National Security Threats in West Africa

• These threats include dangers to countries strategic interest, values, and welfare.
• They can be endogenous, exogenous, or transnational in nature.
• In West Africa these threats may embody uncertainties with varying degrees of objectives and end states.
  • Low intensity threat levels -> Highly violent and dangerous dimensions
  • Ex: Uncertainty of human development, youth unemployment, and land distribution and ownership rights are all characterized as low intensity threats, if left neglected can escalate into violent threats.
  • Violent threats have the capabilities to transcend national borders and affect the stability of neighboring countries.
Examples of current National Security Threats in West Africa

- Violent Extremist Organizations and Terrorism:
  - Boko Haram: In the axis region of Nigeria, Cameroon, and Niger.
  - Armed Violence among Fulani, Dongo, and Dozos: Affecting the territorial sovereignty of Mali
  - Al Qaeda in the Maghrib (AKIM)
Key Attributes of Security Sector Leaders

• Leaders must gain a realistic awareness of internal and external threats and understand the socio-political dynamics in the region.

• VISION: Have clarity of intentions and foresight of likely outcomes.

• TRUST: Must lead a process devoid of personal interest nor biases and submit to transparency to gain citizens trust and confidence.

• LEGITIMACY: Contributes to gaining the publics’ trust and command the respect of subordinates.

• ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY: Must remain accountable for their actions and decisions.
Key Attributes of Security Sector Leaders Con’t

• HONESTY & HUMILITY: As a leader you have to be honest with yourself about your decisions.
  • Leaders need to have the requisite skills, knowledge, or the technical acumen of competence to gain the public trust to achieve desired or strategic goals, objectives, and missions.
Leadership Challenges

• The multiplicity of military and security forces under variety of command elements will make it very difficult to articulate clear threats to national security.

• Lack of coordination between or among security agencies competing for attention and resources.

• More examples:
  - Lack of financial and logistical supports
  - Very limited tactical and technical capabilities

“Good intentions, clear objectives and mission accomplishment do not ascend into victory without timely financial and logistical supports.” - BJS
Governance Process

• Legitimacy and acceptance: Attained thru an inclusive process of consultation with cross section and segments of society.
  • Civil Society organizations
  • Religious communities
  • Student organizations
  • Media
  • Political parties
  • Rural peripheral communities
  • Other branches of government
Leveraging Partnerships

• Leveraging regional and international partnerships harness the synergy of resources, capabilities and political support
  • EX: ECOWAS, ECA, and SADC all have security protocols which seek to preserve the peace and stability of the region for broad base development.
Thank You

Any Questions?