CDD-GHANA

ENHANCING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN CROSS BORDER SECURITY IN GHANA

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The Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) is an independent, non-governmental and non-profit research and advocacy institute dedicated to the promotion of democracy, good governance and economic openness in Ghana and throughout Africa. CDD-Ghana's research outputs and other services are available to and used by governmental and non-governmental agencies, Africa regional bodies, development partners as well as researchers and the public.

ENHANCING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN CROSS BORDER SECURITY IN GHANA

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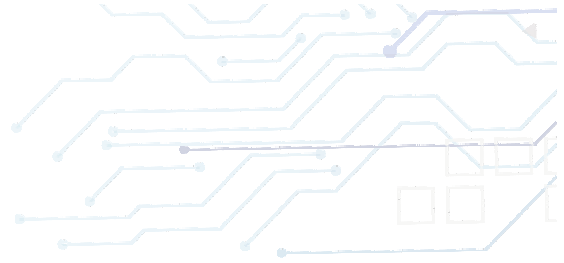**Paul Nana Kwabena Aborampah Mensah**
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SUMMARY

In the glaring face of surging cross border crimes and external security threats in West Africa, border security has received increasing attention to reduce the surging threat of terrorist attacks and violent extremism. The Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana); through its Security Sector Governance program, is implementing a Boarder Security Project that aims to raise security consciousness and enhance citizens' participation in cross border security in Ghana. A key component of the project is the involvement of citizens in designing and implementing counter-terrorism measures. The rationale is that the local level has a good understanding of the joint security needs of their area.

This desk review discusses the conceptual underpinnings of the projects and further provides the rationale for counter terrorism activities in Ghana. The state of terrorism in the West African sub-region and the Sahel is presented after which the Ghanaian context is laid out alongside the vulnerability situation and the measures put in place to respond to the threat of terrorist attacks and violent extremism. The paper provides a list of recommendations for strengthening border security and reducing the threat of terrorism in Ghana.
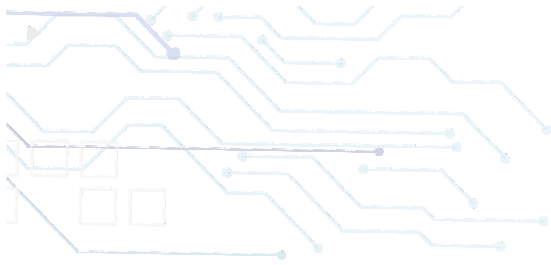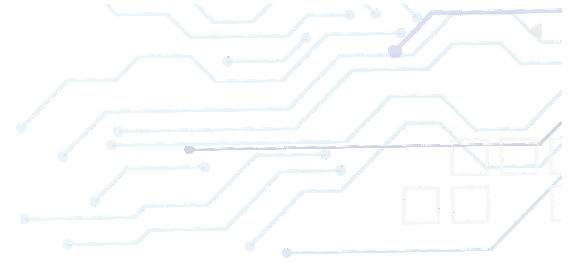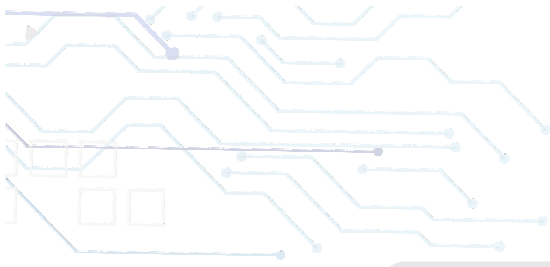
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1. BACKGROUND

Since the end of the Cold War, the debate on security issues have shifted from state to non-state actors with specific emphasis on three key themes. One, military power has declined in importance in international politics as they are less prevalent. Two, there has been a gradual shift in thinking around international relations and national security. Lastly, conceptions about national security has taken on a broader perspective with special focus on inland security. This shift is characterized by changes in contemporary world politics, the nature of threats which are challenging it, and the way in which these threats must be addressed. Threats connote a possible negative future event, which could directly or indirectly endanger the welfare of human beings in the short and long term as well (Krahmann, 2005).

Recent discussions on security suggests that it has become a global phenomenon characterized by the existence of new relations between different actors, the emergence and development of new actors, and the rise of new threats alongside increasing vulnerabilities (Hasan, 2012). These threats are emerging and growing in scale due to the interconnected and interdependent nature of society. At the same time, most of the current challenges and risks in one region of the world are also common to adjacent regions, or even in many outlying areas. Unsurprisingly, a threat in one part of the world is now capable of challenging the peace and stability of distant countries. This underlines the complexity of contemporary global security landscape.

One of the most relevant "new" threats to security, which have been scientifically proven to cluster in space, is terrorism. The September 11, 2001 (9/11) attack on the World Trade Center in the United States forced people to

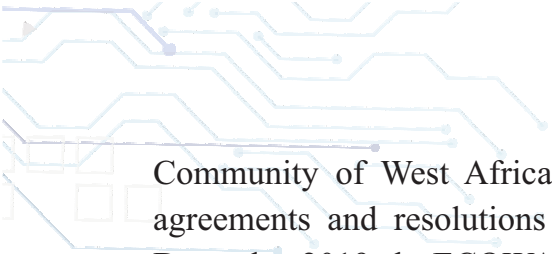rethink the traditional concept of security. This event redefined the foreign policy of all states and forced them to elevate non-state actors to the same or even a higher level of threat than other states. The 9/11 attacks underscored the challenges of terrorism and transnational criminal activity to the global security environment. Even though these threats had existed for some time, they took on new significance as non-state actors operationalized traditional means of attacks in ways that had a strategic effect, thus shocking the world. As a result, regional approaches toward security relationships between states and against non-state actors took on new significance, as states placed a greater emphasis on inland security and the tightening up of their respective boundaries alongside the inclusion of civil society in security matters (Hayes, 2004). Civil society's role is essential as the ultimate aim of any security policy must be the effective protection of its citizens.

New security threats have forced countries to expand their respective defenses by pushing security across neighboring countries, seeking regional cooperation and support against new threats (Amado, 2008). Underlying the shift to security cooperation is the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), that emphasizes that security should be considered from a regional perspective since the relations between states display a regular and geographically clustered patterns. As such, the security of each country in a specific region interacts with the security of other neighboring countries of the same region. Consequently, cooperation among states and interactions on cross border security are the two main features in order to deal with new challenges.

Various regional bodies have used national and international coordination and cooperation to respond to the rise in terrorist threats and transnational criminal activities. The African Union (AU) has since 2014 developed a continental strategy for enhancing border management in Africa. The strategy rests on three pillars: cooperation and coordination; capacity building; and community involvement. Similarly, at the Economic
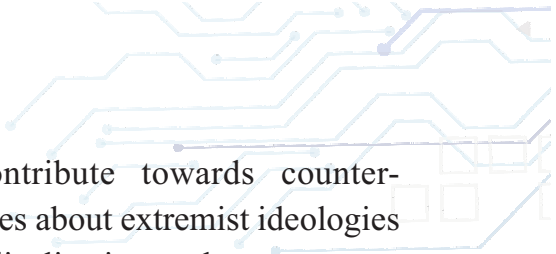
Community of West African States (ECOWAS) level, there have been agreements and resolutions adopted to enhance border security. On 21 December 2019, the ECOWAS Heads of State summit "adopted a 2020-2024 action plan to eradicate terrorism in the sub-region. These resolutions emphasize the important role of civil society especially citizens in strengthening border security.

In Ghana, the Government in partnership with the border management agencies have instituted measures to respond to border security challenges. At the international level, Ghana is a party to all the UN conventions on Terrorism[1]. In addition, the Ghana Government in partnership with some international institutions have implemented some projects to strengthen border security. For example, the European Union (EU) on February 6, 2020 launched a five million Euro project to strengthen border security by improving border management and security, reducing irregular migration, human trafficking, the smuggling of goods and other cross-border crimes. The other component of the project is dedicated to civil society organizations, media networks and local authorities to develop projects that will improve the cross-border management of people, goods and services.

The inclusion of CSO in security governance especially in border security is in response to the rise in terrorist threats and transnational criminal activities. The role of CSOs is considered very important in awareness-raising and mobilization of local populations around security issues. Awareness-raising on security challenges may help increase a population's vigilance against certain threats. This may be helpful, for example, against the threat of extremist violence. CSOs can strengthen early warning mechanisms relating to the risk of extremist deviance, which require close collaboration between communities and institutions, as well as a high level of awareness of threats within communities. Moreover, in the context of their work with

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[1]See Sosuh, M. M. (2011) Border security in Ghana: Challenges and prospect. KAIPTC Occasional PaperNo.32

communities, CSOs can significantly contribute towards counter-radicalization initiatives to educate communities about extremist ideologies to make the population more resistant to radicalization and prevent new recruitments.

CSOs are an essential link in peace and security, maintaining constant dialogue between the public and security institutions, which is crucial to guaranteeing the continued relevance of security services to the demands expressed by citizens. Permanent interaction between citizens (civilian populations) and security institutions contribute to the establishment and consolidation of mutual trust. This can improve the operational effectiveness of security forces, since they are more likely to succeed in carrying out their activities if they have public support than if they are constantly faced with hostility.

