DRUG TRAFFICKING AND TERRORISM IN WEST AFRICA: THE CASE OF MALI

BY

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LEGON
JULY 2016
DECLARATION

With the exception of quoted sources and acknowledged references, I hereby declare that this dissertation is the product of an original research conducted by me under the supervision of Dr. Ken Ahorsu and that no part of this study has been submitted anywhere else for any other purpose.

ABDUL-HANAN ZUBERU (STUDENT)

DATE ........................................

DR. KEN AHORSU (SUPERVISOR)

DATE ........................................
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late mother, Hajia Memunatu Abuyamma Zuberu, for her sweat and sacrifice. May the Almighty Allah give her jannatul firdaus.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My utmost gratitude goes to the Almighty Allah for His sufficient mercies, guidance and inspiration, which have sustained me throughout my academic pursuits. If I have come this far then it is the unmerited favour of Allah who has blessed me with life, health and knowledge.

I also acknowledge my supervisor, Dr. Ken Ahorsu for his patience, constructive criticisms and directions, without which it would have been extremely difficult to complete this research.

The Director-General of the Research Department and the entire Directorate deserve my deep appreciation for finding me worthy of selection for this MA course. I also take this opportunity to sincerely thank officers/lecturers of Ghana Armed Forces, the Narcotic Control Board (NACOB), Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), Mali Embassy in Accra, Ghana Embassy in Bamako, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFA&RI) who provided me with the necessary information which contributed immensely to the successful conduct of this research.

Most importantly, I will like to thank my sweet wife, Asana and children Muna, Shahrukh, Shabana and Iman for their encouragement, understanding and support throughout this course.
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<table>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACSS</td>
<td>African Centre for Strategic Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFISMA</td>
<td>African-led International Support Mission to Mali</td>
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<td>AMISOM</td>
<td>African Union Mission in Somalia</td>
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<td>AQIM</td>
<td>Al Qaeda in the Islamist Maghreb</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<td>CTED</td>
<td>Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate</td>
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<td>DEA</td>
<td>Drug Enforcement Administration (US)</td>
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<td>DPA</td>
<td>Department of Political Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPKO</td>
<td>Department of Peacekeeping Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>EMCDDA</td>
<td>European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FARC</td>
<td>Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISIS</td>
<td>Islamic State of Iraq and Syria</td>
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<tr>
<td>NACOB</td>
<td>Narcotics Drug Control Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>PBUH</td>
<td>Peace Be Upon Him</td>
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<tr>
<td>SALW</td>
<td>Small arms and Light Weapons</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOCs</td>
<td>Transnational Organized Crimes</td>
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<tr>
<td>TSCTI</td>
<td>Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNODC</td>
<td>United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime</td>
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<td>UNSC</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>WACI</td>
<td>West Africa Coast Initiative</td>
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<td>WAPCCO</td>
<td>West African Police Chiefs Committee</td>
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<td>WCO</td>
<td>The World Customs Organization</td>
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<td>WDR</td>
<td>World Drug Report</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the state of drug trafficking and terrorism in West Africa and how drug trafficking aids terrorism in Mali and vice versa. The study found that Terrorists’ networks were in concert with drug traffickers and other Transnational Organised criminals in Mali. The study also established a link between politicians/State officials and Transnational Organised Crimes in Mali. It identified the nature and forms of such relationship, the actors involved, the threats posed by the collaborative activities of drug traffickers and terrorists organisations on the security of Mali and for that matter that of West Africa. The study further revealed that Mali has adopted many policy responses to prevent, counter or combat the threats posed by drug trafficking and terrorism to the country. However, these strategies are faced with challenges such as the lack of political will/leadership, weak institutional capacity (training and equipment), lack of funds, corruption, etc. that militate against the successful implementation of the strategies. The study recommended that the Mali government should put in place sound economic and social policies to address the permissive conditions such as poverty, youth unemployment, economic and political marginalization, which cause Drug trafficking and Terrorism in the country. Mali government should also embark on a targeted and accelerated development of the northern Mali to bridge the developmental gap between the south and the north of the country.
CHAPTER ONE
RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Background to the Problem Statement

Since the end of the Cold War, the definition of security and what constitute security threats in the international system has largely become more inclusive. Security threats have become more and more transnational in nature. In today’s international system, a number of non-traditional threats such as drug trafficking and terrorism have been defined as transnational security threats. While some of these threats do not pose immediate danger to the international community, their cumulative effect may far outweigh that of the traditional threats. The danger these threats pose is universal in nature. However, developing states appear to be the most vulnerable to transnational security threats because of their porous borders, weak security and judicial structures, endemic corruption, poverty among others.

Drug trafficking is the sale and distribution of illicit drugs. Illicit drug substances are drugs which are often hallucinogenic addictive substances that cause change in the user’s behaviour and perception, and are often taken for their hallucination effects.\(^1\) According to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), “drug trafficking is the global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition laws.”\(^2\) The types of illicit drugs commonly traded are Marijuana, heroin, cocaine, opium, methamphetamine, temazepam, and counterfeit drugs.
Latin American drug cartels faced with the balloon effect in the Americas and increased European demand for illicit drugs, have resulted in the discovery of new supply channels through West Africa and the Sahel region. These regions are now the citadel for the trafficking of illicit narcotics in the last decade and half, with its associated consequences on the regions. The UNODC first sounded the alarm on the drug crisis in West Africa in 2008. It warned that an exploding drug trade in the sub-region was distorting economies and corrupting people across the spectrum of society. According to UNODC, the arrest of drug peddlers and seizure of cocaine in the sub-region got to the pinnacle in 2007 when 47 tons of cocaine were seized. Some 50 tons of cocaine transit via the region each year representing 27% of Europe’s cocaine consumption yearly.

The Latino drug lords are reported to have taken a commercial approach in the shipment of narcotics by using “low-risk, high-return routes.” With its porous borders, lack of jobs for the youth, alienation of the youth, corruption and weak domestic security structures, the sub-region seems to provide a fertile ground for the achievement of this goal. For example, until 2010, Ghana and Nigeria had no body scanners at their International Airports. Guinea started the use of such scanners at its International Airport only from 2011. Formerly, the heart for the smuggling of licit goods such as cigarettes and low-priced commodities, the same routes and experiences now help drug barons in the sub-region. According to former President Olusegun Obasanjo, the Chairman of the West African Commission on Drugs (WACD), “West Africa ceased to be just transit zone. We have become manufacturing and consuming zone.”

Illicit drugs are transported by air, ship, car or mules from Latin America to the West African sub-region, through the Sahel to Europe. Illicit Drugs enter West Africa largely through its over 200
ports. The main docking points are Lagos, Dakar, Abidjan and Douala. Other non-conventional routes are used and the UNODC regional representative for West and Central Africa, Pierre Lapaque, observed that “in the last few years, more and more twin-engine planes have been landing in West Africa on abandoned airstrips, or making low-altitude drops.” The shortest way from Latin America to Africa is a route called the Highway 10 in reference to “10 degrees of latitude north,” where several drugs bound for Africa had been seized. It runs through Colombia and Venezuela to Guinea and Nigeria and ends up in Mali. Throwing more light on the most favoured routes by Latin American traffickers to Europe, Dahou Ould Kablia, Minister of Interior for Algeria, at a Paris summit on the predicament of the transatlantic drug trade in May, 2012, confirmed that “one of the preferred corridors for the passage of illicit drugs, is along a corridor located on the tip of Algeria’s border with Mali and Niger, which extends for more than 1,000km into the Sahel region.”

While Drug trafficking has been going on in the sub-region since time immemorial, in recent times, terrorism has become part of the drug trade in West Africa.

The United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1566 of 2004, defines Terrorism as:

"criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act, which constitute offences within the scope of and as defined in the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature.”

The Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU) defines terrorism as:
“(a) any act which is a violation of the criminal laws of a State Party and which may endanger the life, physical integrity or freedom of, or cause serious injury or death to, any person, any number or group of persons or causes or may cause damage to public or private property, natural resources, environmental or cultural heritage and is calculated or intended to:

(i) intimidate, put in fear, force, coerce or induce any government, body, institution, the general public or any segment thereof, to do or abstain from doing any act, or to adopt or abandon a particular standpoint, or to act according to certain principles; or

(ii) disrupt any public service, the delivery of any essential service to the public or to create a public emergency; or

(iii) create general insurrection in a State;

(b) any promotion, sponsoring, contribution to, command, aid, incitement, encouragement, attempt, threat, conspiracy, organizing, or procurement of any person, with the intent to commit any act referred to in paragraph (a) (i) to (iii).”

Until the 9/11 attacks in the US, and the US and its Allies subsequent ‘war on terror’ campaign, the perpetration of Terrorist acts in West Africa were not as common as it is today. The hitherto unknown phenomenon in West Africa has since gained prominence, with a sustained escalation in kidnappings, attacks and bombings in the sub-region by terrorist groups such as Mali-based Islamist groups, Ansar Dine (Defenders of the Faith), Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), The National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), the Unity Movement for Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), and the Nigerian based Islamic sect, Boko Haram. The most recent examples are the attacks at the Radisson Blu hotel in Bamako, Mali in November, 2015, which
killed 21 people.\textsuperscript{21} The Splendid hotel attack in Burkina Faso in January, 2016, which killed 29 people.\textsuperscript{22} The Grand-Bassam beach resort attack in Cote d’Ivoire in March 2016, in which 16 people died and 33 others injured.\textsuperscript{23} The three attacks were conducted by AQIM and its affiliates such as Al-Mourabitoun.\textsuperscript{24} Boko Haram has also been carrying out assassinations, abductions and bombings not only in Nigeria, but also across the borders into Chad, Niger, and Camerouns.\textsuperscript{25} The attacks by Boko Haram are not only recurrent but with increasing casualties and destruction. This has raised concerns of West African governments and the International community alike to the increasing threats terrorism pose to the sub-region. Religious differences, marginalization, poverty, social exclusions are but a few of the reasons that explain why individuals and groups in West Africa employ terrorist acts.\textsuperscript{26} The ungovernable spaces and instability in the sub-region has provided a platform for drug traffickers and terrorists to increasingly cooperate and collaborate. This work is a contribution to the emerging interface between drug trafficking and terrorism.

In Mali, internal social grievances, coupled with the return of thousands of Tuaregs with sophisticated weapons from the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi of Libya in 2011 and the March 2012 regime change resulted in a crisis in the country. This created a sanctuary for AQIM, Ansar Dine, MNLA and MUJAO in Northern Mali. Conditions in Mali worsened further following increasing activities of drug traffickers. Until 2008, Mali had not been the preferred route of drug traffickers to Europe. However, following the increasing lawlessness in the country as result of the crisis, Mali has now become the heart of international drug transits from Latin American to Europe the “world’s largest drug consumer market.”\textsuperscript{27} Terrorists’ networks in northern Mali and international drug cartels seized the opportunity of the power vacuum in the area to forge a relationship of convenience, where drug lords are given unfettered access to the areas controlled
by the terrorists for a fee. Some of the terrorists are engaged personally in the trafficking of drugs.\(^{28}\) The UN in 2012, indicated that “northern Mali has now become dangerous crossroads of drugs, crime, terrorism and rebellion.”\(^{29}\) The National Assembly of Mali on 4\(^{th}\) July, 2013 stripped nine members of parliament of their immunity, including six from the armed rebel group, MNLA suspected of terrorism and drug and arms trafficking, to face prosecution.\(^{30}\)

1.2 Problem Statement

Drug trafficking is a social cankerworm. Terrorism is no less better, permeating the Maghreb and the Sahel because of Mali’s ethnic and socio-political problems. Drug trafficking and terrorism have been major phenomena in the political economy of Mali since the overthrow of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. A hitherto dormant crisis was invigorated by the return of thousands of Tuaregs with sophisticated weapons from Libya. Since September 11, 2001, the West has largely curtailed the sources of funding to terrorist organisations globally. Cooperation and collaborations have become the new sources of funding available to both drug traffickers and terrorists. The work thus seeks to examine the impact of the cooperation and collaboration of the two transnational security threats and how they collectively threaten the Malian state.

