



AFRICA CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

CAPSTONE SPOUSE
Security Trends in Africa
May 2026
Alix Boucher

Africa at a Glance



- 54 countries
- Sahara Desert: largest hot desert in the world (size of U.S.)
- South Sudan: world's newest country (2011)
- Nile : 4,132 mi. – longest river in the world
- Nigeria: most populous country on the continent (206 million)
- 1.6 billion people today; 2.5 billion by 2050
- Youthful population: 44% under 15; less than 3% over 65
- Average life expectancy is approximately 59 years (ADB)
- Great wealth & poverty: 75% of the population lives on less than \$2 a day but mineral wealth with:

80% of platinum

52% of cobalt

37% of chromium

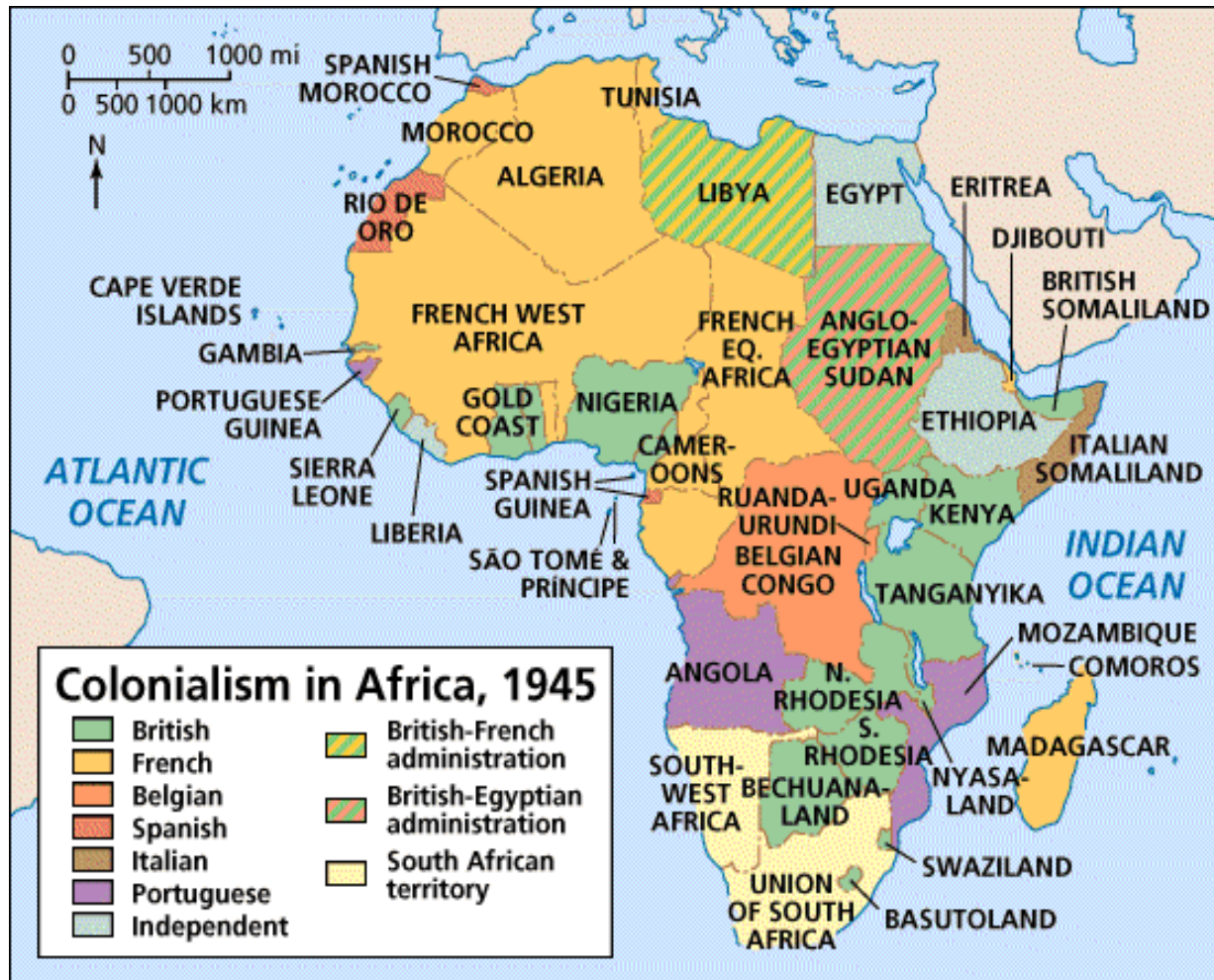
35% of manganese

55% of diamonds

10% of proven oil reserves

Source: Worldatlas.com

Africa's Colonial Legacies



Consequences of colonial relationships:

