

## Drug Gangs Deployed Against Mali

*Drug smuggling networks spanning Africa provide the basis for threats to nations. The case of Mali, Part I.*

The war plan that the London-centered international financial empire has been carrying out against the nations of West Africa acquired a significant increase in offensive capability when drug-trafficking networks, under the guise of Islamic jihadists or Salafists, and supposedly linked to a mythical, centralized al-Qaeda, hijacked an attempt by local Tuaregs to declare independence of the North after the Mali Army abandoned its northern outposts following a March 22 coup in the capital, Bamako. By June 26, the jihadist militias had consolidated their control of northern Mali.

The coup was carried out by a group of soldiers with no perspective on running the country; it left Mali leaderless, paralyzed its governing institutions, and paved the way for foreign-directed and better-supplied gangs to establish their control of the North, an area larger than France.

African sources report that Europe and the United States do not consider the takeover of northern Mali to be a security threat to them, since they consider that only kidnapping for ransom and drug running are involved. Therefore, there is no pressure to do anything.

If the establishment of an apparatus to undermine the nations in the region is not considered a priority for Western nations, the only conclusion that can be drawn is that it must be a condoned policy.

So many impediments have been placed in the way of efforts to mobilize a West African peacekeeping force to restore a functioning govern-

ment and institutions in Bamako, as a first step to regaining control of northern Mali, that African sources fear that it may never come to pass.

A U.S. State Department source projects that it will take at least a year. There is a May 2013 deadline for election of a government in Mali that must be met before the Western nations will even consider supporting actions in northern Mali. The putschist elements in the present transitional government will never allow an election, so no force will ever be established, said one African source, unless the Western policy changes.

Before President Obama's unconstitutional war against Libya, it was already known that northern Mali was vulnerable. The attack on Libya sealed its fate.

Prior to the coup, northern Mali had already been a staging ground for drugs, primarily from Ibero-America, to be smuggled across the Sahara to Europe.

A portion of the enormous amount of narco-dollars associated with this drug traffic has corrupted the institutions of many of the nations in West Africa, including Mali, which explains that nation's susceptibility to the coup by lower-ranking officers. This corruption of the leading layers of society, also contributed to the lack of a strong reaction from the population in favor of the government, and against the putschists.

Many of the security issues confronting Africa ultimately derive from the scourge of drug trafficking. In addition to the drugs from Ibero-America,

drugs from Afghanistan and Asia are increasingly coming to eastern Africa and South Africa, as a result of a Russian crackdown on transshipment.

The north of Mali not only remains a staging ground for drug smuggling; it is also being turned into a base for special terrorist operations, like those in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Many observers in Africa have warned against this development, starting with Foreign Minister Mohamed Bazoum of the neighboring nation of Niger, who was in Washington on May 21. He warned there that Niger had intelligence of involvement by Pakistanis in Mali.

This takeover of a large ungoverned area by people engaged in criminal activity, and who have adopted a jihadi type of Islamic identity, using Sharia law to impose their will on people in the region who do not want to cooperate, is providing a base for the same operatives who were funded by Arab Gulf sheikdoms, who organized the assaults on the Libyan government, and who are doing the same now against the government in Syria.

Qatar, the most significant on-the-ground operator in Libya during that crisis, is regularly sending flights to three airstrips in northern Mali. West African sources suspect that money for recruitment, supplies, and arms are being brought in, in a rerun of the operation in Libya, despite Qatar's claims that it is only bringing humanitarian aid.

All of the nations in the region are vulnerable to attack from northern Mali. The primary immediate target is Nigeria: The terrorist group targeting Nigeria with bombings and attacks on Christians and Muslims, Boko Haram, has operatives in a small but extremely dangerous jihadist group, Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (Mujao), who participated in the takeover of northern Mali.

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