The Dynamics of Environment and World Powers Interest in the Sahel Sub-Region of West Africa: 2010 – 2022.

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Abstract

In recent years, the Sahel region has been in the global spotlight following security challenges and other social problems such as crises of socio-economic deprivations, perceived social and Political exclusion, and terrorism. Given this situation, there is an increasing perception in the West that the Sahel region security challenge is a potential threat to international peace and security. On this premise, we have witnessed the interventions of World Powers in the Sahel sub region of West Africa. . Using the theories of hermeneutics of suspicion and that of Hobbes' realism as the framework of analysis, and historical descriptive methodology, the study examined the usual explanans of the West for their intervention in countries of the Sahel region of West Africa particularly Mali, Niger, Mauritania, among others. The Study revealed that, foreign powers interventions were carried out not purely in the interest of Africans but in their endeavour to maximize self-interests irrespective of the impact on the receiving states. The paper therefore concludes that foreign intervention in the region is exclusively designed for self-serving and amoral national interest, particularly to has geo-strategic benefits from enormous natural resources (oil, gold, uranium and other strategic resources) in the region. Based on this finding, the

paper suggests among others that African leaders should invest in the security of their countries and respect African values that encourage peace and stability to avoid foreign manipulation over local resources with the excuse of intervention.

Keywords: Dynamics, World Powers Interest, Sahel sub-region, West Africa, Environment

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War the involvement of the world powers in resolving African conflict has taken Centre stage at both the academic and policy levels. The World powers interest to promote peace and security on the continent has triggered debate on the genuineness of their involvement. In this respect, there are contending view points between Euro centric and Afro – centric expectations on the economics. From Afro centric perspective, world powers intervention in Africa continue to suffer credibility crisis in that they raise the security expectations among affected civilians in conflict situations and ultimately fail to deliver up to expectation. This perspective cited Congo, Somali, Rwanda and Sudan ineffective intervention due national interests in these countries. Accordingly, they concluded that the behavior demonstrated by world powers in the four African countries mentioned reflects the fact that in practice, they do not have as their primary objectives the safety and wellbeing if affected African populations, but rather the promotion of their values and geo-strategic self-interests. The Euro-centric view on the other hand argue that for every intervention, the western countries acted out of the goodness of their heart with objective to bring Africa, the gift of democracy, good governance, peace and to secure the very lives of millions of Africans who would otherwise have been butchered by warlords and terrorists. While much has been written about intervention over countries in Africa, particularly Congo, Rwanda, Sudan and Somalia, there has not been significant scholarly research specifically addressing world powers interests in the Sahel sub-regions of west Africa, hence this study.

THE SAHEL: A geo-political clarification

The word "Sahel" is an Arabic word meaning "shore" (Syngenta foundation, 2012). The Sahel runs 3862k, (2,400 miles) from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to

the red sea in the East covering an area of 3,053,200 square kilometers (Dele, 2011:8). The Sahel is a transition zone between the arid north and the tropical green forest that borders the Atlantic Ocean; it covers parts of the territory of Senegal, southern Mauritania, Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso, Northern Mali, Cameroun, Sudan, Guinea Bissau, Benin, Gambia and Eretria (Dele, 2011).

There are diverse ethnic groups in the Sahel region of west Africa. These ethnic groups include Wolof, Tuareg, Fulani, Hausa among others. Islam is the major predominant region in the area, however, hundreds of smaller ethnic groups profess varied traditional religions. The climate is hot; tropical and topography are mostly flat. The maximum temperature reaches about 36 degrees and minimum is about 18 degrees Celsius. Rainfall in the area occurs between May and September, indicating that the rest of the year is dry. The region has a large deposit of oil and other numeral resources especially Uranium (the moor next door, 2010). In conceptualizing the geopolitical importance of the region, all of these geopolitical factors are significant especially in terms of the region's relations with worldpowers. The Sahel sub-region of West Africa is an environment with extensive natural resources and thus reemerged as an important niche that attracted the attention of the world powers. Using the concept dynamics to demonstrates forces that induce intervention in the region.

Theoretical Framework

To understand world powers interest in the Sahel region of West Africa, the study adopted two theories namely; the theory of hermeneutics of suspicion and the theory of realism.

The theory of hermeneutics of suspicion states that authentic intervention does not come from nation states as their authorities are not always transparent and tend to serve the interests of major powers at the expense of the local populations they purport to come and rescue.

