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To what extent do democratic transitions correlate with the development of terrorist extremist groups?

Political Rights in Nigeria and Mali

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1.0 Introduction

Following the end of the Cold War, the international system allegedly witnessed the 'Third Wave' of democratisation (Huntington, 1991) having global outreach and implications. On the surface, democracy promotion is widely seen in positive terms, correlating with an entitlement to human rights, the rule of law and good governance. However, the dangerous reality of democracy promotion at a time when the international system is currently witnessing a democratic pushback, a rise in authoritarianism, identity politics and nationalism has meant that the West has embarked on an enthusiastic promulgation of democracy, resulting in civil wars, belligerent nationalism, and insurgent and terrorist violence during the transition. Although Democratic Peace Theory denotes that democracies do not go to war against each other; the initial process of democratisation, often, and at least in the short term, contradicts claims that peace and democracy are mutually reinforcing.

After marking the thirtieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall celebrating the success of a liberal, democratic led world order juxtaposed by the brutality conducted in Tiananmen square by the Chinese military crushing the pro-democracy movement in the same year (1989), it is as important as ever to readdress our stance on democracy promotion and Western-centric values. Historically, democratisation has neither been an out-rightly peaceful nor swift affair across Europe - exemplified by the French Revolution and Germany's five aggressive wars between 1864-1939 - but the current international imperative of having a Responsibility to Protect (R2P) states who are unable to provide for their citizens, coupled with the unprecedented interconnectivity of the international community, means that it is no longer possible for democratically emergent countries to embark on costly transitions to democracy whilst the West stands idle. Does the end goal of a legitimate, representative government outweigh the violent means to achieve democracy? What factors facilitate or impede rebellion based on democratic characteristics? Does the opening of the political system give rise to greater insurgent or terrorist activity? What is the true meaning of democracy in Mali and Nigeria? These are some of the questions this paper strives to answer.

There is not a clear cut line between autocratic and democratic states and transition from one to the other is certainly not a linear process. The lines are blurred, contentious and bloody. Thus, violence should not be understood as the antithesis of democracy but in fact as an expected - albeit unfortunate - side effect of the democratic transition process in the Sahel region. Geographically, the Sahel is a belt of countries in Africa that stretches from Mauritania in the West to Eritrea in the East, including Mali and Northern Nigeria. Moreover, the likelihood that violence will occur is increased by a state's inability to retain a monopoly of force allowing sub-state regions to form violent sects often under a religious ideological pretense. Violence is further amplified due to economic deprivation and religious division as exemplified by the separatist Tuaregs in Mali and the Muslim-Christian, North-South split in Nigeria. This provokes one to question the extent to which violence is inherently rooted within the society of a state or in fact whether it was caused directly as a result of transition. Violence during democratic transition including the expansion of terrorist activities challenges the perceived benefits of democracy as a deliverer of stability. In contrast, the success of the China model, prioritising *economic development and regime stability* (albeit often ignoring human rights) whilst showing little philosophical acknowledgement of the need for democratisation, is useful to bear in mind when considering debates as to democracy and development. The notion that democracy has become virtually the only model with global appeal (Inglehart & Baker, 2000) is becoming ever more questionable as we move through the C21 particularly considering the tumultuous journey and high human cost it often takes to be achieved.

Additionally, it is important to consider the relationship between terrorist groups' activities and the state which is often paramount to the survival of such groups. For example, terrorist groups that are able to collaborate with the state through patrimonial ties and clientelism complicate the ability to counter the spread of terrorism in the Sahel region. In a similar vein, strategic violence used by corrupt officials during transitions in order to retain rents; political entrepreneurs benefitting from the economies of conflict and individuals known as "comtsotsis"' (Harris, 2006:13) who used the political context to commit crimes for personal gain, all allow criminal opportunities for exploiting a turbulent political system in which elites vie for power vis-à-vis desperate citizens struggling for democratic consolidation. In order to gain a better understanding of the political and security environment during regime transitions, it is important to address state corruption as one of the three focal points of the paper that plays into the score of political rights as obtained by *Freedom House*. This has led to a readjustment

of the Freedom House criterion on political rights to ask questions that are more conducive to the scope of this paper and a better understanding of the relationship between terrorist groups vis-à-vis the government under the umbrella of the political rights framework.

Prior research has clarified that the transitions from autocracy to democracy are considerably more likely to generate conflict than transitions toward autocracy (Mansfield & Snyder, 2002:298) and thus this research does not apply to transitions at large but specifically to states transitioning to democracy. This is particularly significant in addressing democracy promotion - a linchpin of all Western states foreign policy - by focusing on the development of terrorist extremist groups, namely, *Jama at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihad* commonly known as Boko Haram in Nigeria and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in Mali, during such transitions. Moreover, although it is duly noted that not all transitions to democracy are violent, with relatively peaceful transitions taking place across East Asia, the Southern cone of South American and South Africa (Mansfield and Snyder, 2005:8), this paper is concerned with those that are of a violent nature.

It is contended that, during transitions to democracy, the uncertainty within anocratic states creates a window of opportunity for terrorist groups to develop. It is apparent that anocracies are no longer states in transition to democracy but ones which are somewhat stuck in a complex web of hybridity that is neither conducive to state stability nor prosperity in the Sahel context. Although this regime type has been successful, in the case of Singapore for example, it has yet to prove beneficial as a form of governance in a West African context. The global increase of anocracies (Polity, 2018) as well as the extended period of time that a state is in this regime type means that there are increased opportunities for terrorist groups and/or rebel insurgencies to take advantage of weak state apparatus. The longevity of the anocratic phase is concerning for intra-state conflict patterns: 'if allowed to fester, criminality and violence may become institutionalized as conflicting groups gain a stake in perpetuating the disarray' (Kaplan, 1994; Collier, 2000; King, 2001). As conflicts progress, power asymmetries between the state and the terrorist decreases. Therefore, the willingness for the weaker party to engage in dialogue may also decrease (Duyvesteyn & Schuurman, 2010), meaning that peace talks become harder to facilitate. Moreover, recent statistics have illustrated that a state that has endured conflict in the past is likely to see a recurrence of conflict in the near future and thus the problem is by no means short sighted or insignificant in its outreach.

The purpose of this paper is not to understate the immense progress that has been made in embracing multiparty democracy since the 1990s in the Sahel and West African region but to place an important emphasis on the *process* of democratisation which is often overlooked. This paper puts forward two core arguments. Firstly, at the macro level, the realisation that the end goal of democracy is nullified by the development of terrorist groups during the transition and early democratic consolidation phase which lessens the degree to which the state is able to have a monopoly of authority and force over its population in medium to long term. Secondly, on a micro level, the opening up of the political system as part of the democratisation process a) does not necessarily correlate with the increase of *real* political rights, b) cannot be said to be a direct causal factor for the emergence of violence encounters by rebel groups and c) is clouded by the illegitimacy of flawed elections and weak democratic institutions in place that are plagued with corruption and unaccountability. It is the political environmental at large, consisting of weak institutions, nationalist elites and corrupt officials adopting unconventional mechanisms to deal with insurgent groups within anocratic regimes as well as regional circumstances that show a greater correlation to the violence conducted by non-state actors. Therefore, there is a limited structural argument evidencing that opening the political system which in theory would mean the increase of political rights, has a positive causal correlation with insurgent activity. With regard to agency, the limited ability to uphold democratic values in anocracies or the newly democratic stage of regime change, coupled with insurgents' anti-western ideological worldviews, have a larger role to play in sparking violent activity against the state or citizens within a state.

This paper will explore the under addressed nexus between democratisation and the development of violent terrorist groups in Mali and Nigeria by looking at Freedom House data on political rights between 2006-2015 which covers the lead up and aftermath of significant violent events. It will focus on the relationship between the acquisition of political rights and violent uprisings or acts of terrorism committed, namely the 2009 Boko Haram uprising in Nigeria and 2012 Coup in Mali. Both insurgencies by the aforementioned groups serve as the principle challenge to democratic consolidation in Mali and Nigeria. The arguments put forward are significant for the future of democracy promotion in the Sahel region as well as research findings contributing to a greater understanding of the features of political transitions that can be used to explain rebel violence. This paper aims to contribute to the decentering of International Relations - endorsed by Acharya and other scholars – in conclusions drawn between the causal correlation between an opening up of the political system through

democratisation with an environment that is less conducive to terrorism and the importance placed on political rights by the West as a factor contributing to sustaining peace. This paper advocates a greater focus on stability rather than democracy in the short to medium term.

The structure of this paper will be divided into four core sections. First, addressing definitions of democracy and anocracy; second, viewing the literature in the field; third, disaggregating the Freedom House framework for political rights and tailoring it to apply more specifically to terrorist and insurgent groups in the Nigerian and Malian case studies; and fourth looking at alternative factors that may explain terrorist activities in light of a negative correlation, before the concluding remarks highlighting main observations.

2.0 Methodology

This paper is primarily a quantitative study using primary and secondary sources to assess the extent to which the acquisition of political rights correlates with terrorist or insurgent activity. The main format of this paper is based on the Freedom House framework on political rights but has been adapted to a more specific criterion directly with reference to terrorist or insurgent armed groups. The paper applies a new methodology to an existing framework to conduct an original analysis by forming sub-research questions that connect key measurements of political rights (elections, political participation and the functioning of government) directly to violent activities of Boko Haram, AQIM and state actors. Furthermore, correlation can be defined as 'an approach to the analysis of relationships between interval/ratio variables and/or ordinal variables that seeks to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables concerned' (Bryman, 2012:711). This paper carries out process tracing of political rights leading to the outcome of terrorist violence using past events. George & Bennett contend that 'process-tracing is particularly important for generating and assessing evidence on causal mechanisms' (2005:609) which helps to assess whether a variable has causal significance.

