Mapping the Dynamics of Subregional Order: Challenges and Prospects in the Maghreb Region after 2011 Arab Spring

Asmaa Rafa* & Philipp O. Amour**

Abstract

This article examines the security challenges facing the Maghreb region as a subregional system of the Middle East since the Arab Spring. The analysis concentrates on the period after the fall of the Libyan regime, which resulted in the decline of security in Libya, internal conflicts in Mali, and rising security instability in the Sahel region due to the return of Tuareg fighters to their Malian homeland. The article explores the political and economic dynamics in the Maghreb through an analysis of power distribution utilizing the regional security complex theory (RSCT). This examination highlights how these dynamics influence rivalry or cooperation, and the repercussions of missing systems that prompt the restructuring of the subregional order. The relevant information was systematically collected and analyzed via a data collection method which facilitated a thorough investigation of the intricate dynamics of the area, resulting in a better comprehension of the elements that mold its geopolitical environment.

Keywords: Maghreb, Sahel, subregional order, regional security complex theory (RSCT), Algeria, Morocco

Introduction

The Maghreb subregional system has faced new security challenges since the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2011. Security issues were amplified after the fall of the Gaddafi regime in Libya and the subsequent deterioration of security in the country, in addition to internal conflicts in Mali and the escalation of security instability in the Sahel region after the return of armed and trained Tuareg fighters from Libya to their homeland. The article examines the political and economic dynamics within the Maghreb by studying how power is distributed in the region. Utilizing the regional security complex theory, the article explores how these dynamics led to competition or cooperation, and how the fall of the Gaddafi regime led to the creation of a vacuum that increased the pace of competition between the major powers in the region, necessitating the need to reshape the Maghreb's subregional system.

In line with the regional security complex theory, historical and sociopolitical ties, their impact on current interactions, including alliances and conflicts, and how they affect contemporary security concerns are studied. In addition, non-state actors, such as terrorist groups, can influence the subregional security complex. The region's security transformations have resulted in new interactions between state and non-state actors. In addition to previous issues that have remained unresolved, such as the conflict over Western Sahara, new challenges that have increased in frequency, such as terrorism,[1] the proliferation of armed groups, organized crime, and migration, require the coordination of efforts and cooperation among subregional countries and external actors to confront them and maintain regional stability.

The Maghreb subregional order is also influenced by political dynamics. Despite political differences and occasional tensions, members of the region recognize the importance of regional cooperation to address common challenges and advance shared interests;[2] however, the dynamic interaction within the Maghreb subregional order is fraught with difficulties. Deeper integration and closer cooperation have been hampered by political differences, historical disputes, and regional conflicts. The current situation in Libya and Western Sahara, for example, has had an impact on the stability and progress of the entire Maghreb.

---
* Asmaa Rafa (corresponding author), PhD Researcher, Middle East Institute, Sakarya University, Türkiye. Email: asmaa.rafa@ogr.sakarya.edu.tr. ORCiD: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2164-1985.
** Philipp O. Amour (PhD), Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Sakarya University, Türkiye. Email: dr@philipp-amour.ch. ORCiD: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6287-4625.
[1] Aljamal, Yousef (2014), "Hamas: Terrorism Organization or Liberation Movement?," *The Politics and Religion Journal - Serbian Edition*,Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 40.
[2] Hamdy A. Hassan (2021), "Trade and Security Cooperation in the Arab Maghreb Union Region," in Kenneth Omeje (ed.), *The Governance, Security, and Development Nexus: Africa Rising*, Bradford: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 185.

The difficulties facing the Maghreb highlight the complexities of subregional dynamics and the importance of ongoing dialogue, trust-building, and conflict-resolution mechanisms. The article explores whether there is a need to find a new regional order after these transitions, especially after the vacuum left by the Libyan regime and the security threats that require security cooperation and a collective security vision.

Theoretical Framework: Regional Security Complex Theory

In *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security,* Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver discuss the regional security complex theory (RSCT) which expands on their previous framework for analyzing security introduced in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis.* RSCT is rooted in constructivism, which emphasizes that the formation of regional security complexes is shaped by the relationships of amity and enmity among actors in the international system. In this context, conflict and cooperation are influenced by both the actions and perspectives of these actors, and their power dynamics.[3]

Buzan developed the theory to improve our knowledge of the dynamics of security relations at the regional level, which lies between the opposite ends of state level and international level; RSCT, thus, aims to create concepts for studying regions. The theory is based on the idea that geographical proximity facilitates the transmission of threats more effectively. Therefore, threats tend to come more from neighboring countries rather than distant ones. The theory also suggests that lack of security is linked to geographical proximity as states linked by a geographical area experience security interdependence. The regional security complex is a pattern of mutual security consideration in the international system.[4] As geographically neighboring states are linked to each other by their security concerns and fears, there should be a relative density of security relations between them. In the regional security complex, international security cannot be analyzed for each state in isolation. The term "regional security complexes" refers to the structured relationships that states develop within a geographical area to survive and maintain their security. There should also be clarity in the security interdependence, which appears through competition and a mutual sense of threat. According to Buzan, the South Asian model is characterized by competition between India and Pakistan,[5] while the Maghreb model is characterized by competition between Morocco and Algeria. Regional patterns are formed through power distribution and through studying historical relationships, whether characterized by enmity or amity.[6]

The conceptual expansion introduced by the Copenhagen School has taken the security concept out of its narrow framework confined to the military dimension and broadened security agendas to include five sectors: military, societal, political, economic, and environmental security. This expansion has made the scope of threats wider than just the military. Also, referent objects, which are the entities whose existence is threatened and have the right to exist, are no longer limited to states. While the state is still the most dominant actor and the basic unit in security interactions, it is not the only one; regional institutions and non-state actors, for example, are also considered part of the security complex. This expansion has led security studies to address threats in all dimensions, such as the societal dimension, which addresses immigration as a threat to national identity, and the economic dimension, which addresses the impact of smuggling on national economies.[7]

The Maghreb Subregional Security Complex and Political Landscape

The term "Maghreb" (in Arabic *al-Djazirat al-Maghrib,* the "Sunset Peninsula" or "West," as opposed to Machrek, the "Arab East") has long included the three countries of northwest Africa, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, as well as to the east and west, Libya and Mauritania. These five states, grouped since 1989 in the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), also include the disputed territory of Western Sahara, located between Mauritania and Morocco, and occupied by the latter since 1979.[8]

---

[3] Barry Buzan (2003), "Regional Security Complex Theory in the Post-Cold War World," in Fredrik Söderbaum and Timothy M. Shaw (eds.), *Theories of New Regionalism*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 144.
[4] Buzan (2003), "Regional Security Complex Theory," p. 144.
[5] Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver (2003), *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, Vol. 91, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 46.
[6] Patrick M. Morgan (1997), "Regional Security Complexes and Regional Orders," in David A. Lake and Patrick M. Morgan, *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World*, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, p. 31.
[7] Barry Buzan (2008), *People, States & Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in The Post-Cold War Era*, ECPR Press, p. 23.
[8] Atlas (2017), "Le Maghreb: Tout Savoir Sur Cette Région d'Afrique Du Nord," *Atlas Monde: Toutes Les Cartes Des Pays*, retrieved 18 May 2023, www.atlas-monde.net/afrique/maghreb/.

