

The Algerian Experience in Combating Terrorist Organizations in North Africa

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Abstract:

The phenomenon of terrorism has posed a considerable threat to various regions of Africa, with the nature, intensity, and sources of this threat differing from one region to another. Over time, terrorism has evolved and spread across the continent. The North African region has been particularly impacted by the rise of terrorist organizations, especially in light of recent regional transformations on the continent. This situation necessitates that countries in the region cooperate and coordinate to address this threat.

Keywords: Terrorist Organizations, North Africa, Combating Terrorism, Algerian Experience in Combating Terrorism

Introduction:

Terrorist organizations are active in almost all countries of the North African region, although the severity of the terrorist threat varies among them. The threat is the most serious in Algeria, followed by Morocco, Egypt, and Libya. Despite the differences in the severity of terrorism among these countries, there is a significant similarity in the sources of terrorism and motives of its perpetrators. The terrorist threats in this region are also characterized as "actual" due to the occurrence of several terrorist operations and the presence of active terrorist groups, which has led the countries in the region to adopt both national and regional strategies to confront these organizations. This leads to the following problem statement:

What are the most significant national and regional mechanisms adopted by Algeria in its approach to combating terrorism in North Africa?

Study Objectives:

This study aims to fulfill several objectives, including:

- Highlighting the phenomenon of terrorist organizations in the North African region.
- Identifying the nature of terrorist organizations active in North Africa and the environment in which they operate.
- Analyzing the Algerian approach to fighting terrorism at the national and regional levels.

Study Methodology:

In this study, we used the descriptive approach to present information, facts, and concepts about terrorist organizations and the specific nature of this phenomenon in the North African region. This approach also facilitates the examination of the various national and regional mechanisms developed by the Algerian approach to combating terrorism. Furthermore, we employed the comparative approach to analyze the countries of North Africa, emphasizing the key differences between them in terms of the terrorist organizations operating within their borders and their features.

Study Plan: The subject is addressed through the following plan:

1. The nature of terrorist organizations in the North African region.
2. The operational environment of terrorist organizations in the North African region.
3. National mechanisms for fighting terrorism in the Algerian experience.
4. Regional mechanisms for combating terrorism in the Algerian experience.

1. The Nature of Terrorist Organizations in the North African Region

The phenomenon of terrorism is marked by considerable overlap and interconnectedness among North African countries, especially in Algeria, Morocco, and Libya. In these regions, terrorist groups often share goals, memberships, and activities. For instance, extremist groups sometimes adopt similar names in different countries, such as the Islamic Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), Libyan

Islamic Fighting Group (GICL), Moroccan Islamic Fighting Group (GICM), and Tunisian Islamic Fighting Group (GICT)^[1], although their influence and capabilities vary. Many of these groups maintained ideological, logistical, and operational links with Al-Qaeda.

Most terrorist organizations in North Africa are affiliated with the "Salafi Jihadist" movement. The ideological foundations of this movement are not new; they were formulated by Sayyid Qutb in the early sixties, drawing from directives of the "Muslim Brotherhood," encompassing figures like Abdelkader Awda, the literature of "Hizb Al-Tahrir," the Taqi al-Din al-Banhani Foundation, and the writings of Abul A'la al-Mawdudi, founder of the Pakistani Islamic Group. These ideas are reflected in the practices and justifications of groups such as the Armed Islamic Group and the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combating in Algeria.

Terrorism is often connected to ideological fanaticism, which is a severe form of extremism. Extremists may engage in extreme acts of aggression, including assassination, and exhibit readiness to face death with a sense of joy and achievement.²

Jihadist Salafism is an ideological movement that opposes the existing social systems, prevailing political and cultural authorities, and international relations. It has several justifications for its existence, and recruits individuals from diverse social, economic, and educational backgrounds.

This ideology is characterized by a dual nature: it represents the most radical form of religious division, extending beyond traditional classifications of Muslims and non-Muslims to create a narrow definition of Islam that excludes a considerable portion of Muslims.

At the same time, it introduced the most radical form of politicizing religion, utilizing it as a confrontational ideology with the aim of establishing a global caliphate, that is, Islamic rule over the entire world.³

Armed Islamic groups within the Maghreb region operate under the guidance of the International Islamic Armed Movement. Since the September 11 attacks, there

¹ Jafal Ammar, "Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb: Islam The third political from a local organization to the link with Al-Qaeda "Unified Maghreb Magazine, Issue 5, 2010, p. 15.

