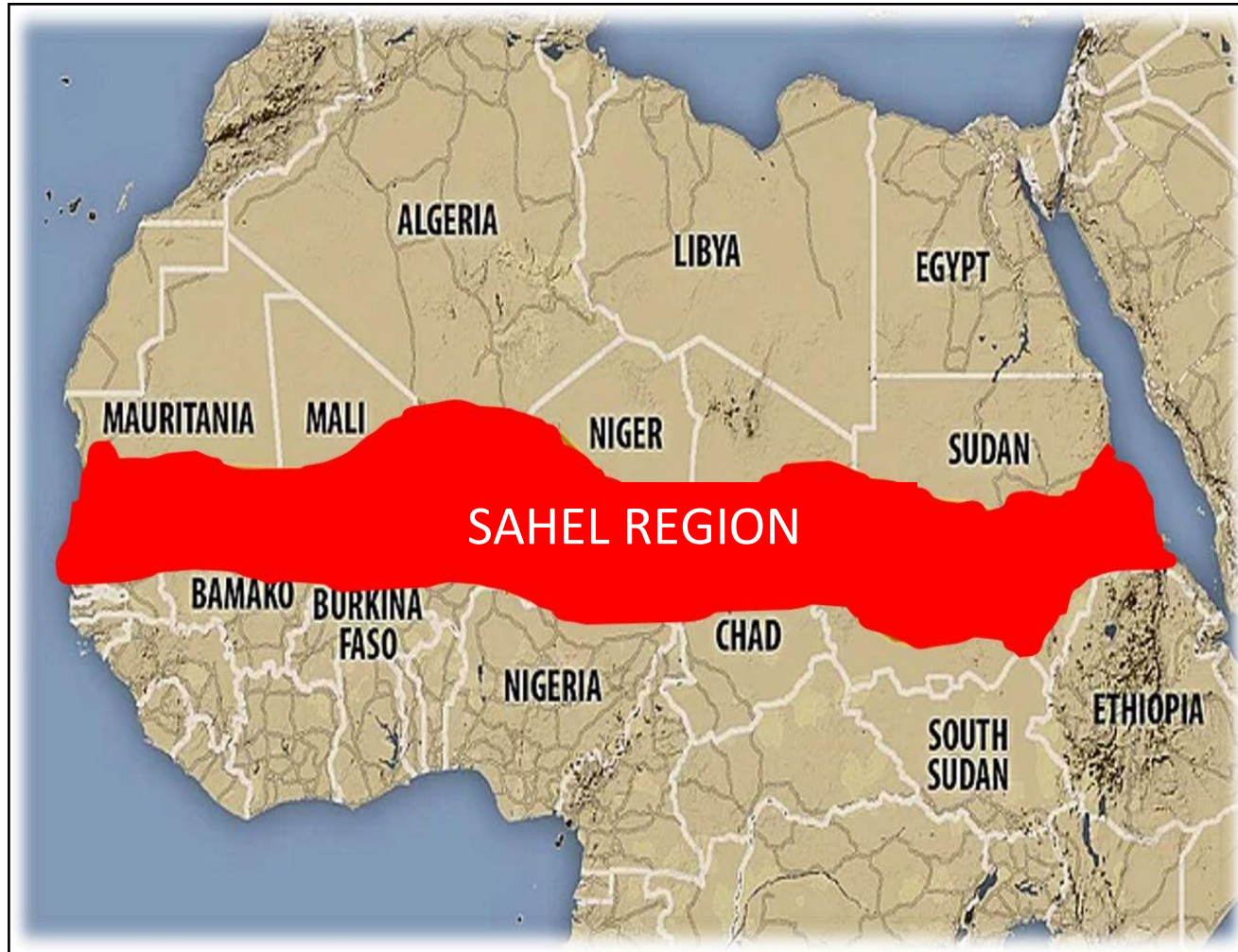


A STRATEGIC OVERVIEW OF THE SAHEL REGION

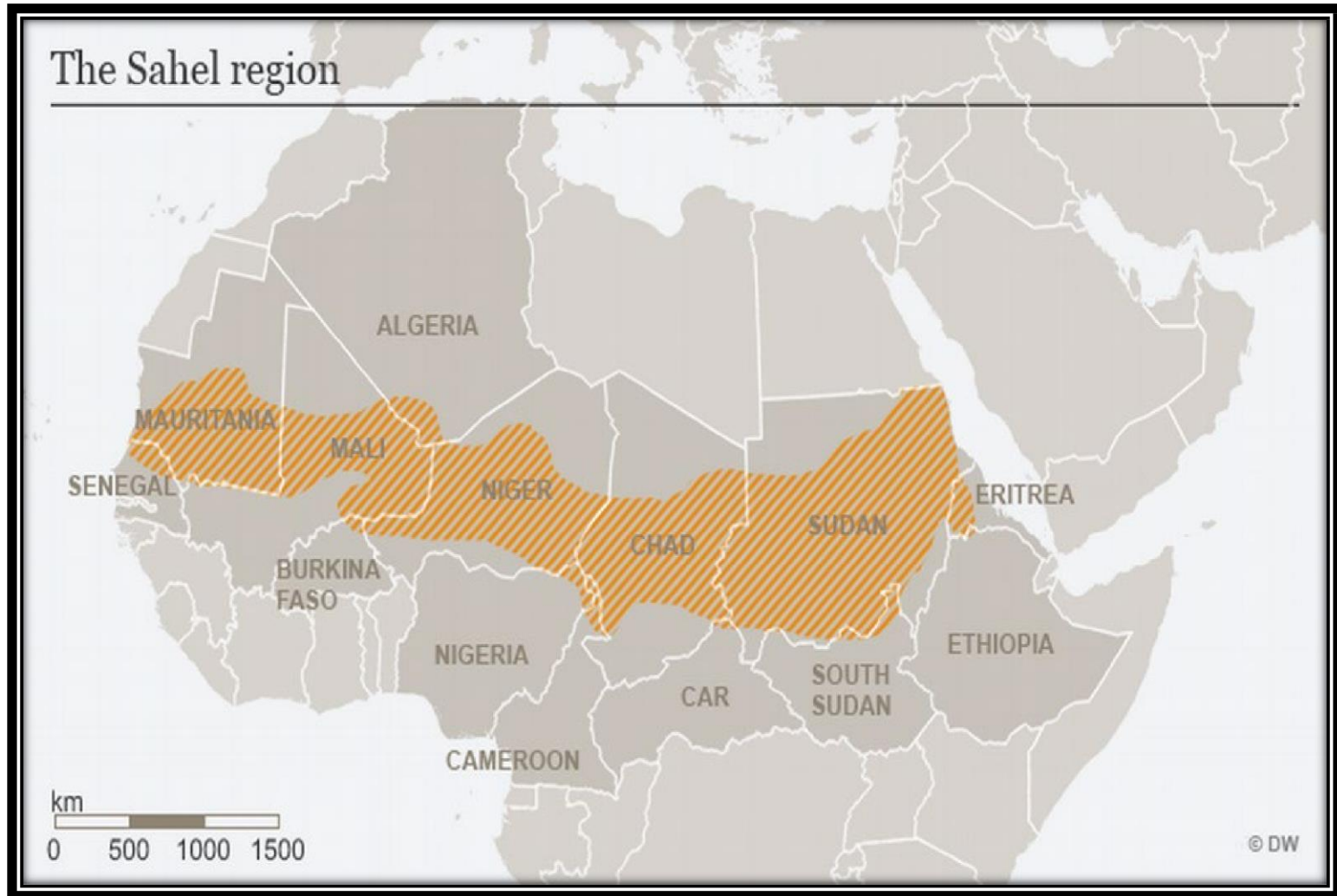
“SAHEL BELT”

- Coastal or Coastal Zone (Arabic ساحل, sāḥil, semi-arid Sahara are savannahs of tropical and subtropical grasslands and shrubs on the border or lands.
- The Sahel extends from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Red Sea in the east; The lane continues as a 3862 km long strip with a width of several hundred kilometers to a thousand kilometers and covers an area of 3,053,200 square kilometers.
- **Sahel**; It is the name that defines the geography of the South of Africa's Sahara Belt, starting from Senegal, including Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Sudan and even partially Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Eritrea.

