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Thomas Dempsey

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# **Purveyors of Terror: Counterterrorism in Africa's Failing States**

**Thomas Dempsey**

Weak and failing states in Africa continue to offer challenging environments for counterterrorism campaigns in both a military and a civil law enforcement context. Weakly governed and ungoverned spaces in these states offer venues that violent extremist groups continue to exploit as platforms for terrorism. These groups – Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Al-Shabaab in Somalia are simply two of the more prominent ex-

state actors themselves represent violent extremist groups involved in acts of terror. Others play central roles in the mediation of disputes (administration of justice), delivery of police services, or as military surrogates in providing for local defense.

I argued in *Counterterrorism in African Failed States* that collaboration between US military forces and law enforcement

agencies is essential to effective counterterrorism interventions in African failed states.<sup>1</sup> Subsequent counterterrorism operations in the region have confirmed that argument, and African senior police and military leaders increasingly emphasize the importance of collaboration between military and police forces.<sup>2</sup> In addition to military forces and law en-

forcement services, counterterrorism in Africa must effectively address the need for effective partners in the justice sector – prosecutors (and defense counsels), courts, prisons and corrections – in implementing counterterrorism strategies. All three components of counterterrorism strategies must confront the reality that weakly governed and ungov-

***The continuing prevalence of weakly governed and ungoverned spaces in Africa is, in part, a product of colonial security sector legacies combined with resource-poor African public sectors.***

amples – use these weakly governed and ungoverned spaces to recruit new followers, build capability and capacity, and launch new terrorist attacks while avoiding the scrutiny and attention of African security sectors and their international partners. A defining feature of these weakly governed and ungoverned spaces in Africa is the predominance of non-state security actors, including local militias, neighborhood watch organizations, traditional hunting societies, and traditional, customary, or religious justice processes that operate outside of the formal court system. Some of these non-

1 Thomas Dempsey, “Counterterrorism in African Failed States: Challenges and Potential Solutions,” United States Army War College, *Institute for Strategic Studies*, (2006): 26-27.

2 Senior African military and police officers in discussion with the author, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Zambia, and Mozambique, March, 2014.

erned spaces are ground zero for counterterrorism on the continent, and that non-state security actors are a defining feature of those spaces.

To address the purveyors of terror – in most cases, non-state security actors like Al-Shabaab in Somalia or AQIM in the Sahel – counterterrorism strategies in ungoverned and weakly governed spaces in Africa must address all of the non-state security actors that proliferate in those areas. Strategies must overcome the influence of non-state security actors that impede or actively resist counterterrorism efforts (like local militias in Northern Mali), which may not be actively supporting AQIM agendas, but are nonetheless hostile to Malian state security services. At the same time, these strategies must accommodate, and may in some cases partner with, non-state security actors that have local legitimacy and functionality to counter violent extremist groups that have become purveyors of terror. Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) forces in 1998 succeeded in countering deliberate programs of terror by Revolutionary United Front (RUF) forces in Sierra Leone largely through collaboration with local non-state actors like the Kamajor hunting societies; Kenyan components of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) have forged similar relationships with local Somali clan militias that are hostile to Al-Shabaab. Counterterrorism strategies that effectively counter negative

non-state security actors while developing effective partnerships with more functional and legitimate non-state security actors may be able to significantly improve counterterrorism outcomes.

African security sectors and their external partners must also recognize the potential risks of partnering with non-state security actors. “Franchising” the state security function is unlikely to contribute to stronger state security institutions. Collaboration with security actors that operate outside of the formal institutions of governance creates challenges of accountability and oversight, and can potentially undermine effective governance, especially at the local level. Counterterrorism strategists seeking to partner with non-state security actors will need to develop effective measures for mitigating these risks. External partners will also need to negotiate the significant barriers in national and international law to partnering with security actors that lack the formal sanction of state institutions of governance.

### **VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN WEAKLY GOVERNED AND UNGOVERNED SPACES IN AFRICA**

Since the publication of *Counterterrorism in African Failed States* in 2006, the terrorism threat emanating from weak and failing states in Sub-Saharan Africa has continued to grow. The collapse of governance in Northern Mali and the corresponding rise of AQIM and its

partners in the region, the extension of Al-Shabaab terrorist activities into other areas of East Africa, the growing influence of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria, and the escalating violence in the Central African Republic (CAR) between both Christian and Muslim extremist groups all demonstrate the persistence of violent, extremist-inspired acts of terror on the continent. The one feature that these groups all share is an affinity for the weakly governed and ungoverned spaces that continue to exist on the African continent.

