

Conference Report

National Security Policy Development in North West Africa: Adapting to a Changing Context

DCAF Regional Conference, Tunis, Tunisia
11-13 December 2012



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the rule of law

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The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) promotes good governance and reform of the security sector. The Centre conducts research on good practices in the security sector and encourages the implementation of democratic norms at national and international levels. DCAF develops general recommendations concerning democratic governance of the security sector. The Centre also offers consultative services to local actors and accompanies ongoing reforms through assistance programmes. DCAF's partners include governments, parliaments, civil society organisations as well as international organisations. For the implementation of its training and assistance programmes, DCAF also works with security and military forces.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



On 11-13 December 2012, DCAF held a regional conference in Tunis entitled “National Security Policy Development in North West Africa: Adapting to a Changing Context”. The conference brought together high-level representatives and security practitioners from Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal and Tunisia.

Centring particularly on the “Arab Spring” and the crisis in Northern Mali, participants analysed how the regional security environment has changed over the past two years. A special conference session focused on Northern Mali, due to its topicality and regional significance. The debate highlighted the different ways in which recent events had influenced already existing, deeply rooted security challenges. In particular, discussions highlighted the cross-border nature of the security challenges facing states in the region.

The second part of discussions focused on how governments respond to these security challenges. At the national level, participants considered the development and implementation of national security policies. Discussions brought up many concrete examples, and led to several recommendations on how to develop such policies, but also demonstrated the many difficulties involved in their implementation.

The conference participants then turned their attention to the regional level, specifically on how to improve regional security cooperation. Key points included the need to share information and security analysis in a more structured way, and the importance of supplementing official

state-to-state dialogue with greater civil society engagement and expert networks.

In conclusion, participants expressed their satisfaction with having the opportunity to share experiences with other practitioners and experts from North and West Africa, and identified concrete ideas for continuing the exchange.

INTRODUCTION



On 23 and 24 November 2010, just a few weeks before the beginning of the “Arab Spring”, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and local partner Centre for Human Rights and Democracy Studies (CEDHD) held a regional conference in Rabat, Morocco, entitled “Integrating Human Security into National Security Policies in North-West Africa”. The conference brought together participants from across the region to consider regional security challenges from a human security perspective, and discuss the measures being implemented at national level to counter these threats. Participants particularly appreciated the fact that the conference offered an opportunity to exchange security analysis and perspectives between North and West Africa. These two corners of the continent are interdependent and deeply connected; yet they do not have much common membership of regional fora and organisations. In their final statement, conference participants called for “the continuation of this initiative through the sharing of information and analysis, continual exchange of ideas and experiences, and through the holding of further meetings at the regional level in order to develop and deepen reflection on matters of regional security.”

In the light of the political changes affecting the region since the Rabat conference took place, and the impact they have had on the regional security dynamics, DCAF decided that it was time to follow up on the interest expressed by the Rabat conference participants, and hold a new regional conference. Taking place in Tunis on 11-13 December 2012, the conference entitled “National Security Policy Development in North

West Africa: Adapting to a Changing Context” brought together high-level representatives from Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, Mauretania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal and Tunisia. The purpose of the conference was to provide a forum for sharing experiences and lessons learned; and to follow up and continue the discussion initiated in Rabat by:

- understanding how recent political, economic and social developments have affected security and/or perceptions of security in the region;
- assessing national, regional and sub regional responses to these developments;
- and exploring opportunities for developing suitable regional processes and mechanisms for structuring a more regular exchange on national security policies.

This report is organised in two main sections: the first outlines how the regional security environment has changed over the past two years. The two main themes here are the “Arab Spring” and the crisis in Northern Mali. A special conference session focused on the latter subject due to its topicality and regional importance.

The second section considers the response side. At the national level, it involved the development and implementation of national security policies. At the regional level, the existing regional security cooperation and how it could be improved were central to the discussion. The conclusion summarises the key recommendations put forward by the conference participants, including in terms of how to continue the regional exchange and security analysis.

SECTION I: A CHANGING SECURITY CONTEXT



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Security developments in North West Africa since the Rabat conference

Since the last regional conference took place in Rabat in November 2010, a number of political and social changes have affected security dynamics in the region. While many of the fundamental security challenges remain the same, recent events have reshaped some of them profoundly. Most notably, the so-called “Arab Spring” in many North African countries has had wider regional impacts. One example of these far-reaching effects is the change in conflict dynamics in Northern Mali, which receives special attention here.

New security factors: the “Arab Spring” and its regional impact

The series of uprisings and revolutions that took place in North Africa during 2010-2011 have had both positive and negative impacts on the North West African region. Several North African participants stressed the positive impact on regional relations and longer-term stability and security.