Buzan argues that the Maghreb is part of the Middle East's regional security complex. The Maghreb subregional security complex is a complex and dynamic system shaped by various factors, including historical relationships, geopolitical interests, and economic elements.[9] These states share the same history, geography, and culture, and one country's security is frequently linked to the security of the others. Yet, the relationships have been tumultuous and fluctuating.[10] The Maghreb's borders with the rest of Africa are not clearly demarcated, and security worries have frequently spilled over into neighboring nations Meanwhile, the primary regional security issue has been caused by Morocco's annexation of Western Sahara in 1975.[11]

The Maghreb witnessed essential changes during the first and second waves of the Arab Spring (2011–2019), which affected the regimes in Tunisia, Libya, and Algeria. The fall of the Libyan regime impacted the region in so far as the absence of the Gaddafi regime as an essential player in the regional system created a vacuum that led other regimes to compete to try to fill it. This included the Moroccan regime, which created an increase in the pace of competition with Algeria.[12]

At the same time, Gaddafi's fall and the Libyan army's collapse constituted a security breakdown and caused the spread of armed groups, which impacted neighboring countries and regimes within the regional system. In the early 1980s, Malian Tuareg fled to Libya, where they were trained and armed to form the Islamic Legion. After the collapse of the Gaddafi regime, members of this legion returned to their original homeland with their weapons and military capabilities, demanding the independence of the Azawad region in northern Mali, and increasing the pace of internal conflicts in the country.[13]

The lack of progress in security reform in Libya has led to ongoing instability, reinforcing the opposing parties' division. Consequently, two governments have formed, creating a more complex political and security landscape. Additionally, the failure to unify security institutions and reliance on local armed groups, along with their legalized status, have compounded the already challenging security situation in Libya.[14] At the same time, foreign intervention is a potential contributor to heightened security tensions in the country. As former U.S. President Barack Obama acknowledged, the intervention in Libya, which lacked planning, was the worst error of his presidency.[15] Ben Fishman asserts that the Biden administration should strive to limit foreign involvement in Libya in order to promote stability.[16] The new situation has created a security challenge for all countries in the Maghreb. These developments have spurred a new regional order and the proliferation of studies on the dynamics of interaction, based on either amity or enmity, between the units in the security complex.

Power Dynamics in the Maghreb

Analyzing a regional system involves examining three key dimensions: its order or distribution of power, its patterns of regional dynamics and political processes, and its transnational causes. These dimensions provide a comprehensive understanding of the regional system by considering the interplay between material power, ideas, causes, and domestic influences.[17]

Analyzing power dynamics in the Maghreb specifically requires understanding the complex relationships among regional states. As a region shaped by shared history, geography, and culture, historical tensions, economic interests, and political rivalries often influence power dynamics. The conflict over Western Sahara, which is the most critical issue in the region and the primary source of tension between its two major countries, Morocco and Algeria, is a prime example of how power

---

[9] Buzan and Wæver (2003), *Regions and Powers*, p. 191.
[10] Angel Rabasa et al. (2004), *The Muslim World After 9/11*, Pittsburgh: Rand Corporation, p. 147.
[11] Buzan and Wæver (2003), *Regions and Powers*, p.193.
[12] Miguel Hernando de Larramendi (2018), "Doomed Regionalism in a Redrawn Maghreb? The Changing Shape of the Rivalry between Algeria and Morocco in the post-2011 Era," *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 3, p. 4.
[13] Jean-Louis Romanet Perroux (2019), "The Deep Roots of Libya's Security Fragmentation," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 55, No. 2, p. 18.
[14] Nuri Yeşilyurt (2023). "A New Balance between 'Local 'and 'National'? Libya's Failed Security Sector Reform," *Journal of Intervention and State Building*, Vol. 17, No. 4, p. 462.
[15] Spyridon N. Litsas (2020), "Obama's Foreign Policy and the Arab Spring: The Cases of Egypt, Libya, and Syria," in Spyridon N. Litsas (ed.), *US Foreign Policy in the Eastern Mediterranean*, Cham: Springer, p. 134. See also The Guardian (12 April 2016), "Barack Obama says Libya was the 'worst mistake' of his presidency," retrieved July 7, 2023, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/apr/12/barack-obama-says-libya-was-worst-mistake-of-his-presidency.
[16] Ben Fishman (2022), "Ten Years after Benghazi: Getting Past Groundhog Day," *Survival*, Vol. 64, No. 5, p. 113.
[17] Phlipp O. Amour (2020), "Introduction," in Philipp O. Amour (ed.), *The Regional Order in the Gulf Region and the Middle East: Regional Rivalries and Security Alliances*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 3.

dynamics are affected in the region. Moreover, the emergence of terrorist groups and the spread of armed conflict have further complicated the power dynamics in the Maghreb. To understand fully the power landscape in the Maghreb, it is necessary to examine the various contributing factors and how they interact. The analysis that follows includes a review of the region's significant issues and an examination of the distribution of power, both military and economic.

Military Power

According to Michael Willis, the military's role in the politics of three of the Maghreb countries has been different in each case. In Algeria, the military has played a central and pivotal role, even embodying the state itself. In contrast, the military was intentionally kept out of politics in Tunisia for many years, while in Morocco the military's role has varied between these two extremes.[18] However, there are some commonalities as well across the region. The ruling regimes in all three countries have recognized the importance of the military's support in maintaining their power, and one of the primary ways of supporting the regimes has been by protecting them against domestic enemies and challengers that may threaten their stability. This protection is crucial to the regimes' survival.[19]

Algerian-Moroccan Arms Race

Between 1962 and 1990, the Soviet Union was by far Algeria's largest supplier of military equipment, selling weapons worth approximately $14 billion and accounting for more than 90 percent of Algeria's arms imports. According to Luis Martinez, since 1973, Algeria has benefited from the repercussions of the nationalization of hydrocarbons and the first oil crisis, and had a significant external income for the first time since its independence. Expenditure for the purchase of arms also followed the course of the price of a barrel of oil.[20] Arms races are a common occurrence in international relations, where pairs of hostile countries engage in a competitive acquisition of military capability. This phenomenon has been observed in many historical instances, from the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union to current regional conflicts such as the one between India and Pakistan. Despite changes in global dynamics, arms races continue to be a persistent concern in modern times.[21]

The arms race has become increasingly international since the Industrial Revolution, which unleashed the mass production and qualitative evolution of weapons, and the dawn of the race to quantitative and qualitative armaments with the technological development of modern weapons. The action-reaction process is still operational at lower levels of competition and in terms of the military status quo. Even when the likelihood of war is low, states usually have some idea of who they consider to be potential sources of threat.[22] In the competition process, states may reach the point where the process of arming the other party is a threat to them and, therefore, seek measures to strengthen their military security by strengthening their armaments. Such reinforcement makes the other party feel less secure, requiring it to take measures that increase its safety.

Regardless of the intentions of a state that increases its armament, whether it is for defensive or offensive purposes, it creates a sense of threat for other countries, particularly neighboring ones. This is what is known as the "security dilemma," where actions and reactions escalate tensions.[23] The raising of doubts can cause other countries to increase their armament to enhance their sense of security, leading to competition between countries and an armament race.[24] Buzan states that the arms race is one of the results of the development of military technology.

