African nation. Since 2012, the IRC has provided lifesaving assistance to over half a million people in Mali who were facing trouble. They also noticed that the crisis in Mali also led to a collapse of basic needs such as health care and education. In order to help the country recover, the IRC provides drinkable water with water treatment kits, health care supplies, psychosocial support for mental trauma, educational school, and support to villages.

The Operation Serval was a French military operation in Mali which its aim was to drive out Islamic armed forces from the northern Mali. Mali was a French colony until 1960. In 2013, France's government said it wanted to protect the Malian population and the 6,000 French citizens living there, so France sent 5,000 troops to Mali. Not only French troops, but there were also 14,000 UN peacekeeping troops alongside local military forces across the deserts of the Sahel. When the French forces first arrived Mali, they received a lot of welcome. However, as time went by, the local people thought that France, as an advanced military power, could have already solved the terror problem. Also, they thought that France troops should leave the country if they could not show any difference. In France, people also wanted the French troops to stop giving help because 55 French troops have already been killed



French soldiers quit Mali after 9 years, billions spent and many lives lost

in the Sahel. As a result, France withdrew from Mali on August 15, 2022.

Key Organizations

World Food Programme (WFP)

The World Food Programme (WFP) is the world's largest humanitarian organization that saves lives in emergencies by using food assistance to build a pathway to peace, stability, and prosperity, for people having trouble from conflict. The organization includes almost 21,000 staff worldwide, with offices in over 120 countries or territories. Also, they have once been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020 from providing continuous assistance to those who need help.

According to their statistics in Mali, about 30.4 percent of children under 5 are stunted, and about 4.3 million people are required humanitarian assistance in 2020. The WFP carried out emergency food assistance to more than 700,000 people in Mali who are suffering from displacement. This organization is continuing to ensure life-saving food, nutrition, and livelihoods assistance, supporting the humanitarian and health responses at the national level.



WFP's assistance to Mali

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

This organization has been helping millions of people in more than 110 countries worldwide since 1992. They provide assistance for the affected countries and populations when there is a disaster or humanitarian emergency.

They notice that Mali is increasingly recording serious human rights and law violations, and that violent attacks by armed groups now affect civilians throughout most of the country. According to their statistics, an estimated 7.5 million people require humanitarian assistance in 2022. Until now since the year 2012, more than 1.3 million people left their own nation due to the severe violence and danger they face.

The EU has provided more than 446 million euros in providing aid in Mali since 2012, and now became a leading donor of assistance in the country. Their assistance covers food, basic needs, shelter, health care, etc.

The Stances of the P5 Nations

United States of America

The US foreign assistance continues to support the Malian people. Some key assistance includes promoting a stable democracy and improved governance, also promoting regional security by combatting terrorists and traffickers who try to attack ungoverned areas in the Sahel. They also focus on improving social development, increasing sustainable livelihoods, and encouraging economic growth. Their goal includes strengthening Mali's democratic institution with its governance becoming more responsive, and its respect for human rights improved.

MUNiSQ 2023 Security Council

United Kingdom

Since the year 2020, about 300 British soldiers were part of a UN mission to protect the population of Mali from Islamist terror groups. British troops had conducted long-range inspection against Islamist militant groups in the areas such as Al-Qaeda. With France deciding to leave Mali, the UK also had to step back with various reasons. The UK was the latest country to pull its troops from Mali.



UK withdraws troops from Mali early blaming political instability

France

Since Mali was a French colony that gained independence, France decided to provide their military troop in order to help Mali defend its country. However, despite the continuous French military presence since 2012, conflict has spread more from Mali to Niger and Burkina. After years of dispute between the local citizens and the French troops, both sides understood the differences and France finally decided to withdraw from Mali.

China

Not much about China's view towards this issue is known, however China believes that the foreign intervention does not always lead to more stability or better protection. After noticing France and United Kingdom's United Nations Security Council Resolution to launch military interventions beyond the original scope, China has been particularly cautious in agreeing to any UN Security Council resolution that would authorize a military intervention.

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation is trying to become a reliable ally in the fight against jihadists. Since both French and Britain troops exit the fight, Mali is seeking for security partners. Alousseini Sanou, West African country's economy minister once said that Mali is expecting Russia to send shipments of fuel, fertilizer, and food worth around 100 million dollars. With this, we could know that Russia has given several help to Mali.

Possible Solutions

Since this problem is happening in several countries and not only in the Republic of Mali, there are many solutions that could be proposed in order to mitigate the issue. Among the many problems that exist within this issue, the three of the most grave are the following:

1. The climate change is considered as an contributing factor to this issue. The rising temperatures have caused drought and hunger prompting migration and contributing to instability. A solution regarding the climate change is needed as it is an important factor

MUNiSQ 2023 Security Council

to think of.

2. About 70% of West Africa's population depend on agriculture and livestock for a living, but the persistent droughts are threatening that way of life. There should be solutions to the food systems that people in Mali currently have.
3. Another reason that armed Islamic groups have gained a foothold in the region is because both the militaries and government in Mali are weak. There should be solutions to enhance the powers of the nation's military forces and the powers of the government.
4. The country lack the security services and therefore lets the armed groups to easily get into the country. Solutions are needed to enhance the security services or borders in order to protect the country itself.