The continuing prevalence of weakly governed and ungoverned spaces in Africa is, in part, a product of colonial security sector legacies combined with resource-poor African public sectors. Colonial regimes built security sectors that were concentrated in a very small number of major cities and in areas of economic significance to the colonial power. Rural and geographically remote areas lacking significant mineral or other resources were neglected, both in security terms and in a more general development context, resulting in poor infrastructure, limited government services, and minimal state security presence. Resource-poor post-colonial regimes have been hard pressed to correct these imbalances, although a post-Cold War wave of democratic and governance reform is beginning to change this dynamic in several African states. In Senegal and Niger, for example, movement towards more effective and

legitimate democratic processes has been accompanied by sustained Security Sector Reform (SSR)<sup>3</sup> efforts to improve how the police, military, and justice systems provide security to citizens and communities. This positive movement is reducing the areas of weakly governed or ungoverned space to more limited areas along the more remote borders. In Liberia, however, successful political reform and focused SSR has been unable to overcome long-standing neglect of development and governance outside of the national capital, and there is a real risk that areas of weak governance are actually expanding, especially as the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) peacekeeping mission continues its withdrawal.

Areas in which state presence is limited, communications are poor, and infrastructure is almost non-existent have provided both safety and a source of recruitment for violent extremist groups. Safety is provided by the limited capacity of African security sectors and their

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3 Security Sector Reform refers to those policies, processes, and activities designed to improve how the state security sector – including direct security providers, oversight and accountability processes, and civil society stakeholders – provides security to citizens, communities, and the institutions of the state itself. The objectives of SSR include state security services that are effective, legitimate, accountable, responsive to the needs of the people, and observant of human rights. See US Agency for International Development, US Department of Defense, US Department of State, *Statement on Security Sector Reform*, Washington, DC, January 2009, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/115810.pdf>.

external partners to maintain a presence in, or project influence into, these remote areas. Recruitment to violent extremist groups is frequently aided by the presence of politically and economically marginalized local populations. These local communities may have little identification with regimes centered in the capital and feel little or no loyalty to a state that has failed in fundamental ways to address local needs and grievances. The prevalence of local conflict – frequently a product of ineffective security sectors and an absence of effective justice mediation mechanisms – also fuels the growth of violent extremist groups, as the current situation in the Central African Republic illustrates.<sup>4</sup>

While weakly governed and ungoverned spaces in Africa have traditionally predominated in rural and border areas, as well as geographically remote areas of the interior, these spaces are more currently proliferating in large African urban areas. David Kilcullen has detailed this process in his recent book, *Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla*.<sup>5</sup> The rapid expansion of the urban periphery in major African cities is overwhelming public services, particularly security services. African police forces and justice systems, already overstressed by the demands of policing and

adjudicating disputes in large municipalities, have little effective presence in these vast urban slum areas, as researchers like Bruce Baker have noted.<sup>6</sup> Residents of these sprawling, overpopulated, and underserved neighborhoods largely fend for themselves and share many of the negative attitudes towards the state that are already prevalent in remote rural and border areas.

The extension of weakly governed (and even ungoverned) space into the African urban periphery poses particular challenges to counterterrorism strategies. The attack on the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi in 2013 compellingly illustrated the increased vulnerability of the state to violent extremists when those extremists can exploit weakly governed spaces in African urban areas. These areas not only offer access to lucrative targets for terrorist groups, they offer connections to national, regional, and global air and maritime transportation networks, which can extend the reach of local groups like Al-Shabaab into new areas of operation.

### NON-STATE SECURITY ACTORS IN WEAKLY GOVERNED AND UNGOVERNED SPACES

A shared attribute of almost all weakly governed and ungoverned spaces in

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4 “Central African Republic: Better Late than Never,” *International Crisis Group* 96 (2013).

5 David Kilcullen, *Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla* (London: Oxford University Press, 2013), 60.

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6 Bruce Baker, “Nonstate Policing: Expanding the Scope for Tackling Africa’s Urban Violence,” *Africa Center for Strategic Studies* 7 (2010).

