

United States Withdrawal from Afghanistan: A Systems Theory Analysis of Implications on Africa Human Security

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Abstract

In August 2021, the United States withdrew the last of its troops from Afghanistan, ending its military presence there after nearly 20 years. This paper uses the Systems theory to examine the effects of this withdrawal on Human Security in Africa. The military action in Afghanistan represented a massive global coalition effort. In addition to the United States, the 20 years period saw military forces and assets from the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, Russia and Turkey. The termination of this conflict is likely to have long term effects on Human Security in Africa. These effects traverse personal and community security, economic security, environmental security, food security, Health security and Political security all of which fall within the larger domain of Human Security. This qualitative method based paper uses SALSA model to source and analyze information from a diverse set of literature. The key findings of this research are; likely increase in terrorism activities; the dangers posed by the increasing population of refugees; the problem of proliferation of sophisticated weapons and small arms; and increased economic challenges such as unemployment and poverty. The theoretical lenses provided by the Systems theory showed that Africa is a player within the global system. The identified effects require Africa to rethink its strategy and policy to decisively address them. Additionally, the silenced guns must translate to improved human security across the Continent by re-focusing the massive resources that were being used to sustain this campaign towards the creation of sustainable developmental

programmes across the African continent. On her part, the continent must come up with strategies to address human security challenges, create employment, enhance efforts to fight terrorism, minimise the impact of refugees, eliminate drugs use and abuse and stop the proliferation of illegal arms.

Key Words: *Afghanistan, Africa, USA, Human Security.*

Introduction

This paper uses the Systems theory to investigate the interplay between the US mission in Afganisatn and how it interplays with global security and more specifically its impact on human security in Africa. The Afghanistan war started in 2001 after 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York. The USA and its allies launched Operation Enduring Freedom on 7, October 2001 to pursue the masterminds of the terror attack. The war sought to dismantle terror networks and ensure that Afghanistan was no longer a breeding ground for terrorists. After 20 years of war, over USD 2 trillion spent and more than 3500 lives lost, the USA exited Afghanistan on 30 August 2021 (Beaumont, 2021).

The shift from traditional security to human security provides the world with a comprehensive and preventive approach that challenges the traditional notion of national security by arguing that the proper reference for security should be at the human level rather than at the national level (UNDP, 1994). This thinking seeks to refocus efforts at all levels to whole-of-human security needs to reduce vulnerabilities and achieve a world free from fear, want and indignity. The Human Security approach spans the personal and community security, economic security, food security, environmental security, health security and political security (Babu, 2016; Ogata & Cels, 2003).

Africa is endowed with natural resources and warm-hearted people with greater aspirations. However, despite its potential and positive outlook, it has continued to face human security related challenges such as poor health, failing political systems and economies, poverty, hunger and environmental degradation (Abutudu, 2006; Ake, 1996; Chossudovsky, 1997). It continues to be a melting pot of diverse conflicts that differ in shape, volume, magnitude, actors, motivation and causes.

This reduces the quality of life despite concerted efforts by governments, policy makers, regional and global bodies to alleviate suffering in the continent.

While Africa has had its share of internal conflicts and wars, it is part of a larger global ecosystem and events happening elsewhere in the world, especially in the Middle East usually come with great shock and consequences. In addition, the connected nature of the world has caused dependencies that cannot be ignored. There are shared religions, cultures, economic dependencies, mass movement of people and the ever-increasing technological capabilities that make the present world a global village. According to United Nations, digital technologies has greatly contributed to global connectivity (United Nations, 2021). This connected nature of the world has both positive and negative impacts and the end of the US campaign in Afghanistan has human security related impact on Africa.

From a Systems theory perspective, the rise of Taliban, the mass evacuations of foreigners and Afghans and the transatlantic movement of refugees was a human security catastrophe not only to Afghanistan but also to Africa. While the full extent of the global impact of USA withdrawal from Afghanistan continues to unfold, there is need for deliberate and proactive actions to safeguard Africa from the ripple effects of USA's withdrawal from Afghanistan (Beaumont, 2021). From a Security perspective, there were Taliban or their Sympathisers who disguised themselves as security, intelligence and economic personnel to work for the USA and their allies in various capacities. These people by nature of their association with USA and its allies, found their way out of Afghanistan and are in various European and African cities as they wait for an opportune time to reactivate their networks, recruit, train and even radicalise Western and African citizens.