² _ Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Youssef Abdullah, *Social Systems and Their Role in Resisting Terrorism*, 1st ed., Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, Riyadh, 2006, pp. 83, 84.

³ _ Abu Al-Ainain Mahmoud, *African Strategic Report 2007-2008*, 5th ed., African Research Center, Cairo, 2008, pp. 258, 259.

has been a significant transformation in radical Islamic networks. These networks have transitioned from a hierarchical organizational model—characterized by state sponsorship, regional bases, and central leadership—to a "network of networks" dispersed globally without a clearly identifiable leadership structure. Al-Qaeda has evolved from an organization with a top-down hierarchy to one in which significance is ranked from the bottom up, with the major responsibility for conducting attacks now concentrated in local cells.

Despite the challenges of establishing physical training camps, Internet and propaganda campaigns have partially filled the void. The rise of jihadist activities has facilitated the spread of violent ideologies and the basic principles necessary for launching attacks⁴.

The organization known as "Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb" has gained prominence because of the escalation of its armed activities across the North African region⁵, where it finds fertile ground and supportive factors. Most attacks occur in North Africa, especially in Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. Algeria has the highest rate of terrorist incidents among North African countries at a rate of 9.47%⁶.

The Operational Environment of Terrorist Organizations in the North African Region

The African continent, along with its various underdeveloped countries and conflicts⁷, provides a fertile environment for terrorist activities. The environment in which a terrorist group operates affects its structure, available opportunities, and operational methods. Key factors influencing terrorist operations include physical and human geography, as well as local and international political frameworks.

The North African region is characterized by a combination of geographical, political, and historical factors that make it a conducive environment for terrorist activities.

⁴ Abu Al-Ainain Mahmoud, op.cit , p. 259.

⁵ Thomasingar , Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World , The Superintendent Of Documents, Washington , 2008, p 69.

⁶ Wafula Okumu And Anneli Botha, Understanding Terrorism In Africa : Building Bridges And Overcoming The Gaps, Institute For Security Studies, South Africa, 2008 ,P 38 .

⁷ . _Abdul Rahman Barquq, Sonia Al-Aidi "Civil Society and Democratic Transformation in Algeria" Notebooks of Democratic Transformation in Algeria, December 11, 2005, p. 105.

First: Physical Geography

Morocco and Algeria are prominent centers of terrorist activity in northwest Africa. The expansion of operational scope, exploitation of the Internet, and movement of individuals within and beyond the region have amplified the international dimension of local radical networks.

In Morocco, radical cells such as Casablanca and Tangier are prevalent within major urban centers. The diversity of political Islamic movements has facilitated the efforts of extremists to integrate into the population. Moreover, Morocco's thriving tourism industry and strategic location near the Strait of Gibraltar ensures a significant flow of tourists and trade, providing terrorists with ample potential targets.

In Algeria, addressing urban terrorist cells is less challenging because of the stringent security environment established during the Black Decade. Algerian security agencies have successfully built an extensive network of informants within the capital and other major cities and have effectively isolated many armed leaders in mountainous regions outside the capital ⁸.

While the terrorist threat in Algeria might potentially become more urbanized in the future compared to Morocco, the primary challenge currently lies in confronting a system emerging from rural areas in the northern part of the country and parts of the southern desert. Islamist militants, especially those affiliated with the Salafist Group, have recently expanded their activities in the Saharan region. This expansion is partly due to their confrontation with more effective counterterrorism measures in urban centers and the opportunities presented by the vast desert for organized crime, encompassing the illegal trade of various goods.

These developments emphasize a potential vulnerability for Algeria: the extensive pipeline network that connects its oil and natural gas fields to export ports in the Mediterranean region. Al-Qaeda-linked militants have indicated a resolution to target Algeria's hydrocarbon industry, which is crucial for the country's economy, providing approximately 60 percent of Algeria's budget revenues⁹.

Second: Human Geography

Compared to populations in the heart of the region, the people of North Africa are

⁸ Abu Al-Ainain Mahmoud, op.cit, p 260.