For example, Libyan participants stressed the primarily negative security role that Muammar Gaddafi had played in the region: fostering instability, inciting tribal conflict, and arming opposition groups in several African countries, thus contributing to the vast amounts of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in circulation. They suggested that the region would benefit from a new democratic rule which intends to develop a coherent security policy reflecting values of transparency, good governance, rule of law and

human rights – and to develop partnerships with governments in the region based on mutual respect.

For Tunisia, the revolution has added a new focus to national security policy. President Ben Ali was primarily concerned with the territorial integrity of Tunisia and the security of his own regime, not the security of Tunisia’s citizens. Now, citizens demand human security be fundamental to any national security policy.

However, the North African revolutions have also had some negative short-term effects on regional security dynamics. Notably, many participants pointed to the connection between the Libyan revolution and the subsequent exodus of fighters and weapons from Libya, contributing to the uprising in Northern Mali. However, other participants also stressed that despite the fact that Libyan arms did play a contributing role in the uprising in Northern Mali, they are not the root of the problem. Root causes include poverty and the lack of good governance, which enabled terrorists and criminal groups to establish themselves in the area (see next section for an analysis of the situation Northern Mali).

New trends influencing “old” security challenges

Participants stressed that while the “Arab Spring” and the crisis in Northern Mali have been the focus of security analysis in the region over the past couple of years, these events have taken place against a backdrop of several older and still predominant security challenges. These include:



- terrorism
- illegal migration
- trans-border crime (trafficking of people and goods, including weapons and drugs)
- illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW)
- weak state institutions
- economic insecurity and poverty, and
- religious extremism

The 2010 Rabat conference report provides an analysis of these factors, and most of the conclusions outlined there remain valid. However, the Tunis participants noted that new trends had influenced many of these challenges. For example, in Rabat, participants had agreed on the close connections between terrorism and trans-border crime, with terrorist networks raising funds through kidnappings and trafficking, made possible by the region's porous borders – in turn a result of weak state (security) institutions. Criminal and terrorist networks are able to attract young recruits because of the lack of economic opportunities. In Tunis, some participants felt that this trend had become even stronger since then, with the two merging and feeding off each other: terrorists exploiting poverty and social issues to infiltrate society; and with their activities creating instability and insecurity, which further serve to undermine prospects for economic and social development.

Another underlying issue is the challenge posed by illicit SALW in the region. Their amount has only increased after the “Arab Spring”, in particular following the looting of Gaddafi's extensive weapons caches. One North African participant noted that there is also evidence of an increased availability of heavier weapons, some capable of

taking down small aircrafts, making the threat of terrorism even more pertinent.

In a similar vein, poverty, food insecurity and youth unemployment are posing even bigger problems. The entire region's economies have become more fragile as a result of the Arab Spring, as the unrest has lowered tourism revenues and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and resulted (at least for some time) in the reverse flow of migrant workers returning back to the countries south of the Sahara.

Therefore, participants agreed that security analysis and policy in North West Africa must take place in a development context, and closely linked to state building and peace building processes: “Tackling security issues without development will not work”. Again, this echoes the conclusions reached in Rabat, but perhaps with even greater urgency.

In summary, participants agreed that the security problems facing North West Africa are essentially cross-border and interlinked. In order to have any chance of success, security policies that hope to tackle these complex issues must therefore be both multi-dimensional and regional in scope.



The crisis in Northern Mali and its regional implications

The situation in Mali was reaching a critical point at the time of the Tunis conference. In March 2012, Tuareg fighters (strengthened by the influx of weapons and fighters from the 2011 Libyan armed conflict) had seized control of the north of the country and declared the independent state of Azawad. The Malian army simultaneously mounting a coup d'état against the government in Bamako had made their victory easier. Shortly afterwards however, Al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) toppled the Tuareg leadership, established their effective hold of the area and imposed Islamist rule.

As a result of the conflict, economic development in Mali halted; drought triggered an ongoing food crisis; and the population of the north of the country suffered widespread human rights violations, as AQIM terrorised people whose behaviour was deemed "un-Islamic". In December 2012, with the new government in Bamako unable to launch an effective counter-attack to gain back the north, international debate was intensifying as to whether and how to address the crisis militarily: ECOWAS was preparing a military force to intervene, and other international actors were positioning themselves on either side of the debate.

Given the seriousness of the situation and its regional interlinkages, a special session at the conference was dedicated to debating the root causes of the crisis, and exploring the strategic options for addressing it.