1.3 Research Questions

- What is the state of drug trafficking and terrorism in West Africa?
- Who are the main actors, nature and form collaboration between the criminal groups?
- What is the state and dynamics of the drug-terrorism nexus in Mali and its effects?
- What are the measures put in place by ECOWAS and Mali to combat the menace, its successes and challenges?
1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study generally looks at drug trafficking and terrorism in West Africa with Mali as a case study. It specifically seeks to:

- Overview the permissive conditions and dynamics of drug trafficking and terrorism in West Africa
- Identify the actors, nature and form of cooperation and collaboration between drug traffickers and terrorists in Mali and its effect on West Africa
- Investigate the measures put in place to combat the phenomena
- Identify the challenges faced in managing the combined crises
- Offer suggestions and recommendations following findings.

1.5 Rationale of the Study

West Africa is faced with many development and security challenges, especially contemporary transnational threats. Drug trafficking and terrorism combined portend a much greater danger to the viability and security of the sub-region. This study will help inform politicians, statesmen and citizens on how best to contain the crises.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study is largely about the menace of drug trafficking and terrorism in West Africa with emphasis on Mali as a case study from 2004 to date.
1.7 Conceptual Framework

The study is situated within the framework of transnational security threats for analysis. Transnational security threats are security threats that are not exclusive to one country but cut across the delimitation of states. This implies that the perpetration of such threats in one state has dire consequences for the rest of the world. Drug trafficking and Terrorism are examples of such threats. Thus the choice of the concept of transnational security threats fits into the topic under research which is “Drug trafficking and Terrorism in West Africa: The case of Mali.”

Michael Wesley defines the word transnational as:

“any activity that originates from within society (rather than from within the decision structure and resources of the state), is commissioned and undertaken by agents operating in several national jurisdictions, and is transmitted or replicated across national borders.”

Westley emphasises on the principal sources of transnational security threats. He defines “security threat’ as an activity or known intent to degrade the safety, property, or values of a society, and ultimately the independence or viability of a state.” According to Richard Shultz, Roy Godson, and George Quester, transnational security is a “paradigm for understanding the ways in which governments and non-state actors—functioning within and across state borders—interact and affect the defence of states and their citizens.” Richard et al. brought a different dimension to the definition by bringing to the fore how non-state actors affect the wellbeing of the state and international system bordering on security and stability.

Ken Ahorsu, on his part argues that:

“In today’s ever globalizing world, threats have become more diffuse and pervasive transcending national and other geographical boundaries. The result is that issues that were
Ahorsu broadened the definition of transnational security threats, bringing out its global nature, whereby borders have become permeable because security has become more diffused. In the opinion of Maryann K. Cusimano, “security has moved to a situation 'beyond sovereignty.”35

Both private citizens and individual states are very much concerned about transnational security threats because of the adverse effect it can have on peace and security. Louise I. Shelley (Director of the Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center at George Mason University) observes that:

“Transnational crime will be a defining issue of the 21st century for policymakers - as defining as the Cold War was for the 20th century and colonialism was for the 19th. Terrorists and transnational crime groups will proliferate because these crime groups are major beneficiaries of globalization. They take advantage of increased travel, trade, rapid money movements, telecommunications and computer links, and are well positioned for growth.”36

In my view, transnational security threats are threats that traverse borders and undermine state authority, weakens the tenets of democratic and threatens the very well-being of the inhabitants of states. It’s worth noting that the transnational security concept does not only challenge the realist construct of security with its inclusion of non-state actors but also expands the security discourse.37

The goal of transnational criminals is to acquire power, influence, or monetary gains, which they do through unlawful means such as “corruption and/ or violence.”38 Transnational security threats manifest in many forms. These include maritime piracy, drug trafficking, human trafficking, prohibited sale of wildlife, fake medicine sale, terrorism, migrants trafficking, arms trafficking, illicit trade in resources such as oil, timber, diamonds and rare metals, trafficking in cultural
property, organ trafficking among others.\textsuperscript{39} It also includes cybercrime, example of which are “hate crimes, telemarketing and internet fraud, identity theft, and credit card account thefts.”\textsuperscript{40}

Facilitating the deeds of these transnational criminals are bankers, accountants, attorneys, notaries, police, border/custom officials, real estate brokers and state/government officials, the Judiciary and Parliamentarians who operate both inside and outside the law to offer their services to anyone on demand.\textsuperscript{41} Transnational criminal organisations rely on industry insiders, who wilfully or inadvertently assist them in shady dealings to lay the groundwork to support their unlawful operations.\textsuperscript{42} The facilitators help criminal groups to launder money, protect them from the law, give them easy passage through borders, provide them with most often than not forged documents such as passports and visas for their travels, as well as secure them safe and reliable transportation networks and safe locations for their activities.\textsuperscript{43} While transnational criminals used intermediaries to facilitate their activities, they also use the internet and computer networks to perpetuate their activities.\textsuperscript{44} The revolution of Information Communication Technology (ICT) has supported the increasing relationship between terrorism and other transnational organized crimes like drug trafficking. It has created conditions where the terror-crime cooperation is exploiting the internet and other communication networks to achieve their goals. Terrorist organisations and other crime groups have also significantly enhanced their potential to raise money for terrorist activities and safer ways of transporting contraband through the use of the internet.\textsuperscript{45} Some of these groups also operate genuine businesses as a facade for their nefarious activities. For example, a former Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Real Estates Developers Association (GREDA), Dr. Alex Tweneboah, was on 9 June 2016 given a two-year jail term for his part in a SIM box fraud, which is believed to have accrued to him some $33million.\textsuperscript{46} Another example is the sentencing of
Ibrahim Sima, the Chief Executive of EXOPA, a prominent Modelling Agency in Ghana with models across the globe, in March 2011, to 15 years imprisonment in his attempt to smuggle 4.9 kg of cocaine to Germany through the Kotoka International Airport, Accra in September 2009.47

Effects

Transnational security threats threaten every sphere of life through bribery, violence, or panic to realise their objectives. They affect the peace, stability and human security of states, “violates human rights and undermines economic, social, cultural, political and civil development of societies” across the world.48 They often undermine democratic institutions, destabilise markets, drain assets of states, and hinder the growth of stable societies. Governments that are not stable or not strong enough to stop transnational criminal networks, become victims to them.49

1.8 Literature Review

Gail Wannenburg, in his article “Organised Crime in West Africa,” writes on Transnational Organized Crime (TOCs) groups that are engaged in criminal activities such as illegal mining, piracy, oil bunkering, vehicle hijacking, and smuggling of tobacco, alcohol and second-hand cars and the threats they pose to development in West Africa. In his view, Organized crime has prevailed in West Africa for centuries.50 He also indicates that, West Africa has been a victim of circumstance caused by corruption, civil wars, criminal anarchy among other ills. The activities of dictators of the sub-region, among others, impoverished their countries and resigned them to underdevelopment. The trade in natural resources which the sub-region has in abundance, such as diamond, oil etc. have not been handled with transparency thereby further fuelling perceptions of corruption. He also examines the escalation of transnational organized crime in the West African
sun-region vis-a-vis the conditions that make them flourish. He claims that drug trafficking had been financing rebellions in West Africa since early 1990s. “In Cote d’Ivoire, Liberia and Senegal,” he alleges that Marijuana cultivation funded arms acquisition.51

In his article “West Africa’s International Drug Trade,” Stephen Ellis looks at the international drug trade in the sub-region. He traces the historical roots of the illicit trade back to over half a century. He demonstrates that Lebanese smugglers have been transporting heroin to the USA using West Africa as a transit point since 1952.52 According to him, the drug trade was taken over by Nigerian and Ghanaian smugglers a decade later.53

He explores the linkages between the international drug trade and African economies with focus on contemporary challenges to the West African international drug trade. In his opinion, “It is needless to say, drug trade is entirely illegal and yet the proceeds are so great as to have a considerable impact on West African economies.”54 He expatiates further that despite concerns regarding the possible effects of drug trafficking on West Africa, there is proof that proceeds of drugs is used to support politicians across sub-region.55 He shows how the lucrative nature of illicit trade allow people to buy power and influence, making them very important people in society. According to him, since West Africa was never a producing hub for heroin and cocaine, they were not looked out for by European law enforcement agents. This gave West African traffickers a great advantage in the early days of the drug trade.56

Cockayne and Williams, in their article “The Invisible Tide: Towards an International Strategy to deal with Drug Trafficking, through West Africa,” assert that the influence and power of drug
money was creeping into the social fabric of West African societies. They are of the view that though the international community is not oblivious to the spectre of trafficking in the region, they lack the appropriate strategies to counter the menace. They warn that the proceeds from drug sales will worsen the already precarious political situation in the region as diverse groups fight for the control of the drug routes in the region. In their opinion, drug money could be used to seek political or military power in the sub-region. They find the 2009/10 assassinations of military and political leaders in Guinea-Bissau as a manifestation of this. They refer to the upheaval that may engulf the region as West Africa’s “drug wars.”

According to them, West Africa’s economies are increasingly anchored on the proceeds of the illicit trade and therefore are heading to what they described as “junky economics.” West Africa is a fertile ground for drug trafficking organizations because of corruption in the law-enforcement agencies, poverty, vast uncontrolled territories, the location of the sub-region between Latin America and Europe, and the fact that West Africa is not known as a major consumer of illicit drug.

In their article “Understanding the Nature and Threats of Drug Trafficking to National and Regional Security in West Africa,” Aning and Pokoo identify the effect of drug trafficking as a critical element of transnational organized crime on West Africa’s weak security, governance and development systems. They observe that West Africa has now gone pass just being a transit and repackaging point for cocaine and heroin to a consuming destination. They reveal that the explosion of the drug trade in the sub-region has exposed the region to security threats through the infiltration of the three arms of government namely, the Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary, and political parties by drug lords. They cite increased incidents of drug related arrests and confiscations in some countries in West Africa to demonstrate the complexity and diverse
players engaged in the drug business chain in the sub-region. A seeming complicity of the judiciary in Ghana, was when six people, including one Ghanaian were granted bail of $33,000 in Accra in 2004 following their detention for attempting to traffic 675 kg of cocaine. The bail, granted for a crime which was non-bailable in Ghana’s penal code drew public outcry, which led to the change of judge for the case.60

Aning and Pokoo agree with Cockayne and Williams in relation to the permissive conditions prevailing in the sub-region, which they cite as porosity of boundaries, fragile institutions, corrupt politicians, and poverty. To them, countries that have some parts of their territories neglected by the central government and flash points serve as safe havens for transnational organized criminals. In their view, the use of violence by drug trafficking syndicates in West Africa has not reached the level of violence akin to their counterparts in Latin America. West African drug trafficking syndicates prefer to use bribery and corruption to achieve their goals than the use of violence. They caution however that, as competition for drug routes as well as who controls local production of some illicit drugs increases, the sub-region is likely to see an increase in violence akin to what is seen in South America.61 According to them, ECOWAS, African Union (AU) and development partners have put in place measures to stem the drug tide in West Africa. There exists a number of legislations and counter-narcotics strategies to fight the menace, however for want of political will on the part of ECOWAS states to operationalize the strategies has seen a case of no show. According to them, this is evidenced by the legislations of a number of counter-narcotics strategies to duly fight the menace.62 They also cite inadequate resources and operational level turf wars among some of the relevant technical agencies as stifling counter-narcotic measures in the region.63
On her part, Nancy E. Brune, in her article “The Brazil–Africa Narco Nexus,” argues that only 15% cocaine from Latin America are trafficked via Brazil to the U.S. and Europe. In her view, due to the advantage of both geographical setting and commerce, the use of Brazil as a conduit between South America and West Africa in the drug trade is expected to increase. She underscores the role Brazil’s massive coast and porous boundaries play in boosting the narcotic trade in the two regions.