This paper has six sections. The next section presents a review of related literature on terrorism and border security. This is followed by an overview of terrorism in Sahel and West Africa and an insight into the major terrorist groups operating in West Africa. The Ghanaian situation with emphasis on the risks and vulnerabilities to terrorism are discussed. Counter-terrorism measures are presented.
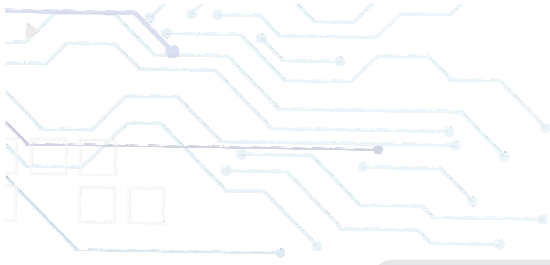
2. REVIEW OF KEY CONCEPTS

This section provides the operationalization of some concepts as used in the paper.

2.1 Terrorism

This section discusses the concept of terrorism as applied in the literature. Terrorism as a complex concept, with varied meanings. The use of the concept is often contested among practitioners since terrorism can be approached from different disciplines such as political science, war and peace studies and religious studies. Therefore, we can find different interpretations of terrorism with some sources defining it as a political act, a warfare action, a communication strategy, or a religious fight (Schmid, 2004)[2].

The complexity of the different definitions and understandings of terrorism make it difficult to agree on a common and clear definition. This is evident in the United Nations (UN) with the UN High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change stating that, there is a seeming "lack of agreement on a clear and well-known definition of terrorism that undermines the normative and moral stance against terrorism." The definitional problem of terrorism is seen among the different agencies in the United States Government with a counter-terrorism mission. For instance,

> *United States House of Representatives Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (2002): "Terrorism is the illegitimate, premeditated violence or threat of violence by subnational groups against persons or property with the intent to coerce a government by instilling fear among*

[2]Schmid, A. (2004). Terrorism - The Definitional Problem. Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law, Volume 36(2) pages 375-419
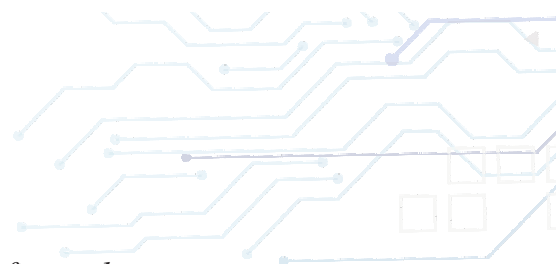
the populace."
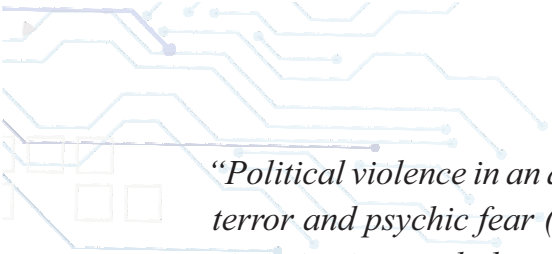
The State Department (1984) also defines the concept to mean "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience."

The FBI (1999) defines "terrorism as the unlawful use, or threatened use, of force or violence by a group or an individual...committed against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives."

Despite the struggle to define terrorism, it is clear that the core concept behind terrorism is terror. Terror is a state of intense fear which can be coercively produced or induced. Terrorism groups could ultimately manipulate it in order to achieve the goals of a different nature. In line with this thought, the definition which better suits the aim of this paper is:

"Terrorism is a purposeful human political activity which is directed toward the creation of a general climate of fear, and is designed to influence, in ways desired by the protagonist, other human beings and, through them, some course of events" (Hoffman, 1984, p. 181).

Bockstette (2008) was worried about the asymmetric type of warfare undertaken by terrorists, which is given by the differences in equipment and skills concerning the two competing actors (State versus Non-State). Indeed, he defines terrorism as:

"Political violence in an asymmetrical conflict that is designed to induce terror and psychic fear (sometimes indiscriminate) through the violent victimization and destruction of non-combatant targets (sometimes iconic symbols)".
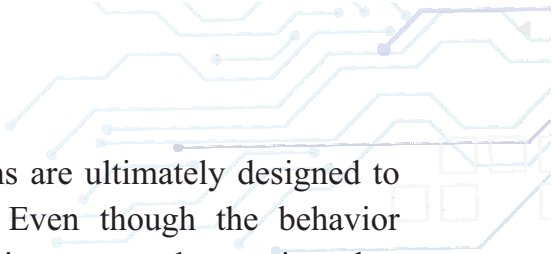
Very often, violent extremism has been used as a synonym of terrorism. However, violent extremists do no need to establish fear in the public, nor require an asymmetrical conflict. For example, the USAID (2011) defines violent extremism as:

"Advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic or political objectives".

A common element among most of the existing definitions, is the fact that terrorism involves violence or the threat of it, perpetrated by non-state actors. Indeed, the UN General Assembly in 1997 defined terrorism as:

"Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them" (UN Resolution 51/210, 1997).

The Ghana Anti-Terrorism Act (2008) defines terrorism as "An act [that is] performed in furtherance of a political, ideological, religious, racial or ethnic cause" and harms a person or property or is prejudicial to national security, public safety or essential infrastructure. This definition is broader than the UN definition, as it does not require that the perpetrator intends to instill fear or terror in the general public.

Despite the varied definitions, terrorist actions are ultimately designed to influence one target by attacking another. Even though the behavior represented through this view is rational, terrorists are not always viewed as rational agents. Indeed, when we consider the terrorists' decision-making process, distinct schools of thought give rise to different framing of analysis (McCormick, 2003). For example, strategic theories are based on the concept of "rational agent" w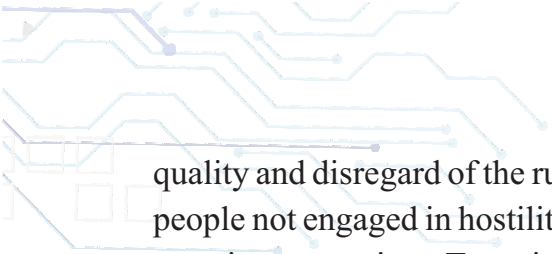ho compare the expected costs and benefits among the most obvious options and try to achieve the option with the optimal expected utility.

In contrast to that, Abrahms (2008) developed a "seven puzzles" discussion, in which he challenges the strategic model, arguing that it misperceives the terrorists' incentive structure. In contrast, He propose a theory in which terrorists are rational people who develop strong affective ties with the components of the same group. In line with this view the psychological theories address the problem of emotional factors, which could create "affective distortions" undermining the ability to implement rational choice. However, organizational theories focus attention on factors that define a terroristic organization. Indeed, a secret organization faces a critical trade-off between its operational capacity and its operational security (McCormick and Owen, 2000).

Hoffman (2006) identifies certain key distinguishing factors that are common to most definitions of terrorism. First, an action must be carried out for political, economic, religious, or social purposes to count as terrorism. For example, the terrorist organisation, Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has clearly stated its political goal to establish itself as a caliphate. Secondly, for an action to be classified as terrorism, the actions must be designed to have far-reaching psychological repercussions beyond the immediate victim or target. In other words, an action must aim to create terror through "its shocking brutality, lack of discrimination, dramatic or symbolic

quality and disregard of the rules of warfare" (Schimid, 2012)[3]. Additionally, people not engaged in hostilities is a necessary but not sufficient condition to constitute terrorism. Terrorist actions must be also conducted either by an organization with an identifiable chain of command or conspiratorial cell or by individuals or a small collection of individuals directly influenced by the logical aims or example of some existent terrorist movement and its leaders.

2.2 Border security
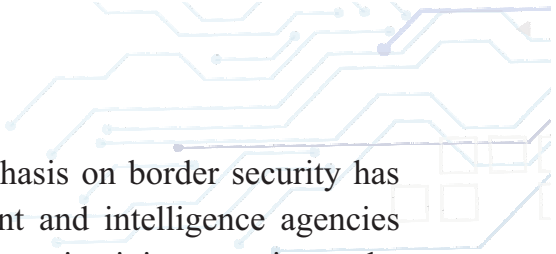
This section discusses the concepts of border and border security. Borders define a country's sovereignty by determining its territory, and where its administration and jurisdiction ends. Borders also assign national identities. A nation-state's boundaries put people under one entity, define their lifestyles, national culture including language, destiny, privileges (e.g., right to vote, enjoy welfare benefits and certain rights denied non-citizens).

In practice, border security connotes the process of controlling and examining what enters and leaves a country. This aspect is especially important due to current terrorist threats and organized crime. In addition, border security deals with the control of spread of disease and prevent smuggling of weapons, drugs, and endangered animals. According to the US Department of Homeland Security (2015), border security is, "the act of protecting our borders from illegal movement of weapons, drugs, contraband, and people, while promoting lawful entry and exit".[4]

The concept of border security has evolved greatly due to the threat of terrorism. Border security therefore provides safety for a country and is an important means through which national security plan is implemented. In contemporary times, especially after the 9/11 attacks in the US, border security has shifted attention from primarily trade and commerce (Salter, 2005) to how states exert their sovereignty and secure their frontiers (Drache,

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[3]Schmid, A. P. (2012). The revised academic consensus definition of terrorism. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 6(2).
[4]Border Security | Homeland Security. (2015). Retrieved February 18, 2017, from https://www.dhs.gov/border-securityZZ

2004; Condon & Sinha 2003). The new emphasis on border security has affected the structure of key law enforcement and intelligence agencies alongside border security priorities. Howe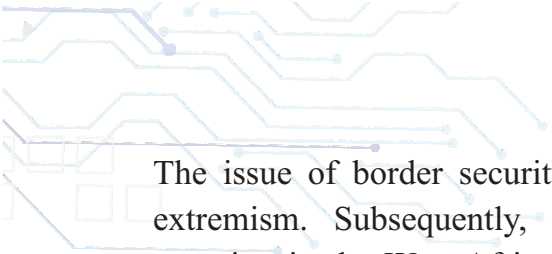ver, maintaining security at the borders is extremely challenging due to the tremendously lengthy and porous nature of the borders that are also difficult to monitor. The lack of a solid border and border security apparatus allows for cross-border illicit actions, such as the drug and arms trade, and human trafficking. Other challenges derive from the lack of financial and human resources, equipment and specialist skills, or the lack of intra-State and inter-State cooperation.