Causes of the crisis: complex and deeply rooted

The participants agreed that the situation lacked clarity regarding the deeper causes of the crisis and the actors involved, and that no longer-term vision of how to address the conflict had been put forward. Several participants pointed out that the crisis had not suddenly arisen. The problems in Northern Mali had gone unaddressed for a long time, and the return from Libya of armed and experienced Tuareg fighters had only been the trigger. Problems in the north include: the unaddressed grievances and demands of the Tuareg, lack of good governance, poverty and unemployment, and the financial and military power of criminal-terrorist groups.

The Tuareg aspirations for (greater) autonomy stretch back decades. The issues of independence is difficult for many reasons: one West African participant noted that given the ethnic composition of northern Mali, it would be difficult, in practice, to create a Tuareg state, as many of the inhabitants of the area are in fact not Tuareg. However, Tuareg demands mainly concern political, social and cultural grievances linked to the Tuareg identity as a nomadic people, and their (lack of) recognition and rights within the Malian society. Most of these demands can be the subject of negotiations.

Participants considered AQIM and allied criminal/terrorist groups to pose an even greater problem. Most of their objectives lie outside of the realm of negotiation, and their power and influence in the area go beyond pure military might. A West African participant highlighted unemployment – particularly youth unemployment – as a key



contributing factor to the Mali crisis. As a matter of fact, young people often leave school early, and the criminal/terrorist networks offer them two things society does not: the feeling of being valued as individuals, and the potential for material gain far beyond what they could earn elsewhere.

In addition, some armed groups in Northern Mali have developed links with farmers and shepherds along the Mali-Niger border. The Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) – closely linked to AQIM – have defended them and their livestock from attack or theft, which used to be prevalent, and in this way have gained people's support.

Options for addressing the crisis

Participants agreed that the gravity of the situation called for action, and that the Malian government was not currently in a position to act alone. However, given the complex roots of the conflict, most participants were also sceptical about the likelihood of military intervention providing a lasting solution. The discussions can be broken down into two strands: the first outlines the arguments against military intervention (focusing on the limited chance of achieving success and on potential risks), while the other lists the conditions for a military intervention to be successful.

1. Arguments against military intervention

- **It is not enough to apply a military solution to a social/political crisis:** As the causes of the crisis are complex and deep-rooted, military intervention should only be a first step to addressing the situation: it would have to be followed by serious political efforts to address the underlying problems in the region.
- **A military mission would be very difficult:** Participants broadly recognised that this was going to be a difficult military mission. A participant with military background remarked that while taking control of the main cities is possible with the right military planning and capacity, there needs to be an ability to hold the ground. However, this does not solve the issue of how to secure and hold all the terrain outside of the main cities – and all the way across the borders. He commented: "When we say we will chase them, where will they go? To Niger, to Algeria, to Mauretania... if you try to fight them, they will disappear in the nature, they will be nowhere. The classic military logic is to occupy the terrain but this does not apply here."
- **Local military resources and capacity are not adequate for the task:** The Malian Army was unable to pose a real challenge to the militants. There was also scepticism about ECOWAS' ability to plan and carry out a successful operation due to a lack of adequate resources and strategic capacity. This means that external forces would have to greatly support the operation.



- **There is a risk of the violence spilling into neighbouring countries:** Many participants feared that decision makers had not adequately considered the direct implications and long-term consequences of a military intervention. Participants from neighbouring countries particularly feared that fighters would cross borders and reconstitute elsewhere, causing the fighting to spread.
- **There is a risk that the humanitarian impact has not been adequately planned for:** Participants stressed the likely risk of civilian casualties and new streams of refugees through Mali and the region. If decision makers do not draw up adequate plans, these groups might face outbreaks of cholera and other deadly diseases.

In short, many participants were concerned that military action would create more problems than it solved. Neighbouring countries in particular would therefore like to discuss and explore all alternatives before embarking on a military intervention.

However, most participants seemed resigned to the situation, and saw few alternatives to restore Mali's territorial integrity. In particular, participants recognised that the terrorist groups in northern Mali also posed a threat to the rest of the region, and that it was not possible to negotiate with these groups: the only way to defeat them would be through military intervention.

