

Groups seeking to control the Sahel



SAHARA DESERT

SAHEL

Countries spanning the vast Sahara and Sahel region face terrorist groups seeking to establish an Islamic caliphate across West Africa

JIHADIST GROUPS IN SAHEL REGION

Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Al Murabitoun, Ansar Dine, Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA), Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS)

ALGERIA
AQIM grows out of long-running Islamist insurgency

French Foreign Legion base, supported by Germany, Italy, Romania

LIBYA
More than 100 militias with around 125,000 fighters including AQIM and ISGS

Reaper drone at French airbase in Niamey, Niger



MAURITANIA

MALI

UK Chinook helicopters
Gao

NIGER

Agadez
U.S. base for armed drones

CHAD

N'Djamena
Operation Barkhane HQ

SUDAN

Bamako

Ouagadougou
BURKINA FASO
Special-forces base

NIGERIA

Niamey
Reaper drones

Metele

CAMEROON

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

SOUTH SUDAN

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Kamango

UGANDA

COUNTER-TERRORISM OPERATIONS

2013: United Nations launches **Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)**

Strength: 16,450 troops from 56 countries
Fatalities to date: 195

2014-present: France launches **Operation Barkhane**, counter-terrorism operation covering G5 Sahel – Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso. Supported by Canada, Estonia, U.S. and UK

Strength: 5,000 troops
Fatalities to date: 13

2016: EU Training Mission in Mali (EUTM) extended to include G5 Sahel

Strength: 600 troops from 21 EU states

2009-present, Nigeria: **Boko Haram** war against government

Nov 2018: **Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP)** attacks Nigerian Army base at Mete, killing 100 soldiers

2015-present, Burkina Faso: Spike in attacks by AQIM and ISGS have killed around 500 people and displaced 135,000 since Nov 2018

2014-present, Cameroon: Boko Haram insurgency spills over border. Attacks by Boko Haram and ISWAP kill more than 2,500. Women and girls forced to carry out suicide attacks

Apr 2019, D. R. Congo: Islamic State claims its first-ever attack in state, targeting army base at Kamango. IS is linked to **Allied Democratic Forces** – Ugandan militant group with goal of creating Islamic state

Dec 2018, Burkina Faso: Italian and Canadian aid workers Luca Tacchetto and Edith Blais (far left) kidnapped

Jan 2019: Canadian geologist Kirk Woodman (left) abducted and killed by ISGS

