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# Institutional responses to the illegal narcotic trade in West Africa

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# Institutional responses to the illegal narcotic trade in West Africa

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This Research Report is submitted in partial fulfilment towards the degree of Master of Arts (MA) in International Relations"

# DECLARATION

I declare that this Thesis is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Masters of International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

_____

(Signature of candidate)

_____day of

_____20_____in_____

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to thank God since none of this would be possible without her guidance

I would like to thank my supervisor Michelle Small for providing me with a sense of stability and calm despite how bad situations might have looked over the past two years and for that I am eternally grateful

I wish to thank My deceased grandfather Moses Nkosi because without his help during my final High school years I wouldn't be in the position I am in right now.

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Thank you

# Abstract

The trafficking of illegal narcotics on the African continent and into West Africa has resulted in human insecurity and state insecurity in the region. Furthermore, it has helped facilitate shadow economies such as the illegal trade in fire arms and human trafficking within the region deteriorating law and order, judicial enforcement, and political institutions in these countries. The West African region serves as a transit point in the distribution of narcotics to Europe from Latin America and has increasingly become a destination in drug trafficking.

Various national, regional, and international strategies have been undertaken in combating this perceived scourge. The African Union, European Union, United Nations, and West African states themselves have all provided frameworks in combating drug trafficking in Africa. Despite these various strategies drug trafficking still thrives in West Africa. This thesis will assess one of these strategies that being the West African Coast Initiative (WACI). This thesis attempts to outline the various reasons for the growing importance of West Africa in the regional and international drug trade whilst assessing the impact WACI has had in dealing with the drug trade in West Africa.

The reason the paper seeks to assess the effectiveness of the West African Coast Initiative is to highlight the obstacles and challenges the strategy has faced over the last eight years of its existence, to make recommendations in this regard, and to identify specific shortcomings in African institutional efforts in engaging with threats that exist outside the state

**Key Words:** Narcotics, International Relations, globalization, Neoliberalism, Transnational Organised Crime, Human development, Drug trafficking

# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| AU | African Union |
| DPA | Department of Political Affairs |
| DTO | Drug Trading Organisation |
| EU | European Union |
| ECOWAS | The Economic Community of West African States |
| IGO | International Governmental Organization |
| INTERPOL | The International Criminal Police Organization |
| JAITF | Joint Airport Interdiction Task Forces |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| TOC ` | Transnational Organised Crime |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNGASS | United Nations General Assembly Special Session |
| UNOWA | United Nations Office for West Africa |
| UNODC | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime |
| WACI | West African Coast Initiative |

# FIGURES

**Figure1**: Map exemplifying Cocaine routes

**Figure 2**: Map exemplifying Opioid Routes

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

This introductory chapter aims to present an overview of the international drug trade origins, current make up and the war on drugs that have characterised the trade. This section outlines the research objectives, research questions and methodology which inform the study.

### Background of the international Drug trade.

The international drug trade has become a global phenomenon in international relations due to the trades ever evolving structures circumnavigating state and international law enforcement arrangements. This situation has occurred through the ever changing and adaptable nature of the illicit narcotic trade which has led drug trafficking to become one of the most lucrative trades on earth. With 1 in 20 people being an active drug user between the ages of 16 -64, the international market for narcotics is one that is large in scale (UNODC, World Drug Report 2015). Over 28 billion dollars annually is spent within the USA alone on the consumption of narcotics (UNODC, World Drug Report 2016, 77) .

The international drug trade is one that is not a recent phenomenon but one that has taken on various auspices and different states of legality in its history. An early example of a monetised and sophisticated trade of illegal narcotics is observable in the Chinese Opium trade.

Opium was first traded by Arabian and Turkish traders to China in the 7$^{th}$ century which would lead to a slow but gradual rise of drug addiction until Chinese emperor Yung-Cheng would ban

the substance. The opium trade despite being banned would later be repurposed as a medicinal drug by British traders for European markets around the 16 centuries. (Trocki 2012, 6).

This would change in the 17th century when the once presupposed medicinal herb would be primarily traded to European markets for pleasure. This change in priority would be the first-time western markets would engage with the consumption of opioids outside medicinal usage and this is viewed as a precursor to casual drug use in the global west (ibid). This case would also be the first contemporary instance of the creation of a highly profitable trade of narcotics to western markets by European merchants and therefore the first instance of a modernised narcotic economy for western markets.

In more contemporary times the narcotic trade has diversified from opium to a multitude of drugs, from organic such as cannabis to the synthetic as illustrated by methamphetamines. It has been estimated that the cocaine and opioid trade is worth 88 billion and 65 billion dollars respectively (Global Research 2014) .Distributing these various drugs has led to the creation of international trade networks which have transit points on each continent on earth. Networks such as those between the Caribbean to Europe and even from West Africa to South East Asia exemplify the globalised nature of the narcotic trade in international relations (see figure 1 ,2 and 3).

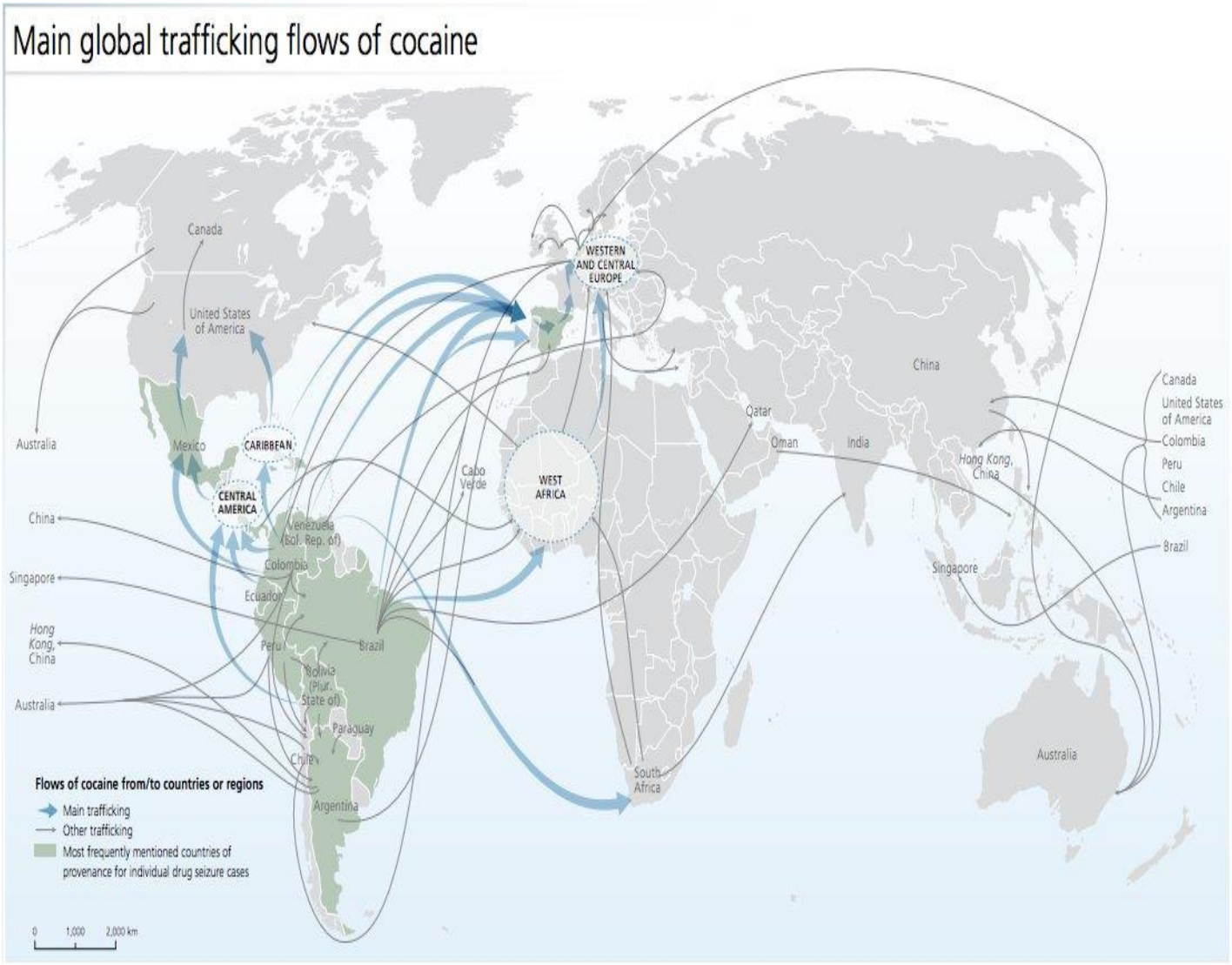



*Figure 1. A map that exemplifies major cocaine narcotic trafficking routes with main trafficking routes highlighted by blue directional arrows whilst minor routes by grey directional arrows. This map highlights that drugs trafficked from Brazil to West Africa as being an important and most frequent trafficking route (World Drug Report 2015)*

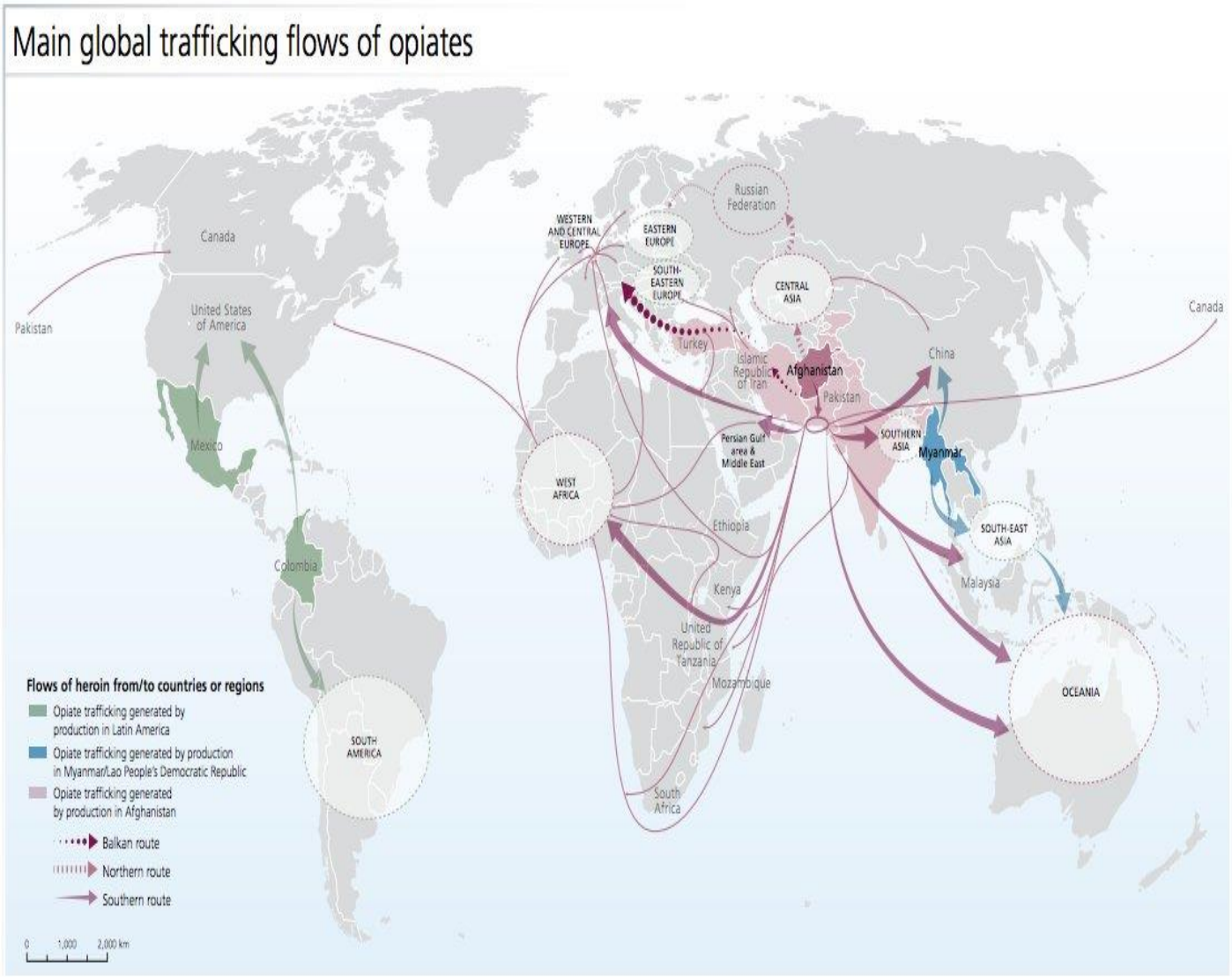



*Figure 2. A map that exemplifies heroin trafficking routes in red. One major route of Afghan heroin being trafficked into the United States goes through the West African region (World Drug Report 2015)*