The threat of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) now constitute a major threat to regional and international border security. For example, organizations like Al Shabaab in Somalia and Boko Haram in Nigeria use weak and porous borders to evade the grasp of whichever government they are attempting to subvert. Boko Haram has flourished in West Africa due to the lack of border security in the region. The organization uses the unsecured borders of Nigeria to conduct operations in Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, acting as a destabilizing force in these neighboring countries.

With the increasing trend of religious radicalization and violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, counter extremism and sectarian violence, countries are required to put in place efficient mechanisms for border management and control. The UN Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014) urges member states to prevent the movement of terrorists or terrorist groups by effective border controls.   States are required to maintain their boundaries, secure their territories, and protect their citizens. The Resolution further urges member states, "in accordance with domestic and international law, to intensify and accelerate the exchange of operational information regarding actions or movements of terrorists or terrorist networks, including foreign terrorist fighters". Many States have taken steps to strengthen border security and prevent FTF from entering into their countries.
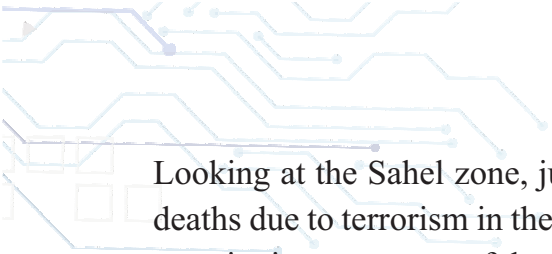
The issue of border security has implications for terrorism and violent extremism. Subsequently, border security has received considerable attention in the West African sub-region due to the increasing spread of terrorist activities in the sub-region. The next section provides an overview of terrorism in West Africa, by briefly discussing current forms, and causes. The discussion situates the context within which Ghana finds itself in the sub-region.

3. OVERVIEW OF TERRORISM IN SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA

With the inception of the third wave of democracy in the 1990s, the problem of terrorism and violent extremist acts have been on the increase due to both internal and external threats and vulnerabilities. Evidence of terrorist presence in the region included Islamic fundamentalists' activities in Northern Nigeria and militancy in the Niger Delta region, Touareg insurgency in Mali, and violence in the Cassamance region of Senegal. The emerging threat of piracy is well documented with Pirates hijacking 8 Nigerian vessels off the Niger Delta coast in 2008 alone (Osagie and Nzeshi, 2008). Other terrorist acts are perpetuated by Salafist-jihadist groups such as Boko Haram, Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen (JNIM), the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), and Ansarul Islam. The recent activities of these groups have expanded beyond the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin region to include countries within the coastal areas along the Gulf of Guinea (Christensen & Edu-Afful, 2019).
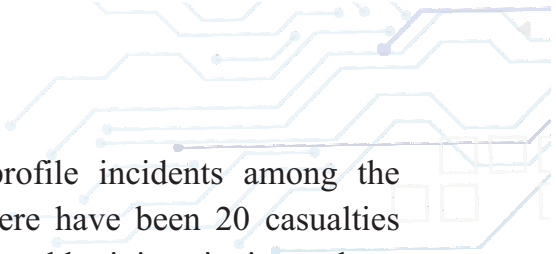
The activities of the above mentioned groups have seen a change in approach of terrorist from the kidnapping of westerners in Mali, and Niger, and Nigeria to the consolidation of insurgencies in northern Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger and north-eastern Nigeria. Since the beginning of 2016, groups operating in northern Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso have organized attacks on so-called soft targets near Bamako, Abidjan, and three times in Ouagadougou. New groups that target schools have emerged. Public officials, religious leaders, and citizens collaborating with security forces have also been targeted in assassinations. This is an important trend to be considered, because in both West Africa and Sahel, these events have little historical precedent (Eizenga, 2019).

Looking at the Sahel zone, just in the month of March 2019 there were 57 deaths due to terrorism in the Sahel zone (Ansah, 2019). In recent times, the security in many parts of the vast Sahel area that runs west to east across the continent from Senegal to Sudan, has continued to deteriorate. In 2019, the region experienced a devastating surge in terrorist attacks against civilian and military targets. In the Sahel zone, just in the month of March 2019 there were 57 deaths due to terrorism (Ansah, 2019). Terrorist-attack casualties in Burkina Faso Mali and Niger, have leapt five-fold since 2016 – with more than 4,000 deaths reported in 2019 alone as compared to some 770 three years earlier (AFP, 2019b). Since 2015, there have been 585 terrorism related deaths in the eastern Sahel. Moreover, terrorist violence has spread to the coast and along the Sahel-Sahara strip, in the Lake Chad Basin.

The U.S. assesses that Boko Haram/ISWAP has been responsible for over 35,000 deaths since 2011 (The Defense Post, 2019b). This means that in the Sahel zone, there are countries which are severely weakened or destabilized by terrorism. The fight against terrorist groups binds many resources of the affected States, which amount to 2.7% of GDP for Nigeria and 1.4% of GDP for Mali. Still, sometimes, terrorist groups successfully rival the government forces and become the local hegemon. Indeed, occasional transition occurs. Terrorist groups grew and then transitioned to insurgents. In the past five decades, 34 terrorist groups became actors in an intrastate conflict, maintaining their terrorist organisational structure (GTI, 2019). The notion of those groups to seek to increase their territory poses an inherent risk to other States in the region, even if they are not yet affected by terrorism themselves.

Burkina Faso was a frequent target for terrorist attacks in the past. Sources estimate that there have been over 400 deaths due to terrorism in Burkina Faso since 2015 (AFP, 2019a). Just during the period of two months from August to September 2019, 13 incidences that were classified as terroristic violence took place. At the start of the year 2019, series of terror attacks led to the resignation of Burkina Faso's president (Blake, 2019). Attacks have

continued nevertheless, with several high-profile incidents among the attacks; for example, since October 2019 there have been 20 casualties through terrorists attacks, including attack at a gold mining site in northern Burkina Faso (AFP, 2019b; The Defense Post, 2019a).

On January 8, in his first formal meeting of the year 2020, Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, the UN Special Representative and Head of the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), updated the Security Council on a*n "unprecedented" rise in terrorist violence across the region. He stated clearly that "the geographic focus of terrorist attacks has shifted eastwards from Mali to Burkina Faso and is increasingly threatening West African Coastal States"*. Indeed, the West Africa states have been under serious terrorist invasion, and both countries that have already suffered attacks of terrorism, and those who are yet to experience any terrorists strike are on the constant look out.

3.1 Major terrorist groups operating in West Africa

This section presents an overview of the major terrorist groups in West Africa. The terrorist groups operating in this region are exclusively Islamic terrorists. Also, the threat of terrorism in West Africa has started as a very local problem in some areas and only over time has affected other countries and developed as a regional threat. Still, today there is a strong heterogeneity in the intensity of terrorist activities and violent extremism between countries, with Nigeria, Mali, Niger and recently Burkina Faso as the hotbed of terrorism.

- The group Islamic State (IS), also known as Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is a terrorist organization that tries to establish a caliphate in Middle East. It operates mostly in Syria and Iraq, which makes West Africa not directly affected by its terror attacks. However, the group is drawing members and actively recruiting youth in Ghana, which indirectly affect the security of the country, because the

Ghanaians radicalized abroad might return home to practice their new found expertise (Adom Online, 2017; Mpoke-Bigg, 2015). As at 2019, some see ISIS as defeated (McKernan, 2019), however, the recent USA decision to withdraw their troops from Syria which appears as the beginning of a future disengagement in Middle East, make difficult to confirm the end of the group.

- The group Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), also widely referred to as Boko Haram, operates in the north-eastern regions of Nigeria and has also spread to Cameroon, Niger and Chad. It was founded more than 20 years ago; however, the group strongly intensified its activities after 2009. In 2015, it pledged alliance to the Islamic State and officially changed its name to ISWAP. Observers have commented that even though Boko Haram had links to the Islamic State, their main drivers are internal problems in Nigeria (Hogendoorn, 2018). All over the world, the immense scale of the crimes committed by the terror group has alarmed governments: data by the Council on Foreign Policy document revealed that between 2011 and 2018, 37530 people had been killed in incidents involving Boko Haram. Furthermore, the United Nations' refugee agency estimates that as a result of the conflict with Boko Haram, 2.4 million people have been displaced, and more than 7 million people face the risk of starvation (United States High Commissioner for Refugees, 2018). Since 2018, there have been fewer activities by this group due to a new military operation initiated by the Nigerian Army in the north east region of the country and around Lake Chad to eradicate the remaining Boko Haram militants (Beri, 2017). There are several factors responsible for the decline of Boko Haram as a violent group in Nigeria. One of them is the lingering internal crisis within the group. This is further compounded by the disagreement over doctrine, ideology, targets and tactics. These factors caused a major split in August 2016, leading to the emergence of at least three factions with control over several cells (Onuoha, 2016).
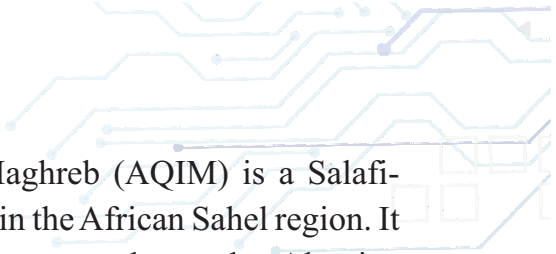
- The group Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) is a Salafi-Jihadist militant organization operating in the African Sahel region. It originated in Algeria with the focus to overthrow the Algerian government. In the early 2000s, the group expanded to Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, and Mali. Recently, they have also claimed responsibility for attacks in Burkina Faso. Among their deadliest attacks were the mass shooting at Mali's Raddison Blu Hotel in November 2015, the hostage crisis at Burkina Faso's Splendid Hotel in January 2016, and the bombing of a French-UN military base in Mali in January 2017 (Mapping Militant Organizations, 2018a).