- Languages
- Legal traditions
- Trade relationships
- Military interventions

Source: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston

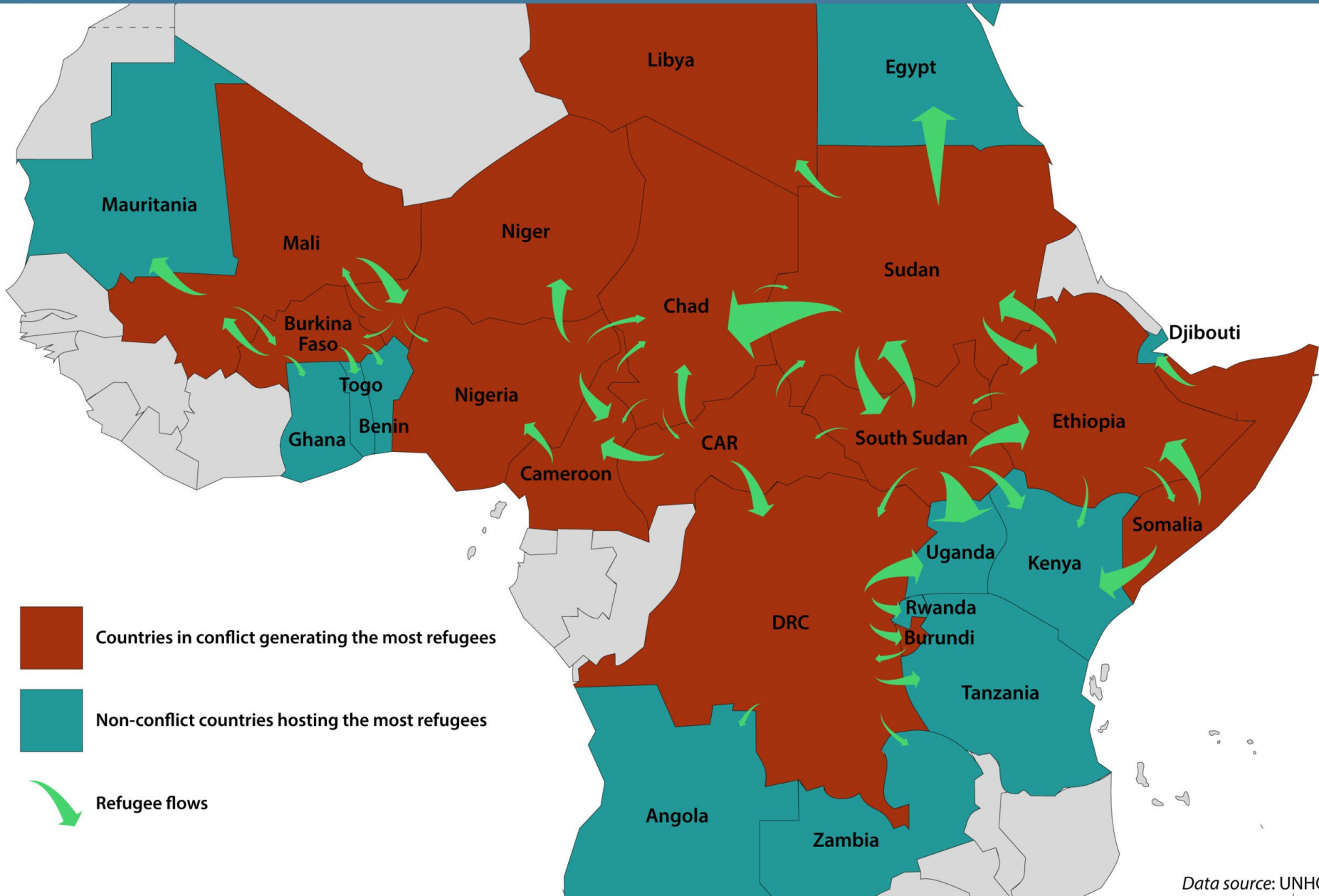


COUPS AND MILITARY DOMINATED REGIMES IN AFRICA



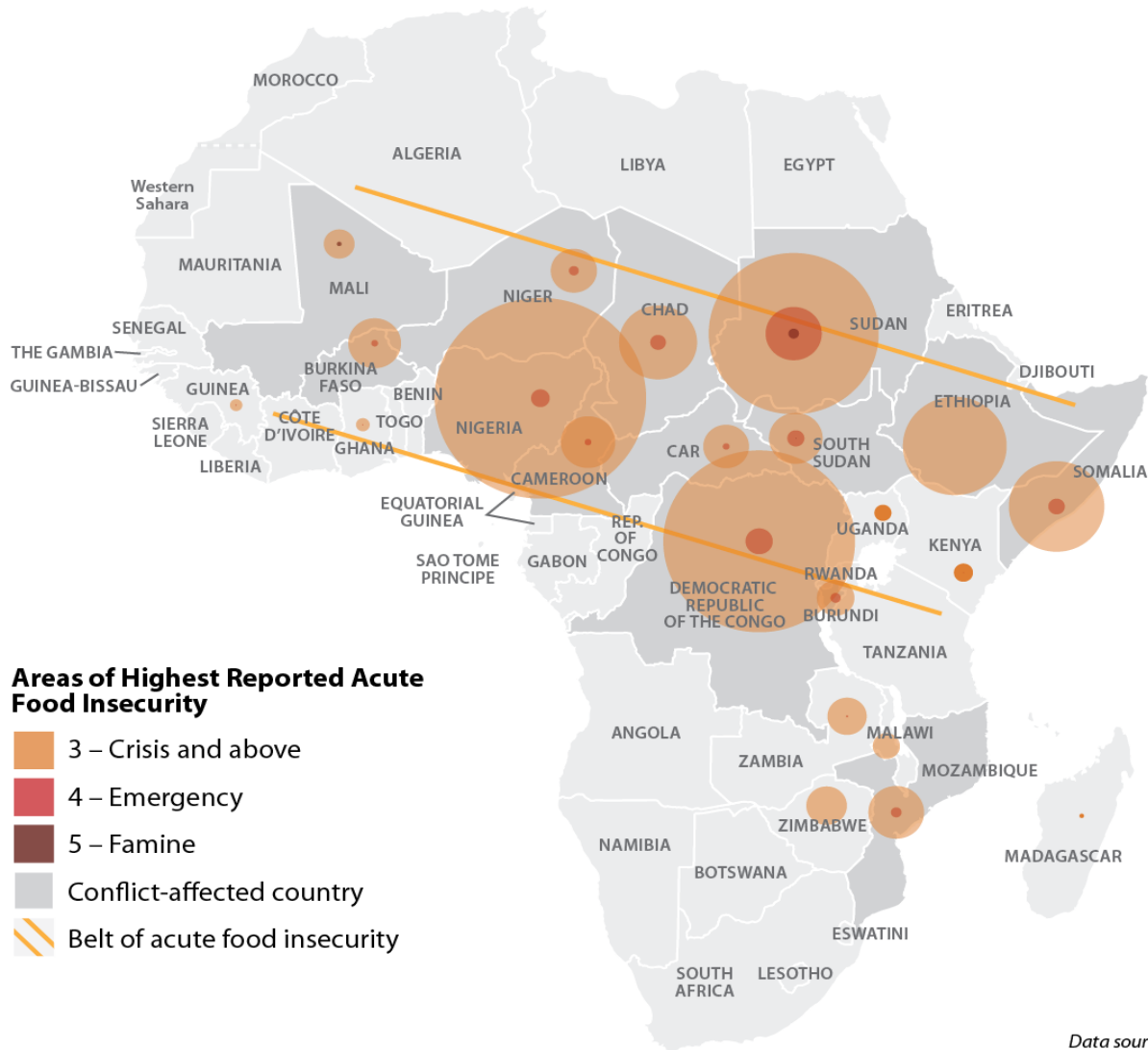


REFUGEES FLEEING ONE CONFLICT-AFFECTED COUNTRY FOR ANOTHER





CONFLUENCE OF CONFLICT-INDUCED FOOD INSECURITY





AFRICA'S ACTIVE MILITANT ISLAMIST GROUPS

ALGERIA

- Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)
- Islamic State (ISIS)

MALI/BURKINA FASO/NIGER

- Jama'at Nusrat al Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM), comprising the following Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) affiliates:
 - Ansar Dine
 - Macina Liberation Front (FLM)
 - Al Mourabitoun
 - Sahara Emirate of AQIM
- Ansaroul Islam
- Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS)
- JNIM and/or ISGS
- Lakurawa

NIGERIA/NIGER/CAMEROON/CHAD

- Boko Haram (a.k.a. Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad)
- Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA)
- Ansaru (a.k.a. Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan)
- Boko Haram and/or ISWA

LIBYA

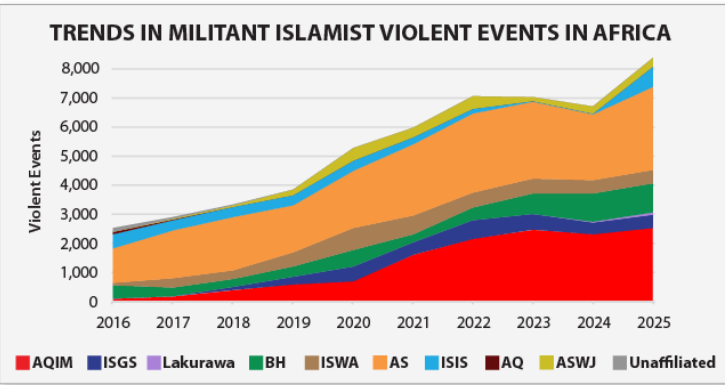
- Islamic State (ISIS)

SOMALIA

- Al Shabaab
- Islamic State (ISIS)
- Al Shabaab and/or ISIS

MOZAMBIQUE

- Ahlu Sunnah wa Jama'a (ASWJ) (a.k.a. "al Shabaab")