SAHEL REGION BELT



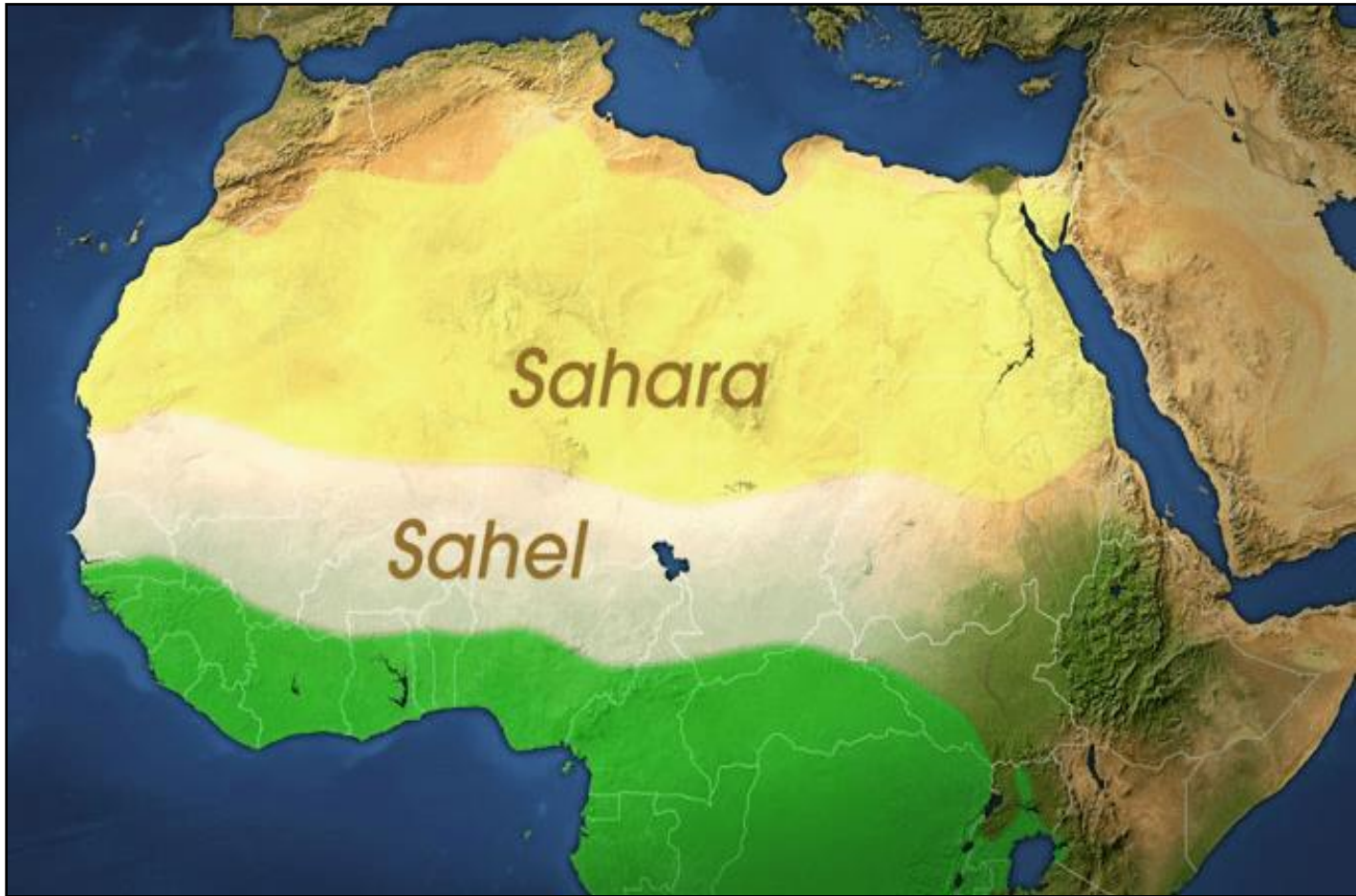
SAHEL REGION BELT



WHERE IS SAHEL?

- It is the steppe ecoregion that forms the transition from the Sahara in the north to the less arid Sudanese region in the south.
- It is the transition zone from semi-arid meadows, savannahs, steppes and thorny shrubs between the forested “**Sudanese savannah**” in the south and the “**Sahara**” in the north.
- Geography science determines the boundaries of the region based on annual precipitation per square meter, a specific vegetation (for example, Acacia tree) cover or geographically diverse natural species and characteristic communities (ecoregion).

SAHEL REGION BELT



AFRICA POLITICAL MAP



COLONIZATION(1)

- It started with the slave trade in the 15th century and lasted for many years. The term that best describes this is the English idiom "Africa Rush".
- Colonialism is generally a state's desire to spread and enlargement by taking other nations, states, communities under its political and economic sovereignty.

COLONIZATION(2)

- They confiscate the resources, labor and markets of the regions and at the same time put pressure on the socio-cultural and religious values of the people under their colonization.
- Imperialism, as a shade difference from colonialism, is used in situations where control is in the dominant power in areas.
- Colonialists believe that they are superior to the people they exploit.
- Such beliefs, which are also tried to be supported by so-called scientific theories, spread mostly in Europe in the 19th century and became the so-called legitimate basis for the enlargement of Europeans as a colonial power all over the world.

COLONIALISM – SLAVERY(1)

- Slavery is described as a form of manhunt that first started in 1444 and continued until the mid-19th century.
- With the fall of the Andalusian dynasty in 1492, other Muslim homelands in North Africa also was in a dangerous period.
- The southern shores of the Mediterranean began to experience a period of complete disaster against Spanish enlargement.
- All major port cities were falling one by one, and those who could save their lives from the locals fled inland, while those who could not save themselves were captured and killed.

COLONIALISM – SLAVERY(2)

- Some of Europe's largest banks and insurance organizations obtained their initial capital through the slave trade.
- North America gained its wealth and sophistication largely through slavery.
- In the process that led Britain to the industrial revolution, the role of the slave trade was so great that cities such as [Liverpool](#), [Bristol](#), and [Glasgow](#) owed all their wealth to the slave and colonial goods trade. Most of the slave-carrying ships were registered in Liverpool Harbor.

COLONIALISM – SLAVERY(3)

- Those who saw Africa as a source of slaves became interested in this oppressed continent both as a source of raw materials and as a market.
- But for this, they needed the workforce in Africa.
- The prohibition of slavery was directly related to this. This new process, proclaimed as the liberation of Africans, was nothing more than a new form of slavery.
- Slave traders organized into organizations that provided workers to mines or farms.

COLONIALISM

- After the prohibition of slavery in the United States, the entire continent, except for some part of Ethiopia, was invaded and colonized by the state they established in Liberia, where some freedmen were brought by ships.
- **France** and **England** took the biggest share in the African continent.
- While the **Germans** could only take Namibia and Tanzania, the **Italians** occupied Libya, Eritrea, part of Somalia, and partly Ethiopia.

CHURCH AND COLONIALISM

- Although slavery was an economic issue, the enslavement of millions of Africans had to be justified.
- For this reason, the church put forward the explanation that the souls of "savages" were saved and scientists supported the claim that they were inferior races.
- “When the missionaries came to Africa, we had lands, they had bible. They said “let’s pray”. **We closed our eyes. When we opened our eyes,** we had the bible, they had lands.

COLONIALISM FOR USA AND EUROPE

- That is why it was said for Europe "Literally this is the creation of the 3rd World".
- The resources and labor flowing from the colonies lay behind the wealth of Europe.
- In [Namibia](#), the Herero people want two billion marks for the genocide committed by the German Empire in 1904-1905.
- In the "**World Conference against Racism**" in South Africa, the USA and the EU refused to accept the acknowledgment of the damages caused by slavery and colonialism and did not want to discuss it.
- Africans demanded compensation for the damage caused by the slave trade and colonialism, and that the slave trade should be a crime against humanity.
- One million Algerians lost their lives in the 8-year war that France fought in order not to lose its most valuable colony, **Algeria**.

