

CONTRIBUTION TO A REGIONAL CONFERENCE 'DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY IN SAHARO-SAHELIAN AREAS:  
THE ASSET OF PASTORAL BREEDING

**GEO-STRATEGIC AND SECURITY STAKES IN SAHARA-SAHEL AREAS**

*Henry Wilkinson. Head of Intelligence & Analysis, Director, The Risk Advisory Group plc, Russell Square House, 10-12 Russell Square, London WC1B 5EH, [henry.wilkinson@riskadvisory.net](mailto:henry.wilkinson@riskadvisory.net)*

**Résumé**

In the past two years, the Sahel and Saharan region has entered a new era of security threats and development challenges require fresh understanding and co-operation. Transnational terrorism, radical Islamism, the widening of ungoverned spaces, trafficking in people, arms and narcotics are not only issues that transcend borders they can erode the very fabric of state and society and undermine development.

As recent events in northern Mali, Libya and Algeria all demonstrate, the new security threats are not faraway challenges to be resolved one country at a time. They are often sophisticated, dynamic and adaptive, and demand all regional stakeholders to rethink old paradigms and means of co-operation. The knock on impact of one crisis on another – from country into another - can be immense and occur faster than many countries can respond. The Arab Spring that led ultimately to the Islamist takeover of Northern Mali last year demonstrates the interconnectedness of these risks.

Sustainable security and sustainable development are not mutually exclusive concepts – they are interdependent. The spread of foreign strains of radical Islamism into West Africa and the Sahel is not just a cause but also an effect. Understanding how the radicalisation of youth works is a vital part of this process – as is the interplay between global narcotics trafficking and terrorism, and the impact of these phenomena on the informal economies that shape many people's lives.

The routing of radical Islamist forces routes from parts of northern Mali and the dispersal of their remnants does not mark an end of the problem. But it does create a space to ask questions about how to prevent radical groups taking root in disaffected and marginalised communities, and how states can work together across borders to build security and create better alternatives for the peoples of the region.

**Texte de la communication non disponible à ce jour.**