2. Conditions for a successful military intervention

One North African participant remarked that the decision to intervene militarily had already been made and preparations were underway: "we are already in an active phase". Therefore, he pointed out that the discussion should not focus on whether or not military intervention should take place, but rather what could increase the chances of its success. Following on from this point, the participants discussed the following points:

- **Supplement military options with dialogue:** There was broad agreement that the military approach alone would not resolve the crisis, but that the stakeholders should also pursue dialogue. Discussions focused on the role of dialogue with the different factions present in Northern Mali. Firstly, most participants agreed that the government should discuss Tuareg's demands for increased autonomy: these are political, social and economic demands, which can form part of a political negotiation. A West African participant remarked, however, that it was not possible to pursue through dialogue every issue: for example, the territorial integrity of Mali cannot be discussed. Another problem is with whom to pursue this dialogue considering that some of the armed groups belong to criminal networks. Questions asked included: "Of course we have to pursue dialogue, but dialogue with who?" and: "Are we going to have this dialogue only with the people who are inside Mali, or also the same groups in other countries?" The question of who should undertake the dialogue was also relevant on the government side, given the



lack of clarity about who has the legitimacy to speak for Mali today. This pointed to the clear need for a Malian government, which enjoys broad legitimacy.

- **Include everyone who is willing to negotiate:** Pointing to experiences from previous peace agreements, some participants underlined the need to bring everyone who is willing to the negotiating table. This might minimise the risk of groups not included in negotiations undermining the agreement. "Everyone is essential and should be included in negotiations. You need to bring everyone who is willing to the table".
- **Military intervention should be based on a thorough analysis of the situation and the actors:** Participants stressed the necessity of thoroughly understanding the situation and mapping relevant actors. There should be no artificially short deadlines set that could compromise the clarity of this understanding. One West African participant noted: "There are regions that have been occupied for years. The groups in Northern Mali are committing heinous acts, so we want to act now. But we should not rush into a bad decision".
- **Malian actors should play a key role, but a wide range of stakeholders should support and carry out the military intervention:** Participants felt that to ensure legitimacy, the Malian army should play a key role. It is therefore crucial to rebuild the Malian army, currently in disarray. Participants also stressed training in desert- & guerrilla warfare (currently

undertaken by ECOWAS) as a key condition for success, as many armies in the region are not used to fighting in desert conditions, and against this type of enemy. Participants also felt that the UN and EU should be involved, as these would guarantee a more sustainable solution.

- **Planning needs to take place for the longer term:** Several participants stated that military intervention was usually short-term, and needed to be part of a clear long-term strategy. Not only would it be necessary to plan for how to win the war, but also for the aftermath: how to deal with the effects of war, such as refugees, etc. This links in with sustainability: several participants said that a good strategy must provide a durable solution to the conflict.

In light of these difficulties, many agreed that there was limited scope for finding a truly good solution to this crisis, and that the ambition should probably be to develop a possible one.

SECTION II: POLICY RESPONSES



“With political leadership we need a national security policy which is inclusive and participatory, and a national defence strategy which is strategic. All this needs to be linked to the regional and international strategies for security in the region.” (West African participant)

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National security policies as a response to regional security challenges

While most of the region’s security challenges cross national borders (illegal migration, drug trafficking, terrorism etc.), most policy options for responding to them remain national. States often lack a thorough understanding of the various threats and how they are interlinked, and this impedes efforts to deal with them properly. Developing and implementing national security policies (NSPs) is a key means to this end. The Malian NSP should present a strategic vision for each part of the security sector, and aim to bridge the gaps between the different elements.

At the conference, participants shared their practical experiences and lessons learned from formulating NSPs and translating them into practice. Col. Honoré Lucien Nombre, Burkina Faso, presented in detail the lessons learned from the national security policy in his country, which runs from 2011 to 2020. The presentation provided a concrete example with a clear outline of lessons learned. On this basis, the participants made more general points. The discussion touched on various aspects of NSP development and implementation:

Process: Local ownership of the NSP by both policymakers and ordinary citizens is essential. As stated by one West African participant: “It is important for the decision makers to own the policies, otherwise they will stay in the drawer”. In order to ensure local ownership, NSP development must be an inclusive process. Many participants argued that policymakers needed

to involve citizens ideally by broad consultation. A North African participant said: “Communities should be the central component in developing these policies. Not everyone understands that these policies are developed to protect the people rather than the state.” Another North Africa participant noted: “Communities must be aware of the strategies and support them, because it is the communities that will pay the cost of security operations.” The conference participants agreed that as a minimum, the policy should be communicated clearly to local communities.

Scope and definitions: Some participants raised the point that notions of “security” should include non-state actors. An example was the mining industry operating in the sub region: these are private enterprises but have security systems of their own. In addition, given the complexity of human security challenges in the region, NSPs should also include social and economic components. A West African participant also argued for mainstreaming gender into the NSP, from the very beginning of its development.