COLONIZATION OF SAHEL

- In the new and recent ages, the slave, gold and spice trade increased the interest of the colonialist states in Africa; It has turned Africa into the competition area of colonial states.
- In the 19th century, as a result of the increasing competition in the region, **colonial states** felt the need to put the conflict in the continent into a system. For this purpose, a conference was held in **Berlin** between 15 November 1884 and 26 February 1885 and the fate of the continent was determined in this conference.

BERLIN WEST AFRICA CONFERENCE

- **The Berlin West Africa Conference**, is an international conference to discuss and conclude Africa's sovereign rights in the Congo Basin.
- England, France, Austria, Germany, Italy, Russia, Portugal, Spain, United States, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Belgium and Ottoman Empire have attended the conference.
The conference was moderated by the German chancellor Bismarck .

BERLIN WEST AFRICA CONFERENCE

- Until the 1870s the principle of "verbal occupation" was valid.
- The conclusion document formed at the end of the conference adopted the principle of "de facto occupation". This means that being able to claim a right on any region is based on establishing a military domination (occupation) in the region.
- The conference paved the way for colonial governments to rapidly occupy different parts of the world.
- Therefore, the conference is one of the important milestones in the history of colonialism.

WHY SAHEL IS IMPORTANT?

- Africa, which caused a balance of power among Western countries during the colonial years, is being transformed into a global competition area in the 21st century, especially for the third world countries.
- Energy resources of the world, especially **oil** and **gas** are decreasing. Africa is a continent with significant reserves of energy resources. **The Sahel region is one of the richest regions** in the continent in terms of energy resources.

JEOSTRATEGIC TARGET: SAHEL

- The USA, China and European countries are struggling for energy resources in the Sahel region.
- With 60 billion barrels of oil reserves, it is much more important than the Middle East in terms of energy resources and makes it the geo-strategic target of the imperialist powers.
- Africa and Africans would benefit from the wealth of the Sahel region. But imperialist states overthrew the Qaddafi regime in 2011.
- The Sahel region, which lost its stability after Qaddafi, turned into a home for terrorist groups.
- Republic of Mali fell into turmoil after the military coup in 2013.