⁹ Ibidem, p 260.

geographically and culturally more distanced from major conflicts in the Middle East and tend to be characterized by greater religious moderation. However, this does not render the region immune to development in the Middle East. The rise of the Islamic revival movement since the seventies and the transformation of political Islam over the past two decades into a popular means of opposing non-democratic regimes have had an impact on North Africa.

Furthermore, the external sponsorship of mosques and religious schools, along with scholarships for studying religious sciences in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, have bolstered conservative Islamist currents. This impact has been particularly noticeable in countries with weaker central governments, such as Mauritania, or in those adhering to less strict Islamic doctrines.

The proliferation of the Internet, satellite television, and mobile phone technology has facilitated Al-Qaeda's propaganda efforts and enhanced communication among those striving to join the organization. Since the September 11, 2001, attacks, the number of supporters of Al-Qaeda's ideology has grown significantly ¹⁰.

3. National Mechanisms to Combat Terrorism in Algerian Experience:

Algeria is regarded as the most active arena for terrorist groups in Africa. The Islamic movement in Algeria lacks significant "historical depth" in a temporal sense, apart from the country's historical aspiration for Arabization and its defense of Islamic identity against Western influences. Since its independence, Algeria has pursued a strict socialist approach depending on the army. Over more than two decades, the country has focused on development and educational programs that seek to restore Arab and Islamic identity while maintaining a suspicious stance toward Western influences.

In this regard, Islamic orientation has become a prominent avenue for Algerians seeking to counter Western encroachment. With the adoption of a multiparty system in 1988, numerous religious parties emerged, the most notable being the Islamic Salvation Front led by Abbas Madani and Ali Belhadj. However, the army prevented these parties from participating in power, leading the country to crisis. The resolution of this crisis was left to fate with neither friends nor Arab allies offering assistance. Consequently, Algeria entered a harrowing period known as the Black

¹⁰ Abu Al-Ainain Mahmoud, op.cit, p 260.

Decade and the crisis of democratic transition by others. Western analysts often refer to this period as the Civil War, as detailed in Louis Martinez's book.¹¹

This crisis resulted in more than 200,000 deaths and over \$30 billion in material losses. Splinter movements emerged from the Islamic Salvation Front, with the weakest quickly fading away, leaving two main groups: the Armed Islamic Group and the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat¹².

The Algerian approach to combating terrorism is based on the following principles:

1. The principle of not negotiating with terrorist organizations.
2. The principle of working to eliminate the material and intellectual sources of terrorism.
3. The principle of a comprehensive approach that connects peace, security, and development to counter the terrorist threat.
4. The principle of coordination and cooperation at the regional level without interfering in the internal affairs of other countries.
5. The principle of cooperation and partnership with partners outside the African and Maghreb regions.¹³

Algeria has adopted specific strategies to confront terrorist groups, primarily consisting of:

- Establishing security centers in the desert by decision of the Minister of Interior and Local Authorities. This decision grants governors the authority to sign on behalf of the minister, enabling them to place any adult suspected of threatening public order, public security, or the smooth running of public interests under surveillance.
- Restricting the freedom of movement for persons, vehicles, and goods under Article 6 of Decree 92.
- Creating new judicial bodies and expanding the jurisdiction of military courts to include serious crimes and misdemeanors committed against state security.

¹¹ Abdul Rahman Barquq, Sonia Al-Aidi "Civil Society and Democratic Transformation in Algeria" Notebooks of Democratic Transformation in Algeria, December 11, 2005, p. 105.

¹² Ibidem, p 267.

¹³ Makhlof Sahel "The Algerian Approach to Combating Terrorism: Foundations and Mechanisms" Journal of Legal and Political Studies, Issue 03, January 2016, pp. 32, 33

- Extending the period of detention before the investigating judge from 48 hours to 12 days, although this extension was not respected in many cases ¹⁴.