She argues that after many years of speculation, there is proof of linkages between Latino drug traffickers and militant groups in West Africa and envisages the strengthening of these ties in the coming years. According to her, the upsurge in the drug trade in West Africa has raised concerns that fragile states could become “narco-states.” She, however, admits that these threats have not gone unnoticed by the authorities of both Brazil and West African countries, which have accordingly made efforts in that direction. The collaboration of Brazil with seven West African countries under the Airport Communications Project (AIRCOP) – a UNODC-funded venture supported by Canada and the European Commission, under the aegis of Interpol and the World Customs Organization, is one such collaboration effort. She laments, however that, such endeavours are bedevilled with the sub-region’s peculiar challenges of weak security, corruption and ill training and lack of gears for security officers.

In their article “Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime in West Africa,” Onuoha and Ezirim, observe that the growing closeness between terrorist organisations and transnational organised criminals in Africa lately is a source of concern. They acknowledge the predominance of terrorists’ networks such as Ansar Dine, AQIM, Boko Haram MUJAO, and Ansaru in West Africa. Most of these groups make money for their activities by providing protection and safe
passage for transnational organised criminals. They add that “West Africa’s drug smuggling routes provide opportunities for militant organisations to generate funds.” They posit that the insecurity of West Africa is heightened by the proliferation of TOCs in the region. In their opinion, “threats like terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal oil bunkering, piracy, and arms trafficking have taken a transnational dimension.” In their opinion, TOCs are daunting challenges to human security which require concerted efforts, both locally and internationally, to combat. Onuoha and Ezirim also agree with Cockayne and Williams and Aning and Pokoo regarding the permissive conditions that make the TOCs succeed in West Africa. He identify them as; ineffectual national security systems, porous borders, corruption, poverty, widespread unemployment, weak democratic institutions. They recognize the efforts by ECOWAS in adopting policies and strategies to enhance safety, conflict management, democratic tenets, economic growth and development in West Africa. But they admit that in spite of these interventions, terrorism has gained traction in the sub-region and if measures were not put in place to halt the situation, it could only increase in scale.

Diego Gordano, in his article “The terror-crime nexus in West Africa: Relevance and Effects,” discusses the nexus between terrorist networks and other Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) groups in West Africa. He notes a marked surge in the activities of terrorist organisations such as AQIM, Ansar Dine, Ansaru, Boko Haram and MUJAO in the region in the last 20 years. Cordano has similar views as Cockayne and Williams and Aning and Pokoo and Onuoha and Ezirim.

According to Gordano, TOCs, particularly drug trafficking, arms smuggling and kidnappings for ransom exploit features of the sub-region such as weak judicial structures, high level of corruption, porous borders, the region’s strategic location between suppliers of drugs in South America and
consumers in Europe, its long tradition of smuggling and banditry and the vast ungoverned spaces
in the Sahel that allow these groups to operate with little risks of being arrested are the features
that provide the permissive environment for criminals. Both criminal networks and terrorist groups
take opportunity of the widespread poverty, unemployment and resentments against governments
in West Africa to recruit the youth for their activities.\(^{69}\)

AQIM and its offshoot, MUJAO, are deeply engaged in illicit activities such as drug trafficking
and extortion and has developed a wide cooperation with other criminal networks. The terrorists’
organisation tax drugs that pass through territories under their control or guarantee security to
trafficking gangs through northern Mali. According to Gordano, AQIM has expanded its activities
to include kidnapping for ransom, which now serves as its most important source of revenue.\(^{70}\)

In their book “West Africa’s Security Challenges, Building Peace in a Troubled Region,” Adekeye
and Ismail assess the Post-Cold war security challenges of West African states. They allude to the
relationship between poor economic performance and instability. The authors are of the view that
the sub-region is predisposed to conflicts, especially in states which have suffered coup d’états
before. The authors ascribe the causes of conflicts in West Africa to “political marginalization,
economic impoverishment and social alienation of the citizens by autocratic regimes.”\(^{71}\)

They refer to present-day problems as “crisis of modernity,”\(^{72}\) “…a dimension that cannot be
understood without first understanding some of the esoteric, psychological, and religious
foundations of different cultures in the sub-region.”\(^{73}\) Using Liberia and Sierra Leone as reference
points, the authors contend “that the dynamics of armed rebel movements in Africa suggest that
they were initially propelled by internal political considerations.” They identify six key areas that could help in addressing instability in the region. They are conflict prevention, resolution and peace building, promotion of democracy and good governance. Others are integrating the youth and children into stable societies, and good neighbourliness all aimed at halting the trafficking of arms and drugs across porous borders in West Africa.

Edward Newman, in his article "Exploring the Root Causes of Terrorism," investigates the root causes of terrorism. He identifies demographic factors, poverty, social inequality and exclusion, dispossession and political grievances as some of the causes of terrorism. He classifies the causes of terrorism into two groups, i.e. Root and Precipitant causes. He further groups the causes of terrorism under Permissive Structural Factors and Direct Root Causes. He identifies poverty, demographic factors and urbanization as the Permissive Structural Factors. He views poverty at both the individual and the state levels. At the individual level, poverty could lead to bitterness and disaffection which serve as permissive conditions for extremism. At the state level, he argues that poor societies often make for weak states and serve as grounds for terrorist activity or recruitment. He believes rapid population growth, poverty and unemployment, could be exploited by extremists groups.

He identifies the direct root causes of terrorism as follows: human right abuses, alienation, exclusion, social inequality, dispossession, and humiliation. He finds leadership, state sponsorship and political upheaval as the triggers to terrorism. He, therefore, sees the root causes as the precursor to the emergence of terrorist organisations. He concludes with the verdict that no
amount of military might or preparedness could defeat terrorism if these causes were not addressed.  

In his article “Preventing Terrorism in West Africa: Good Governance or Collective Security?” Kehinde A. Bolaji discusses good governance and collective security and how each represent the best strategy to fighting terrorism in the sub-region. He interrogates the concept of collective security, vis-a-vis the concept of good governance, and proffers measures to combat terrorism in West Africa. According to him, currently the sub-region was not a bastion of terrorism, but provides a conducive environment for creating terrorists. He argues that collective security and good governance are important tools for ensuring security, peace and development. He considers the concept of good governance as a guide for decision-makers in managing the resources of states within the realm of transparency and accountability, to bring about sustainable social and economic development.

He, however, identifies the difficulties of states ceding their sovereignty for the purpose of regional integration, and the personalization of governance and politics as the limitations militating against “good governance and collective security in the fight against terrorism.” On good governance, he is of the view that though with robust governance systems, West Africa has a relatively weak security structures to effectively tackle terrorism. He admits that neither good governance nor collective security alone could totally annihilate terrorism in West Africa. He, therefore, suggests the integration of the two concepts to help combat the menace in the sub-region. He also proffers additional strategies such as the fight against the spread of Small Arms and Light Weapons
(SALW), the implementation of anticorruption mechanisms to reduce illicit transactions, and information sharing among sub-regional security agencies.\textsuperscript{83}

From the analysis of the works of the learned authors above, what cut across all the literature reviewed is the permissive conditions that make West Africa conducive for TOCs, and the lack of capacity of West African states to combat the menace. It is however, worth noting that this research seeks to contribute to existing literature on the emerging phenomena of the cooperation and collaboration between drug trafficking and terrorism in the West African sub-region.

1.9 Sources of Data and Research Methodology

Primary and secondary sources of data were used. The primary data were obtained through unstructured interviews with eight (8) experts from agencies/institutions such as the Ghana Armed Forces, The Narcotic Control Board (NACOB), Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), Mali Embassy in Accra, Ghana Embassy in Bamako, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFA&RI). The Secondary data were obtained from both online and offline sources such as books, journals, reports, seminar papers and other records from the Balme, LECIAD, Institute of African Studies, and George Padmore libraries.

1.10 Research Methodology

The methodology used in this study is the Qualitative method of analysis. Deductions and analysis are made from the information gathered to answer the research questions.
1.11 Chapter Arrangement

The study has been structured into four main chapters:

- Chapter One – Research Design
- Chapter Two – An Overview of Drug Trafficking and Terrorism in West Africa.
- Chapter Three – Drug Trafficking and Terrorism and its Dynamics in Mali.
- Chapter Four – Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations
1 United States Food and Drugs and Cosmetic Act.
2 UNODC World Drug Report 2010
3 This effect draws an analogy between efforts to eradicate the production of illegal drugs in South American countries and what happens to the air inside of a latex balloon when it is squeezed. The air is moved, but does not disappear. This displacement is also known as the "balloon effect"; pressure applied in one area pushes the air into another area of less resistance
4 Drug Trafficking and Threats to national and Regional Security in West Africa
7 Frintz, Anne., Drugs: the new alternative economy of West Africa http://mondediplo.com/2013/02/03drugs, accessed on 27th May, 2016
19 OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism

24 Ibid.


27 Ibid.


32 Ibid.


36 Transnational Security Threats in Asia: Conference Report, op. cit.


39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.


49 Ibid.


51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

57 Cockayne, James., and Williams, Phil., “The Invisible Tide: Towards an International Strategy to Deal with Drug Trafficking Through West Africa” October, 2009
58 Ibid.
59 Aning, Kwesi., and Pokoo, John., “understanding the nature and threats of Drug Trafficking to National and Regional Security in West Africa”
60 Ibid
61 Ibid
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid.
64 Brune, Nancy, E., “The Brazil–Africa Narco Nexus”
65 Onuoha, Freedom C. and Dr. Ezirim, Gerald, E., “Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime in West Africa”
66 Ibid
67 Ibid
68 Cordano, Diego., “The terror-crime nexus in West Africa: Relevance and effects”
69 Ibid.
70 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
77 Ibid
78 Ibid., p. 173.
79 Ibid
81 Bolaji, Kehinde A., op. cit.
82 Ibid., p. 213.
83 Ibid.
CHAPTER TWO

AN OVERVIEW OF DRUG TRAFFICKING AND TERRORISM IN WEST AFRICA

2.0 Introductions

This chapter overviews the trend of drug trafficking and terrorism in the West African sub-region. It also examines the complexities, the various players/actors involved, and the auxiliary relationships with other Transnational Organised Crimes (TOCs) in the region.

2.1 Trends in the incidence of Drug Trafficking in the West Africa

From 2004 to 2008, some 3.4 tons of cocaine were confiscated from 1357 traffickers, on aircrafts in West Africa bound for Europe. Sixty-two percent (62%) of the incidents and fifty-five (55%) of the cocaine seized came from Senegal, Nigeria, Guinea, and Mali.\(^1\)

Seventy-seven (77) parcels of cocaine on board the shipping vessel, *MV Benjamin*, disappeared mysteriously at the Tema Harbour in April 2006.\(^2\) A French naval vessel during a routine security check on 31 January 2008 intercepted the *Blue Atlantic* carrying 2.4 tons of cocaine from Liberia en route to Nigeria.\(^3\) The Gambia security officials detained 2,100 kg of cocaine bound for Europe in June, 2010.\(^4\) In Lagos, Nigeria, the first illegal amphetamine and methamphetamine laboratory was destroyed in June 2011. Law enforcement officials in October 2011, confiscated 1.5 tons of cocaine on the coast of the Island of Santiago in Cape Verde.\(^5\) In September 2012, five (5) security officers in Ghana were detained for the part they played in the shipment of 1.5 tons of Marijuana to the UK.\(^6\)
The head of a private firm contracted to provide security at the Kotoka International Airport in Accra, Mr. Solomon Adelaquaye was in June 2013, charged together with his Colombian and two Nigerian co-conspirators in the US for facilitating an alleged trafficking of 3,000 kg of cocaine through Accra. On the 10th of November, 2014, Ms. Nayele Ametefe was arrested at the Heathrow International Airport with cocaine weighing 12kg on a flight from the Kotoka International Airport, Accra. In July 2012, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Yury Fedotov, revealed that about 30 tons of cocaine and 400 kg of heroin were smuggled to Europe through the sub-region in 2011.