TERROR AND INSTABILITY



COLONIALIST COUNTRIES IN SAHEL

- **FRANCE**
 - **USA**
- **CHINA**
- **Japan**
- **India**

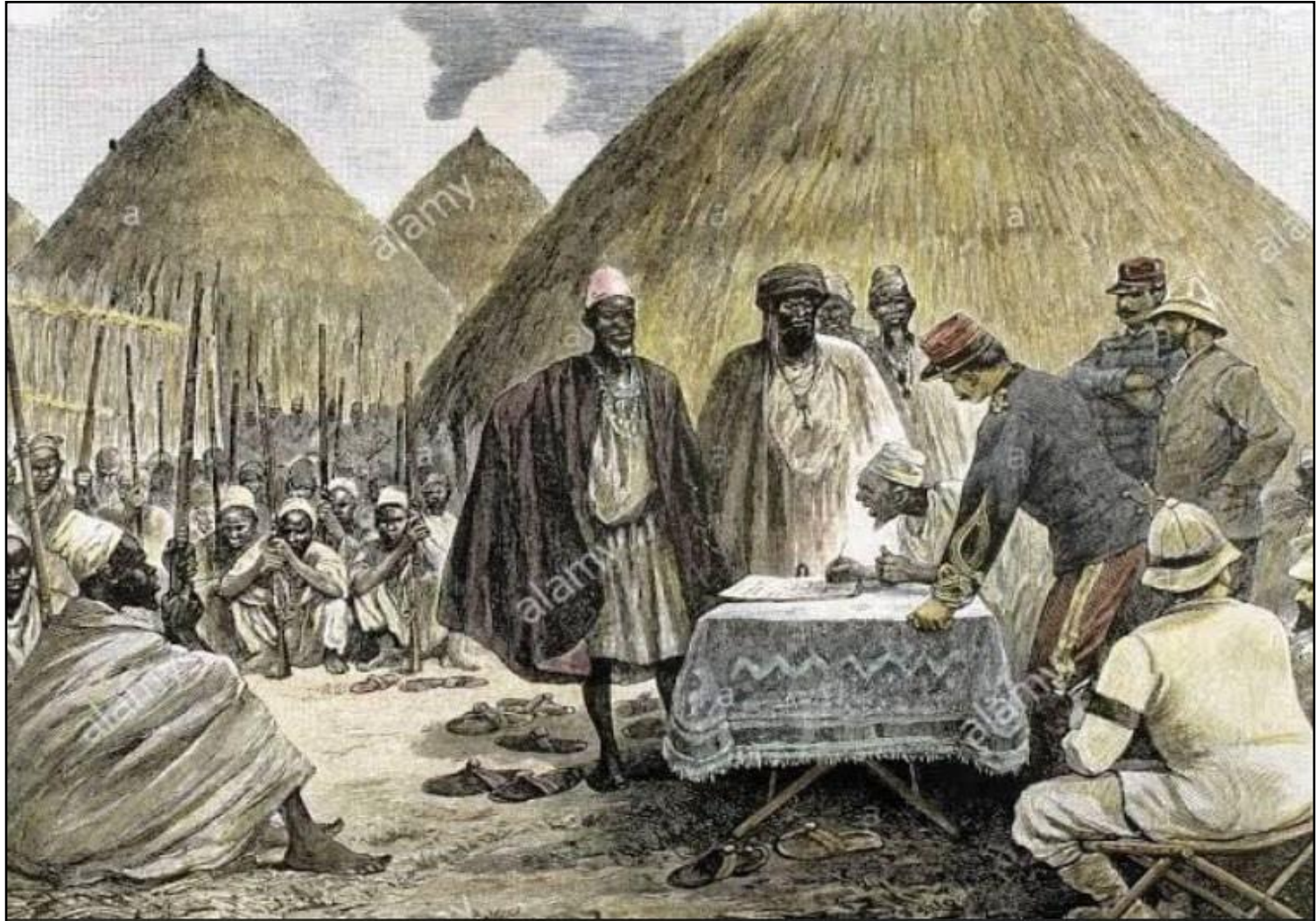
THE OPPRESSION OF FRANCE ON AFRICA AND COLONIALISM



COLONIALIST FRANCE IN SAHEL

- Sahel countries are former French colonies.
- France, like other imperialist countries, has always maintained a military presence in this region to protect its energy interests.
- France, along with the decolonization process, made several military agreements with colonial countries, including the Sahel region.

THE OPPRESSION OF FRANCE ON AFRICA AND COLONIALISM



CAUSES OF ATTRACTION

- **There is oil and gas in Algeria,**
- **Niger has one of the world's largest uranium reserves which provide power to France's nuclear power plants.**
- **Mali is Africa's third largest gold producer.**
- **Some Terrorist Organizations earned money by smuggling immigrants and drugs on the old roads to Europe and they used this earnings to buy weapons.**

SUBCONTRACTOR TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS



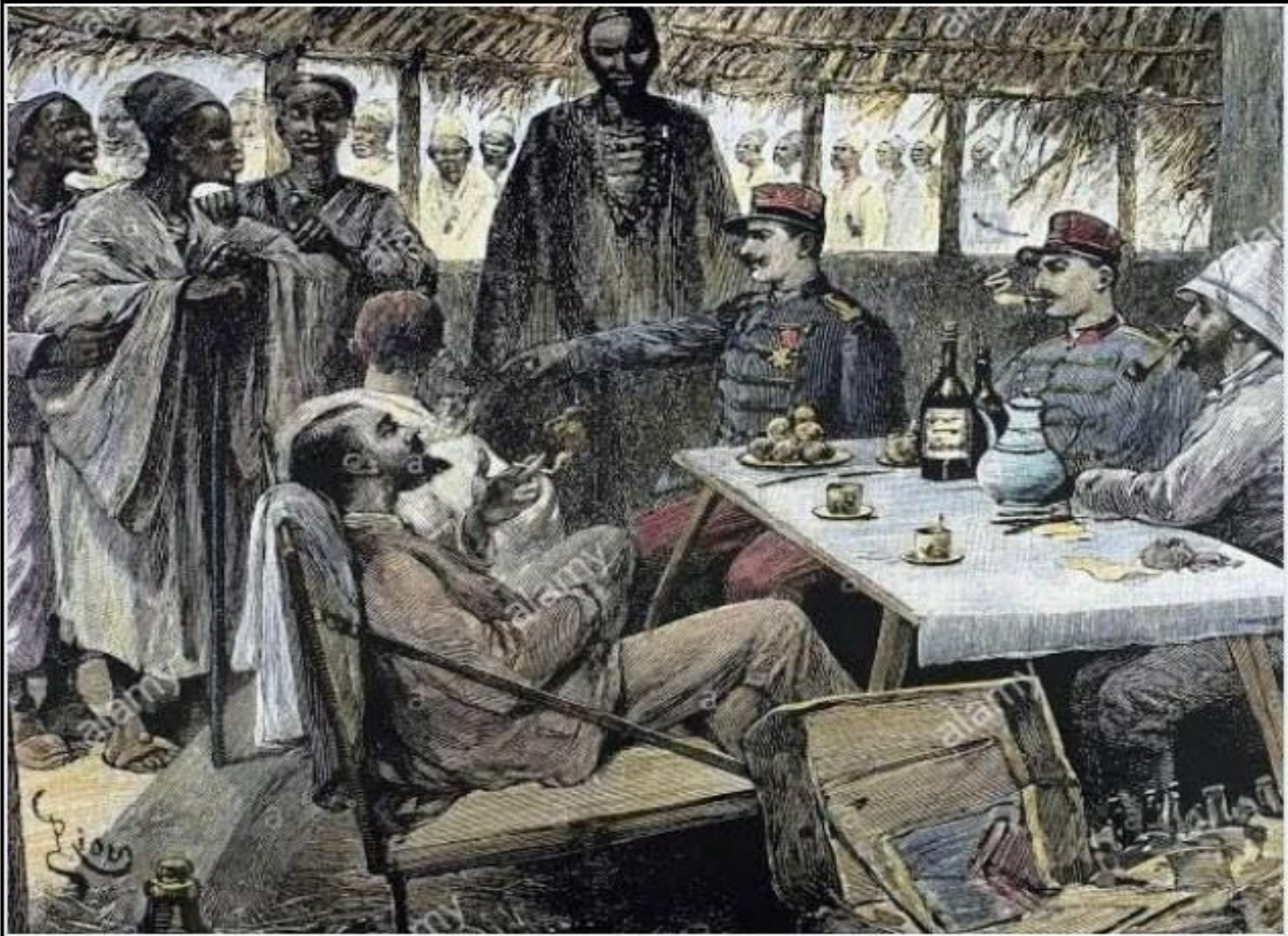
SUBCONTRACTOR TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

- **When Colonel Qaddafi was overthrown in Libya in 2011, many Tuareg fighters returned to Mali and started a rebellion.**
- **Tuareg rebels joined forces with Boko Haram, which was expelled from Algeria in the 1990s and spread into the Sahara, establishing connections with Al-Qaeda and carrying out attacks in all countries of the region.**
- **In April 2012, the new alliance quickly captured northern Mali, an area larger than France.**

OCCUPANT FRANCE IN SAHEL

- Sahel's heart: Niger, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Chad, Mali
- **France made its first military intervention in Chad in 1968, and deployed its soldiers,**
- The last time, in 1960, the country's first President Modibo Keita ended France's military presence in Mali.
- The Republic of Mali is in an important position for France to strategically dominate the Sahel region completely.
- Therefore, in 2013, France intervened in the Republic of Mali and strengthened its military presence in the Sahel region.