Therefore, this paper, uses the Systems theory to dissect the intricate system's inter-dependencies to investigate the likely effects of USA withdrawal from Afghanistan on human security in the African continent.

Conceptualising Human security

Human Security is a concept premised on the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report. It contends that individuals are entitled to freedom from fear, freedom

from want, and the freedom to live in dignity, and that the global community and each country ought to prioritize building a world that secures these essential freedoms (UNDP, 1994). It revolves around protection of people from severe and pervasive threats and situations through creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity (Ogata & Cels, 2003).

Buzan refers to security as ultimately a political process, that when an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to a designated referent object, existential in that the continued being of something is at stake or in danger (Buzan et al., 1998; Ogata & Cels, 2003). Other arguments include the mainstream international relations theories, where the notion of ‘security’ is primarily codified as the prerogative of states (realism), and institutions (liberalism) to be free from danger that presents ‘an existential threat’.

Over time, the subject of security has advanced from traditional security to more inclusive human security and therefore expanding the concept of security with a wholesome lens to include other aspects of security. Further, Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy (2007) support the extension of the concept of security to include human security aspects, to achieve freedom from fear, want and indignity.

Global security

The struggle for statehood has seen countries pursue national interests for their survival and posterity. More often, this pursuit results in conflicts between states and allies who come in support of either side. Consequently, after two world wars, the UN and other regional bodies were formed to promote world peace hence while a third world war has been successfully averted, there have been major wars and conflicts that have had a serious global impact. Key among these include the Korean War that separated the North from the South, the Israel-Arab wars, Iran-Iraq wars and the war on terror in Iraq and Afghanistan among others (Marks, 1976; Mentan, 2020; Pellegrini, 2019).

While the world craves for peace and stability, the struggle for resources, the need for survival of states, self-preservation and even the pursuit of self-interests

continue to fuel conflicts across the globe (Jouannet, 2012; Kanishka, 2022; Kanishka, 2021; Mentan, 2020). From World War I, World War II, the cold war, the war on terror and the global war against pandemics, the world is sieged with conflicts. In the endeavour for self-preservation, more nations are amassing sophisticated weapon systems including nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missiles that can transcend continents. The number of aircraft carriers continues to increase and these floating airbases project airpower for defence and also deterrence and extend reach far beyond the ordinary stationary bases. In addition to the over 45 aircraft carriers operating around the world, approximately 485 submarines move stealthily across the world oceans ready to pounce on short notice (Lehman, 2021).

These aspects of military might and balance of power between nations continue to shape global security and policy. Additionally, the USA war on terror in Afghanistan has been a defining moment in the global scene with conflict transcending generations, redefining geopolitics and realignments. In the end, its closure and the withdrawal of USA of its troops opens a new post-Afghanistan era and provides impendence to the discourse on the individual rights of states to protect themselves and pursue perceived enemies beyond their borders.

Afghanistan war will remain a classical case study in military schools and colleges for decades to come. It provides an opportunity for national security scholars and strategists to examine and interrogate it, in order to extract lessons into posterity. While the full repercussions are yet to manifest, military scholars and strategists should examine this war and its effects on Human Security in order to inform global, regional and national security policy and posture.

An overview of African continental security

Africa has been a centre of interest due to its vast resources, unique political systems, size, population and diversity in culture and religion (Austin, 2010; Austin, 2008). Despite being over 1000 miles from Afghanistan, the interconnected and systematic nature of the world portends that the withdrawal of the USA from Afghanistan is likely to have effects on an already burdened continent.

A general overview of the security situation in Africa reveals that the 2010 Arab Spring revolution in North Africa affected countries such as Tunisia, Libya and Egypt (Ghanem, 2016; Haas & Lesch, 2017). However, its gains have been slowly eroded and, in most countries, terrorist groups continue to be a growing threat. In addition, various armed groups are operating in the region especially in Libya and in the Sahel region, carrying out sporadic attacks. Therefore, the withdrawal of USA from Afghanistan and the rise of Taliban is likely to add to the growing list of security challenges for these nations. While the bulk of Afghanistan refugees may be headed to Europe, North African countries share common religion and language with Afghans and are likely to be an attractive option to terrorists who are looking for safe places where they can easily disguise and therefore receive little attention from the authorities and security organisations.