The above seizures and arrests of drug related criminals across West Africa, have exposed how the operations of drug lords are facilitated by various actors such as businessmen, politicians, security officials, and the judiciary. Several drug confiscations are believed to have been unearthed accidentally, showing that in reality there might have been larger volumes of drugs moved through the sub-region. A February 2012 Report on anti-narcotic sting operation dubbed “Operation COCAIR III” conducted by the WCO alongside Interpol and the UNODC showed the amount of illicit substances that pass through the sub-region and other areas in a week. The operation was conducted at thirty international airports in West Africa, Central Africa and Brazil from 28 November to 4 December 2011. “It resulted in forty-five (45) seizures, 486 kg of cannabis, 24 kg of cocaine, 5 kg of heroin and amphetamines and methamphetamines.” This example illustrates the alarming state of the drug trade in West Africa. Xavier Raufer, citing the US Congress’ audit arm, the Government Accountability Office, indicates that only 25 cents are confiscated for every 100 dollars of dirty money that accrues from the drug trade.
2.2 Factors Facilitating Drug Trafficking in West Africa

Several permissive conditions account for the thriving Drug Trafficking in West Africa. Weak or non-existent security and law enforcement measures are factors that attracts drug traffickers to the region. Drug cartels face lower risks of surveillance and arrest in West Africa in relation to some other regions across the globe.\(^\text{12}\) The location of West Africa on the globe between Latin America and Europe makes it an ideal geographical choice as a transit point for the narcotics dealers. The sub-region’s several uninhabited islands and archipelagoes make discovery of drugs challenging and facilitate transit.\(^\text{13}\) The permissive conditions that make drug trafficking and other TOCs feasible in the sub-region are its porous borders, corruption, poverty, widespread unemployment, bad governance and deficient institutions.\(^\text{14}\) Others are: West Africa’s history of central government neglect of certain parts of their territories which serves as havens for drug traffickers and other radical groups.\(^\text{15}\) Another reason is the “absence of major consumer markets within the region.”\(^\text{16}\) The Sub-region’s own history of time-tested webs of cross border criminals, serves as a rallying ground for Latino drug syndicates. West Africa’s large informal economies is also a factor.\(^\text{17}\) Another factor in the sub-region is its insecurity resulting from civil wars, insurgencies and coups d’états.\(^\text{18}\)

2.3 Drug Trafficking and Violent Crimes

Drug trafficking in the sub-region has devastating social implications for current and future generations. Winter indicates that illicit drugs are now the “frontiers in the Africa’s new wars”\(^\text{19}\) Drug trafficking and consumption have been increasingly link to the incidence of crime, violence and political instability in West Africa.\(^\text{20}\) Security officials have increasingly confiscated small arms from cocaine trafficking gangs in almost all cocaine related cases. There have also been
several cocaine connected shootouts and killings in the sub-region in recent times.\textsuperscript{21} This is evident in the rivalry between the various syndicates in drug trafficking in Mali and Guinea Bissau.\textsuperscript{22} The alleged “contract killings” in Ghana in 2007 raised fears that drug wars were being waged against supposed enemies.\textsuperscript{23} Some of the murders suspected to be contract killings were that of “Mr. Rokko Frimpong, Deputy Managing Director of the Ghana Commercial Bank, Nana Brentuo III, Chief of Nyankumasi- Adansi among others.”\textsuperscript{24} The then President of Ghana, John Evans Atta Mills indicated that the amount of profit from the drug trade meant that drug lords could hire the services of “contract killers.”\textsuperscript{25}

2.4 Drug Trafficking and the Proliferation of Small Arms

Connected to the drug trade is the challenge of the smuggling of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). There is an estimated amount of 8 million SALW in the West African sub-region.\textsuperscript{26} The sub-region is a transit point for illicit SALW.\textsuperscript{27} SALW are mostly imported and spread across the West African sub-region through an illegal cross-border trade.\textsuperscript{28} The SALW imported are “rocket launchers, missile systems, light machine guns, revolvers and pistols with automatic loading, etc.”\textsuperscript{29} Arm smugglers use deserts, forests, mountain areas, seaports, airports, major border towns, rivers, lakes etc. to smuggle the arms.\textsuperscript{30} The main actors in the smuggling of arms are drug traffickers and others such as commercial arms dealers, insurgents/rebels groups, warlords, politicians, and international oil merchants.\textsuperscript{31} These SALW therefore, come in handy for drug traffickers as they use them to facilitate the drug trade.\textsuperscript{32}

There is also a substantial number of illicit SALW in the sub-region that are locally manufactured. These include firearms, small bombs, and grenades. The commonest types manufactured are
“pistols as well as short, long and double-barrel guns.” \(^{33}\) “There is flourishing artisanal industries of local arms manufacture in the sub-region.” \(^{34}\) The use of locally manufactured guns in West Africa for hunting, chieftaincy rites, funerals and festivals drives these artisanal industries. \(^{35}\) In recent years, states in the sub-region have seen an increasing use of SALW by drug syndicates “to protect themselves and their businesses.” \(^{36}\) The growing numbers of arms recovered from drug associated criminals in West Africa gives credence to this. For example, the French army stationed in the Sahel region to combat Islamists militants, on 14 May 2015, seized a total of 1.5 tons of drugs and cache of weapons after intercepting a convoy in the desert in north-eastern Niger. \(^{37}\) There is no doubt that drug trafficking and the proliferation of arms go hand-in-hand.

### 2.5 Drug Trafficking and Terrorism

In recent times, drug trafficking in West Africa has been increasingly linked with terrorism, directly and indirectly. According to the 2009 Report of the UNODC, “while coastal countries appeared to be on a more positive trajectory, there was increasing evidence that the northern part of the region was under increased pressure from terrorist groups” that seemed to be closing ranks with criminal networks across the globe. \(^{38}\) A WikiLeaks cable reported by The Telegraph on February 4, 2011 revealed that the concerns of the UK was that drug trafficking posed the most risk to the peace and stability in the West African sub-region. According to the report, the drug trade presents the prospect of an augmented militant financing in the sub-region and violence akin to what is seen in the Caribbean. \(^{39}\) It is now a known fact that Hezbollah is financially backed by Lebanese Shi’ite nationals in West Africa and the Sahel. Majority of these nationals are into both legitimate and illegitimate activities such as drug business, arms running, money laundering, black marketing and other criminal activities. \(^{40}\)
2.6 Drug trafficking and Politics in West Africa

There is an emerging evidence of a link between politics and the drug business in West Africa.\textsuperscript{41} Recent events in West Africa illuminates the relationship between the two. For instance, in Guinea, the President’s security detail were not only allegedly made to protect drug consignments, drug deals were also carried out in “the first lady’s private residence and in the president’s VIP salon cars.”\textsuperscript{42} Guinea late President, Lansana Conte’s son, Ousmane Conte in February, 2009 admitted to being a member of a drug smuggling network on television.\textsuperscript{43} According to the 15 March 2009 edition of the Washington Post, cocaine was sometimes smuggled abroad via the diplomatic bag by Guinea state officials.\textsuperscript{44} In Ghana, in May, 2009 and September 2011, the then President, J.E.A Mills subjected himself to security checks at the Kotoka International Airport before embarking on trips to London and the U.S, respectively.\textsuperscript{45} This was because the President was said to have begun to suspect members of his own government of complicity in the drug trade. This suspicion is given credence in a WikiLeaks cable cited here:

\begin{quote}
\ldots in June 2009, he [Mills] told the US ambassador to Ghana, Donald Teitelbaum, "elements of his government are already compromised and that officials at the airport tipped off drug traffickers about operations there."
\end{quote}

In Mali, it is reported that Former President Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT) was the first to benefit from the drug trade. During his reign, many politicians were in various arrangements with the drug smugglers. If a security official stopped a drug convoy, it is reported that the said officer will get a call from the top to let it through.\textsuperscript{47} The ATT government’s complicity in the drug trade was an open secret in Mali. This was one of the reasons why junior officers of the Malian army staged the March 2012 Coup d’etat. Drug trade funded elections through money laundering operations. It supported the expensive live style of senior military officers and politicians with fleet of cars and mansions.\textsuperscript{48} A June, 2013 report of the African Centre for Strategic Studies (ACSS) revealed that
the assassination of President João Bernardo Vieira on 1st March 2009, was a revenge killing by military forces loyal to the chief of staff of Guinea-Bissau's armed forces, Batista Tagme Na Wai who was killed hours earlier in an explosion suspected to be caused by supporters of President Vieira. The dispute arose between the two over the drug trade in that country. In the ensuing years, another two state officials of Guinea-Bissau, Chief of staff, Antonio Indjai, and Admiral Jose Americo Bubo Na Tchuto, who were believed to have instigated the 2010 and 2012 coups, were later charge for drug trafficking. The report revealed that, “in the four months following the 2012 coup, up to 25 tons of cocaine entered Guinea-Bissau from Latin America.” José Américo Bubo Na Tchuto, was subsequently arrested in a sting operation in April 2013, by the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in attempt to traffic into Guinea-Bissau four tonnes of cocaine, at US $1 million per metric tonne, of which 500 kg were to be trafficked to the US. Nigerian authorities in May, 2015 arrested senator-elect, Buruji Kashamu, who had been wanted by the U.S in a 20-year-old heroin deal. Kashamu was an alleged financier of the People's Democratic Party's (PDP). The party of former President Goodluck Jonathan. President Jonathan and his party lost in the March, 2015 election, but Kashamu was elected a senator in an election opponents claimed he rigged.

2.7 The Rise of Islamic fundamentalism /Extremism in West Africa

The pre-colonial era witnessed the advent of several anti-colonialism movement across various sub-regions in Africa, including West Africa. Though, these struggles for freedom and self-determination by African states were referred to as terrorist acts by the colonising powers, the acts did not amount to terrorism according to the definition of terrorism by the OAU (now AU). In recent times the use of violence to achieve political, social, economic goals has assumed an
alarming proportion big enough to gain the attention of not only the peoples and governments of West African States, but also the international community. Contemporary terrorism in West Africa is largely Islamist in nature. The terrorists use religion as a medium through which to perpetuate their terror. Islamic fundamentalism/terrorism believes that *sharia* (Islamic law), should be the system of governance in Muslim-majority territories, even if it means by use of violence. It sees sharia as the only authentic system of the administration of a state. It is averse to democracy, and secularism. The state is envisaged on the caliphate (leadership), the Ummah (the people) and the sharia.

Islamic Fundamentalism started in the 1700s in Saudi Arabia in the form of Wahhabism (a Salafist Islamic movement which derived its name from its founder, Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahhab). Wahhabism advocates a radical interpretation of Islam. It sees the Islamic religion as sacred and therefore, unadulterated. It also finds Western values and civilization as corrupting. As such, it advocates the return to the fundamental interpretation of Islamic teachings and practices, even with the use of force if necessary. According to them, the moral fibre of society is on a slippery slope of decay. It calls for societal affairs to be guided in its economic, social and political life by sharia including individual personal lives. It is therefore seen as a response to modern social changes.