A double case study approach will be used in a bid to understand certain trends whether it be similarities or differences between the Nigerian and Malian cases in deciphering the nature of the correlation, if any. Both cases have undergone democratic transitions and are undergoing democratic consolidation albeit to different degrees since independence from colonial rule in 1960 and house two of the most feared terrorist groups in the world, Boko Haram and AQIM. The case study approach 'attempts to develop logically consistent models or theories, they

derive observable implications from these theories, they test these implications against empirical observations or measurements… a case that fails to fit in existing theories, may provide significant theoretical insight' (George & Bennett, 2004:7).

Certain limitations on the research conducted were identified in the reactive nature of Freedom House data to insurgent or terrorist events having an impact on the score of political rights after the event had happened, making it difficult to draw correlations between the degree of political rights as a precursor to violence. The relative stability of Freedom Rights scores for Nigeria and especially Mali made it difficult to access a causal correlation between the two variables.

3.0 Unpacking Core Concepts

3.1 Democracy:

> *"Unless a substantial majority of citizens prefer democracy and its political institutions to any nondemocratic alternative and support political leaders who uphold democratic practices, democracy is unlikely to survive its inevitable crises"* –Robert Dahl, 1998

Robert Dahl - the preeminent democratic theorist writing *On Democracy* – contends 'a push toward democratic participation develops out of what we might call the *logic of equality'* (Dahl, 1998:10). Stemming from the Greek word *demokratia*, demo meaning people and kratia to rule the basic idea is that governments need the consent of the governed in order to rule which is claimed through taxation and elections (Dahl, 1998:11-22). Moreover, Dahl states five key tenets of democracy, namely: (1) effective participation, (2) equality in voting, (3) gaining enlightened understanding (in learning about alternative policies), (4) exercising final control over the agenda; and (5) inclusion of adults. Fundamentally, states democratising today have to incorporate both men and women in the voting process from the outset which took centuries for European states to achieve and therefore are heavily reliant on competent institutions to cope with the electoral logistics. Moreover, Huntington argues that cultures are rooted in society and thus people are free to choose as they wish in pursuing a normative stance that democracy is not a universal good. Indeed, scholars from de Tocqueville to Nietzsche have argued that modern democracy is simply a secularisation of western values.

One problem is that, the western conceptualisation of democracy which encompass the above tenets that Dahl laid out differs from the practical reality on the ground in both Mali and Nigeria. Prungle (2006) in an interview with a leading Malian academic reported that the general consensus was the concern for financial stability over any democratic privileges: 'For us democracy is as good as money in the bank.' With respect, the meaning of democracy to local populations in rural dwellings across West Africa is well-founded through gatherings under the shade of a tree or in the chiefs hut (Duyvesteyn, 2017:669) and does not necessarily take the formalised ideal of democracy as championed by the West. The populations perception of democracy are clouded by illegitimate vote buying, rigged elections and an armed military presence at polling stations. Even though vote buying is by no means novel to the West African context and can be identified in the Western world, it delegitimises the purpose of creating a democratic government from the outset of its formation.

Democratic consolidation refers to the durability and survival of new democracies (Gaisorowski & Power, 1998:741). Originally, democratic consolidation was the term used to describe the 'challenge of making new democracies secure, of extending their life expectancy beyond the short term, [and] of making them immune against the threat of authoritarian regression' (Schedler, 1998). This includes the stabilisation of electoral rules, formulating an independent judiciary, decentralising central government's power and working towards socio-economic reform programmes to deepen the layers of democracy. The reversibility of democracy to authoritarian rule is lessened through consolidation.

3.2 Anocracy:

Anocracy is a political system which is neither fully democratic nor fully authoritarian, often being vulnerable to political instability. Anocracies are regarded as hybrid regimes or semi democracies 'that are partly open yet somewhat repressive' (Hegre *et al*., 2001: 33,25) and are 'politically weak central governments' with 'weak local policing or inept and corrupt counterinsurgency practices' (Fearon & Laitin, 2003:75-76, 81). On the Polity IV index, an anocracy is -5 to +5 on the regime categorisation scale which sits in the middle of democracies and autocracies. The Centre for Systemic Peace Global Report (2017) characterises anocracies as regimes that reflect inherent 'qualities of instability or ineffectiveness and are especially vulnerable to the onset of new political instability events, such as outbreaks of armed conflict, unexpected changes in leadership or adverse regime changes (a seizure of power by a

personalistic or military leader in a coup)' (Marshall & Elzinga-Marshall, 2017:30). The aforementioned report reiterates the expansion of anocracies worldwide by affirming that: the 'global system cannot be considered a democratic authority system but more so an anocratic system' (Marshall & Elzinga-Marshall, 2017:9). Similarly, Diamond laments, 'the trend toward democracy has been accompanied by an even more dramatic trend toward pseudodemocracy' (Diamond, 2002: 27). Such mixed regimes fall short of full political competition because of 'restrictions on who can participate, how they can participate, or what issues they can raise. The state's bureaucratic agents do not necessarily adhere to the rule of law' (Mansfield & Snyder, 2005:41).

Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest percentage of anocracies globally that are conflict prone, not only in the years of anocracy but relapse into conflict during democratic consolidation. This is further evidenced by the 2005 Human Security Report which stated that forty percent of countries relapse into war within five years (Human Security Report, 2005) and is illustrative of the importance needed to be placed on analysing this regime type.

4.0 Literature review

An array of scholars have disaggregated correlations between the democracy - terrorism nexus which is founded around the core debate as to whether the conditions of a democratic state or newly democratic state create an environment which is conducive to terrorist activity. Scholars in the field form on two sides of the debate in focusing on the shifts in regime type in affecting terrorist activity. This paper aims to add to the existing literature in the field by looking at the relationship between the acquisition of political rights and terrorist activity in Nigeria and Mali at a more micro level, thus having wider implications for the assessment of the vitality of democratic values and the responsiveness of the government to their citizens in the early phase of democratic consolidation.

First, before delving into an analysis of the literature addressing the democracy - terrorism nexus, it is necessary to take a wider view by disaggregating Mansfield and Snyder's arguments in explaining the causal correlation between democratisation and war. Mansfield and Snyder (1995) find that 'democratizing states - those that have recently undergone regime change in a democratic direction - are much more war-prone than states that have undergone no regime change, and are somewhat more war-prone than those that have undergone a change in an

autocratic direction' (1995:8). The authors found that 'on average, democratizing states were about two-thirds more likely to go to war than states that did not experience a regime change' with the correlation between democratisation and war being the strongest in a ten-year period compared to a one-year period illustrating the weakest results (1995:12). The authors stress the need for well-developed state institutions before the transitions takes place and as even though 'weak institutions per se do not increase the chance of war; they do so only during the early phase of an incomplete democratic transition' (2005:9). Mansfield and Snyder argue that 'states face a gap between rising demands for broad participation in politics and inadequate institutions manage those popular demands' (as also referenced by Huntington) which leads to charismatic appeals by leaders coming into contestation with the masses and leading to war.

A core distinction with the scholarship of Mansfield and Snyder and the line of argumentation in this paper is that although it may in fact be true that the opening of the political system in handing over a degree of political power to the masses sparks a revolutionary type uprising due to weak institutions in place, it is not well-founded that the greater ability for citizen's to access political rights in the case of Mali and Nigeria lead to the increase of terrorist activity on the weak state apparatus.

The authors point to nationalism as a key characteristic that emerges within democratising states due to weak leader's desire to retain political power and legitimation in the face of weak institutions: 'urging a democratic transition when the necessary institutions are extremely weak risks not only a violent outcome, but also an increased likelihood of a long detour into a pseudo-democratic form of nationalism' (Mansfield & Snyder, 2005:16-17). The success of wars of independence following the long period of colonial rule gave rise to militaristic leaders rallying around a nationalist cause. Nationalism was – and still is - a tool used by powerless elites whose privileges are threatened by the masses voting power of elective representation. Therefore, 'war is often an indirect by-product of the nationalist politics of the transitional regime' (2005:11). In conjunction with nationalist appeals, elites during democratisation view the weakness of state democratic institutions as an opportunity to consolidate power rather than a danger to their existing status. In short, Mansfield and Snyder stress weak institutions and the actions of powerless elites are the core tenets leading to conflict in democratisating states.

In sum, the authors argue that there are four main reasons how democratisation causes war: (1) the widening of the political spectrum, (2) inflexible interests and short time horizons, (3)

competitive mass mobilisation, and (4) the weakening of central authority. The four reasons provide a basis from which solidifies the need to address - at a more detailed level - the shift in level of political rights (in the opening or closing of the political domain) with the rise of insurgent and/or terrorist activity following democratisation. Mansfield and Snyder have out-rightly stated that 'instability of the political elite...combines with the expansion of mass political participation in democratising states in distinctively explosive ways' (2005:35). The causal claim between increased political participation and war made by Mansfield and Snyder is going to be unpacked further and tested against the variable of insurgent terrorist groups.

There are two schools of thought as to whether democracy promotes or reduces transnational terrorist's activities in the literature. Quan Li (2005) lays out the conflicting arguments in the debate: (1) democracy reduces transnational terrorism due to the fact that citizens can seek recourse to their grievances through non-violent channels to resolve conflict of interest or conversely; (2) democracy encourages terrorism because citizens have more freedom of speech, movement and association, permitting parochial interest to get organised whilst reducing the cost of conducting terrorist atrocities. A strong supporter of the first argument is Schwarzmantel who contends that:

> 'Democracy and violence are mutually exclusive terms; where there is full democracy, there can be no violence, since democracy means exactly the renunciation of violence in favor of the processes of dialogue and discussion, leading to reconciliation of difference through compromise' (2010: 223).