- The group Movement for the Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) was formed as a splinter group of AQIM in 2011 (Mapping Militant Organizations, 2018b). They have mainly been operating in Northern Mali. In August 2013, they merged with another group to form Al Mourabitoun, which has conducted attacks mostly in Mali. Since 2015, Al Mourabitoun is again, to a certain degree, affiliated with AQIM.

- The group Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen (JNIM), also known as the Group for Support of Islam and Muslims, is a Salafi-Jihadist organization that was formed in March 2017. It was the result of a merger of the Sahara branch of AQIM, Al Mourabitoun, Ansar Dine and the Macina Liberation Front (Mapping Militant Organizations, 2018c).

Figure 1 provides a comparative overview of the origins, primary areas of operation, aims and governance models of the Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and ISIL to show that certain characteristics are common to the terrorist groups irrespective of their location.

Figure 1: Overview of al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and ISIL

Al-Shabaab

- Established in 2006; based in Somalia

- Also operates in Yemen, Kenya, Uganda, Djibouti

- Adheres to an interpretation of Salafism and Wahhabism that supports *takfir*

- Pledged allegiance to Al-Qaeda in 2012

- Leader: Ahmad Umar

- Governing body: Shura Council of 10 members

Boko Haram

- Established in 2002; based in Northern Nigeria

- Also operates in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger

- Adheres to a Salafi-Jihadist interpretation of Sunni Islam

- Pledged allegiance to ISIS in March 2015

- Leader: Abu Musab al-Barnawi

- Governing body: the Shura council comprising 30 members and commanding the group's regional cells

ISIL

- Established (in its current form) in 2013; based in Iraq and Syria

- Also operates in Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the North Caucasus

- Adheres to a literalist interpretation of Sunni Islam

- Leader: Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

- Governing body: Shura Council and Shariah Council

- Major setbacks: fall of Mosul and Raqqa
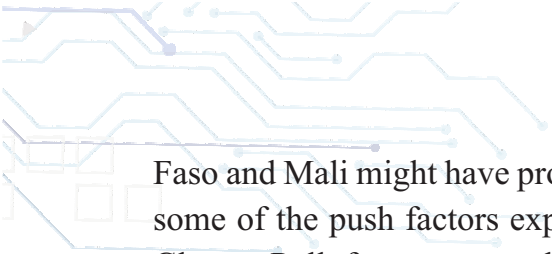
4. TERRORISM IN GHANA: RISK AND VULNERABILITY

As explained in the previous sections, terrorism in general is a big threat in West Africa. Poverty, youth unemployment, bad governance and intercommunal conflict provide a fertile ground for the growth of extremism (Bolaji, 2010). While not all countries in the region are presently affected by terrorist attacks, some argue that this could change in the future. Ghana's President, His Excellency, Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo, acknowledged this, and remarked that:

> *"Despite it being a beacon of peace, stability and democracy in a region that is plagued by the activities of terrorist and extremist groups, Ghana must know she cannot be immune to terrorist attacks"* (Akufo-Addo, 2019).

The risk of terrorism is determined by a combination of internal and external factors, such as resource curse, sectarianism, ethnicity, social inequality, youth unemployment, militarization exposed these societies to violent conflict and extremism. In the case of Ghana, the general risk to terrorism depends on the one hand on domestic factors, and on another hand, the risk lay on cross-border cultural ties shared among sections of population living along borders among regional neighbors. Indeed, scholars indicated cultural ties as a significant risk factor that contributes to the spread of terrorism among countries.

4.1 Domestic factors

There are some voices that rate the risk for radical Islam in general rather low in West Africa (Clapham, 2003). However, recent developments in Burkina
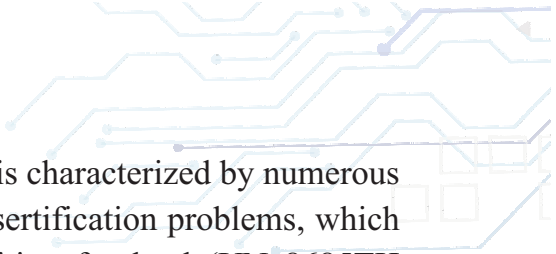
Faso and Mali might have proven them wrong. More relevant is the fact that some of the push factors exposed by Antwi-Boateng (2017) are present in Ghana. Pull factors as well, like "providing a mission" could pose a consistent risk, even though this apply to all countries in the region.

Among push factors, Antwi-Boateng (2017) mentions the impact of youth bulge and the high youth unemployment. In the case of Ghana, 57% of the population is under 25 years (CIA, 2018) and there is a high youth unemployment rate. This leads to negative prospects for the future and discontentment with the government, which can make adolescents more susceptible to promises of terrorist groups. However, there are already some programs tackling this problem, for example by the Youth Employment Agency. It is vital to find solutions to these issues, as violent extremist groups try to integrate themselves into local communities (Matongbada, 2018) where they could be provided benefits and services that the state has failed to provide.

Terrorist groups can instrumentally draw on long-standing grievances among the citizenry to further exploit local resentments to spread extremism. They can add tensions between herders and farmers, which has already risen due to the degradation of land, climate change and the ready availability of weapons. Intercommunal cleavages could be another possible exploitable domestic factor. Indeed:
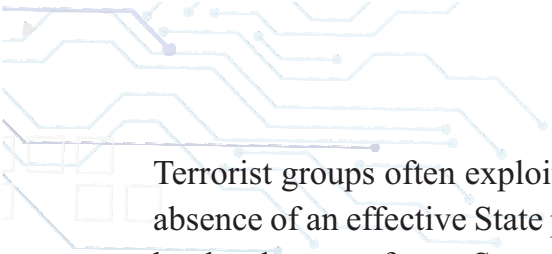
> *"Communal conflicts are often sparked by competition to control economically important areas, such as marketplaces, transportation hubs, fertile land, water wells, or development investments" (Fjelde and Østby, 2014:744).*

Another area of concern is the increasing competition over natural resources and the deteriorating livelihoods among the population in West Africa. The West African region with a total population of 350 million, have 70% of

people relying on agriculture or husbandry. It is characterized by numerous ethnicities, a fast-growing population, and desertification problems, which have all contributed to increase the competition for land (UN 8685TH Meeting, 2019). Indeed, in this region, many communal conflicts found fertile grounds on disagreements over land. Competition over land may generate cleavages along the lines of dominant livelihood, among pastoralist, which is nomadic or seminomadic versus settled farmers (Benjaminsen and Ba, 2009; Turner et al., 2011). Since the African continent is the most vulnerable in regards of climate change effects (Benjaminsen et al., 2012), the competition for resources among pastoralist and farmers will steadily increase. Furthermore, cash crop production patterns increased the value of the land, encouraging violent interaction over ownership claims (Boone, 2007). Therefore, intercommunal conflicts will increasingly entangle groups sharing the same livelihood or same mode of production, as inter-pastoralism conflicts. Those type of conflicts usually revolve around livestock raiding dynamics (Butler and Gates, 2012; Detges, 2014).

Communal conflict is, and will be, an increasing problem among West African countries. Ghana's northern regions have already experienced conflicts among communities, which make this phenomenon more likely to recur. An example of this could be found in past episodes located in the Northern Region. These conflicts were mainly rooted in the desire of having own chiefs and control over the lands. For these conflicts an unstable peace settlement secured a precarious peace so far, but the lack in addressing the root causes of the problem will lead to possible recurrence of it. Terrorists and violent extremist groups can take undue advantage of these protracted conflicts and manipulate it to their advantage (UNDP – Draft of Conflict Mapping 2019). Kendie, Osei-Kufuor and Boakye (2014) report that northern Ghana remains a hot spot for (Islamic) religious radicalization owing to rampant wave of violent activities over there.

Terrorist groups often exploit the resulting intercommunal tensions and the absence of an effective State presence. Indeed, another problem is presented by the absence of state Security Forces in specific areas of the country. This can generate a sense of insecurity among communities which will mobilize them to purchase arm for self-protection. Latent and unresolved conflicts may present other security dynamics and may trigger a renewed violence. This also presents a cyclical security dilemma. A community which increases or just arms its members for self-protection, could be seen by rival communities as a possible future threat to their survival. This perceived threat would be addressed by weapons purchase, which will in turn be perceived by the first group as a new threat. The former would be tackled by increasing the volume of their arms. The dynamic just outlined could provoke an escalation of tensions among groups (Booth and Wheeler, 2007), ultimately leading to a possible violent interaction. Beside the fact that this loop is difficult to be stopped, it also exacerbates old or poorly managed local disputes, and political tensions. These problems would be easily exploitable by terrorist groups.