Islam first came to Africa and for that matter West Africa around the same period it began in the Arabian Peninsula in 615 AD, when Prophet Mohamed (Peace Be Upon Him) out of persecution of his followers requested them to seek refuge in the now Ethiopia and Eritrea. Muslims have continue to live in Africa ever since, co-existing peacefully with other religions and local
traditions. Islam’s growth in the continent was mainly through peaceful means in heterogeneous civilization, until Wahhabihism tried to reduce it into a monolithic religious culture. This ran affront to African culture which is traditionally defined by cultural, ethnic, and linguistic multiplicity. Wahhabihism made a great impact on West Africa following the 1970s spikes in oil prices. With boundless wealth from the booming oil business, Saudi Arabia started a crusade of Wahhabization in Africa.\textsuperscript{57} Funding was channelled through Islamic NGOs in targeted countries in the provision of mosques, Madrassas (Islamic religious schools), training of imams (the person who leads prayers in a mosque) in Wahhabihism, mass printing and circulation of religious literature and scholarship to Muslims to study in some countries in the Arab world.\textsuperscript{58}

Mali became the epicenter of “Quranic studies, as well as the intellectual and spiritual capital of African Islam.”\textsuperscript{59} The Malian type of Islam has historically been peaceful in the 1400s and 1500s until the introduction of Wahhabihism in the 1700s, where religious scriptures were used to justify violent actions.\textsuperscript{60} It was in this regard that terrorist groups such as AQIM, Ansar Dine and MNLA aided by well-armed Tuareg returnees from the Libyan uprising, took advantage of social grievances of the people in Northern Mali to take control of the area.\textsuperscript{61}

Militant groups in West Africa espouse one form of Islam ideology or the other as a ploy to legitimate their barbaric acts or to mobilise followers. For example, as their names suggest, Ansar Dine means “helper of the religion” and Jama'atu Ansarul Musilimina Fi Biladis Sudan means “Vanguard for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa.” Boko Haram means “Western education is forbidden”. The philosophy of Boko Haram is that western education corrupts leaders and only the poor bear the brunt. The group is therefore advocating sharia as a system of
governance, because it is exacting in nature. Some of these groups in the sub-region, particularly, AQIM and Boko Haram have now assumed international characters and exhibit traits previously known with more recognised terrorists groups in other parts of the globe. They are now emboldened and claim responsibility for their attacks and issues video threats. They also openly endorse and give their support to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) among others.

2.7.1 Kidnapping as a Major Strategy for Terrorists in West Africa

Kidnapping has become a major strategy for most of the terrorist networks in West Africa. Most of the kidnappers have targeted Westerners. Kidnapping is largely used as source of funding, a political bargaining chip or for its symbolic significance. Western interests are considered legitimate targets. Terrorist groups have made millions of dollars through kidnapping in exchange for money. The New York Times indicates that from between 2008 to 2013, AQIM collected a total amount of US$91.5 million as ransom from Europeans. Between 2003 and 2012, MUJAO and AQIM have kidnapped westerners including Europeans, Canadians and American for ransoms amounting to over 500 million dollars. The former U.S Treasury Department’s Under-Secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence, David S Cohen, indicates that “Kidnapping for ransom has become today’s most significant source of terrorist financing.”

In the more recent past, the kidnappings in West Africa, especially by the Boko Haram has been stretched to include Nigerians, Cameroonian, Maltians and expatriate workers from other parts of the world irrespective of their religion or status. For instance, the sect kidnapped over 200 school girls from Chibok in Borno State of Nigeria and the kidnapping of the wife of the Vice-Prime Minister of Cameroon in 2014.
2.7.2 The Use of women and child Suicide Bombers in West Africa

In recent times, the tactics of terrorist networks in West Africa have included women and child suicide bombings.\(^{68}\) Though the use of the female gender as suicide bombers is not a new phenomenon in the world, their deployment by Boko Haram became a tactic only in the last two years. The sect’s first known female suicide act was in “June, 2014, when a middle-aged woman detonated a motorcycle near a Nigerian military barracks in Gombe, killing one policeman.”\(^{69}\)

In the past, it was male and adult suicide bombers that were used in terrorists bombing in the West African sub-region. However, now the use of women and children as suicide bombers is on the rise. A data compiled by *The Long War Journal*, indicates that at least 75 young women have carried out suicide attacks for Boko Haram in northwest Nigeria, northern Cameroon, and southwestern Chad since June 2014.\(^{70}\) This is probably because the use of females masks the real intentions of terrorists since the prospects of women being searched by security forces is less due to religious sensitiveness. This is a major concern in West Africa, as governments cannot fathom whether or not some of the kidnapped girls from Chibok Girls’ school have been radicalized to cause havoc in the sub-region. True to this apprehension, a suspected suicide bomber stopped by security forces in northern Cameroon on 25 March 2016 before she could detonate the bomb turnout to be one of the Chibok schoolgirls.\(^{71}\)

2.8 Causes of Terrorism in West Africa
2.8.1 Socio-Economic Factors

Grievances such as marginalisation, inequalities, underdevelopment, poverty and unemployment among others by identifiable groups increase the possibility of coup d’état’s, and conflicts. As such, “conflating terrorism with poor economic conditions seems logical.”\(^{72}\) In fact, a few weeks
after September 11, 2001, the then U.S. Trade Representative, Robert Zoellick advocated the freeing up of international trade to generate wealth for the poor through economic growth as a strategy to fighting terrorism.\textsuperscript{73} Oshita Oshita, agrees "that poverty and unemployment are conditions that reinforce terrorism."\textsuperscript{74} For instance, Boko Haram’s activities started in the form of a rebellion against economic, social and political injustice, “government corruption, abusive security forces and widening regional economic disparity.”\textsuperscript{75}

\subsection*{2.8.2 Failure of States to Provide Adequate Security}

The failure of West African governments, either through inability or unwillingness, to ensure adequate security in their countries create conditions for terrorist to gain traction. Since independence, most parts of northern Mali has largely existed without the presence of central government control. The absence of the central government control over parts of the north of the country created the conditions for militant organisations to spring up in the country.\textsuperscript{76}

\subsection*{2.8.3 Political Instability as a Source of Terrorism}

West Africa has gone through protracted political instability including military coup, post-election violence etc. These conflicts distract security agencies from dealing with matters that could result in terror acts, this sometimes provide a permissive conditions for terrorists to operate. In addition, the scarce resources that could be used to improve human security thereby reducing terrorist’s chances of recruiting foot soldiers, are spent on containing these conflicts. Political instability provides both the space and human resource to terrorism.\textsuperscript{77} For instance, the March 2012 coup in Mali that toppled President Touré, contributed to the capture of the three major cities of Kidal, Timbuktu and Gao by AQIM and other militant groups. The coup created a power vacuum and so
much in-fighting within the ranks of the Malian army that the militant groups seized the opportunity of the chaotic situation to take control of the three regions of the north.\textsuperscript{78}

\subsection{2.8.4 Environment Factors}

Environmental conditions such as floods, drought, and desertification, among others serve as permissive conditions for conflicts in West Africa. The sub-region is plagued with high temperatures, floods, drought and desertification that leads to food insecurity, poverty and forced migration. They have multiplier effects of causing or exacerbating existing tensions and conflicts. The environmental conditions often lead to competition over scarce water resources thereby creating conflicts. The Tuareg rebellion in Mali in 1990 is a prime example.\textsuperscript{79}

\subsection{2.8.5 The Sunni-Shia Divide as a cause of Terrorism}

The Sunni-Shia divide is a cause of terrorism in West Africa. The fissure between the two factions started in the 7th century following the death of Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him) over who to succeed him as the leader of Islam. Whereas the Sunnis went for his closest companion, Abu Bakr, to take over, the Shias went for his closest relative, his son-in-law and nephew Ali. This created a deep rift between the two over the years and has most of the times led to violence among their followers. To radical Sunni Islamists, they equate non-Muslims to the Shia and Muslims who are against their radical approach as infidels (disbelievers) and therefore should be killed.\textsuperscript{80} Boko Haram is a radical Sunni sect. Since March, 2015, it has pledged loyalty to the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL), which is known to have killed more Muslims than Christians in its campaign for an Islamic state in Nigeria.\textsuperscript{81} The most recent Boko Haram attack on Muslims was
on 16 March 2016 at a mosque in Maiduguri, Nigeria, which claimed the lives of 22 worshippers and injured eighteen others.\textsuperscript{82}

2.9 \textbf{West Africa’s Current Policy Responses to the Threats Posed by Drug Trafficking}

ECOWAS has supported several policies in contributing to the international fight against narcotics control. Most West African countries drug enforcement law deal mostly with Marijuana cultivation and use and in recent times, cocaine.\textsuperscript{83} At the 21st Summit of Heads of State and Government in Abuja, Nigeria in October 1998, a declaration was issued entitled ‘Community Flame Ceremony – the Fight Against Drugs.’ Some of the provisions are: “Resolution relating to Prevention and Control of Drug Abuse in West Africa (ECOWAS 1997); Recommendation C/98 on the establishment of a Regional Fund for Financing of Drug Control Activities in West Africa; Decision on the establishment of a Regional Fund for Financing Drug Control Activities (ECOWAS 1998); and Decision on establishing the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (ECOWAS 1999).”\textsuperscript{84} The West African Police Chiefs Committee (WAPCCO), Interpol and other agencies worked together to implement the Abuja declaration on illegal drug trade. They also collaborated in the formation of Organised Crime Units in the various states in West Africa.\textsuperscript{85}

The Authority of Heads of State and government of the ECOWAS on 10 December 1999, lunched the ECOWAS’s Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA) to combat money laundering and the funding of terrorist activities. This was later reviewed in January 2006 to widen its scope and give it more powers. \textsuperscript{86} However, GIABA has not been as successful as expected. ECOWAS Heads of State and Government in Praia, Cape Verde,
in 2008, made a Political Declaration against illicit Drug Trafficking, Abuse and Organised Crimes, 2008-2011.\textsuperscript{87} The Political Declaration covered five (5) main areas: “a) mobilizing ECOWAS political leadership and addressing the need for adequate national budget allocation by ECOWAS member states for preventing and combating illicit drug trafficking, related organized crime and drug abuse; b) effective law enforcement and national/regional cooperation against the high-level increase in illicit drug trafficking and organized crime; c) developing and strengthening appropriate and adequate legal frameworks for effective criminal justice; d) confronting emerging threats of increased drug abuse and associated health and security problems; and e) creating valid and reliable data to assess the magnitude of the drug trafficking and abuse problems affecting the region on a sustainable basis.”\textsuperscript{88}

Again, as part of efforts to operationalize the Political Declaration, UNODC, DPKO, DPA, INTERPOL, UNOWA, and ECOWAS assisted in the formation of the West Africa Coast Initiative (WACI), a programme meant to resource and train law enforcement officers in certain states in the sub-region. The main phase of the Political Declaration was to set up pilot Transnational Crime Units (TCUs) in four (4) countries being Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The impact of the political declaration has however been low, due to lack of funds and political will, thus making little progress.\textsuperscript{89} As such, at the 42nd Ordinary session of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d’Ivoire in February 2013, the political declaration was made to continue.\textsuperscript{90}

Finally, ECOWAS member states have also individually made bilateral arrangements with the US and the UK in various areas. Ghana for instance has agreements with the US in the areas of capacity
building and legislations on extradition.\textsuperscript{91} France has 3,500 French troops stationed in Burkina Faso as part of Operation Barkhane - France's anti-terrorism team in the Sahel region.\textsuperscript{92}

2.10 West Africa’s Counter-Terrorism Policies

Article 3 of the ECOWAS Protocol on Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution and Security cited combating of terrorism as one of its objectives.\textsuperscript{93} The proposed formation of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF), and the freeze on the importation and exportation of SALW in 1998 are part of its counter-terrorism efforts. ECOWAS in 1999, developed a sub-regional strategy to fight money laundering and terrorists’ funding through the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering (GIABA). GIABA provides “a common framework for combating money laundering and the financing of terrorist activities.”\textsuperscript{94} In January 2008, ECOWAS implemented a Conflict Prevention Framework to support member states’ responses to the interconnected problems of cross-border crime, proliferation of SALW among others.\textsuperscript{95}