The fact is that, foreign sponsored missions are suspicious and retrogressive to the host populations and their governments, as they are not designed to promote the well being and prosperity of the local citizens thereby undermining host state sovereignty. In practice, the western powers rarely create opportunities for

"emancipating social transformation" that is truly in favor of the host populations (Featherstone; 2007: 198). Rather they are primarily motivated by the promotion of self-interests of the main sponsors of peace keeping missions, who happen to be western powers and former colonial masters trying to re-Juvent their lost control and influence over their former colonies in Africa (Ayoob, 2002; ALQaq, 2009).

The basis of this argument and suspicion is that, since the former colonial powers did not rule Africa on the principle of promoting prosperity, peace and harmony among their colonies, it therefore becomes suspicious when western powers return to African countries experiencing conflict turmoil on the pretext of promoting peace among the tribal/ ethnic groupings and upholding human rights which they never observed and safe guarded during colonialism.

Related to the theory of hermeneutics of suspicion is the theory of realism. The realist theory is associated with the works of Thomas Hobbes, Nicolo Machiavelli and Hans Morgenthau. There are many theoretical variants within realism. These includes: descriptive realism which sees the world as an arena of conflict; explanatory realism which shows that there are genetic defects that push mankind into behaving negatively and preemptive realism which builds on the previous two arguments to say that decision makers (individuals, groups and Nations) have a moral justification to defend their basic interest and ensure self-preservation using any means necessary.

The central argument of realist theory is that states, acting through statesmen who personify their think and act in terms of interest defined as power. The adherents of this perspective argue that the concept of interest defined in terms of power gives continuity and unity to seemingly diverse foreign policies of widely separated states, and at the same time makes evidently the actions of statesman at different point in history possible. The theory further holds that in pursuit of national security, states strive to attain as many resources as possible, and that the overriding national interests of each state is its national security and survival which must be protected as all cost.

Given this, it means that Western power involvements in African Affairs are usually undertaken with an aura of motives which at closer scrutiny are not about

well being of Africans but the promotion of their national interest. As emphasized by the realists, there is no room for morality in the conduct of national business with African states. In this way, it is futile to wish the existence of a shared moral world view among nation states in their international world affairs. This theory emphasizes the limits of morality and insist that in practice, power politics exercised by nation states should gear towards maximizing their self-interest irrespective of the impact on the receiving states.

The adoption of the realist theory is very imperative because of its significance in explaining world powers interests in the Sahel sub-region of West Africa. To demonstrate the use of power as realist predicted, by world powers to protect their strategic national interest. Klare cited in Tarabinah and Okolo noted that the use of militarism to protect the flow of oil has been a major plank of US foreign policy since 1945. This was indicated in a meeting between President Franklin Roosevelt and the Saudi King Aziz Ibn Saud, where Roosevelt brokered a military protection for Saudi Arabia in return for special access to Saudi Arabia vast oil reserves (David, 2015:10).

Based on the preliminary literature and objective of the study, this paper adopted historical and descriptive research approach. The paper used historical method to explore carefully and closely some major facts regarding foreign powers intervention in Africa to find answers to the questions of World Powers altruism intervention gospel. The descriptive methodology adopted, served as a strategy of enquiry that moved from the underlying Eurocentric philosophical assumptions to discuss the unacknowledged Eurocentric interests in Africa. This method is adopted as it yields data that provides depth and detail understanding of the subject of study. The study was based on both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary source includes perusal and study of primary official documents on UN peacekeeping missions in Africa. Secondary source involves the information of secondary published and internet material on the subject of study.

The Security Environment of the Sahel Sub-Region of West Africa.

One remarkable narrative of West African sub-region is that with the exception of Liberia and Sierra-Leone, the other states were former colonies. Part of the remarkable narrative is that the sub region has enormous natural resources. The

area has since attracted global attention as one of the poorest region of the world, facing simultaneously the challenges of poverty, climate change, food crises, fragile governance, corruption, internal tensions and more increasingly terrorism. Aliyu (2015)'s description is apt:

> Its crippling poverty, higher level of corruption, cases of bad governance, and the number of weak states, internal political instabilities, violent overthrow of governments, rebellions and civil wars, are remarkable features of West Africa over the last fifty years.

