Mali: Collateral Damage of the Complex Security Challenges in the Sahel

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Key Points

- Crisis in the Sahel: What is at stake?
- Mali: Making Sense of the Political and Security Crises
- International Response Strategy: between procrastination and confusion
- Framing a solution to the crisis: what are the options
French Operations
1. Ground offensive by 21st Marine infantry
2. Air assault and combat jump at Gao
3. Combat jump at Timbuktu
4. Air assault at Kidal airport

African Operations
1. Burkina Faso’s contingent moves into Markala
2. Niger’s and Chad’s contingents airlifted into Gao
3. Chad’s contingent moves into Kidal
4. Niger’s contingent moves into Ansongo

- Jihadist tunnels
- French airstrikes
Crisis In The Sahel: What Is At Stake?

- Perceptions of the threats is not the same among some of the major actors involved
- US: Terrorism
- France and the dilemma of its role and presence in Africa
- Algeria/Mauritania: Sahel is the dustbin of successful counter-terrorism initiative: GIA to AQMI
- Mali: someone’s else problem
  - No coherent collaborative response mechanisms
Making Sense of the Political and Security Crises

- Weak state authority and ungoverned spaces
- Stalled and failed democratisation processes
- Serious deficiencies in anticipating and addressing the structural bases of conflict
- Tuareg rebellion and the fallacy of marginalization
- 22 March coup: a setback for democracy
- Political and security crisis
Political Actors and Islamist Groups in Mali

- Ansar Dine
- MNLA
- AQIM
- MUJAO
- Militia

Regions:
- Timbuktu
- Kidal
- Gao
- Kayes
- Koulikoro
- Sikasso
- Mopti
- Segou

Residents:
- President Dioncounda Traore
- P. Minister Django Cissoko
- Cpt. Amadou Hata Sanogo
International Response Strategy: Between Procrastination and Confusion

Three major handicaps compromise the effective management of the crisis in Mali:
- Procrastination of the external partners
- Divergences of approaches
- Absence of a decisive leadership

The continuous political impasse provided opportunity for the Islamist groups to consolidate their control and to seek to weight in the so-called negotiation process.
“Operation Serval” and the changing dynamics of the crisis

Two sets of dynamics

Military option imposed de facto: War by default

• Reverse sequence of the initiatives leading to the Deployment of AFISMA

• UN torn between a traditional Peace Mission or a an AMISOM-type partnership with the Africa-led force AFISMA, or a UNAMID-type hybrid mission.

Political dynamics

• New configuration of power while putting on hold a serious political discontent.
Challenges

- AFISMA without a clear command and control
- Effectiveness of border control
- Fear of terrorist attacks as retaliation
- Urban warfare
- Civilian casualties
- Worsened humanitarian crisis: IDPs and Refugees
- Prolonged economic hardship
- Inter-communal violence and revenge
Liaisons dangereuses

16 janv. 2013
Attaque contre le site gazier

Trafics de drogues
Transports d’armes
Mouvements des chefs jihadistes
Zones jihadistes
Présence américaine
Framing Solution to the crisis: what are the options

Restoring democratic governance:
- Ensure the credibility of the electoral process
- What form of reconciliation for Mali?
- Transition from AFISMA to UN Peace Mission needs to take into consideration
- Regional comprehensive strategy for security and peace.
Questions? No Thanks!
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