THE OPPRESSION OF FRANCE ON AFRICA AND COLONIALISM



SAHEL «AMBITION» OF FRANCE

- An estimated 716 people died as a result of terrorist attacks in Mali in 2017.
- It is stated that this number increased even more in 2018 and 2019.
- On 23 March 2019, 160 people died as a result of a terrorist attack in the village of Ogossagou in the Republic of Mali.
- The last time 50 soldiers died in the Republic of Niger on 14 May 2019.
- As of today, the Sahel region has become a dangerous geography.

FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE



OCCUPANT FRANCE



FRENCH MILITARY IN SAHEL

- From this date until 2013, France tried every possible way to get a military presence in Mali again; France supported the Tuareg rebellion.
- The Republic of Mali, which lost its security and stability because of terrorist organizations, The Republic of Mali is on the hook.
- In order to prevent the advance of terrorist organizations that targeted the capital of Mali, then French President François Hollande invited the President of Mali to write a letter to the French government in January 2013 for the military intervention of France.
- To legitimize the intervention at the international level, the French government forced Mali to write a letter to the United Nations which explains the situation.

FRENCH MILITARY IN SAHEL

- France changed the content of the letter which is sent to them and asked the government of Mali to rewrite the letter. Because, with this intervention, the French government could both give an intervention order before reaching an agreement and violate the agreement.
- France started the operation on January 11, 2013, by making military shipments from **Chad, Burkina Faso** and **Ivory Coast** to Mali, using the status quo that existed before the government of Mali approved. Because there was another reason for the intervention: Deployment of French troops in Mali.
- In this way, 4000 French soldiers were deployed in the Republic of Mali towards the end of January 2013.

BACKWARD AFRICA



FRENCH MILITARY IN SAHEL

- France has 3 military bases in the cities of Gao, Kidal and Tessalit in the north of Mali.
- With these bases, both the uranium mine in the Niger Republic and the **oil** and **uranium** exploration and extraction facilities in the Gao, Kidal and Tessalit cities of Mali are secured.
- France turns the Republic of Mali into a war zone by arming terrorist and separatist groups, which are proxy elements for these interests.
- The Sahel region is now a center of human, drug and arms trafficking for separatist organizations and terrorist groups.

FRENCH MILITARY IN SAHEL

- After the independence of African countries, **France** continues its military presence in the continent with the agreements it made with these countries to ensure security.
- It is known that France has 4,500 to 5,000 soldiers in the **Sahel** (Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, Eritrea) region.
- The French army currently has military presence in Encemine, the capital of Chad; Vagadugu, the capital of Burkina Faso; Niamey, the capital of Niger; Bamako, the capital of Niger and the city of Gao and Mauritania.

FRANCE IN THE SAHEL AND ADJACENT REGION

FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE OUTSIDE OF SAHEL

France also has more than 10 thousand troops in Africa, in the Ivory Coast, Central African Republic, Djibouti and Democratic Republic of the Congo.

ENLARGEMENT STEP FROM MALI TO SAHEL REGION

*France, which entered Mali in 2013, **expanded its military presence to cover the entire Sahel** in 2014.*

FRENCH MILITARY IN SAHEL

FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE IN SAHEL REGION



Sahel Region covers **Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, Eritrea.**

France has **around 4500-5000 soldiers** in the Sahel region

France spends **more than 1 million euros per day** for military in the Sahel region

French army stepped in after the UN failed to control the Sahel region with **10,000 peacekeeping soldiers**

FRENCH MILITARY IN SAHEL

- Despite the loss of life, spending more than 1 million euros a day and the security problem, France's efforts to maintain its presence in Africa are remarkable.
- Despite the fact that the United Nations (UN) has approximately 10 thousand peacekeepers in the Sahel region, the French army stepped in this region due to the failure of costly operations in the fight against ethnic conflicts, riots and terrorist activities.

ENLARGEMENT STEPS

- **ENLARGEMENT STEP FROM MALI TO SAHEL REGION**
- France, which launched the Serval operation in Mali on January 11, 2013, against political instability and the activities of groups linked to Al Qaeda, first deployed 3,000 soldiers to this country, and then 1,500 more in August.
- Although France announced that it ended this operation on July 15, 2014, France did not withdraw the soldiers and deployed them to Mauritania, Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso and moved its military activities to the wider Sahel region under the name of Operation Barkhane.
- Although Mali is not a country rich in terms of minerals, other countries in the Sahel region are known to be rich in **bauxite, uranium, iron, gold and oil reserves**.
- The soldiers deployed in the Sahel were supported by armored vehicles, Mirage 2000 type military aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles, aerial surveillance vehicles and combat helicopter equipment.