First: Practical Measures for Adapting Security Institutions to the Phenomenon of Terrorism:

1. **Establishing a Central Structure for Security Coordination (1992):** This structure includes all entities involved in fighting terrorism, such as the National People's Army, the National Gendarmerie, and the National Security forces.
2. **Establishing Unified Command in All States (from 1993):** Known as the "Operational Sector," this command coordinates security efforts while overseeing the management and follow-up of operations.
3. **Establishment of the Municipal Police Corps:** Under Executive Decree No. 93-207 of September 22, 1993, which outlined the tasks and duties of this corps, the Municipal Police—later renamed the Municipal Guards—was established to contribute locally to maintaining public security and peace. They also played a role in counter-terrorism operations within their respective administrative sectors.
4. **Establishment of Legitimate Defense Groups:** These groups were formed to enable citizens to defend rural areas that would otherwise suffer from killings, robberies, rapes, assaults on family honor, and the commission of heinous crimes and massacres. Decree No. 97-04, issued on January 4, 1997, defined the conditions for exercising the right of legitimate defense within an organized framework, allowing the formation of legitimate defense groups encompassing volunteer citizens under the supervision of authorities responsible for maintaining public order.¹⁵

Second: The Legal and Legislative Framework for the Prevention and Fight Against Terrorism:

¹⁴ Barquq Amhand "Combating Terrorism in Algeria from the Security Approach to the Political Solution" Journal of Al-Mofaker, Issue 2, 2007, pp. 41, 43.

¹⁵ _ Barquq Amhand "Combating Terrorism in Algeria from the Security Approach to the Political Solution", op.cit, pp 43, 44.

Legislative Decree No. 92-03, issued on September 30, 1992, addresses the legal vacuum in dealing with terrorism, combining prevention, deterrence, and suppression of all activities that contribute to the foundation, support, justification, promotion, or concealment of terrorism. This decree also recognizes terrorism as a transnational phenomenon. Law 01-08, issued on June 26, 2001, amended and supplemented Presidential Decree 66-155, issued on June 8, 1966, concerning the Code of Criminal Procedure. It serves as a new reference text for the suppression of terrorist acts, setting boundaries for fieldwork to combat and suppress terrorism, as illustrated in the following elements:

- **Inspections:** The Algerian legislator has authorized the specialized judicial police to conduct inspections day and night across the entire national territory, based on prior authorization from the investigating judge.
- **Pretrial Detention:** As an exceptional measure, pretrial detention is limited to 4 months, renewable five times for terrorist crimes, as stipulated in Article 125 bis of Decree 08-01. The number of renewals may reach 11 times for transnational crimes.
- **Penalties for Perpetrators of Terrorist Crimes:** These penalties are proportional to the type of crime committed, as outlined in Article 87 bis of the Penal Code:
 - **Death Sentence:** Applied when the law prescribes life imprisonment (though execution of death sentences was suspended in 1993).
 - **Life Imprisonment:** Applied when the crime requires a penalty of 10 to 20 years.
 - **10 to 20 Years in Prison:** Applied when the law prescribes a penalty between 5 and 10 years.

Additional provisions are stipulated in Law 89-05, issued on April 25, 1989, including:

- **House Arrest and Prohibition of Residence**
- **Partial Expropriation**
- **Dissolution of the Legal Entity Involved in Such Crimes** (organization, association, company, etc.)

Further stipulations include:

- **Participation or Involvement in a Terrorist Organization:** Results in a sentence of 10 to 20 years.

- **Unauthorized Use of Mosques:** Exposes the offender to imprisonment for 1 to 3 years and a fine.
- **Delivering Sermons in Mosques to Harm Social Harmony or Justify Terrorism:** Punishable by 3 to 5 years of imprisonment.
- **Supporting, Backing, and Financing Terrorism:** Carries a penalty of 5 to 10 years in prison and a fine.
- **Republishing and Distributing Terrorist Publications:** Punishable by 5 to 10 years of imprisonment and a fine.
- **Using Explosives for Destructive Purposes:** Resulting in loss of life and property damage imposes the death penalty on the perpetrators.¹⁶

Third: Political Measures to Fight Terrorism:

Since 1995, Algerian public authorities have employed several legal frameworks to address the security and political aspects of terrorism, providing partial incentives for terrorist elements to cease their criminal activities. These measures are encapsulated in three key initiatives:

1. **Mercy Law**
2. **Civil Harmony Law**
3. **Peace, Reconciliation, and Nationalism Endeavor**

Mercy Law:

Mercy measures were established under Presidential Order No. 95-12, issued on February 25, 1995, based on the provisions of Article 87 bis 3 of the Penal Code. This law offers amnesty for those involved in terrorist activities, except for those who have killed someone, caused a permanent disability, or used explosives to harm people and property. The law targets individuals who are part of terrorist groups that deviated from the public order of the state. The key provisions of Mercy Law include the following:

- Reducing the prison term from the death penalty to 15 to 20 years.
- If the original penalty is life imprisonment, it is reduced to 10 to 15 years. In other cases, the penalty is reduced by half, as outlined in Article 4 of the law.