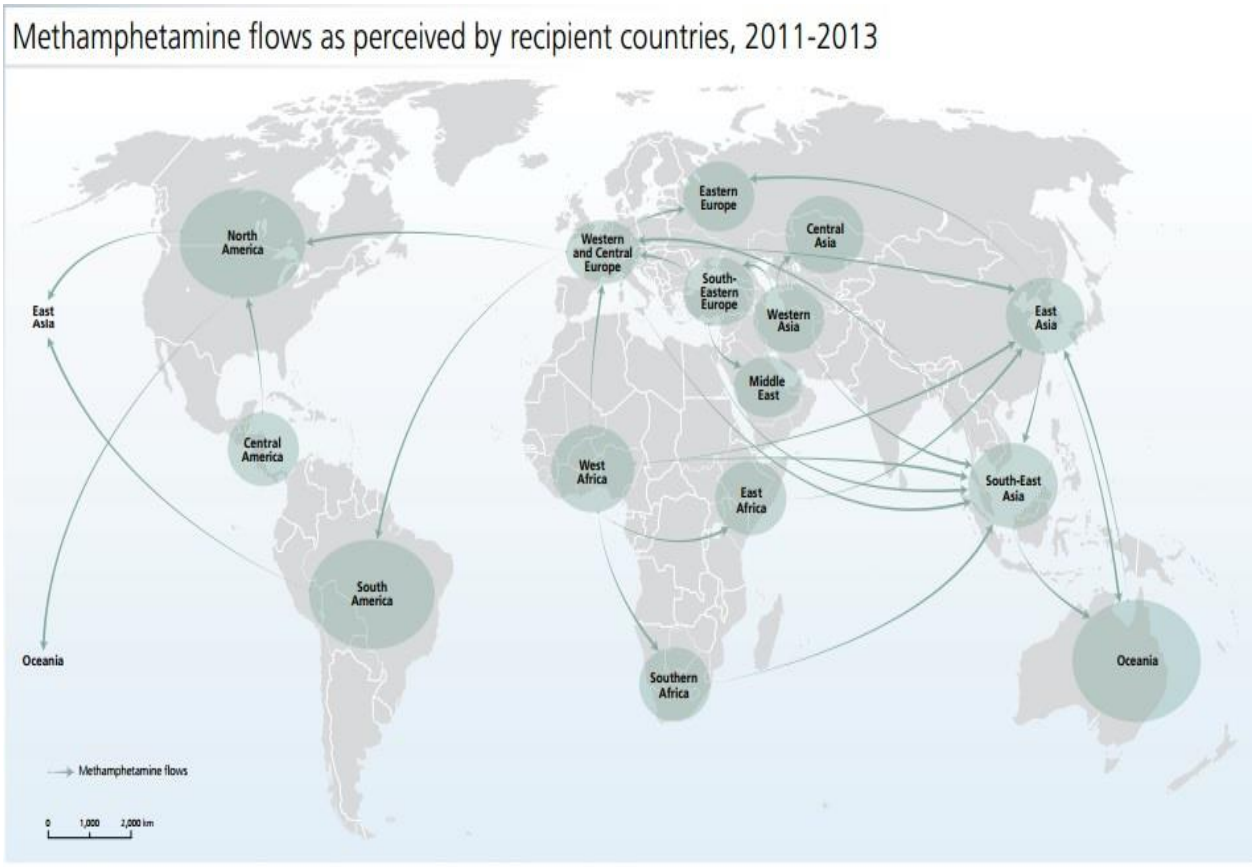



*Figure 3 reflects methamphetamines flows in blue with West Africa being a focal point in distributing methamphetamines to Europe East Asia, South East Asia East Africa and even Southern Africa. (UNODC 2014).*

The globalised nature of the narcotic trade has led to globalised responses in dealing with the trade leading states, regional organisations, global organisations and even private institutions in finding ways in curbing the global drug trade. The United Nations have established t various structures to deal with the international drug trade such as the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime of 2000 which highlighted the transnational threat criminal organisations present. Further, procedural recommendations on how TOC's can be engaged with are outlined in this convention. Institutions that deal with monetary issues such as the World Bank have also recognised the impact of Transnational criminal syndicates and their involvement with drugs, with the World Bank investing over 1.5 billion dollars in finding solutions to the trade (Council Of foreign Relations 2014). Europol an initiative set up by the European Union has also functioned as a tool in addressing the globalised nature of transnational organised crime especially that affecting the European Union's member states in matters of fraud, human trafficking and drug trafficking (ibid)

The way the drug trade has been engaged by global governance structures such as the United Nations has followed a securitised approach in which law enforcement measures have been central in framing strategies to deal with narcotic trafficking. This is exemplified in the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 that argued for greater transnational law enforcement cooperation in engaging with drug trade as specified by conventions article 14 (UNODC 1988,14). The Convention also allows states to have the freedom to provide unspecified strict measures in dealing with the narcotic trade within their nations (article 18), and allows states to deal with drug enforcement in any measure the state deems appropriate (article 24) (UNODC 1988,18).

The globalised nature of the international drug trade has become increasingly relevant to the African continent due to the growing importance of Africa, specifically West Africa's role in fostering narcotic trade networks. The AU, EU and the United Nations have monitored West Africa as a major transit zone for drugs coming from Latin America to Europe. This has led to collaborative efforts by these institutions to curb the supply of drugs coming into Europe (EMCDDA 2013).

Groups such as the EU based Maritime Analysis and Operations centre created in 2006 has helped in patrolling waters around Guinea Bissau and Senegal providing a deterrent to traffickers (MOAC 2016). Other examples have been seen in the case of AIRCOP a multi-agency and multiregional organisation that has allowed airports from across the world to share information on various security risks such as the transfer of drugs (UNDOC 2016). This paper will focus on understanding the West African Coast initiative (WACI) a multi-agency initiative that seeks to coordinate various institutional structures to curb the ever-growing influence of the drug trade in West Africa.

## The International War on drugs and its continued failure

Before this paper engages with the issues of the West African transnational trade in illegal narcotics, the global phenomena on the war drugs must be briefly explained. The war on drugs narrative has shaped not only perceptions on illegal narcotics but also, and most importantly, institutional policy on the drug trade undertaken by states, NGOS, IGOS and even MNCs.

Contemporary thinking in dealing with transnational issues has tended to follow in line with securitization theory reasoning. Securitization theory is a concept centred on the language in which various issues within the political sphere are termed and the consequences of that very same language has in orchestrating policy (Taureck 2006, 3). The trade of illegal narcotics has been deemed as a security issue and therefore the responses to the trade of illegal narcotics have been centred primarily through law enforcement measures.

The idea of securitization could be viewed as a simple consequence of state centric reasoning in relation to foreign threats. The traditional notion of the state security (which will be discussed later in this thesis) deems the protection of a state's borders and its rule of law as the most important function of the state. Such reasoning then focuses on policing, seizure and incarcerations.

The global offensive on illegal narcotics can be traced to the 1961 United Nations Single Convention on Illegal Drugs, which sets out the various institutional and definitional frameworks on the engagement of the illegal narcotic trade (UNODC, Single Convention On The Drug Trade 1961). The 1961 convention on illegal drugs provided a framework in which the trade and use of drugs were institutionally criminalized. Nations that adopted the framework had to take a hard stance in tackling the trade. This is exemplified by the conventions article three which allowed

the rescheduling of drugs from that of one to two, allowing greater control of substances deemed as schedule 1 narcotics. The convention also set out the framework of a logistical and law enforcement framework to deal with the narcotic trade (article 4) (UNODC, Single Convention On Narcotic Drugs 1961 )

In engaging with the international drug trade, the main stance states have undertaken has been the criminalization of the industry and those who profit from it. In many nations in the world, those who consume the narcotics are criminalised too. An example of the criminalization of drug users has been recently seen in a "War on Drugs" led by the Philippines' president Rodrigo Duterte whereby , over six thousand individuals in the Philippines have been killed since his inauguration on July 25th 2016 for alleged links to the countries rampant drug trade (Regencia 2016) .These individuals had been killed by on duty police and alleged police led death squads formed by president Duterte himself as highlighted by retired police testimonials in the country (Lamb 2016). The most disturbing reality is that of those individuals killed where in fact drug users (and at times addicts) or simply everyday day civilians. The issue of the murder of innocent individuals had led to the president himself to offer a public apology to the nation (Romero 2016)

Tackling transnational criminal networks in their dealing with the trade of narcotics has been an issue that has put strain on communities in which the war on drugs have been fought, but also a major strain on the economies of the nations which undertake this battle. The war on drugs is estimated to have cost the United Sates alone over 1 trillion dollars over the past 40 years in measures to curb the drug trade whilst paying over 51 billion dollars annually to fight the war on drugs (OConnell 2015).

The same scenario of high spending exists in Europe too with the United Kingdom spending over 3 billion pounds annually on its war on drugs (Runciman 2012) .This figure pales in comparison to the GDPs of entire nations on the African continent with Guinea Bissau and Sierra Leone's entire states budgets not exceeding over a billion dollars, with Guinea Bissau GDP valued at $960 million whilst Sierra Leones sits at a GDP of $678 million (World Bank 2017).

It has been argued that the continued war on drugs has led to a greater unregulated trade in illegal narcotics which in turn has increased the profitability of the drug trade (Lopez 2017). A case could be made by looking at the cocaine trade in which a kilo of the pure substance would cost around $2000 from cocaine farms in the jungles of Columbia. This figure through various dealers and traffickers is marked up to the eventual price off over $200 000 when reaching a destination such as Australia (see figure 4) (Stratfor 2013). This high figure in mark-up reflects the amount of profit made throughout the trafficking.

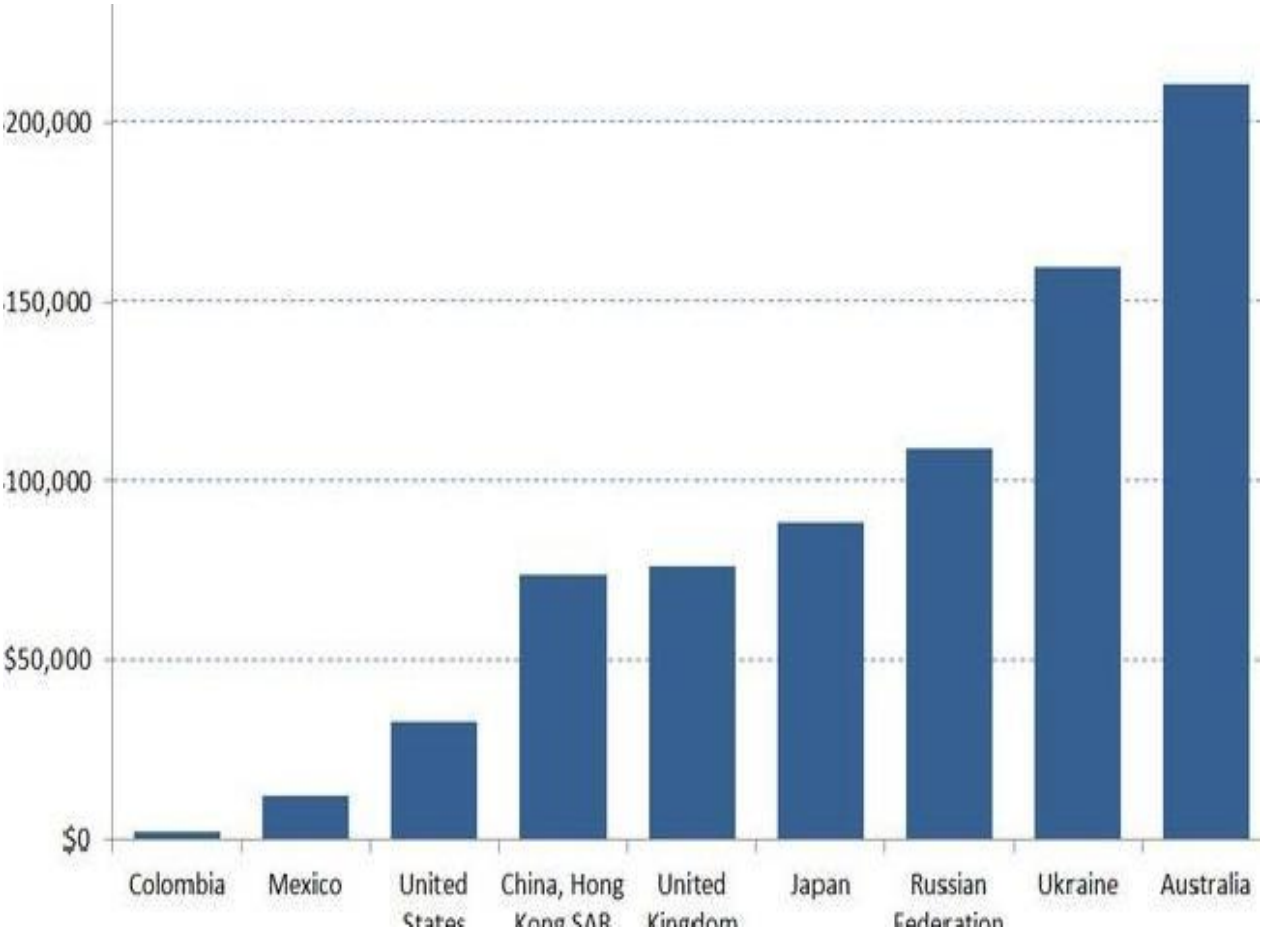



*Figure 4 Graph indicating the price of trafficked cocaine from Columbia starting at $2000 a kilo to a maximum of over $200 000 a kilogram when reaching a destination such as Australia (Stratford 2013)*

In retrospect, the war on drugs victories are small or non-existent in comparison to the various battles it has engaged in. A major victory on the war on drugs has been the gradual decreasing of farmers who cultivate agricultural based narcotics such as opioids especially in South American states such as Bolivia (Margolis 2015). Despite there being a gradual decrease in farmers cultivating narcotics in nations such as Bolivia there has been a lack of correlation between the decreasing of farmers in cultivating opioids for narcotic use, and the ever-growing trafficking market coming from these nations (ibid). Ever since Bolivia orchestrated its own war on drugs by kicking out the American DEA in 2008, it managed to decrease the number of drug cultivators. Bolivia has taken radical steps in dealing with drugs by allowing farmers to cultivate cocoa but for different purposes such as toothpaste and therefore not criminalizing subsistence farmers who once farmed cocoa for cocaine production (Margolis 2015).

Notwithstanding these realities contemporary engagements with the narcotic trade have still focused primarily on law enforcement measures but despite the universally acknowledged failure of the criminalisation of the industry, policy makers have continued this path. The narcotic trade has turned into one which has funded various other illicit trades such as human trafficking, gun running and even terrorism and through these matters the trade of narcotics has fundamentally become a security issue with the ability to destabilise entire communities and even entire states. It's been uncovered by the American DEA that al Qaeda have incorporated a business model of using proceeds of from the trafficking of narcotics through north Africa to fund human trafficking operations by smuggling individuals from India to Spain (Vardi 2009).