The last push factor that Antwi-Boateng (2017) mentioned, is very much applicable in the case of Ghana as the country has porous borders with all its neighbors. The Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) states that "it is simply impossible to control the movement of people crossing into the country" (JTM, 2019) and sees it as a major challenge in fighting terrorism (Mordy, 2019). The wide nature of the land area at Ghana's border and the sparse GIS checkpoints, have led to the creation of dozens of unauthorized routes. On these routes people can move in and out without being checked, which also opens the way for criminal activities such as arms smuggling. This does not only simplify the process for communities, to arm and mobilize for self-protection. It also allows terrorists to move freely into the country, and enables them to smuggle equipment, like explosives, for terrorist attacks purposes. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) states that:

"The principle of free movement of people and goods in West Africa and the porous nature of borders calls for a rethink of the responses needed to deal with the phenomenon" (Faye, 2019).

4.2 External factors

The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and the UN, estimates that the threat of terrorism, which so far has mostly been observed in the Sahel zone, could now also spread towards coastal West Africa. This spread is being facilitated through the permissible borders between countries and the activities of FTF (Matongbada, 2018). The precarious nature of the borders and its susceptibility to terrorists and extremist groups is succinctly captured by Matongbada:

"The region is not presently a hub of terrorism but is a fertile ground for breeding terrorist networks through trans-national criminal networks".

As previously specified, contemporary threats are characterized by dynamics ascribable to a regional level. Moreover, terrorism is a phenomenon which cluster in space, spreading among countries. Therefore, in assessing the threat of terrorism in Ghana, it is of utmost importance to not only look at Ghana's history and recent developments, but to also consider the development in the neighboring countries. As the borders are very porous, foreign terrorist groups that operate close to the Ghanaian border could easily get a foothold in Ghana.

Terrorists usually seek haven or plunder in surrounding States hiding among refugees. Afterward, terrorism proliferate exploiting the absence of public services, the distrust between security forces and the population, and old or badly managed communal or political tensions. Indeed, as Blake (2019) noted:

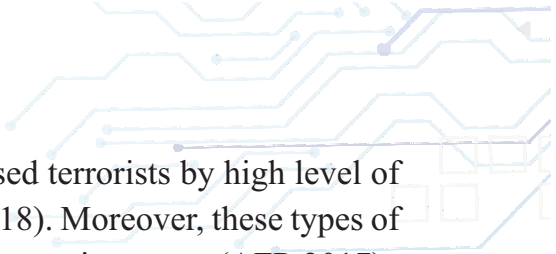"The combination of poverty, ineffective efforts to combat domestic

terrorism, and a lack of basic government services has been conducive to the spread of terrorism".

The influx of refugees from Burkina Faso is a phenomenon which terrorists can easily exploit to cross the border. Moreover, the general distrust of the northern population toward the Ghanaian security force, combined with a lack of government services, and a series of badly managed communal and political tensions, makes the northern part of Ghana a perfect environment for the previous dynamic to occur and develop. A serious control of the border is therefore required in order to neutralize the negative effect related to an uncontrolled flow of migrants, which could give rise to the proliferation of terrorist groups and the rise of new tensions for intercommunal resources competition.

An example of what an uncontrolled influx of refugees from Burkina Faso to the Northern part of Ghana could provoke, is observable through the developments that occurred in Burkina Faso after 2015. Indeed, as Burkina Faso shows us, terrorist groups can quickly establish themselves in a new environment. While before 2015, there were almost no accounts of terrorist attacks in the country, it has recently become a hotspot of terrorist activities; since January 2016, there have been more than 250 attacks. In October, 2019, it was reported that in the village of Pobe Mengao in Soum Province near the border with Niger, 16 people were killed as a result of terrorist attacks. Terror groups that migrated from Mali to Burkina Faso are partly responsible for the surge in terrorism attacks.

Another danger which should not be underestimated, is the return of Ghanaian expatriate terrorists. There were already incidences of Ghanaians joining terrorist groups with the purpose to fight abroad. After the defeat of the Islamic State (IS), these fighters could be in search of a new purpose. This can pose a big security risk, as they are likely to return to their home country where it is hard to indict them due to lack of evidence. This possibility lay
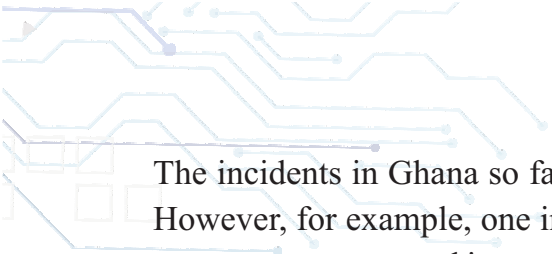
perfectly along new theories which characterised terrorists by high level of education and good job prospects (Krueger, 2018). Moreover, these types of subjects could radicalize others and create local terrorist groups (AFP, 2017).

4.3 The spread of terrorism towards Ghana's borders

The threat from terrorism continues to evolve and so is the rate of spread. Since 2015, attacks have increasingly moved from the northern regions of Mali and the north eastern regions of Nigeria to Burkina Faso in the center of West Africa, and recently seemed to move even further down to the coastal States of Ghana, Togo and Benin. The north of Burkina Faso, which borders Mali and Niger, serves as a refuge for Islamist extremists who regularly attack the civilian population. Extremist and intercommunal violence have displaced more than 500,000 people in the north and the east of Burkina (UN 8685TH Meeting, 2019). Members of some of these terror groups have moved towards the southern border of the country. There was an incident on the 1st of May 2019, when two French tourists were kidnapped in Benin while their tour guide was killed. The perpetrators were terrorists that had come across the border from Burkina Faso (Kwarkye et al., 2019; Mir, 2019). In January 2019, there was an incident in the Burkinabe border town of Nohao, which is close to the northern region of Togo. Terrorists attacked a mobile customs unit, leaving four dead.

In general, Burkina Faso can be seen as a cautionary tale, because within a very short period, the terrorist activities there have increased significantly. As indicated above, before 2015, there was almost no terrorist attacks, while just in the month of September 2019, eight attacks occurred in Burkina Faso, which led to 84 deaths. From May to October 2019, there have been at least 18 attacks with a total death toll of at least 169 people. The porous borders have allowed terrorist groups to get a foothold within less than three years and also allowed them to be constantly supplied with new members and resources.
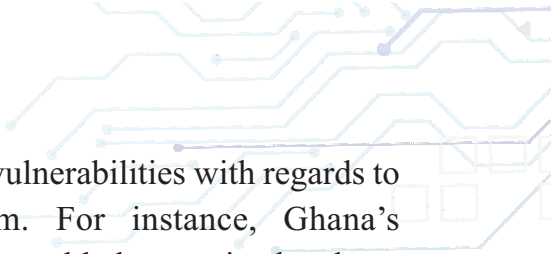
The incidents in Ghana so far have been minor and have not led to deaths. However, for example, one incident happened in January 2018, when three suspects were arrested in a suburb of Accra for possession of seven grenades (myjoyonline.com, 2018). Sources stated that the explosives were intercepted based on a police intelligence. In June 2019, a 55-year-old Burkinabe with a loaded handgun was arrested in a church in the town of Hamile, located at the border to Burkina Faso, during church service on Sunday (Adjetey, 2019). The suspect's license for the gun was only valid in Burkina Faso. The case is still under investigation. The incident raised suggestions to either ban bags at the church or install scanners at the entrances.

Some assessments on the risk of terrorism in Ghana by foreign governments are rather bleak: The government of the United Kingdom warns that *"Terrorists are likely to try to carry out attacks in Ghana" (Foreign and Commonwealth Office [UK], 2019)* and that AQIM as well as ISWA present a threat in the region. It also warns that due to a lack of physical barriers along Ghana's borders, the security situation in regions close to the border could change quickly. Furthermore, the Head of the Department of Research at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KAIPTC), Dr. Emmanuel Kwesi Aning, has asserted that Ghana is vulnerable to threats of terror attacks, despite assurances that the country is safe (Aning, 2019).

4.4 Ghana's vulnerabilities

Africa's violent security landscape is diverse and multi-faceted. It is characterized by inter- and intragroup rivalries as it cuts across geographical, gender and ideological boundaries, and it is evolving at a very rapid pace. Although Ghana is being described as a beacon of peace, especially in the region that is plagued by the activities of terrorists, the recent developments at the neighboring countries should alert the country that it is not immune to terrorist attacks. While Ghana has not had any attacks yet, there are some signs and traces of terrors, which define an undoubted possibility of actual attacks.

Ghana's current situation is driven by a set of vulnerabilities with regards to both domestic and transnational terrorism. For instance, Ghana's involvement in providing military support to troubled countries has been identified as an avenue that exposes Ghana to security threats, and it has heightened the country's risk to transnational terrorist attack (Aning, 2005). Ghana's troops have been deployed in Mali, Ivory Coast, Sudan and other parts of the region. In Mali, Al-Qaeda's victory against the abstract ISIS has a potential serious implication for further actions by rival groups to gain international limelight. In order to explain the occurrence of transnational terrorism, Dalacoura (2011) takes the foreign policy as explanatory variable. States with active or provocative foreign policies could possibly foment some sort of resentment among known or unknown foreign groups. Therefore, States with active or provocative foreign policies are more likely to become a target of transnational terrorist attacks. As explained in chapter one, terrorism is an instrument with which non-state actors try to achieve political goals. The strategy behind this is to create a climate of fear in order to influence the course of actions. Indeed, this indirect strategy is based on the asymmetric power relation between the two actors involved, the terrorist group and the State. This define a low likelihood in achieving their goal in the short run. Through hit-and-run raids directed to a main target, terrorist aim to force a government to politically respond. The desired response must be violent or unpopular among the population, in order to gain support and increase political influence in their country of origin. As explained by Pape (2003, 2008), terrorists are more likely to attack domestic targets, but attacks on foreign targets and installations can still occur.

