Political Economy Undercurrents of Security and Defence in Africa

Gbensuglo Alidu Bukari*

Abstract

This paper examines the governance and economic undercurrents influencing security and defence outcomes in Africa. The discussion centres on Africa's political-economic governance framework and its implications for security outcomes. Stability, security, and defence represent foundational pursuits of any sovereign state, with legal frameworks and constitutional arrangements typically designed to achieve peace, integration, and stability essential for national growth and prosperity. Employing a political economy framework of analysis, the paper argues that Africa's current strategic environment requires a redesigned security and defence posture to respond to emerging threats. Also, political stability, security, and defence constitute vital national interests that facilitate peaceful coexistence and growth. Drawing on exploratory case study design and analyses, the findings reveal that despite the aspirations, efforts by most African governments toward attaining secure states remain continually undermined by political instability and security challenges. The findings further show that recent insurgent attacks and widespread insecurity in Africa, particularly in the Horn of Africa and Sahel region, have negatively impacted citizens' lives and property, with costs measured in deaths, broken lives, destroyed livelihoods, and increased vulnerability. The paper concludes that addressing these complex challenges requires strengthening domestic institutions, promoting regional cooperation, diversifying economies, investing in human security, and reconfiguring relationships with external actors. This should be anchored in professionalising security forces and establishing robust civilian oversight mechanisms, which are essential for preventing the militarisation of politics and ensuring that security institutions serve the population rather than ruling elites.

Keywords: politics, economics, security, defence, conflicts, development, Africa

*gbukari@uds.edu.gh

1.0 Introduction and Motivation

The political economy of security and defence examines how political and economic issues influence security and defence outcomes within states. This paper explores the relationship and interplay between economic factors and political decisions that shape security and defence in Africa (Frieden & Lake, 2000). Defence and security dynamics continue to overshadow the continent's political economy, restricting Africa's autonomy and its ability to shape development processes that enhance security and development prospects (Hutchful & Fayemi, 2005). This reality is evident at both global and regional levels, as aspirations for a more democratic global governance architecture remain distant despite significant initiatives (Frieden & Lake, 2000; Ifedi, 2020).

Economic and political factors play significant roles in shaping security and defence policies. The availability of resources, economic growth rates, and fiscal constraints directly impact a state's defence budget and its capacity to maintain and modernise its defence and security apparatus (Hou & Chen, 2013; Gong, Wagner & Bertay, 2015). During periods of economic growth, states may increase defence spending to enhance their capabilities. Conversely, economic downturns can lead to budget cuts and a reevaluation of defence priorities. The need to balance economic growth and defence spending often leads to complex trade-offs, as excessive defence expenditure can divert resources from critical areas such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure, thereby perpetuating unmet basic human needs (Hutchful & Fayemi, 2005; Iheonu & Ichoku, 2023). Political factors exert equally significant influence on security and defence discussions. Political ideologies, the structure of political institutions, public opinion, and the interests of powerful stakeholders such as defence industries shape defence policies in meaningful ways. Governments may prioritize security spending to fulfil strategic objectives, respond to perceived threats, or maintain political legitimacy (Gong et al., 2015; Otukoya, 2024).

The persistent nature of territorial violence in Africa necessitates broader theoretical and policy efforts to address its root causes. African states, unlike their European counterparts, have not experienced the same level of state formation and consolidation of domestic order. Moreover, they do not possess full control over their political and security spheres, partly due to the legacy of European colonisation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017). Since the 1990s, conflicts in Africa have proliferated, with many being state-related and centred on territorial issues. Garcia (2019) identified at least 117 territorial disputes in Africa, noting that African wars tend to be disproportionately long, less violent, and often end in mutually hurting stalemates (Gong et al., 2015).

Arguably, the most important pursuits of any sovereign state are stability, security, and defence. Without these elements, growth and development become virtually impossible. It is not surprising, therefore, that all laws, legislation, and constitutions are typically designed by governments and their people to achieve peace, integration, and stability, elements basic to national growth and prosperity. That notwithstanding, efforts by most governments in Africa towards attaining secure states remain continually undermined by security threats and development issues. Recent insurgency, violent attacks, and insecurity in the Sahel regions of Africa have impinged negatively on the lives and properties of citizens (Kedem, 2023). For many people concerned with peace and development, the most disturbing aspect of the twenty-first century is the spread of insurgency, piracy, armed robbery, mob justice, gang warfare, and particularly political vigilantism. Human rights violations resulting from current violence are unprecedented (Hutchful & Fayemi, 2005). A violence-free society requires well-trained personnel and equipped state security agencies with modern security protection tools. Peace, security, and defence constitute key ingredients to socio-economic development in a nation-state. It is increasingly recognised that a relationship exists between security, defence, and development.