With the drug trade being able to fund organisations that not only undermine states borders through the trafficking of individuals, but also helps fund groups that commit acts deemed as terrorism, states have increasingly reinforced a security centred approach in engaging with these threats.

Efforts in engaging with narcotic trafficking as mentioned have become less of an individual state concern and has taken a more multi state agenda. In such an environment multi state and multi- agency operations have manifested themselves in which operations such as the West African Coast Initiative, the topic of this paper has arisen to deal with narcotic trafficking.

## Research Objective

The papers research objective is to understand the capacity of transnational IGO efforts in engaging with the transnational criminal narcotic trade on the West Coast of Africa by engaging with the West African Coast Initiative. This paper seeks to understand the impact of such strategies and the limitations they face when engaging with Non-state actor threats such as criminal organisations.

## Research question

To what extent has the WACI initiative succeeded in combatting illicit drug trafficking and organised crime in West Africa?

## Hypothesis

This research assumes that the WACI initiative has had limited success in curbing the illicit drug trade in West Africa due to many factors such as the institutional weakness of the West African state and the underfunding of WACI initiative,

## Methodology

The paper will work within a 12-year period between 2004 to 2016. The reason for the chosen allocated time is to measure the prevalence of drug trafficking before the WACI initiative in 2010 and after the creation of WACI. The reasoning behind the use of the 12-year period is to analyse the first 6 years WACI had been existence from 2010 with the signing of the Freetown agreement to the time of the writing of the paper being 2016. This data gathered will then be used comparatively with data of these states 6 years prior the signing of the initiative to provide an explicit picture of transnational criminal operations within these states and if any improvement has occurred with the implementation of the initiative.

This therefore will lead to a before and after method to be used in conjunction with process tracing. The before and after method is understood as a research design to analyse the effects of a certain variable once an added property is instated in that environment. In the case of the paper that property would be the WACI initiative in the selected case studies of Liberia and Guinea Bissau. When using the before and after method there are two means in which the case study can be measured in a controlled or uncontrolled manner. A controlled before and after method requires the researcher to control the environment in which variables operate in. This paper will be using an uncontrolled method since the researcher cannot control the environment of variables tested due to them being states, intuitions and transnational criminal organisations (Sedgwick 2014, 1).

This paper will be one centred on qualitative research in achieving the goals set up in the papers research objective. Qualitative research is understood as being a form of research that allows the researcher to examine experiences which can't be easily quantified to a specific numerical value. This is done through a multitude of different ways such as interviews, content analysis of various forms of media and information, observations of group discussions and even biographies (Hennink, Hutter and Bailey 2011, 9) .

Guinea Bissau and Liberia will be used as case study nations since the two nations have vastly different political and socio-economic contexts in which transnational criminal units of WACI have functioned in. Data gathered on the two case studies will be analysed in relation to West African coast initiatives aims and goals:

*The aims and goals of WACI briefly are:*

1) *Enhancing national and local judicial institutions to build better capacity to build better regional and international coordination and cooperation*
2) *The creation of Transnational Criminal Units for greater interagency cooperation and regional and international law enforcement operations*
3) *Increasing regional capacity especially in WACI abiding states*
4) *WACI seeks to improve security reform in participating WACI nations (UNODC 2017)*

*The indicators to be used in the paper to determine the success of the WACI initiative*

- Arrests and seizures made in relation to narcotic trafficking and handling in selected case studies. This will be collected through codified data through reliable sources such the WACO commissions reports
- Operational ability of transnational criminal units in achieving their prescribed goals set out by the WACI. This data will primarily have collected through interviews
- The decline in import/export and drugs from the selected case studies

Since the West African Coast Initiative is a multiagency initiative the paper will therefore engage with central documents from agencies such as UNODC, UNOWA/DPA, DPKO and INTERPOL in relation to narcotic trafficking in West Africa.

Documents such as The UNDOC annual Drug reports, The ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on Drugs, The African Union Plan of Action Drug Enforcement Masterplan (2013 -2017) and GIBA evaluation reports on the selected case studies will be engaged with.

Through engaging with such policy documents a document analysis research method will be undertaken. Document analysis is understood as a systematic procedure for reviewing and evaluating documents of both electronic and printed material which is examined and interpreted with the goal of understanding meaning and eventually developing empirical knowledge. (Bowen 2009, 27)

The paper will also use interviews to obtain expert opinion on the topic of WACI and the drug trade in West Africa. Individuals such as Mark Shaw of UCT a security specialist in West Africa, and advisor to the West African Coast Initiative, Mr. Pierre Lapaque the UNODC West Africa regional Representative and Amodo de Andres a current UNODC representative for Central America and the Caribbean who was instrumental in the creation of the WACI initiative in 2010.

The paper will also seek to get into contact with Interpol offices in both Liberia and Guinea Bissau to get an understanding about what issues are occurring on the ground, with further supplementation by contacting these states local South African embassies for interviews. Interviews will be analysed by asking a standardised set of questions amongst different participants to gather different opinions. The paper will utilize discourse analysis which is understood as the analysis of language in its widest sense through conversation, non-verbal interaction, images symbols and even documents (Shaw and Bailey 2009)

The snowball method will also be used in engaging with the interviewees to create a larger pool of interviews the snowball method is a referral method of contacting participants which consists of identifying respondents who are then used to refer the interviewer to other researchers in the field of interest (Atkinson and Flint 2001, 1) .

## Limitations

The limitations this paper has in research has primarily been situated in the reality that there is no parity in relation to data. Data and figures on drug trafficking in the selected case study nations are either too scarce or unreliable. This has led the researcher to take the position to gain additional resources by the usage of interviews to create greater parity between the hypothesis of the paper and actual data found within this study.

# Chapter 2

# Theoretical framework and literature review

The aim of this papers literature review is to provide a comprehensive understanding on various pre-existing literature on issues surrounded by the international drug trade. This chapter will first discuss the concept of transnational organised crime and then discuss how global governance structures have dealt with the trade and how these very same structures have been critiqued in their engagement of transnational matters.

## What is transnational organised crime

The idea of transnational organised crime has expanded over time. An early articulation of what is deemed as organised crime was presented by Schelling (1971) who makes the argument that organised criminal syndicates primary goal could be understood as groups imposing protection on both legal and illegal entities as a means of acquiring a profit. Gambetta (1993) adds to this understanding by viewing organised crime groups as having a governance structure directed to illegal activities to make a profit.

Wannenburg (2006) understands the basic idea of organised crime through the United Nations interpretation as codified in the 2000 Palermo convention on transnational organised crime which is stated as

a) *"Organized criminal group" shall mean a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences established in accordance with this Convention, to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit; (UNODC 2000 ,5)*.

This document states organised crime as being a structured group of three or more persons existing with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes. The Palermo convention lists crimes such as money-laundering, corruption, the illicit trafficking in endangered species, human and drug trafficking as transnational organised crime. (UNODC 2000 ,3)

This understanding of organised crime between Schellings conception to that of the Palermo convention view organised crime as a group of individuals orchestrating criminal activities. This definition has been met with criticism due to its broad nature. It lumps together neighbourhood hooligan youths with no influence outside their limited jurisdiction with international drug cartels with GDP's the size of small nations.

Symeonidou-Kastanidou (2007) provides an important definition which she argues needs to be understood in reference with the Palermo's convention on the definition of organised crime such as them being innately entrepreneurial with an abundance of financial capital to articulate their goals that being the accumulation of wealth on a massive scale.

The difference between the two definitions highlights an important distinction that being intent, therefore highlighting that a collection of individuals with criminal aspirations as not necessarily being a criminal organisation but rather sufficient in capacity in its ability to commit criminal acts. Such a distinction therefore brings forth new ways to judge, prosecute and conceptualise strategies in engaging with transnational criminal organised syndicates.

The linking and dealing with transnational organised crime as an issue to be dealt within the realm of international relations and not just a one that could be dealt with as a political project has been articulated by Williams (1994). Transnational Organised Crime is an issue in which states don't have the capacity to deal with solely since operationally transnational criminal

syndicates work within multiple states and therefore exist outside a singular state borders and jurisdiction. This conundrum as argued by Williams (1994) forces states to create multi governmental agencies within the realm of international relations to deal with this transnational threat that disregards state borders.

Drug trafficking in which this paper will focus on as a by-product of transnational organised crime is one that needs to be dealt with as an international relations issue and this has been brought forth by Chawla and Pietschmann (2005) who argue that the trafficking of commonly banned substances between states falls within the description of transnational organised crime.

This idea of commonly banned substances has been furthered by the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 which specified lists of various banned substances banned in over 189 UN abiding states in which the transnational trade of such substances is deemed as a crime.

**Global governance and TOC.**

CIGI (2012) argues that due to the reality of the narcotic trade being transnational in nature it therefore needs to be viewed as a global priority. Multi regional agencies can help coordinate the actions of states in engaging with the transnational narcotic trade. This claim therefore centres the positioning of global governance in helping deal with the TOC.

Multi regional agencies despite working within a global governance paradigm, prosecutions of those indicted still work within a state's local judicial structures as stated by the by the African Union Plans of Action on Drug Control (African Union 2012). This reality therefore leads to an

understanding that a crucial aspect in prosecuting drug cases is the structural strength of domestic courts. The problem with a reliance of local law enforcement structures to deal and prosecute drug related issues is that for many African states weak judicial and law enforcement structures characterise them. Schwartz (2004) argues that for many African states, conflict has left many African law enforcement structures not fully functional but even as source of human insecurity and corruption in themselves,

Such literature therefore reflects that even if global governance is central in the provision of strategies in dealing with the narcotic trade, the state is still central in the implementation of these strategies. Such revelations therefore put African state capacity in dealing with transnational organised crime.

Organised crime which at first was seen as a crime perpetuated by highly organised European, North American and Latin American syndicates now have ever growing numbers of East Asian and West African syndicates. The evolving makeup of these syndicates has brought to question the construction of these criminal syndicates on the African continent due to an alleged link which criminal organisations share with terrorist groups: this is termed the crime terror nexus.

The crime terror nexus is defined by Wang (2010) as encompassing two components that being straightforward links by terrorists to criminal activities as a s source of funding such as drug trafficking and secondly the linkages and mutually beneficial relationships shared between independent criminal organisations and terrorist groups. (Wang 2010, 1)

Taylor and Husler (2003) argue that a crime –terrorism nexus exists in which warlords to terrorist groups tend to double up as criminal organisations to further fund their own political and monetary agendas. Farah (2011) further adds to this claim that the crime and terror nexus had

occurred in the case of Liberia which under the leadership of Charles Taylor, the government directly negotiated with criminal syndicates from across the world in the trade of blood diamonds to acquire military machinery to prolong the civil conflict. Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout (also known as the merchant of death) was instrumental in supplying arms to the armies of Charles Taylor in Liberia. (Lipman 2009, 9)

This nexus between criminal organisations has been discussed by the UNDOC (2015) has argued that despite the relationship in which transnational criminal organisations have had with groups promoting civil conflict it has also had a major impact in corrupting governance in the sub-region .This idea is shared by O'Regan and Thompson (2013) who looks at the power of transnational criminal organisations as having the ability not only to bribe those in power but to entrench themselves within governance structures such as the presidency as seen in the case of Guinea Bissau.

Soberon (1997) adds to the idea of drugs, bribery and corruption being a destabilizing influence in the functioning of democratic structures since bribery and corruption in relation to drugs have social and economic ramifications such as violence health care risks and a lack governance accountability.

Koroma, Diallo, Gueye and Ikoh (2013) further add to this argument by highlighting that despite the various regional and international mechanisms in dealing with transnational crime, Nigerian criminal elements have had a history of infiltrating the states parliament whilst increasing their grasp on greater legislation and judicial power. This observation therefore puts into question the impartiality of governance structures when engaging with criminal elements. Cases as recently as

of 2016 had seen members of the Nigerian drug enforcement agency relating to Brazilian drug cartels in facilitating drug trafficking from Latin America to West Africa. ( Adelani 2016)

Transnational syndicates operating in West Africa have focused primarily in the illegal trade of narcotics due to the growing ease of Latin American syndicates using West Africa as a transit zone. The reasoning behind the encroachment of West Africa within the global narcotic trade could be understood by Stares (1996) who makes the argument that globalisation, has allowed the for the creation of a borderless world in which greater criminal links can be harboured between criminal groups across the world. The reasons for West Africa being used as a trafficking destination has been discussed by Ellis (2009) primarily been due to the curtailing of Caribbean to European routes by drug enforcement agencies, the proximity in which West Africa is to that of Europe and finally the weak law enforcement structures that allow criminal organisations easier access to nations on the West African coast.

Williams and Godson (2002) further reinforce the arguments presented by Satres and Ellis that an important factor that has led to the creation of transnational criminal syndicates alongside globalisation has been the fragility of states in a post-cold war world where weak states are seen by transnational criminal syndicates as the perfect environments for business. Weak states can be characterised as states which have recognised central authorities but weak instrumental capacity in delivering positive political goods and assuring the rights for its citizens but still can coordinate government sanctioned strategies through its institutions. Rotberg (2003) defines nations such as Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka and Indonesia as weak states and not as failed. The biggest difference between a weak state and that of failed, is that of lawlessness and the lack of a central authority to guide policy decisions.

The aforementioned idea by Williams and Godson (2002) shares parallels with work presented by Shelly (1995) who argues that transnational criminal organisations threaten the running of the state by not only weakening state apparatus but by also by putting into question the role of the state in its monopoly of resources and violence. A case of the monopoly over violence of a state being under the control drug of trafficking interests had been seen in the case Guinea Bissau in which the state military was complicit in the trade of trafficking drugs under former president Vieira (Spiegal 2013)

Such examples as Guinea Bissau reflect that institutions or the personnel that exists in them can be infiltrated therefore leading to the situation that intuitions can be subverted but even worse, can be used to perpetuate the trade.