If a citizens political and civil rights were suppressed as a counter-terrorism mechanism, one could argue that this would lead to greater frustration and thus more inclination for terrorist fractions to resort to violence. Enders and Sandler lament that strategic terrorists select alternative modes to engage in violence if freedom of press, movement and association are restricted (2002:145-67). Therefore, it is not yet clear as to whether terrorists or insurgent rebel groups are propelled towards violence as a result of shifts in the degree of political rights they are granted or in fact due to other factors such as socio-economic or political grievances.

Importantly, for this paper, Li's findings showed that countries undergoing regime change are more likely to experience transnational terrorism with new democracies tending to have more terrorist incidents than other types of states. Li's core line of argumentation is that 'it is the

institutional constraints on the government that drive the positive effect of democracy on terrorism' (2005:279). This is due to the fact that 'Institutional checks and balances create political deadlock, increase the frustration of marginal groups, impose on the democratic government the tough task of protecting the general citizenry against terrorist attacks, and weaken the government's ability to fight terrorism' (2005:294). Therefore, there is a spiraling effect of discontent which stems at the core of the institutional framework of government. Although, Li's argument holds water to a certain degree, a large proportion of the problems that arise within governmental institutions - within the Sahel region - results from kleptocratic rulers, using patrimonial ties to conduct state business. Arguably, it is not only institutional constraints on government that drive correlations between democracy and terrorist activity but more so the personal characteristics and moral integrity of individual leaders within key governmental institutions that are able to create political deadlock on their own accord, to pursue personal gains.

Moreover, Eubank and Weinberg (1998) also evaluated the impact of regime change on the incidence of terrorist events. The authors found that 'terrorist events are substantially more likely to occur in free and democratic settings than in any of the alternatives' including authoritarian and mixed political regimes. Eubank and Weinberg based their analysis on Robert Wessen's 1987 *Democracy: A Worldwide Survey* following a fivefold classification of states: stable democracies, insecure democracies, partial democracies, limited authoritarianism and absolutism. They confirm their findings that 'International terrorist events are more likely to occur in free democracies than under any other type of political circumstance' (1998: 114). Furthermore, state's undergoing political transition are more vulnerable to international terrorist violence whilst during the volatile years. However, the authors make it clear that 'the direction of the change was unrelated to the frequency of the violence. For instance, countries that became less free were no more or less likely than countries that became more free to be the locale for terrorist attacks. Change *per se* and not its direction seems to have played a role' (1998: 115). In a later publication (2001) the authors alter earlier findings by postulating that even though it is the case that civil wars tend to occur in weak, insecure democracies; it is in fact the 'stable, secure 'centripetal' democracies which are the most vulnerable to terrorist violence; that is where the events occur most frequently, that is where their perpetrators and victims tend to come from' (2001:161). Eubank and Weinberg (2001) deepen their argument stating that democracy allows for terrorists to wage campaigns of violence as 'after all liberty is to [violent] faction as oxygen is to fire' (2001:163). Eubank and Weinberg's literature is

useful in addressing terrorist security threats in democracies which is supposedly the optimal end goal for state's undergoing transition. This allows one to question the strength of democracy as a regime type in comparison to authoritarian or hybrid regimes, solely under the dependent variable of terrorist activity. Lastly, in a 2008 volume, the authors find a negative correlation between the number of terrorist attacks on the one hand, and the level of civil liberties, political rights and democracy, on the other; a statement which this paper aims to further address.

Eubank and Weinberg (2001, 2008) and Eyerman (1998), however, reach contradicting conclusions regarding the probability that established democracies are the most likely form of governance to suffer terrorist attacks. For the purpose of this paper, Eyerman's argument resonates more fully with the cases of Nigeria and Mali which are frequently oscillating between stable governance and democratic rule. To a large extent, consolidated democracy and stability are not mutually exclusive in the Sahel region and democratic practices such as free and fair elections, checks and balances, an independent judiciary and so on, come as a trade off to political violence and instability. At the core, this is further amplified by a system of government vying for personal gains over state prosperity. Significantly, 'interstate democratic peace is weaker for young democracies' (Maoz & Russett, 1992; Hegre, 2014:164). Considering this, Eyerman (1998) gives three reasons why new democracies are more likely to suffer terrorist attacks than established democracies:

1. A 'newly formed democratic country may not know yet how to most effectively prevent and punish violence.
2. Terrorist organisations do not know yet that they can use non-violent alternatives to get what they want, so following a democratic transition, they keep on using violence.
3. Established democracies may experience less terrorism because they are able to show that non-violent political activities have a greater effect than violence' (Eyerman, 1998: 151-170; Oenema, 2012:93).

Even though, Eyerman's paper adds value to the literature in the field, countering claims arise with the second point of argumentation. The fact that terrorists are unaware of non-violent means to pursue their ends is nulled by findings that negotiations are the least likely way of solving violence coupled with the greater probability of the recurrence of violence following a negotiated settlement vis-a-vis military action (Duyvesteyn & Schuurman, 2011). Alongside

this, low levels of education, such as literacy rates (80% of Malians are illiterate) as well as socio-economic factors such as poverty propel recruits towards violence as optimum means of gaining recognition and status as within an organisation. Additionally, Coggins (2015) incorporated socio-economic factors into his analysis on whether state failure causes terrorism, such as violations of political rights, institutions inefficacy, and corruption to conclude that it is weak and failing states that are more likely to have terrorism than already failed states. Coggins emphases that 'political rights in particular, were more influential and showed a nonlinear relationship to the risk of terrorism' (2015:459). Likewise, Gasiorowski turns to socio-economic related factors as one of the three main factors affecting democratic consolidation alongside having democratic neighbours (regional dynamic) and high inflation (1998:740).

Furthermore, instead of addressing the political rights and civil liberties in a given country, Savun and Phillips (2009) argue that democracies have a higher likelihood of suffering from terrorist attacks due to the contentious foreign policies they pursue. Scholars also have differentiated between the probability of a transnational compared to a domestic terrorist attack. For example, Eyerman (1998) argues that in newly formed democracies there is a greater probability of a domestic terrorist attack whilst there being a smaller probability of a transnational terrorist attack (Piazza, 2008). However, it is noteworthy that this data was collected in the early stages of transnational terrorist networks formulating. For example, the fall of Gaddafi in 2011 led to a surge in weapons trade from Libya to the wider Sahel region having grave implications for violent conflict in the region. Similarly, the latter scholarship predates the splintering of terrorist organisations from al-Qaeda forming affiliate groups coupled with the ease of transnational networks creating a ripe environment for human, drug and weapons trafficking, in an ever globalised world.

Theoretically, Gaibulloev *et al*., (2016) postulated that there is an "inverted U-relationship" between violence and democratisation including the correlation between transition and terrorism. At both ends of the 'U' there is relative stability whether it be a democracy or an autocracy and thus the correlation with violence and terrorism is less. Authoritarian states having tight control over their domestic populations are more likely to suppress violence or terrorist groups before they are able to escalate. Conversely, democratic states are usually able to channel discontent into peaceful 'institutional channels' (Klopp & Zuern, 2007:128). Consequently, there is more violence in the middle of the 'U' during a period of regime change

or transition. Klopp & Zuern state that the inverted 'U' pattern 'has been explained largely by institutional and rational actor arguments' (2007:127). In contrast, Fearon & Laitin do not lay claim to institutional characterisitcs in explaining the inverted-U theory but instead the underlying issue regarding the setup of the system with anocracies being 'weak regimes, lacking the resources to be successful autocrats or containing an unstable mix of political forces that makes them unable to move to crush nascent rebel groups'(2003:85; Hegre, 2014:164) Additionally, owing to the fact that anocracies 'possess less inherent commitment than democracies to protect lives and property, there are fewer checks on terrorist attacks' (Gaibulleov *et al*., 2017). Therefore, it is necessary to address the implications of there being a possible rise in extreme terrorism whilst a state is embarking on democratic transition and if this correlation is specific to the change in degree of political rights.

Therefore, it is apparent that the existing literature addresses two core debates. First, the correlation between regime type and terrorism illustrating competing claims between Mansfield & Snyder, and Eyerman on the one hand, and Eubank & Weinberg on the other. Second, additional debates as to whether democracy (as an end goal ideal) promotes or reduces terrorist activities and if so how? Mansfield and Snyder have put forward causal claims that political rights do correlate with violent activity regarding through a widening of the political spectrum. Thus said, what is not fully addressed in the literature is a test of the latter causal claims through a micro level analysis of the acquisition of political rights and terrorist activity.

Before moving to an empirical focus of Nigeria and Mali it is important to clarify three core assumptions of this paper:

i) Democratisation leads to greater political rights by opening up the political realm,
ii) Anocracies are not stable in the Sahel region; and
iii) Insurgent groups or terrorist groups are politically engaged.

5.0 Democratic Credentials of Mali and Nigeria

In order to draw any casual correlations between the degree of political rights and terrorist activity it is first necessary to gain a chronological understanding of the democratic credentials of Mali and Nigeria. On the Polity IV Regime Trends scale from 1946-2013, both Nigeria and Mali were classified as open anocracies (Polity, 2014), fitting the profile for analysis. In both

cases, coups have been normalised as a method of regime change and are the catalyst in driving ostensible democratic consolidation.