With these features, West Africa has a very low stability index in the world. Many reasons account for this particular environment. And in fact, many of these reasons are directly traceable to the nature of the political elite at the helm of political leadership. In this sense, bad governance is one major issue promoting transnational terrorism in the Sahel region of West Africa. The sub-region is one of the largest producers of Crude Oil, Uranium and other resources, yet, over 50 percent of her population live on less than one US dollar per day (NBS, 2011). This wide spread poverty as a result of bad governance is seriously fueling security challenges in the region. Willie (2021) provided the link between bad governance and security threat. using Nigeria situation, he observed that majority of Nigerian youths who joined Boko Haram in the early days of the group were unemployed youth who were frustrated after years of graduating from university. They tore their certificates and joined the group.

Also, Danjibo (2009) observed that many youths who were also students in higher institutions in the Northern Nigeria abandoned their education and joined Boko Haram because they felt that they would not find a job when they graduate.

Security challenges in the sub-region cannot be adequately explained by simply limiting it to issues of bad governance. Very significant also is religious fundamentalism. Huntington's (1996) works respectively theorized the potentiality of religion in instigating instability and insecurity within and between states. They asserted that religion, in a post-cold war period; serve as the initiator of violent conflict along cultural lines. Federal Bureau of investigation (2006) and

Zackary (2006), have all justified the link between religion and terrorism. One way religion enhances transnational terrorism is the encouragement of fanatism through radicalization. Ashindorbe and Owonikoko (2017) made this point clearer when he observed that many people have been brainwashed into believing that dying in the course of defending their religion would earn them status of a martyr. They are therefore inclined to sacrifice their lives by involving in transnational terrorism. This trend dominates Boko Haram terrorism in the Sahel sub region of West Africa. While it is true that these factors are at the forefront of igniting fires of civil interest, conflicts, and terrorism that attracted the attention of foreign powers, it is however, uncertain, that foreign intervention are carried out purely in the interest of Africans.

World Powers Interventions in West Africa

West Africa has continued to host foreign powers for varied reasons. However, interventions appear to be the major factor. Consider for example, French military interventions in Africa during and after the Cold War. between 1960 and 2005 France launched some 46 military operations in the former colonies. (Christopher, 2007). According to Douglas (2018:95) military interventions, starting in Gabon (1964), Chad (1968-72), Mauritania (1977), Chad (1978), Zoure (1978), Central African Republic (1979), Chad (1983-84), Gabon (1990), Rwanda (1990-94), Benin (1991), Djibouti (1991), Zoure (1991), Angola (1992), Djibouti (1992-93), Sierra Leone (1992), Somalia (1992-93), Cameroon (1994), Comoros (1995), Central Africa Republic (1996 - 1997), Congo-Brazzaville (1997), Cote d'Ivoire (2002), Djibouti (2008), Libya (2011), Mali (2013-2011).

These are sample of the intervention operations, counter-insurgency missions, combat support operations, peace keeping interpositions, peace security operations and non-combatant interventions conducted under the Frech tricolour. There are other Western actors that intervened in African missions. These actors have enormous and substantial humanitarian, economic and military aid relationship in the region. These powers include EU members that constitute the European Union actors, such as France, Germany, Spain and Italy (individually and Jointly). United states, China and Russia are also actors with interest in the region. Though, China and Russia are in the region with limited political influence. This is due to their disinterest in the politics of the region.

When one reviews the extensive literature on foreign interventions in Africa, one finds that their interventions go beyond the issues of humanitarian reasons. After all, in a 1969 article, John Morton Morton Moore cited in Ayoob(2002) asserted that "intervention is truly a monochromatic term for a polychromatic reality. In essence, interventions may be pushed in public eye as a single venture but in reality there are many sided intentions and consequences. Richard (1968) asserts that "intervention refers to conduct with an external animus that … intends to achieve a fundamental alteration of the state of affairs in the target nation. This has to do also with organized and systematic activity across boundaries largely aimed at affecting the political authority structures of the target. Intervention, as it is the case with Sahel sub-region of West Africa experience, from former colonial powers, cannot but be interpreted as a continuation of a long tradition of colonialism, sometimes transcending the framework of the existing relations with unobstructive degree of imposing the hegemonic will on the relatively weaker states in defense of their national interest Warisu (2010:64) indicated that democratization is a critical component of the neo-liberal agenda and globalization which many African countries subscribe to its dictate. No doubt that democracy has improve and enhanced participation in decision-making, but authoritarian rule that induce conflict in the region still persist. Most lenders resist all attempt to get them out of office following their insensitivity and lack of responsiveness to the welfare of their citizens. The political crisis and instability in Guinea Bissau, Republic of Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, and the succession in Togo attest to this argument. Though there is a continent-wide commitment to democracy, however, many of the political leaders have refused to abide by the principles of democratic governance and the rule of law. Rather, the West African region is confronted with political impunity and a strong desire by the incumbent leaders to perpetrate themselves in power. We have seen this development in Mauritania, Gambia, Mali, Togo, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau and Guinea (Conakry) (Warisu, 2010).