Despite significant scholarly attention to the political economy of security in Africa, several gaps remain. First, there is limited study on how the interaction between economic conditions, governance structures, and historical legacies produces specific security outcomes. Second, the role of neo-patrimonial practices in shaping security governance requires further investigation. Third, more empirical study is needed on the effectiveness of policy interventions in addressing security challenges. This paper contributes to addressing these gaps by providing an analysis that integrates multiple theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence. Therefore, the purpose of the paper is to examine governance and economic undercurrents in Africa contributing to security and defence threats on the continent. Specifically, the paper:

i. Identifies the theoretical frameworks that explain the relationship between political economy and security in Africa,
ii. Examines the conceptual issues shaping security and defence outcomes in African states,
iii. Ascertains the geopolitical dynamics and regional security complexes affecting the continent,
iv. Analyses the socio-political factors influencing security governance.

2.0 Literature Review

The political economy of security and defence in Africa has attracted considerable scholarly attention, with researchers exploring the complex relationships between governance, economic conditions, and security outcomes. This literature review examines key themes in the existing scholarship, including the relationship between economic factors and security, the role of governance and state capacity, external influences on African security, and the impact of historical legacies.

Scholars have extensively documented the relationship between economic conditions and security outcomes in Africa. Hou and Chen (2013) demonstrated that military expenditure and economic growth are closely linked in developing countries, with fiscal constraints often

forcing difficult trade-offs between security spending and other development priorities. Iheonu and Ichoku (2023) found that terrorism and economic growth in Africa are significantly influenced by military expenditure, suggesting that security investments can have both positive and negative effects on economic development.

The resource curse literature has been particularly influential in explaining how natural resource wealth can contribute to conflict and instability. Adabor and Mishra (2023) showed that resource dependence is associated with increased conflict risk in Africa, with competition over valuable resources often fueling armed violence. Yates (2015) examined the rise and fall of oil-rentier states in Africa, demonstrating how resource wealth can undermine governance and create conditions for conflict. Similarly, Omeje (2021) explored the relationship between natural resources and rentier capitalism, highlighting the challenges of managing resource wealth for sustainable development. Poverty, unemployment, and economic inequality have also been identified as important drivers of insecurity. Constantinescu (2011) argued that economic marginalization creates grievances that can fuel recruitment into armed groups. Kedem (2023) documented the relationship between economic hardship and civil unrest, showing that economic pressures often translate into political instability and violence. These findings suggest that addressing the economic roots of insecurity requires inclusive development strategies that promote equitable growth and job creation.

The relationship between governance and security has been extensively examined in the African context. Ngange (2019) argued that weak governance structures and limited state capacity hinder the ability of African governments to provide security and maintain order. Corruption, lack of transparency, and inefficiency in public institutions exacerbate security challenges by creating opportunities for insurgent groups and criminal networks to thrive. Risse and Stollenwerk (2018) explored the concept of legitimacy in areas of limited statehood, arguing that state

weakness creates spaces for non-state actors to challenge state authority. Bates (2008) examined state failure in late twentieth-century Africa, showing how governance failures contributed to the collapse of state institutions and the emergence of conflict. These studies highlight the importance of strengthening governance institutions as a foundation for sustainable security.

External actors play a significant role in shaping the security and defence landscape in Africa. Ndawana (2020) examined how international organisations, foreign governments, and multinational corporations influence security policies through aid, investment, and diplomatic relations. While external support can provide critical resources and expertise, it can also create dependencies and limit local agency. Aning and Addo (2008) analysed the African Union's peace and security architecture, highlighting both achievements and challenges in developing autonomous African security capabilities. Asgedom (2019) examined the partnership between the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in peace and security, showing how regional organizations can work together to address security challenges. However, the efficacy of these organisations is sometimes impeded by insufficient financial resources, logistical problems, and political differences among member nations (Williams, 2009). Military interventions by external powers have significant ramifications for African security. Bah (2010) showed that while interventions are often justified on humanitarian grounds or for counterterrorism purposes, they can also aggravate conflicts and undermine local government institutions. Lacher (2012) examined the complex dynamics of organized crime and conflict in the Sahel, highlighting the challenges of addressing transnational security threats in regions with weak state capacity.