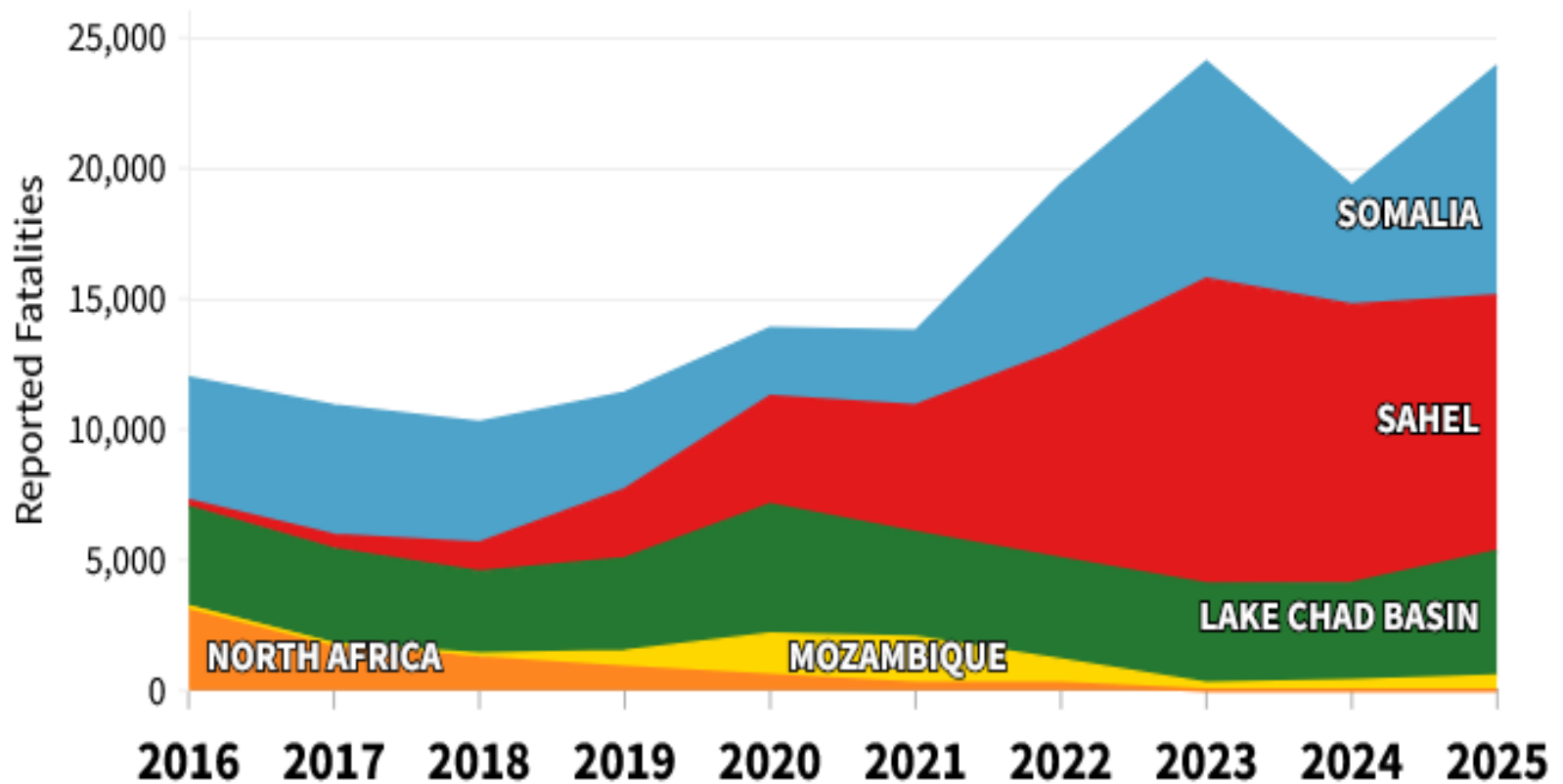


Updated: March 2026

Note: Compiled by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, this graphic shows violent events involving the listed groups over the 12-month period ending December 31, 2025. Data on attacks or fatalities does not attempt to distinguish the perpetrators of the events. Group listings are intended for informational purposes only and should not be considered official designations. Due to the fluid nature of many groups, the listed affiliations may change.