Africa is the proliferation of non-state actors in every area of public security and safety. Non-state security actors range from simple neighborhood watch groups focused on local public safety to large, heavily-armed militias that provide a surrogate for (or, in some cases, direct competition with or opposition to) state military forces. Baker has provided an excellent taxonomy of groups involved in non-state security in Africa in his detailed study of non-state policing on the continent.<sup>7</sup> For purposes of simplification here, they can be divided into four broad categories: 1) local neighborhood watch groups; 2) local policing service providers; 3) paramilitary self-defense or militia groups; and 4) local justice and mediation providers.

Neighborhood watch groups play a primarily passive role of observation and early warning, similar to a “night watchman” function. They typically operate in partnership with state security services or with other local non-state actors that provide more active policing or paramilitary services. Liberian Neighborhood Watch Teams are an example of this category, originally organized spontaneously in response to rising crime and lack of an adequate response by the newly reorganized, post-civil war Liberian National Police (LNP). They have since been officially endorsed as active LNP partners, an institution struggling

to overcome a chronic lack of resources and limited success in post-war reform efforts.<sup>8</sup>

Non-state local policing service providers deliver active policing services: Maintaining public order; handling local disputes; enforcing societal norms; and helping to resolve (or limit) conflicts between or among community members. Their primary focus is internal and, in Africa, they are most commonly associated with traditional ethno-linguistic clan or tribal associations, or with sectarian religious communities. Prior to their militarization during the civil conflict of the 1990s, hunting societies in Sierra Leone were examples of this category,<sup>9</sup> as are the religious police commonly found in Muslim communities in Northern Nigeria.<sup>10</sup> These groups are usually unarmed or lightly armed, and employ limited force in a civil, rather than a military, context.

Paramilitary self-defense or militia groups are overtly military organizations, focused on defense of the group, community, village, or region against other non-state actors or, in some cases, against the security services of the state. They are generally large, frequent-

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<sup>7</sup> Bruce Baker, *Multi-Choice Policing in Africa*, (Stockholm: Nordic Africa Institute, 2008): 79.

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<sup>8</sup> “Neighborhood Watch Teams to be Reinforced,” *The New Dawn* (Liberia), July 8, 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Dempsey, “The Role of Non-State Security Actors in Security Sector Reform: Hunting Societies in Sierra Leone,” in *Civil Power in Irregular Conflict*, ed. Franklin D. Kramer et al. (Arlington: Center for Naval Analyses, 2008), 134.

<sup>10</sup> Baker, *Multi-Choice Policing in Africa*, 84-86.

ly heavily armed with military-grade weaponry, including crew-served weapons – machine guns, rocket propelled grenades (RPGs), even mortars in some cases. Examples of this category include the hunting societies in Sierra Leone, which evolved into paramilitary “Civil Defense Forces” as a result of the conflict with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in the mid- and late 1990s.<sup>11</sup> More recent examples are the Christian and Muslim sectarian militias in the Central African Republic.<sup>12</sup>

Groups providing local justice and mediation are especially prevalent in areas where the formal state system of justice lacks both legitimacy and functionality. Examples include customary and traditional justice processes rooted in local tribal and clan social structures, sectarian justice systems (including local versions of Sharia law), and local, community-based dispute resolution bodies.<sup>13</sup> Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) processes are an important element of this latter category. ADR processes incorporate different local, non-state justice processes, helping to address fragmented local justice systems in communities

with ethnically or religiously diverse populations. ADR systems have been especially prominent in Africa, providing an alternative to a formal justice system that is badly deficient in both local legitimacy and functionality.<sup>14</sup>

## NON-STATE SECURITY ACTORS AND COUNTERTERRORISM

The prevalence of non-state security actors in weakly governed and ungoverned African spaces requires counterterrorism strategies that address this element of the security environment. Military, police, and justice counterterrorism components will confront unique challenges from non-state actors in each of their functional areas. They will also enjoy significant opportunities to leverage some of those non-state actors as partners in counterterrorism campaigns.

Effective counterterrorism strategies require the creation of a permissive environment in which non-military stakeholders from the law enforcement and justice sector can fulfill their appropriate roles. High levels of organized violence involving multiple paramilitary groups, militias, and local defense forces characterize most weakly governed and ungoverned spaces in Africa. Some of those groups are themselves pepe-

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11 Dempsey, “The Role of Non-State Security Actors,” 134-135.

12 For a description of the militias active in CAR, see “Central African Republic: Better Late than Never,” *International Crisis Group* 96 (2013).

13 For one of the best reviews of non-state actors in the justice arena, see *Rule of Law Handbook: A Practitioner’s Guide for Judge Advocates* (Charlottesville: Center for Law and Military Operations, 2011), 99-108.