5.1 Nigeria

Nigeria's transition to democracy following independence from Britain in 1960 has consisted of oscillations between military and civilian rule and a turbulent political climate. During the Biafran war (1967-1993) elections took place but were curtailed by military coups and grave accusations of irregularities in electoral outcomes, rigged elections and violence surrounding elections. The year 1999 supposedly marked the establishment of democratic rule with the presidential election of Olusegun Obasanjo but was immediately met with challenges over the adoption of Sharia law in 2000 between Christians and Muslims in several of the northern states (BBC, 2019). The 2003 elections marked the first legislative elections since the end of military rule in 1999 whereby President Obasanjo won a parliamentary majority and remained in office until the 2007 elections made Umaru Ya'Adua of the ruling People's Democratic Party president. Following Yar'Adua's death in 2010, acting Vice President Goodluck Jonathan won presidential elections in March 2011 ruling until 2015 when President Buhari was elected. The 2015 presidential elections marked the first successful democratic transfer from civilian to civilian rule. Like Mali, patrimonial networks and corruption remains prominent throughout the period from independence to present, clouding the vitality of democracy as a credible and legitimate form of governance.

An escalation of violence in 2009-2010 by Boko Haram marred with the formation of transnational linkages with in Niger, Chad and Cameroon during their re-grouping around the same period meant that countering the terrorist threat became an increasingly urgent priority for the government in Abuja. Boko Haram grew out of localised instability and discontent but has deepened its support base both vertically and horizontally. The International Criminal Court (ICC) reported 'at least thousands of deaths between July 2002 and April 2011 due to 'inter-communal, sectarian and political violence' (2011), making Nigeria a ripe case for investigation. With regard to trends in political rights between 2006-2009 Nigeria had a Freedom House score of 4, 2009-2010 the score worsened to 5, and from 2011-2015 returned to the score of 4 (1 being the best and 7 the worst).

5.2 Mali

After gaining independence from France in 1960, Mali formalised it's constitution in 1962 and focused on a decentralised administration, giving power to devolved regional officials. Socialist Modibo Keita was the first President of Mali (1960-1968) but harsh authoritarian leadership and a discontented population fueled by economic failure led to a military coup by junior army officers in 1968. Moussa Troaré came to power, later to be overthrown in 1991 leading to the first multiparty elections in 1992 won by Alpha Konaré. Konaré stepped down after presidential elections in 2002 (seemingly illustrative of a successful democratic transition) which led to the rise of Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT) who ruled Mali from 2002- the military coup in March 2012 led by Captain Amadou Sanogo. Up until 2012 Mali was regarded as a 'model for democracy' and a 'donor darling' yet the 2012 coup d'état led scholars and international observers to question the viability of Mali's ostensibly democratic achievements in the three decades of rule prior to the coup. As Mali moved through the stages of anocracy to democratic consolidation from 1992 onwards, developments of rebel groups in the northern territories escalated to culminate in tandem with the military uprising the Bamako in 2012. Northern rebel groups – namely, National Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad (NMLA), AQIM, Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) and Ansar Dine - were able to take advantage of political turmoil in the capital, taking control of Timbuktu, Kida and Gao to declare regional independence from the capital (Freedom House, 2013). The coalition of northern rebel groups were able to seize territory from the Tuareg separatist groups who had previously dominated the region. Conflict in Mali is multilayered and for clarity can be separated into three distinct domains: (1) coalition of Islamic rebel militias in the north, (2) Tuareg separatists (3) military officers carrying out coup d'état's in Bamako. The complex dynamics and ongoing confrontations between the Malian armed forces with both rebel groups and traffickers will be disaggregated in section 6.3 of this paper, illustrating their potential to undermine democratic legitimacy and consolidation. In the case of Mali, 'the future of statehood and the future of meaningful democracy thus are connected' (Elishcher, 2019:18).

Efforts by the Malian armed forces coupled with French military intervention in 2013 meant that the government was able to reclaim northern territory seized in early 2012. That said, the threat of terrorist and insurgent rebel groups in the north still remain a constant source of insecurity. A peace agreement between the central government and jihadi and other militia groups in the north was signed in 2015 yet still needs to be put into effect (Elishcher, 2019:17). The French intervention had a two pronged objective: first to claim back lost northern territory

and second to accomplish a democratic transition (Freedom House, 2013). At the end of 2013, the presidential election was won by Ibrahim Boubacar Keita defeating Soumaila Cissé. The United Nations established a peacekeeping force (Resolution 2100) in Mali which has remained in the country since 2013 stressing that 'terrorism could only be defeated by a sustained and comprehensive approach to isolate the terrorist threat' (UN, 2013). Mali remains in a state of political uncertainty following the 2012 coup, desperately trying to regain legitimacy.

With regards to political rights as per Freedom House, Mali retained a consistent score of 2 from 2006-2013, sharply declining to 7 in 2013 (following the 2012 coup), before bettering to a score of 5 in the years 2014 and 2015.

6.0 Unpacking an adapted Freedom House criterion for Political Rights

The political rights criteria as per Freedom House has three broad tenets: (1) Electoral Process, (2) Political Pluralism and Participation, and (3) Functioning of Government. This paper has tailored the Freedom House questions to specifically target the actions of insurgent and/or terrorist groups in order to decipher whether the opening up of the political domain affects core violent events. This enables gaps in Freedom House data to be filled with a more in depth analysis of the correlation between political rights and insurgent and/or terrorist groups.

6.1 Electoral Process

"Intimidation, harassment and violence have no place in a democracy" - Mo Ibrahim, 2015

"Most of these elections barely change anything" –Ahmad Mufta of Nigeria

Elections form a key linchpin of democracy, yet electoral violence, fraud, vote rigging and disruptions of the registration process discredit the results and undermine values of democracy. Elections facilitate a social contract between the governors and the governed, giving a voice to the public and legitimising the government of the day through popular representation. In anocratic or newly democratic states, elections can serve as a melting pot of violence having the ability to polarise 'the electorate along conflict lines' (Hoglund, 2010:413), mainly through militarisation creating fear and uncertainty. The competitive nature of elections coupled with

the rallying of the masses in a particular time and place instigate political violence. In newly democratising states, skepticism surrounding the vitality of elections is not a new phenomenon. Dahl – in discussion about early European democratisaiton - delineated that 'Political parties were widely condemned as dangerous and undesirable. Elections were notoriously corrupted by agents of the Crown' (Dahl, 1998:24).

It is noteworthy that electoral violence can be committed by both state actors (politicians, military) or non-state actors (insurgent groups, terrorist groups, state or privately funded militias). Due to the different affiliations of the actors involved, a complex web of insecurity is created, negatively affecting both voting patterns and electoral outcomes. This section focuses mainly on the latter groups of actors in addressing Boko Haram and AQIM's violent activities surrounding presidential and municipal elections in Nigeria and Mali.

i) Did insurgent and/or terrorist group violence occur around elections in Mali and Nigeria?

Nigeria

The year 1999 marked Nigeria's transition from military to civilian rule and from 'not free' to 'partly free' on the Freedom House index. In between independence from British colonial rule in 1960 to the ostensible return to democratic rule in 1999, Nigeria had oscillated between military rule and a transitioning state and is yet to fully consolidate democracy, moving into the 'free' category. In the first four decades of its independence, the fragile state experienced eight successful coups d'état's (Mills *et al*., 2019:158) and coups were widely normalised as a legitimate means of regime change by the general populace. Furthermore, an important aspect of Nigerian politics in the lead up to elections is the role of "Godfathers" who hold a politically influential position in a state and ensure that their "Godsons" make it into a position of power. The role of godfathers is illustrative of patronage whereby politicians gain power through informal networks and personal relations with 'clients.' These strongmen or "Godfathers" have been likened to 'war generals or contractors that could mobilise the resources and forces necessary to deliver complete or 'landslide' victories' (Obi, 2007: 380). From the outset, it is apparent that patron-client ties in Nigerian politics alter a core tenet of democracy being equality by marginalizing parts of the population, 'rewarding loyalty over efficiency and encouraging corruption whilst sidelining the rule of law' (Hoglund, 2010: 420).

Moreover, Nigeria has faced electoral violence in the south by militants of the Movement of the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND); in the northern states, primarily by the Islamic terrorist group Boko Haram, and violent conflict between herders and farmers across the country. Arguably, the mark left by violent conflict during the Biafra civil war (1967-1970) as well as a culture of impunity, has created a higher tolerance for violence surrounding elections in Nigeria. Although, the chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) alongside international observers regarded the 2011 elections as free, fair and credible, post-election violence killed 800 people and left 65,000 displaced (Freedom House, 2015). Even though internally displaced persons (IDP) have the right to vote, their situation 'can make it difficult for individuals to exercise their rights to political participation, particularly in elections' (UNHCR, 2009) when ostracised from their communities. In practice, it is challenging for displaced persons to exercise their electoral rights which often results in 'disenfranchisement and exclusion from the political and public life of the country' (UNHCR, 2009) as well as discrimination and marginalisation from communities. Considering this, displaced individual's legal ability to vote was comprised by the movement away from the location of registration, 'lost of Permanent Voters Card (PVC), and [the fact that they] could not participate in the Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercise' (Hassan &Yusuf, 2015:6). Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the state to ensure that displaced persons are able to exercise their right to vote, a state function that is seldom carried out in practice.