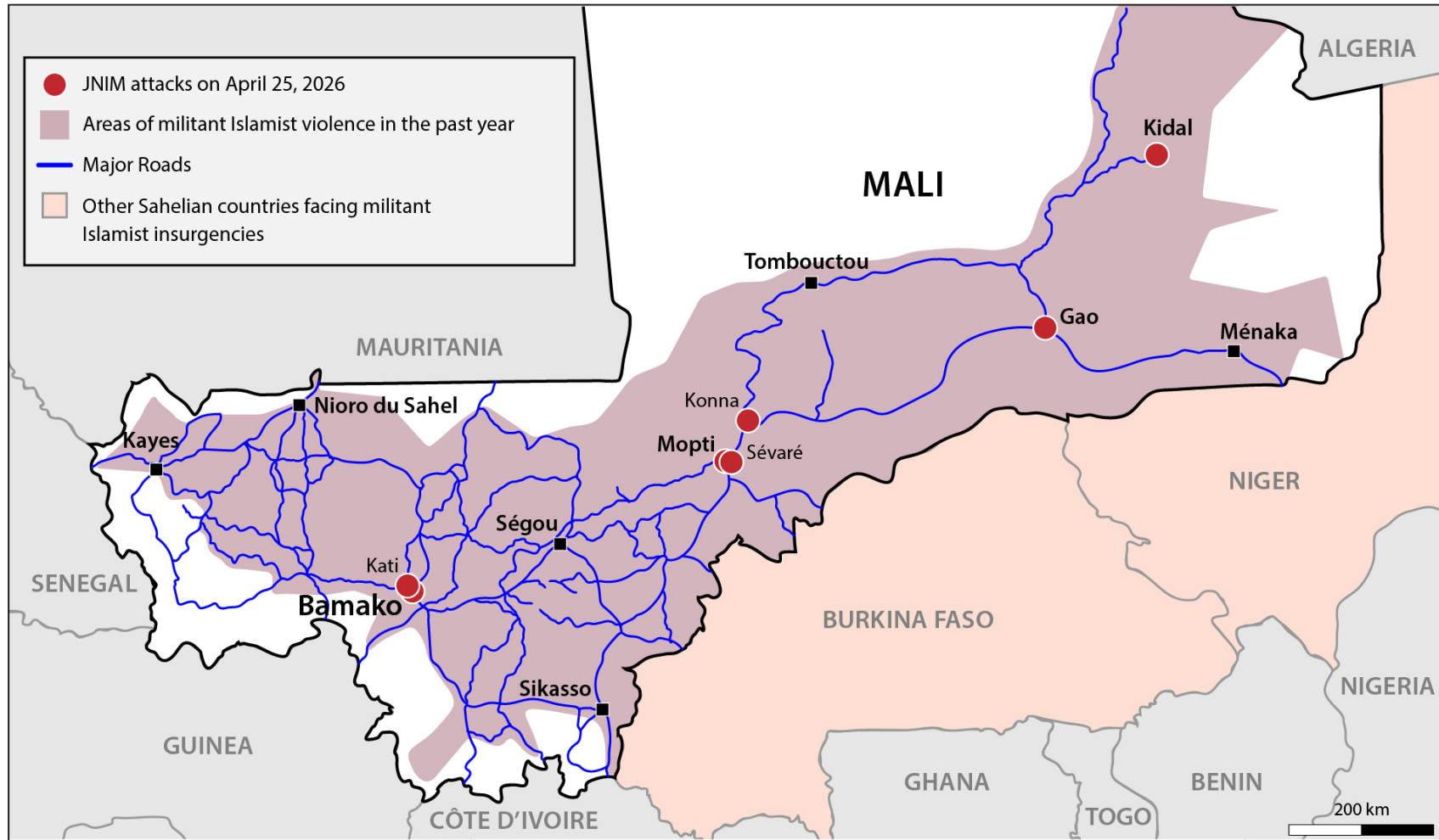
Sources: ACLED (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data); Centro Para Democracia e Direitos Humanos; Hiraal Institute; HumAngle; International Crisis Group; Institute for Security Studies; MENASTREAM; National Centre for Scientific Research; the Washington Institute; and the United Nations.