The effect of historical legacies on contemporary security challenges has been a major theme in the literature. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2017) examined

coloniality of power in postcolonial Africa, showing how colonial histories continue to shape governance structures and security dynamics. Gashaw (2017) analysed colonial legacies and contemporary conflict, demonstrating how arbitrary borders and extractive economies have contributed to persistent instability. Walsh (2020) revisited regional security complex theory in Africa, examining how historical patterns of conflict and cooperation continue to shape security dynamics. The literature consistently shows that understanding and addressing these historical legacies is essential for building sustainable peace and security.

3. 0 Theoretical Framework

Dependency theory posits that the economic conditions of developing countries are inextricably linked to their historical relationships with developed nations (Mingst & Arreguín-Toft, 2017; Lisimba, 2020). Originating in the 1950s and 1960s, this theory challenges the notion that underdevelopment is merely a stage on the development path. Instead, it argues that the global economic system is structured to benefit the developed world at the expense of the developing world, creating a persistent cycle of dependency and underdevelopment (Ikechukwu & Ikechukwu, 2013).

In the African context, dependency theory sheds light on how colonial histories and ongoing economic relationships with former colonial powers and other developed nations influence security and defence policies (Mingst & Arreguín-Toft, 2017). Colonialism established economic structures designed to extract resources and wealth from African colonies to benefit European powers. Post-independence, these structures have often persisted, albeit in modified forms, maintaining economic dependencies. For instance, many African countries continue to rely on exports of primary commodities to global markets dominated by multinational corporations based in developed countries (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017). This dependency extends beyond economics to security and defence. African countries frequently depend on external aid, military

assistance, and security cooperation from developed nations. While this assistance can provide immediate security benefits, it often comes with conditions that potentially undermine national sovereignty and create long-term vulnerabilities. Reliance on foreign military aid can disincentivize investment in domestic security infrastructure and professionalisation of local armed forces, perpetuating insecurity. Moreover, the terms of such aid and assistance are often dictated by the strategic interests of donor countries rather than the security needs of recipient nations, leading to misalignments between local security priorities and external objectives (Ndawana, 2020).

The resource curse theory, also known as the paradox of plenty, suggests that countries rich in natural resources often experience adverse economic and political outcomes (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004). Contrary to expectations that resource wealth should spur economic development and prosperity, many resource-rich countries suffer from poor governance, corruption, and conflict (Nguyen, 2021; Adabor & Mishra, 2023). This paradox is particularly evident in Africa, where numerous countries endowed with significant natural resources such as oil, diamonds, and minerals face persistent challenges. Resource wealth can become a source of conflict and instability, exacerbating security challenges (Adabor & Mishra, 2023). The struggle for control over valuable resources often leads to armed conflicts, as seen in the oil-rich Niger Delta region of Nigeria and the mineral-rich areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These conflicts are fueled by various factors, including competition among local groups, interference by external actors, and the involvement of illicit networks that exploit resource wealth (Adabor & Mishra, 2023; Oluyemi, 2020). Resource wealth can also undermine governance by creating opportunities for corruption and rent-seeking behaviour (Adabor & Mishra, 2023). Political elites may divert resource revenues for personal gain or to maintain their grip on power, often through patronage networks. This weakens state institutions and erodes public trust, making it difficult to implement effective security and

defence policies (Brosig, 2017; Yates, 2015). The challenge of managing resource wealth responsibly remains a critical issue for many African countries seeking to leverage their natural endowments for sustainable development (Schritt & Witte, 2022; Omeje, 2021). The notion of regional security complexes, as introduced by Buzan and Waever (2003), is important for comprehending the linked nature of security concerns in Africa. In these complexes, the security problems of one state are strongly related to those of its neighbours, necessitating a regional approach to security management (Manwaring & Hill, 2022). For example, the instability in the Sahel area, characterized by the existence of terrorist organisations and transnational criminal networks, requires coordinated efforts from different nations to address underlying causes and reduce dangers (Lacher, 2012). Regional security complex theory helps explain how security dynamics are shaped by geographic proximity, historical patterns of interaction, and shared challenges. It highlights the importance of regional organisations in addressing security threats that transcend national borders.