To the south of the continent, there are frequent Xenophobic attacks in South Africa and the increased movement of Al-Shabaab, ISIS and other terrorist groups in the SADC region is likely to further compound these problems. A country like Mozambique has already solicited support from Rwanda to help its troops fight jihadists in the northern Cabo Delgado region (Cannon & Donelli, 2022). Therefore, with the developments in Afghanistan, terrorist networks may expand as they look for safer havens. The mass movement of people and refugees across the globe is likely to escalate the scramble for limited resources and may be trigger to attacks within this region.

To the eastern parts of the continent, we have the volatile Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa (HoA). Within the Great Lakes, Rwanda and Uganda have agreed to host Afghanistan refugees (Athumani, 2021). While this is a good international gesture, the presence of these refugees may provide cover for communication and movement of terrorist elements who may take advantage of these countries' generosity to camouflage their activities. Within the horn of Africa, there is the Ethiopian and Tigray conflict and the threat of Al-Shabaab and terrorism in Somalia that has fuelled over three decades of conflict. There is also Sudan and Darfur conflict which started in 2003 and the perennial internal issues in South Sudan after successful cession and independence from Sudan on 09 July 2011.

The HoA situation is further complicated by the Somaliland region willingness to also take in Afghanistan refugees (Yayboke, 2021). While Afghan refugees are not a problem, their presence provides cover for terrorism elements to move in and out of Somaliland in the pretext of visiting family and friends as they recruit, train and arm themselves to carry out attacks across Africa and the globe. The danger is not for Rwanda, Uganda and Somaliland but Africa at large and countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Tanzania being in close proximity should watch out for terrorist elements that are likely to move around masked as refugees or their relatives.

The western parts of Africa are already a volatile region with active terrorist cells. There have been several abductions of school-going children by groups such as Boko Haram and attacks by ISIS-affiliated groups in Mali and Cameroon (Muraga, 2021). Finally, in the central part of Africa, we have the CAR which has an ongoing active conflict. Mr Idriss Deby was killed on 19 April 2021 as he led his troops in battle. In addition, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCAR) has been on the ground since 10 April 2014 with a mandate to monitor and enforce peace agreements between the government and the various rebel groups.

On the other hand, countries such as Rwanda that have entered into bilateral arrangements with the Central African Republic government to assist in enforcing security (Brendon & Donelli, 2022; RNP, 2022). Despite its distance from Afghanistan, African location and perennial conflicts may provide terrorist groups with a safe haven to thrive. The presence of UN peacekeepers in various parts of Africa should also be a warning to Africa as the multi-national nature of these missions may provide lucrative terrorist targets.

Theoretical Framework

Systems Theory

The first call for a general systems theory originated from Ludwig von Bertalanffy's research in the 1940s-50s. Increasing complexity of world interconnectedness and the positive and negative outcomes arising from this connectivity (Montuori, 2011).

The theory provides researchers with a scientific approach to the interdisciplinary investigation of systems and subsystems, their interrelations, dependency and interaction with the environment (Bertalanffy, 1969).

From a Systems Theory perspective, changes in one part of the globe will directly or indirectly affect other parts or the whole system. This theory has found multidisciplinary applications and in this paper it provides an opportunity to investigate the effects of USA withdrawal from Afghanistan on human security in Africa, being cognisant of the fact that the continent and its member states does not exist in isolation but are a critical cog in the world ecosystem.

In this discussion, the Systems theory thinking was applied within the defence and security discourse to provide answers to human security dilemma that Africa faces (Mesjasz, 2006; Tierney, 1972). The theory provides lenses through which developments in Afghanistan can be scientifically investigated to identify pertinent issues that require strategic leadership and direction from Africa. Indeed, the rapid collapse of the Afghan government and the Taliban's seizure of power has been examined from a systems perspective to bring out likely human security effects in the post-Afghanistan war chapter. Therefore, Policymakers and Scholars should partake in this discourse to provide scholarly and scientific output into the likely effects on human security in Africa.

Methodology

The SALSA (Search, Appraisal, Synthesis, and Analysis) model was used to source and analyze information from a diverse set of literature from both general and specific search engines. Secondary sources of data from books, journal articles, conference proceedings to examine the likely effects of USA withdrawal from Afghanistan on human security in Africa. The method selected was informed by time and cost considering that the events that happened in Afghanistan have been affected by space and time. A prose and narrative technique was used to present the findings. The paper gives a critical presentation of the findings.