The idea of globalisation and transnational crime has been further argued by Makarenko (2004) in which he presents the black hole thesis where fragile or failed states are used as headquarters to orchestrate organised crime through the inability of weak state machinery to effectively engage with transnational organised crime within its borders. Hansen (2011) argues that weak states are the perfect environment for transnational criminal syndicates to operate in due to government structures not being able to adequately engage with them. Hasen provides the idea of ineffective border controls being advantageous to TOC syndicates since it would allow for the easier smuggling of illegal goods across state borders.

In articulating ways to deal with issues such as drug trafficking, institutions have been used as the prime focal point in engaging with these problems. To understand how institutions, work, an idea of what these regimes consist of becomes important.

**International Regimes and transnational TOC**

Krasner (1982) states that international regimes are defined as principles norms and decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge in each issue area. Haggard and Simmons (1987) further expand on these ideas of how regimes could be viewed in a functionalist lens and therefore compliance to the regime would further strengthen those mechanisms.

Such institutional ideas have been levelled as various forms of criticisms Grieco (1988) argues that liberal institutionalism fails to address the way states are willing to facilitate cooperation that is generated by international anarchy. This assumption therefore reaffirms an earlier discussed idea that international institutions can provide provisions in how to engage with transnational threats but the responsibility in articulating these strategies still falls on domestic government. When a state's own machinery is weak in orchestrating international provisions on a mutual issue, the entire mutual endeavour in solving the issue is undermined by the weakness of a state within that mutual group. This idea simply means that one state not complying with a shared issue could undermine the solving of a problem within a set institutional structure.

In relation to the WACI initiative this criticism means that it's important for all countries to be on the same page because if not it would undermine the success of the entire initiative due to transnational organised crimes ability to work through the weakest link to continue its operations.

Further criticism has been presented by Waller (1988) through the idea of social individual dualism in which institutional thought prioritizes the macro over the individual and therefore a chasm emerges in dealing with societal issues by institutional mechanisms. This form of Macro

reasoning puts greater importance on securitised issues of the state that exist within the macro sphere and not of the social and human centred issues which occur within the state.

The idea of the limitation of institutions dealing with non-institutional factors has been supplementary argued by Gorges (2001) who argues institutional accounts rely heavily on exogenous, non-institutional or systemic variables to explain change such as NGOs. This scenario therefore questions the role of institutions but also if non-institutional factors should have greater priority than institutional forces. This argument therefore implies that institutional machinery finds itself unable to comprehensively explain phenomena that work outside the state which therefore limits responses to transnational organised crime issues.

## Global Governance and Policy Responses in Africa

Regimes and International organisations have acted in various ways in curbing the growing influence of transnational organisations. The United Nations in conjunction with the Palermo protocol released the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (2004) which elaborated views on what transnational crime is as stated by the Palermo protocol but also presented strategies in tackling TOC. A central strategy in engaging with TOC was the centrality of the state and regional bodies to forester international cooperation in engaging with TOC. This has been noted by Article 18 in the Palermo convention that deals with mutual assistance in the realm of legal information which states

*1)"States Parties shall afford one another the widest measure of mutual legal assistance in investigations, prosecutions and judicial proceedings in relation to the offences covered by this Convention as provided for in article 3 and shall reciprocally extend to one another similar assistance where the requesting State Party has reasonable grounds to suspect that the offence referred to in article 3, paragraph 1 (a) or (b), is transnational in nature, including that victims, witnesses, proceeds, instrumentalities or evidence of such offences are located in the requested State Party and that the offence involves an organized criminal group."(UNODC 2000 ,19)*

The idea of sharing law enforcement capacity across state lines had been discussed in Article 19 on Joint operations which states:

*"States Parties shall consider concluding bilateral or multilateral agreements or arrangements whereby, in relation to matters that are the subject of investigations, prosecutions or judicial proceedings in one or more States, the competent authorities concerned may establish joint investigative bodies. In the absence of such agreements or arrangements, joint investigations may be undertaken by agreement on a case-by-case basis. The States Parties involved shall ensure that the sovereignty of the State Party in whose territory such investigation is to take place is fully respected."* (*UNODC 2000 ,25)*

Therefore, regional bodies and states would engineer localised plans for engaging with TOC in their localities. The issue with the centrality of regional bodies in engaging with the narcotic problem is as highlighted earlier in the literature review, require the capacity of the state's governments who in some cases can be complicit in the drug trade therefore undermining the entire process.

The centrality of the state and regional bodies in engaging with TOC threats have been reflected through the Africa Unions various 'Plans of Action on Drug Control protocols with its most recent rendition providing a framework between the years of 2013-2017. The framework argues for states to strengthen legal frameworks to help in facilitating with the dealing of the drug trafficking threat

"(*I) Improved capacities of criminal justice system to investigate and prosecute as well as take other measures to contain drug related organised crimes" (African Union 2012 ,7)*

These issues have been further expanded in the *ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking organised crime and drug abuse in West Africa of 2008 -2011* (which was extended by an additional two years ) and its most recent rendition of 2015 -2019 which argue for greater

regional cooperation with global governance institutions such as the European Union to further help coordinate strategies in dealing with transnational criminal organisations (ECOWAS, Support to ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking 2013, 2) . The plan. promotes the idea of "complimentary coordination" meaning that various strategies by different regional organisations with often overlapping mandates should coordinate their actions in a seamless manner (ibid)

The WACI initiative is seen as the most logical step from the ground work set up by the African Union and ECOWAS in which Musa and Adeyemi (2015) argues as being a regional plan of action that's used to address the growing problem of illicit drug trafficking and organised crime. The WACI initiative states to fulfil its goals by providing joint strategies between states in helping build capacity in areas of law enforcement forensic border management and various other areas within state machinery that could be vulnerable to criminal exploits .WACI's main enforcement measure assuring that these strategies are fulfilled is through the setting up of transnational criminal units in each country that abides to the WACI initiative, manned with individuals from local law enforcement agencies .The WACI initiative seeks to also increase the capacity of financial intelligence units to monitor any irregularities that could manifest through transnational organised crime. Further detail as to the role and strategy of WACI follows in the next chapter.

The WACI initiative therefore conceptually is a multileveled strategy crossing various domestic government departments but also regional governments and international institutions such as the

UNDOC, Interpol, UNOWA and ECOWAS in helping provide a solution to narcotic trafficking (UNDOC 2016).

Despite these efforts criticism has been levelled. Annan (2015) argues that despite a greater push for a greater human centred policy orientation, efforts on the ground are still positioned on a criminal justice level which he argues should be seen as a public health concern instead of the heavily securitised approach in which the drug trade is engaged with. Drugs being viewed as a national health concern are due to the ramifications of drug addiction has had with the sharing of unsafe needles and the HIV infections that occur from that.

Obot (2013) discusses the severity of the drug trade in which 41 000 people on the African continent die on an annual basis due the use of drugs in comparison to 220 000 that die globally due to drug use. Obot further highlights how this drug use puts stress on healthcare infrastructure which could be exemplified in East African coastal cities where 221,000 of injection drug users are living with HIV and require medical treatment (Obot 2013, 4). This example reflects how the drug trade on the African continent becomes an issue that can lead to societal instability on a ground level and therefore a central issue to individual human security.

This literature therefore highlights the various limitations in dealing with drug trafficking from West Africa such as the misdiagnosis of the issue as presented by Annan to monetary constraints in dealing with the issue as presented by Obot.

# Theoretical Framework

Part of the problem in understanding responses to managing the drug trade in West Africa is that no one theoretical framework or lens captures the phenomenon at play. Furthermore, there are many actors within the chain such as the drug cartels, states, IGO's, individuals, each who alter the grasp of research if singled out. The drug trade is open to interpretation and analysis at many levels such as a transitional-globalised phenomenon, a political economy phenomenon, as a securitised issue and finally a global governance problem.

The paper will situate itself theoretically within the global governance paradigm and securitization theory to best understand the actions of States and IGO actors who facilitate the functioning of strategies to deal with the drug trade This paper will also use the paradigm of human security to help describe the actions of actors on a ground level who are impacted by the drug trade but fall outside the Global governance and Securitized agenda.

By using two or more theories this paper presents an integrative theoretical model in articulating the way the West African coast initiative has functioned. Integrative theories are theories that combine propositions from two or more prior existing theories to understand a selected issue (Elliot 2012)

## Global Governance theory

The concept of global governance is used as a point in recognising the political and economic implications of global change and how that has impacts upon domestic frameworks and governance structures.

Global governance theory arose out the remnants of regime theory that saw international governance as being one in which states could find a platform for cooperation through institutions which would help in engaging with narrow single-issue areas (Okereke and Bulkeley 2007, 14)

Unlike regime theory where the state is still viewed as central within international relations, Global Governance theory increases the number of actors and distributes the importance of actors engaging in IR (ibid). Global Governance theory can be defined as "*the sum of many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs".* Global governance is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action is taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest" (Commission on Global Governance 1995)

Importantly Global Governance examines how non-state influences are growing in importance vis-à-vis states, including non-state actors (e.g. transnational business, transnational civil society). Actors such as The International Monetary Fund, United Nations the ICC are central in the well-functioning of the international system in which states participate in since they play active roles in mediating the way states operate in ( Hägel 2011).

Despite these traits, Global Governance theories most distinguishing feature in comparison to traditional regime theory sees actors such as NGOS and private multinational non-state actors playing a role in global governance and therefore the bracket in which governance is orchestrated in is widened considerably. This theory therefore leads to the idea that cooperation could exist in

an anarchic world in which a range of actors can resolve issues through institutions leading global governance to work within a Neoliberal framework.

Global governance theory therefore can be used to understand how state and legitimate non-state actors (e.g. MNC) operate in engaging with a wide range of issues of governance in an increasingly interconnected globalised environment.

What is useful to draw from the global governance theoretical framework is the notion of the Jurisdiction gap; which refers to the gap between the increasing need for global governance in many areas and the lack of an authority with the power, or jurisdiction, to act (WHO 2016).

The lack of Universal Jurisdiction could be noted due to its impact on state sovereignty since universal jurisdiction would directly infringe on state sovereignty through foreign actors actively engaging in the running of the state. Domestic application of legal frameworks and policies is determined by the capacity, capabilities and will of states. When this is lacking from the state, and in the absence of a universal enforcer, a gap emerges compromising the effectiveness of tackling transnational issues,

The belief of global governance as flawed in its engagement with transnational crime has been situated in the TOC seminal document form the 2000 UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime does not adequately discuss the linkages between organized crime corruption, conflict, public health, global finance, and modern technology (Global Council on Foreign Relations 2013). This engagement with global governance therefore sees the prime medium in engaging with transnational criminal syndicates as being the state which through its apparatus has the supposed capacity to deal with this non-state threat.

The biggest issue with this assumption is that it does not consider the possibility of the capturing of a state's machinery by criminal syndicates. This prospect would greatly hamper the ability of any institutional reform and measures to engage with TOC and even worse a state's institutional apparatus could be used to help streamline a criminal syndicates operation. This form of state capture by criminal syndicates has occurred across the word and more specifically across the African continent where it has become common place for corrupt state officials to create alliances with various criminal groupings. An example of this arrangement has been seen in Nigeria in which drug traffickers have infiltrated the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) in which syndicates have not only attained travel documents but also documents classifying implicated narcotic traffickers as diplomats (Premium Times 2014) .

This inverting of institutional machinery by criminal syndicates highlights a reality in which the states very own machinery can be used to further a criminal objective and for that very same institutional machinery to become an extension of a criminal syndicates apparatus. This brings to question if it is possible for state machinery to deal effectively with non-state actors which can not only subvert state structures but in some cases, but challenge state power.

The threat in which state power has been challenged by the growth of transitional criminal syndicates has been exemplified by the case of the Mexico. In contemporary Mexico state power but most specifically the monopoly of state violence has been challenged by criminal organisations operating within the nation by the two biggest criminal organisations in the nation that being the Sinola Cartel and Los Zetas (Vasquez 2015)

The Sinola cartel and Los Zetas which both compromise various smaller gangs within their ranks have accumulated not only a sizeable arsenal of military grade equipment such as assault rifles

and rocket launchers but also some of the most advanced arsenals carried by private organisations that rivals the nations own military (Vasquez 2015).

This situation highlights a threat to state sovereignty not existing within the traditional sphere but of criminal organisations against the state for the goal of criminal enterprise and profit.

**Securitization theory**

In engaging with issues such as the drug trade and the non-state actors that have arisen, global governance structures have taken on a securitised approach in dealing with the threat. As highlighted earlier in the paper securitization theory is understood as a concept centred on the language in which various issues within the political sphere are termed and the consequences of those terms effect the articulation of policy.

State security has been traditionally looked at from a realist understanding of the "paramount priority of the state" and the belief that security extends downwards from state level to the individual who would get the bottom billing of security attention. (Liotta and Owen 2006) .

The traditional conception of state security rests on an epistemological assumption that presupposes that state interaction can be gaged and quantified through various "social truths" in which state actors objectively abide to, therefore there could be a positivist engagement with how state actors operate through the observation of social phenomena (Šulović 2010, 2) .

From this theoretical standpoint, supporters of the traditional notion of security quantify the various phenomena in international relations with the most central characteristic of IR that being the anarchic nature of the international system. From this position and via logical prioritization the most important function of a state in an anarchic environment is that of survival (ibid).

Through this analytical engagement the traditional notion of security tends to follow under realist rationality due to the basis that there are no supranational entities that govern the interactions between states and that individual states ultimately must prioritise their own wellbeing.