REASONS FOR INTERVENTION

- To drive al-Qaeda, DAESH and affiliated groups out of the Sahara Desert and around the Niger River.
- To prevent ethnic conflicts
- To keep the militia forces under control and to gain an advantage against terrorist groups
- **THE FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE TRIGGERS TERRORIST ACTIVITIES**
- Terrorist activities of groups linked to al-Qaeda and DAESH intensified.
- While the terrorist group active in the region was three before the French arrived, this number is six now.
- Meanwhile, France has begun preparations for a larger permanent military base in Mali's Gourma area.

COOPERATION WITH TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS



RELATION OF FRANCE & TERROR

FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE TRIGGERS TERRORIST ACTIVITIES

*The French military presence could not prevent ethnic and inter-tribal violence in the Sahel, **and remained ineffective against increasing terrorist attacks.***

*While the terrorist group active in the region was **three** before the French arrived, **this number is six now.***

RELATION OF COLONY & COUP

- **There have been 45 coups in the former French colonies in Africa in the last 50 years.**
- As France withdrew, it had obtained the **right to** deploy its troops in advance and to **intervene militarily** in the country to defend its interests.
- France acquired new privileges in many African countries by means of carrying out coups or **claiming that they prevented the coup attempts.**
- With these agreements called "Defense Agreements" attached to the Colonial Pact, France has the legal right to intervene militarily in African countries and at the same time to deploy soldiers in military bases and military facilities there.
- Because of these conditions, many African countries are like **companies operated entirely by France.**
- There are currently around 70.000 French soldiers in Africa.
- Some of these are warfare forces acting as so-called "Peace Force" in the UN mission. During the Cold War, France was called the "Gendarmerie of Africa". France conducted a total of 130 military interventions on the African continent between 1945 and 2005.

THE PEOPLE REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN THE SAHEL REGION

- China's relations with the countries of the Sahel region have started to increase since the end of 1990.
- Relations between China and Niger gained momentum when the Beijing government started exploration for oil in 1996 and for uranium in 2008.
- Western countries had stopped economic aid to Niger with sanctions between 2001-2006.
- China has turned this situation into an opportunity and increased its influence on Niger.
- Before the coup in 2010, Niger President Mamadou Tandja gave many privileges to the Chinese to produce in the oil and uranium sectors.
- After obtaining uranium research license in 2007, the Chinese company *China National Nuclear Corporation* started to produce uranium in Azerlik mine with a 37% common share in 2011.
- With an investment of around 300 million USD, the Chinese said that they will increase their annual production of 700 tons per year to 5,000 tons in 2021.

URANIUM MINE OF CHINA IN NIGER



RIVALRY OF FRANCE - CHINA

- China started oil production in various regions of Niger in 2003.
- China took a big step to control uranium production by taking it from the French company Areva.
- China started to strengthen its presence in the region and it has started to seriously disturb actors such as France and the USA.
- In order to deter the Chinese, attacks were carried out by the terrorist organization in the Republic of Niger, which was supported by France in 2007.
- Chinese-French rivalry threatens security for the Republic of Niger and the Sahel region.
- The Chinese also have investments in the field of oil in the Republic of Chad.

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AFRICA CONCERN OF USA

- It was stated that Beijing's establishment of military bases across Africa, starting **with Djibouti** "increased China's ability to deter the use of conventional military force, to supply operations abroad and to risk strategic economic corridors."
- **STUNNING STATEMENTS TOWARDS AFRICA**
- "The People's Liberation Army's first military base in Djibouti and possible new bases increases China's (in Africa) ability to deter the use of conventional military force, replenish its operations abroad, and risk strategic economic corridors. The expansion of the People's Liberation Army's global capabilities provides the China the military option to observe and complicate the counterparty's activities in conflict situations. "

THE REASONS OF CHINA'S TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICAN POLICY

- Centuries ago, there was a commercial relationship between the parties, trade in fabric – agricultural products
- It began in 1949 after Mao Zedong came into power in China and established the Republican regime. It was not difficult for Beijing to introduce itself to African countries, as China did not have a colonial past.
- The Beijing government also based its relations with Africa on ideological discourses and symbols. It started to shape its policy with the principles of "**coexistence in peace**" and "**stand by me and win**".
- In the last two decades, the **USA**, **Japan** and **India's** increased visibility in Africa has encouraged China.
- The fact that Africa, which is very rich in many raw materials, has placed it at the center of the global power competition since the beginning of the 21st century has pushed China to strengthen its presence in Africa and to implement a policy of making itself accepted in every aspect.

AIM OF CHINA'S NEW AFRICAN POLICY

- Diversifying China's resources in its oil supply and reducing its dependence on the Middle East and the Arabian Gulf region;
- Increasing the need for oil and diversifying its resources in order to meet the energy needs of the economy
- China's main suppliers, which meet approximately 25 percent of its total oil imports from Africa, are Sudan, Angola, Algeria, Gabon and Chad. To benefit more from Africa, which has 8 percent of the world's crude oil reserves

MILITARY PRESENCE OF CHINA

- Three small-scale weapons production facilities in Sudan,
- Opening ammunition and arms production facilities in Mali and Zimbabwe,
- China has also made various military agreements with many African countries. These agreements include military training as well as some arms sales.
- Military base in Djibouti which is recently established to secure the Silk Road and commercial ships against pirates
- Considering that the export amount from China to Europe via the Gulf of Aden and the Suez Canal is \$ 1 billion per day, the advantage of the military base in Djibouti for China will be better understood.
- Diplomacy and soft power constitute China's main expansion strategy.

