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Securing Uranium *Yellowcake*: Assessing the Strategic Politics of Uranium and Their Implications for Conflict

John-Mark K. Mutua

Abstract

This research explores the dynamics and implications of uranium militarization for conflict. Drawing on Niger's conflict (2007-2009), the research discerns Nigerien uranium-conflict actors militarized securing of uranium, *yellowcake*, resources in light of the strategic politics of uranium's deleterious social and politico-economic implications of the military use of uranium (U.S.), the positive socio-economic implications of uranium's use in civil/commercial reactors (France and China), and the lucrative economic value of uranium exports (Niger). Equally important, this research's advent of process-tracing establishes that the militarizing roles of the strategic politics of uranium coupled with competing [sub] regional interests accentuated the repressive and counter repressive capabilities of a despotic-uranium dependent Nigerien regime and rebels (*Mouvement des Nigériens pour la justice;* MNJ) highly mobilized around greed-grievances. The result: the onset and escalation in the level of the Nigerien conflict from a rebellion in 2007 to a fully-fledged civil war/conflict by 2009.