

# Operational efficiency of the multinational joint task force and peace in the Lake Chad region

## *Eficacia operativa de la fuerza multinacional conjunta y paz en la región del lago Chad*

**Abstract:** The Lake Chad Basin (LCB) countries created the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in 2012 to address the Boko Haram crisis, which started in Nigeria in 2002. Recognizing that the problem was regional, not just Nigerian, the countries of the Lake Chad Region (LCR) - Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria - agreed to improve cooperation. In 2015, the MNJTF headquarters was attacked by Boko Haram, which led to increased military responses from the LCR countries. However, almost a decade later, the MNJTF has not achieved its goal of eliminating the Boko Haram threat due to challenges such as funding, equipment, and structure. These challenges have undermined peace in the region and diverted attention from other threats faced by LCR countries. This research proposes measures such as appropriate funding, equipment, and structure to enhance the effectiveness of the MNJTF. Implementing these recommendations is expected to contribute to peace and stability in the Lake Chad Region and Africa as a whole.

**Keywords:** Lake Chad Basin (LCB); Terrorism; MNJTF; Military Operational Efficiency and Peace.

**Resumen:** Los países de la cuenca del lago Chad (LCB) crearon la Fuerza Multinacional Conjunta (MNJTF) en 2012 para hacer frente a la crisis de Boko Haram, que comenzó en Nigeria en 2002. Reconociendo que el problema era regional, no solo nigeriano, los países de la Región del Lago Chad (RBL) -Benín, Camerún, Chad, Níger y Nigeria- acordaron mejorar la cooperación. En 2015, el cuartel general de la MNJTF fue atacado por Boko Haram, lo que provocó un aumento de las respuestas militares de los países de la LCR. Sin embargo, casi una década después, la MNJTF no ha logrado su objetivo de eliminar la amenaza de Boko Haram debido a problemas como la financiación, el equipamiento y la estructura. Estos problemas han puesto en peligro la paz en la región y han desviado la atención de otras amenazas a las que se enfrentan los países de la LCR. Esta investigación propone medidas como una financiación, equipamiento y estructura adecuados para aumentar la eficacia de la MNJTF. Se espera que la aplicación de estas recomendaciones contribuya a la paz y la estabilidad en la región del lago Chad y en África en su conjunto.

**Palabras clave:** Cuenca del Lago Chad (LCB); Terrorismo; MNJTF; Eficiencia Operativa Militar y Paz.

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**Received: Feb. 15, 2024**

**Accepted: July 3, 2024**

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**ISSN on-line 2316-4891 / ISSN print 2316-4833**

<http://ebrevistas.eb.mil.br/index.php/RMM/index>



## 1 INTRODUCTION

A Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) was established in 1994 during the administration of General Sani Abacha to monitor and control banditry activities and facilitate free movement along the northern Nigerian border. It remained dormant until the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) reactivated it to fight the growing threats from the Boko Haram Insurgency (BHI) in Nigeria. In 1998 the force was expanded to include units from Chad and Niger to address common cross-border security issues in the Lake Chad Region (LCR) with its headquarters in Baga, Borno State, Nigeria. Initially, countries contributing to the MNJTF included Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. Algeria, Libya and Sudan were also members of the LCBC but withdrew from it. Thereafter, the Central African Republic withdrew but Benin—a non-member—joined the group (Antimbom, 2016). Islamist groups grew and expanded their operations during the 2000s and early 2010s, of which the BHI and the Vanguard for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa, better known as Ansaru, later Islamic State – West African Province (ISWAP) were the most active and well known. The BHI began in 2009, and security forces across the region were increasingly directly challenged by militant groups. The BHI started its operations from 2009 onwards and quickly captured some territory, mostly in northeastern Nigeria (Mapping Military Organisations).

In April 2012, the MNJTF mandate was expanded to encompass counterterrorism operations. At the peak of the BHI reign in 2014-2015, they killed over 10,000 people and kidnapped school children from Chibok and Dapchi. The LCBC reactivated the MNJTF in April 2012 with each country in the group agreeing to contribute one battalion (International Crises Group, June 2020). The MNJTF faces inadequate, inconsistent and insufficient funding and is therefore unable to adequately plan, execute and sustain large-scale operations. This situation calls for the prioritisation of current challenges and for the appropriate mobilisation of available resources to address them. To enhance the capacity and effectiveness of force against terrorism, the LCR must strengthen the MNJTF intelligence capacity, align training with core priority areas to fill capacity gaps and institutionalise a due diligence framework for funding and utilisation of funds (Zabala, 2023). Therefore, the countries in the LCR desire to develop their capability for an efficient and effective MNJTF to address the BHI.

Therefore, this study examines how an efficient MNJTF can address insecurity and eventually lead to peace in the LCR, which would arise from better funding allocation and management, equipping, structural framework and the streamlining of the politics and bureaucracy in the management and operations of the MNJTF. This study contains subdivisions that include an introduction; the conceptual and theoretical framing; an overview of the MNJTF; and an analysis of the BHI, the factors militating the operational efficiency of the MNJTF and the possibility of peace with an effective MNJTF and a way forward. This research suggests funding, equipping and structural solutions to the MNJTF and countries in the LCR. These solutions should make the operations of the MNJTF more effective as part of the regional efforts to bring peace and stability to the LCR and Africa in general.

This study aims to address the following research questions:

1. Is the MNJTTF efficient?
2. What is the nexus between an efficient MNJTTF and peace in the LCR?
3. What are the factors working against an efficient MNJTTF?
4. Can an efficient MNJTTF lead to peace in the LCR?
5. What is the way forwards to an efficient MJTTF and peace in the LCR?

This study will critically look at the factors challenging the efficient functioning of the security architecture. The most critical of the problems involves efficient funding and equipment as they constitute an absolute necessity to work collaboratively in dealing with the BHI. The broad objective of the study is to ascertain how an efficient MNJTTF can address insecurity and promote peace in the LCR. The specific objectives of this study include examining how efficient the MNJTTF is operationally and evaluating the factors responsible for any inefficiencies. We will also analyse the nexus between an efficient MNJTTF and peace and the possibility of peace in the LCR and offer specific suggestions that can address the inefficiency in the MNJTTF. This research will use the theories of international relations, peace and interdependence.