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14 Ernest E. Uwazie, “Alternative Dispute Resolution in Africa: Preventing Conflict and Enhancing Stability,” *Africa Center for Strategic Studies* 16 (2011): 3-4.

trators of terrorism and purveyors of violent extremism. The military counterterrorism component must address this reality.

At a minimum, counterterrorism campaigns in these areas of Africa must field sufficient military force to defeat non-state security actors with military capabilities who are perpetrating terrorist acts themselves or providing support to other groups who do so. More broadly, the military component of counterterrorism campaigns must field sufficient force to stabilize the operating environment and reduce the general armed threat below the military threshold. In other words, the military counterterrorism component must create a sufficiently benign environment that civil police forces can maintain public order using appropriate police weapons and procedures, including providing necessary protection for justice venues and processes.

Unfortunately, many African security sectors, even with the assistance of external partners, lack the military capacity to accomplish this task, especially in weakly governed and ungoverned spaces where military power projection is particularly challenging. As a result, African security sectors routinely partner with local non-state actors that have military capabilities. Such partnerships were a hallmark of ECOMOG operations

in Sierra Leone in the 1990s<sup>15</sup> and have been a common feature of AMISOM operations in Somalia.<sup>16</sup> Local non-state military actors have knowledge of the physical and human terrain, local presence, and the experience operating in the local environment. They also may enjoy a measure of local legitimacy that yields valuable intelligence about military threats and about the operations of violent extremists groups that are the object of the counterterrorism campaign.

Once the military counterterrorism component has established a stable and secure environment, responsibility for, and leadership of, counterterrorism efforts shifts to its civil law enforcement and policing counterparts. African police services are even more limited in capacity, capability, and presence than their military counterparts in weakly governed and ungoverned spaces. As a result, local non-state actors that play a policing or neighborhood watch function are likely to emerge as central players as counterterrorism operations transition to a policing and law enforcement focus. During this phase, non-state security actors can impede, or obstruct altogether, police investigations and efforts to apprehend terrorist suspects. Alternatively, especially where local non-state actors enjoy a measure of lo-

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15 Dempsey, "The Role of Non-State Security Actors," 136.

16 Senior East African military officers with AMISOM experience in discussion by the author, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, August 2013.

cal legitimacy and functionality, these groups can materially assist the state security sector – police and law enforcement – in locating and taking into custody perpetrators of terrorist acts and members of violent extremist groups that support and sponsor those acts.

The final area where non-state actors can impact counterterrorism may be the most important: local justice processes. A chronic shortcoming in counterterrorism campaigns in Africa has been lack of legitimate, timely, and effective justice processes for adjudicating the cases of terrorist suspects and of civilians detained in the course of counterterrorism campaigns. Weak formal justice processes are even more problematic in weakly governed and ungoverned spaces where those processes are frequently absent altogether, or are actually negative players in the security architecture. Justice venues that are corrupt – or perceived by local communities as repressive, capricious, and brutal – are an all too common feature of African formal justice systems.

Successful military and policing components to counterterrorism campaigns that deliver violent extremists, terrorist suspects, and, in many cases, large numbers of innocent civilians to corrupt or repressive formal justice systems may actually contribute to further terrorist acts. Unfortunately, justice reform is a complex, expensive, and long-term undertaking that seldom gener-

ates immediate results. In a very real sense, counterterrorism planners are frequently stuck with the formal justice system in place, regardless of its defects.

***“Once the military counterterrorism component has established a stable and secure environment, responsibility for, and leadership of, counterterrorism efforts shifts to its civil law enforcement and policing counterparts.”***

Interventions in that justice system are unlikely to be successful and may be a practical impossibility, given the political sensitivity associated with interference in adjudication processes.