Findings and Discussions

The ripple effects of USA withdrawal from Afghanistan as experienced in Africa are discussed and analysed with a view to inform governments, security services, policy makers and scholars who need to develop relevant response mechanism to mitigate these effects.

Increase in terrorist activities

One of the likely effects that the USA withdrawal from Afghanistan may have on Africa is the likely increase in terrorist attacks and activities. The fall of Afghanistan's Western backed government and the Taliban takeover rolls back costly and many years of global efforts on the war against terror (CRS, 2021). Africa has already had its fair share of terrorist attacks and activities that threatens personal and community security in Africa. Moreover, the aftermath of terrorist attacks in Africa, including the measures to contain their occurrence has always had devastating effects due to reduced movement, reduced investment, security and travel advisories among others. The vacuum created may allow Terrorists groups to regroup, recruit, train, equip and package themselves to make attacks to soft and lucrative targets.

There is an increased danger of home-grown terrorists who may get the opportunity to train in Afghanistan and be released back into their own African countries as they wait for the perfect opportunity to strike. Already countries such as Kenya have seen increased attacks from their own nationals with foreign training and logistics support. According to the US National Security Council (2021), domestic terrorism poses a direct challenge to America's national security. Homegrown terrorist presents the biggest danger to most nations due to their ability to innocently silhouette among the local population where they raise the least suspicion as they wait for an opportune time to strike.

It is therefore incumbent upon the global community, African included, to ensure that Afghanistan under the Taliban is safe for Africa and not a haven and source of terrorists. The Afghan's post-American era should not be allowed to pose a danger to world peace and the gains already made. Africa ought to join

other countries in ensuring a terrorist free Afghanistan. The continent needs to safeguard the hard-earned gains and blood sacrifices that have been made in the fight against terrorism.

Motivation for armed groups

In addition to the terrorism menace, Africa is already home to many armed groups with diverse objectives. Therefore, the Taliban takeover may have far-reaching implications for the unforeseen future as their success is likely to provide motivation and crucial lessons to other armed groups. Despite the USA and Western supported financial superiority, sophisticated weapon system, increased troop build-up, the Taliban were able to preserve their resources and energy for the opportune time. To the USA in Afghanistan, by the time the last flight and soldier flew out of Kabul International Airport, the internationally recognised government in Afghanistan and its military had already collapsed (Murtazashvili, 2022; CRS, 2021).

While the African continent scenario may be different, Taliban's victory created an aura and invincibility among like-minded armed groups across the globe. This euphoria and motivation provided armed groups with positive energy as well as awoke sleeper cells, a situation that may lead to increased attacks in Africa. In addition, this motivation and inspiration coupled with limited in-theatre achievements provide enough fodder to feed armed groups propaganda machinery which may lead to increased recruits and funding.

Taliban takeover changes the global security architecture and African countries need to review their security posture to commit more human and financial resources to their internal and external security. This is likely to jeopardise investment and expenditure in other sectors such as education, health, agriculture, housing and infrastructure development which are key to support national human security efforts. Arising from this, the withdrawal of USA from Afghanistan makes the emergency of armed groups and the hardening of their resolve a real threat to Africa (Kilcumen & Mills, 2021).

Challenges with new refugees

Other human security issues that Africa is likely to contend with in the post Afghanistan war era are the dangers arising from increased number of refugees. The collapse of the USA and Western backed, Afghanistan government led to a massive movement and evacuation of Afghans who feared retribution and the expected harsh rule of the Taliban (Kilcumen & Mills, 2021; Murtazashvili, 2022; CRS, 2021). This saw the USA and its allies evacuate over 130,000 people who either worked for them or were classified as vulnerable and were likely to face prosecution from the new Taliban government.

Closer home in Africa and Kenya, countries such as Rwanda, Uganda and Somaliland agreed to host Afghanistan refugees (Athumani, 2021; Yayboke, 2021). While this is a great gesture and fulfilment of international obligations to provide a haven to vulnerable groups and people fleeing their country, the security implication of these acts of kindness cannot be ignored. Whether hosting these refugees or not, governments, security leaders and strategists should consider developing a refugee security framework that assures the security of the host countries and continent. Refugees can be screened to weed out terrorist elements whose objective may be to obtain a safe haven to mask their activities and initiate sleeper cells that would be activated at an opportune time (Yayboke, 2021).