Furthermore, the presence and smuggling of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in Ghana and West Africa in general, poses a great threat to the country's stability. Available statistics from the Ghana National Commission on Small Arms, as at 2004 indicated that there were 240,000 guns in circulation. This figure increased by about 850 percent in 2014 with about three hundred million arms circulating in the region. According to Pokoo,

Aning, & Jaye (2014), about 1.1 million of the arms were being possessed illegally by civilians, posing a threat to national security. Aside from the high number of SALW in circulation, Ghana has a long tradition of artisans producing rudimentary firearms (Malhotra, 2011; Hays & Jenzen-Jones, 2018). Blacksmiths in Ghana, for example, produce a range of small arms including pistols and shotguns (Vines, 2005). In addition to this, Ghana is a free source of ammonium nitrate, which is used in the production of weapons in Mali and Burkina Faso. Guns made in Ghana have a strong recognition, and their effectiveness and accessibility have increased. This sophisticated local arms production is a key driver for proliferation of weapons in the region. The artisanal firearm industry is especially widespread and developed in Ghana, with some gunsmiths reportedly able to produce assault rifles. It is important to point out that organized armed groups from Mole in the Upper East Region and artisans at Suame Magazine in the Ashanti Region are related to the production of local firearms (Aning, 2005).

Indeed, as previously explained, especially in peripheral areas where the State's presence is weak, terrorism, organized crime and intercommunal violence are often intertwined. As Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, UN Special Representative and Head of the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), explained:

> "In those places, extremists provide safety and protection to populations, as well as social services in exchange for loyalty. […] counter-terrorism responses must focus on gaining the trust and support of local populations" (UN news, 2020).
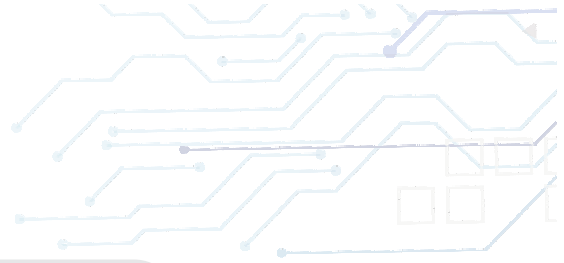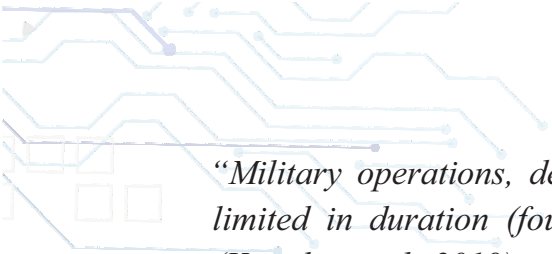
5. GHANA'S PREPAREDNESS TO DEAL WITH TERRORISM

This section examines actions and preparedness of State and non-State actors in mitigating the potential threats from terrorists and violent extremists. It further looks at citizens' level of awareness to the emerging threats of terrorism.

5.1 The Accra initiative

Ghana is engaged in a number of activities at the (sub) regional, and international levels in addressing issues of security, and stability. The Accra initiative is one joint security strategy between Ghana and her neighboring countries. Ghana collaborated with Togo, Burkina Faso and Ivory Cost to launch the Accra initiative in September 2017. The initiative was based on the realization that the growing rate of terrorism poses a greater threat to the peace and security of the region especially the coastal states. The Accra Initiative is a cooperative and collaborative security mechanism that is anchored on three pillars: information and intelligence sharing, training of security and intelligence personnel, and conducting joint cross-border military operations to sustain border security. This initiative gives a headway for these countries to come together to address it. The meeting was planned to strategize towards eliminating the spread of terrorism and resolving organized crime cases committed along the border lines (Kwarkye et al., 2019). The initiative has intensified Ghana's access to information and enhanced the cooperation between these neighboring countries. Ghana has built up a counter terrorism framework to help identify and delve into the main source of violent extremism (Kwarkye et al., 2019). Nevertheless, while pointing out to a range of positive effects, the Institute for Security Studies in Dakar (ISS-Dakar) has also noted that:
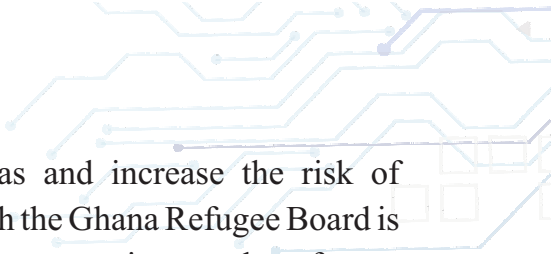
"Military operations, despite leading to arrests, have been ad hoc, limited in duration (four-day deployments) and geographic reach" (Kwarkye et al., 2019).

Therefore, the Accra Initiative is only a temporary treatment of the symptoms of terrorism, while the roots remain untouched. Other challenges identified with the Accra Initiative are that member countries have limited intelligence capabilities that are likely to affect their ability to effectively track and control extremist groups' movement across their borders. Secondly, language barriers between English-speaking Ghana and its Francophone counterparts have occasionally hindered effective communication. Finally, there are also variations in the make-up of the security sector and operational concepts of member countries. While Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo have gendarmeries, Ghana doesn't. Benin has the Republican Police, a merger of their police and gendarmerie.

Despite the identified challenges in the Accra Initiative, it still remains a major platform for countries to respond to the threat of violent extremism in West Africa's coastal states as it offers the chance for multilateral collaboration on a common threat and further offers the member countries the opportunity to address the existing governance, economic and socio-political grievances that violent extremist groups often exploit to get a foothold in the region. The ISS Dakar advised states to rethink the role of security institutions and further pay more attention to the needs of the people. For example, security institutions should incorporate social services in security plans. This would fight "push factors" to terrorism and help to prevent it in the first place.

In the light of improving the social situation of people living at the borders, it is important to address the topic of refugees from Burkina Faso, who are fleeing from terrorism and the activities of FTF who are fleeing from their terrorist base. If the refugees and FTF settle again in Ghana's border regions,

it could further destabilize the affected areas and increase the risk of terrorism. In the case of the refuges, even though the Ghana Refugee Board is paying some attention to this issue by conducting screenings on the refugees (3news.com, 2019), more needs to be done on the influx of refugees to Ghana, especially those fleeing from terrorist invasions.

5.2 National Strategy to deal with terrorism

Ghana has legal, and institutional arrangements which have been established to address terrorism and other transnational organized crimes. The country has established institutions such as Counter Terrorism Unit, Police, Military, Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), the Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS), the Air force, Navy, and the Army. Ghana has developed a counter terrorism policy that has led to the setting up of a counter terrorism unit within the National Security Council Secretariat, to lead and co-ordinate national efforts against terrorism. Using a well-coordinated Inter Agency Approach, the Unit has a framework that facilitates the timely sharing of information and intelligence, operational coordination and joint strategy formulation (Ghanaweb General News of Thursday, September 5, 2019).

In terms of anti-terrorism, Ghana has domestic legislative instruments, and frameworks which include but not limited to Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act, 2012, (Act 842), Anti-Terrorism Act 2008 (Act 762), anti-money laundering Act 2008, (Act 749), Economics and Organized Crime Act 2010 (Act 804), the Directive principle of State policy, and 1992 Constitution. Also, at the (sub) regional, and international levels, Ghana has ratified a number of conventions, and protocols on terrorism. For example, it has ratified the ECOWAS' Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, Convention on Extradition, Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons (mutual 2013; extradition 2013; small arms 2013) and Algiers Protocol on Conflict Prevention (ECOWAS 1999). Similarly, it is a signatory to the 1999 OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, and Protocol to the 1999 OAU Convention (Africa Union 2004 –Protocol to
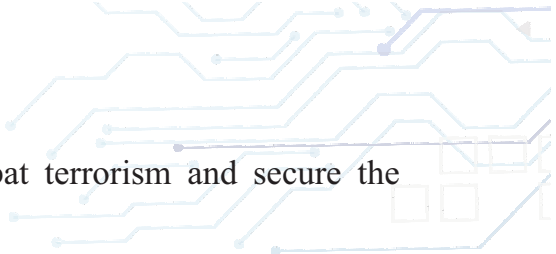
the OAU C; Africa Union 2013 –list of countries who have ratified) at the regional level.

In Ghana, terrorism was first criminalized under the Criminal Offences Act of 1960 (Act 29). Hijacking and attacking international communications are considered criminal. Presently, the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2008 addresses much wider issues which include provisions for the confiscation and repatriation of terrorist funds and assets.

In November 2017, Ghana security agencies and the emergency services, led a counter-terrorism exercise which was named "Exercise Home Shield". This was aimed to train the various participating security personnel and enhance their skills to be able to fight terrorism. The Ghana Immigration Service has also intensified its fight against terrorism. Through the immigration Act 2016, ACT 908, the Ghana immigration service is mandated with the responsibility to manage and patrol the borders of the country. In September 2019, more than sixty immigration officers had undergone a pre training exercise, which would prepare them towards any unforeseen event (GNA, 2019). In June 2019, about one hundred and twenty-five Ghanaian police officers also went through intensive training at Boti Falls in the Eastern Region, to prepare towards any unforeseen terrorist attacks in the country. This gave some assurances of the preparedness of the security forces to counter any terrorist attacks in the country.