With states working in such a framework of anarchy, state security rests on the survival of the sovereign state and from this position state insecurity can primarily occur through foreign actors (or local as seen in the case of domestic drug cartels) seeking to question the makeup of the state's borders, operational capacities and most importantly sovereignty.

Logically adherents to this securitised approach put great emphasis on the ability of a state to protect itself since the main threat a nation has under a traditionalist notion of security has been other states and therefore a state's primary concern is not that of the wellbeing of its people but in fact the maintenance of a sovereign state and using its monopoly of violence.

The stance by global governance structures in dealing with narcotics trade had been codified by the UN through its 1988 convention of illegal narcotics that set up the parameters in which law enforcement mechanisms where to deal with the narcotic trade. The 1988 convention on illegal narcotics which is still in power today provides from article three onwards securitised steps in dealing with the drug trade through law enforcement measures such as suggestions on extradition and transnational law enforcement cooperation whilst using global governance institutions such as the UN as a medium to achieve its goals. This convention therefore produced the language of engaging with the drug trade as a highly securitised issue that requires a need for stringent law enforcement measures to deal with it.

Securitization theory and its focus on law enforcement does find itself limited in scope as argued by this paper. A securitised paradigm centres law enforcement and judicial mechanisms to deal

with issues of narcotic trafficking but not the societal factors that lead to the environment in which narcotic trafficking can exist.

This paper argues that this leads to a securitization gap in which law enforcement measures can tackle the crimes in which criminals perpetuate but are unable to deal with the environment which allows criminal activities to exist.

## A Human Security perspective

This shift from the prioritisation of traditional state security to that of human security could be viewed as a consequence of the end of the Cold War in which the biggest threats that the state would face would not be other states but in fact actors within the state. This shift from dealing with threats from outside the state to threats from within the state highlighted threats to the progressively centred individual. This centring of the individual in its relationship with the state would in 1994 be articulated and codified by the UNDP into 7 components of concerns in which the term human security would deal with (Liotta and Owen 2006, 42).

*1) Economic security: poverty; vulnerability to global economic change*

*2) Food security: hunger and famine; vulnerability to extreme climate events and agricultural changes*

*3) Health security: injury and disease; vulnerability to disease and infection*

*4) Environmental security: resource depletion; vulnerability to pollution and environmental degradation*

*5) Personal security: violence; vulnerability to conflicts, natural hazards, and "creeping" disasters*

*6) Community security: violations of the integrity of cultures; vulnerability to cultural globalization*

*7) Political security: political repression; vulnerability to conflicts and warfare*

This understanding of human security therefore centres new ways in which states engage with its populace and ultimately the needs of its populace. The way human security issues have been

dealt with have been through two major theoretical understandings of human security that being human security being defined as “freedom from fear” and “freedom from fear and want “.

Freedom from fear is an idea within human security thinking that puts paramount importance on the threat the state has in its ability to hurt and inflict pain on its own population and therefore this lens takes the state as the source of problems to individual security. This reasoning has supplemented debates on humanitarian intervention and the need to protect individuals. An explicit case in which the government was the central agent in providing human insecurity to its citizens can be exemplified by state sponsored violence during the Rwandan genocide in 1994 in which the government and its security apparatus perpetrated acts of genocide on an Tutsi ethnic minority (United Nations, Outreach Program on the Rwandan Genocide and The United Nations 2016).

Whilst freedom of want reflects all the needs individuals need necessary for their survival and fulfilment of their individual desires in acquiring positive political goods from the society in which the individual finds themselves in (United Nations Trust for Human Security 2016).

The United Nations has provided a comprehensive approach in engaging with fulfilling human security needs that being human security concerns should be fundamentally context specific in their engagement and therefore wide blanketing strategies cannot work within a human security paradigm (ibid). Another important aspect in engaging with human security concerns is the prioritisation of a bottom up approach as stated previously, since a Human security perspective seeks to reconfigure asymmetries of power in which the most vulnerable in society have an orchestrated and impactful voice to those in power (United Nations Trust for Human Security 2016).

Using a human security perspective in the engagement with this paper will allow this perspective to shed light on issues the securitization gap and global governance cannot articulate that being the effects the narcotic trade has on the micro level and the environments that help facilitate it. Human security as mentioned works from the bottom up and in areas in which global governance has no reach in.

# Chapter 3

## Overview of the Drug trade, human security and institutional response in Africa

The contemporary environment of the African narcotic trade is one that has become highly sophisticated and extremely profitable as highlighted earlier in the paper with West Africa becoming a central destination in the trafficking of narcotics into Europe and Asia.

The rest of the continent has found itself following similar trends to the West African region with East Africa slowly becoming a major transitory location for the trafficking of heroin from the middle east to Europe (The Economist 2015).

### Human security and the drug trade

The drug trade by its very nature is a threat to human security since narcotics are goods directed at individuals and entire communities for profit and dependence. Further, the drug trade benefits from conditions of impoverishment and unemployment by providing alternate means of production and livelihood. The drug trade feeds into human insecurity given its illicit nature that relies on trafficking, smuggling and violence. (Goodwin 2007, 3)

The drug trade results in various primary and secondary effects to human security within a community. The first and most visible effect of the drug trade in societies which consume these goods are health related issues connected to the use of illegal narcotics. Drug addiction is the most evident consequence to drug trafficking and consequential consumption.

On the African continent drug consumption has led to an increasing section of society finding themselves addicted to a wide range of narcotics such as the increasing rate of methamphetamine addiction on the west coast of Africa due to domestic dealers gaining the expertise in the manufacturing of methamphetamines (Mungai 2015)

Drugs and societal poverty has also led to disturbing trends by those addicted, heroin addicts across the sub-continent have uncovered a new means of drug use in the form of flesh bonding. Flesh bonding is the act in which drug addicts conduct blood transfusions amongst themselves to reap the effects of their partners highs (ibid).

The issue of flesh bonding reflects an immediate threat drugs have on individual health and the ability of health care institutions to engage with the problem. This is due to the reality of unsanitary needles used whilst taking drugs or simply unsafe drug taking actions like flesh bonding provide to not only increase the rate of transmittable illness such as HIV amongst drug users.

This reality is compounded by the fact many states in Africa do not have sufficient capacity to provide adequate healthcare not only to individuals addicted to narcotics but those affected with transmittable diseases such as HIV too. With this reality understood drug addicted individuals provide a double burden on limited and often stressed health care capacity.

Outside the threat narcotics provide to the health of a people, the issue of general safety and political accountability become a central concern. An example of such had been exemplified by the indictment of Malian President Touré's administration in which top government and security officials were connected to a plane from Venezuela which carried over 9 tons of cocaine that crashed in a makeshift airstrip for the trafficking of narcotics (Gberie 2016, 6) .

When drug traffickers and those who occupy government positions work with one another it provides two major problems. The first issue being accountability of government officials who now find themselves more accountable to the whims of drug traffickers then their own constituencies. Another major issue is that drug proceeds cannot be adequately used within government strategies to uplift its populace due to this capital coming into the country from the black market and therefore cannot be adequately taxed and used by the states own budgets.

The way the drug trade has effected human security is one that is not only multifaceted in its ways it effects individuals but also multileveled in its effects on policy and economics. The drug trade has affected human security in which through a war on drugs entire communities have found themselves being affected by government sponsored suppression.

This has been exemplified in the case of Liberia in which the police enforce rigorous routine slum raids in communities thought of being centres of drugs and criminality that has led innocent people to be displaced through these government sanctioned raids (The New Republic 2013)

Despite this reality in which greater human insecurity has occurred through the manufacturing, trafficking and eventual use of drugs some groups affected by the drug trade have been able to become benefactors of the trade outside criminal networks and ironically helped facilitate a widening of these groups own human security.

The increasing of individual utility and communal income has been reflected most visibly in rural farming communities that through the cultivation of narcotics such as coca, opium and cannabis fetch over 10 times the amount of normal agricultural produce. This situation has led these communities to gather more expandable income in which they have been able to use on education and even healthcare (Gautreau 2012, 70) . Drug trafficking revenues have provided

an additional sum of income to individuals and groups that lack substantial government support to improve their own society and therefore proceeds from the drug trade provide and additional safety net.

The ability for individuals and groups within society to engage with the production and eventual trafficking of narcotics speaks to a deeper issue within these groups that being the human security threat of economic and societal vulnerability.

The use of military and law enforcement measures to engage with a threat that stems from societal and economic vulnerability has created a form of dissonance in which the effects of the trade are engaged with but not the various causes, many of which are centred on human security concerns

**Brief origins of West African drug trade**

The origins of West Africa becoming a central destination in the trade of illicit narcotics could be traced to a multitude of causes from the return of West African soldiers from world war two coming back with cannabis seeds from South East Asia to the growth and expansion of west African criminal syndicates in the 1980s through its diaspora (NDLEA 2016). There have been cases of Nigerian drug seizures across the world as seen with Raifiu Ojikuto, a 26-year-old Nigerian medical student who was found in the possession of heroin in Dublin Ireland the 1960s who was the countries first person in the nation to be arrested on drug charges (McGrath 2012) (Andres 2018)

These examples reflect the reality that drugs and narcotics are not a recent phenomenon in the region but as this paper will argue that despite this, there has been unprecedented growth in West Africa's role in the functioning of the global narcotic trade since the end of the cold war .This growing centrality in West Africa's involvement in the international drug trade has been due to various factors the most prominent being the role of transnational networks of people and ease of communication between these networks through greater globalisation.

The centring of West Africa in the transnational narcotic trade has been originating in the 1980s when South American cartels sought new markets in Europe after ever increasing saturation of the North American market. (Ellis 2009, 181). These events led to South American cartels through the 1980s creating linkages to West African criminal groupings to help foster a point of transit for drugs into Europe.

West Africa provided a major opportunity to drug traffickers from South America due to the weak state machinery that characterised the West African state that drug cartels where able to exploit. The infiltration of drug interests in West African national politics has been seen through numerous African presidential administrations from the managing of presidential campaigns by Russian mobsters as seen in Sierra Leon for Joseph Memo to the creation of a transnational narcotic interest group in localised politics in Guinea Bissau (which will be discussed in depth later in the paper) (Ellis 2009, 182)

The narcotic trade in West Africa has grown substantially in which traditional markets for cannabis had always existed but with rise of globalisation harder narcotics such as Cocaine, heroin and even methamphetamines have begun to take ever increasing market share in the trade of illegal narcotics on the African continent (Carrier and Klantsching 2012).

The growing importance of West Africa in the realm of the trafficking of narcotics from South America has been exemplified by its meteoric rise in trafficking figures. This could be exemplified by that 0.8 tons where trafficked through West Africa in 1998 to 5.5 tons by 2007 for the global market (World Drug Report 2016). Despite this increase the amount being seized by the law enforcement agencies across West Africa would drop to 1.9 tons as of 2015.

This figure of 1.9 tons is one that has been scrutinised due to traffickers finding new means to traffic drugs and avoid detection in bringing drugs into West Africa (ibid). A new way drug trafficker has used to bring drugs into West Africa has been through the use of submarines which have been able to circumnavigate various detection measures by maritime law enforcement (De Andres 2017).

Another hypothesised way traffickers have been able to smuggle drugs into West Africa has been through the shipping of smaller quantities of narcotics into West Africa at a time. This strategy has been hypothesised to minimise the risk of detection by law enforcement agencies ( Pachico 2013).

The possibility in which smaller loads of trafficked narcotics entering West Africa could be exemplified by the figure in which only 175 kilograms of cocaine was seized by law enforcement agencies of the coast of west Africa in the year of 2013 a far cry from the multi ton seizures experienced a few years prior (ibid).

The trafficking of narcotics through the Sahel has presented a problem in which those involved in smuggling drugs through the Sahel at times are individuals and groups involved with terrorist activities such as al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and terrorist groups who have pledged support to the Islamic state (de Andres 2017). The proceeds used to smuggle narcotics has led to the funding of terrorist activities therefore bringing into light a crime terror nexus which exists between that of drug traffickers and terrorist groupings operating in the Sahel (de Andres 2017) .Political instability in Mali by separatists has been funded through money from the trafficking of narcotics through the Sahel which has also funded the activities of al Shahab on the east coast of Africa in its attacks in Kenya (West African Commision On Drugs 2014) .

These examples especially that of Al Shabab provide a frightening possibility that the trafficking of narcotics on the West Coast of Africa has wider continental ramifications through its ability to fund terrorist activates across the entire subcontinent.

Drugs trafficked from the West African coast transported through the Sahel on route to northern Africa has been estimated to be at around 40 to 50 metric tons of narcotics annually ( Caulderwood 2015). This figure presented against the backdrop of seizure figures of 1.9 tons of narcotics seized off the coast of West Africa highlights the possibility of new methods in which drugs have been trafficked through the West African coast in which drug enforcement agencies have been unable to identify.

This example reflects the major disconnect between law enforcement measures and manners in which narcotics traffickers have found new means to circumnavigate procedures of detection and identification.

**Institutional responses to the drug trade**

In order to understand the impact of the West African Coast Initiative it is important that a contextual understanding of the international ,regional and sub regional initiatives it works alongside is noted .The reason for this is that WACI is just one transnational mechanism in enforcing and policing transnational criminal syndicates in the West Coast of Africa and by its very own design requires the help of various other institutional frameworks in order to supplement its strategies (De Andres 2017 ) . In this chapter, brief explanations of these various initiatives will be presented.

On an international level, the biggest overarching framework in dealing with the trafficking of illegal narcotics has been illustrated by United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Drugs which occurred in the April of 2016 (UNGASS 2016) . The special assembly's goals as stated by its outcome document was on the greater recognition of the importance of civic structures and capacity building on a local level to tackle the narcotic trade (UN General Assembly Special Session 2016).