Customary and traditional justice processes or systems of religious law, where they exist, may have more legitimacy and functionality than the formal state system. Unfortunately, these systems are almost always rooted in ethno-linguistic tribal structures or in sectarian religious practices. In diverse communities with ethnic or sectarian religious divisions, these non-state justice processes may actually contribute

to ongoing conflicts and disputes. In the worst cases, local justice processes may be complicit with, or active promoters of, violent extremist-inspired terrorism. The devolution of the Islamic Courts in Somalia from relatively legitimate and functional local justice fora, rooted deeply in the Somali clan system, to agents of violent Islamic extremism is an excellent example.<sup>17</sup>

In this setting, local, non-state Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) processes, where they exist, may offer an attractive alternative to the formal justice system. To the degree that such processes have local legitimacy and functionality, they can provide a bridge between and among local groups that are in conflict. They may provide an effective means of identifying innocent local citizens detained in error in the process of a counterterrorism campaign and affecting their release from custody. ADR may also provide a platform for discriminating between rank-and-file followers of violent extremist groups – who are better handled through some combination of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) and restorative justice – and hardcore purveyors of terror who are continuing threats to themselves and to the public. A better solution for this latter group of hardcore offenders may be referral to a special tribunal specifically con-

stituted to provide a more legitimate and functional venue within the formal state justice sector. The Special Court for Sierra Leone offers an example of this approach.<sup>18</sup> At the time the Special Court was organized in 2000, the formal Sierra Leone justice system was completely non-functional and lacking in legitimacy, having been badly compromised through almost two decades of conflict. A hybrid that combined both national (formal) and international components, the Special Court was able to bring a veneer of legitimacy and a functional authority to a highly contentious and potentially destabilizing justice process for senior RUF and Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) members. Despite its many defects, accurately chronicled by the International Crisis Group,<sup>19</sup> the Special Court permitted justice processes to be pursued that might otherwise have undermined the transition from conflict of a still very fragile Sierra Leone state.

### MITIGATING THE RISKS OF PARTNERING WITH NON-STATE SECURITY ACTORS

While partnering with non-state security actors offers unique benefits to counterterrorism operations in Africa, it also presents serious risks. Those risks are different for each of the broad

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<sup>17</sup> “Can the Somali Crisis be Contained?,” *International Crisis Group* 116 (2006): 10-11.

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<sup>18</sup> For a description and critique of this approach, see “The Special Court for Sierra Leone: Promises and Pitfalls of a ‘New Model,’” *International Crisis Group* 16 (2003).

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3.

categories of non-state security actors: Paramilitary and militia groups, actors that fulfill neighborhood watch functions and deliver policing services, and non-state justice and dispute resolution processes. Counterterrorism campaigns that embrace partnership with any or all of these non-state actors will need to carefully examine the risks involved and develop mitigating strategies.

Non-state actors in every category enjoy varying degrees of local legitimacy and functionality. Some groups are little more than criminal groups operating under a fig leaf of social service provision. Others are products of, and deeply vested in, intra- and inter-communal violence and ongoing local conflicts. Groups with high levels of local legitimacy and functionality—for example, hunting societies that are respected in the local village and routinely intervene to maintain order, resolve or limit disputes, and protect the safety of individual villagers—present the most desirable partners. But even groups with high levels of local legitimacy and functionality may be a liability in areas where those groups are involved in local conflicts. While collaboration with “anti-balaka” Christian self-defense groups in CAR may lend legitimacy to counterterrorism operations in the eyes of Christian communities, it is likely to de-legitimize those operations in the eyes of Muslim communities that are being victimized by “anti-balaka” paramilitary bands.

In general, collaboration with certain paramilitary and militia groups offers the most tangible and immediate operational benefits for the military counterterrorism component. They offer an armed presence on the ground, sources of local intelligence, guides for intervening military forces, and auxiliaries for overtaxed ground combat units that are almost never deployed in sufficient strength for the missions they are assigned. Unfortunately, groups with military capabilities are those groups most likely to be active participants in local conflicts. Even where their local opponents may be associated with violent extremist groups that are closely associated with ongoing terrorist activities, partnering with such non-state actors runs the risk of deepening those local conflicts and alienating large sections of already hostile and suspicious local communities.

Non-state actors in the military space are also more likely to be involved in human rights abuses due to their greater capacity for use of force and their inherent lack of accountability and oversight. Lightly armed or unarmed “tribal police” and neighborhood watches may be subject to some levels of societal control and limits to their authority. Heavily armed bands of drug- and alcohol-abusing young men, accustomed to the routine use of violence, are not.

Military counterterrorism commanders who plan to collaborate actively with



non-state military partners will need to address several issues to mitigate the risks of that relationship. Some means of providing oversight and accountability of non-state partners will be required. Assigning military advisors to accompany those non-state actors can help to address this, but may also increase the risks associated with partnership: the presence of advisors may not prevent abuses, but it may provide a highly visible association of the state military component with those abuses. Compensation and support for non-state military auxiliaries must also be addressed. To the extent that the rank-and-file members of local militias are unpaid, or inadequately paid or supported, they are more likely to prey on local civilian communities for that pay and support.