Internationally and regionally, the UN, AU and USA, ought to ensure that refugees are re-settled to allow them to enjoy a normal life in their adopted countries and focus on developing their lives without being a security threat to the host. The lessons learnt from refugee's camps in countries such as Kenya are vital and should inform a security framework that ensures the safety of these refugees at the same time preventing refugee camps from becoming terrorism breeding and radicalisation centres. Refugees are human beings and need to be treated with honour, respect and dignity as per international conventions, but the security of the host nations, territorial integrity, honour and respect of its citizens should not be compromised.

The presence of Afghanistan refugees in addition to the other refugees in Africa provides a perfect opportunity for UN, AU and individual nations to revisit security

and refugee management framework and policies. Additionally, host countries should not be left to suffer the consequences of their generosity. This is a world problem, and requires the attention it deserves. Having refugees in Africa and worse still, from 1,000 miles away in Afghanistan provides Africa with questions to ponder. Time may be ripe for the UN, AU, leaders, Strategists and Scholars to re-think the subject of refugees in the 21st Century, as the withdrawal of USA from Afghanistan has made this problem a threat to Africa (Murtazashvili, 2022).

The proliferation of illegal and small arms

The massive cache of sophisticated arms that was left behind by the USA and the ousted Afghanistan government compounds an already fragile security situation in Africa. These arms fell into the hands of Taliban, related terror groups and even normal citizens and are therefore likely to find their way into the continent (Ali et al., 2021; Taylor, 2021). The arms will be used to propagate various interests in Afghanistan, Africa and in countries where these groups have a presence and interest. Already the effects of Soviet presence and the arms that were left in the hands of the various groups continue to resonate the world over and illegal small arms such as the AK47 has been used internationally to destabilise nations and economies (Lionel, 2020; Zipporah, 2020). Indeed, according to Lionel (2020), the Kalashnikov AK-47 has been in all conflict in Africa since the 1950s and a rifle of choice for rebels, terrorists, drug lords and gangsters alike.

In Kenya, terrorist attacks on the Westgate, DUSIT2 Hotel and Garissa University were carried out using small arms such as AK47. The same has also been a weapon of choice by Al-Shabaab and has been used extensively to carry out various attacks (Lionel, 2020; Zipporah, 2020). With other America lethal weapons such as M16 being in the hands of the Taliban and their affiliated groups, it may just be a matter of time before they find their way into Africa and other parts of the world.

Conflict is one of the biggest impediments to prosperity of African states and the AU has made silencing the guns in Africa as one of the flagship projects of the wider developmental blueprint Agenda 2063 with the sole objective of eliminating small illegal guns and achieve peace across the continent (Musau,

2019; Zipporah, 2020). According to the 2019 SAS and African Union study, Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa, it is estimated that 80% of small arms and light weapons in Africa are in the hands of civilians and rebel groups. That leaves security agencies with only 20% which means that the security apparatus are outnumbered and outgunned.

According to Fleshman (2011), the northern parts of Kenya have been experienced an arms race between communities. For example, the pastoral Pokot people and their neighbours have gone from protecting their herds with spears to outfitting their young men and warriors with cheap, reliable and deadly automatic rifles from the war zones of Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan. The list is likely to expand to include Afghanistan, escalating an already delicate, fragile and fluid security situation.

Indeed, the presence of illegal and small arms poses a considerable threat to security in Africa and the world at large (Murtazashvili, 2022). Time may be ripe for strict measures against the presence of small arms. Already, conflict in the northern parts of Africa has led to an increase in small and light weapons in some parts of West Africa and the withdrawal of USA from Afghanistan makes the proliferation of illegal and small arms a real threat to Africa.

Increased supply of illicit drugs

Drugs pose a health and economic human security concern. According to UNODC (2022), Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of opium and its harvest accounts for more than 80% of the world's supply. Its production is estimated to contribute to approximately 11% of the country's economy (Windle, 2021). Additionally, Landay (2021), observes that despite the massive investment made by the USA and its allies to eradicate the trade of opium, Afghanistan remains the world's biggest illicit opiate supplier and looks certain to remain so under the Taliban.

One of the major reasons why the Taliban continued to survive and grow strong despite being out of power, was the financing they received from the billion-dollar drug trade. Peters (2009), argues that, it is not possible to treat the Taliban

insurgency and the drug trade as separate matters, meaning the two were linked up and supported each other with the Taliban providing a secure operational environment for the producers and the producers providing much needed economic lifeline. The production of drugs is likely to increase as Taliban isolation and lack of international recognition will make them fall back to drugs as a source of funds.