The West African Police Chiefs Committee (WAPCCO) supports information sharing between member states on potential extremist and other nefarious activities. WAPCCO collaborates with the West African Interpol office in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire, to develop and implement counter-terrorism-related programmes. These two bodies have facilitated joint police operations to combat terrorism financing within the sub-region.\textsuperscript{96} There is also the U.S. sponsored Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative (TSCTI), with partner states including Algeria, Chad, Mali, Mauritania Morocco, Nigeria, Tunisia, Senegal, Niger, Nigeria and Ghana.\textsuperscript{97} The TSCTI trains forces in these countries to fight terrorism in their respective “countries and foster better information sharing and operational planning between regional states.”\textsuperscript{98} The Sahelian and Saharan belts of West Africa
also have anti-terrorism agreement with the US and its allies, as part of the US’s war on terror.\textsuperscript{99} Other organisations and agencies that West Africa countries are partnering with in their fight against terrorism include, the UN Security Council’s Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), UNODC, the AU, and the European Union (EU). These organisations and countries have “provided technical and other counter terrorism capacity-building assistance to a number of countries in the sub-region.”\textsuperscript{100}

ECOWAS also has a Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It was inspired by the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Deliberations on the counter-terrorism strategy started in 2009, which included national, regional and international experts, civil society and media organizations.\textsuperscript{101} In February, 2013, Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS at its 42nd ordinary session in Yamoussoukro, Cote d’Ivoire, made a Political Declaration to approve the Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Strategy also included “ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Coordination Unit; ECOWAS Arrest Warrant; ECOWAS Black List of Terrorist and Criminal Networks and ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Training Manual.”\textsuperscript{102}

The primary objective of the Strategy is the prevention and eradication of terrorism and other criminal acts in the sub-region with a view to providing favourable environment for economic growth and development and to guarantee the wellbeing of citizens of ECOWAS member states.\textsuperscript{103} The Declaration contained wide-ranging policy areas including rules that are common to all member countries and found in relevant domestic and international legal protocols. For example, ECOWAS members unequivocally condemn terrorism and other criminal acts namely incitement, and terrorism funding etc. It also came to the decision “that a terrorist attack on one state is an
attack on all member states.” It has been observed that maintaining peacekeeping missions are costly, as seen in African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Thus, the top most priority of the counter-terrorism strategy is prevention.

The Strategy is a three-pronged approach: “prevent, pursue and reconstruct.” The strategy considers the first approach (prevent) as the most important as mentioned earlier. It obliges member countries to ratify and successfully implement the relevant legal protocols. It also required the removal of permissive conditions that aid the propagation of terrorism and strengthen early warning systems. Others are averting radicalisation, promoting good governance and democratic tenets. The second approach (pursue) is intended to help member countries to put in place mechanisms to react to terrorist acts in real time. It entails the capacity building efforts in terms of training, equipment and a strong criminal justice system. The third approach (reconstruct) is based on the management of the aftermath of a terrorist attack such as rebuilding and healing the social wounds caused by terrorist attacks. Not much however has been done on the ECOWAS counter-terrorism strategy in terms of implementation since it was approved 3 years ago, due to the lack of political will on the part of member states to domesticate the strategies. There is also the problem of funds. ECOWAS is currently cash strapped. Donor funding is also not forthcoming because of donor fatigue as a result the current migrant crisis in Europe. Thus, whilst brilliant ideas towards curbing the drug–terrorism menace have been put up, they remain ideas due to challenges in their implementation.
2.11 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the dynamics of the threat of Drug trafficking and Terrorism to the West African sub-region. The link between Drug trafficking and Terrorism come in many forms. “Drug traffickers benefit from the terrorists’ military skills, weaponry supply and access to clandestine organizations. Terrorists gain a source of revenue and expertise in illicit transfer and laundering of proceeds from illicit transactions.”\textsuperscript{109} “Both groups use corrupt officials whose services provide mutual benefits such as access to fraudulent documents, including passports and customs papers.”\textsuperscript{110} The methods employed by drug barons for hiding proceeds of drugs are akin to those terrorist organisations use to fund their operations. These involve exploiting the poorly regulated banking structures in West Africa to do so.\textsuperscript{111} By this relationship, Drug traffickers get safe passages through territories in the sub-region controlled by West African-based terrorist organisations to further their activities.\textsuperscript{112} In all this, what is evident is that West Africa lack the capacity to stem these crime tide making the sub-region more attractive to organised criminals as a transit hub of TOCs. This poses grave danger to the security and development of West Africa.
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CHAPTER THREE

OVERVIEW OF DRUG TRAFFICKING AND TERRORISM IN MALI

3.0 Introduction

This chapter analyses the dynamics of the drug trade and terrorism as transnational security threats in Mali. It lays particular emphasis on how drug trafficking supports terrorism in Mali and vice versa. It looks at the implications for Mali and for that matter the transnational threat it poses to the sub-region, the challenges to combating the two scourges, and the policy responses of the Malian government to Drug trafficking and Terrorism.

3.1 Brief Profile of Mali

Mali is a landlocked state. It “is bordered by Algeria to the north, Niger to the east, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire to the south, Guinea to the south-west, and Senegal and Mauritania to the west.”¹

It has a population of 16,455,903 (July 2014 est.), of which Muslims account for 90.0%, Christians 1.0%, and traditionalists 9%.² Mali is divided into one capital district (Bamako) and eight regions. The regions are: Gao, Kayes, Kidal, Koulikoro, Mopti, Segou, Sikasso, and Timbuktu. The northern regions of Gao, Kidal and Timbuktu make up 70% of Mali’s land area with majority of the land in the Sahara Desert but home to only 10% of the population.³ Increases in Mali’s population growth rate coupled with desertification and drought have often resulted in food insecurity, poverty, and instability. Mali is ranked 179th out of 188 countries on the United Nations Human Development Index for 2015. It is one of the 23 poorest countries across the globe.⁴ Poverty is more widespread in the north of the country than in the south as about 90% of the people living in the north are poor. The delivery of services in Mali’s large and sparsely populated territory is a problem and affects its geographic equity, social cohesion and governance.⁵ It has one of the
lowest literacy rates at 26.2%.\textsuperscript{6} Mali is also bedevilled with socio-economic and political problems such as economic and political underdevelopment, ethnic tensions, low agricultural production, youth unemployment, food insecurity, weak territorial administration and deep rooted corruption, among others.\textsuperscript{7} Mali’s military forces are underpaid, poorly equipped, and in need of restructuring.\textsuperscript{8}

3.2 The State and Dynamics of Drug Trafficking in Mali

Narcotics, particularly cocaine, are smuggled from Latin America countries such as Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador and Panama via Cape Verde and the Canary Islands to West African states such as “Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.”\textsuperscript{9} These countries serve as conduit for trafficking drugs to Spain for onward distribution to the rest of Europe.\textsuperscript{10} This is depicted in the diagram below;

![Diagram showing drug trafficking routes from Latin America to Europe through West Africa](image)


Mali is one country that has increasingly became notorious as a transit hub for drugs through “West Africa to Europe in the Mid-2000s.”\textsuperscript{11} It is now also considered as an end state of drugs.\textsuperscript{12} Drug
syndicates in Latin America find northern Mali as a perfect launch pad for their activities because of its position halfway between South America and Europe and also due to the fact that it has been mostly left uncontrolled by Bamako.\textsuperscript{13} North-eastern Malian town of Gao is located on the River Niger and had been one of the preferred transit areas for Latino drug cartels. In fact, it is the same place the supposed ‘Air Cocaine’ issue happened in 2009, where a burnt Boeing 727 plane alleged to be carrying up to 11 tons of cocaine from Venezuela was discovered.\textsuperscript{14} The said plane was believed to have failed to take off after landing to discharge its contents as a result of which it was burnt by the owners. An anonymous French specialist in the area claims highly placed state officials with links to the former Mali President, Amadou Toumani Touré, were complicit.\textsuperscript{15} Again, Latino drug traffickers are exploiting the expertise of the people of the Sahel/Sahara and their knowledge of smuggling routes to conduct their drug shipment operations.\textsuperscript{16} According to Andy Morgan, a British-based Sahara expert, “in northern Mali, everything that is eaten comes from Algeria and comes illegally.”\textsuperscript{17} “Smuggling is in people's blood, it is not deemed a nefarious activity, and most of the region's powerful people are involved.”\textsuperscript{18} The UNODC’s Regional Representative for West and Central Africa, Pierre Lapaque told The Sunday Telegraph in 2013 that "Northern Mali is the Wild West. There is absolutely no control.”\textsuperscript{19}

In October 2007, twenty-two human mules on flights from Bamako were detained at Amsterdam International Airport. Mali’s customs in 2007 also confiscated 116kg and 35kg of cocaine at “Kouremale, near the Guinea border, in two separate incidents. Between 2006 and 2008, 254kg of cocaine were seized in Europe from flights coming from Mali.”\textsuperscript{20} Reuters on 24 March 2011 reported the arrest of four (4) people in connection with the ‘Air Cocaine’ case.\textsuperscript{21} But the four (4) were later set free without any charges allegedly on the orders of President Amadou Toumani
On 6 February 2010, the Algeria Watch reported of the delivery of four (4) tons of cocaine by an aircraft to Kayes located in western Mali along the Senegal River. According to the report, the consignment was received by some figureheads of the area. The report further claimed that three days after the first delivery, a similar consignment was delivered to the same leaders “in Ain In Esseri, southeast of Tinzaouatin near the Niger border”. An Algerian court in September 2011 requested Mali parliament to waive the immunity of one of its Members from the north of Mali. This was to allow investigations into allegations that the Member of Parliament was a member of a drug trafficking organisation that was responsible for the distribution of 500kg of Marijuana in Algeria among other countries.

3.3 The State and dynamics of Terrorism in Mali

Mali has seen several insurgencies by traditionally nomadic Tuaregs since 1916. The Tuaregs have been belligerent against the central government of Mali for an independence state in the northern part of Mali, known as Azawad, in what they claim was as a result of the State of Mali’s neglect of the area. The internal social grievance included political and economic underdevelopment, lack of social amenities, youth unemployment, among others. The latest rebellion started in January to April 2012, led by the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). The MNLA is made up of ex-insurgents and heavily armed Tuareg returnees from the Libya crisis who were part of Gaddafi army. This caused junior officers of the Malian Army to overthrow President Amadou Toumani Toure on 22 March 2012, out of frustration for his poor handling of the crisis. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) initiated mediation and their efforts brought about a return to civilian rule in April 2012 with Dioncounda Traore as interim President. The MNLA together with islamist groups such as Ansar Dine and Mujao seized the opportunity
created by the coup chaos to expel the Malian military from Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu of the country. Following the seizure of Douentza on 5 April 2012, the MNLA ceased hostilities and “proclaimed Azawad's independence from Mali.”

However, subsequent to the ending of clashes with the Malian military, MNLA, a secessionist group could not come to terms with Islamist groups such as Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) and Ansar Dine on the vision for the state of Azawad. In June, 2012 the Islamists started to wage a battle with the MNLA until they pushed the MNLA out of all the key towns in the north. A French-led international military intervention force dubbed “Operation SERVAL” together with UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) retook most of the north by the end of February 2013. This paved the way for a democratic presidential elections to be held in July, 2013 and a second round in August, 2013, which elected Ibrahim Boubacar Keita as president. “The choice of northern Mali as a safe haven for al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) is not a coincidence.” Stephen Ellis is of the view that the sub-region offers a favourable conditions that makes it possible for the illicit drug business to thrive because “smuggling is widely tolerated, law enforcement is fitful and inefficient, and politicians are easily bribed or even involved in the drug trade themselves. A pliable sovereign state is the ideal cover for the drug trafficker.” Islamic militants took advantage of the prevailing conditions in Northern Mali such as weak administrative control in most parts, poverty, and underdevelopment. Others are marginalisation, youth unemployment, weak security infrastructure and corruption. Through the provision of social services such clinics, water, moderately priced food items, transportation among other basic services, the militants were able to win the support and loyalty of the locals. These basic commodities under normal circumstances should be provided for by the Malian
government. The group controlled a chunk of the desert - more than 8.5 million square km - which has no central government control and presented favourable grounds for training of Jihadists. American officials claim that “Mali’s ten months as a de facto Islamist state allowed local militants to operate training camps where extremists from across Africa come to train alongside one another and share ideas for building stronger explosives.” At present, the Islamist groups operating in Northern Mali are: AQIM, MNLA, MUJAO, Al-Mourabitoun (The Sentinels) Signed-in-Blood Battalion, Ansar Dine and Islamic Movement for Azawad (IMA).