## **2 CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Conceptual Discourse**

#### *2.1.1 Concept of the MNJTTF*

The Joint Task Force (JTF) is the primary organisation for joint operations involving all the arms and services in the military (army, navy, air force, marines and the coast guard) and other paramilitary forces. The JTF organisational structure capitalises on the unique capabilities of each service and provides the flexibility to tailor the size and makeup of a military force to accomplish specific tasks in either peace, crisis or war. The last five to seven decades have shown a common thread of involving forces from different nations in combat. Nations form regional and global geopolitical and economic relations to promote their mutual interests, ensure mutual security against real and perceived threats, conduct foreign humanitarian assistance and peace operations and promote their ideals. Global interests and responsibilities inevitably engage forces in alliances and coalition activities. This inevitably results in alliances and coalitions, usually named JTF or MNJTTF. Military alliances are highly consequential in shaping the landscape of international

politics. States pursue alliances to preserve themselves in the face of threats or to augment their power (Riscassi, 1963).

Cultural, diplomatic, psychological, economic, technological and informational factors influence multinational operations and participation (Weitsman, 2011). In such arrangements, MS or troop contributing countries (TCC) share the responsibilities, risks and costs of settling the most vexing problems worldwide. Multinational operations are conducted by forces of two or more nations, usually undertaken within the structure of a coalition or alliance. Other possible arrangements include supervision by an international organisation such as the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the African Union (AU) and regional blocks such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Once formed, military alliances send ripples across the system, shaping the patterns of interaction among states, which may alter the politics among members. In many ways, states in coalitions focus on operational effectiveness. This study will evaluate some of these past coalitions. However, it is important to analyse their differences, including their formation, cohesiveness and burden sharing.

Operation Inherent Resolve: this is the operational name for the U.S. international military intervention against the Islamic State, including both a campaign in Iraq and another in Syria, with a closely related campaign in Libya. The campaign — Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve — is primarily waged by USA and UK forces in support of the Iraqi security forces and Syrian Democratic Forces. Combat ground troops were deployed in Iraq. Of the airstrikes, 70% were conducted by the USA, 20% by the UK and the remaining 10% by France, Türkiye, Canada, the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Australia and Jordan. In November 2002, U.S. President George W. Bush referred to the countries who militarily or politically supported the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the subsequent military presence in post-invasion Iraq as the Coalition of the Willing. In total, four countries (USA, UK, Australia and Poland) contributed troops to the invasion force, 3 additional 37 countries provided some number of troops to support military operations (Resolve Special Reports: Operation Inherent Resolve, 2017.).

Operation Allied Force: on March 24, 1999, NATO initiated it to compel Slobodan Milošević to cease ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and to pull Serbian forces out of the disputed province. As per the Kosovo campaign, new NATO missions can involve crisis response and crisis management throughout Europe, including countries outside its treaty area. The campaign displayed the difficulty of establishing and maintaining consensus in coalition warfare as intra-alliance political consultations are essential to produce any military action (Peters *et al.*, 2001).

Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM): In the Horn of Africa, the Islamic State-affiliated insurgents, known as Al-Shabaab, attacked police stations in the Cabo Delgado municipality of Mocimboa da Praia in 2017, killing 17 people. On July 15, 2021, the Mozambican government approved the deployment of some 2,000 troops from eight Southern African Development Community nations to

Cabo Delgado, constituting SAMIM. After reaching agreement with the Mozambican government, Rwanda sent 1,000 soldiers to Cabo Delgado. Southern African nations have made this commitment to Mozambique because they are concerned that its insurgency threatens their own security, regional integration and economic development (Cheatham; Long; Sheehy, 2022). SAMIM is an encouraging example of a multinational joint task force security challenges in Africa.

### *2.1.2 Concept of Military Operational Effectiveness*

War can be seen as a phenomenon that happens in the form of interactions on various scales until one party is defeated or decides to surrender. In this process, the product, rather than the sum of interactions, decides the outcome. Delivering a superior product in war military effectiveness seems to many as an important attribute, thus deserving close examination. Operational effectiveness refers to the ability of an organisation to reduce waste in time, effort and materials as much as possible while producing a high-quality service or product. Operational effectiveness is achieved when the force is efficient. Efficiency can be defined as the ratio between the input required to keep the organisation going and the output it provides. Input refers to what is put into an operation for an effective operation, such as personnel, training and equipment/logistics, whereas output refers to achieved victories/defeats. The problem of military effectiveness points toward a dangerous simplification of war and the only logical outcome can be nothing else than panaceas that promise quick, easy and cheap victories (Jobbagy, 2009). War is an open-ended dynamic process in which often the best we can do is to act on local information, learn from mistakes and hope that a better mix of training, leadership, equipment and weaponry can result in victories.

Mapping military effectiveness demands comparison as its yardstick. Scholars agree on the need to address a multitude of difficult-to-calculate factors. Any attempt to describe it means that we limit our attention to certain features rather than focusing on the full range of possibilities. Military effectiveness have a link to the variables fostering it. Hence, the debate must restrict the addressed variables and define its desired effectiveness (Hali; Ahmed; Iqbal, 2020). Any attempt to addresses military effectiveness must address collective attributes, rather than aggregating results. Victory, rather than the characteristic of an organisation, results from organisational activity. contemporary military operations aim to stop pursuing concrete military strategic objectives and ‘victory’ to establishing certain condition from which political outcomes can be decided (Millett; Murray; Watman, 1986). A fully effective military derives maximum combat power from the physically and politically available resources. While efficiency is often a precondition for effectiveness, it certainly fails to suffice for it. Effectiveness or goal attainment may also be achieved with little efficiency as in the German airborne attack on Crete in 1941. While the Germans achieved the objective of defeating the British-led force (Faulkner, 1941), the operation entailed severe losses and was considered a catastrophic victory. Effectiveness is a combination of conduct and outcome. Outcome is evaluated during the course of history but conduct can be measured on the spot by comparing it to what are considered the best practices in operations.

### *2.1.3 Concept of Peace*

Mahatma Gandhi spoke of nonviolence rather than peace and emphasised the necessity of overcoming injustice. Gandhi's meaning was deftly summarised to violence being a method by which the ruthless few can subdue the passive many, and nonviolence is a means by which the active many can overcome the ruthless few. Yet, the word nonviolence is highly imperfect. It is a word with a negative construction as if the most important thing that can be said about nonviolence is that it is not something else. Nonviolence is cooperative power-collective action based on mutual consent in contrast to coercive power, which compels action by threats or the use of force (Fischer, 1954). John W. Burton (the former Australian Ambassador) argued that peace fails to necessarily mean the absence of conflict (Burton, 1997). The challenge for peace practitioners is to find ways in which communities can resolve differences without physical violence.