¹⁶ _ Bargoug Amhand "Combating Terrorism in Algeria from the Security Approach to the Political Solution", op.cit , pp 47, 48.

Civil Harmony Policy:

Initiated by President Bouteflika immediately after taking the constitutional oath, this policy sought to enhance national harmony by offering a path for terrorists to reintegrate into society.¹⁷

National Reconciliation Project:

Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika launched this significant political initiative in September 1999. The project aimed to end a decade-long terrorism crisis in Algeria. Its cornerstone was a general amnesty program that ran for six months, from March to September 2006, for repentant prisoners and active terrorists who had not committed bombings, murders, or rape. Later, the government extended the validity of this law. However, some terrorist groups chose to continue their activities outside the scope of law.

By September 2006, more than 2,300 terrorists had been released from prison, and over 350 terrorists had surrendered to the authorities to benefit from general amnesty law¹⁸.

Fourth: Security Confrontation

The Algerian police used all the available resources to confront terrorism. The Algerian security services, in their battle against Salafi jihadist groups, utilized a "head-slammng strategy, " which focused on infiltrating militant ranks by planting informants. These informants offered intelligence on the movements of key leaders within the organization's decision-making centers. The elimination of these armed leaders resulted from precise intelligence work, marking a transition from the classic guerrilla warfare previously employed by the security forces. This new approach also sowed distrust among the organization's members, leading them to suspect and accuse each other in collaborating with intelligence services.

Regional Mechanisms to Combat Terrorism in the Algerian Experience

In recent years, the fight against terrorism has become a central issue in discussions between North African countries during several official meetings. This focus is apparent in the regular bilateral and collective meetings of interior and defense

¹⁷ _ Bargoug Amhand "The Algerian Strategy for Combating Terrorism", op.cit .

¹⁸ _ Bargoug Amhand "Combating Terrorism in Algeria from the Security Approach to the Political Solution", op.cit, p 51.

ministers as well as in summits held between the presidents and kings of these nations. Initially, the issue was not given the seriousness it deserved, despite the considerable damage it caused in Algeria and Egypt.¹⁹

Interest in fighting terrorism became more prominent during the meeting of the interior ministers of the 5+5 group held in Nouakchott, Mauritania, on May 22, 2008, and at a meeting in Dakar in July 2007, initiated by the United Nations and attended by twenty-three countries from West and Central Africa. During these meetings, participants agreed to unify their efforts and cooperate closely in the fight against terrorism.

This cooperation is based on numerous United Nations resolutions, the most notable being the resolution established by the General Assembly in its October 1970 declaration (Declaration of Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations). This declaration asserts that every member state has a duty to "refrain from organizing, inciting, assisting, or participating in any terrorist acts in another state or accepting organized activities in its territory with the aim of committing such acts."²⁰

At the meeting of Arab interior ministers held in Tunis on January 30, 2008, amendments to the Arab Convention for Combating Terrorism were introduced to criminalize incitement and support for terrorism. Under these amendments, incitement of terrorist crimes; praising such acts; publishing, printing, or preparing documents, publications, or recordings of any kind sought to encourage the commission of such crimes were all criminalized.

The Arab Convention for Combating Terrorism was originally signed during a joint meeting of the Councils of Interior Ministers of Arab countries in Cairo in April 1998. This convention reflected the Arab countries' desire to promote cooperation in combating terrorism by compiling and sharing anti-terrorism legislation with the interior ministries of Arab nations.

The Convention stipulates the development of a model plan to confront terrorist

¹⁹ Saoudi Badis " Les Variétés Sécuritaires Et Leurs Impacts Sur La Souveraineté Des Etats De La Méditerranée " Séminaire International L'Algérie Et La Sécurité Dans La Méditerranée Réalité Et Perspectives(Université De Constantine .La Faculté De Droits Et De Sciences Politiques . 2008) p 197 .

²⁰ Sweidan Ahmed Hussein, International Terrorism in Light of International Changes, 1st ed., Al-Halabi Publications, Lebanon, 2005, p. 154.

acts in transportation as well as the search, investigation, and arrest of fugitives who have committed terrorist crimes.