3.4 Collusion between Narcotic Traffickers and Terrorists/Islamist Militants

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon told the UN Security Council on 12 February 2012 that in the wake of the Libya crisis, AQIM has:

> “Begun to form alliances with drug traffickers and other criminal syndicates… Such alliances have the potential to further destabilise the region and reverse hard-won democratic and peace-building achievements ... We have seen this toxic brew in other regions in Africa... The warnings are there; the trends are clear.”

There have been increasing reports of a cooperation and collaboration between drug trafficking and terrorism in the sub-region. Terrorist networks in West Africa, like their counterparts in elsewhere, have funded themselves through proceeds of drug trafficking. “The two are bedfellows.” The collusion is made easier because the two share similar operational tools. “Migrant smuggling, document fraud, arms trafficking, auto theft, smuggling of contraband, and illegal financial transactions are tools for terrorists as well as narcotics traffickers.” According to Kwesi Aning, “the link between AQIM and drug traffickers in West Africa is becoming clearer.” “Trafficking drugs remains the most common and lucrative criminal acts that is uniting organized criminals with terrorists through the establishment of opportunistic partnerships”.

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Making it possible for the emergence of buzzwords like “narco-terror, narco-guerillas and narco-fundamentalists.” Though, the drug trade is prohibited under Islamic law, it is well documented that extremist groups such as Lebanon’s Hezbollah and Afghanistan’s Taliban have been known to fund their activities through drug proceeds. A similar trend has manifested in Mali, where militants have forged ties with the region’s local drug lords in order to fund their operations.

For instance, the Madrid terrorist bombing of 2004 is alleged to have been funded by drug proceeds from the West African sub-region. Also, investigations into the ‘Air Cocaine’ case in 2009, discussed earlier, revealed the sophistication and complexity of the diverse players involved in drug business in the sub-region. A report by Cheikh Ba published on 20 March 2013 alleged that former President Toure used to personally intercede for the release of drug lords. Cheikh Ba claimed that one of the people who were arrested in relation to the ‘Air Cocaine’ incident was freed at the instance of the President because the said person was to help the President in raising militias to stop the insurgency of the MNLA rebels. “However he was reported to have joined MUJAO Islamists instead, who are known to be directly involved in drug smuggling.” Again, a WikiLeaks cable of 31 August 2007 by US Ambassador Terrence McCulley, indicates that the late Major Ould Bou Lamana, a high ranking intelligence agent of the Malian General Directorate of State Security (DGSE), was a double agent who gave intelligence to criminal gangs and terrorists networks. He is believed to have negotiated the release of a confiscated cocaine consignment to a Tuareg dealer for $450,000, including an ‘advance tax for future trips.’ In 2010, Mauritanian troops seized 9.5 tons of Indian-made hashish, weapons and ammunition from a convoy protected by Islamist militants in Lemzarrab, near the Malian border.
In November 2012, three al-Qaeda members of Malian nationality were jailed in New York for planning to traffic cocaine for an FBI officer who posed as a South American drug dealer. The three later appealed that they made up their al-Qaeda contacts to impress their client, however, the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) concluded that the incident showed a "direct link between terrorist organizations and international drug trafficking." The UK’s *Sunday Mirror* in April, 2013 alleged that AQIM realised £168m from the cocaine trade that year. The Norwegian Peace building Resource Centre alleged that during the 2012 takeover of Tessalit in the Kidal region by Islamist insurgents, not less than three small planes offloaded cocaine in that area, under the supervision of the Jihadist occupiers. A Malian newspaper and website revealed that in mid-April 2012, a cargo aircraft offloaded armaments and narcotics in Gao, akin to the “Air Cocaine” incident. This shipment was supervised by the men of Iyad ag Ghaly, the leader of Ansar Dine.

Actors that facilitate the cooperation and collaboration between drug traffickers and terrorists in Mali ranges from state officials, politicians, village/community leaders, jihadist, drug traffickers, airport officials, security and intelligence officers. “Given the financial and/or political muscle that comes with drug trafficking and terrorism, in the world and Mali in particular, everybody (from the President to the Reverend Minister/Imam) is a suspect” Some politicians are also believed to use terrorism to discredit their opponents.

3.5 Nature and Form of Cooperation and Collaboration between Drug Traffickers and Terrorist Networks

“Links between terrorist organizations and drug traffickers take many forms, ranging from facilitation -- protection, transportation, and taxation -- to direct trafficking by the terrorist organization itself in order to finance its activities” Western and Malian defence officials say
AQIM and MUJAO militants operate a protection syndicate, providing smugglers safe passage for their product through the north for a fee of up to 15% of the total value of the drugs.\(^{58}\) The amount requested from traffickers to allow their convoy to pass is believed to be around $50,000.\(^{59}\) This was confirmed by the U.S. State Department, which indicates that the extremists "provide protection and permissions for traffickers moving product through areas they control" for a fee.\(^{60}\) According to Col. Didier Dacko, a top Malian military commander in northern Mali, "They get some money from kidnapping Westerners, but nothing like what they get from the drugs….it's their lifeblood."\(^{61}\) Drug trafficking operations are the financial backbone of Islamist militants in Mali.\(^{62}\) "Their total territorial and economic control of the Sahel/Sahara region is dwarfing the impact of Western efforts, despite dozens of French bombing raids and the deployment of close to 10,000 UN peacekeepers in Mali."\(^{63}\) According to former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo in 2013, northern Mali is "a den of drug trafficking, extremism, and criminality."\(^{64}\)

### 3.6 Threats Posed by the Linkages between Drug Trafficking and Terrorism

The cooperation and collaboration between drug traffickers and terrorists in Mali poses danger not only to that country but also as a real transnational security threat to West Africa. Drug traffickers are richer than most states in West Africa, which has the potential to cause destabilization in the sub-region.\(^{65}\) According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, $500m of cocaine proceeds was ‘washed’ in West Africa in 2012. Meanwhile, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger Mauritania and Guinea Bissau spent only $149m, $146m, $69.8m, $120m, and $16.6m, respectively, on their military in the same year.\(^{66}\) The said $500m is even more than the $455.5m promised the FISMA by donors in 2012.\(^{67}\) It is therefore safe to infer that drug money is fuelling insecurity in West Africa and impeding its peaceful resolution.\(^{68}\)
Mali’s Foreign Minister, Abdoulaye Diop on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in October 2015, told reporters that drug trafficking funds the terrorist organisations in Mali and fuels the conflict in the country. A destabilised Mali poses transnational security problems for the whole region, as the instability will be exploited to perpetrate other illicit activities across the region’s porous borders and ungovernable spaces. The UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative for West Africa, Said Djinnit, told the Security Council on 25 January 2013 that “as developments unfold in Mali, the risks for infiltration and destabilization are real in some of the countries bordering Mali.” Examples are the attacks at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako, Mali in November, 2015, which killed 21 people. The Splendid Hotel attack in Burkina Faso in January, 2016, which killed 29 people. The Grand-Bassam beach resort attack in Cote D’ivoire in March, 2016, which claimed 16 lives and injured 33 others. These were venues frequented by Westerners and thus was suspected to be a retaliatory attack on the West by AQIM and its affiliates such as Al-Mourabitoun, for the West’s operations in Mali. Between January, 1990 and June, 2015, Mali experienced 276 terrorist attacks, which claimed 879 lives. Nearly one-third of attacks targeted UN workers, 6% targeted French interests, and 2% targeted other nationals. Three terrorist organizations were responsible for nearly three-quarters (72%) of all the attacks: MUJAO; 38%, AQIM; 17%, and MNLA; 17%. The Islamist occupiers of northern Mali also destroyed the country’s two declared World Heritage sites, Timbuktu and the Tomb of Askia, in that part of the country. According to the extremist groups, the maintenance of these sites which houses the 333 Sufi Saints buried in sixteen mausoleums, three ancient mosques and thousands of sacred manuscripts, is an “idolatrous” act. The resultant insecurity dovetailed into an adverse impact on the Tourism industry in Mali and the
West African sub-region at large. European visitors to Mali for tourism purposes have reduced significantly due to acts of terrorism and general instability. The number of European tourists to Mali has fallen from 71,000 in 2014 to 36,000 in 2015, following terrorists’ attacks on a hotel in Sévaré and at the Radisson Blu hotel in Bamako in August and November, 2015, respectively. According to Moussa Dembélé of the Mali’s National Tourism Bureau, the tourism sector earned a total revenue of 50 billion CFA francs (about € 76.2 million) in 2014 and an estimated earnings of about 40 billion CFA francs (about € 60.96 million) in 2015.79

Northern Mali has witnessed several drug-related conflicts in recent times.80 “Clashes related to cocaine smuggling played out throughout 2007-2008.”81 Some of the conflicts seems to have emanated from competitions among the diverse terrorists organisations engaged in the drug business.82 According to Cockayne, “the local impact of trafficking in the region may include crime and violence perpetrated by users and armed gangs, including petty crime, violence against women and children, and ‘drug money-fuelled’ violence.”83 Again, countries with vast uncontrolled territories and flash points, have recently become safe havens for drug traffickers and terrorists. The criminal groups tend to fill the gap left by central government to provide social services further entrenching themselves in those areas.84 Recent activities of AQIM and others militant groups in the north of Mali is a testament to the above.85

The Malian crisis disrupted schooling, thus impacting negatively on education, which puts the future of the country in jeopardy86 Not only did the political crisis in Mali displaced over 700,000 students and teachers, it also destroyed or closed down at least 115 schools.87 The crisis has also stalled development in the form of Foreign Direct Investments in Mali and for that matter West
Africa. Resources have been stretched thin in fighting the conflict to the detriment of developmental projects. The activities of drug traffickers and terrorists also undermined democratic institutions and governance systems. “Smuggling is often accomplished not by stealth, but by corruption. The profits gained in some trafficking flows are sufficient to buy cooperation from high levels of government […] thus undermining governance.” Cockayne and Williams portend that drug money could be used to seek political or military power in the sub-region. It is reported that prior to the 22 March 2012 coup, top government officials in Mali, including the former President Amadou Toumani Touré were beneficiaries of the drug business. The drug trade funded elections in that country and this was one of the reasons that accounted for the overthrow of the government. This could also lead to state capture which will pose transnational security threat for Mali and for that matter the sub-region. “State capture occurs when the ruling elite and/or powerful businessmen manipulate policy formation and influence the emerging rules of the game (including laws and economic regulations) to their own advantage.”

The youth of West African states get hooked on the drugs and to feed the addiction they resort to all forms of crime such as petty crime and armed robbery. According to former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan “West Africa initially was seen as a transit point, but no country remains a transit point for long. …..the population begins to use it.” The UNODC reported in 2012 that there were perhaps 2.3 million cocaine users in West and Central Africa. Though, Mali does have accurate records regarding narcotics use in the country, unconfirmed sources indicates the youth are increasingly using narcotic substances, which can cause substantial public health challenges for the state and the region at large.
Lastly, the exporting and laundering of the illicit money from the drug trade destroys several legitimate small businesses and destabilises markets. The flow of such huge financial resources into various West African countries creates a somewhat ‘fake’ economic boom. According to Cockayne and Williams, West Africa’s economies are increasingly anchored on the proceeds of the illicit drug trade and therefore are heading to what they described as “junky economics.” It is important to mention however that, the injection of drug money into the Malian economy by the transnational criminals, could not only lead to economic growth and development as well as creating jobs for the youth of Mali but also provide social services particularly to the people of northern Mali, where central government is non-existent.