Peace in its simplest characterisation indicates an absence of conflict—especially violent conflict—whereas more initiative-taking definitions include an active presence of positive states of being, such as justice, equality, free expression, physical health, safety and self-actualisation. Defining peace narrowly can imply passivity and the acceptance of injustice. Peace is more than the absence of war. It is also the maintenance of an orderly and just society—orderly in being protected against the violence or extortion of aggressors and just in being defended against exploitation and abuse by the more powerful. Genuine peace means progress towards a freer and juster world. Thus, positive peace means transcending the conditions that limit the human potential and ensuring opportunities for self-realisation (Peace, 2008). A peace process is the set of sociopolitical negotiations, agreements and actions that aim to solve a specific armed conflict. The peace process mixes politics, diplomacy, changing relationships, negotiation, mediation and dialogue in both official and unofficial arenas in two stages: ceasing armed conflict and the sociological reorganisation (Marshall, 2020).

### *2.1.4 Relationship Between Military Operational Efficiency and Peace*

The conflicts of the new millennium are complex and asymmetric. The greatest security challenges of today consist of failing states, rogue states, as well as regional insecurity with global repercussions and the rise of global terrorism. The system of strategic deterrence of the post-Cold War era has changed in favour of a strategic deterrence that relies not on retaliation but on prevention by stopping terrorists outright, deterring sponsors or convincing them that terror cannot succeed. Technological revolutions in sensors, information technology and weapons enabled nations to become organize and fight. Indeed, this is what network-centric operations are about. They are coordinated to shape the behaviour of friends, foes and neutrals in peace, crisis and war (SMITH EDWARD A, 2003). Contemporary military operations are multifunctional and complex in which armed forces are one tool in a toolbox that also contains economic, social and political instruments of power. Measuring effectiveness in complex operations must include traditional civilian capabilities that also influence the attainment of the political aims of operations towards peace (Enaohwo, 2021).

The main goals are to contain conflict, restore peace, shape the strategic environment to support reconciliation and rebuilding and facilitate transition to legitimate governance. The military serves to apply or threat to apply force toward compliance with resolutions or sanctions to maintain or restore peace and order thus creating conditions for a lasting peace, strengthening the nation's capacities to address the root causes of conflict; rebuilding institutions, infrastructure and civic life; and maintaining effective and harmonious societal order (Peace Operations, USA, May 2019). Military operations are conducted to support the efforts of non-military actors or help ensure a secure environment in which other actors can operate. Consequently, efficient military operations in conflict areas provide the enabling environment for normalcy, peace and humanitarian activities.

## 2.2 Review of the Related Literature

The growing interest in the quest for peace in the LCR has increased the body of published literatures on the subject. For instance, *The Impact of MNJTF Counter-Operations in the Fight against BHI* (Dadur; Aliyu, 2021) agreed that BHI has extensively damaged the LCR and requires the collective efforts of the global community to defeat. They tried to determine how much BHI has affected the three-part peace in the region and identify the challenges of the MNJTF. They provided a nexus between poverty, illiteracy, climate change and underdevelopment and the conflict. They gave an insight as to how low economic development led to a greater risk of easy recruitment. However, they failed to identify the political and structural challenges facing the MNJTF and how to tackle them. Their recommendation on funding was only for the TCCs and failed to mention the donors who spend more on sustaining the MNJTF. Panle and Shittu took no cognisance of that large area to either suggest increase in troops or use of police to secure areas recaptured by troops.

In his treatise *Conflict Analysis In The Lake Chad Basin 2020-2021. Trends, developments and implications for peace and stability*, Charles Chika Aniekwe (2021) (Head of United Nations Development Programme Support to LCBC) agreed that the antecedents of the BHI crisis can largely be traced to the failures of the State and the last decade underscores a context in which BHI factions have thrived and evolved by exploiting socioeconomic and political gaps. These figures continued to rise exploding humanitarian needs that provided a fertile ground for violent extremism. He equally asserted that acts of banditry, abduction, highway robbery and cattle rustling have been recorded in these places, and BHI grafted itself onto these existing threats. This was also evidenced in the mode of operation of the Jama'tu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad (JAS), where it incorporated these criminalities as major parts of its operation. He further alluded that Abubakar Shekau formed an alliance with bandits in northern Nigeria to expand his territory and take advantage of the kidnap-for-ransom industry leading to the December 2020 Kankara abduction of 300 schoolboys in Katsina State, Nigeria.

It is important to highlight that all the above literature examined the conflict and MNJTF. However, Charles H. Anderson and Jurgen Brauer (2019) failed to directly link their observations to how economic actions can enhance peace and security when the conflict is already in place. Also, Charles neither considered the efforts of the MNJTF nor the need for collaboration

with other parties or even the need for the LCR, LCBC or the AU to ensure an effective and efficient MNJTF towards peace in the LCR. Moreover, these works failed to identify certain salient issues associated with the challenges faced by the MNJTF and ways of having an efficient MNJTF. Consequently, some of the strategies these scholars offered to galvanise efforts towards peace in the LCR to enhance national security were deficient. Therein lies the gap in literature which this study intends to fill.

## 2.3 Theoretical Framework

In analysing the effectiveness of MNJTF and peace in the LCR, the interdependence theory and the theory of collective security are best suited to ascertain this.

### 2.3.1 *Interdependence Theory*

Interdependence is a key structural feature of the international system, along with anarchy. Anarchy and interdependence do not stand in opposition to one other as is frequently claimed. The two concepts are logically independent. One is strategic interdependence, in which the ability of each participant to attain their valued outcome depends to some important degree on other participants' choices. Each actor faces costs from failing to cooperate (Nye; Keohane, 1977). The second meaning is structural interdependence resulting from the nature of the relation itself. Interdependence thinking and theorising have been at play for a long time and have served as fundamental building blocks in international relations scholarship. This involved mutual dependency and mutual benefits from exchange, whereas reciprocal interdependence constrains behaviour, constitutes dependency as an unpleasant fact and evaluates the effects of interdependence on the effectiveness of the use of force.