In the case of the Algeria-Morocco arms race, considering the securitization theory, Algeria saw the normalization of Israeli-Arab relations to be a direct threat to its national security, especially after security and military agreements were signed between the Moroccan and Israeli sides. These agreements include the security and intelligence fields, and allow for the conclusion of security deals,

[18] Michael Willis (2014), *Politics and Power in the Maghreb: Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco from Independence to the Arab Spring*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 83
[19] Willis (2014), *Politics and Power in the Maghreb*, p. 84.
[20] Luis Martinez (2011), "Frontières Et Nationalisme Autour du Sahara Occidental," *Paris: Sciences Po, CERI*, retrieved June 7, 2023, https://ceriscope.sciences-po.fr/content/part3/frontieres-et-nationalisme-autour-du-sahara-occidental.
[21] Dunne J. Paul and Ron P. Smith (2007), "The Econometrics of Military Arms Races, in Todd Sandler and Keith Hartley," *Handbook of Defense Economics - Defense in a Globalized World*, Vol. 2, Amsterdam: North Holland, p. 915.
[22] Christopher Hughes and Yew Meng Lai (2011), *Security Studies: A Reader*, New York: Routledge, p. 250.
[23] Glenn H. Snyder (1984) "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics*, Vol. 36, No.4, p. 462.
[24] Eryn Sobarini, Deni Dadang Ahmad Rajab and Surryanto Djoko Waluyo (2021), "Aukus Pact in the Perspective of Security Dilemma," *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research*, Vol. 4, No. 12, p. 3983.

the sale of security and military equipment to Morocco, and joint military exercises. In addition to cooperation in operational planning, research, and development, then Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz described the agreement as "an essential matter that will enable us to exchange views, launch joint projects, and stimulate Israeli exports to Morocco."[25]

In 2018, Israel has provided Morocco with drones as part of the cooperation framework and expanded the field of military cooperation.[26] In addition, it has also spurred other projects aimed at strengthening the military arsenal of Morocco and strengthening its defense systems. This is especially crucial in the face of harassment from the Polisario Front or from the Algerian military regime, which cut off diplomatic relations with Rabat and closed its airspace to Moroccan civil and military aviation. At the same time, it points to Israeli leadership in the field of military technology, allowing the kingdom to benefit from visits of the Israeli defense minister to protect its interests, and, in particular, its sovereignty over the Western Sahara region.[27]

The increase in armament in Morocco poses a threat to Algeria, causing its decision-makers to increase Algerian armament as well. Last October, Algeria approved the increase of its military budget by 130 percent, which means it will reach $23 billion by next year. The country is also the world's largest importer of Russian weapons, ahead of China and India. Despite the economic situation affected by the coronavirus pandemic, the budget allocated to armament in Algeria and Morocco increased repeatedly from 2020 to 2023. In 2021, Algeria allocated a budget estimated at $9 billion and planned to increase it by 7.8 percent in 2022. In late 2022, the country's *Official Gazette* stated that the budget allocated to the Ministry of Defense amounted to $18.39 billion, equivalent to 15.45 percent of the general budget.[28] Between 2005 and 2009, Algeria was the second-largest importer of arms in Africa after South Africa, with a share of imports of 28 percent of total arms imported into the continent.[29]

Morocco's 2020 finance bill increased the kingdom's national defense budget by 29 percent, allocating $4.728 billion to defense. In 2021, it increased the budget allocated to the Ministry of Defense by 30 percent. In 2022, Morocco's allotment remained unchanged at $5 billion. As for Morocco's budget for the year 2023, the budget of the National Defense Department amounted to $5.83 billion. The Moroccan-Israeli normalization process was another factor in activating the Algerian-Moroccan arms race, especially after the announcement of Israeli investments and the signing of military agreements worth approximately $500 million.[30]

From 2005 to 2009, the amount of primary conventional weapons imported by Algeria increased by 102 percent in comparison to the period from 2000 to 2004. As a result, Algeria advanced from the 18th to the 9th position among the top receivers of such weaponry worldwide. Algeria received 89 percent of the total volume of arms transferred to North Africa, excluding Egypt.[31] Algeria's military spending of $10.3 billion in 2019 was the largest in entire Africa.[32] Overall, the country's military expenditures have nearly doubled since 2000, particularly between 2004 and 2016, while its military burden is 6 percent of its GDP.

Morocco's military spending in 2021 increased by 3.2 percent to $5.4 billion compared to 2020. Morocco and Algeria are the two African countries that have spent the most on armaments over the past decade. Morocco is one of ten countries in the Middle East and North Africa region that allocate the highest percentage of their GDP to military spending. Morocco spent 4.2 percent of its GDP on military spending in 2021, compared with 5.6 percent for Algeria. In 2021, global military expenditure exceeded $2 trillion for the first time, reaching $2.1 trillion. Morocco's military expenditure in 2020 reached $4.8

[25] Mohammed Zainabi (2021), "Morocco-Israel: First Steps towards Promising Joint Projects," *The Jerusalem Post*, retrieved July 7, 2023, https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/morocco-israel-first-steps-towards-promising-joint-projects-658652.

[26] Federico Borsari (2020), *The Middle East's Game of Drones: The Race to Lethal UAVs and Its Implications for the Region's Security Landscape*, Milan: Italian Institute for International Political Studies, ISPI ANALYSIS, p. 7.

[27] Le Figaro (2022) "Le Maroc Et Israël Consolident leur Alliance Militaire," *Le Figaro*, July 20, 2022.

[28] *Official Gazette of the Republic of Algeria*, December 31, 2022, No 83.

[29] Paul Holtom, Mark Bromley and Pieter D. Wezeman (2010), "International Arms Transfers," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 713-716.

[30] Karim Mezran et al. (2022), *North Africa's Transatlantic Relations amid Change and Continuity*, Washington: Atlantic Council Rafik Hariri Center & Middle East, p. 31.

[31] Nicholas B. Dirks (2004), "Colonial and Postcolonial Histories: Comparative Reflections on the Legacies of Empire," *Human Development Report Office (HDRO)*, no: HDOCPA-2004-03.

[32] Sipri Yearbook (2020), *Armaments, Disarmament, and International Security*, Stockholm: SIPRI Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, p. 233.

billion, an increase of 29 percent over 2019 and 54 percent over 2011, accounting for 29 percent of its GDP.[33]

According to the 2022 global firepower rankings, Morocco's military strength ranked 55th out of 140 countries worldwide that year. Regarding main battle tank (MBT) fleet strength by country, Morocco ranks 8th with 3,335 tanks. The country is one of the top 40 importers of large arms, ranking 29th out of 40 countries, while data shows that Morocco is one of the largest buyers of U.S. weapons: 90 percent of Morocco's weapons come from the U.S., 9.2 percent from France, and 0.3 percent from the UK.[34] However, when considering options, the need for diversification emerges. Morocco relies heavily on U.S. arms sales and maintenance contracts because most of its armed forces use U.S. military equipment. Despite European frigates and some French and Israeli air force reinforcements, Morocco still relies on the United States for military modernization. This raises critical defense issues concerning the independence of the Moroccan army as the U.S. Congress must approve key components of military modernization, and many U.S. allies' efforts to do so in the recent past have been thwarted.[35]