At first glance, this makes one question the efficacy of the role the INEC is playing and the nature of the classification "free and fair" in the eyes of the international community. Considering this, Freedom House (2009) states that the INEC is effectively an extension of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and thus not an independent, impartial body. The correlation between Boko Haram's violent turn in 2009 and 2010 which included an escalation of violence, bombing of government officials, places of worship and public institutions, also was strategically timed around elections. Unsurprisingly, Dowd states that 'between January 2009 and November 2010 (Six months prior to the elections), Boko Haram activity averaged around 1.6 events per month; this increased to an average of 10 events per month in the six-month period surrounding the elections; and just under 30 events per month from December 2011 onwards' (2015: 525). The aforementioned figures clearly illustrate the increase of violence by Boko Haram around elections.

The April 2011 general elections were of significance because the victory by Goodluck Johnathan effectively ended the 'informal system of rotation of presidency between southern Christians and northern Muslims' (Dowd, 2015: 525). A highpoint of Boko Haram's violent activity parallels the 2011 elections, exemplified by the assassination of several politicians in the Northeastern state of Borno including the gubernational candidate of the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) as well as the bombing of a polling centre in Maidurguri and violence against campaign events, rallies, polling stations and electoral offices (Thurston, 2011). Therefore, Boko Harams strategy of targeting security forces as well as citizens objecting the implementation of Sharia law in the northern controlled states, was able to culminate around elections which provided a fertile ground for the group to delegitimise the state and intimidate the western construct of democratic elections. Despite the violence conducted by non-state actors, the apparent goal of rigging the 2011 elections was to ensure 'that Jonathan met the two constitutional requirements for electoral victory,' namely, 50% plus one vote of the total cast and 25% of the vote in two-thirds of the states (Campbell, 2015). Following Johnathan's victory, rioting in the north led to 'the greatest bloodshed since the 1967-70 civil war' and was directed at those within the Islamic establishment who had supported Johnathan (Christian candidate) in the 2011 election but 'degenerated into ethnic and religious killings' (Campbell, 2015). As a result of the outcome, post-election violence was able to escalate drawing out deeper ethnic disputes. Therefore, first and foremost, the outcome of the election was the cause of the violence.

Thus, there is a positive correlation between the violence and the electoral process in Nigeria between 2009-2011 insofar as Boko Haram selectively targeted polling stations in northeastern territory to quell democratic practices. On the surface, the bettering of political rights from 5 in 2009 and 2010 to 4 in 2011 correlates with the escalation of violence by Boko Haram around elections. However, there is limited structural evidence supporting the notion that this increase in political rights was in fact the causal factor in motivating the violence conducted. Arguably, the increase in the number of citizens gathering around polling stations provided a nucleus for attacks and meant that Boko Haram was able to target elections both to increase death toll and as a symbol of rejection against western democratic principles; therefore, not owing to a perceived increase in political freedoms that are unlikely to be felt in the rural regions of northeastern states. With regard to the post-election violence witnessed in 2011, the root cause of the violence was indeed the electoral outcome but which was sensitively resting on deep-seated ethnic divisions waiting to explode. In this case, the supposed increase in political rights

as channeled through elections, provide for one factor amidst an array of motives of Boko Haram to structure their attack.

Mali

Prior to the coup d'état in 2012, Mali engaged in elections and focused on a decentralised administration. Dowd states 'Mali had elections but not the substance of democracy, a crucial distinction that was not noticed or was deliberately overlooked by many who celebrated its success' (2019:118). Similar to international observers and the INEC granting Nigerian elections in 2011 free and fair, the conduct of Malian elections and the façade of institutions in Bamako were somewhat overlooked. Since independence in 1960 from France, Malian leaders' have founded a 'long history of invoking democratic principles for non-democratic aims' which weakened the legitimacy of the government in the lead up and following the 2012 coup d'état (Nathan, 2013:466). This stemmed from Modibo Keita – Mali's first president – who 'came to power on a democratic platform but broke his electoral promises and created an authoritarian state that disfranchised the people' (Nathan, 2013:467). It is questionable as to why Malians allowed the military junta take control just weeks before presidential elections in 2012 and thus suggestive of unvoiced discontent of the mismanagement of ostensibly democratic practices prior to the coup.

In the case of Mali, it is interesting to note the difference in electoral violence pre and post the coup in 2012. Prior to the coup, Mali was well regarded as a 'democracy poster child' (Reuters, 2012) satisfying the international community's desire for the establishment of elections and a representative government. Limited events can be cited linking MNLA insurgent group, Ansar Dine, MUJAO or AQIM directly with electoral violence in the two decades of "democracy" leading up to March 2012. This is further illustrated in the Freedom House political rights rating of 2 up to 2012. Unlike Boko Haram in Nigeria, there is seemingly a negative direct correlation between the electoral process and the coalition of rebel groups in Northern Mali. Thus said, as a result of the political eruption in 2012 and offensive action by the coalition of armed groups in Northern territories, over 450,000 Malians were reported to have fled conflict-affected areas by December 2013 (OCHA, 2013; d'Errico *et al*., 2017:11). Similarities can be drawn with the situation in Nigeria whereby IDPs are restricted by access to polling stations, lack of documentation and discrimination. As a result of the ongoing conflict and political

turmoil, IDPs directly alter the voting demographics – in their inability to vote - impacting the electoral outcome.

6.2 Political Pluralism and Participation

The right to political participation is codified into international human rights law and includes 'the right to participate in government and public affairs, to vote and stand for elections, and to have equal access to participate in public services' (UNHCR, 2009). Women and men have equal rights with regards to political participation. Moreover, effective participation forms the first of Dahls five key principles for an effective democracy and is paramount to securing an accurately representative electorate.

i) Are the people's political choices free from domination by the military, foreign powers, religious hierarchies, economic oligarchies or any other powerful group that is not democratically accountable? (Freedom House, 2018)

ii) Have people's political participation been constrained by insurgent and/or terrorist activity?

Nigeria

Even though the INEC registered more than twenty-five political parties in Nigeria in 2015, citizen's choice and participation in elections has been obstructed by (1) militarisation involving intimidation and fear, (2) vote buying and (3) religious affiliations.

First, the militarisation of Nigerian politics paradoxically contributes to democratic consolidation after periods of military rule. A juxtaposition between the opening of the political realm, allowing for greater political rights, and militarisation has taken place in Nigeria. This makes it difficult to separate civilian leadership from the military and blurs the lines between the separation of power. To this end, 'the militarisation of politics is the antithesis of democracy' and therefore 'cannot be separated from the disempowerment of democracy' (Obi, 2007:383). Arguably, the lingering of military rule evident in the militarisation of Nigerian politics, contributes to the statistics in a 2013 survey of eleven northern states that: 61% of respondents believe that democracy has given room for terrorists to operate and 30% of

respondents believe that terrorists are driven by dislike for democracy (Adelaja *et al*., 2018:41). Citizens that answered the survey in Kano and Kaduna indicated that dislike for democracy is to be blamed for the rise of Boko Haram in northern Nigeria but on balance this factor was not found to serve as a root cause (ibid). Therefore, even though a military commander has not ruled Nigeria since 1999 when Adbusalam Abubakar came to power, people's political choice remains not free from military domination. This is in regard to both physical military presence during elections and the psychological imagery of militarisation, constraining citizen's ability to act freely in a hostile environment. Obi depicts the aforementioned dichotomy between the desire for democratisation set against a military dominance in society:

> 'On the one hand, the democratic opening has created an opportunity for hitherto repressed groups agitating for a redistribution of power, social justice and resources to pursue their interests, while on the other, the persistence of militarism has all but closed the prospects for political participation, dialogue and democratization, and deepened existing tensions' (2007:380).

Miliarisation facilitated by the Nigerian military, Boko Haram and MEND militants in the southern states, directly affect citizen's political choices due to intimidation surrounding elections. The psychological fear and insecurity citizens face when taking to the polls is furthered by vote buying and bribery (Freedom House, 2015). The risk of over-securitisation through militarisation deters voters whilst curbing political freedoms. Furthermore, Adamawa state was one of the worst affected by Boko Haram in the 2015 elections, so much so they had to be held in the state capital of Yola instead. This meant that voters had to travel a long distance to place their votes whilst mistrusting local elections taking place outside their locality, damaging the credibility of the elections.

Furthermore, the religious superiority of Islamist group Boko Haram in the northern regions takes on an ideological stance in the complete rejection of western education and democracy believed to violate sharia:

> 'We will not accept any system of government apart from the one stipulated by Islam because that is the only way that Muslims can be liberated. We do not believe in any system of government, be it traditional or orthodox, except the Islamic system and that is why we will keep on fighting against democracy' (Agbo, 2011:46-7).

The restrictions Boko Haram places on northern citizens committed to exerting their voting right, through anti-democratic rhetoric and sentiment creates an environment that is not conducive to a successful democratic consolidation, lessening the degree *real* political rights can be enacted.

Mali

Mali is renowned in the Sahel and wider West African region for having the lowest voter turnouts rates. From the first nation wide election in '1992 until the coup in 2012, voter turnout never exceeded 40 percent' (Bleck 2015; Bleck & Van de Walle, 2011). The reasoning behind the lack of political participation is an absence of trust in corrupt officials vying for personal gains under the guise of democracy and past disappointment concerning previous promises of a better socio-economic outcome. Malians widely associated political parties with 'opportunism and injustice, and little faith in the power of elections to improve their situation' (Whitehouse, 2017:19). The combination of mistrust and low voter confidence has fueled the widening of the gap between the electorate and elected representatives ostensibly ruling on behalf of the populace. Additionally, Malian's fail to identify with the privileged political elite who had 'been drawn since independence from a small cadre of graduates from French-language schools identifying with the secular foundations of the postcolonial state' (Simeant, 2014; Whitehouse, 2017).

