



## Development in Africa and its Impact on Combating Terrorism

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Terrorism has sparked more controversy recently than any other topic. Attempts to understand its various aspects have resulted in a set of counter means and approaches. Africa is considered one of terrorism's hotbeds, attracting violent extremist movements. It has become a battlefield subjecting its people and territories to atrocious, destructive terrorist operations. Restoring peace, security, and welfare throughout Africa requires hard, persistent work, deep, profound research, and opening the floor for questions and revisiting existing convictions.

According to the Global Terrorism Index (GTI 2021), which is a report measuring the state of terrorism all over the world on a scale of (zero–10 degrees), zero means a country is free of terrorism, while ten means a country registers the highest impact of terrorism. Some African countries were rated poorly on GTI 2021 respectively as follows: Nigeria (8.2), Somalia (7.4), Democratic Republic of Congo (6.7), and Mali (8.2). The main causes of this despicable state should be investigated to see if there is a connection between terrorism and the development situation in African communities and to decide what actions can be taken to overcome this situation.

### Terrorism in Context

Most African countries represent the strange, illogical reality of human and non-human resource abundance vis-à-vis poor development. This is simply because of how stuck they still are in the colonized zone, which resulted in post-colonial countries characterized by the following:

1. Extensive bureaucratic systems and security services;
2. Poor gross national product (GNP) and the failure of the economy to generate employment opportunities;
3. People's perception that there is no genuine democratic representation and that citizens' voices are being snatched away in favour of inspiring leaders, leading parties, or saviour officials;

4. Increased tribal and ethnic attachment due to institutional failure to understand and meet people's needs and to aggressive governments that encouraged tendencies towards tribalism in order to avoid state violence;
5. Imbalanced religious impact on public life given that, despite the ostensible spiritual legacy in many African communities, governments' approach towards religion has been limited to either subjecting religion and religious institutions to state authority, or excluding them completely from public life;
6. Specializing in producing and exporting raw materials, which resulted in a substantial deficit in the balance-of-payment and confirmed the common stereotype about Africa as a strategic stockpile for the world;
7. Poor attention designated to human capital formation, where illiteracy is high in many African communities and education outcomes are poor; thereby, human competition has been drastically reduced.

All these factors resulted in injustice, which in turn produced extremist expression patterns by religious, ethnic, or tribal movements that share tendencies towards violence regardless of their ideological differences and goals.

### **Terrorism and Development**

As stated above, poor development and injustices have produced a perfect environment for terrorism. Terrorist behavior, in turn, has contributed to a poorer development. The destruction of the infrastructure by militant groups, the collapse in investment, and declining incomes resulted in a fragile national economy. Some movements tend to justify their terrorist actions by calling for fighting and undermining the government. However, they disregard the impact of those actions on civilians who painfully wonder about the relationship between their jobs and income and opposition to the government. How do anti-state movements claim being keen on meeting people's demands while fighting them at the same time?

This situation is the outcome of the way governments have tackled development as merely policies and economic programs, overlooking any required updates. African countries continue to stagnate, producing no sustainable national development paradigm that would combine knowledge with conventional wisdom and current achievements. Moreover, they have not yet found an all-inclusive way for everyone to participate in national construction by making wise compromises, which made rebelling against governments the easiest means for change.

Colonialism had established the so-called “colonized economies” to meet the colonizers’ needs by using the raw resources of the colonized countries without striving to establish a national industry. Seeking promptness following their independence, African countries continued to adopt a raw-material-dependency approach to reinforce their national economies, increased efforts for strengthening the capacity of the bureaucratic state service, established the public sector including various companies and institutes, and turned into rentier states in which power is more than absolute, and society is more than helpless.

Studies confirm that this turn has changed the nature and function of countries from producing countries to allocating rentier states. Producing countries should actively seek the growth of their local economies. This can only happen by engaging the whole community in the production process, which generates local income that would enable states to spend their revenue on their administrative and defense institutions, public services, and income redistribution. Allocating rentier states themselves are the main source of income. The question here is: are there any regulations?

Rentierism did not only affect the nature of countries, but also impeded their transformation into producing nations unlike the situation in Europe during the Industrial Revolution. In feudal Europe, internal rentierism made the transformation from feudalism to industrialization easier. However, rentierism in developing countries originated externally. Seeking to build their economic structures based on rentierism rather than production has contributed to the expansion of post-colonial states into the public realm and the transformation of political regimes into authoritarian rule, where ruling elites consider human resources and nature in their countries as inherited fiefs.

Rentierism is characterized by several features, most prominently:

- Rentierism originated externally, whereas internal rentierism is limited to internal payment transfers.
- Only a few people are responsible for rentier income-generation, while the majority undertakes distribution and consumption.
- Rentierism is not the single source of income in economy, but is the largest.
- Rentierism generates a predominant economic environment influencing private investments. It targets ore extraction, speculations, restaurants, and commercial agencies.
- Rentierism generates values and forms of behavior that promote a pillage culture at the expense of production and innovation.