Figure 1: Military expenditure as a share of gross domestic product (GDP) in Algeria (2010-2020)
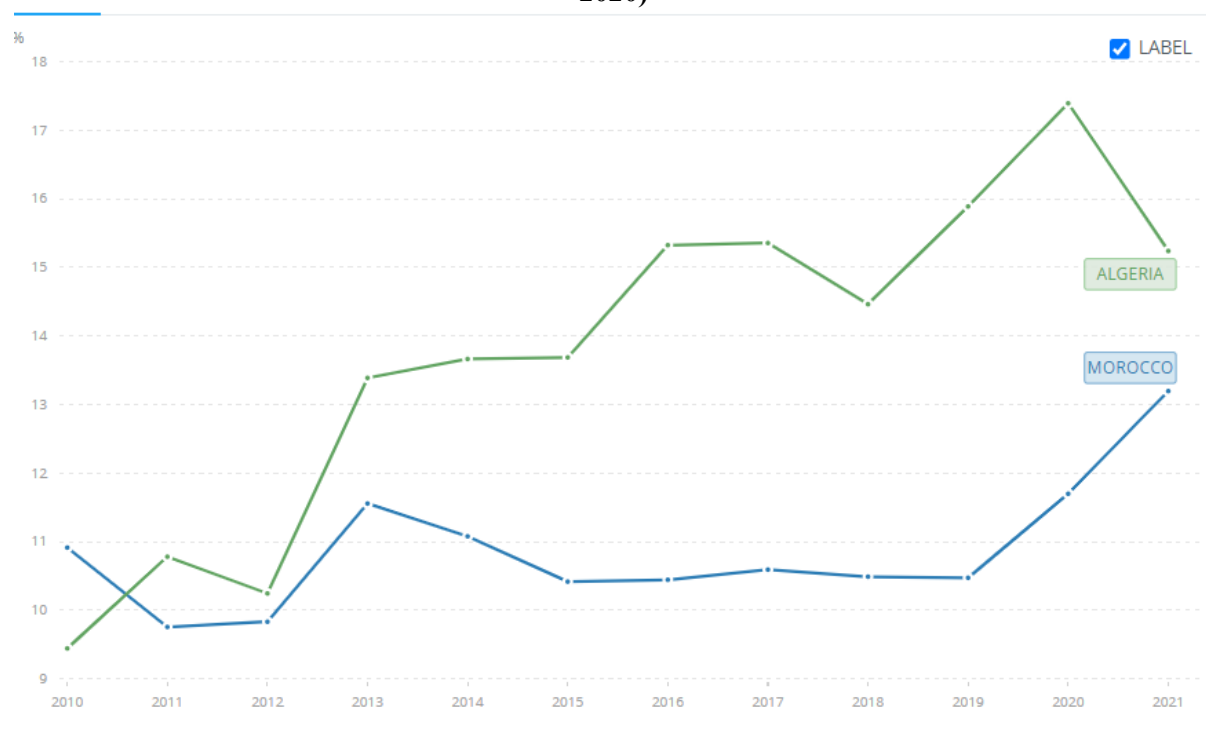
Source: World Bank Open Data (2023)

Economic Power
Amid the different ideologies adopted in the Maghreb countries since their independence, with Algeria, Libya, and Tunisia adopting socialist stances, Morocco has relied on an open market economy. Yet, the Maghreb countries have been unsuccessful in finding solutions to social and economic problems and challenges. The unemployment rate is high, and although the rates are decreasing, the low level of per capita GNP continues, and the countries still need to implement a development model.[36] The Tunisian economy has faced significant challenges due to the ineffective results of neoliberal economic strategies, a decline in tourism following high-profile terrorist attacks, the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and overwhelming government debt. Together, these factors have led to a deterioration in the standard of living for many Tunisians since 2011. In addition, the use of coercive

[33] Diego Lopes (2021), *Fact Sheet April 2021: Trends in World Military Expenditure 2020*, Stockholm: SIPRI Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, p. 6.
[34] Global Firepower (2022), "Global Firepower: World Military Strength," retrieved November 30, 2022, https://www.globalfirepower.com/.
[35] Jasper Hamann (2022) "Morocco Upgrades Its Military Capabilities Amid Regional Tensions," *Morocco World News*, retrieved May 5, 2023, https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2021/08/343983/morocco-upgrades-its-military-capabilities-amid-regional-tensions.

[36] Nabli Beligh (2014), "Géo-économie du Maghreb," *Groupe Interacademique pour le Development*, retrieved May 20, 2023, https://g-i-d.org/fr/zone-euro-mediterraneenne/actualites/item/197-geo-economie-du-maghreb.

mechanisms by the Tunisian state and an external debt that exceeds 90 percent of GDP have further exacerbated the economic burden on the nation.[37]

The Arab Spring had a significant impact on the Libyan economy. At an estimated cost of $56.548 billion, the Libyan civil war following the fall of the Gaddafi regime has caused significant economic disruption.[38] The observed growth rate of real GDP per capita between 2011 and 2014 was -49.0 percent, while that of synthetic Libya in the same period was 15.2 percent. The loss in terms of growth rate of real GDP per capita in this period was 64.2 percent.

Figure 2: Key resources of the Maghreb
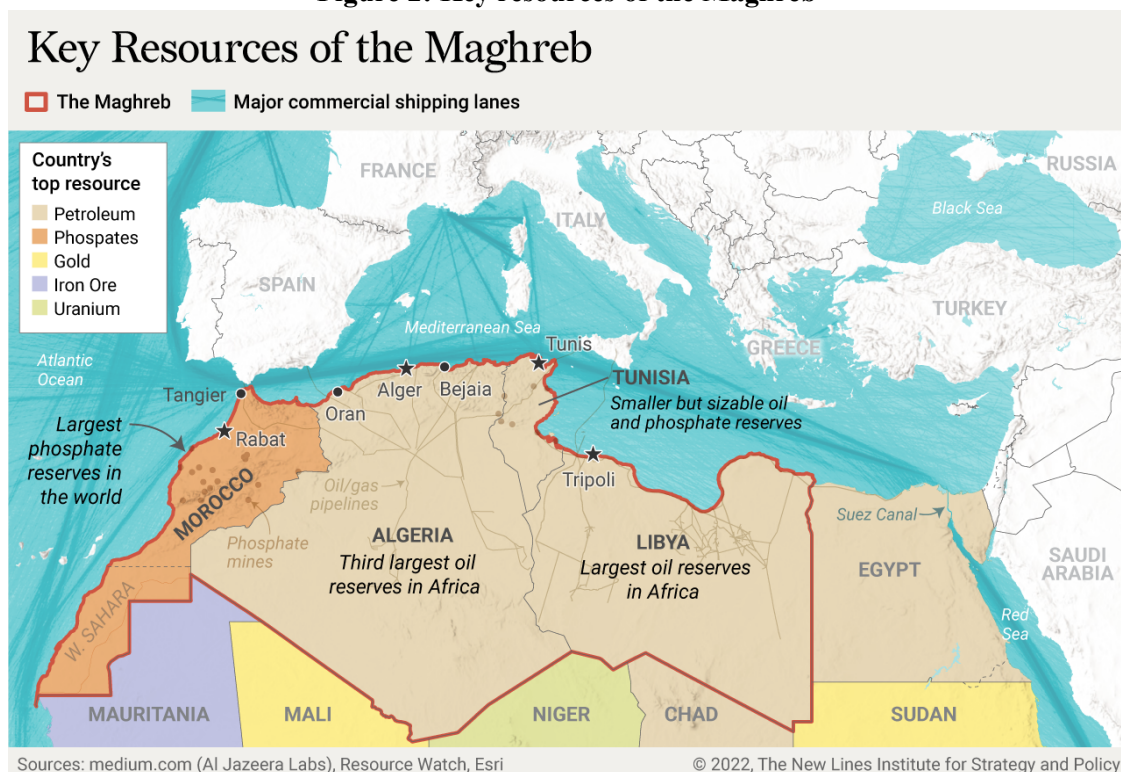
Source: Karim Mezran et al. (2022)

Intraregional Trade in the Maghreb

The reports issued by the International Monetary Fund indicate that the volume of intra-regional trade between the Maghreb countries is at most 5 percent of the total trade in the region and still fragile compared to the trade between countries in other regions of the world. By contrast, intra-African trade exceeds 16 percent and trade in the European Union stands at 80 percent. Due to their proximity, the main trade partners of the Maghreb are European countries in the southern Mediterranean region, namely Spain, France, and Italy. The low percentage of intra-Maghreb trade persists despite initiatives to improve intra-regional trade and economic cooperation. The lack of economic integration can be attributed to the absence of a political will, which stems from the disputes between the Maghreb countries, especially between Algeria and Morocco, which have escalated to severing diplomatic relations and maintaining closed borders since 1994. This is in addition to the various security challenges in the region and the need to secure the borders. Other reasons include investment restrictions, a lack of regional infrastructure to build the Maghreb market, and customs restrictions. Geopolitical considerations also play a role in constraining investment policies.[39]

Overall, the Maghreb is characterized by an unusual weakness in capital flows, investment, and intra-Maghreb trade. For example, according to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) data, trade between the five AMU countries was limited in 2017 to 2.7 percent of the

---

[37] Rosa Maryon (2023) "The Role of Security Assistance in Reconfiguring Tunisia's Transition," *Mediterranean Politics*, p. 14.