Interdependence is both an analytical tool and a rhetorical device. In common parlance, dependence means a state of being determined or significantly affected by external forces. Interdependence most simply defined as mutual dependence. Interdependence in world politics refers to situations characterised by reciprocal effects between countries or actors in different countries in a manner of cooperation and synergy towards the same aim or objective. Interdependence differs from simple interconnectedness by its costly reciprocal effects (Nye; Keohane, 1977). Sensitivity is the external liability to costly effects before policies are altered to try to change the situation. Interdependence refers to the interconnectedness and mutual reliance between individuals, groups or countries. It recognizes that no entity can exist in isolation and that our well-being and progress are intricately tied to the well-being and progress of others (UN World Public Sector Report, 2018). Interdependence occurs at various levels, from the micro level of interpersonal relationships to the macro level of global economies and environmental sustainability. It is a fundamental concept that shapes our social, economic and environmental landscapes.

Working together on a project can bring diverse skills and expertise to the table, leading to more innovative and effective outcomes. Interdependence becomes even more pronounced at the societal level. On a global scale, interdependence becomes even more vital. In today's interconnected world, countries rely on one another for trade, security and cooperation. Recognising and embracing our interdependence allows us to foster cooperation, build stronger relationships and work toward common goals. Interdependence extends to the global political landscape as nations are increasingly



interconnected by treaties, alliances and international organisations. The actions of one nation can have far-reaching consequences for others. Issues such as security, human rights and global crises require cooperation and collaboration between countries (Shevtsova; Guehno, 2010). Political interdependence fosters peace, stability and development as nations recognise the mutual benefits of working together towards shared goals. The interdependence theory is apt in the multinational nature of the MNJTF. It centres on cooperation, cost sharing and synchronised action against terrorists from all sides at the same time.

### *2.3.2 Theory of Collective Security*

The theory of collective security sprouted out of a liberal institutionalism that views the international system as based on a community of states that can cooperate to overcome mutual problems, also seen as a formal commitment between groups of countries to protect the security interest of its individual members within their joint spheres of interest. It also explains an the arrangement by which all member states agree as a collective to annul any threat posed by an outsider against any of its member states. Collective security theory is a liberal theory of international relations that emphasises venues of cooperation and mutual obligation. States enter into multilateral agreements to refrain from attacking one another and enhance economic relations within an overarching organisation to which they owe allegiance. According to the theory, pledging to an international organisation will create a more stable commitment than a large, confusing set of bilateral treaties. Collective security refers to the formation of a broad alliance of most major actors in an international system to jointly oppose aggression from an actor.

The collective security model, seen as an arrangement among states for effective actions against any aggressor from within the community of states, could also be undertaken by a coalition of states against international aggression or internal conflicts or disorder. Under collective security, states agree to abide by certain norms and rules to maintain stability and, when necessary, bond together to stop aggression, which stems from the realisation that the security threats nations currently face are such that the States cannot solve on their own, hence the need for synergic capacity and strategy. The stability (of any region) stems from cooperation the essence of which is to combat threats to peace and stability. In a system of collective security, the aggressor, an enemy threatening regional or international peace and security, would be isolated and would have to face the organised power of the whole international community. Collective security is as a regional or global arrangement in which each state accepts that security of one concerns all and agrees to join in a collective response to threats to peace and security.

## **2.4 Research Methodology**

Secondary data collection relied on a mix of documentation on the LCB and other organisations focused on trends in the region. Online conflict analysis databases were searched for statistics on the conflict, reflecting the number and frequency of incidents and fatalities. This was complemented by distilling information from media sources.

### 3 OVERVIEW OF THE MNJTF AND BHI AND THE CHALLENGES OF MNJTF

#### 3.1 Overview of MNJTF and the Mutation of BHI

##### 3.1.1 Mandate of the MNJTF

The LCB represents a complex regional system. Over the last 10 years, violent extremism has spread across the region because of BHI and ISWAP activities, which gave impulse to regional security cooperation. The MS of the LCBCR formed a joint military force (MNJTF) mandated by the AU Peace and Security Council with the support of external partners. The MNJTF is a framework for coordinating actions to obtain a multiplier effect. The contingent of each country is deployed within its own national boundaries and operates as a matter of priority for individual and bilateral arrangements. The MNJTF was established on 7 October 2014. On 29 January 2015, the Peace and Security Council formally authorised the deployment of the MNJTF for 12 months, broadening its mandate to include counterterrorism tasks (Tchie; Zabala, 2023). The AU gave political legitimacy and support to regional governments, adopting a concepts of operations in June 2015. The MNJTF is tasked with three core mandates:

1. To create a safe and secure environment in the areas affected by the activities of BHI and other terrorist groups and significantly reduce violence against civilians and other abuses (including sexual and gender-based violence) in full compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law and the UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy;
2. To facilitate the implementation of overall stabilisation programmes by the LCBC MS and Benin in the affected areas, including the complete restoration of state authority and the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees;
3. To facilitate, within the limit of its capabilities, humanitarian operations and the delivery of assistance to the affected populations.

##### 3.1.2 Structure of the MNJTF

The MNJTF was reactivated in late 2014 and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union authorised the operationalisation of its Force in early 2015, renewing its mandate on a yearly basis since then. The Force is comprised of troops from its five troop contributing countries (TCCs) of Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and a smaller contingent from Benin. What is unique about the Force is that each contingent operates within its own borders.

According to the MNJTF rules of engagement, TCCs position themselves within their borders in which they conduct their own national operations. However, where necessary, forces can conduct joint operations where they may cross up to a 50 km perimeter into neighbouring territory in hot pursuit of terrorists. Additionally, operations are coordinated to hit the terrorists from all directions at the same time and prevent them from escaping to non-operational areas. The MNJTF operates under the direct political leadership of the LCBC and military command of its Force Commander (a Nigerian), responsible for coordinating all activities across the four countries, while the MNJTF headquarters were located in N'Djamena, Chad. Sector 1 has its command in Mora (Cameroon); Sector 2, in the town of Baga-Sola (Chad); Sector 3, in Baga (Nigeria); and Sector 4, in the town of Diffa (southeast Niger) (Tchie; Zabala, 2023).