Significantly, religion is a key factor affecting Mali's low political participation rating. The fact that Mali is 90% Muslim, coupled with the state's tight control of the religious sphere through the High Islamic Council, means that liberal democratic thought is challenged in the religious domain (Leininger, 2009:3). That said, the codification of the Malian constitution in 1962, including the ban of religious parties in the creation of a secular state, distanced religious affairs from affecting political decisions. The theory behind political participation through voting in elections is that a vote has the ability to alter the support base for a particular candidate or in favour of certain democratic institutions. However, many observers have noted 'that meaningless or entirely uncontested elections are increasing in the Muslim world' (Fattah, 2006:49). Elections in Mali renege the very promise that they set out to achieve: to change the status quo giving power to the people. At large, 'of the fifty-three countries with Muslim majorities, around fifty officially hold some sort of elections and referenda…however, could

be described as "nothing more than the people's periodic renunciation of their sovereignty"' (Sartori, 1962:24; Fattah, 2006). This is a stark reminder that elections as a singular factor do not have the power to transform a polity into a democracy.

Although, prior to the 2012 coup, Mali had made significant process and was seemingly conducting viable elections, the post coup environment shifted to resemble the majority of Muslim democracies worldwide whilst provoking a re-evaluation of 'the role of Islam in public life in Mali' (Thurston, 2013:47). The coup marked a turning point in which Muslim leaders were able to more openly participate in politics and engage in debates regarding the meaning of Islam in the Malian political arena. Fattah rightfully contends that: 'There is no democracy without elections, but in most Muslim countries there are elections without democracy, elections that breed dictatorship' (2006:50). Ideologically, 'Muslim countries do not equate western-style democracy to solve their countries problems, especially after the west have previously supported autocratic rulers, merely paying lip service to prodemocracy rhetoric' (Fattah, 2006:85). In Mali, 47% of respondents trust *ulama* [doctors of Muslim religion and law] more so than government officials (Fattah, 2006:82-86) who play a fundamental role in forging democratic ideals, albeit tailored to an Islamic style of democratic governance. Huntington places Islamic culture as central to the explanation why there has been a 'failure of democracy in much of the Muslim world' (1996:29). That said, in a post 2012 Malian state, secularism confining Islam to the private sphere is not going to prove successful and needs to be integrated into the political domain whilst being more accepted in eyes of the west to see the progressive role Islam could play in Malian politics. The West cannot solely equate Islamisation with radicalisation as Islamic leaders are becoming increasingly influential in determining the character of the state following the 2012 political crisis (Thurston, 2013:61). The centrality of religion to the process of democratisation in Mali delves into wider debates on the compatibility of Islam and democracy beyond the scope of this paper but a sub-conclusion can be drawn that the religious demographics of a state is a core factor affecting the ease and feasibility of transition.

The coup d'état of March 2012 is the pinnacle highpoint in which political participation was nullified because it led to the cancellation of the presidential elections that same month. The military take-over led to the fall of President Amodou Toumani Touré and an armed intervention into northern Mali by France, codename, Operation Serval in 2013. Thurston makes note of the speed in which elections were conducted after conflict by referring to the

"Shoot and vote" mechanism used by the west emphasising the misperception of 'elections with democracy and ceasefires with peace' (Thurston, 2013). The need to satisfy the international community through holding elections and the ostensible legitimacy in doing so is little use in the face of unsettled ethnic disputes and deep-seated mistrust of those in power. Legitimacy and credibility take time to construct and this cannot be done solely through elections and in the case of Mali: 'past events demonstrate that the state's local legitimacy could require more than just an election to bounce back' (Nathan, 2013: 477) following the collapse a seemingly idealistic democracy. Lastly, Ansar Dine – an armed rebel group operating in Gao, Kidal and Timbuktu – was able to establish control over towns, governing through local councils and setting up a police force to carry out the enforcement of Sharia law (ICC, 2013: 19). The institutionalisation of Northern rebel groups into positions of power heightens their ability to maneuver citizen's political participation to their advantage.

Once again there is limited evidence highlighting election interference by AQIM or other militant groups in Mali having a direct effect on election proceedings. To this end, even though AQIM, NMLA, Ansar Dine and other armed groups have a political dimension, there is arguably a negative correlation between the opening of the political system – by holding multiparty elections – and terrorist activity in Mali in this instance. It is apparent that religion and corrupt officials have a larger casual correlation behind low voter turnout than violent actions of the coalition of northern Malian rebel groups.

In sum, Nigerian citizens in northeastern provinces have directly been constrained by Boko Haram and state militarism whereas Malians restrictions are largely as a result of religious affiliations, corrupt officials and low literacy rates, giving more value to agency rather than structural factors.

6.3 Functioning of Government

"In a democracy, someone who failed to get elected to office can always console himself with the thought that there was something not quite fair about it" –
Thucydides, 1972

"Without political change and the necessary will, reform will only amount to empty words. As I often say, it's just putting lipstick on a crocodile" – Tendai Biti, 2019

i) Does the government operate with openness and transparency?
ii) Does the government collaborate with insurgent groups? Arms trade and trafficking.
iii) Has the government of Nigeria and/or Mali countered insurgent groups with state led terrorism themselves, committing war crimes?

Nigeria

First, corruption in Nigeria is inextricably linked to oil wealth and remains pervasive within government institutions. Chatham House – a renowned British think tank – found that over 5% of oil output is stolen annually and as of the end of 2014, the federal government had not released the findings of the audit conducted by Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) (Freedom House, 2015). Additionally, in February 2014, the Nigerian National Petroleum Cooperation was accused by the governor of the Central Bank, Lamido Sanusi 'of failing to remit as much as $20 billion in oil revenue to the government's accounts between January 2012 and July 2013' (Freedom House, 2015). Nigeria is not an anomaly in the region, with corruption and neo-patrimonial networks shaping political dynamics across West Africa (Elischer, 2019:3). Similar to the situation in Mali, access to power remains confined to a small wealthy elite josting for influence. To a large extent, political opportunism overrides transparency partly due to the lack of independent judiciary. The ability of Boko Haram to grow stemmed from a 'socio-economic flux that came with a process of democratic transition, couple with the consequences of decades of mismanagement resulting from military rule and corruption' (Chatham House, 2015). Interestingly, whilst Boko Haram's founder and initial leader 'Yusuf did not explicitly condemn the poor governance, electoral fraud and collaboration of state officials in his doctrine, he did speak out against corruption of traditional chiefs and the travails of Nigerian politics' (Perouse de Montclos, 2014: 144). The acknowledgement of the inefficiency of the Nigerian government by Boko Haram appeals to their support base in the northern states who are desperately deprived and are unsatisfied by the service of the state.

Even though the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) which is the main anti-corruption body cited over 110 convictions in 2014, this was hampered by political interferences and an inefficient judiciary (Freedom House, 2015). Findley and Young argue

that it is the domestic political institutions, in particular an independent judiciary that 'shape the incentives of groups pursuing policy change' (2011:257). Considering this, a report conducted by Amnesty International stated that the first phase of mass trials of Boko Haram suspects was conducted in secrecy between the 9th-12th October 2017 and lacked transparency. Corruption, lack of transparency and manipulation by officials has fueled Boko Haram who 'dislikes the Nigerian government and unequivocally rejects Nigeria's political system, which they deem corrupt and un-Islamic' (Sergie & Johnson; Adelaja *et al*., 2018:41).

Both scholars and the Nigerian population alike perceive there to be a collaboration between the Nigerian government and Boko Haram. The aforementioned survey conducted by Adelaja *et al*., noted that 62% of respondents believe Boko Haram was a 'grand design' by politicians to stay in power (2018:42). This statistic is further supported by the claim that 'Boko Haram is supported and financed by some politicians in Nigeria to promote their political agenda' coupled with the notion that it is in fact the terrorists that are being 'manipulated by politicians in order to remain in power' (Adelaja *et al.,* 2018: 42). This is further evidenced by the arrest of three police officers for renting Kalashnikov-pattern weapons and selling 1,200 rounds of ammunition to local criminals (UNODC, 2013). To this end, Boko Haram has been termed a 'political construct that is sponsored by politicians' (Botha *et al*., no date). It is difficult to confirm the authenticity of the latter claims but it is evident that in dealing with Boko Haram, the Nigerian government has embarked on questionable mechanisms both in regard to collaboration and coercion.

The Nigerian Joint Task Force (JTF) used to quell violence in the northeastern territory (Adamawa, Borno and Yobe) has been widely criticised for human rights abuses and crimes against humanity under articles 7 and 8 of the Rome Statute. The unlawful and inhumane detention of women supposedly connected to Boko Haram members by the military has led to violations of international law. In August 2014, video footage was released of 'suspected Boko Haram detainees being murdered and buried in mass graves, allegedly by members of the JTF and state-sponsored militias' (Freedom House, 2015; Amnesty International, 2018). A culture of impunity was evidenced by over 600 extrajudicial killings between January and August 2014 (Freedom House, 2015) during the military crackdown (Operation Lafiya Dole) on Boko Haram, yet no subsequent trials or convictions. To this end, the ICC cited two cases involving crimes against humanity and war crimes conducted by the Nigerian Security Forces. The first case was related to the systematic arrest of young men and boys suspected to be Boko Haram

supporters including the torture and execution of such individuals. Since 2011, Nigerian Security Forces 'have reportedly arrested at least 20,000 people…[and] more than 7,000 people reportedly died in military detention due to…overcrowding of detention facilities, torture, ill-treatment and extrajudicial executions' (ICC, 2015). Secondly, attacks against civilians was another cited offense (although yet to be charged) following a security operation on 17th April 2013 in the town of Baga, Borno State killing up to 228 persons (ICC, 2015) as well as the use of child soldiers in the Civilian Joint Task Force which is supposedly prohibited by the central government. A main objective of Boko Haram is to 'seek revenge against security forces' (Adelaja et al., 2018:35) and therefore suppressing violence with violence only heightens the resentment of ill-feeling towards the state, driving future violent attacks.