[38] Arcade Ndoricimpa and Michel-Armel Ndayikeza (2023), "Economic Costs of Civil Conflicts: The Case of Burundi," *Defence and Peace Economics*, p. 13.

[39] Hedi Larbi and Lars Christensen (2017), *Smart Development Strategy for the Maghreb: Structural Reform, a new role for the State, Regional Integration*, Tunis: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), p. 82.

region's total foreign trade.[40] The Maghrebian presence in Maghreb foreign investment is deficient, with the stock of Maghrebi foreign direct investment (FDI) from AMU countries representing barely 1.7 percent of total FDI in the world and 0.31 percent of the FDI of AMU countries received from around the world.[41] In 2017, the region received a total of $5.1 billion in FDI, representing only 0.3 percent of global FDI flows and 1.35percent of the region's GDP.[42]

The Maghreb region has significant economic potential, owing to its natural resources, geographical location, and diverse economic base. Realizing this potential and strengthening economic power, however, necessitates addressing issues such as resource dependency, trade barriers, labor market issues, infrastructure gaps, economic diversification, and governance flaws. The Maghreb countries can increase their economic power and contribute to the region's long-term development by leveraging their collective strengths, promoting regional integration, investing in human capital, improving infrastructure, and implementing sound economic policies.

Critical Issues in the Maghreb

Border Security Concerns
The Maghreb region faces numerous security challenges, particularly at its borders, including terrorism, arms smuggling, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and migratory flows. The fall of the Gaddafi regime in Libya in 2011 and the subsequent arms smuggling that followed have worsened the security situation. The proliferation of weapons was supported by Tuareg fighters, with smugglers from the Libyan southwest crossing the Algerian and Nigerian borders to transport the weapons.[43] In addition, the presence of weapons depots in Libya and the uncoordinated nature of the Libyan Army have contributed to the spread of weapons in the Sahel region, particularly Mali.

After the collapse of the Gaddafi regime, there was a widespread loss of state control over weapons depots seized by an opposition force.[44] The arms trade has been a source of funding for armed groups deployed in Libya to the neighboring countries of Libya, Egypt, Tunisia Algeria, and Chad.[45] To solve these challenges, North African countries have employed various tactics, including the construction of barriers and fences, and the use of drones and advanced surveillance technologies. However, there is a risk that military pressure, such as that exerted by Operation Serval in Mali in 2013, could inadvertently foster collaboration between jihadist groups and certain traffickers, creating new risks.

The spread of weapons in North Africa and the Sahel region after the Libyan war has challenged Algeria to prevent its territory from becoming a base for Libyan militias and terrorist groups. Algeria closed its border with Libya in 2012 and re-evaluated its defense policy after the 2013 attack on the Tiguentourine Gas Complex.[46]

While efforts to secure the Maghreb region's borders are necessary, there is a need for a holistic approach that takes into account the underlying economic, social, and political factors driving these challenges. Military operations must be conducted cautiously to avoid unintended consequences that could exacerbate the security situation.

The Rivalry between Algeria and Morocco
According to Willis, the dispute between Morocco and Algeria is rooted in the countries' structures. The independence of the latter from France resulted from a revolutionary movement, while the former

[40] Alexei P. Kireyev et al. (2019), *Economic Integration in the Maghreb: An Untapped Source of Growth*, Washington, D.C: International Monetary Fund, p. .2

[41] Amar Mahmah (2022): "Le Projet D'Intégration Maghrébine à L'Epreuve des Tensions Régionales," *Les Cahiers Du Cread*, Vol. 38, No. 2, p. 177.

[42] Sami Mouley and Noureddine Zekri (2019) "Intégration Financière Régionale au Maghreb et Activation Opérationnelle De La Banque Mghrébine D'investissement Et De Commerce Extérieur," *Revue d'économie Financière*, pp. 77-102.

[43] James Cohen et al. (2016), *Building Regional Border Security Cooperation: Lessons from the Maghreb*, Washington: United States Institute of Peace, pp. 1-4.

[44] Marsh Nicholas (2017), "Brothers Came Back with Weapons: The Effects of Arms Proliferation from Libya," *The Peace Research Institute Oslo*, Vol. 6, No. 4, p. 82.

[45] UN Security Council (2017) "Letter dated 1 June 2017 from the Panel of Experts on Libya established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council," *UN Security Council*, retrieved May 15, 2023, https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N17/116/23/PDF/N1711623.pdf?OpenElement.

[46] Boudhane Yacine (2014), "Algeria's Role in Solving the Libya Crisis," *The Washington Institute*, retrieved July 5, 2023, https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/algerias-role-solving-libya-crisis.

became a monarchy. Aside from their ideological differences, the two countries have also adopted different political ideologies. After Algeria became a socialist state, Morocco became more Westernized. Since the independence of the Maghreb countries, Maghrebi regional relations have fluctuated between conflict and cooperation. Part of the volatility stems from the lack of a dominant regional state capable of acting as a "hegemon." Instead, the two more powerful states, Morocco and Algeria, have attempted to dominate the region to further their agendas. Both have attempted to enlist the region's other states as allies, although the other three are either extremely weak (Mauritania), extremely small (Tunisia), or internationally isolated and erratic (Libya).[47]

The dominant feature in Algerian-Moroccan relations is the prevalent tension that has been present since Algeria's independence from French colonialism in 1962, Morocco became independent in 1956, with the exception of the late 1980s and the period of the start of the Arab Spring demonstrations in 2011, when the two countries witnessed a rapprochement. The reason for the rapprochements was either a common interest or a common threat. Regarding the rapprochement witnessed in bilateral relations in the late 1980s, we find the two countries grew closer due to the necessity of establishing the Maghreb Union, as the latter could not exist without a fundamental agreement between the two major countries in the region. As for the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2011, the reason was the presence of a potential threat to both regimes, especially with the beginning of the rise of Islamic currents in the region, the collapse of regimes, and the consequent absence of security stability. Many analysts also consider competition as the dominant feature of the bilateral relations.

Since independence, there have been many instances of conflict over Algerian and Moroccan foreign policies and regional dominance, leading to border closures and limited cooperation agreements. Although Algeria adopted a policy of non-alignment during the Cold War, it was known for its proximity to the Soviet Union and its declared policy of supporting liberation movements around the world. In this context, Algeria received several titles, the most important of which was as a "mecca for revolutionaries." Today, Algerian authorities no longer regard Morocco as a rival country, but rather as a potential adversary seeking to destabilize the regime. On August 24, 2021, Algeria announced the severance of diplomatic relations with Morocco, following a series of Algerian accusations of spying on Algerian figures with the Israeli-made Pegasus malware, and then accusing Morocco of involvement in the fires that erupted in Algerian forests in the Kabylie region. Ties were also strained over the Moroccan delegation's statement at the United Nations calling for the right of tribes to self-determination.[48]

During an intense period of Maghrebi rivalries before the 1980s, Tunisian foreign policy aimed to distance itself incrementally from regional politics by avoiding alignment with rivals and adhering to international legal arbitration for conflict resolution.