It also calls for the creation of a database on terrorism and emphasizes continued joint efforts to establish an international center to combat terrorism. Moreover, it enhances greater cooperation, coordination, and exchange of information among member states.

This convention underscores the need to establish scientific foundations for conducting joint studies and research between security institutions and security scientific research centers to improve and enrich security efforts across different arenas²¹.

Algeria has actively participated in these efforts. The country hosted the Organization of the African Unity summit in mid-July 1999, during which the treaty on combating terrorism was ratified. Furthermore, Algeria has supported the "African Center for Studies and Research on Terrorism" since its establishment in October 2004. The country has consistently maintained a strong presence of multilateral events in regions focused on terrorism.

Algeria, represented by the President of the Republic, participated with six countries from the Sahel region (Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Libya, and Chad) in a symposium on "Terrorism and Smuggling" held in the Malian capital, Bamako, in July 2008.

Algeria also attended a meeting in June 2009 in Tripoli, Libya, alongside military personnel and officers from Mauritania, Mali, Niger, and Libya, to discuss security in the Sahara and Sahel region.

Algeria did not stop at mere participation; it also hosted meetings between countries in the region, whether at the level of foreign ministers or army commanders.²²

Furthermore, Algeria provided training for elite Tunisian forces, as Tunisian leaders sought to benefit from Algeria's experience in dealing with jihadist groups. The two sides exchanged several high-level defense delegations. In 2013, the two governments established a joint intelligence unit, and in 2014, they reached an

²¹ _ Mustafa Suleiman Ahmed Ibrahim, *Terrorism and Organized Crime: Criminalization and Ways of Confrontation*, Dar Al-Talae', Cairo, 2006, p. 323.

²² _Hossam Hamza "Geopolitical Circles of Algerian National Security" Master's Thesis (University of Hadj Lakhdar-Batna, Faculty of Law and Political Science, Department of Political Science, Academic Year: 2011/2010) p. 106.

agreement on security coordination at the borders, culminating in the establishment of the Algerian-Tunisian Joint Committee²³.

A joint military command was also established among the countries of the region to coordinate security, intelligence, and military matters between the agencies responsible for combating terrorism in the member states, and to monitor Al-Qaeda elements in the region after they had significantly shifted their activities toward the vast deserts of Africa to obtain weapons across the ocean and integrate their activities with those of drug traffickers to secure funding, in addition to engaging in hostage-taking and ransom operations.

This cooperation led to the creation of a new structure represented by a mini command room for military operations, in which Algeria, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger participated under the name "Joint Staff Operations Committee of the Sahel Countries" (CEMOC)²⁴. This initiative resulted in the "Tamanrasset Plan," adopted during the meeting of the leaders of the armies of the four countries on August 14, 2009. The plan included a joint decision to establish a command center for joint security and military coordination, headquartered in the Algerian desert city of Tamanrasset²⁵.

This coordination evolved in 2010 into operational cooperation, which became known in 2011 as the "Field Countries" (Algeria, Mali, Niger, and Mauritania), with the aim of addressing security vulnerabilities in neighboring countries.²⁶

In response to the successive regional developments experienced by the region, Algeria raised its defense and armament budget to a record level starting in 2014, with the defense budget reaching \$20 billion for that year. This was the highest allocation among all the sectors, constituting approximately 15 percent of the

²³ Kal Ben Khalid "Evolving Approaches In Algerian Security Cooperation", CTC Sentinel, Volume 8, Issue 6, June 2015, pp19,20 .

²⁴ _Fouad Jeddou "Algerian Foreign Policy and Security Transformations in the African Sahel Region" Al-Mofaker Magazine, Issue 13, p. 331.

²⁵ Ben Aicha Mohamed El-Amin "The Mali Crisis: Algeria's Gateway to Regional Leadership" from the website: <http://www.aqlame.com/article.11275htm>>, The day: 07/27/2024, Time: 11.30.

²⁶ Saadaoui Omar "Algerian National Security in Light of New Regional Transformations: Challenges and Alternatives" Master's Thesis (University of Algiers, Faculty of Political Science and Media, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Academic Year 2012/2013) p 147.

general budget²⁷. With the decision to increase defense allocations, Algeria's defense budget nearly quintupled between 2008 and 2014, rising from only \$1 billion in 1988 to \$1.5 billion in the 1990s²⁸. The defense budget has increased significantly again over the last two years, reaching \$22 billion²⁹ to meet the requirements of Algerian national security, particularly in light of the volatile southern borders and the multiple sources from which these threats originate³⁰.