The poor quality of governance has contributed in no small measure to insecurity and conflict in the sub-region. The World Bank (1994) has defined good governance as a type of governance that is predictable, open and enlightened policy-making, a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethics acting in furtherance of the public good, the rule of law, transparent society participating process and a strong civil society in public affairs. The political developments

across the Sahel sub-region of West Africa are far from the norms of good governance defined above. The social and economic upheaval that always accompanies bad governance and the collapse of the developmental state have continued to undermine national solidarity and cohesion, threatening national and sub-regional security. Insurgents and the military have challenged and, in some cases, successfully taken over power in many of the West African countries. Increasingly this situation is considered threat to international peace and security. Recent development in Niger reinforces this argument. For instance, Niger has become the latest country in West Africa where the army seized power, following Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, and Chad - all these are former French colonies. Since 1990, a striking 78% of the 27 coups in sub-Saharan Africa have occurred in Francophone states leading some commentators to ask whether France - or the legacy of French colonialism - is to blame. Many of the coup plotters and their supporters have accused foreign powers especially France. To be sure, Colonel Abdoulaye Maiga, who was named prime minister by the military junta in Mali in September 2022, accused France of "neocolonialist, condescending, paternalist and vengeful policies". Earlier, Maiga alleged that France had "disowned universal moral values" and stabbed Mali "in the back".

Anti-French vitriol has also flourished in Burkina Faso, where the military government ended a long-standing accord that allowed French troops to operate in the country.

In Niger, which neighbours both countries, alleged that President Mohamed Bazoum was a puppet for French interests were used to legitimized his removal from power, and five military deals with France revoked by the junta led by Gen Abdourahmane Tchiani. The coup was followed by popular protests and attacks on the French. Historical record provides some support for these grievances. French colonial rule established political systems designed to extract valuable resources while using repressive strategies to retain control.

So did British colonial rule, but what was distinctive about France's role in Africa was the extent to which it continued to engage or meddle - in the politics and economics of its former territories after independence. Seven of the nine Francophone states in West Africa still use the CFA franc, which is pegged to the

euro and guaranteed by France, as their currency, a legacy of French economic policy towards its colonies. France also forged defence agreements that saw it regularly intervene militarily on behalf of unpopular pro-French leaders to keep them in power. In many cases, this strengthened the hand of corrupt and abusive figures such as Chad's former President Idriss Déby and former Burkinabe President Blaise Compaoré, creating additional challenges for the struggle for democracy. Although France did not intervene militarily to reinstate any of the recently deposed heads of state, all were seen as being "pro-French".

Worse, the relationship between French political leaders and their allies in Africa was often corrupt, creating a powerful and wealthy elite at the expense of African citizens. François-Xavier Verschave, a prominent French economist, coined the term Françafrique to refer to a neocolonial relationship hidden by "the secret criminality in the upper echelons of French politics and economy". These ties, he alleged, resulted in large sums of money being "misappropriated".

Although recent French governments have sought to distance themselves from Françafrique, there are constant reminders of the problematic relations between France, French business interests and Africa, including a number of embarrassing corruption.

It is therefore easy to understand why one Nigerien told the BBC that: "Since childhood, I've been opposed to France… They've exploited all the riches of my country such as uranium." Such scandals were often swept under the carpet while France's African political allies were strong, and France's military support helped to maintain stability.

In recent years, the ability of France and other Western states to ensure order has deteriorated, leaving them increasingly vulnerable to criticism.

Despite considerable funding and troops, the French-led international response to Islamist insurgencies in the Sahel region has failed to enable West African governments to regain control of their territories. This was particularly significant to the fate of civilian leaders in Burkina Faso and Mali because their inability to protect their own citizens created the impression that French support was more of

a liability than a blessing. In turn, growing popular anger and frustration emboldened military leaders to believe that a coup would be celebrated by citizens.