The latter examples illustrate the violence conducted by Nigerian Security Forces in their counter-insurgency operations to defeat Boko Haram who are themselves under investigation by the ICC for eight potential cases of crimes against humanity and war crimes. It is clear that a culture of violence and culture of impunity has been facilitated through the uncertain political environment and mistrustful leaders in government and positions of power.

Mali

The political crisis in 2012 inevitably led to the plummeting of Mali's political rights score from 2 to 7 on the Freedom House index with 1 being the best and 7 the worst. Even though the cause of the coup is multifaceted, the ill functioning of the government in Bamako is central. The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime (2015) pointed to the 'widespread disillusionment with the incumbent government and political leadership, not the Northern separatist movements' as the root cause of the coup. The Tuareg separatists vying for regional autonomy is not a phenomena confined to 2012 but one which has been simmering since independence; four Tuareg rebellions and five different and ineffective north-south peace agreements have taken place from 1960-2012 (Clingendael, 2015). Considering this, the junta leaders supported the necessity of the coup on account of the 'incompetent management of the situation in the north' (Freedom House, 2013). Furthermore, jihadist groups including MNLA, AQIM, Ansar Dine and MUJAO were able to capitalise on the state's lack of legitimacy (ICG, 2016), asserting their control in northern territories.

Corruption takes place in many forms in Mali. In regard to 'grand corruption' the Amadou Toumanu Touré administration (2002-2012) reportedly lost 4-5% of the national budget annually to mismanagement and fraud (Transparency International, 2017). Even though the judiciary is independent in accordance to the 1992 Malian constitution, the president president is also the chair of the *Counseil Superieur de la Magistrature*, the High Judicial Council (Transparency International, 2017). To this end, the judiciary is largely ineffective in high profile political cases (Global Integrity, 2017). In an Afrobarometer (2017) survey 59.3% of respondents stated that 'all or most judges and magistrates are involved in corruption' with similar figures for both business executives and the police.

In regard to the states relationship with the coalition of northern rebel groups, there have been several reports citing the Malian regime to have profited from the vast kidnapping income by AQIM (Dowd & Raleigh, 2013:506). The complicity between state officials and AQIM in generating wealth from kidnap-for ransom activities (Global Initiative, 2014) deepens the insecurity in the northeastern region making it increasingly difficult to activate counter-terrorism mechanism amidst entangled networks of illegal entrepreneurial style collaboration. The strong link between corruption and high levels of organised crime is profound in Mali especially considering Mali's central location – in particular Gao - for trafficking and smuggling routes throughout the continent and northwards into Europe. In forging close networks with the state, the rebel groups such as AQIM have been effective at leveraging 'the state to consolidate both administrative and political control over there geographic and ethnic bases' (Global Initiative, 2015). Given the financial rewards state officials receive through their collaboration with rebel groups, they have little incentive 'to serve as a bulwark against criminal interests' (Global Initiative, 2015). Moreover, the vertical integration between state and criminal activity is furthered by the progression of traffickers – who have considerable influence or control over a certain area – to become 'political entrepreneurs' running local or legislative elections (ICG, 2018). This shift is fundamental to the continued insecurity in the region in distilling mistrust and voters losing confidence in unelected officials. An International Crisis Group report furthers the latter concerns:

> 'Access to political power is a source of both direct enrichment (access to public procurement) and political benefits: notably parliamentary immunity, diplomatic

> passports, access to the highest state institutions and access to public contracts' (ICG, 2018).

The roots of the relationship between state and criminal networks is the driving factor behind the longevity of corrupt officials rising to positions of power. Developments between AQIM and the local northeastern population shifted from 'mutual acquiescence to control' whilst alienating large parts of the population through the crinimalisation of alcohol, smoking, music and dance which are central to local culture (Boeke, 2016:925). The 2012 political crisis in Mali saw the weakening of state-trafficker relations as the state no longer controlled the north and opposition arose in clashes between traffickers and jihadists both challenging each other to take advantage of the political vacuum. Paradoxically, Operation Servel put pressure on MNLA, AQIM and Ansar Dine, largely cutting off their ability to exploit people for ransom as well as the forced withdrawal of the Malian state, struggling to reclaim territory, meant that the rebel groups turned to the traffickers for greater security and solidarity in the face of foreign intervention. The fluidity of boundaries between both state and criminal activities and rebel groups and human/drugs traffickers means that networks become intertwined and motives blurred.

Even though the aforementioned text points to implicit corroboration between Malian state officials with traffickers and AQIM which was primarily driven by financial rewards, the Malian government have not been accused of committing war crimes in countering northern insurgents or rebels. The Malian Cabinet referred crimes committed by MNLA, AQIM, Ansar Dine and other armed groups in the regions of Kidal, Gao and Timbuku to the International Criminal Court on the 30th May 2012 (ICC, 2013:7). Arguably, a spark of the referral was the Aquelhok incident in January 2012 in which the aforementioned coalition of rebels attacked a military base in Aquelhok executing between 70-153 (ICG, 2018) Malian servicemen.

Therefore, in both the Nigerian and Malian cases the armed rebel group's relationship with the state played a fundamental role in the continuance of violence and insecurity in terms of (1) the state's neglect of northern provinces creating a vacuum of governance, (2) state collaboration with criminal trafficking networks and rebel groups themselves and (3) coercion leading to greater resentment of the government causing violence to be countered by violence (albeit to a greater extent in Nigeria than Mali).

7.0 Analysis

The aforementioned sections have illustrated the difficulty in pinpointing the transition to democracy and an increase in insurgent or terrorist activity judging by the political rights score. Therefore, this section will investigate the alternative factors that explain violent uprisings in Nigeria and Mali.

Firstly, to a large extent, and in tandem with political developments, regional dynamics are central to violent trends. The fall of Libyan dictator Muammar al-Gaddafi in 2011 after forty years of military rule led to an exponential proliferation of light weapons across the Sahel. The trafficking of arms from liberated Libyan military stock piles and large weapon caches were transported primarily by Tuaregs who were formally employed by Gaddafi during the Libyan civil war. On return to Mali and equipped with assault rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, plastic explosives, man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS) and other arms (Reuters, 2012) the Tuaregs formed the Azawad National Liberation Movement. A report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime contended that 'instability in Mali had been driven by the flood of firearms into its territory from Libya in 2011' (UNODC, 2013; Transparency International). As a result, AQIM became one of the best armed al-Qaeda fractions in the world filling the vacuum of governance in northern Mali. On reflection of events in 2011, Mali's president Ibrahim Boubacar Keita stated in July 2017 'We were collateral victims of the Libyan crisis' (*in* Mills *et al*., 2019:117). Even though the fall of Gaddafi impacted Mali to a much greater extent than Nigeria, weapons that were used in the Libyan civil war were found in the hands of Boko Haram members. To this end, the porous nature of international borders meant that there was an unimpeded free flow of illicit trade stemming from Libya and reaching West and Central Africa, having devastating effects on stability on the continent.

Secondly, Nigeria's overwhelming dependence on its oil economy is also a significant factor impeding the ease of transition to full democracy and an explanation behind elites corrupt activities in diverting state oil revenues into personal accounts. Dahl argues that 'democracies often struggle to survive in single-commodity export economies (oil curse), where access to the levers of political power is often vital to the continuing well-being of elites' (1998:198). As Dahl comments, 'Politics all too easily becomes a zero-sum battle for monopoly control of the commanding heights of the economy' (1998:198). Accordingly, socio-economic factors are crucial as a precursor to democratisation and diluting terrorist groups ability to recruit and

develop. Arguably, 'democracy and peace are due to pre-existing socio-economic conditions' (Hegre, 2014:159) and must be considered as a significant factor at the core of a state's ability to carry out a democratic transition. Mali's extremely low literacy rates are at the core of issues regarding political participation and at the root of socio-economic demographics. As James Madison stated:

> 'A people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives. A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to… a tragedy' (Madison *in* Creppell,1989:24).

The positive correlation between literacy rates and political participation, meaning that increased education leads to an increased propensity to vote (Kaplan & Venezky,1995: iii) is significant given the low literacy rates and extremely low voter turnout in Mali. Moreover, socio-economic factors are arguably a core driving factor behind the Boko Haram campaign owing to 'poverty, deteriorating social services and infrastructure, educational backwardness, rising numbers of unemployed graduates…and the weak and dwindling productive base of the northern economy' (Isa, 2010:329). To a large extent, Boko Haram is a product of corruption and economic deprivation brought out through social and financial inequalities (Achebe, 2012). Certainly, disenfranchisement, inequality and poverty are central drivers leading to the development of terrorist extremist groups in north northeastern Nigeria and northern Mali.