The following table demonstrates the development of the defense budget in Algeria during different years.

The Year	2004	2008	2010	2013	2014	2015	2018	2023	2024
Defense budget in billion dollars	2,6	3,9	5,6	11	20	15	11,18	22	23

Source: Algeria.. An unprecedented budget for the army of \$ 22 billion" from the site:, <https://www.defensehere.com/ar/feed> />, Today: 07_27_2024, Time: 12:00. And other sources.

Conclusion

In this modest research paper, we have identified the phenomenon of terrorism in the North African region by examining the nature of these terrorist groups and the unique conditions of the fertile African environment in which they operate—an environment rich in targets.

This situation has made it imperative for countries in the region to reconsider the need for regional cooperation to confront this transnational threat, as it has become a necessity dictated by regional and international circumstances, particularly in light

²⁷ Bouhenia Qawi, *Algeria and the New Security Threats from Combating Terrorism to Security Engineering*, First Edition, Dar Al-Hamed for Publishing and Distribution, Amman, 2017, pp 483, 484.

²⁸ Ben Ahmed Mohamed "Algeria's defense budget doubles fivefold in 6 years: Deals to purchase helicopters, planes and air defense equipment" El Khabar newspaper, from the site: <https://www.djazairiess.com/elkhabar/421670>>, The day: 02_26_2024, Time: 16:31

²⁹"Algeria raises its defense budget for 2023 to more than \$22 billion" 11/23/2022, from the site https://s.france24.com/media/display/a6bb306c-4197-11ea-b99b-005056bfd1d9/w:1280/p:16x9/w1240-p16x9-10042019_algerie_presidentielle_juillet-1.jpg>, The day 07_28_2024, Time: 10:30.

³⁰ Algeria.. An unprecedented budget for the army of 22 billion dollars" from the site:, <https://www.defensehere.com/ar/feed> />, The day: 07_27_2024, Time: 12:00.

of the structural and organizational transformations within terrorist groups. As terrorism continues to grow and diversify in its trends and patterns and as the methods of combating it evolve, it is clear that relying solely on reactive measures is no longer sufficient. While such measures are necessary, they must be supplemented by efforts to eliminate the underlying factors that contribute to the formation of terrorist ideologies.

North African countries are among the most vocal advocates for the necessity of cooperation and coordination in fighting this phenomenon, as they are most directly impacted by it. However, a close examination of African cooperation reveals a significant lack of clear, cohesive strategies for dealing with terrorism.

The study concludes with the following recommendations:

1. **Strengthening Collective Action:** The countries of the region should work together to urge the UN Security Council to issue a resolution criminalizing the payment of ransoms by European countries to secure the release of their citizens kidnapped by terrorist groups. Furthermore, efforts should be made to persuade the African Union to adopt an effective African model law to combat terrorism.
2. **Balancing Security and Development:** It is crucial not to overlook the dual significance of security and development. Studies on terrorism in North Africa consistently demonstrate that poverty and unemployment are primary drivers of recruitment into terrorist groups. Thus, it is essential to address the root causes that lead individuals to join these groups.
3. **Adopting a Unified Security Doctrine:** The countries of the region should adopt a unified security doctrine that opposes any regional changes in its neighborhood without their agreement, especially when dealing with supra-regional powers within the territorial circles of their national security. This includes rejecting foreign military intervention or presence in the region, as it could offer a pretext for terrorism to be framed as "resistance."
4. **Enhancing Regional Cooperation:** There is a need to strengthen regional cooperation among the countries of the region and to raise the level of coordination in the areas of security, intelligence, and technical assistance.
5. **Leveraging Algeria's Experience:** Algeria is a cornerstone in the North African region, with a pioneering and successful experience in combating terrorism, as recognized by many countries. Therefore, it is essential to

transfer this experience to other countries in the region and benefit from its insights.

6. **Developing the African Security Partnership:** It is necessary to develop the African security partnership through broad coordination and partnership among North African countries to address common challenges, particularly terrorism. This also includes the urgent need for other African countries to activate various security cooperation mechanisms, particularly the joint operations room for the armies of the field countries.