The LCBC MS and Benin were required to provide the force with a legal framework by obtaining formal authorisation from the Peace and Security Council for its activation. This was even more necessary as the LCBC countries and Benin sought a UNSC Resolution recognising and endorsing the deployment of the MNJTF. The AU agreement was a prerequisite for achieving UNSC resolution and thus emerged as the main partner. The AU experience in the deployment and management of peace operations tipped the balance in its favour. The MNJTF financially depends on the AU, which often receives criticism for its bureaucracy impacting the functions and efficiency of the force. The implementation of the MNJTF concept of operations was overseen by a group of regional organisations such as the AU, Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa, Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), ECOWAS, the UN, and MNJTF TCC countries. However, due to funding scarcity, AU provides overall political legitimacy, but the implementation funds are coming from external actors, such as the EU, the United Nations Development Programme and Nigeria.

### *3.1.3 Mutation of the BHI*

The focus on conflict dynamics in the LCB must be understood as a critical examination of the wide spectrum of actors, structures and processes that spawn insecurity in the region and still centre the BHI phenomenon and its connections with other conflict or security dynamics. Muhammed Yusuf founded violent extremism in the LCB in 2002 in Borno State, Nigeria. The BHI was forced underground in 2009 after Nigerian police forces killed over 700 members, including Yusuf, during a raid. Remaining members dispersed to Algeria, Chad, Mali, Niger and other parts of the world. In June and August 2011, the BHI indicated a more aggressive strategy by launching suicide attacks on the police and the UN headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria. The group gained international notoriety following its abduction of 276 girls from the town of Chibok in 2014 and pledging allegiance to ISWAP in 2015. Abubakar Shekau formed an alliance with bandits in northwestern and northern central Nigeria as he sought to expand his territory outside the northeast. This alliance came to the fore with the December 2020 Kankara abduction of over 300 schoolboys in Katsina State. The motivation for this cooperation was largely monetary (Olojo; Aniekwe, 2022).

A splinter faction of the original BHI was active until 2021, when the ISWAP killed its leader, absorbed its territory and relegated its members to remote islands in Lake Chad. An internal reform took place within the ISWAP as Abu Musab al-Barnawi took interim leadership of it. Major parts of the reforms included addressing the thorny issue of the spoils of war and the rights of fighters. Fighters welcomed the reform, and many former fighters returned, boosting the fighting capacity of the ISWAP. The death of Abubakar Shekau gave the ISWAP the opportunity to co-opt some of his fighters and take over territories, further cementing the position of the ISWAP as the dominant violent extremist group in the LCBR (Samuel, 2020). In 2019, the Nigerian military largely relied on a super-camp strategy. JAS exploited this to restock its supplies. Although this worked temporarily, it exposed civilians to more attacks from JAS. ISWAP, which was unable to attack these super-camps, changed its strategy by deploying fighters in larger concentrations and setting ambushes against military reinforcements. This tactic worked and overrun super-camps at least three times from February to April 2021. Consequently, the military resorted to forward operating bases, taking the fight to BHI. This resulted in the deaths of several ISWAP members, including commanders (Anakwe, 2021).

Before Shekau's death, ISWAP had been mostly dominant in the northern part of Borno, near the Nigerian border with Chad and the Republic of Niger, including the islands of Lake Chad. However, the line demarcating the area of influence of each faction is often unclear, leading to occasional skirmishes. The ISWAP benefited from the limited presence of the State by stepping in to fill gaps. In areas it controls, particularly dozens of island villages in Lake Chad, the group is securing market routes, providing security and some basic services such as potable water and medical assistance. They also control access to farmlands as one way to extort rent from communities, thus bolstering revenue (Aniekwe, 2021). The death of Shekau altered the landscape of BHI in 2021, leading to a temporary lull in JAS activities and the consolidation of power by the ISWAP. Nonetheless, JAS managed to provide a rallying point for fighters who refused to join the ISWAP. Several clashes happened between the two factions, with JAS gaining the upper hand and being able to maintain its position in Barwa, Niger and part of Lake Chad islands. The ISWAP leveraged its affiliation to the Islamic State to gain support from the global terror groups with fighters from Libya joining them. JAS leadership changed around March/April 2021, when al-Barnawi took over as interim leader after Ba Lawan. In October 2021, the Nigerian Army confirmed the death of Abu Musab al-Barnawi (Aniekwe, 2021). It remains unclear who is currently running the organisation. Despite the death of its leader, JAS could maintain the stronghold atop the Mandara Mountains, although ISWAP took control of villages in the lower areas of the mountain.

### *3.1.4 Operational Efficiency of the MNJTF*

The LCB countries established the MNJTF to combat BHI and ISWAP. Despite the numerous political, logistical, technical and financial challenges it has been facing, the MNJTF achieved some successes. Over the years, the MNJTF has pressured militants stemming from the BHI/ISWAP expansion, leading it to fracture on more than one occasion. The MNJTF

has brought other dividends by considerable strides toward multilateral cooperation despite divergent perspectives and interests. Several Intelligence-driven operations are being conducted to enhance success rate and reinforce the support to stabilisation. The overall assessment is that the MNJTF is, to a degree, effectively attaining its mandate priorities.

The MNJTF has conducted six major operations since 2015, having significant gains. Operation Sharan Fage in 2021 and Operation Lake Sanity I and II in 2022, cleared several BH/ISWAP strongholds, eliminated top terrorist commanders and freed over 4,000 civilians. The efforts of the MNJTF also decreased the number of terrorist attacks and fatalities in the region from 8,119 in 2015 to 1,894 in 2021. This decline is also due to the surrendering of terrorists in the region as 1,711 terrorists surrendered in 2021 and 2,225 surrendered in 2022. Beyond its military efforts, the MNJTF has been able to create a conducive environment for over 20,000 refugees and IDPs to return home, from September 2021 to April 2022, and has remained steadfast in protecting and providing for them amidst the departure of some NGOs (Zabala, 2023). Moreover, the MNJTF is providing protection and a safe corridor for humanitarian actors to move and enter affected areas they had been unable to access. This has enabled the greater affected populations to gain access to basic services and humanitarian assistance. Another notable success over the last one year is the 'spate of insurgents surrendering' due to MNJTF's kinetic and non-kinetic measures. MNJTF operations has ceased weapons and equipment after dislodging the terrorist group who are now contained in enclaves within the Lake Chad Islands.