Thirdly, the extrajudicial killing of Boko Haram's founder Mohammed Yusuf in the 2009 violent uprising between the militant Islamist group and the Nigerian military sparked the shift to a violent strategy to include bombing and suicide attacks. The killing of the former leader led to the growth of the terrorist organisation 'to operate outside of Borno and Yobe, hitting churches in Jos in December 2010 and United Nations offices in Abuja in August 2011' (Perouse de Montclos, 2014: 137). Furthermore, the targeting of Christians by Boko Haram became significant following Yusuf's death by the 'remaining commanders of the sect, who wanted revenge [and] drew closer to the global jihadist narrative against "Crusaders"'(Perouse de Montclos, 2014: 139). Following Yusuf's death, the interim leader Mallam Sani Umaa was reported to have signed a statement supporting Osama bin Laden to "carry out his command in Nigeria until the country is totally Islamized" in declaring total jihad (Perouse de Montclos, 2014:141); whilst the rise of Abubakar Shekau as successor to Yusuf was a main driver behind anti-Western sentiment. It certainly appears as though the violent turn was married with a

reaffirmation of religious, ideological goals of Boko Haram that were instated as a result of the anger following the death of founder and leader Mohmmed Yusaf, instead of a constrain of political rights in Nigeria from 2008 rating 4 to 2009/2010 rating of 5 (worsening) as per *Freedom House*.

Fourth, the correlation between political rights and terrorist or insurgent groups can be disaggregated through the lens of the structure versus agency conceptualisation. It may be the case that certainly a degree of political rights was needed in the first place to form Boko Haram and the coalition of rebel groups in Mali but it cannot be said to be a direct causal factor for the emergence of violent encounters thereafter. The notion that an opening of the political system gives rise to terrorist attacks in not well founded based on the stability of Freedom House political rights ratings up to and before a large attack took place. Thus, limited structural arguments can account for violent uprisings based on the variable of political rights. The nature of Freedom House analysis and methodology leads one to drawn conclusions that are reactive to activities of rebel groups in altering a states political rights score, giving rebels the agency from the outset. For example, following the coup d'état in Mali the political rights score declined from 2 to 7 as a result of the political turmoil, yet there was limited structural indicator – as per the decade of stability in the political rights score of 2 – allowing one to draw a causal connection between the two variables. The inability of central government in both Nigeria and Mali to uphold a credible, legitimate and trusted form of democracy exacerbates the belief in the failure of democracy as a form of governance as a whole, whilst allowing the reaffirmation of Islamist beliefs and the entrenchment of anocratic governance. Furthermore, the structural argument in favoring a correlation between the acquisition of political rights and rebel attacks is dampened by the clouded score of an individual's political rights in *real* terms owing to corruption, rigged elections and vote buying. Although Freedom House accounts for factors such as corruption, rigged elections and patrimonial ties, its analysis does not cover the depth in connection to rebel groups which this paper has done at length. Moreover, an interesting structural development in research would be to map the differences in political rights, and the ability to acquire such rights, between different regions of a country. For example, the grave situation in Northern Mali limiting Malian's political rights differ from individuals in Bamako; and similarly the northeastern territory in Nigeria, being subject to Boko Haram dominance, places de facto limits on an individual's freedom to exercise political rights vis-à-vis more exercisable rights in Abuja.

The cases in Nigeria and Mali evidence cases of interacting causal variables that are not independent of each other. The intertwining nature of causal factors falsifies causal claims based solely on the variable of political rights.

8.0 Conclusion

This paper has challenged broad claims made by Mansfield and Snyder (2005) that the widening of the political spectrum during democratisation causes war in assessing the purported correlation between the acquisition of individual political rights and intra-state violence conducted by violent terrorist groups in Nigeria and Mali on a micro level. The nonlinear relationship between acquisition of political rights and terrorism has been disaggregated highlighting the complexities at all three layers of the Freedom House framework for political rights. This said, the obverse was definitely identified, in that correlations were found beyond doubt, that terrorist group activity did have a profound effect on the failure of citizens of Mali and Nigeria ability to actually access political rights.

Research has shown that, the electoral process was hampered to a greater extent in Nigeria by Boko Haram than the relative lack of strategic targeting of polling stations by AQIM in Mali. In both cases, however, the vast number of internally displaced persons affected both the electoral process and political participation. Displacement can be regarded as a direct factor affecting political rights stemming from the conflict-ridden environment in the northern and northeastern territories of Mali and Nigeria respectively. Moreover, political participation in Mali was overshadowed by the ostensible incompatibility of Islam and democracy with a greater trust in the *ulama* vis-à-vis state officials. In the case of Mali, the integration of religion into politics post-2012 is central in forging national unity. The religious dimension increases the complexity of the argument owing to the 'intercivilisational' (Huntington, 1996) nature of the issues inherently rooted in the cultural demographics of society, playing on historical rivalries between Christendom and Islam. To this end, the recent Nigerian suicide attack on 17th June 2019 killing thirty people at a video hall perceived to be un-Islamic by Boko Haram militants is a stark reminder of not only the contemporary nature of the workings of this paper but also of the deep-seated culture of violence that is occurring based on a religious narrative.

The focus on the functioning of government, addressing collaboration and coercion by state actors in countering violent rebel groups bought another dimension to the equation. The

weakness of Nigeria's and Mali's regimes vis-à-vis the strength of domestic terrorist groups are directly correlated. Firstly, state neglect in the northern states of both Mali and Nigeria facilitated the emergence of violent rebel groups vying for territorial autonomy under Islamic control. Alongside this, the Nigerian state committing crimes against humanity and grave human rights abuses in attempting to suppress Boko Haram coupled with the horrendous conditions and prisoner treatment in IDP camps meant that a culture of violence and immunity was created from the top. To this end, the sense of sanctuary and belonging that groups such as Boko Haram offer, makes it a paradoxical haven of security amidst insecurity when juxtaposed against corrupt officials seen as puppets of seemingly neocolonial western style democracy and matching violence with violence. Alongside this, the functional role AQIM has played, in creating inroads in politics, institutionalises their position in the state whilst blurring the lines between formally criminal activities progression into affairs of the state. Secondly, state collaboration with traffickers and rebels occurring in both Mali and Nigeria impairs the possibility of securing an effective counter-terror strategy. In countries which have an extremely low socio-economic platform, personal financial rewards override the moral integrity of officials in positions of power.

To this end, this paper concludes five main hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Democratic transitions do positively correlate with the development of terrorist extremist or insurgent groups, where there is a vacuum in effective legitimate state control, albeit not as a direct result of the increase in political rights per se in Mali and Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2: Although the electoral process, political participation and the functioning of government are all impacted in some way by armed non-state actors, deep-rooted characteristics such as corruption, neopatrimonialism and collaboration by state actors with such groups are also a factor in limiting the acquisition and access to citizens' *real* political rights by undermining the integrity of state institutions.

Hypothesis 3: The relative stability of political rights in Mali and Nigeria before an upsurge of violence (pre 2009-10 in Nigeria and pre 2012 in Mali) made it difficult to draw a structural causal correlation based on the Freedom House data.

Hypothesis 4: The acquisition of political rights through democratisation or democratic consolidation is not the driving factor behind a violent upturn in terrorist activity but in fact the terrorist activity (which is amplified in the anocratic phase) *is itself* a core determinator of a citizen's ability to access political rights.

Hypothesis 5: Alternative factors are more significant than the acquisition of democratic political rights per se in determining an increase in the incidence of terrorist activity. In Mali, for example, the proliferation of weapons following the fall of Gadaffi in 2011 brought armed capability to AQIM, both in terms of weapons and personnel, and in Nigeria, the death of Yusuf sparked the violent episode in 2009/2010 escalating the violent intensity of the armed group.

It is evident that following the third wave of democractisation, there has indeed been a broadening of democracy in outreach yet a shallowing in terms of institutional viability, integral elites and independent judiciary. Global trends of pseudo-democracies, competitive authoritarian systems, or hybrid regimes (Diamond, 2002:22) have created a fourth wave of states which are no longer transitioning in nature but permanently stuck in an anocratic regime type mainly owing to the unwillingness of incumbent elites to give up the benefits of their position whilst fighting for power in a governance vacuum. As the process of democratisation is elongated, the concern is that such behaviours become ingrained into the culture of the state making anti-corruption agencies and other bodies focusing on transparency deemed ineffective. Therefore, international actors should be encouraged to act as stablisers instead of democratisers.

Amidst often dire economic situations, religious divisions (both within a religion and between religious groups), and violent conflict, the issue of prioritisation of the government is vital. The role of money in politics dominated by the few often overshadows the wishes of the majority vying for a legitimate form of democracy and a true belief in the system. It is apparent that socio-economic factors play a vital role in determining both the ease and success of transitioning states and the ability of terrorist organisations to develop. Arguably, a sound economical foundation would provide the main driver to accepting any alternative governance regime. In the absence of peace and stability it is easier for transnational terrorist networks to persist even after a transition, remaining prominent in society after consolidation has been achieved. Ideally, a pre-democratisation focus on economic stability coupled with the creation of an effective government, legitimately exercising its powers for the benefit of its citizens, is

the only guarantee of a successful and peaceful transition, whether anocratic or not. The circumstances for democratisation are never ideal and the extent of violence will be determined by the confluence of a number of factors be they economic, religious, or geo-political, all of which are exacerbated logarithmically by weak government and corruption.

Further research into a possible positive correlation between the abuse of civil liberties during democratic transitions and terrorist activity might field interesting results. Additionally, a re-evaluation of the social contract between the governing and the governed in the face of elite corruption would be a useful topic of research. Merely holding elections and allowing citizens to politically participate is insufficient to classify a regime type as a democracy, especially as elections are often used as a tool to satisfy western counterparts whilst lacking credibility. To this end, research into what constitutes free and fair elections and an evaluation into a time scale for holding elections post conflict would add value to existing debates.

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