These drugs especially opium and cocaine are likely to affect the health of people in the African continent. Their increased production will make them easily accessible and affordable leading to increased consumption by vulnerable groups such as the youth. This is likely to negate African government efforts to fight drug abuse and related security challenges arising from increased drug use and abuse.

According to Jumbe et al. (2021), drugs and substance use and abuse continue to be a growing major public health concern in Africa. It can therefore be argued that drug abuse is a Health Security issue and a key factor in the ever-deteriorating security in the continent as most of the criminal gangs and organised crimes groups thrive in the use of drugs to mask their inhuman and heinous activities. Accordingly, this increases the cost of security services as more and more equipment and personnel are required to secure the populace and also fight drug-induced criminal gangs.

The use of drugs and the deteriorating security situation will likely lead to reduced economic activities as most investors consider security as one of the key determinants before they can make their investment. The events in Afghanistan will therefore slow the recovery of African economies, increase the cost of providing security as well as reducing the jobs available as a result of reduced investments. Therefore, the withdrawal of USA from Afghanistan makes illicit drugs a threat to Africa (Murtazashvili, 2022).

Increased unemployment

Africa faces the challenge of unemployment and poorly performing economies. To mitigate its effects, most of the youths seek opportunities in Europe and the Middle East. According to Fox et al. (2020), the youth employment crisis in

Africa is actually a missing jobs crisis. This made the war effort in Afghanistan one of the sources of employment of many nationals from around the world, Africa included and therefore, the withdrawal of USA from Afghanistan will have an economic impact on Africa. The end of USA campaign in Afghanistan has costed Africans jobs as the massive logistics required for the Afghanistan operation required technical personnel and support staff to undertake non-combat operations. This was being undertaken through civilian contractors most of which provided employment opportunities to Africans, more specifically to retired military personnel who used their security experience to support the war effort.

The money earned would be ploughed back home in Africa to support families, enterprises and as investments in real estate. In addition to jobs, the war effort provided ready market for African produce and products and the job losses are likely to directly impact on the state of security as unemployed youths are likely to resort to other illegal means to earn a living.

The UN International Labour Organization (ILO) has already estimated that more than half a million people have lost or have been pushed out of their jobs in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover, with further expectation that these job losses will increase to nearly nine hundred thousand (ILO,2022; ILO 2020).

Conclusion

This paper has used the Systems theory to examine the effects of USA withdrawal from Afghanistan on human security in Africa. The Systems theory provided vital lens in this scholarly discourse noting that nothing happens in isolation. The findings show that, some of the likely effects are increased terrorism activities, security challenges associated with increased refugees and their movement, the likely proliferation of small arms and weapons, increased challenges and problems associated with use of drugs and the challenges of unemployment, increased poverty and other related economic challenges. Therefore, the withdrawal of

the USA, the eventual collapse of the internationally recognised Afghanistan government and the rise of the Taliban is a set back to the global war on terror. This makes Afghanistan a haven and breeding ground for terrorists and related elements. The mass movement of refugees provides cover for terrorist elements to mask their movement across the globe and more so across Africa. In addition, small arms have continued to find their way to organised gangs that can carry out criminal activities against law-abiding citizens and reduce their ability to engage in productive activities. The effect of drug supply is likely to cost African countries due to increased abuse, increased criminal activities and increased burden on the health system. Unemployment and poverty remain a major problem that has seen Africans seek global opportunities in other parts of the world. Indeed, the withdrawal of USA from Afghanistan is likely to have long term human security effects on Africa. The Paper has further identified the dangers posed by the increasing population of refugees; the problem of proliferation of sophisticated weapons and small arms; and increased economic challenges such as unemployment and poverty as some of the key issues that Africa will face

Recommendations

- There is therefore need for USA, global partners and Africa to ensure that the silenced guns ought to translate to improved human security across the Continent by re-focusing the massive resources that were being used to sustain this campaign towards the creation of sustainable developmental programmes across the African continent.
- At the same time, Africa as a continent need to come up with strategies to address human security challenges in Africa.
- There is need to create employment and enhance efforts to fight terrorism, minimise the impact of refugees, eliminate drugs use and abuse, stop the proliferation of illegal arms among others.

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