The achievements of the MNJTF are visible as the incidence of bombing has largely decreased, as has the flow of weapons, information and financial supply. The task force has been able to set free communities that were under the control of the infamous group, such communities include Gore Blangafe, Gore Mahamat, Kirta-Woulgo, Segui, Damboure and Chaugry. The MNJTF has also weakened the capabilities of BHI to inflict sufferings on civilians as the 2000 attacks on citizens in 2015 dropped to 573 in 2018 (Tar; Adejoh, 2017). The MNJTF military operations have improved security situation in some of the affected areas in the LCB, paving the way for IDPs and refugees to return home. This was the case in Baroua, in the Diffa region in southeast Niger, where close to 6,000 IDPs who fled from BHI violence for years returned home last June. In August 2021, the same number of IDPs returned to Cross-Kauwa, Baga and Doron Baga of Borno State. As of February 2023, the Displacement Tracking Matrix identified a total of 2,388,703 IDPs in 488,163 households and 2,110,039 returnees in 346,166 households. (UN IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix, April 2023).

Despite the MNJTF success, both BHI and ISWAP still offer a potent resilient threat despite the setback it sustained. BHI staged 33 attacks leading to 175 deaths during the first half of 2021 as compared to 2020 (59 attacks and 375 deaths). BHI remained the most lethal terrorist group in Africa, averaging 5.3 deaths per attack (Twum-Amoah, 2022). However, the security situation leading to peace remains critical given the high adaptability and mobility of the terrorists and the highly volatile circumstances in the region. Although operations are successful, they are unable to be sustained for extended periods of time. Once the military leaves the liberated areas, no police capacity can protect and hold the areas for stabilisation programmes to begin. This enables terrorist groups

to come back and reclaim those territories, becoming invisible and embedded within the local population and setting up their own governance structures. The military is often forced to remain present to conduct policing tasks. However, the military has neither the capacity to operate at this level nor the resources.

### **3.2 Analysis of Factors Hindering the Operational Efficiency of the MNJTF in the LCR**

The essence of MNJTF or coalitions is to improve the overall war fighting effectiveness of the joint force and enable more effective multinational operations. International rationalisation, standardisation and interoperability with TCC is important for achieving cooperation, efficient procurement and effective multinational capability. Countries forming alliances seek to advance national security and stability, prevent conflicts and reduce/share risk. The tenets of multinational operations are respect, rapport, mission focus, trust and confidence. While these tenets are unable to guarantee success, ignoring them may lead to mission failure due to a lack of unity of effort.

#### *3.2.1 Poor Funding of the MNJTF GC*

Most African multilateral military campaigns are not financially self-sustaining. The MNJTF, although chiefly supported by TCCs, also relies on donor support. A significant percentage of the funding of the operations of the MNJTF comes from the countries that make up the task force. However, significant amount also come from donor countries and institutions. At the 2016 Addis Ababa Donors' Conference, financial commitment to the Task Force recorded \$250 million. The Nigerian Government pledged a sum \$100 million, and as of 2016, met \$30 million of its commitment. Also, the United Kingdom provided \$ 3.5 million for outfit, whereas Benin, Chad and Niger (the regional Community of Sahel-Saharan States) offered, for the running of the Task Force, a sum of \$1.5million to assist with the financial burden of these countries (Alufoge; Duruji, 2020). Funding for missions depends on external partners and their procurement processes or on the funding each TCC.

TCCs and foreign partners are the sole supporters of the operations, with each TCC giving what it can. The main instrument of the EU for support, until 2021, is the Alliance for Peace and Freedom with €600 million to support the AU under the European Peace Facility. The EU approved additional support of €10 million to the resources already mobilised under the European Peace Facility for the MNJTF, increasing its overall support to €20m. The EU directly provides several military support assets such as air transport, operating costs, intelligence and fuel. (COUNCIL OF THE EU PRESS RELEASE 21 April 2022). The EU only started to disburse its funds in 2017 due to weaknesses in AU procurement processes. After several unsuccessful attempts to circumvent those processes by outsourcing procurement to third-party contractors, the EU supported a major overhaul of the AU systems, which enabled funds to flow through the AU to the MNJTF and

procurement contractors. Even today, some EU funds remain unspent. The EU has had to extend its deadline twice for spending the funds due to delays in agreeing requirements. As of late 2019, the AU had spent or agreed on spending for a little over half of EU's €55 million. The money has been critical, paying for medical services for the force, including a hospital in N'Djamena, communications equipment, vehicles and infrastructure for N'Djamena and the four sectoral headquarters (INTERNATIONAL CRISES GROUP, June 2020).

The USA Department of State, by its Peacekeeping Operations account, is providing approximately \$71 million worth of equipment, logistics support and training to the MNJTF signatory countries. The State Department has provided additional counterterrorism assistance, primarily through Peacekeeping Operations account. In September 2015, the Secretary of State also authorised the use of up to \$45 million in defence articles, services and military training to the MNJTF TCC. In total BHI-related counterterrorism assistance has totalled more \$6 million to date. In addition to military aid, the United States support programs to counter violent extremism the region, including more than \$30 million in activities managed by the USAID Off Transition Initiatives and other programs funded by the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. (Brosig, 2023). This left TCCs, mostly Nigeria, to cover the initial 2016 financing for the MNJTF headquarters, leaving troops in the field undersupplied. Funding is unpredictable, inconsistent and unreliable. The MNJTF is facing inadequate, inconsistent and insufficient funding. Therefore, it is unable to adequately plan, execute and sustain large-scale operations. This constraint contributes to scaling back the effectiveness of its actions. If the LCB MS and their international partners envisage the MNJTF building up its presence and continuously and effectively operate over the next years, they should aim to reach consensus about who and how will pay for the force and explore complementary funding.

### *3.2.2 Ill Equipping the MNJTF GC*

The lack of appropriate and operational equipment to conduct effective and safe operations is a major challenge for the MNJTF. One such challenge refers to the ISWAP increasingly using technologies such as unmanned aerial vehicles. This was first reported in November 2018 when the Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari announced the development during a meeting of TCCs to the MNJTF. So far, ISWAP's use of drones has been limited to propaganda, surveillance and communication. The influx of affiliated foreign terrorist fighters from Libya and the Sahel (who bring technical skills with them) in customizing the widely available commercial drones help the BHI add drones to their repertoires. (Samuel, 2023). The current use of this technology by the BHI is limited to surveillance and reconnaissance operations (AU PEACE..., 2018). In assistance of the task force, France provided 10 transporters aircrafts for mobility, 200 armoured vehicles, four Assault Rafale fighters, French Army helicopters stationed in Mali and general atomic MQ-9 reaper unmanned aerial vehicles, pledging to donate € 30 million to develop amenities and three Lance Roquette Unitaire systems and offering some members of the Task Force

with military training from French armies (Alufoge; Duruji, 2020). It is imperative that the MNJTF and countries in the LCB have a strategy to counter the emerging threat. Also, the MNJTF has neither the appropriate counter-IED equipment nor sufficient amphibious platforms, directly affecting the movement across AORs. The above, coupled with the lack of long-term, substantive and specialised training, as well as military doctrine and language differences among TCC troops significantly hinder the effectiveness of the force. Therefore, all mission stakeholders should prioritise closing those gaps before looking at external or alternative solutions.