FATALITIES LINKED TO MILITANT ISLAMIST GROUPS IN AFRICA BY THEATER



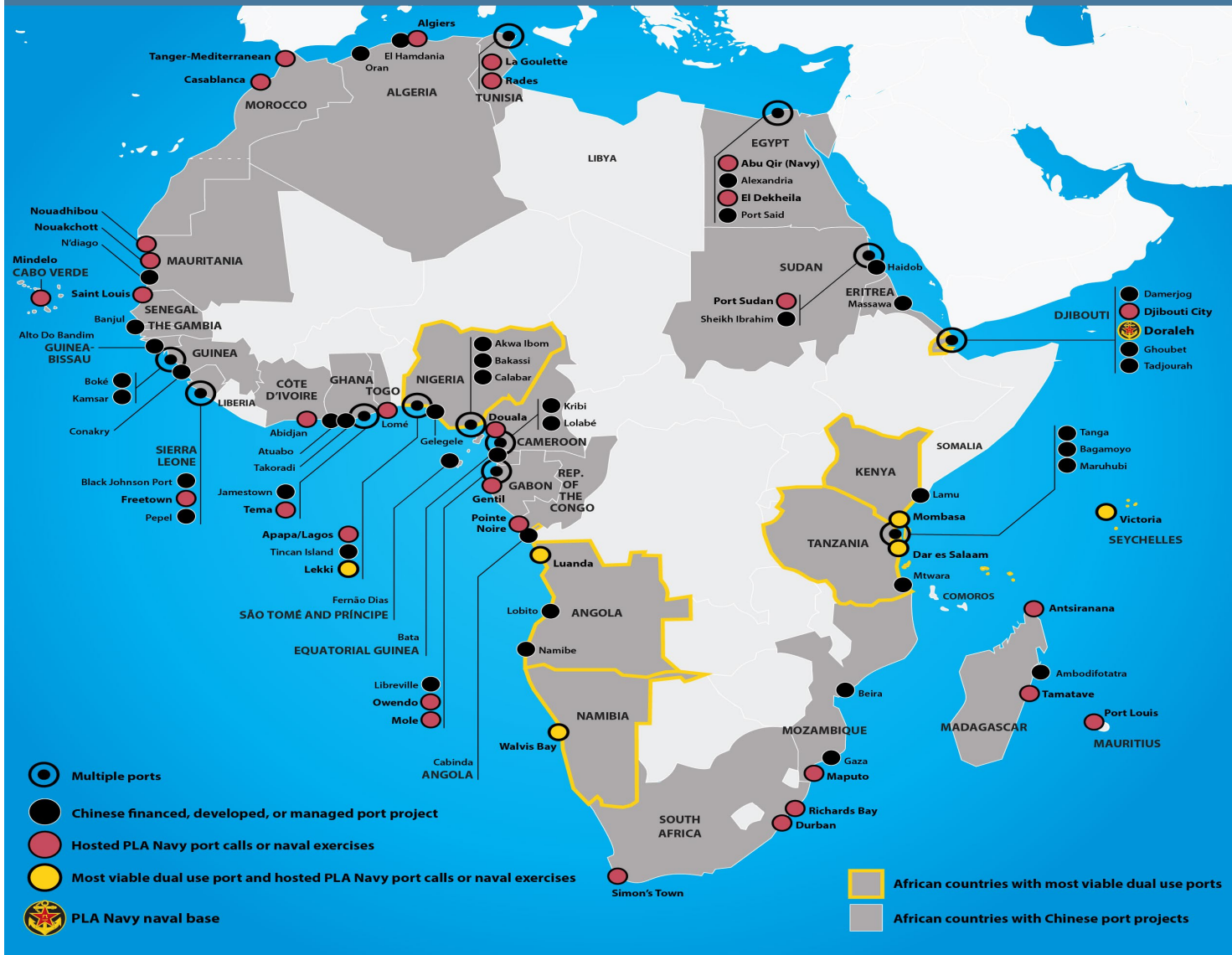
Data source: ACLED (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data)

MILITANT ATTACKS SPAN MALI





CHINESE PORT EXPANSION IN AFRICA



About the Africa Center for Strategic Studies

- The Africa Center is a U. S. Department of Defense institution established and funded by Congress for the study of security issues relating to Africa and serving as a forum for bilateral and multilateral research, communication, exchange of ideas, and training involving military and civilian participants. (10 U.S.C 342)
- Our vision: *Security for all Africans championed by effective institutions accountable to their citizens.*
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