According to Imad Mansour the rivalry between Maghrebi countries subsided between the 1980s and 2010, but the destabilizing effects have remained widespread. Tunisian leaders bolstered their connections with France to mitigate the negative consequences of these rivalries. The relations between Algeria and Morocco have structured the political landscape of the Maghreb region and shaped Tunisian foreign policy strategies towards promoting stability.[49]

Migration in the Maghreb from the Sahel
The deterioration of security in the Sahel has led to the emergence of security challenges for neighboring countries, including the Maghreb and European countries, as the lack of security and instability across borders have caused a new wave of migration of Sahelian citizens to countries such as Mali and Niger.[50] Algeria can be reached via two primary transit points, namely Agadez in Niger and Gao in Mali. From these points, the initial destination is Algeria's southernmost town, Tamanrasset, which is located near the border of Niger.[51] Those who cross to Tamanrasset, depending on the reasons for their departure,

---

[47] Willis (2014), *Politics and Power in the Maghreb*, p. 92.
[48] Luis Martínez (2021), "Algérie et Maroc: Rivaux Ou Ennemis?" *AFKAR/IDEES*, retrieved March 23, 2023, https://www.iemed.org/publication/algerie-et-maroc-rivaux-ou-ennemis/?lang=fr.
[49] Imad Mansour (2022), "Explaining the Influence of Maghrebi Rivalries on Tunisian Foreign Policy," *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 2, p. 395.
[50] Rasmus Alenius Boserup and Luis Martinez (2018), "Europe and the Sahel-Maghreb Crisis," *Danish Institute for International Studies*, No. 3, p. 7.
[51] Paola Manzini (2010), "Smuggling of Migrants into, though, and from North Africa," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, pp. 8-10.

seek a different destination: some cross into Algeria as a transit country on their way to Libya or Morocco, and others seek asylum in Algeria.[52]

The geographical belt separating the Maghreb and the coast has been considered a haven for smuggling operations over the past years, where the smuggling of goods of various kinds, including subsidized foods and drugs, is commonplace. This region is considered a transit area for drugs coming from Latin America to the countries of the Maghreb and Africa via land routes in the desert. Max Galien states that governments in the region have condoned smuggling operations to avoid rebellions by the residents of the border areas and protests against their marginalization and poor living conditions; on the whole, he does not consider smuggling a threat to national security.[53] Harbert discusses the informal agreement between governments and smugglers in exchange for security information on borderline areas, calling it "informal tolerance."[54]

The issue of growing terrorism threats and smuggling in Algeria has resulted in the loss of $1.3 billion in petrol smuggling. To address this, both Morocco and Algeria have implemented measures to tighten their security, including building walls and investing in national security. These measures, though, have negatively impacted the border towns that had relied on illicit trading for decades.

Despite the efforts to combat smuggling, it remains a significant concern in both countries due to the smugglers' agility. The Washington think-tank Global Financial Integrity estimates that Algeria and Morocco have lost approximately $3.5 billion and $2.7 billion, respectively, due to illicit financial inflows in recent years. The countries have also lost $4.1 billion and $3.4 billion, respectively, from illicit financial outflows. Moreover, smugglers in both Algeria and Morocco continue to generate significant revenue through narcotics from South America. These issues not only have economic consequences, but also pose national security concerns.

What is more, following the deterioration of the security situation after 2011, the activity in the region expanded from smuggling goods to people smuggling. Agadez is the hub of human smuggling operations between the Sahel and the Maghreb, which is distinguished by its geographical proximity to Europe, extending along the south shore of the Mediterranean Sea.

Migration and terrorism are linked in so far as terrorist organizations use migration routes by embedding terrorists among migrants as sleeper cells, who resume their activity in the countries of migration. Algerian officials rely on such fears, in addition to the possibility that factors of religious or ethnic affiliation may facilitate migrants joining terrorist cells and being recruited for terrorist operations in the countries to which they migrate.[55] The connection between migration and terrorism presents a strong argument for the security discourse that seeks to securitize migration, portraying it as a threat to national security.

Moreover, the security situation in the Sahel has worsened due to the emergence of violent extremist groups and non-state actors leading to an unprecedented rise in crime in the region, with criminal networks increasingly utilizing the network of routes connecting the Maghreb and the Sahel for activities such as drug trafficking, arms trafficking, and human trafficking. These transnational organized criminal networks often finance terrorist activities.[56]

Terrorist groups operating in the Sahel and other regions, according to UN Secretary-General António Guterres, are advancing and attempting to broaden their sphere of influence. The path of terrorism is widening, with fighters, money, and weapons moving more frequently across different regions and even continents. Terrorist organizations are also forming new alliances with organized crime and pirate organizations. Meanwhile, the online world provides a global platform that facilitates the spread of

---

[52] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2018), "Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, retrieved March 30, 2023, https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glosom/GLOSOM_2018_web_small.pdf.
[53] Jihane Ben Yahia et al. (2019), *Transnational Organized Crime and Political Actors in the Maghreb and Sahel*, Mediterranean Dialogue Series, No. 17, p. 4.
[54] Yahia et al. (2019), *Transnational Organized Crime*, p. 5.
[55] Marc Helbling and Daniel Meierrieks (2022), "Terrorism and Migration: An Overview," *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 52, No. 2, p. 984.
[56] Yahia et al. (2019), *Transnational Organized Crime*, p. 3

violent ideologies.[57] The brutality of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has raised fears of instability in the Maghreb and the Sahel. In fact, AQIM's activities, which include abducting foreigners, smuggling cars and cigarettes, trafficking drugs, and arms dealing, have led many to believe that the group's motivations are more criminal in nature than political or religious.[58]

Maghreb and the Sahel: Regional Rivalry or Security Cooperation?

The Sahel region is considered the Maghreb's backyard. The geographical and ethnic rapprochement between the two regions has led the Maghreb countries to give strategic priority to becoming mediators in resolving the regional conflicts. As a result, the Sahel region is an arena for the rivalry between the Maghreb countries; this was the case between Algeria and Libya before the fall of the Gaddafi regime and is currently the case between Algeria and Morocco.[59]

The Gaddafi regime paid unprecedented attention to the African strategic depths: Libya was considered a haven for the migration of the African labor foe, and the country was a source of solutions and economic aid that revived the economies of many African countries.

Meanwhile, Morocco has turned its attention to the southern part of the continent in pursuit of trade agreements. From 2003 to 2017, 60 percent of Morocco's foreign investment flowed into Africa, with 55 percent of that investment being directed toward West Africa. Mali has been a particular target for Moroccan investment, with state- or royal family-affiliated holding companies investing in various sectors such as mining, banking, and telecommunications.[60]

Morocco culminated its efforts toward Africa with a diplomatic step in the institutional context, namely its 2017 return to the African Union, which it had left in 1984 due to its objection to the accession of Western Sahara. In addition, Morocco provided financial support estimated at $3.3 million for the G5 Sahel Initiative, a security initiative launched by France.[61]

On the other hand, Algeria is keen to play the role of mediator of peace between the conflicting parties in Mali. As a mediator in the 1990s and beyond, Algeria rejected French pressure to participate in the military intervention in Mali on the basis of its diplomatic principles and preference for a political solution. Algeria fears the continued deterioration of security will impact its southern regions, which are the backbone of the economy and the center of fuel production. Additionally, there are concerns about the impact of the financial independence of the Tuareg and their establishment of a homeland.