World Powers Interests in the Sahel region of West Africa

From the foregoing, world powers interest in the Sahel sub-region of the West Africa is a product of a wide and complex matrix. While the military component in one, there are other processes and actors less overt that collaborate with it to achieve interests perceived by them.

On the surface of it, the idea is sold that there is concern for enhancing the capacity of weak, falling, fragile states in the sub-region to deal with their own security problems, including that of preventing and managing conflicts. As evident in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, however, the compulsion to engage "non-functional" states in the area of security is dictated primarily by the need to protect themselves from the consequences of the fragility of these states. And since they have a preconception of the kind of state that would deliver, effort is to be made to ensure that "fragile" states transit to this predetermined destination.

First, the world powers perceived the sub-region as incapable of providing security, particularly for their investments. They characterized the sub-region as the home of the poor, of the five poorest countries of the world, four are in the region, having below USD 1,500 per capital income and threatened by political, communal violence, terrorism among others. Osita (2010:91), argues that the above perception found acceptance in the fact that state represents the basic unit of international relations. Therefore, it must be in a position to be responsible for what happens within its territory and accountable to other states for the consequences of its actions or inactions that affect their interest. In this way, states in the Sahel, including the West Africa sub-region are considered "fragile", lacking political will and/or capacity to provide the basic functions needed for poverty reduction, development and to safeguard the security and human rights of their population (Menocal, 2008).

Given this perception, the world powers maintain that:

> "International engagement will need to be converted, sustained and focuses on building the relationship between state and society, through engagement in two main areas. Firstly, supporting the legitimacy and accountability of states, by addressing issues of democratic governance, human rights, civil society engagement and peace building."

Secondly, strengthening the capacity of states to fulfil their functions is essential to reduce poverty. Priority functions include; ensuring security and justice, mobilizing revenue, establishing an enabling environment for basic service delivery, strong economic performance and employment generation.

No doubt, these are legitimate ends which state power must serve but the main reason for the concern as already indicated must be sought elsewhere. On the face of it, fighting insecurity and extremism in the sub-region would appear to be the matter, but underneath this, however, are ultimately concerns of strategic economic interest. Today, Africa in general and West Africa in particular is important and remains one of the major points of focus, because of strategic resources both solid mineral and crude oil.

In 2013, France intervened in Mali's internal political and communal violence. In this conflict, Hollande had obtained the deployment of ECOWAS mission, but was manipulated by France who wondered what this was all about and thus intervened; conducted an … "clean-up" operation in the rocks and cares of the Ifoghas mountains (Douglas, 2013:111). France officially ended Operation Serval on 15 July, 2014, with total cost put at €650million. This intervention like many others cannot be seen as isolated event - "to help fight terrorist, and recover its territorial integrity", and must be situated with specific development in the global logic of big powers. France intervened in Mali as from January 11, 2013 was driven by economic and geo-political interest. As observed by Armstrong (2013), if Konna had not been captured by the Islamists nothing perhaps would have drastically come from France. Already French hostages were held in the region and the lucrative Areva's Uranium deposits were threatened, this economic and regional stability interests were seriously at risk. Hollande made it clear that France had no

other interests in Mali, than reserving a friendly state and fight terrorism, but the question is, if this was the purpose, why refuse to intervene in Central African Republic, even after president Francois Bozize called frequently for help. It would be naïve to imagine that big powers will work so hard to secure the African environment endowed with enormous resources and be satisfied with effusive farewells. The thrust of France's intervention in Mali and other countries in the Sahel sub-region of West Africa is premised on their economic interest. The late Omar Bongo for instance, Gabon's former president, famously declared in an interview with the French press that "Gabon without France is like a car with no driver, France without Gabon is like a car with no fuel" (Douglas, 2018:108). This surely, explains the economic importance of the region's resources to France. Confirming this Francois Millerand declared, without Africa, France will have no history in the twenty-first century (Douglas, 2018:108).