Responsiveness and adaptability: The changing nature of the security environment means that policymakers are operating with a great degree of ambiguity and volatility. Policies therefore need to be responsive: decision makers must have the capacity to anticipate new developments, and the flexibility to tackle a number of problems at the same time. A West African participant noted that “It is necessary to reformulate national security policies: it is important to set up permanent structures that deliver an exhaustive analysis of the environment. These policies must be closely linked to the situation on the ground,



which is constantly evolving. So if we don't have this updated analysis, the policies will become obsolete." Some participants suggested that reviews of the NSP should take place frequently, every five years or so, complemented by periodic public consultations. In addition, regular dialogue between security policy makers in different states would help policy makers update their threat analysis.

Prevention over reaction: Several participants stressed that it was not enough to just consider current events: potential future scenarios should also form basis for national security policies. Participants noted that security analysts and decision makers alike tended to be reactive, and develop policies in response to past and current events, rather than to develop policies to prevent future security threats from arising. However, since "reaction is good, anticipation is better", many stressed the need for decision makers to focus more on prevention. Part of this is the creation of "early warning" systems to adequately predict future changes in the security situation. For example, decision makers need to regard altercations and skirmishes as warning signals. Such an approach would probably also be more cost effective in the long run.

Implementation – the great challenge: Several participants stressed the difficulty in finding adequate resources to effectively implement an NSP. Burkina Faso's example illustrates the difficulties in matching a well-developed NSP with adequate human resources, equipment, etc. Implementing the NSP had cost much more than what was initially envisaged. In addition, the global financial crisis has affected aid budgets,

and as a result, the government had not been able to find the necessary funds to fully implement its policy. To make up for this, the government had started exploring ways to share some of the cost with neighbouring countries, or regional organisations like ECOWAS. Some participants also said that addressing these challenges could not wait for resources to arrive from western states: "We need to find the resources – what can Africans do for themselves and for their own security? Unfortunately, the easiest is to ask for assistance, but this cannot go on: we need to find our own solutions."

The discussion also highlighted the many factors that threaten the effective implementation of even the most sophisticated security policy in the region. Vast, porous borders and large areas of sparsely inhabited land mean that it is very difficult to ensure national sovereignty across the region. One participant highlighted the example of the African airspace, which is nearly impossible to control: all that is needed is a clearing in the jungle for a small aircraft to land and take off completely unnoticed. These factors would prove challenging even for a wealthy state with well-developed institutions; for many countries in the region, they present nearly insurmountable obstacles.



“The best defence against terrorism is the everyday citizen” (participant from West Africa)

Regional responses: how to improve regional security cooperation?

Participants agreed that addressing these national security challenges required a regional approach. Security problems that affect one country will most often have an impact on neighbouring countries – participants mentioned Mali as an example. These interlinkages mean that it is impossible, or at least difficult, for governments to deal with these challenges individually.

However, regional security cooperation is currently not adequate to meet the challenges at hand. One West African participant noted that if regional security cooperation had been effective, it would have been possible to avoid the crisis in Mali.

Criticism arose over the lop-sided nature of regional relationships. One West African participant noted “There are exchanges but not real cooperation, it is one-sided: we give and you receive. Cooperation needs to be refined – we need to share the duties.” While everyone recognised the challenges, they also noted that the time now might be riper than at the Rabat conference two years ago, as the “Arab Spring” had given new opportunities for constructive regional security cooperation. In fact, the new democratic governments are more interested in pursuing positive and mutually respectful relations than their predecessors. A North African participant felt that democratic societies were even a precondition for regional cooperation: “We cannot look at regional policies unless we have a national policy consecrating

the respect of international agreements, human rights for example, and puts the development of democratic society within a national strategy”.

Conference participants then moved on to consider the “How”, “What” and “Who” of how to potentially improve security cooperation across the region.

How: where to start?

The conference participants raised two main points: 1. regional security cooperation must be rooted in analysis, policies and strategies developed at the national level; and 2. a revision of the existing regional fora and structures is necessary, in order to see whether they can be improved to better serve this purpose.

1. Taking the national and community level as a starting point for regional engagement:

Several participants stressed the interlinkages between having functioning security policies at the national level, and developing efficient regional security cooperation. Effective national security policies must form the basis for a viable and coherent regional security strategy; and the regional challenges and threats, and regional security initiatives must in turn inform national policies. One North African participant proposed building on the existing experiences by developing a regional framework for drafting, comparing and reviewing national security policies. This would facilitate coordination, and could help serve as a basis for a regional security framework.

2. Reviewing and improving existing regional structures and fora: the participants discussed whether reviewing and improving the already



existing cooperation structures would be a way forward. There are a number of security committees, regional and trans-border commissions, as well as some good practices, which could be strengthened. For example, ECOWAS, despite its shortcomings, is in a position to boost national processes by obliging countries to follow regional agreements. For instance, it could perhaps strengthen and develop its Early Warning and Response Network. However, individual states often constitute the main obstacle to its effective functioning, because they believe such initiatives threaten their national interests. This mechanism developed because of advocacy, and additional advocacy could push states to cooperate better.