The security threats facing the Sahel are diverse as they combine terrorism, smuggling, and organized crime, making the region an arena for countries to compete for influence in confronting threats.[62] Despite the many calls for joint action and security cooperation to achieve stability in the Sahel and the need for regional efforts to join forces to achieve a security vision that counters common threats, tensions and disagreements between Algeria and Morocco dominate the surface, as evidenced by the proposed security initiatives that do not include both Algeria and Morocco together. At the same time, both countries are working hard to assert their influence and play an essential role in the region.[63]

The consequences of regional conflicts in the Maghreb and Sahel regions are significant and have far-reaching implications. These conflicts have hampered regional cooperation and strained relations with the European Union. The conflicts in Libya, in the Mali-Niger-Burkina Faso border region, and in the

[57] Relief Web (2023), "Deeply Concerned by Terrorists' Gains in the Sahel and Elsewhere, the Secretary-General Tells the Security Council that a Human-Rights-Based Approach is Crucial to Ending the Scourge," retrieved May 25, 2023, https://reliefweb.int/report/world/deeply-concerned-terrorists-gains-sahel-elsewhere-secretary-general-tells-security-council-human-rights-based-approach-crucial-end-scourge.

[58] Laurence Aïda Ammour (2021), "Regional Security Cooperation in the Maghreb and Sahel: Algeria's Pivotal Ambivalence," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, pp. 2-5, retrieved June 1, 2023, https://africacenter.org/publication/regional-security-cooperation-in-the-maghreb-and-sahel-algerias-pivotal-ambivalence/.

[59] Virginie Baudais, Amal Bourhrous and Dylan O'Driscoll (2021), "Conflict Mediation and Peacebuilding in the Sahel: The role of Maghreb countries in an African Framework," Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, p. 11.

[60] Baudais, Bourhrous and O'Driscoll (2021), "Conflict Mediation and Peacebuilding in the Sahel," p. 12.

[61] Cheikh Sidya (2019), "G5 Sahel: le Maroc Apporte Une Contribution Effective de 3,3 Millions De Dollars," *Le 360 Afrique*, retrieved May 27, 2023, https://afrique.le360.ma/autres-pays/politique/2019/09/18/27901-g5-sahel-le-maroc-apporte-une-contribution-effective-de-33-millions-de-dollars-27901/.

[62] Julien Daemers (2014) "Maghreb-Sahel Security Cooperation: From Mirage to Reality? Re-mapping the Sahel: Transnational Security Challenges and International Responses," *European Union Institute for Security*, Report no. 19, p.51.

[63] Daemers (2014) "Maghreb-Sahel Security Cooperation," p. 52.

Chad Basin have become complex security for the Maghreb-Sahel regional security subcomplex. These conflicts have led to the emergence of common problems such as refugees, irregular migrants, violent extremist organizations, and criminal networks. As a result, interconnections within and between the regions have increased. The conflicts have also forced state authorities, governments, local power brokers, non-state actors, and international partners, including the EU, to focus on the crises. EU missions in the Sahel, such as the training mission in Mali, crisis management, capacity building, and border assistance missions aim at peacekeeping, crisis management, training of local armed forces, political stabilization, and development.[64] Overall, the consequences of regional conflicts include increased interdependence between regions, displacement of populations, the spread of violence and extremism, and the need for concerted efforts to address these challenges.

Conclusion

The Maghreb region has faced significant security challenges after the Arab Spring, in particular terrorism[65] and arms smuggling. Extremist groups have taken advantage of political instability and porous borders, leading to a rise in terrorist activities. The fall of the Gaddafi regime in Libya has resulted in weapon proliferation, causing conflicts and instability in the region. The emergence of arms smuggling networks has heightened the security threat while drug trafficking is also prevalent in the area with the Maghreb becoming a major route for drug trafficking of cocaine and cannabis. The latter, in turn, has contributed to the expansion of organized crime, posing challenges for law enforcement agencies.

In addition, vulnerable migrants and refugees seeking illicit services, including smuggling, are exploited by criminal networks, creating humanitarian crises and security concerns. Measures to strengthen border security are necessary to address these issues. The Maghreb faces significant border security challenges, primarily attributed to armed groups, terrorism, and the trafficking of weapons, drugs, and individuals. Internal conflicts, such as the conflict in Mali, exacerbate security challenges and generate instability. At the same time, regional rivalries compound these complications. Tensions and rivalries among Maghreb nations, particularly between Algeria and Morocco, have created additional security challenges and hindered regional cooperation. Addressing these obstacles requires cooperative efforts among subregional countries and external actors to maintain regional stability.

References

Aljamal, Yousef (2014), "Hamas: Terrorism Organization or Liberation Movement?," *The Politics and Religion Journal - Serbian Edition*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 39-58.

Ammour, Laurence Aïda (2021), "Regional Security Cooperation in the Maghreb and Sahel: Algeria's Pivotal Ambivalence," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, pp. 2-5, retrieved June 1, 2023, https://africacenter.org/publication/regional-security-cooperation-in-the-maghreb-and-sahel-algerias-pivotal-ambivalence/.

Amour, Phillip (2020), "Introduction," in Philipp O. Amour (ed.), *The Regional Order in the Gulf Region and the Middle East: Regional Rivalries and Security Alliances*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 1-25.

Atlas (2017), "Le Maghreb: Tout Savoir Sur Cette Région d'Afrique Du Nord," *Atlas Monde: Toutes Les Cartes Des Pays*, retrieved 18 May 2023, www.atlas-monde.net/afrique/maghreb/.

Baudais, Virginie, Bourhrous, Amal and O'Driscoll, Dylan (2021), "Conflict Mediation and Peacebuilding in the Sahel: The role of Maghreb countries in an African Framework," Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

---

[64] Rózsa N. Erzsébet and Viktor Marsai (2022), "From a Fragmented Cooperation to an Integrated Approach–The Emergence of the Maghreb and Sahel Region and Its Consequences for the European Union," *Barcelona: European Institute of the Mediterranean*, Paper no. 53, p. 8.

Beligh, Nabli (2014), "Géo-économie du Maghreb," *Groupe Interacademique pour le Development*, retrieved May 20, 2023, https://g-i-d.org/fr/zone-euro-mediterraneenne/actualites/item/197-geo-economie-du-maghreb.

Ben Yahia, Jihane, Fabiani, Riccardo, Gallien, Max and Herbert, Matt (2019), *Transnational Organized Crime and Political Actors in the Maghreb and Sahel*, Mediterranean Dialogue Series, No. 17.

Borsari, Federico (2020), *The Middle East's Game of Drones: The Race to Lethal UAVs and Its Implications for the Region's Security Landscape*, Milan: Italian Institute for International Political Studies, ISPI ANALYSIS.

Boserup, Rasmus Alenius and Martínez, Luis (2018) "Europe and the Sahel-Maghreb Crisis," *Danish Institute for International Studies*, No. 3.

Buzan, Barry (2003), "Regional Security Complex Theory in the Post-Cold War World," in Fredrik Söderbaum and Timothy M. Shaw (eds.), *Theories of New Regionalism*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 140-159.

Buzan, Barry (2008), *People, States & Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, ECPR Press.

Buzan, Barry and Wæver, Ole (2003), *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, Vol. 91, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cohen, James, MacKay, Leanne and Kasee, Joyce A. (2016), *Building Regional Border Security Cooperation: Lessons from the Maghreb*, Washington: United States Institute of Peace.

Daemers, Julien (2014), "Maghreb-Sahel Security Cooperation: From Mirage to Reality? Re-mapping the Sahel: Transnational Security Challenges and International Responses," *European Union Institute for Security*, Report no. 19.

Dirks, Nicholas B. (2004), "Colonial and Postcolonial Histories: Comparative Reflections on the Legacies of Empire," *Human Development Report Office (HDRO)*, no: HDOCPA-2004-03.

Erzsébet, Rózsa N. and Marsai, Viktor (2022), "From a Fragmented Cooperation to an Integrated Approach–The Emergence of the Maghreb and Sahel Region and Its Consequences for the European Union," *Barcelona: European Institute of the Mediterranean*, Paper no. 53.