At the strategic level, counterterrorism planners also need to assess the impact

of endorsing non-state military actors on the state “monopoly of force.” Given that the employment of military force is almost universally accepted as the unique purview of national armed forces and an exercise of national sovereignty, the political costs of partnership may be high. Those political costs will need to be assessed both with external partners and elected and political leaders at the national and local levels.

External partners may confront unique barriers to collaboration with non-state military actors. Security assistance among Western democracies is regarded as a state-to-state activity generally affected at the national, bilateral level. In many cases, there are statutory and legal barriers to providing security assistance, especially military security assistance, outside of a state context.

Collaboration with neighborhood watch groups and local non-state policing service providers entails both more and less risk than collaboration with non-state paramilitary actors. Non-state actors in these functional areas lack the capacity for severe abuse that their paramilitary counterparts have and, as noted above, are more easily subjected to societal control. On the other hand, delivery of police services is much more deeply rooted in the governance process than are military activities. Delivery of police services is a direct and immediate manifestation of state presence and a central feature of the formal governance process. Accepting non-state actors in this role is likely to have an immediate and negative impact on the perceived legitimacy and functionality of state institutions, especially at the local level. While it may offer short-term benefits to overstressed police forces, it may also make the reform of those police forces more difficult and problematic.

The most effective means of mitigating the risk with non-state police actors may be to build a formal state association with those actors. Finding a way to lend the imprimatur of state authority to local non-state security providers – if accompanied by some oversight structure on the state side and a limited provision of state resources to compensate security providers – may mitigate the risk of accepting their functional roles. Linking these informal providers of security to the formal structures of local

governance may not only mitigate the risk, but also increase the value of the non-state actors as security partners. Niger has been exploring this approach as an element of its decentralization program. In converting appointed local governance positions to locally-elected offices, they are embracing a security role for local non-state actors that are known to the newly elected local officials and which enjoy some level of legitimacy and functionality with those leaders and their constituencies.

Partnerships with locally recognized Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) processes may represent the least risk and greatest return to non-state partnership in counterterrorism strategies. The downside of this association is the potentially negative impact on rule of law and justice system functionality on the formal side. ADR processes are not likely to be helpful in addressing issues of corruption, and may prove as vulnerable to being suborned by violent extremist groups with access to large reserves of cash as their formal sector counterparts. These processes are also much less amenable to the checks and balances of the formal legal system, even where those checks and balances have limited functionality.

One means of mitigating risk in partnering with non-state justice actors is to institute some degree of formal sector judicial review of decisions by ADR or other non-state justice processes.

Providing a formal justice sector component to counterterrorism task forces operating in weakly governed and ungoverned African spaces could facilitate the implementation of this measure, with the magistrate or justice official accompanying counterterrorism police and military elements providing a direct link to local justice processes.

Another potential means of mitigating risk is controlling the types of cases that are referred to local ADR and non-state justice processes. Referring the most serious cases to the formal system, while leaving less serious cases to the purview of local justice actors, may help render the challenge of processing large numbers of suspects and detainees more manageable. Again, incorporating a formal justice sector component to counterterrorism teams deploying to African weakly governed and ungoverned spaces may facilitate this approach. The Alternative Dispute Resolution Programme pursued by Ghana during 2007-2013<sup>20</sup> offers an example of how a process blending ADR with formal justice proceedings can be implemented.

## CONCLUSION

The prevalence of weakly governed and ungoverned space in African states continues to offer venues for violent extremists groups to plan and launch acts

of terror. The extension of these areas into African urban centers elevates the risk of terrorist attack and extends that risk to areas well beyond the region. At the same time, these areas facilitate the proliferation of non-state security actors in a variety of roles, complicating the implementation of counterterrorism campaigns by military forces, police services, and justice officials.

Successful counterterrorist strategists will need to learn how to navigate these non-state waters. Countering negative non-state actors and leveraging potential non-state partners will be key to extending counterterrorism efforts into these difficult operating environments. Non-state security actors in the military, policing, and justice functional areas are a given in weakly governed and ungoverned areas of the continent. Partnership with some of these actors is probably unavoidable. Counterterrorism strategists must develop practical and feasible measures to minimize the risks and optimize the advantages of those partnerships. ☉

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<sup>20</sup> Uwazie, "Alternative Dispute Resolution in Africa," 3-4.



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