One North African participant mentioned that lack of implementation was a challenge: in the Maghreb, there are some agreements, but unfortunately, many are not yet implemented.

A key deficit mentioned was that the existing regional structures do not cover all of North West Africa. Some participants recommended creating a new space called "North West Africa" in order to create a forum where the regions' countries could work together to address their security concerns.

What: issues and foci for regional cooperation

Participants discussed the following areas and aspects of regional security cooperation:

1. Threat analysis: Participants broadly agreed that a condition for any efficient regional security cooperation was a joint vision across the region of

the challenges faced: "There can be no successful regional cooperation if we do not agree on the analysis of the risks and threats." Therefore, the sharing of information and analysis was a key area of cooperation discussed among participation.

2. Technical cooperation: Participants also discussed different areas of technical cooperation, including the exchange of expertise. One North African participant proposed that countries share methods to tackle illegal migration. He also highlighted the need to tackle supply factors feeding migration and crime, namely poverty, by providing employment and development. "Most of the time, poverty is the main problem in the region – it leads to the formation of terror groups, it is behind trafficking of weapons and humans (...) we need to turn off the tap". Another North African participant suggested that such cooperation and exchanges could also be helpful in the realm of justice: there are not many bilateral agreements between states in West Africa in the area of justice. In the Maghreb Union, some agreements exist, but few have entered into force. Other technical areas mentioned were aerial and naval cooperation, given the difficulties states face with securing their territories (highlighted in the previous section).

3. Implementation: Some participants also highlighted the issue of resources. One North African participant noted the need to review the budgets available for regional initiatives. With income levels differing across the region, states would have to formulate a suitable solution for sharing the related costs.



Who: involving the right stakeholders

Given the centrality of sovereignty in national security issues, regional security cooperation would naturally have national governments as the main focal point and level of decision-making. However, participants stressed the need to involve civil society, and explored opportunities for strengthening exchange directly between security practitioners from the different branches of the security sectors. One West African participant pointed out a potential conflict: “We are not all state (officials) – yet what we are proposing has to do with the sovereignty of the state. Will the state accept what we would like to do?” Nevertheless, participants largely agreed that greater engagement on regional security matters by civil society and non-elected security practitioners would complement and strengthen “official” regional cooperation.

1. Strengthening civil society’s engagement on security issues: Most participants stressed the role of civil society in pushing for effective regional cooperation. Many felt that a sufficiently strong civil society did not yet exist in the region, and that it needed to receive support in order to have a real role. While the newly won political freedoms in many North African countries have removed obstacles for civil society engagement, civil society is not yet able to fully exploit these. For example, few civil society representatives are used to analysing and discussing a defence budget. The first step would therefore be targeted training and capacity building of civil society actors. Participants then discussed how to institutionalise civil society networks. One or two “networks of human security” would be useful, to shore up thinking and inform government

strategy. Governments usually adapt their approach after political considerations, and not all decision-makers fully understand the security concepts put forward by practitioners and think tanks. Therefore, such a framework could be very important to help develop a political vision rooted in expert analysis and shared with civil society.

2. Continuing the dialogue and creating a regional network of security practitioners:

There was general agreement among participants that conferences such as this one were very useful and informative, because they brought together practitioners and experts from civil society, government and the military. Like in Rabat, participants wanted to see the conference as part of a process rather than a distinct event: discussing how to continue the exchange, some participants suggested establishing a network. Such a network could meet annually to discuss regional security issues, and exchange research and analysis on an on-going basis.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS



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As in Rabat two years before, the Tunis conference enabled the sharing of lessons learned from developing and implementing national security policies (NSPs). It produced a number of concrete recommendations on this subject, such as the importance of ensuring that NSPs: are locally owned by policymakers and citizens alike; employ broad notions of “security”; enable regular reviews and adjustments to ensure they address prevalent security challenges; and incorporate a view to “emerging threats”. Participants also noted the challenge of ensuring adequate resources to allow satisfactory implementation of NSPs.

The Tunis conference came at an important time, when the regional security effects of the political changes in North Africa were becoming more apparent (as exemplified by the crisis in Northern Mali). The highly inter-connected nature of security in this region stresses the need for dialogue that goes beyond the usual North/West divide. It also stresses the need for states to balance their concerns about national sovereignty with the need to prioritise regional threat analysis and security cooperation. Doing this would address more effectively the many complex security challenges currently facing them. On this background, conference participants discussed several approaches to improving security cooperation in the region. Considering the “how”, “what” and “who” of regional security cooperation, key points included:

1. Taking national-level analysis, policies and strategies as a starting point for regional cooperation. This could for example take the form of creating a regional forum that tracks and compares NSP development and implementation across the region.