This positioning of a bottom up approach therefore centres the initial prevention of drug abuse and the importance on the creation of structures that have the ability to keep individuals from engaging with the drug trade such as the creation and maintenance of recreational centres (UN General Assembly Special Session 2016, 4) .This could be viewed as an important dimension and step forward in engaging with a greater human orientated approach to drug trade outside.

Another important aspect within the special session on drugs was a highlighting of the secondary impacts the drug trade has on issues on healthcare. The outcome document viewed issues such as the connection between the use of drugs and transmitted illnesses Such as HIV/Aids. The special session insisted that UN member states put a greater importance in infrastructural support to healthcare in helping individuals suffering from drug addiction and those affected by illnesses caused by using drugs (UN General Assembly Special Session 2016, 5).

A central UNGASS outcome was the acknowledgment of the intersectional nature of the drug trade and various other criminal activities. Issues such as human trafficking and the sale of arms and ammunition where noted as being intertwined in its connection with the trafficking of narcotics and its ability to fund and be funded by these illicit acts. (UN General Assembly Special Session 2016, 5).

In a larger analysis of the UNGASS of 2016 it provides a framework in which regional, sub regional and state institutions can adopt in their own localised settings.

On a regional level, Africa's seminal response in engaging with the international drug trade has been through the African Unions Plan of action of 2013-2017 as discussed in the papers literature review. The current plan of action builds on the African Unions previous plan of action "2007-2013". The AU plan of action of 2013-2017 primarily seeks to provide a framework for greater continental, regional and national integration in the engagement in dealing with the narcotic trade (African Union 2012, 5) . The plan of action seeks to do this by using the African union as a medium to facilitate the engagement of different regional economic communities in finding ways to fight the transnational trade in illegal narcotics.

Sub regionally with a focus on West Africa, various initiatives have occurred in dealing with the transnational trade of narcotics The ECOWAS regional community has the title of being the first sub regional grouping in the world to sign a political declaration to deal with the growing drug threat via the Abuja declaration of 2008.

The Abuja declaration made West African states accountable to finding measures to deal with the growing trade by the setting up of new institutions like the WACI. The outcome of the Abuja Declaration had been the creation of an ECOWAS action plan which sets out the parameters which would later provide the groundwork for the ECOWAS Plan of action of 2008 to 2014.

The ECOWAS plan of action on Drugs brought forth the creation of tangible structures to deal with the illegal narcotic trade affecting the West African region (ECOWAS, ECOWAS policy stratagy on the impact of drug traficking in west africa 2008) . The *ECOWAS Plan Of Action On Drugs* created a ECOWAS commission with tools and personal dedicated to providing adequate support to West African law enforcement agencies to help support domestic operations in dealing with the trafficking of illegal narcotics (ECOWAS, ECOWAS policy stratagy on the impact of drug traficking in west africa 2008, 24) .

The ECOWAS Commission through its creation has been able to create linkages with Interpol who through domestic law enforcement agencies have collaborated in Joint Police Simultaneous operations across West Africa that in 2012 led to the seizing of eight tons of cocaine (ECOWAS 2008, 24). The ECOWAS commission therefore provides a wider framework for various agencies dealing with the illegal narcotic trade to come together and provide a multiagency in dealing with the illegal narcotic trade.

Despite the Abuja declaration of 2008 being a seminal framework in contemporary dealing with the drug trade the sub region has had various percussing strategies to deal with the drug trade

The first acknowledged strategy to deal with the drug trade sub regionally and oldest has been the West African Joint Operations initiative. WAJO was set up in 2000 in a collaborative effort by the Nigerian drug enforcement agency and the United States drug enforcement agency to provide law enforcement mechanisms to deal with drug trade in West Africa .WAJO focused on intelligence gathering and cross border operations amongst states in West Africa . (INCSR 2003, 13) WAJO as a framework had been fraught with problems of underfunding and the lack of capacity to fill out basic operational tasks in engaging and dealing with the drug trafficking as exposed by Wiki leaks cables between by American officials as having "woeful" capacity and funding shortages (Wiki Leaks 2008) .This lack of operational capacity lead WAJO in not being functional over course of 2007-2008 due to the NDLEA's focusing on the then Nigerian president elections due to funding shortages . Despite these issues WAJO provided the first framework for cross border cooperation and therefore could be understood as providing a vital first step in strategies to deal with the drug trade in the region.

Another major regional initiative to deal drugs has been the West Africa Drug Regulatory Authority Network (WADRAN) set up in 2001 .Unlike WAJO ,WADRAN focused specifically on the trade of counterfeit drugs across the West African region .This network investigates the dealing of counterfeit drugs sold to consumers in open markets across the region and provides informational capacity to domestic enforcement agencies in West African nations to deal with the selling of counterfeit drugs .An example of the WADRAN in action has been through its collaborative efforts with the Nigerian National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) which through its collaboration helped decrease the selling and distribution

of counterfeit drugs by 41 percent from the time period between 2001 and 2006 (West Africa Drug Regulatory Authority Network 2007)

As mentioned in the introduction of the paper the AIRCOP initiative has played a role in helping provide intelligence in monitoring the movements of those suspected to be involved in transnational illegal activities across national airports (AIRCOP 2017) .AIRCOP is a multiagency initiative which is the product of a collaboration between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime ,the World Customs Organization and the International Criminal Police Organization (ibid) AIRCOP is a UNODC facilitated project in which the World Customs Union provides intelligence in the movement of individuals whilst Interpol provides the law enforcement capacity in dealing with potential threats .

The initiatives goals are to provide improved communication between participating agencies therefore leading to better orchestrated strategies in dealing with illegal activities across state borders and dismantling criminal networks across Latin America the Caribbean and Africa (AIRCOP 2017) . This engagement with dealing trafficking is one that can be understood as a securitized approach through the provision of law enforcement mechanisms in tracking and limiting foreign threats from entering the domestic.

The AIRCOP initiative would achieve its goals by creating Joint Airport Interdiction Task Forces led by Interpol officials and domestic law enforcement agency personal (JAITF). These JAITF would be set up across participating nations airports with those being Brazil Benin, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Mali, Morocco Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Togo (AIRCOP 2017). These JAITF in various national airports would have the ability to track the movements of suspected

individuals across national airports and therefore provide real time surveillance on suspects leaving one national airport to another.

The AIRCOP initiative has been able to provide considerable victories in its battle against transnational criminal networks seizing 674 kg of cocaine ,739 kg of cannabis 112 kg heroin and 365 kg methamphetamines as of the year of September 2015 (AIRCOP 2017) .When this figure is tallied against the figure of 1.9 tons of narcotic seized by West African governments in 2015 it reflects a resounding success of the initiative.

The AIRCOP initiative exemplifies the growing trend of multi-agency initiatives that have grown to deal with the international drug trade especially in West Africa in which the ECOWAS convention has highlighted as being crucial in dealing with an ever-evolving threat.

Another multi agency initiative that has worked closely with AIRCOP has been the European Union funded project named COCAIR which works through airports such as that of AIRCOP but with a specific focus on drugs getting into Europe from Africa and South America (World Customs Organisation 2008) . Like the AIRCOP initiative the main priority of COCAIR would be the training of personal who are able to share intel of the movements of individuals suspected of the smuggling drugs through airports but also teach law enforcement working in airports new means to detect individuals and cargo that could carry illegal narcotics (ibid).

The biggest differences between AIRCOP and COCAIR is that despite them sharing the same partners that of Interpol and the World Customs Union and build off each other's structural capacity COCAIR is not facilitated by the UNODC but instead the World Customs Organisation with a specific focus of Drugs coming into Europe unlike AIRCOP's multi regional approach between South America and Africa.

The initiative has been viewed as a major success as reported in 2016 by the European Commission due in its ability in seizing a substantial number of narcotics coming into Europe from Africa and Latin America. The figures presented on the initiatives successes have been impressive with the COCAIR being able to seize 411 kg of cocaine and 50 kg of psychotropic substances through its operations (European Commision 2016) .

In dealing with drug trafficking that occurs through the sea the European Union set up the creation of the Maritime And Operation Centre (MAOC). The MAOC with the patrolling of drug trafficking routs at sea especially across the West African coast due to the recognition that a portion of the drugs that get trafficked through the West African coast eventually finds itself in Europe. This initiative was set up with the recognition that to protect Europe from an ever-growing drug threat it would have to take up the responsibility in dealing with the drug trade on West African coast since its nations lacks efficient maritime law enforcement measures (Leite 2013, 2) . The MAOC by 2013 was able to confiscate over 82 tonnes of cocaine coming from South America being trafficked to Europe through West Africa or directly from South America from the period between 2007 and 2013 (Francis 2013, 14) .

# Chapter 4

# The WACI initiative Institutional response overview

## What Is WACI and its functions

The West African Coast Initiative (WACI ) was created on the 9th July 2009 as a mechanism to deal with the growing threat of transnational and organised crime across West Africa but most specifically previously war torn nations on the West African coast .The WACI initiative is a framework which allows multiple agencies on the West African coast and beyond to coordinate efforts against various contemporary issues involving criminality across state borders such as the smuggling of commodities ,human trafficking ,dumping of toxic substances, drug trafficking and various issues in the realm of transnational illegal doings

The organisations involved within the West African coast initiative are ECOWAS, UNODC, the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA), the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) through its peacekeeping operations in the region (UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire [UNOCI], UN Mission in Liberia [UNMIL]), the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA), and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) (UNPOL 2016)

The West African Coast initiative ultimately is a framework that allows for the joint assistance in dealing with transnational criminal networks that operate on the African continent. Most importantly WACI is an initiative that recognises that transnational organised crime does constitute a major threat to peace, security and economic development in the region (Goudsmid, Mancini and Andrés Vanegas Canosa 2012) .

Through data collected in interviews the idea that transnational crime and narcotic trafficking as being a major threat to state security was deemed by West African political elite as not a major problem instead it was viewed as a domestic issue with limited scope in its ability to destabilise the state (Shaw 2017) .Through the creation of WACI the issue of transnational crime being an issue that requires serious political attention was achieved due to WACI highlighting the growing relationship between organised crime ,terrorism and political instability . The West African Coast initiative seeks to achieve four primary goals through its creation that being

- *The facilitating and increasing of capacity of regional and international enforcement operations in dealing with various transnational criminal activities*
- *An important function in which the West African coast initiative seeks to build as its main mechanisms in dealing with transnational criminal issues is through the formation of transnational organized criminal Units. These transnational organized crime units (TCUs) would be the main agent in dealing with transnational crime in in WACI designated nations under its framework by intelligence gathering and serving as the entry and support point for regional and international enforcement operations*
- *The WACI initiative also seeks to improve the various basic institutional function's in WACI subscribing countries such as domestic judicial protocol and law enforcement*
- *Finally, WACI seeks to add to the current discourse in security reform on the west coast of Africa (UNODC 2017)*

The main organ in orchestrating the West African Coast Initiatives goals as discussed have been Transnational Criminal Units (TCU's.) These units as of this year are all fully functioning with Liberia being the first to implement TCU's whilst Guinea Bissau being the last. WACI TCU's are situated in existing law enforcement structures within the nations they are embedded in. The reason for this is to further help coordinate the functions of transnational criminal units within

domestic law enforcement apparatus therefore leading to a streamlined link of logistical apparatus.

Ultimately the goals for the streamlining of the transnational criminal units is to:

- *Provide decision makers the latest and most accurate intelligence, analyses and statistics for strategy and policy development;*
- *Independently investigate cases of transnational organized crime and effectively build cases for prosecution based on solid evidence;*
- *Apply cost-effective principles of intelligence led-investigation in the fight against transnational organized crime;*
- *Act as national focal point for international/regional investigations;*
- *Enhance regional cooperation (UNODC 2017)*

The framework used to understand such policy brought forth by the West African Coast Initiative follows within global governance notions in building capacity in dealing with threats that have arisen in a globalised environment. By the nature of WACI initiative being orchestrated by regional and international intuitions that deal with issues circumnavigating local jurisdictions it highlights how the use of the West African initiative follows in line with a global governance perspective but also through a securitized lens due to its focus and pre-occupation on law enforcement measures.

As discussed, the main arm in facilitating the ground work for the West African Coast initiative has been through the creation of transnational criminal units whose main responsibilities are that in investigating compiling and helping in the final arrests of those involved with the drug trade. The makeup of WACI transnational criminal units unlike domestic law enforcement units that deal with issues across state borders is that WACI TCU's are elite inter agency groupings which uses the expertise and capacity of its partners to function through data gathering, information

sharing and training. This provision of spaces for inter-agency frameworks to exist reinforces the idea of complimentary coordination.

As mentioned in the previous chapter The WACI initiative finds itself situated in a plethora of various global and regional strategies that deal with the drug trade Such as AIRCOP and COCAIR and therefore it is extremely important to note that the WACI initiative is not the sole custodian in dealing with narcotic trafficking issues on the west African coast (Lapaque 2017).

Despite this WACI does work within *the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking organised crime and drug abuse in West Africa* framework and therefore the concept of complimentary coordination and assistance as advocated by the ECOWAS plan of action allows the initiative in tangent with wider regional strategies, global governing bodies and law enforcement bodies to coordinate tasks when dealing with organised crime in the region.

Unlike the WAJO initiative in which the WACI initiative shares many procedural similarities to such as the sharing of intelligence and cross border law enforcement joint operations, what makes WACI different is its preoccupation on post war nations and the various nuances that exist in these environments.

Through discussions in interviews with Amado De Andres and Pierre Lapaque it was noted WACI abiding nations required an urgent response since drug trafficking syndicates from South America but most specifically from Colombia had begun targeting nations who were recovering from domestic conflict. This reality in which a specific response that understood the fragile nature of post conflict environments in which WACI embeds itself was needed.

This reason of contextual specificity in regard to the creation of the WACI initiative was a major reason why the initiative had not been rolled out to all West African costal nations which have a history in the trafficking of narcotics such as Senegal and Nigeria.