Fishman, Ben (2022), "Ten Years after Benghazi: Getting Past Groundhog Day," *Survival Journal*, Vol. 64, No. 5, 113-126.

Global Firepower (2022), "Global Firepower: World Military Strength," retrieved November 30, 2022, https://www.globalfirepower.com/.

Hamann, Jasper (2021), "Morocco Upgrades Its Military Capabilities Amid Regional Tensions," *Morocco World News*, retrieved May 5, 2023, https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2021/08/343983/morocco-upgrades-its-military-capabilities-amid-regional-tensions.

Hassan, Hamdy A. (2021) "Trade and Security Cooperation in the Arab Maghreb Union Region," in Kenneth Omeje (ed.), *The Governance, Security, and Development Nexus: Africa Rising*, Bradford: Palgrave Macmillan, 171-191.

Helbling, Marc, and Meierrieks, Daniel (2022), "Terrorism and Migration: An Overview," *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 52, No. 2, 977-996.

Holtom, Paul, Bromley, Mark and Wezeman, Pieter D. (2010), "International Arms Transfers," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 4, 713-716.

Hughes, Christopher and Lai, Yew Meng (2011), *Security Studies: A Reader*, New York: Routledge.

Kireyev, Alexei P., Nandwa, Boaz, Ocampos, Lorraine, Sarr, Babacar, Al Amine, Ramzy, Auclair, Allan G., Cai, Yufei and Dauphin, Jean-Francois (2019), *Economic Integration in the Maghreb: An Untapped Source of Growth*, Washington, D.C: International Monetary Fund.

Larbi, Hedi and Christensen, Lars (2017), *Smart Development Strategy for the Maghreb: Structural Reform, a new role for the State, Regional Integration*, Tunis: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS).

Le Figaro (2022) "Le Maroc Et Israël Consolident Leur Alliance Militaire," *Le Figaro*, July 20, 2022.
Litsas, Spyridon N. (2020), "Obama's Foreign Policy and the Arab Spring: The Cases of Egypt, Libya, and Syria," in Spyridon N. Litsas (ed.), *US Foreign Policy in the Eastern Mediterranean*, Cham: Springer, 103-153

Lopes, Diego (2022), *Fact Sheet April 2021: Trends in World Military Expenditure 2020*, Stockholm: SIPRI Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Mahmah, Amar (2022), "Le Projet d'Intégration Maghrébine à L'Epreuve des tensions Régionales," *les Cahiers du Cread*, Vol. 38, No. 2, 175-199.

Mansour, Imad (2022), "Explaining the Influence of Maghrebi Rivalries on Tunisian Foreign Policy," *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 394-422.

Manzini, Paola (2010), "Smuggling of Migrants into, though, and from North Africa," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*.

Martinez, Luis (2011), "Frontières Et Nationalisme Autour du Sahara Occidental," *Paris: Sciences Po, CERI*, retrieved June 7, 2023, https://ceriscope.sciences-po.fr/content/part3/frontieres-et-nationalisme-autour-du-sahara-occidental.

Martínez, Luis (2021), "Algérie et Maroc: Rivaux Ou Ennemis?" *AFKAR/IDEES*, retrieved March 23, 2023, https://www.iemed.org/publication/algerie-et-maroc-rivaux-ou-ennemis/?lang=fr.

Maryon, Rosa (2023), "The Role of Security Assistance in Reconfiguring Tunisia's Transition," *Mediterranean Politics*, 1-23.

Mezran, Karim, Menotti, Roberto, Melcangi, Alessia, Badi, Emadeddin and Pavia, Alissa (2022), *North Africa's Transatlantic Relations amid Change and Continuity*, Washington: Atlantic Council Rafik Hariri Center & Middle East.

Miguel, Larramendi (2018), "Doomed Regionalism in a Redrawn Maghreb? The Changing Shape of the Rivalry between Algeria and Morocco in the Post-2011 Era," *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 506-531

Morgan, Patrick M. (1997), "Regional Security Complexes and Regional Orders," in David A. Lake and Patrick M. Morgan, *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World*, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 20-42.

Mouley, Sami and Zekri, Noureddine (2019), "Intégration Financière Régionale au Maghreb et Activation Opérationnelle De La Banque Mghrébine D'investissement Et De Commerce Extérieur," *Revue d'économie financière*, Vol. 4, No. 136, 77-102.

Ndoricimp, Arcade and Ndayikeza, Michel-Armel (2023), "Economic Costs of Civil Conflicts: The Case of Burundi," *Defence and Peace Economics*.

Nicholas, Marsh (2017), "Brothers Came Back with Weapons: The Effects of Arms Proliferation from Libya," *The Peace Research Institute Oslo*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 78-97.

Official Gazette of the Republic of Algeria, December 31, 2022, no 83.

Paul, Dunne, J. and Smith, Ron P. (2007), "The Econometrics of Military Arms Races, in Todd Sandler and Keith Hartley," *Handbook of Defense Economics - Defense in a Globalized World*, Vol. 2, Amsterdam: North Holland.

Rabasa, Angel M., Bernard, Cheryl, Chalk, Peter, Fair, c. Christine, Karasik, Theodore, Lal, Rollie, Lesser, Ian and Thaler, David (2004), *The Muslim World After 9/11*, Pittsburgh: Rand Corporation.

Relief Web (2023), "Deeply Concerned by Terrorists' Gains in the Sahel and Elsewhere, the Secretary-General Tells the Security Council that a Human-Rights-Based Approach is Crucial to Ending the Scourge," retrieved May 25, 2023, https://reliefweb.int/report/world/deeply-concerned-terrorists-gains-sahel-elsewhere-secretary-general-tells-security-council-human-rights-based-approach-crucial-end-scourge.

Romanet Perroux, Jean-Louis (2019), "The Deep Roots of Libya's Security Fragmentation," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 55, No. 2, 200-224.

Sidya, Cheikh (2019) "G5 Sahel: le Maroc Apporte Une Contribution Effective de 3,3 Millions De Dollars," *Le 360 Afrique*, retrieved May 27, 2023, https://afrique.le360.ma/autres-pays/politique/2019/09/18/27901-g5-sahel-le-maroc-apporte-une-contribution-effective-de-33-millions-de-dollars-27901/.

Sipri Yearbook (2020), *Armaments, Disarmament, and International Security*, Stockholm: SIPRI Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Snyder, Glenn H. (1984) "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics*, Vol. 36, No. 4, 461-495.

Sobarini, Eryn, Ahmad Rajab, Deni Dadang and Waluyo, Surryanto Djoko (2021), "Aukus Pact in the Perspective of Security Dilemma," *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research*, Vol. 4, No. 12, 3981-3985

The Guardian (12 April 2016), "Barack Obama says Libya was the 'worst mistake' of his presidency," retrieved July 7, 2023, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/apr/12/barack-obama-says-libya-was-worst-mistake-of-his-presidency.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2018), "Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, retrieved March 30, 2023, https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glosom/GLOSOM_2018_web_small.pdf.

Willis, Michael (2014), *Politics and Power in the Maghreb: Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco from Independence to the Arab Spring*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Yacine, Boudhane (2014), "Algeria's Role in Solving the Libya Crisis," *The Washington Institute*, retrieved July 5, 2023, https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/algerias-role-solving-libya-crisis.

Yeşilyurt, Nuri (2023), "A New Balance between 'Local 'and 'National'? Libya's Failed Security Sector Reform," *Journal of Intervention and State Building*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 456-476.

Zainabi, Mohammed (2021), "Morocco-Israel: First Steps towards Promising Joint Projects," *The Jerusalem Post*, retrieved July 7, 2023, https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/morocco-israel-first-steps-towards-promising-joint-projects-658652.