2. Reviewing and assessing existing regional fora and structures, in order to see whether it is possible to improve them to address regional security challenges more effectively.
3. Identifying concrete areas for cooperation. Regional cooperation could for example focus on the sharing and analysis of information; or on technical cooperation (i.e. immigration, justice, naval and aerial security, etc.).
4. Complementing and strengthening official state dialogue by civil society engagement, and regional expert/practitioner networks. To this end, civil society needs to receive more investment and capacity building. Regional expert/practitioner networks could provide targeted analysis and sharing of lessons learned.

In the absence of regional security fora bringing together the North and West African countries, participants very much appreciated the format and scope of the conference, and most called for the conference to become a recurrent event in one form or another. This could for example take the shape of smaller and more frequent events, targeting specific aspects of regional security (thematic or sector-focused); or the exchange and sharing of analysis via other means (for example via online expert communities). To this end, participants called for the establishment of small working groups that could follow up on the conference and help prepare follow-on activities. As in Rabat, the participants expressed their wish to institutionalise the exchange, and to develop concrete and practical tools to help them address the many security challenges currently affecting North West Africa.

ANNEX I

**“National Security Policy development in North West Africa:
Adapting to a changing context”**

Tunis, 11-13 December 2012

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CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Time	Tuesday 11 December 2012
afternoon	Arrival and registration of participants (conference desk at Hotel Carthage Thalasso)
19.00-20.00	Welcome reception (Hotel Carthage Thalasso)
20.00-22.00	Welcome dinner (Hotel Carthage Thalasso)
Time	Wednesday 12 December 2012
08.30-09.00	Arrival
09.00-09.30	Opening of the conference
09.30-11.00	<p>Session 1: The Rabat Conference’s recommendations: Assessing progress</p> <p>Summary: This session aims to provide an evaluation of the progress of the implementation of recommendations made during the Rabat conference in November 2010.</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the situation two years after the Rabat conference? • At what level were the conference’s recommendations implemented? • Has there been any progress in the field of cooperation since 2010? <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arnold Luethold, DCAF <p>Contributors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mahamadou Niakaté, Mali • Mostefa Khiati, Algeria • Boubacar Diallo, Niger <p>Discussion</p>
11.00-11.30	Coffee break

11.30-13.00	<p>Session 2: The security situation's evolution and the challenges for national security.</p> <p>Summary: This session will focus on the concrete security challenges encountered by individual countries in the region as a result of the "Arab Spring" .</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has been the concrete impact of the "Arab Spring" on the security situation at the national level and on the regional security environment? • Have the revolutions and transformations changed the way the region's countries consider security and perceive threats? • How do changes related to cross-border movements of people and goods impact on national security? • What are the main challenges to national security today? <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haykel Ben Mahfoudh, DCAF <p>Contributors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omar Al-Khadrawi, Libya • Birame Diop, Senegal, • Habib Belkouch, Morocco • Herman M. Omer Bambara, Burkina Faso • Aziz Ould Dahi, Mauretania <p>Discussion</p>
13.00-14.30	Lunch
14.30-16.00	<p>Session 3: Understanding the conflict in Mali and its impact on the region</p> <p>Summary: This session aims to analyse the conflict in Mali, its root causes and its implications for security in neighbouring countries and in the wider region.</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do countries in the region look at this conflict? • What are the main causes of the conflict in Mali and who are the main actors? • Why has the conflict turned violent? • How does the conflict influence neighbouring countries and the wider region's security? • How could the conflict develop in the short and medium term? • What strategies are or should be implemented in order to limit the spread of the conflict in the region? <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omar Al-Khadrawi <p>Contributors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zeini Moulaye, Mali • Mostefa Khiati, Algeria • Lamine Cissé, Senegal • Boubacar Daouda Diallo, Niger <p>Discussion</p>