Africa, which,, the Sahel-sub region of West Africa, is part of, still provides the diplomatic resources that France will not otherwise enjoy. The largest community of French speakers in the world lives in Africa. The African continent possesses 10% of the planet's oil reserves. Its mineral riches are equally considerable, it holds more than 80% of the world's platinum and chrome, and more than 60% of its Manganese and Cobalt, precious for mobile telephone chips. Countries in the Sahel sub-region of West Africa are the largest bastion of the French in the mining sector. The Uranium in Mali and Niger is strategic for the sales of Areva Nuclear power plants and French nuclear weapons (Raphael,2015). The sub-region is also the last reserved domain of the French oil well in the deep waters of the Gulf of Guinea.

> Through several strategies laced around France's protection
> of her economic interests and boosting of her role in international
> Affairs, France helped to safeguard or install governments friendly
> To her cooperation agreements and defence pacts entered into at
> Independence made it possible for her to get involved in the internal
> Affairs of the former colonies in the sub region

France is not alone, as the wide and complex matrix of interest in the region involves other big powers, especially the United States. US has been engaged in Africa for several decades, with the establishment of the "States Department

Bureau of African Affairs'' in 1958. This however was with less attention compared with other regions of perceived greater interest.

Strains in the global oil market, enhances the geo-strategic oil resources in the West African region in the international oil market. David (2015:6) captured why US renewed its interest in the region in these words:

> The desire to shift US oil dependence from the Middle East, increasing prize of crude oil, technological advancement, competition among super powers to create their Zone of influence and the Gulf war which opposed the US and its allies to the Arab nations, push the US to turn to the Sahel of West African, and the entire Africa as an alternative source of energy supply.

Some scholars have argued that greater presence of the United States and Western European countries in the region bears advantages, given terrorism concerns in the region. The fact remains that no Nation exercise morality in the conduct of international relations. National interest is the driving force. Thus, the US, like France may have been engaging in their usual cynical calculations of advancing its interests under the guise of assisting in the security management of the sub-region. Consequently, it may be rightly argued that:

> "the rising global quest for oil in the sub-region is not merely to satisfy energy security needs of key oil importing countries, but also to protect their investments in the oil sector in the region and seek new investment opportunities."

In an un overt manner, US interfere in the internal affairs of Nigeria. For instance, conditions that were given by the US for the removal of Nigeria's name from the Terror Watch List in 2010 have been interpreted to mean intervention in the domestic affairs of sovereign nation. These conditions, Alao, cited in David (2015:23) includes:

i. Public condemnation of act of terrorism
ii. Address security lapses at its airports

iii. Nigeria should be party to an agreement to deploy air Marshalls on all US-bound flights originating from Nigeria.
iv. Enactment of anti-terrorism

While we acknowledge the security concerns, it is apt to measure this security interest in the primary objective to access oil, and as well, within the framework of global logic of the big powers. It is well acknowledged fact, that oil is a commodity without which, and in the absence of an adequate and practical substitute, the West would suffer greatly; it must be emphasized that even through a strategic petroleum reserve policy is in place in the Unites States, one in which enough oil is stored in the deep cone shaped salt caverns along the Gulf of Mexico to replace months of imports, this can only be a short term measure and does not totally cancel the vulnerability of the United States to Oil (Goke, 2011:46).

The position of the Sahel sub-region of West Africa as an important oil producing area makes it a significant region to the United States.

> "This therefore explains why since 1951, whenever access to oil was threatened, Western power intervened. For instance, when the Ba'ath Party under Gen. Ahmed Hassan al Baker nationalized the oil industry, the United State was quick to act, just as it did when Iran nationalized."

Today, Senegal which has made a major alliance shift from France towards the United States has become the latest focal point for the Pentagon in Africa. The US achieved a wide range of concessions at a Darkar airfield, which already has been used as a landing point for several military operations in West Africa .For instance, the large-scale operation in Liberia. Again, for CIA, Senegal is strategically placed to enable US monitor activities that threaten its interests in the region. Above all, Senegal has intensive oil exploration features, which the United States hopes may become a new major oil supplier. Some 20% of US's oil is imported from Africa, and the Sahel region of West Africa supplies over 16% of US hydrocarbons and it is estimated that it would be over 25% in years beyond.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have been able to established that foreign powers interventions in the sub – region of West Africa cannot be totally alienated and detach from their interests .In essence, a very strong relationship or linkage exists between whatever excuse the big powers might have given for intervention and the spirited efforts to access huge resources in the sub region. Based on these findings, the paper suggests among others that African leaders should invest in the security of their countries and respect African values that encourage peace and stability to avoid foreign manipulation over local resources with the excuse of intervention.

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