MILITARY BASE OF CHINA IN DJIBOUTI



SAHEL REGION STRATEGY OF THE USA

- Sub-Saharan Africa, including the Sahel region, is a strategically and economically important region for the USA.
- With the beginning of decolonization in the region, a unit related to the African continent was established within the US State Department.
- In 1960 and 1975, it indirectly provided support to countries such as Congo, Angola, Mozambique and Namibia to block the USSR. Thus, the Cold War rivalry between the USA and the Soviets moved to Africa.
- The USA, which carried out an isolationist policy in Sub-Saharan Africa until 2000, started to look at the region from a realistic perspective by establishing a military base in Djibouti in 2002.

USA IN SAHEL



SAHEL REGION STRATEGY OF THE USA

- USA, targeting the energy and oil reserves of the continent, initiated economic development programs for African countries with its multinational companies.
- The countries of the Sahel region are also targeted in these development programs. Thus, the USA entered into a new Cold War by competing with powerful states such as France and China in the Sahel region.
- The USA thinks the energy resources in the Sahel region as an alternative that will reduce its dependence in the Middle East.
- The Republic of Niger has an important place in the strategy of the USA for the Sahel region. Niger is seen as a geostrategic country to fight against terrorist organizations such as Boko Haram and Maghreb al-Qaeda.
- The USA controls French military operations in the Sahel region over the drone base in Niger. Because Niger is a very rich country in energy resources (oil, uranium) that cannot be left alone.

SAHEL REGION STRATEGY OF THE USA

- For the purpose of fight against terrorism, the United States launched an initiative called the *Pan-Sahel Initiative* in 2002.
- Since 2002, the Sahel region has become increasingly dangerous. This shows that the *Pan-Sahel Initiative* was not successful.
- As of today, although the United States has funded military training and equipment for these countries, regional security cannot be ensured.
- In 2005, the *Pan-Sahel Initiative* to cover all Sub-Saharan African countries was expanded under the leadership of the Pentagon. With this initiative, military finance and education support will be given not only to the countries of the Sahel region but also to the Sub-Saharan countries.
- The basis of the US presence in this region is concentrated in the city of Agadez, Niger. It is recorded that there are a minimum of 800 soldiers on a military base with combat and surveillance drones (MQ-9).

SAHEL REGION STRATEGY OF THE USA

- The USA, trying to increase its influence in the region, has placed wiretapping and surveillance satellites in Niger and Mauritania. It is known that the USA spent around 100 million dollars for the deployment of its military base in Niger.
- The USA's realist policy in the Sahel region is aimed at securing energy interests, as well as blocking rivals such as China and France.
- Although France and the USA sometimes aim to cooperate militarily, the presence of the USA in the Sahel region pushes France to protect its own interests.
- The policies of these two powerful states, with different allies in the region, are also competitive. In general, it can be said that the USA is stronger in the region compared to other actors with its military training and fund.

United States Africa Command (AFRICOM)

- AFRICOM is the name of the unit established by the Pentagon in 2007 for the purpose of organizing civil and military operations in Africa by the George W. Bush government in the USA, and is known as the United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) or shortly AFRICOM.

DUTY

- AFRICOM, with its partners, counteracts transnational threats and malicious actors, strengthens security forces, and responds to crises to advance U.S. national interests and promote regional security, stability and prosperity.

AFRICOM

- The United States unites land forces in Europe and Africa
- The US Land Forces Command announced that they united the land forces within the European Forces (EUCOM) and African Forces (AFRICOM) commands under a single command.
- In the statement made by the Command, It is expressed that "The new organization, which is referred as the **US European** and **African** Land Forces, will improve the ability of the Land Forces to meet their strategic and operational goals in **Europe** and **Africa**."
- In the statement, it was reported that the newly promoted General Christopher G. Cavoli had been appointed as the commander of the command which is aforementioned.
- The USA started this transformation process in February.

AFRICOM


- The 5th Corps (V Corps), which had conducted critical foreign missions from World War I until 2012, the US Army reactivated it in February and included it in the EUCOM.
- The 5th Corps was abolished by former President Barack Obama after the withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2012.
- While the US army consists of the Land, Air, Naval, Space and Marine Corps Command in terms of training, it is divided into 11 combatant commands regionally and functionally.
- Naval fleets of which mission locations are divided by regions, also provide support to regional force commands.

AFRICOM

United States Africa Command



Emblem of United States Africa Command

Active	Established: 1 October 2007 Activated: 1 October 2008 ^[1]
Country	 United States
Type	Unified combatant command

Commanders

Commander



GEN Stephen J. Townsend, USA

Deputy
Commander



Lt Gen Kirk W. Smith, USAF

Senior Enlisted
Leader

SgtMaj Richard D. Thresher, USMC

MILITARY BASES IN AFRICA AND THEIR COUNTRIES

<u>Military Bases in;</u>	<u>Military Bases of;</u>
Djibouti	China France Italy Japan USA
Chad	France
Gabon	France
Ivory Coast	France
Niger	France USA
Senegal	France
Madagascar	India
Mauritius	India
Seychelles	India
Libya	Italy United Arab Emirates
Somali	Turkey
Eritrea	United Arab Emirates
Somaliland	United Arab Emirates
Kenya	United Kingdom (England)

SAHEL BELT



THE NUMBER OF MILITARY BASES IN AFRICA AND THEIR OWNERS

Country	Number of Military Bases
France	6
India	3
United Arab Emirates	3
United States of America	2
Italy	2
China	1
Japan	1
Turkey	1
United Kingdom (England)	1