- Rentier economy limits economic activity to big moneymakers, disregarding any potential producing or innovative business, either by businessmen, private and public sectors companies, central governments or state and district governments.

Several researchers argue that democratic transition and economic stability are truly difficult under rentier economy that lacks accountability, maximized governmental authority, and marginalized civil society. More importantly, a nondiversified economic base leads to rising inequality and poor income distribution.

Rentierism originated from conventional external sources, either petroleum, minerals, or financial aids. Then it transformed into an integrated institutional system capable of “rentiering” any economic, investment, production, or trade process to generate state-sponsored benefits by the acquisition of greater values from production processes, such as rents, bonuses, and profit shares.

### **Rentierism and Terrorism**

The rentier state internalizes intellectual convictions, perhaps the most prominent of which is the adoption of a top-down modernization approach, undertaken by the government, which expanded at the expense of society. This requires forcing certain methodical policies on incomes along specific patterns. Global experiences indicate several patterns of rentierism impact on political regimes, most notably:

1. Surplus production and large revenues gained by the government provide budgets for scaling up political expenditure, which makes civil service a prize over which parties and individuals compete;
2. Rentierism increases the capacity of the government apparatus, allows for maneuvering society, and undermines the capacity of other parties (the private sector and civil society organizations), their impact on the public realm, surveillance capacity, transparency, and accountability;
3. Rentierism overseas is associated with the global market that sets the prices of raw materials. This, along with other factors, makes governments vulnerable to fluctuating markets, balances of power, and regional arrangements. This situation makes other countries rather than local economy the main drive for development. Thus, economic diversification has declined, and value chains of productive sectors have been solidified.

4. Rentierism results in the deterioration of civil services. Employees become more important than the job or position itself. Consequently, employees turn into ones looking for job opportunities, or contractors regarding jobs as means of self-profit or “pillage”. Instead of being a source of enhancing confidence between the ruler and the ruled, thus consolidating citizenship, the employee turns to boosting the authority of the government and imposing its power. According to some researchers, this case is called “the vicious circle in the rentier state”.
5. Rentierism hinders democratic transition, the development of civil society (political parties, syndicates, and NGOs), and the relatively independent reconstitution outside a non-state framework.
6. Rentierism hinders democratic transition due to the lack of productive activities that would promote the value of workers and their productive efforts, allowing for their independence and their right of free speech with no fear of dismissal due to governmental dominance over job opportunities.
7. Government security authority in rentier states is often authoritarian and dominates the executive power. The executive power dominates the legislative and judicial authorities as well as the media.
8. Rentierism is conducive to two kinds of subordination: one to the resources sector, and the other to the imports sector. In addition, more attention is given to some ministries at the expense of others, such as petroleum and minerals rather than agriculture and industry.
9. The resources sector curbs the development of the export base, the industrial sector, and innovation; it also lays down restrictions on businesses by encouraging rentierism, which is manifested in non-violent rentierism, as in tax evasion and bribery, and violent rentierism, as in separatist movements calling for seizing wealth and demanding independence from their own countries.
10. Rentier economy generates a political behavior that is based on reinforcing tribalism and ethnic prejudices. It is observed that rentierism income is not yielded from labor employment in local economy, which increases unemployment and injustices.
11. Flow of rents is not necessarily a defining characteristic of a rentier system, but rather a means aiming to change state structures and decision-making processes. There is no doubt that maintaining raw materials transforms national economy into a modern one. Instead of advancing countries, it makes them vulnerable to

fluctuating markets, and results in large external deficit problems. This, in turn, leads to political, social and security turmoil.

12. Rentierism leads to rising inequality within societies, since it creates a network of contacts regarding distribution, redistribution and benefits, resulting in a social hierarchy of successive rentier segments gaining special benefits given their special position in the hierarchy.

As stated above, rentierism directly and significantly influences the political regime structure and power relations; it also indirectly influences the outcome of malformed economic structures and the distribution pattern of production dividends. Many African countries depending on raw materials attest to this fact, thus providing the perfect environment for religious, ethnic, or tribal terrorism.

### Future Challenges

Understanding terrorism and its complications requires a comprehensive approach, careful observation and awareness of societal realities, global economic progress, rising powers (China and India), and their implications on African economies. There is no doubt that competing over African resources shall rise. However, for Africa to benefit from such rivalry, African countries and leaders should seek a brighter future. That would be possible only if they provide some benefits, most notably:

**First:** Profound understanding of social structure and needs.

**Second:** Establishing harmony between major active stakeholders in the public realm, whether parties, civil society associations, conventional entities, or military institutions.

**Third:** Awareness of the importance of religion and its profound impact on the public realm. No one should ever be excluded from the public realm or used as an instrument of power.

**Fourth:** Harmony between regional entities in Africa in order to impose fairer relations with multinational companies and developed countries.