16.00-16.30	Coffee break
16.30-18.00	<p>SPECIAL SESSION 4: National security policy advising: assessing strategic options</p> <p>Summary: This session is a highly interactive session aiming to analyse options for the resolution of the Mali conflict. Participants will discuss the issue in two groups, practically evaluating the strategic choices. They will later present their conclusions in plenary session.</p> <p>Moderators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arnold Luethold • Christina Hoyoz, ADB
18.00-19.00	Cocktails at the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
19.00-20.00	Dinner
Time	Thursday 13 December 2012
09.00-10.30	<p>Session 5: National responses to regional security challenges</p> <p>Summary: This session focuses on national security policies and how the strategic analysis and security policy at the national level has responded to the new regional security environment.</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have the new regional security challenges influenced national security policy thinking? • What lessons can be learned from various practical experiences in the region? • What should national security policy makers in the region focus on? • What would they need to do differently? <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zeini Moulaye <p>Contributors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mustafa Nouh, Libya • Honoré Lucien Nombéré, Burkina Faso • Mohamed Sadok Kasri, Tunisia <p>Discussion</p>
10.30-11.00	Coffee break

11.00-12.30	<p>Session 6: Opportunities for enhancing regional exchange and cooperation</p> <p>Summary: This session aims to analyse the options for enhancing regional exchanges and cooperation to address the security challenges currently facing the region</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In which areas could countries gain from enhanced exchanges and cooperation? • Is there an interest for deepening regional exchange? • If yes, which practical steps would help move regional cooperation forward? • What could this group do? • Are there also impediments to regional exchange and cooperation that countries in the region would need to address? • Could regional cooperation happen through the structure of an existing international organisation or should we think of creating a new institutional framework? • Any other practical recommendations? <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mahamadou Niakaté, Mali <p>Discussion</p>
12.30-13.00	Session 7: Summary of discussions and closing of the conference

End of the conference

ANNEX II

**“National Security Policy development in North West Africa:
Adapting to a changing context”**

Tunis, 11-13 December 2012

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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1	Algeria	Mr.	Khiati, Mostefa	President of the FOREM Foundation
2	Burkina Faso	COL.	Bambara, Herman MR. Omer	Former Interim Chief of staff of the Gendarmerie Nationale National Defense Ministry
3		COL.	Nombré, Honoré Lucien	Director of the Military and Defense Cooperation Ministry of Defense and Former Combatants
4	Libya	MAJ.	Al-Arabi Senusi, Faraj	Chief of staff of the Deputy Minister of Interior
5		H.E.	Al-Khadrawi, Omar	Deputy Minister of Interior
6		CAPT.	Al-Sharif, Ashraf	Head of the Office of the Deputy Minister
7		Mr.	Ghiryani, Salem	General Intelligence
8		COL.	Krista, Adel	Head of the Department of International Cooperation Ministry of Interior
9		COL.	Safar, Jamal	Head of Training Ministry of Interior
10	Mali	Dr.	Moulaye, Zeïni	UNDP Coordinator Shared Governance of Security and Peace Programme in Mali

11		GEN.	Niakaté, Mahamadou	National Director Shared Governance of Security and Peace Programme in Mali
12	Morocco	Mr.	Belkouch, Habib	President Centre d'études en droits humains et démocratie (CEDHD), Rabat
13		Ms.	El Gour, Khadija	Project Manager Centre d'études en droits humains et démocratie (CEDHD), Rabat
14	Mauretania	Mr.	Ould Dahi, Aziz	President Mauritanie Perspectives
15	Niger	Dr	Diallo, Boubacar	Coordinator Réseau International d'Etudes Stratégiques sur les Conflits en Afrique (RIESCA)
16	Senegal	GEN.	Cissé, Lamine	General (2S), Consultant
17		COL.	Diop, Birame	Director Institut Africain de la Transformation du Secteur de la Sécurité (AISST)
18	Switzerland	Mr.	Bornozy, Pascal	Deputy regional coordinator for North Africa Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)
19		Ms.	Keimer, Esther	Embassy of Switzerland in Tunisia
20	Tunisia	Mr.	Agina, Faycal	Project officer at the office of the Minister of Justice Ministry of Justice
21		LTC.	Bargaoui, Marwen	Ministry of National Defense

22		Mr.	Ben Cheikh, Wadie	Head of division at the Human Rights Directorate Ministry of Foreign Affairs
23		Mr.	Ben Hassen, Kamel Eddine	Ministry of Justice
24		Ms.	Bouzawach, Sana	Deputy Director for Human Rights Ministry of Human Rights and Transitional Justice
25		Mr.	Charfi, Hamdi	Deputy Director of the office of International Cooperation du and foreign relations Ministry of Human Rights and Transitional Justice
26		Mr.	Corfene, Walid	Commissioner-General for National Security Ministry of Interior
27		LTC.	Ghadhab, Fahmi	National Guard Ministry of Interior
28		Mr.	Hamadi, Mohamed El Hédi	Human Rights Directorate Ministry of Foreign Affairs
29		COL.	Kasri, Mohamed Sadok	Ministry of National Defense
30		Ms.	Kort, Aïcha	Director of International Cooperation Ministry of Interior

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