The fact that Ghana has not been exposed to any terrorist attack so far, does not mean it is immune to it. The excess use of violence from security forces, and the general use of violence among citizens in their quest to resolve any misunderstanding, must be disbanded. Ghanaian citizens must render assistance to security forces by giving out credible information (Ghanaweb, 2019), while security forces must reduce, as much as possible, the use of violence towards the population to gain their assistance. Indeed, in the fight against terrorism, in August 2019, some Ghanaian soldiers were deployed to
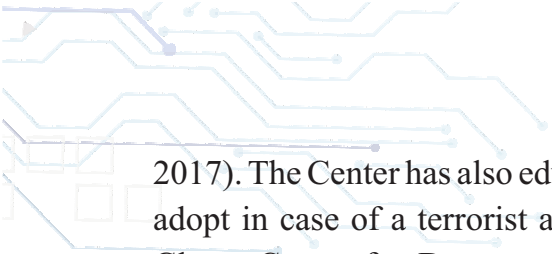
Yinaba, in the Upper East Region, to combat terrorism and secure the borders.

5.3 Role of Civil Society Organizations in countering violent extremism
Civil Society groups in Ghana have contributed significantly in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. Their activities are in line with Security Council resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), which "calls on all relevant actors to take into account, the meaningful participation and views of youth, recognizing that their marginalization is detrimental to building sustainable peace and countering violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism".

In Ghana, CSOs have worked to significantly reduce vulnerability of youth to terrorist recruitment. For example, the West Africa Centre for Counter-Extremism (WACCE) has worked to support national efforts to prevent Ghanaian youth from joining terrorist groups. According to report by the WACCE, two Ghanaian youth, Abdul Latif and his female counterpart who joined ISIS have been killed. The youth have always been the front-runners in the wake of terrorist influence. Recently, Ghana's reputation as a stable country was dented when reports emerged that graduates from Ghana had joined ISIS. The report revealed that ISIS is luring Ghanaian unemployed graduates with money to join the group. Moreover, the new social media, which reaches a large number of youth, has made it easy to target the youth.

In addition, CSOs in Ghana support the fight against terrorism through research and advocacy. Regarding research, CSOs study into the issues that drive terrorism and violent extremism. Through these research reports they are able to provide comprehensive information on the activities of extremists groups. Furthermore, CSOs offer training and engage the communities through advocacy. For example, WACCE engages in programs and holds meetings with young people, especially from Muslim communities which are more prone to terrorist influence and are also drenched in poverty (Kaledzi,
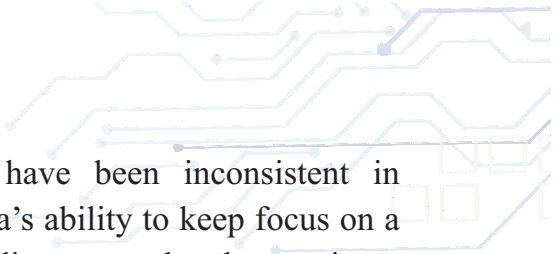
2017). The Center has also educated some youth on the various approaches to adopt in case of a terrorist attack (CitiNewsRoom, 2018). On its part, the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), with support from the US Embassy in Ghana, and in collaboration with the Ghana Immigration Service and the Ministry of National Security, works in selected border communities to raise citizens' awareness and consciousness on terrorism and violent extremism. The Center again creates platforms for interface engagements between members at the border communities and the security agencies. This would seek to bridge the communication gap between them, foster information sharing and create cordial relationships among them.

5.4 Initiatives by the religious bodies

The churches in Ghana have now become more security conscious. This is as a result of the terrorist attack in Dablo, in the northern part of Burkina Faso, where a priest and some members were murdered during church service. The Ghana Police Service has been training members of the Christian community on security, especially at the entrance of the churches. The churches have been advised to introduce body scanners at passageways. This method is intended to help fish out any possible armed person. Some churches have also set up committees composed of individuals within both the congregation and the Ghanaian security forces. Their task is to help train ushers and youth on methods to detect a suspicious person and which procedure to follow once one is spotted (Asiedu, 2019). These initiatives are important steps in preparing the communities against possible terrorists' attacks. The measures should however be intensified, and must spread systematically across the country.

5.5 Citizens' level of awareness

The ordinary citizens' level of awareness on security in general, and terrorism in particular is low. Most Ghanaians are oblivious of issues on terrorism and violent extremism. The media, which serves as a major source of information
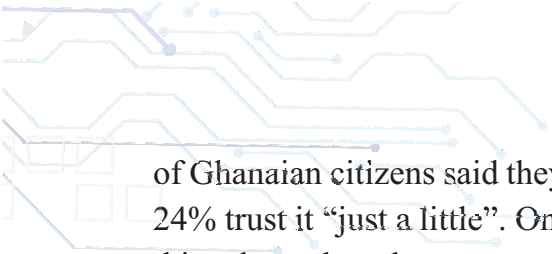
to majority of the Ghanaian population, have been inconsistent in highlighting the threat of terrorism. The media's ability to keep focus on a particular topic is hampered by a shift to trending news, thereby causing a gradual decline of news on terrorism. Related discussions on the emerging threat from Burkina Faso have a depth of information, but its spread is limited in public domain partially due to limits imposed by security services and government officials, but also because the media has given it limited attention. Dedicated hotlines for the public, to send relevant information to the counter-terrorism unit or to other security agencies, are barely of public domain if that exist. The imminent danger that violent extremism pose, calls for immediate attention and for a continuous sensitization by the media, and all other available platforms.

Although various religious bodies, the education sector, security agencies and other civil society organizations have taken it upon themselves to organize forums to educate the people, more systematic efforts need to be made to create public awareness.

5.6 Citizens' relation with the security service

Recently, various States across the world have intensified their security for the purpose of peace, stability and development. The security forces have been charged with the responsibility to protect the rights and property of the ordinary people. However, the relationship between the security sector and the civilians have been wrecked by mistrust and unacceptable behavior from both parties. This has been caused by the violent interaction that occurs between the security services and the civilians. Both sides have been attacking each other causing injuries and deaths.

Data from the Afrobarometer survey show that, historically, the military received a very high level of trust by the citizens. Indeed, in 2019, 73% of the respondents said they trusted the military "a lot" and this trend has continued over the years with minor drops in between. On the other hand, in 2017, 34%

of Ghanaian citizens said they trust the police forces "not at all" and another 24% trust it "just a little". Only about 18% said they trust the police "a lot"; this share has been constantly quite low during the last 10 years (Afrobarometer Data, 2019). The strong contrast showed by these trust levels demonstrate how the police fail to connect to the needs of citizens. Indeed, the rate at which both parties attack each other is very alarming. Frequently, the use of force from the security forces turns bloody. People are shot dead either deliberately or unknowingly. Citizens have been disfigured during demonstrations and held captive by the police without any formal charge (Bawah and Braimah, 2019). Just some examples, a thirty-four-year man lost his life after being physically attacked by a group of policemen in Pankrono, in the Ashanti region. The victim's brother who also run to his aid, and to rescue his brother, was arrested by the police. A taxi driver got blind after being attacked by a city guard in Kaneshie. The driver was smashed with a cement block, which led him to lose his eye, and consequentially lost his job as a result of his injury. Ultimately, seven innocent civilians lost their lives as the police mistakenly shot them. These types of episodes have generated an upsurge of assaults on security personnel at their daily posts by civilians.

Violent interactions between the security forces and the civilian population poses a severe threat to the potential ideas of a collaboration between the police force and citizens. The acceptance, the collaboration and the input of citizens is crucial for successful operations against terrorists, either by the police or by the military. Indeed, the local population has several things to offer to the success of security efforts: they know the environment better than any dispatched security personnel do; they have a much deeper and delicate access to information about cases of extremism, or violence in their community; and they can aid with their experience and long-term assessment of the security situation. Without a good relation between citizens and the officials of the security bodies, not only lots of potential information would be lost, but the overall counter-terrorism operations would be undermined.
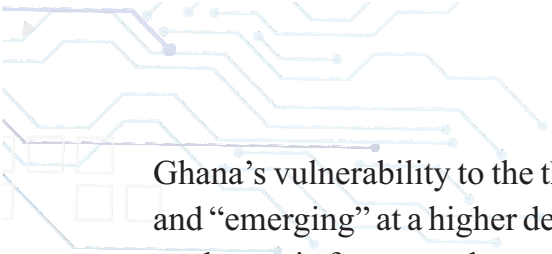
6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

In sum, the desk review sets out to provide critical information on Ghana's susceptibility to terrorism and violent extremism. The complexity and dynamic nature of terrorism have led to the use of intelligence gathering and cooperation among neighboring countries at the regional level. The globalized nature of security makes it fundamentally non-military and transnational in character with geographical adjacency as factor. Security from this perspective cuts across multiple sectors of both state and society, where the state alone does not hold a monopoly of either power or influence on security. The re-orientation of security from the imperative of external defense to the security of citizens makes security a shared responsibility and a public good with civil society having a key stake in tackling problems of such nature. Drawing on McCormick (2003: 481), terrorism is defined in this review as "an instrumental activity designed to achieve or help achieve a specified set of long-run and short-run objectives".