The concept of human security, which emphasises the protection of persons from numerous risks including violence, poverty, and sickness, is increasingly acknowledged as important to the political economy of security in Africa (UNDP, 1994). Traditional security methods focusing primarily on state security are inadequate for tackling the diverse and multidimensional issues facing African nations. Promoting human security demands a comprehensive strategy that incorporates security and development strategies. This involves tackling the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, inequality, and social exclusion, and investing in social services and infrastructure that can strengthen community resilience to security threats (MacFarlane & Khong, 2006; Reveron & Mahoney-Norris, 2018; Manwaring & Hill, 2022). The human security approach recognizes that individuals, not just states, are the ultimate referent objects of security and that threats to well-being encompass both violent and non-violent harms.

Neo-patrimonialism refers to a system of governance where formal state institutions are overshadowed by informal personal networks and patron-client relationships. In many African countries, neo-patrimonial practices shape the political and economic landscape, significantly impacting security and defence (Masenya, 2017). Under neo-patrimonialism, political leaders often use state resources to maintain loyalty and control, prioritising regime survival over national security. This framework helps explain why security forces in many African countries serve the interests of ruling elites rather than the population at large. It also illuminates how corruption and patronage within security institutions undermine their effectiveness and legitimacy.

4. 0 Methodology

This study employs an exploratory case study design and analysis. The case study approach is appropriate for examining complex social phenomena in their real-world contexts and allows for in-depth exploration of the political economy of security and defence in Africa. The study design enables comparison across cases while also allowing for detailed examination of specific contexts. Two primary case studies have been selected for analysis, and these are the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region. The study draws on multiple data sources such as official documents from the African Union, ECOWAS, and other regional organisations, policy documents, reports from national governments, and United Nations Security Council resolutions and reports. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, following the approach outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). However, this design has several limitations, including the reliance on secondary sources, which means that the analysis is dependent on the quality and availability of existing research. Also, its findings cannot be generalised to other African regions, and besides, the study does not include primary data collection through interviews or surveys, which could provide additional insights.

5.0 Findings

Governance and State Capacity Challenges

The findings reveal persistent challenges related to governance and state capacity across African states. Weak governance structures and limited state capacity hinder the ability of African governments to provide security and maintain order. Corruption, lack of transparency, and inefficiency in public institutions exacerbate these issues (Ngange, 2019). For instance, the inability to effectively manage borders and provide basic services creates opportunities for insurgent groups and criminal networks to thrive (Risse & Stollenwerk, 2018). The findings also indicate that governance deficits are particularly acute in areas where state authority is contested or absent. In these areas, non-state actors often fill the security vacuum, creating parallel systems of governance that may challenge state authority. This pattern is evident in parts of Somalia, the Sahel, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where armed groups control territory and provide basic services in the absence of effective state presence.

Economic Drivers of Insecurity

The findings demonstrate that economic conditions significantly impact security and defence outcomes. High levels of poverty, unemployment, and economic inequality contribute to social unrest and conflict. Economic marginalisation of certain groups can fuel grievances and drive recruitment into armed groups (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Constantinescu, 2011). Moreover, economic instability can limit government revenue, reducing capacity to fund security and defence initiatives. The resource curse phenomenon is particularly evident in the findings. Resource-rich countries such as Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan experience higher levels of conflict and instability than countries with fewer natural resources. The struggle for control over valuable resources often leads to armed conflicts, with competition among local groups, interference by external actors, and the involvement of illicit networks exploiting resource wealth (Adabor & Mishra, 2023; Oluyemi, 2020).

External Influence and Security

The findings reveal that external influence plays a significant role in shaping the security and defence landscape in Africa. International organisations, foreign governments, and multinational corporations influence security policies through aid, investment, and diplomatic relations (Poulin, Lambert, Hamm, & Berg, 2014; Ndawana, 2020). While external support can provide critical resources and expertise, it can also create dependencies and limit local agency. The United States' military presence in the Sahel region, aimed at countering terrorism, has had mixed results, providing vital support against extremist groups while also sometimes being perceived as infringing on national sovereignty (Ndawana, 2020). Similarly, the French military intervention in the Sahel has been credited with preventing the collapse of governments in Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso but has also faced criticism for perpetuating a neo-colonial security architecture that limits African agency (Lacher, 2012; Poulin et al, 2014).