Among the four different ideas of possible solutions, the most important one would be the solution about strengthening the powers of the military and government powers. This could be done by several means such as enhancing the law, getting some help from other developed nations, or creating larger military groups with regular training.

Glossary

Terrorism: the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims.

Sahel: the Sahel is a region in North Africa which is a semiarid steppe, a type of dry grassland.

NIMD (The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy): the NIMD is a organization that works to promote peaceful, just and inclusive politics worldwide. The group began working with Malian organizations in 2002, also building an office in Bamako.



Jihadists in Mali

Coup D'état: a sudden, violent, and unlawful seizure of power from a government; a coup.

Al Qaeda (AQ): one of the longest-operating and largest jihadist militant organizations in the world.

Timeline

November 2015 — terrorists attacks the Radisson Hotel in Bamako, and kills a number of hostages including foreign nationals.

March 2016 — gunmen attacks the headquarters of the European Union Training Mission in the centre of Bamako.

June 2017 — terrorists attacks Le Campement resort in Kangaba, on the outskirts of Bamako, and causes a number of deaths.

MUNiSQ 2023 Security Council

February 24, 2019 — insurgents attacks the Koulikoro Training Centre, the main training base in Mali for the European Union Training Mission, approximately 55km northeast of Bamako. Four Malian military personnel gets injured.

January 26, 2020 — terrorists attacks a Malian military camp in Sokolo, Segou region, and kills 20 soldiers.

April 6, 2020 — terrorists attacks a Malian military base in Bamba, Gao region, and kills 25 soldiers.

June 14, 2020 — terrorists attacks a Malian military convey approximately 160km north of Segou town, and kills 24 soldiers.

March 15, 2021 — terrorists attacks a Malian Army security post in Tessit, and kills 33 soldiers.

April 2, 2021 — terrorists attacks the MINUSMA camp in Aguelhok, and causes the death of four peacekeepers.

January 22, 2022 — terrorists attacks the BARKHANE camp in Gao, and causes the death of one French soldier.

June 18, 2022 — terrorists attacks the villages of Diallassagou, Dianweli and Deguessagou, and kills at least 132 civilians.

July 16, 2022 — terrorists attacks a security post at Zantiguila, approximately 70km from Bamako on the road to Segou, and kills six.

July 21, 2022 — there are six attacks across central and southern Mali targeting Malian armed forces targets, including Kolokani, Kono, Douentza, Bapho, Segou and Sévaré.

July 22, 2022 — there are attacks on the Kati military base, 15km from Bamako city centre, which killed one soldier. Seven attackers are also killed.

Sources

- “Mali.” *Human Rights Watch*, 13 Jan. 2022, www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/mali.
- Thelwell, Kim. “Top 10 Facts About Living Conditions in Mali.” *The Borgen Project*, 16 May 2022, borgenproject.org/top-10-facts-about-living-conditions-in-mali.
- “Mali Reports Progress in Political Transition Process, Fighting Terrorism.” *UN News*, 24 Sept. 2022, news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1127861.
- Tjassing, Mirjam. “NIMD’s Sahel Regional Director on Current Events in Mali.” *NIMD*, 28 Mar. 2022, nimd.org/nimds-sahel-regional-director-on-current-events-in-mali/?gclid=CjwKCAiA5Y6eBhAbEiwA_2ZWTTiXOfxk7vbWLyDp3sAU6E1H0w9i2eGijJd4sRrsrNO135OVROlvBoC2E8QAvD_BwE.
- Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy. “Mali.” *NIMD*, 7 June 2022, nimd.org/programmes/mali.
- Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. “Terrorism - Mali Travel Advice.” *GOV.UK*, 16 Dec. 2022, www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/mali/terrorism.
- Vines, Alex. “Terrorism in Africa.” *Chatham House – International Affairs Think Tank*, 19 Dec. 2022, www.chathamhouse.org/2021/09/terrorism-africa.
- “---.” *The IRC*, www.rescue.org/country/mali.
- BBC News. “UK Withdraws Troops From Mali Early Blaming Political Instability.” *BBC News*, 14 Nov. 2022, www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-63627489.
- Reuters. “Malian Minister Says Russia Will Ship Food and Fuel to Mali in Coming Weeks.” *Reuters*, 3 Nov. 2022, www.reuters.com/world/africa/malian-minister-says-russia-will-ship-food-fuel-mali-coming-weeks-2022-11-02.
- Jourdain, Marie, and Petr Tuma. “As Europe Withdraws From Mali, Russia Gets the Upper Hand.” *Atlantic Council*, 8 June 2022, www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/as-europe-withdraws-from-mali-russia-gets-the-upper-hand.
- Who We Are | *World Food Programme*. www.wfp.org/who-we-are.
- Mali | *World Food Programme*. 21 Dec. 2022, www.wfp.org/countries/mali.
- “About Us.” *European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations*, civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/who/about-echo_en.
- “---.” *European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations*, civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/africa/mali_en.