In engaging with these vulnerable states in which WACI has embedded itself in, the initiative works closely with UN peace keeping missions in these nations to help foster a greater environment of capacity building and cooperation. The extent in which WACI has supported this UN peace keeping missions have varied from the supplementary as this paper will argue in the case of Liberia to greatly substitutional as in Guinea Bissau.

# Chapter 5

## WACI initiative Case studies analysis

This paper as discussed previously will focus on two case study nations that being Guinea Bissau and Liberia. This section of the paper will provide a brief history of these two nations and current political environments. Following this an analysis of WACI's progress in these nations will be engaged with. The reasons for the allocated two countries was based on the reality that whilst Guinea Bissau was the last nation to have fully operating transnational criminal units Liberia was the first. This paper seeks to understand the various contextual arrangements that would allow these nations to differ in the operation of the West African Coast initiative.

### Guinea Bissau

Guinea Bissau is a former Portuguese colony which attained its independence in 1974 and has had a turbulent history ever since. Shortly after its attainment of independence in 1974 the nation would suffer its first coup and change of power in the 1980s that brought into power an authoritarian regime led by Joao Bernardo Vieira (Gibert 2009, 627). This unconstitutional change of government would set the groundwork for a political system characterized under the Bernardo Vieira regime as being one that suppressed civil liberties and political expression in the aim of retaining dictatorial power within the nation. Joao Bernardo Vieira would remain in power under dictatorial rule throughout the 80s and for the better part of the 90s until 1998 in which a Military upheaval and mutiny led to the removing of Joao Bernardo Vieira. Despite the

removal Vieira would later be re-elected as president in 2005 but would later be assassinated in 2009 (Gibert 2009, 628)

Understanding the Joao Bernardo Vieira presidency is vital in understanding the growth of transnational crime in the state and more specifically the rise of Guinea Bissau as a 'Narco State' during his presidency.

Joao Bernardo Vieira was once called the Guinea Bissau's biggest drug dealer by the media and political opponents due to his alleged linkages to Colombian drug cartels that had infiltrated the nations politics and economy (The National 2009). It had been alleged that Vieira sought the funding of Colombian drug cartels to help fund his regime. This act between the Vieira regime and Colombian drug cartels had been argued to have taken place due to Viera's own mistrust of local elites (Ibid).

The drug trade and the money it provided played a major role in the funding of the state military with many of the state's top brass being indicted in various narcotic trafficking charges .The Most recent being the indictment of the former head of Guinea Bissau's army General Antonio Indjai who had been found trying to broker a deal with Colombian rebel group FARC for guns in exchange for the provision of space for trafficking .Unfortunately The FARC representatives where in fact undercover US agents (Valdmanis 2013) .Despite this Antonio Indjai was able to evade charges due to the lack of judicial strength in the nation.

The rise of Transnational criminal syndicates in Guinea Bissau must be also looked within the lens of domestic and regional trends. Guinea Bissau has been ranked the 5$^{th}$ poorest nation on earth with one of the lowest HDI's on the African continent. As of the 2015 Human development Index concluded that over 58 percent of its citizens live in a state of severe poverty the highest in

the region (with Liberia a fellow a case study only having 38 percent of its population in severe poverty (Human Development Report 2015) .

The nation's basic infrastructure such as roads water and electricity have been widely damaged due to years of civil instability, especially the 1998 to 1999 civil war and pandemic corruption that has prevented the recuperating of public goods in the nation. This environment had led to a nation that could easily be infiltrated by transnational criminal networks just through the basic levels of poverty and unemployment that is prevalent in the nation. Political instability in Guinea Bissau has only normalised by 2015 in which the nation had been returned to civilian rule under the presidency of Jose Mario Vaz ( Cande 2015).

Despite greater normalcy through the return of civilian rule the nation still faces major poverty which was greatly compounded by the freezing of aid by European nations in 2011 due to the nation's political instability. This reality has led to the Guinea Bissau administration to be severely underfunded with the only export outside of narcotic trafficking that contributes significantly to GDP being the cultivating of cashew nuts ( Fletcher 2008) .

Despite these problems various regional and international initiatives have been provided to help the nation recover generations worth of instability. Outside of the WACI initiative the nation has had numerous initiatives one example has been the United Nations Peace building fund which its goals are that of helping the fight in Judicial impunity and job creation for vulnerable groups especially women

.

As mentioned earlier the nation is also part of various security initiatives such as the European based Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre that conducts security patrols off the Guinea Bissau and greater west African coast to help prevent South American traffickers using west African waters as a transit zone for the distribution of illegal narcotics to Europe.

**Guinea Bissau and the WACI initiative**

Guinea Bissau provides a unique case to its fellow counterparts in the West African Coast Initiative, this is due to the reality that whilst all WACI members required the provision of on the ground peace keeping forces to help provide normalcy and to help as a deterrent from forces that sought to instigate civil violence. Guinea Bissau required additional assistance with a UN backed political mission in the country (Lapaque 2017).

The reasoning behind the implementing of a political mission was due to the nations turbulent past that in the aftermath of the Vieira coup the nation's political machinery was highly lacking and therefore exogenous support was needed to help facilitate not only stability in the nation on a governmental level but also provide support in staving off Colombian drug groups that sought to exploit the political vulnerability .As mentioned in the case study profile Guinea Bissau has had a long history with drug traffickers not just involved with its economy but its politics too and therefore the WACI initiative providing an additional level of support in helping in Guinea Bissau had been a novel strategy in stabilizing the nation .

Through interviews the first idea that was quickly dispelled was that Guinea Bissau is a Narco state. In an interview with Pierre Lapaque The UNODC regional representative Of West Africa it was noted that in the case of Guinea Bissau that the states own machinery were not crafted to adhere to the whims of Narco traffickers from South America but instead individuals who

occupied government machinery found themselves compromised. This goes against the common assumption that has gained traction over the past 10 years that Guinea Bissau finds itself as the worlds “First Narco State” as reported by popular media outlets such as the “The Guardian” (The Gaurdian 2008)

Mark Shaw has added against this conception in which he has argued that the term Narco state refers to a total subversion of state institutions by corrupt actors which is far from the truth due to the reality that drug proceeds do not reach low level governance structures in Guinea Bissau. Instead Mark Shaw makes the argument that Guinea Bissau governance exists within a political economy of protection (Shaw 2015, 341). The concept of a political economy of protection is one which refers to elite alliances in which networks of individuals create relationships in order facilitate, fund and sustain illicit activities within governance structures. (ibid). In the case of Guinea Bissau those who exist in this political economy are high ranking political officials with an invested interest in the drug trade.

Despite Guinea Bissau not being a Narco state as popular media has made it out to be but rather one that exists in a paradigm of the political economy of protection, the level in which government corruption exists is endemic within state machinery. Through interviews what had been uncovered was the level in which government corruption had taken root was one that stifled WACI efforts in three major ways as this paper will argue.

The first major way in which WACI support had been stifled had been through government officials on an executive level who themselves had colluded with South American cartels from South America to make sure WACI reforms are stifled.

Through an interview with de Andres an example of such had been exemplified by the exile of a Guinea Bissau minister Carmelita Pires who sought the fast tracking of WACI policies within the state's Judicial system to combat Narcho trafficking in the nation. Such commitment to implementing WACI policies led to death threats and attacks on the minister's life which lead to an operation by the UNODC to safely take the minister out of the country (de Andres 2017).

The reality of those who sought to silence the minister where individuals who occupied the same executive structures as the minster and therefore bringing into question the idea of ministerial and government accountability to the nation .The reality in which governmental officials on a top brass collude with Narco traffickers provides a scenario in which individuals with governmental power skew state machinery and processes for the benefit of foreign Narco traffickers and not for the benefit of the state's own populace . This example further adds momentum to accusations that individuals who occupy high positions within the states military have been providing trafficking routes into the country for later redistribution.

When such realities are faced it puts to question the WACI initiative goal of "*providing decision makers with the latest and most accurate intelligence, analyses and statistics for strategy and policy development*". In an environment in which decision makers are unable to effectively take information to help create effective policy as in the case of the exiled minister it stifles the mechanical ability for the initiative to make tangible political declarations of change.

Another reality uncovered through interviews under confidentially was that on a ground level transnational criminal units in Guinea Bissau have been limited in their scope of engagement due to ineffective and at times corrupt law enforcement leadership. The WACI objective*" to independently investigate cases of transnational organized crime and effectively build cases for*

*prosecution based on solid evidence"* has been found lacking due to insufficient support by higher ups in local law enforcement agencies in the country.

An issue highlighted through the engagement through the interview process was that despite individuals within the TCU's on the ground being highly motivated, an observation made was that many individuals in these units were not able to fully enact their mandate due to the threat of hefty repercussions should their investigations get to close to those in power.

This had led to an environment where the scope of transnational criminal units has been severely hampered in the provision of providing a base to investigate possible suspects and provide solid evidence.

This situation is made direr when taken into context of Guinea Bissau's position in the global narcotic trade that as mentioned is a preferred trafficking location for South American drug cartels. The inability to not conduct deep investigations into narcotic trafficking through the fear of repercussions does not only provide a potential threat to intelligence gathering in the nation but for the wider WACI information sharing.

The last main issue uncovered in the case of Guinea Bissau had been the prioritization of state stability over the investigating of high ranking government and military officials who have been alleged to be key figures in the Guinea Bissau Drug trade. WACI and the UNODC in the region have found themselves in a compromising situation in which by the possibility of investigating key state figures the potential for civil and political unrest arises.

Such a scenario has led to an environment where inquiries on suspected corrupt officials can reach an investigational ceiling due to the threat of wider societal instability and therefore WACI and UNODC officials in the nation have found themselves weighing the risk to reward

dynamic in engaging with some cases .An example of this was made through interviews in which a major military player involved in a peace transition in the Guinea Bissau had alleged links to Colombian drug cartels (Shaw 2016)

Sadly, as this paper will argue such a limitation in investigational power presents a fundamental inability for WACI structures to provide structural change in the country since through logical prioritization peace and stability in a country with a history of civil wars will be prioritised over justice if the threat of conflict is large enough. This paper argues that such an example highlights the limits in which global governance and securitized approaches deal with since they are not able to account to the societal factors that lead decision makers to take on the positions they do.

Despite these presented issues, the nation has been able to move forward positively due to the WACI initiative since 2010 and much of the successes stems from the provision of a political mission that has helped build political structures not only to deal with narcotics coming in to the country but also improve wider governance structures. As mentioned WACI as a strategy does not work in isolation but in a context of various simultaneous strategies and in Guinea Bissau many of these strategies have helped in further creating the environment in which greater accountability can occur on a governmental level. This can be exemplified by the creation of a UNODC law enforcement agency in Guinea Bissau and an additional judiciary police to further supplement ongoing initiatives occurring in the nation.

The biggest success the West African Coast initiative in Guinea Bissau has been able to provide is the provision of capacity building in the nations governance structures especially in relation to law enforcement. After the coup in 2011 the nation lacked many fundamental institutions required for the promotion of peace and stability in the state such as functioning courts police

services and even jails to house individuals connected to criminal activities. The UNODC and its partners including WACI played a pivotal role to help rebuild state structures and providing essential skills for state machinery to operate.

**Liberia case analysis**

Unlike most nations on the African continent Liberian history was uniquely different by it being a nation established by former black American slaves sanctioned by the United states of America and ultimately being Africa's only American "colony". Liberia would declare its independence in 1947 but remain an American protectorate therefore establishing deep ties with the United states of America (Bøås 2005, 75). The newly freed slaves who later would be known as Americo-Liberians would dominate Liberian politics and economics whilst setting up a caste system which put mixed race Americo – Liberians at the top of both political and economic structures whilst native Liberians (the original inhabitants before former slave led colonisation) found themselves at the bottom of both the political and economic spectrum.

This separation between Native Liberians and Americo Liberians would further be politically incentivised when Americo Liberians adopted segregation policies that mirrored those occurring in the United States own racist segregation laws. Americo Liberian rule over the nation would eventually end in 1980 via a coup de tat in which Americo Liberian president William R. Tolbert, Jr. would be assassinated by a coup led by Samuel Kanyon Doe. (Bøås 2005, 80) Liberia would be plagued with civil upheaval in its history from this moment forward which would accumulate to two civil wars the first lasting from 1989 to 1996 whilst the second would last from 1997 to 2003.

These wars in part have been argued to be have been supplemented by funding originating from the trafficking of illicit narcotics. Charles Taylor is said to have offered Liberian banks to criminal barons to launder money but also supported the idea of exporting narcotics as a revenue stream for the nation. Taylor even went to go far as to suggest to fellow West African nation Ghana to cultivate cocoa and cannabis as major export crops (Aning 2010, 6). Charles Taylor and his facilitating of drug cartels in help funding his war led him to get into contact with individuals connected with Paulo Escobars Medellin cartel such as Nico Sherfer an Ecuadorian who worked closely with Escobar and a Israeli by name of Yair Klien an arms dealer and a trainer of Taylors elite group of private fighters, many of whom would later be employed by the Colombian Medellin cartel (Smillie, Lansana and Hazleton 2000, 47)

These wars would devastate the countries people, politics and economy to the point it was labelled a failed state. Despite the nations turbulent history, it has made significant progress and stability under the presidency of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf from 2005 to the time of the writing of this paper. Despite this the various historical legacies of a war-torn history still plague the nation of Liberia. Liberia sits at number 175 out of 185 nations in the human development index. Life expectancy has grown tremendously in the nation in which the average age of a Liberian male rose from 46 years in 1980 to 60 as of 2015 (UNDP 2015, 3).