The incidence and spread of terrorism and violent extremism in the sub-region from northern states of Chad, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and further down to the coastal countries of Ghana, Togo and Benin is alarming. Countries in the Sahel zone are severely weakened or destabilized by terrorism as new terrorist groups emerge. Terrorist group operating in the sub-region are known and among them are: Islamic State (IS), Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Movement for the Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) and Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen (JNIM).

Ghana's vulnerability to the threat of terrorism is not "imagined", but "real", and "emerging" at a higher degree. Ghana's general risk to terrorism depends on domestic factors and external conditions. Drivers of terrorism and violent extremism in Ghana, did not vary significantly from known causes such as poverty, unemployment, poor governance, porous borders, corruption, unreliable institutions, transnational organized crimes, political alienation and religious radicalization. The influx of refugees from Burkina Faso is a phenomenon which terrorist can easily exploit to cross the border. Moreover, the general distrust of the northern population towards Ghanaians' security force, combined with a lack of government services, and a series of badly managed communal and political tensions, makes the northern part of Ghana a perfect environment for terrorism to occur and develop. Another danger which should not be underestimated, is the return of Ghanaian expatriate terrorists.

So far the incidents of terrorism in Ghana have been minor and have not led to deaths. However, some assessments on the risk of terrorism in Ghana by foreign governments are rather bleak with the government of the United Kingdom cautioning that terrorist attacks are imminent in Ghana with the threat of terrorist acts from groups like "AQIM and ISWA present a threat to the country. Ghana's active participation in peacekeeping operations by providing military support to troubled countries such as Mali, Ivory Coast, Sudan and other parts of the region has been identified as an avenue that exposes Ghana to security threats. This has heightened the country's risk to transnational terrorist attacks. The availability of small arms and light weapons in the country poses a great threat to Ghana's stability.

As a response to the threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism, Ghana has introduced some legislative, and institutional instruments, structures, and frameworks to apparently counter all forms of terrorism, and its related incidences. Aside from its anti-terrorism mechanisms, conventions, and protocols of domestic, and international standards, it could boast of anti-
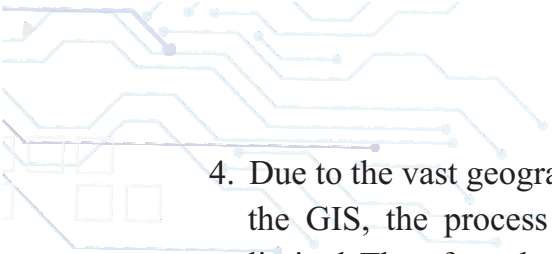
terror agencies, and their close collaboration with transnational security apparatus not limited to the Police, the Military, and the intelligence services.
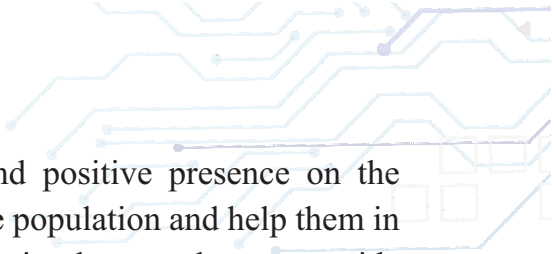
6.2 Recommendations for Ghana

For the case of Ghana, a specific set of recommendations must be presented. The overall trend shows terrorist activities have moved from Sahel to West Africa, and now moving towards Coastal States. The country of Ghana presents a combination of porous border and uncontrolled flow of migrants from Burkina Faso, which constitute the right opportunity for terrorist to easily cross the border. Furthermore, the presence of old or poorly managed intercommunal grievances, and an overall distrust towards security forces, makes the northern part of the country a perfect environment for terrorists to settle and proliferate. In addition, the great availability of small arms and light weapons in the region, and the possibility to obtain locally produced firearms made by blacksmiths across the country, decrease the cost-opportunity of choosing violence as a means to settle disagreements.

1. It is fundamental to strengthen the arm control to increase the cost-opportunity of violence.

2. It is important to promote serious inter-community dialogue, in order to mitigate tension which could be exploited by terrorists' own purposes.

3. Security forces need to be constantly trained to deal with terrorism and on how to handle the population. Indeed, the local population is an important factor in any successful counter-terrorism process. A violent interaction between the security forces and citizens could jeopardize the efforts for a stable collaboration. This would further be undermining the State legitimacy and helping terrorists to legitimatize their activities and their presence.

4. Due to the vast geographical landscape and the limited resources for the GIS, the process of strengthening border security controls is limited. Therefore, the help of the population become fundamental. To gain information from the population, community members need to be made critical part of the fight against terrorism. It is important not to create fear which could evolve in general panic, but just to create awareness in order to structure a needed collaboration.

5. Local authorities and religious leaders must use their influence to educate their members over this issue.

6. The educational sector, mostly from the basic school to the senior high level, should include in their syllabus courses regarding violence, extremism and peace. Schools should establish peace clubs and peacebuilding projects. The creation of new generations more resilient towards violence, would assure the long-term stability of the State.

6.3 Conclusion

Terrorist groups, like insurgency movements, try to win the local population support through the creation of "parallel" systems and institutions that help provide legitimacy for their future actions. Public goods are provided as rewards, and punishment to establish law and order. Through the provision of public goods and security, terrorist groups gain legitimacy and subsequently they gain the support of the local population. Once the support is gained, they embed themselves with the local population, becoming able to engage with them more directly. In order to implement a successful counter-terrorism response, the resolution of the so called "problem of information starvation" becomes crucial. Government needs to obtain from the local population, reliable and specific information necessary to precisely identify the members of the terrorist organization. To do that, it must "win the heart and mind" of the people and re-establish the legitimacy of the government in those areas affected by terrorism.

Security forces must maintain a constant and positive presence on the ground. They must peacefully interact with the population and help them in their daily life struggles. The Government must implement plans to provide those services that were previously missing, and which were negatively affecting their daily life. A constant mediation of tension between security forces and the population, and an active research of common ground to settle grievances among communities is needed. These set of actions should lead to gather relevant information, to identify members of terrorist organisations and to avoid harming any innocents. Indeed, it is not possible to overcome the problem of information starvation with the use of indiscriminate violence. The latter would only increase the population's support for the terrorist groups. Consequently, it would facilitate terrorist groups to overcome the "collective action problem", which pertain to recruiting process. The local population would begin to see them as freedom fighters against a brutal State, and they would start to take part in the organization struggle. This would ultimately lead to the escalation and persistency of the phenomenon.
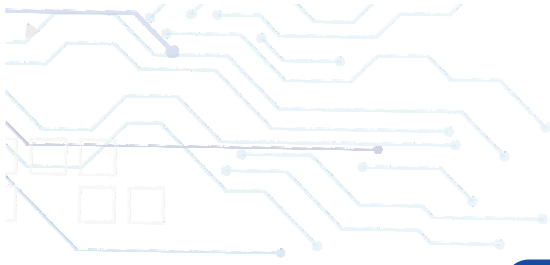
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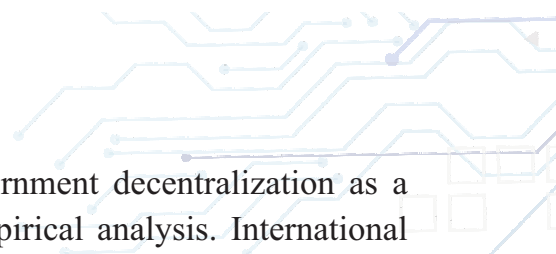
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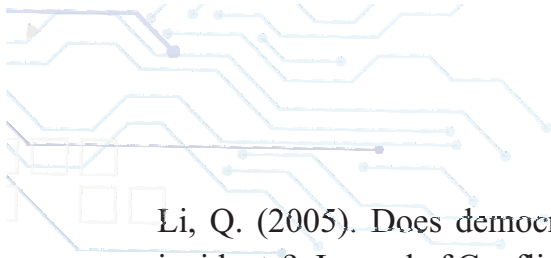
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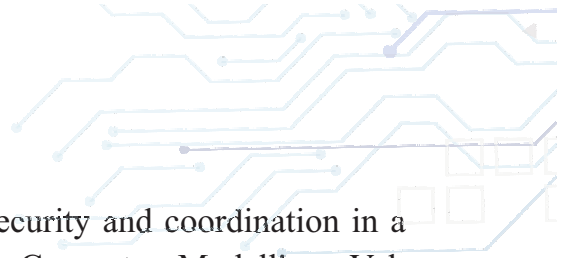
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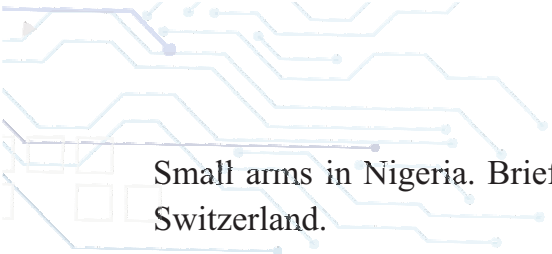
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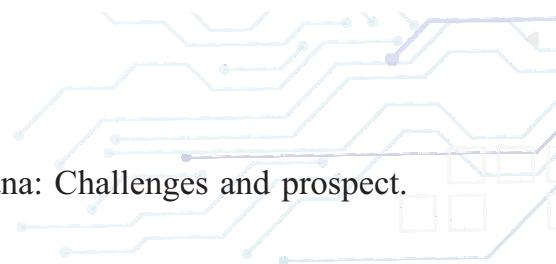
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