3.7 Current Policy Responses to Drug Trafficking in Mali

Mali’s laws relating to the drug trade were first enacted in June 1973 when the Malian government issued Order No. 173 establishing a special procedure for drug-related criminal acts and robbery. In July 1981, the government established a national commission against drug use and trafficking. In September 1983, Mali passed Law 83/14 AN-RM for the suppression of offenses related to toxic substances and drugs, which comprehensively included drug use, trafficking, and operations. In 1995, Mali ratified both the 1961 UN Convention on Narcotic Drugs, becoming one of the first ECOWAS member states in to do so. It also adopted the 1988 UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

In July 2001, Mali passed Law No. 01-078 imposing stiffer penalties on the misuse of narcotic and precursor drugs, and in December 2009, established the Inter-Ministerial Drug Coordinating Committee to fight against drug use and trafficking. Finally, in April 2010, via Decree 10-
2012/P-RM, Mali created a Central Narcotics Office, l’Office Central des Stupéfiants (OCS), to enforce drug laws.\textsuperscript{105} In September 2013 Mali’s parliament passed Decree No. 2013-012 to bolster the OCS with further powers.\textsuperscript{106} The impact of these laws is negligible given the fact that the drug trade is not going down.\textsuperscript{107} This is probably because of the lack of political will, weak state institutions, ill-trained officers, corruption among others.

### 3.8 Current Policy Responses to Terrorism in Mali

Malian Armed Forces and Air Force are the primary bodies which among others are charged with the protection of Mali against any threats of terrorism. The General Directorate of State Security under the Ministry of Security is mandated to investigate and detain persons suspected of terrorist acts.\textsuperscript{108} In May 2012, the country unveiled an updated machine-readable passport linked to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). “The new passport contain several security features, which include micro printing, ultraviolet features, and a full-colour digital photo.”\textsuperscript{109} In May 2013, the National Assembly passed a legislation, which created a judicial unit to combat terrorism and trans-border crime. The unit has the powers to seize the properties of people alleged to have engaged in a terrorist act.\textsuperscript{110} In May, 2014, Mali also introduce “Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System at its international airport for passenger screening and biometric collection.”\textsuperscript{111} Mali is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA).

Mali is an active member of several sub-regional and international organisations such as ECOWAS, the AU and the UN. It is a member of the Trans-Sahara Counter-terrorism Partnership and participated in the Global Counterterrorism Forum.\textsuperscript{112} The Malian military together with
Operation Serval, Operation Baobab and Operation Barkhane have been engage in the fight against Islamist extremists in Mali’s north. The U.S State Department’s Anti-terrorism Assistance program since 2014 has been providing crisis management seminar for senior Malian officers engaged in planning reactions to extremist attacks. Mali is a member of the United States President’s Security Governance Initiative (SGI) announced at the U.S.-Africa Leaders’ Summit in August, 2014. The SGI has six countries and “offers a comprehensive approach to improving security sector governance and capacity to address threats.”

The country also has a National Reconciliation Programme aimed at delegitimising extremist ideas and promoting moderate Islam and social cohesion between communities to address rising radicalism. The Malian government has also accelerated development programmes in the country’s north in a bid to narrow the development gap between the South and the North. Mali has also offered itself as a pilot country for the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, a public-private funding programme developed to avert extremism. Though, these arrangements are laudable, they have not achieved much in reality, because the root causes of the Mali crisis still exist.

3.9 Challenges in Combating the Threats Posed by Drug Trafficking and Terrorism

The root causes of the drug business and terrorism in Mali such as unemployment, poverty, bad governance, social and political marginalisation etc. are yet to be resolved. Thus posing a challenge to combating drug trafficking and terrorism in the country.
A lack of political will on the part of the Malian authorities is also a challenge in combating the menace of drug trafficking and terrorism in the country. Not much has been done to indicate the fervour of the government of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (IBK) in combating TOCs. This however is not surprising, because despite the dreadful impact of terrorism and drug trafficking in Mali, the need to counter them does not feature much in the political discourse of the country. In fact, no political party in Mali made combatting TOCs a part of their campaign agenda in the 2013 elections.

Furthermore, weak state institutions and ill-trained officers are a challenge. The Intelligence and Security agencies in Mali are not well-equipped or well-trained to keep pace with terrorist and drug traffickers. This makes it possible for criminals who are mostly well informed because of their financial clout to stay a step ahead of security agencies.

Also, most business dealings in Mali are cash-based and through mobile money transfers, making it difficult to “monitor and regulate money laundering activities and other remittance services.” This makes the management of terrorism in the sub-region difficult.

There is also a “deeply embedded culture of corruption and impunity in Mali, resulting from a decade of mismanagement, personalized politics, and crass opportunism.” Moneys meant for the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism or to finance programmes meant to solve the root causes of these menace are usually diverted. For instance, a government audit in Mali in 2009 revealed that about $224 million of government money allocated to government agencies for rural
development, water and food security, and other public sector expenditures were either misused or embezzled.\textsuperscript{126}

Confidential counter narcotics/terrorisms strategies also run the risk of being infiltrated by politicians and state officials involved in these activities.\textsuperscript{127} The late Major Ould Bou Lamana, of the Malian General Directorate of State Security (DGSE), a state agent was alleged to be leaking state secrets to criminal gangs and terrorists networks.\textsuperscript{128}

There is also the challenge of donor fatigue as a result of the migrant crisis in Europe. This has made it difficult if not impossible to secure funds from Europe to support the fight against the narcotic business and terrorism in Mali.\textsuperscript{129}

The last but not the least challenge to countering drug trafficking and terrorism in Mali is the West obsession with its ‘war on terror’ to the neglect of drug trafficking in that country. This is a major challenge to the fight against the two, because they are interlinked.\textsuperscript{130}
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CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter captures the summary of all the major findings of this work, draws conclusions and proffers some recommendations for both academic and practical purposes.

4.1 Summary of Findings

The summary of the main findings of the study are as follows:

- Mali has permissive conditions that makes the West African sub-region susceptible to the prevalent of transnational security threats such as drug trafficking and terrorism. Some of these conditions are youth unemployment, poverty, porous borders, weak security structures, economic and political marginalization, general disillusionment among the population and corruption.

- Terrorists’ networks are in concert with drug traffickers in Mali. The nature of the cooperation and collaboration cannot be overestimated.

- That there is also a link between drug trafficking and terrorism and other forms of TOCs such as the trafficking of SALWs, Maritime Piracy, Human trafficking etc.

- Drug trafficking cartels and terrorist organisations have infiltrated the ranks of the political class and state officials in Mali. Some of the members of the various arms of government are recruited to shield or facilitate the activities of drug traffickers and terrorist through bribery and corruption, and sometimes through threat of violence.
• Other Actors who facilitate the cooperation and collaboration between drug trafficking cartels and terrorists organizations in Mali are village/community leaders, airport officials and security and intelligence officers.

• The links between terrorists’ networks and drug cartels in Mali take various forms and nature from protection through transportation to taxation. There is also the personal engagement of terrorist networks in the drug business.

• Though the terrorist groups operating in Mali have since March, 2013 been deposed from the north of the country, there still remain some remnants of the insurgents that pose significant transnational security threat not only to Mali but for the rest of the sub region. This is seen in the attacks of Grand Bassam resort beach in Cote d’ivoire and the Splendid Hotel in Burkina Faso.

• Transnational security threats such as drug trafficking and terrorism impact adversely not only on Mali but also the sub-region because of their rippling effect. They threaten the peace, stability and human security of countries, corrupt systems through bribery or violence which undermine democratic institutions, undermine economies and destabilise markets, violates human rights, undermine political, social, cultural and civil development of societies among others.

• Drug trafficking also has a positive impact on the economy of Mali and for that matter the sub-region. The injection of drug proceeds into the economy of Mali will create an economic boom which leads to economic growth and development, create jobs for the teaming youth of the country as well as provide social services for the residents of northern Mali, particularly in areas where central government is non-existent. These benefits can trickle down into the sub-regional economy.
Mali has adopted many policy responses to the threat posed by drug trafficking and terrorism. It is also a member of several sub-regional, regional and global institutions that have come together to work towards the prevention and possible eradication of these threats as elaborately discussed in the preceding chapter. In spite of the measures put in place, there are some challenges that militate against these measures. These include the lack of political will/leadership, weak institutional capacity (training and equipment), lack of funds, corruption, over-concentration of efforts on the “war on terror” to the neglect of drug trafficking, etc.

4.2 Conclusion

Transnational security threat such as drug trafficking and terrorism have a mutually beneficial relationship. This relationship is served by West Africa’s porous borders, weak security structures, instability and civil wars, corruption, poverty and high rate of unemployment among others. These conditions have provided an enabling environment for the operations or activities of drug traffickers and terrorist organisations to gain a foothold in Mali thus posing a real transnational security threat not only to that country but the sub-region as a whole. Some of these threats include the destruction of lives through drug use or terrorists’ violence, destabilisation of economies and markets through money laundering, hinders economic growth and development, undermines democratic institutions through corruption, etc. Though Mali and for that matter ECOWAS and its member states have put in place policy responses to these menace, not much has been achieved.

4.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:
• Mali government needs to put in place sound economic and social policies to create jobs to address permissive conditions such as poverty, youth unemployment as well as economic and political marginalization. This is likely to lessen disillusionment and the possibility of the recruitment of disaffected youth as being experienced in northern Mali.

• Mali government should embark on a targeted and accelerated development of the North to bridge the developmental gap between the south and the north to pacify the angry and bitter people of the north who felt socially marginalised.

• The Mali government needs to adopt political reforms which deemphasizes the ‘winner takes all doctrine’ and encourage good governance and political inclusion. This will tend to appease those who feels politically marginalised.

• Agencies responsible for counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics in Mali such as the OSC, Mali Army, Mali Air force, Mali Security and intelligence agencies, the judiciary, and the Mali customs should be well equipped and resourced in the form of logistics and funding by the government. States should employ the use of advanced technology such as surveillance, state of the art transportation, and communications systems to improve the effectiveness of their responses. The agencies should also be given the free-hand and empowered to operate without any political interference. To effectively fight the threats of both drug trafficking and terrorism.
Mali should strengthen its partnership with its development partners, neighbours and international counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics agencies to combat the menace. The threats posed by transnational security threats such as terrorism and drug trafficking are more encompassing than individual ECOWAS member states can manage. Therefore to effectively combat them, sub-regional states require a collective, multi-faceted and citizen-centred approaches.¹

West African states need to harmonize their currently unaligned counterterrorism and counter narcotic strategies. Particularly, the right of pursuit. ECOWAS should design a regional policy on the right of pursuit to undermine the ability of terrorists and drug traffickers in taking advantage of common borders to further their activities. Joint border patrols can also disrupt the cross-border maneuvers of transnational criminals such as drug traffickers and terrorists.²

The Malian government and all stakeholders should intensify educative and sensitization programmes to sensitise people on the impact of drug trafficking and terrorism on a state and their related crimes and how such activities should be reported. This will help reduce the incidences of terrorist attacks if not avert them.

Inculcate in people (may be through the school curricula) the spirit of patriotism and the importance of putting national interest before personal interest.
• Law enforcement officials should be well remunerated against the lure of immense financial enticement from transnational organized criminals. This will reduce corruption and help in the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism.

• There is the need for stiffer punishment and draconian legal framework for perpetrators of these crimes to make them unattractive.

• There is the need for greater political will/leadership on the part of sub-regional leaders in the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism.

• The US war on terror in the Sahel/Sahara region should include war on drugs too, because the two are intertwined and the fight against one to the neglect of the other will fail in the fight against both
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