### *3.2.3 Structural Challenges of the MNJTF*

Insurgency and terrorism arguably thrive in the LCB due to the geopolitics of the region and its distinct political economy. The basin, which by the providence of geography, is the melting pot of four sovereign states (Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria) makes for an agricultural hub and a food security basin for the states that surround it. The shared lake configures the central resource that defines the prevailing politics and geography of the subregion since the Lake Chad resource is pivotal to the economic development of the four frontline states in the basin. The surrounding wetlands of the lake further make terrain operations challenging providing a haven for armed insurgents and making it extremely difficult for units of the Armed Forces to penetrate its rough terrains (Tar; Bala, 2020).

The MNJTF operates under the direct authority of the LCBC and the heads of state and government, to whom it reports on the execution of its mandate. Its institutional architecture is structured around the LCBC, which is responsible for political oversight. The AU, on the other hand, is a strategic and technical partner in close collaboration with the LCBC Executive Secretariat. LCBC Executive Secretary Sanusi Imran Abdullahi, was designated as MNJTF head of mission following the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of the LCBC and Benin, held in Abuja, Nigeria, on June 11, 2015. The LCBC has limited experience in this field. The AU has emerged as a key partner of the MNJTF (Assanvo; Abatan, Sawadogo, 2016). The LCBC Secretariat plays no specific role in MNJTF operations, thus resulting in an institutional vacuum due to the absence of an organisation on which the MNJTF could rely. The LCBC has limited experience in this field. Therefore, it was considered necessary to provide the MNJTF with support in specific areas.

Experts from the AU, ECCAS, ECOWAS, EU, LCBC, France, the UK and the US drafted the concepts of operations for the MNJTF. Functional differentiation that emerged between the AU and MNJTF resulted from the conflict-specific constellation of actors and their positions and resources for action. The AU aimed to stay in the 'game' by insisting on 'the imperative of enhanced synergy' and by mentioning 'the cardinal principles of subsidiarity, complementarity and comparative advantage.' The AU concentrated on its comparative advantage by emphasising the need for a holistic response to the terrorist threat and helping to organise a multi-stakeholder reaction. While the MNJTF is primarily a military instrument, a more comprehensive and civilian response is needed to sustain territorial wins against the BHI. The adoption of a regional stabilization, recovery and resilience strategy provides a holistic and more civilian and governance-oriented approach.



## 4 THE MNJTF AND PEACE

### 4.1 International Politics in the MNJTF and the LCR

The MNJTF has a combined multinational architecture comprising military units from Nigeria, Niger, Benin, Cameroon and Chad. It is headquartered in N'Djamena and is mandated to eliminate BHI to create a peaceful, safe and secure environment. The composition of the MNJTF fundamentally differs from existing peacekeeping operations of the UN or AU. While these missions fully integrate national contingents under a joint command, operating troops in a foreign country under the banner of an international organisation, the MNJTF operates with minimal internal coordination (mostly on national territories), although it has permission to pursue BHI up to 50 kilometres in another country. Troops operate within their own borders, as opposed to having a multinational troop operating in a single host country. Cross-border operations are only expected to take place within 50 km into the territory of the neighbouring country (Fessy, 2015).

While most multilateral peacekeeping missions are equipped with comprehensive mandates that address governance questions and focus on civilian tasks, the MNJTF focus on militarily pushing back BHI. Although the MNJTF is mandated to perform civilian and policing tasks, these are yet to materialise. The MNJTF resembles no institutionalised response structures currently operating at the level of the RECs, AU or UN. Rather, it is a group-tailored response of countries in the LCR that is split between ECOWAS and ECCAS membership. Thus, the MNJTF was embedded into the existing network of international institutions. The AU advocates for political support, funding and other aspects for its mission. The AU has a Mission Support Team at the MNJTF Headquarters that supports planning, prioritising and coordinating support from its partners. Through the AU, the MNJTF got field and office material, vehicles and other support, \$500,000 annually from the EU in 2022 and another coordination with China with the distribution of 16 armoured personnel carriers to the TCC (Zabala, 2023). The AU occupied functional niches in which it has a competitive advantage. It endorsed the setting up of the MNJTF, authorised its operation, participated in mandating the force, including its concepts of operations, called for a UN Security Council resolution to authorise the mission and played an essential role demanding and facilitating international donor support.

### 4.2 Implications of MNJTF Effectiveness on Peace in the LCR

Violence resulting from complex operations has always disrupted peace in regions, as evident in Syria and the Middle East, Mozambique in East Africa and Somalia, in the Horn of Africa. A conflict has displaced 2.8 million people and hundreds of thousands of refugees/IDPs. Sahel countries rank among the world's poorest with compounding issues of poverty, food insecurity and unemployment. Temperatures in the Sahel are rising 1.5 times faster than the global average, directly damaging the livelihoods of millions who depend on its natural resources (Moss, 2018). Diminishing land and water

resources have led to frequent clashes between herding, farming and fishing communities. BHI and ISWAP activities have worsened humanitarian conditions and exploited insecure conditions to recruit the populace. The weakened economies and proliferating violent extremists have increased illicit and criminal activities in the region. (Moss, 2018). The role environmental, sociopolitical and economic conditions played in shaping the fragility and instability of the LCR is clear. The operations in the LCR have a divided approach to civil-military relations, involving limited interagency co-operation and a divided civil-military interface. The effectiveness of the MNJTF must include the civil-military dimension involving diplomatic, military and economic aspects towards achieving peace. The MNJTF is unable to solve these myriad problems on its own and will only ever be an addition to national efforts.