Historical Legacies and Contemporary Conflict

The paper demonstrates that historical legacies have left enduring impacts that shape contemporary security and defence issues in Africa. Colonial borders often ignored ethnic and cultural divisions, creating states with diverse and sometimes conflicting identities (Khadiagala, 2008; Gashaw, 2017). This has led to internal conflicts and secessionist movements. Additionally, colonial powers often prioritized extractive economies and repressive security apparatuses, which have influenced post-colonial governance and security structures. The arbitrary borders drawn by colonial powers have resulted in ethnic tensions and conflicts, as seen in ongoing challenges in countries like Sudan and South Sudan (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017). These artificial boundaries often separate ethnic groups or force diverse groups together, creating conditions for conflict over resources, political representation, and cultural recognition.

Neo-Patrimonialism and Security Governance

The study reveals that neo-patrimonial practices significantly impact security and defence outcomes in Africa. Under neo-patrimonialism, political leaders often use state resources to maintain loyalty and control, prioritising regime survival over national security (Zartman, 1995; Masenya, 2017). This leads to the militarization of politics, where security forces are deployed to suppress political opposition and protect the ruling elite. The situation in Zimbabwe, where security forces have been instrumental in ensuring regime longevity through coercion and patronage, exemplifies these dynamics. Similarly, in Uganda, security forces have been used to suppress political opposition and maintain the ruling party's grip on power. Such practices undermine the development of professional and accountable security institutions (Masenya, 2017).

Regional Security Complexes and Coordination

The study also shows that regional organisations play crucial roles in shaping the security picture in Africa. Regional organisations such as the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are essential in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, and post-conflict reconstruction initiatives. However, their efficacy is sometimes impeded by insufficient financial resources, logistical problems, and political differences among member nations (Zartman, 1995; Khadiagala, 2008; Williams, 2009; Asgedom, 2019). The African Union's Peace and Security Council and the African Standby Force represent significant institutional frameworks for collective security. Yet, these mechanisms face persistent challenges related to funding, troop availability, and political will among member states. The reliance on external funding for peacekeeping operations further complicates these efforts, as donor priorities may not align with African security needs (Brosig, 2017).

Case Study Findings: The Horn of Africa

The Horn of Africa, comprising nations such as Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti, is a region marked by protracted hostilities, political

instability, and complex security dynamics. The confluence of historical grievances, ethnic conflicts, and external interference has created a volatile security environment (Luckham, 1998; Cliffe, 1999). Somalia has witnessed decades of civil conflict, governmental breakdown, and the growth of extremist organisations like Al-Shabaab. Efforts to stabilise the country have featured a combination of military operations, peacekeeping missions, and state-building projects, with variable success (Menkhaus, 2007). The ongoing conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region further demonstrates the challenges of handling internal conflicts and the spillover implications for regional security (Aalen & Tronvoll, 2009).

Case Study Findings: The Sahel Region

The Sahel region, spanning West and Central Africa, suffers from a confluence of security challenges, including terrorism, organized crime, and intercommunal violence. The existence of terrorist organisations such as Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has destabilized numerous nations, including Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso (International Crisis Group, 2017). Efforts to combat these challenges have included military operations, regional security measures, and international assistance. However, underlying socio-economic concerns such as poverty, unemployment, and environmental degradation continue to feed instability (Luckham, 998; Lacher, 2012). The Lake Chad Basin region, where Boko Haram has been active, illustrates the transnational nature of security threats in the Sahel.

6.0 Discussion

The findings reveal that security challenges in Africa are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Governance deficits create opportunities for armed groups to thrive, while economic marginalisation fuels grievances that drive recruitment. External interventions can provide short-term security benefits but may create long-term dependencies and limit local agency. Historical legacies of colonialism continue to shape contemporary security dynamics through artificial borders and extractive

economic structures. This interconnectedness suggests that addressing security challenges requires comprehensive approaches that consider multiple dimensions simultaneously. Isolated interventions that focus on only one aspect of the problem are unlikely to succeed. For instance, military operations that do not address underlying governance and economic issues may achieve temporary gains but fail to produce sustainable peace.