The raising of life expectancy (through the end of its bloody civil wars) highlights greater stability in the nation over the past decade but unfortunately the nation still suffers from chronic poverty as highlighted in the 2015 human development index. The 2015 HDI reports that the nations poverty rate in Liberia sits at 81 percent. This figure is centred by the reality that over 72 percent of the nation's population is unemployed with the 28 percent of its population with a

form of employment with 94 percent of these employed living under two dollars a day (UNDP 2015, 4).

Liberia's chronic poverty has led to a section of its society to be involved with the drug trade through the selling and using of narcotics in which women especially have been the most vulnerable to it effects. A growing number of women have found themselves involved in prostitution to help maintain their habits or selling the drugs themselves to feed their families ( Azango 2011)

Due to Liberia's chronic poverty and fractured, past the nation has been in the centre of various international, regional and private initiatives to help provide stability in the nation. Liberia since the ending of the civil war through the Accra Comprehensive Peace agreement in 2003 has been a major benefactor of international aid which the nation has received over 765 million in official developmental assistance whilst getting over 500 million dollars for peacekeeping troops in the nation ( Shilue and Fagen 2014, 18) .Liberia also harbours initiatives such as the UN peace building fund (also found in the Guinea Bissau case study )which aims to help to further increase the pace of reconstruction in the country (United Nations Peace Building Fund 2016) .

Liberia unlike its West African counterpart Guinea Bissau is not a major transit zone for the distribution of narcotics but as discussed by the United States Law Enforcement Agency through various weak institutional structures such as border control the nation has been infiltrated by both regional criminal organisations and foreign using its weak borders to transport narcotics through West Africa.

Due to the nation, not being a major transit zone, Liberia inversely has had a long history of the consumption of drugs from that of cannabis to that of methamphetamines. A major reason to the

nations consumption of drugs has been due the various civil wars which had led to a historical legacy of soldiers and at time civilians who consumed high amounts of drugs. This culture of drug consumption prompted by the civil wars the nation found itself had led to a state in which foreign criminal cartels especially those from Nigeria have been able to lay a stake in the trade of narcotics (Lewis 2015) .

**Liberia and the West African Coast initiative**

Unlike Guinea Bissau Liberia did not require a need for a political mission outside of its peace keeping forces and its UNPOL contingent that helped facilitate supplementary support to law enforcement in the country but not its political. This is due to the reality that a semblance of political stability in the nation had been achieved and therefore only UN peacekeeping forces where needed to prevent civil unrest in the nation (Lapaque 2017). A main reason for political stability in the nation had been the Sirleaf presidency that since 2005 had remained a democratically elected president who has provided a degree of stability in the state's political apparatus.

The lack of a large scale political mission in comparison to Guinea Bissau in Liberia had consequences in the function of the WACI since Liberia had stronger institutional capacity in providing the ground work for WACI strategies to operate much more effectively.

Despite the lack of a political mission the UN has supplemental structures in its work with the states justice ministry. An example of this could be highlighted through the UNs and Liberian justice departments "United nations Development Program" a strategy that seeks to improve institutional capacity of legal and judicial platforms (Ministry Of Justice 2017). The West

African coast initiative also finds itself part of the UN led "At Work Together initiative "in Liberia which provides an intersectional framework which connects Law enforcement health care, education and the economic interests in finding ways to increase the capacity of both governance and civil society structures (UNODC, Liberia 2017) .

As highlighted Liberia is a nation which does not suffer from a high level of Narco drug use and trafficking when compared to Guinea Bissau or fellow WACI nations and therefore from this lens the West African Coast Initiative in Liberia works on different basis.

In the case of Guinea Bissau WACI would work in a more direct basis due to a highly sophisticated drug threat that exists in the nation, Liberia on the other hand , greater pre-emptive measures where set up to make sure that the nation would not fall to Narco trafficking criminal organisations who seek to root themselves in the nation through the building of law enforcement capacity .The ability for WACI to highlight the potential of Liberia to be used as a potential Narco trafficking destination could be viewed as one of the initiatives greatest strengths through the identification of vulnerable states .

Liberia's adoption of the West African Coast initiative was one of the fastest in actual implementation in which the nation was one of the first WACI member states to have fully functioning Transnational Criminal units to deal with narcotic trafficking in which as early as 2010 the nation had set up "embryonic" Transnational Criminal Units to help with operations within the country (Wiki leaks 2010)

WACI Liberian transnational criminal units would work closely with the states own drug enforcement agency the LDEA (Liberian drug enforcement agency ) and since 2010 Liberia has had major cases of success in dealing with drug trafficking in the nation .Over the past 6 years

the Liberian drug enforcement agency has been able to make various high level arrests with the most recent being in April 2016 in which over 12 suspected drug traffickers where arrested in Buchanan City (Senkpeni 2016) .

Interpol Liberia a member and partner of the West African Coast Initiative has been able to make various gains in combating transnational organised crime through its borders. As recently as the 21st of November 2016 Interpol had a large-scale operation in which it made various large-scale arrests and seizures of narcotics including cocaine, cannabis, heroine and 90 kg of methamphetamines (Interpol 2016) .

A major reason why Liberia has been able to have a level of success is that despite government corruption being a problem in all countries in the world Liberia's governance apparatus has been stringent in making sure that drug enforcement is a priority in the nation and therefore low-level structures have been able to work with a level of freedom in engaging with criminal cases unlike those mentioned in Guinea Bissau.

Despite these various successes a major issue concerned with the WACI initiative in Liberia has been the funding for its operations and tangible state capacity needed for the monitoring of the state's drug efforts. In a leaked Wiki leaks cables from Freetown Liberia it was uncovered that the WACI initiative had chronic shortfalls in funding due to the reality that the states themselves involved in the initiative would have to provide capital (Wiki Leaks 2010).

In the case of Liberia and other WACI member states the provision of funding for tools to help operations such as computers, office space and other items for day to day operations have been hard to fund since shortfalls in the UNODCs budgets and a lack of political will have affected the operations of the project (Lapaque 2017).

The issue with Liberia is that due its lack of state funding, the nation has one of the weakest border control structures on the West coast of Africa which allows criminal syndicates to enter the country and use its borders to transfer narcotics and various other illicit goods into Malian trans Sahara trafficking routes.

This example provides a major short coming of the WACI in which it requires substantial investment in the states own capacity, and if the state lacks stringent law enforcement capacity on the states very own borders it adversely affects the range of West African coast initiative since the initiative embeds itself within the states own structures. The embeddedness mentioned therefore leads to the WACI initiative be effected the by the same contextual impediments that affect domestic law enforcement agencies and with a lack funds of it has led to instances in which donor funding has been needed to help. This has been exemplified by the Austrian development agency helping the facilitation of funds to the WACI initiative in 2016 with the figure of 750.000,00 euros to support transnational criminal units (Austrian Development Agency 2016) .

# Chapter 6

## Results and conclusion

Before this paper engages with the results from the research conducted various obstacles and limitations that the paper faced during research must be discussed. The biggest and most glaring omission the paper uncovered was the unfortunate lack of hard data much more then I the researcher thought would uncover. The lack of data affected the paper firstly in its scope of investigation in which acquiring reliable data on drug trafficking pre-2008 forced this research to focus on a 6-year period instead of the 12 years proposed in the methodology.

This lack of information also affected the paper in acquiring specific operational data of the manner which transnational units operated within day to day running such as arrests made and seizures and therefore limiting how success would be indicated as provided by the methodology. The reason for the lack of hard data is twofold, firstly the nations in which WACI embedded itself have historically lacked capacity to quantify and release information related to drugs especially in nations such as Guinea Bissau and Liberia where basic Infrastructure to even conduct and tally data is lacking. Secondly and most glaring to the WACI itself is that the initiative does not produce any reports, even on an annual level as uncovered when interviewing UNODC Regional representative Pierre Lapaque.

This revelation on a lack of procedural reports by the initiative, this paper argues limits the ability of WACI to formulate coordinate and evaluate its progress efficiently throughout its 8-

year history. More so the lack of such data disables third parties (academics, analysts etc) to analyse critique and formulate new ways in which the initiative can move forward.

Due to these glaring limitations, the paper has encountered, this research paper in its investigation can be viewed in helping understand political motivations and capacity constraints that affect the WACI initiative and by extension other initiatives that work within similar environments.

**WACI Findings in research**

The WACI initiative despite its faults has provided major successes the biggest being the acknowledging of Drug trafficking as a tangible threat to West Africa which that was an important step forward (Shaw 2016). Before WACI the issue of drug trafficking within policy making circles in state governance structures deemed drug trafficking as a social problem but one that didn't have any capacity to affect governance (Ibid).

WACI was able to highlight the effects of drug trafficking not just on a societal level but how drug trafficking has the ability to effect government decisions as seen in the case of Guinea Bissau.

The West African Coast Initiative provided an intersectional looking at the regional drug trade and the way the drug trade does not just affect the issues of the state but how it can affect international security.

The linking of the crime terror nexus by the initiative had been an important step in articulating regional security mechanisms since as mentioned the drugs trafficked through these states have gotten into the hands of those involved in terrorist networks across the world. This reality therefore makes WACI one of the first defences against terrorism on the African continent.

Despite this a major impediment to WACI had been the "political management of peace" as noted by Mark Shaw in which the reality of managing peace in a post war context requires various comprises by IGO's such as the UN (Shaw 2017) .In many cases outside of the WACI initiative IGO policy makers have had to dumb down the threat of drug trafficking when engaging with West African State decision makers who have alleged links with the trade but in order to open up the channels to negotiate peace the issue of drug trafficking has to be made a lesser issue (ibid)

This scenario provides a major issue of wider understandings in articulating global governance and the idea of a jurisdiction gap in which IGO related programs firstly do not have the jurisdiction to hold policy makers accountable to achieving set agreements.

Through interviews with those heading or have been involved with the creation and sustaining of the WACI imitative political will was noted constantly as being the biggest impediment in the implementation of WACI policy.

A second issue found within the realm of global governance is that global governance institutions such as the UNODC are often found lacking in the realm of finance which hampers the basic funding of operations on the ground. This is further compounded in the operation of the West African coast initiative in which the nations the program is situated in are formerly war-torn countries that lack adequate financial capabilities.

A crucial aspect in which the WACI initiative had found itself lacking that was uncovered through interviews had been the reality the initiative did little outside law enforcement measures to deal with the drug trade due to its securitized lens. Many of the issues that allowed the environment in which drug trafficking was attractive to the citizens of these states where not engaged with by the WACI initiative (Shaw 2017).

Issues such as unemployment and education or the ability to set up structures within in these societies such as social programs to help stave of the allure of the drug trade had not been engaged with by WACI and could be viewed as a major oversight by the initiative. The creation of social buy in by the societies in which such initiatives embed themselves is an important but an overlooked strategy since social buy in does not only provide the ability for greater integration of projects on a ground level but social buy in also provides a crucial avenue for information.

Societies who buy into initiatives such as WACI have the potential to police themselves and provide crucial intel to transnational criminal units that can be used in operation when engaging with criminal syndicates. This scenario could be understood as a consequence of a securitized lens in which law enforcement is looked within one realm whilst human security is looked in another in which intersectionality between these two paradigms is often left dichotomised.

These issues overlooked by WACI have been noted by individuals such as Pierre Lapaque who has noted the need for the amending of the West African coast initiative in its current format ( Lapaque 2017) .The reasons presented for this amending had been that the industry has constantly evolved and the same structures set out to deal with the narcotic trafficking in 2008

are outdated 9 years later .A simple example can be noted by the drop of annual maritime seizures due to drug traffickers finding new ways in smuggling narcotics (De Andres 2017) .

In conclusion, these realties previously explained provide three major hindrances to the initiative. The first being assuring of political will to enact the initiative. The second issue is the ever-evolving nature in the threat when in comparison to the stagnant nature of official policy in handling the threat whilst lastly is the funding for the initiative to operate at its full capacity.

**Recommendations**

This paper recommends that due to the upcoming possibility of a new WACI or a completely new initiative that will be set to overlook the operations in the West Coast of Africa this paper makes the following recommendations.

1) *To circumnavigate situations in which there is a lack of political will on the part of one state, highlight the interconnected nature of the problem to states most effected by issues such as terrorism. The idea that the lack of political will on the part of one state (e.g. Guinea Bissau) can lead to possible terrorist activities on another fellow African state (e.g. Algeria) will lead to a scenario of forced mutual responsibility.*
2) *As mentioned in recommendation number one if there is a chance for governments from two regions on the African continent to adhere to shared responsibility on a certain issue it not only provides a combined sense of political will but also economic and infrastructural strength to deal with the issues. Such cross regional*

*interconnections could be fostered by regional organizations such as ECOWAS further pushing the notion of "African solutions for African problems".*

3) *The concept of a social dynamic must be central in any strategy dealing with narcotic trafficking as mentioned earlier in the paper, drugs are primarily targeted for the individual and the communities which people embed themselves in therefore a future WACI or an initiative that takes on the reigns from the program requires the need for a social lens to work cooperatively within its law enforcement framework.*

An argument that this paper makes is that even if a new strategy is employed to deal with the drug trade in West Africa within the near future, the various same political and economic impediments that effect WACI in its current format will most probably effect its successor.

A continued securitized focus will lead to similar pressures and disrupting forces when engaging with TOC such as lack of funding from states and donors to corrupt officials that seek to hamper such initiatives. In such an environment, the integration of a securitized lens in cooperation with the social becomes important and not just one in which human security lens is a footnote in a greater securitized project.

In answering the proposed research question on what is the extent of success the WACI initiative achieved in combating the drug trade the answer this paper provides is nuanced .The WACI initiative has faced crucial short comings needed in dealing combatting drugs through the lack of political will and underfunded structures as discussed in this paper .Despite these two central problems faced by WACI, the initiative has provided a crucial foundation and structural framework that could lay the groundwork for future strategies through its inter agency approach

embedded within different states In conclusion the hypothesis in which the paper set out to uncover was proven true in which WACI success in the given case studies was limited due to funding and lack of political will .

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