An efficient military operation will provide the environment for other lines of action by governments towards solving the conflicts as the MNJTF operations are paving way for NGOs operations. In the first quarter of 2023, 120 NGOs plan humanitarian assistance across 61 local government areas of Nigeria. In total, eight UN agencies were active in 58 local government areas, 32 international NGOs were active in 51 local government areas, 67 national NGOs were active in 55 local government areas and 13 government partners were active in 61 local government areas (OCHA, 2023). The USA and its allies have used force to wipe out terrorist groups and targeted attacks against states such as Sudan and Iraq, leaving many questions unanswered. Thus, the use of force has come under criticism, mainly because it has failed to address the underlying causes of the conflict. Whether the cause of war is attributed to greed or grievance, the common factor is the perception of a certain deprivation. BHI/ISWAP have changed the modus operandi of terror groups by filling the governance gap in the regions under their control. They redo the social contract and replace the existing state apparatus and built its recruitment discourse on the failures of the states to provide basic services, including security.

Thus far, the MNJTF has been held back by uneven political commitment, disputes over funding and differences among those states, and the AU and EU over the priorities of the force. The attention of other LCBC MS capitals has also waxed and waned over time. Nigeria face challenges of Indigenous People of Biafra, banditry and kidnappings, whereas Chad faces mounting insecurity/rebellion in its north and east. Cameroon has redeployed some units combating BHI to confront Anglophone separatists in its north-west and south-west provinces. Niger is dealing with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb on its border with Mali, Libya and Burkina Faso. (INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, June 2020). The soft approach to counterterrorism has been designed to win the hearts and minds of people that have been radicalized or are in the process of being radicalized by a non-coercive method. The use of force, especially from a state-based perspective, is categorised as the state-centric. (McAleenan, 2019).

The wave of terrorism in the LCR has generated collective reactions from the affected state actors, with a sole emphasis on force. While Nigeria seeks to dislodge

the group from the areas it has controlled and thus preferred an offensive strategy, the initial focus of other member states was simply to contain the expansion of the group into their territory. Notwithstanding, BHI has waged an asymmetric warfare including roadblocks, ambushes and attacks on soft targets, some of which compromise the gains achieved by the MNJTF. Also, BHI attacks against soft targets have expanded into Cameroon and Niger (UN 2017). However, while the over-reliance on the power of coercion may achieve its mandate in the short run, this exclusive approach is unsustainable for embedding regional peace and security. Sole reliance on a concerted military approach in countering terrorism will fail to address root causes and may further incubate violent extremism. A military counter-terrorism strategy such as the MNJTF can attain limited success, especially as BHI/ISWAP in winning civilians' minds and hearts. Consequently, the activities of an efficient MNJTF can only facilitate the necessary environment for the soft approach by LCB states.

### 4.3 The Way Forward

Regional cooperation is vital to battling BHI/ISWAP, which is thriving in remote border areas around LCR. A reinforced MNJTF can contribute to such a strategy. BHI/ISWAP evolved their posture into that of war against the State. ISWAP has particularly benefited from this limited presence of the State by stepping in to fill gaps. Therefore, it is vital to ensure that the MNJTF is effective, as well as employ the other relevant soft power lines of operation to combat the threat of BHI/ISWAP. Critical to this is the need for political will to address human rights and the Rule of Law to deliver services and ensure access to economic opportunities and soft counter-terrorism strategies related to deradicalization. Lack of coordination in joint planning and information sharing between MNJTF sectors limited the political control of the LCBC over the Force, as well as lack of sustainable funding are the main challenges affecting the effectiveness of the MNJTF.

Efforts should be redoubled in addressing capability gaps, funding constraints, coordination of operation planning and information sharing. The two regional blocs—ECOWAS and ECCAS—should enhance cooperation and coordination. The AU should play a bigger role in helping the MNJTF acquire more equipment and funding. In addition to this, it is widely argued that the AU should support the regional strategy for stabilisation, recovery and resilience to more effectively coordinate efforts of all stakeholders and MS and to ensure intelligence and experience sharing. Improving human rights compliance and cooperation and working with the AU and EU on sustainable funding arrangements, the MNJTF can improve its effectiveness. MNJTF partners should give concrete effect to their pledges of material, financial and technical assistance to strengthen operational capacities (mobility, communications and intelligence) that would enable it to operate effectively.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Summary of Findings

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union authorised the operationalisation of the MNJTF in 2015 to counter the threat of BHI and its offshoots later. The MNJTF has achieved some success in ensuring the terrorists are unable to expand their territories, decimating over 8,500 terrorists over time. Its operations have equally led to humanitarian operations and the return of IDPs and some government activities. However, the MNJTF faces a series of challenges, including funding, ill equipping and structural issues. Additionally, the LCB MS bank more of MNJTF to solve the conflict. The MS only occasionally pursues the soft approach to crisis management, and the BHI/ISWAP still lack that vacuum for recruitment and sympathy from the locals.

An efficient MNJTF is a tool in the box of ideas towards peace in the LCR (and the entire Africa if it activates other lines of operation). The LCB MS should prioritise the development of police capacity and provision of doctors and other social amenities across MS to enable the military to concentrate on operations against the terrorists. This is necessary at the poverty level since effects of climate change and lack of basic amenities persist in the conflict area. Consequently, the LCB MS and TCC must cooperate with one another alongside other institutions such as the ECOWAS, ECCAS, AU and UN as well as donor partners towards the same goal, necessitating a consensus on financial, logistics support and procurement framework to contribute adequate troops and put an excellent political structure in place.

### 5.2 Recommendations

1. AU, LCBC, TCCs and the donor partners should reach a consensus on an international support framework;
2. The AU should facilitate collaboration between the LCB and other (sub)regional blocs in North Africa, the Sahel, Central Africa, Eastern Africa and the Horn of Africa;
3. TCC to develop police capacity across MS and the restructuring of the force into a more multidimensional one with civilian and police components;
4. Strengthen the intelligence posture of the MNJTF by establishing an intelligence-sharing loop between the MNJTF and the TCCs and align training with core priority areas;

5. Donors should commit to consistent and predictable support to augment funding from the TCCs;
6. The LCR MS should intensify developmental interventions by a well-defined and coordinated long- and short-term investment in human security in addressing economic, political and social drivers for recruitment into radicalisation and to win the hearts and minds of the populace;
7. Ensure that states respect and promote the rights of citizens as fundamental to preventing and countering terrorism.

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