Also, the findings strongly support the resource curse thesis, demonstrating that natural resource wealth is associated with increased conflict risk in Africa. Competition over valuable resources, corruption, and rent-seeking behaviour create conditions for conflict and instability. The challenge of managing resource wealth responsibly remains a critical issue for many African countries seeking to leverage their natural endowments for sustainable development. However, the resource curse is not inevitable. Countries like Botswana have managed their diamond wealth effectively, achieving stability and development. The key factors that distinguish successful resource management include strong institutions, transparent governance, and equitable distribution of resource revenues. These findings suggest that addressing the resource curse requires institutional reform and improved governance, not just changes in resource extraction practices.

Besides, the importance of regional cooperation in addressing security challenges is highlighted. Regional organisations play crucial roles in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, and post-conflict reconstruction. However, their efficacy is often limited by insufficient resources and political differences among member states. Strengthening regional cooperation requires addressing these limitations through increased funding, political commitment, and institutional capacity-building. The African Union's efforts to develop an autonomous peace and security architecture represent important steps in this direction, but these efforts require sustained support and political will from member states.

Moreover, the findings reveal the complex dynamics of external engagement in African security. External actors can provide critical resources and expertise, but their involvement can also create dependencies and complicate security dynamics. The presence of foreign military forces and the terms of security assistance can undermine national sovereignty and limit local agency. Balancing external assistance with the development of autonomous security capabilities is a key challenge for African countries. This balance ensures that foreign aid does not undermine local governance structures but rather complements them in ways that foster long-term stability. African countries should strive to develop indigenous security capabilities and shape the terms of their engagements with external partners.

The findings underscore the importance of human security as a framework for addressing security challenges in Africa. Traditional state-centric approaches are inadequate for addressing the multidimensional threats facing African populations. Human security requires comprehensive strategies that address root causes of conflict, invest in social services, and build community resilience to security threats. The human security approach recognizes that individuals, not just states, are the ultimate referent objects of security. This means that security strategies should be evaluated based on their impact on people's lives, not just their effect on state stability. Addressing poverty, inequality, and social exclusion is therefore essential for building sustainable peace and security.

Finally, the findings have implications for the theoretical frameworks used in this study. Dependency theory helps explain the continued influence of external actors on African security and the persistence of economic dependencies that limit African agency. The resource curse theory illuminates the relationship between natural resource wealth and conflict, while regional security complex theory highlights the interconnected nature of security challenges. The neo-patrimonial

framework explains how informal practices shape security governance in many African countries, while human security theory provides a normative framework for evaluating security outcomes. Collectively, these theories offer complementary perspectives that enrich understanding of Africa's security challenges.

7.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The political economy of security and defence in Africa is a complex and multifaceted issue that demands an interdisciplinary approach to understand and address underlying challenges. The historical legacy of colonialism, the economic constraints faced by African states, the influence of international actors, and the socio-political dynamics within countries all play key roles in creating the security picture. Addressing these issues necessitates an integrated approach that promotes human security, regional collaboration, and sustainable development.

This paper has examined governance and economic undercurrents contributing to security and defence threats in Africa. The analysis reveals that governance deficits, economic marginalisation, external interference, historical legacies, and neo-patrimonial practices all contribute to persistent insecurity. The case studies of the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region illustrate the complex dynamics of these interconnected challenges. The findings demonstrate that addressing security challenges requires more than military responses. It requires strengthening state institutions, promoting good governance, addressing economic inequalities, and building resilience at community levels. The interconnected nature of security challenges means that isolated interventions are unlikely to succeed; approaches that consider multiple dimensions simultaneously are essential. Theoretical frameworks including dependency theory, resource curse theory, regional security complex theory, and human security frameworks provide complementary lenses for understanding Africa's security challenges. These theories

highlight the importance of historical context, economic factors, regional dynamics, and human wellbeing in security analysis.

In a nutshell, based on the findings and the conclusion of this paper, there is a need to strengthen domestic institutions responsible for security and defence. This should involve increasing governance, accountability, and transparency to promote public trust and enable effective resource usage. Also, capacity-building projects for security forces and judicial systems are vital for sustaining peace and order and tackling the root causes of conflict. Finally, professionalising security forces and establishing robust civilian oversight mechanisms are essential for preventing the militarisation of politics and ensuring that security institutions serve the population rather than ruling elites.

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