

African Defence

A Statistical Analysis

*Kishore Kumar Khera**

Africa's continental aspirations are well documented in 'Agenda 2063'.¹ With a laid-out implementation plan for well-articulated goals to meet the aspirations, Africa is moving in the right direction,² albeit a little slowly. The main reasons are intertwined and interrelated—conflicts and slow economic growth. To top this, African governments are splurging on building military capabilities without clearly defined strategic goals. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) database on military-related expenditure up to the year 2022 indicates that Africa, on an average, is spending 60 per cent points more than the world average on its military.³ This has been the trend for the last 30 years. After peaking at over 12.5 per cent of government expenditure in 1999, African defence expenditure has come down, but it continues to stay higher than the world average, which is a cause of concern. This article undertakes a statistical analysis of all defence-related issues in the African continent to get an overview of how African defence has moved in the last five decades, and the reasons thereof as well as what is the likely trajectory various African states may follow in the coming decades in this regard.

Keywords: *African defence, Agenda 2063, African defence expenditure, African Union*

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INTRODUCTION

In 1963, 33 independent African states gathered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to form the Organization of African Union (OAU), now the African Union (AU).⁴ On the occasion of its golden jubilee in May 2013, Africa's political leadership re-dedicated itself to the Pan-African vision of an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa. A decade later, there is still no major movement in this direction. Although the AU has a Defence Commission responsible for defence and security cooperation and, in 1979, it approved the formation of an African Intervention Force, yet conflict and insecurity continue to dominate the defence and security debate across much of the continent. Namibia's independence in 1990; civil wars in Ethiopia, Liberia, and Somalia; fighting between tribes in Djibouti; civil war in Angola; stuttering talks for peace in Mozambique; violence in South Africa between the ANC and Zulu Inkatha movement; and unsuccessful coups in the Comoros Islands, Madagascar, and Zambia are all part of the security milieu of Africa. There are signs that some of the long-standing problems of the region may be permanently over, while a number of fresh outbreaks of violence and unrest have arisen in several other areas.

Africa has long been plagued by conflicts and slow economic growth. These issues are intertwined and interrelated, and they continue to hamper the continent's development. To make matters worse, many African governments are investing heavily in their military capabilities without a clear strategic goal in mind.⁵ While it is agreed that military capabilities are essential to ensure security and, thus, economic activities, these need to be developed in accordance with the envisaged threat scenario. The capability development programmes need to meet essential targets first, before looking at desirable characteristics. Secondly, the expansion of military capabilities needs to be in harmony with the national strategy, and within the means available. Expenditure on non-essential military capability development not only impacts other governmental schemes internally, but also sets off a chain reaction in the region, leading to an arms race. Gradually and systematically, the regional military expenditure increases, and developmental goals are relegated. Therefore, it is essential that the AU monitors developments in this respect, and keeps 'Agenda 2063' within reach.

This article undertakes a statistical analysis⁶ of defence-related issues in the African continent over the last five decades to understand the trajectory of African defence, and what can be expected in the coming years.

AFRICAN DEFENCE OVERVIEW

Africa is nature's bouquet—rich, diverse, and multifaceted. Geographically, Africa is a military strategist dreamland, with access to multiple oceans, proximity to Europe and Asia, and terrain that includes deserts, equatorial forests, and mountains, along with long river basins. Flushed with natural resources and relatively low population density, Africa is at the threshold of a new era of economic surge. At this juncture, with a majority of Africans still leading a sustainable lifestyle using minimal resources, the new generation aspires for rapid growth to achieve infrastructure, education, and healthcare that has eluded Africa so far, barring minor exceptions. Major security and defence issues that governed the African narrative in the last five decades hinged on the Arab–Israel conflict in the north, and the internal power struggle in the rest of Africa—although there are several defence agreements and alliances between African and non-African countries,⁷ notably the USA,⁸ the erstwhile USSR⁹, China,¹⁰ Britain,¹¹ Cuba,¹² Belgium,¹³ and France.¹⁴ There are also multilateral arrangements within the region,¹⁵ such as the Defence Council of Equatorial Africa, and the presence of Tanzanian forces in Uganda.

A brief security overview of the last five decades is presented next. The 1970s in Africa were marked by a series of conflicts and security challenges that threatened the stability and sovereignty of many nations on the continent. Besides the Arab–Israel conflict in the north in 1973, this period was characterised by various political and economic upheavals, civil wars, military coups, and proxy wars that were fuelled by Cold War politics. The situation was further compounded by the rising tide of nationalism, ethnic tensions, and the struggle for independence in some countries. The major conflicts that characterised the 1970s in Africa were the Angolan Civil War,¹⁶ the Ethiopian Civil War,¹⁷ and the Mozambican Civil War.¹⁸ Other security challenges included military coups, ethnic tensions,¹⁹ and proxy wars. Military coups were common during this period, as many African countries struggled with political instability and economic challenges. For instance, in Nigeria, two military coups, in 1975 and 1976, led to the overthrow of civilian governments. In Uganda, Idi Amin overthrew the government in 1971, leading to a period of political repression and human rights abuses.

The 1980s in Africa were marked by both a continuation of the conflicts and the security concerns of the previous decade as well as the emergence of new security challenges, like the Sudanese Civil War which lasted from 1983 till 2005,²⁰ and the emergence of armed groups and terrorist organisations,

like the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).²¹ This decade in Africa also saw some efforts towards conflict resolution and peacebuilding, specifically the role of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in brokering peace in the conflicts in Angola and Mozambique, and the OAU established the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) in 1988 to promote conflict resolution and peacebuilding on the continent.

The 1990s in Africa continued the trends of the previous decades, but also saw some developments in the area of peace and security on the continent with the emergence of regional and continental peace and security initiatives. For instance, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) established the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in 1990 to address the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone.²² Major conflicts in this decade were the Rwandan genocide in 1994, which resulted in the deaths of an estimated 8,00,000 people,²³ and the First Congo War, which lasted from 1996 to 1997.²⁴ While the LRA continued its campaign of terror in Uganda and other neighbouring countries, new terrorist groups emerged, such as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in North Africa.

The 2000s in Africa saw significant developments in the area of peace and security. The United Nations established various peacekeeping missions in Africa, including in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.²⁵ Another significant development was the establishment of the African Union (AU) in 2002, which replaced the Organization of African Unity (OAU).²⁶ The AU established various mechanisms for conflict prevention, management, and resolution, including the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Standby Force (ASF).²⁷ The African Union also established its peacekeeping missions, including in Darfur²⁸ and Somalia, and played a key role in resolving the post-election violence in Kenya. However, the Second Congo War, which lasted from 1998 to 2003 and involved multiple regional actors, resulted in the deaths of an estimated 5.4 million people and the displacement of millions more. The emergence of new security challenges included the spread of terrorism, with the new terrorist group Boko Haram in Nigeria in the late 2000s.

In the last decade, the continent has faced a range of challenges, including ongoing conflicts, terrorism, piracy, and organised crime.²⁹ One of the major developments in Africa during the 2010s was the expansion of terrorist groups, such as Boko Haram,³⁰ al-Shabaab, and the Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA). These groups posed significant threats to regional security, carried out attacks on civilians, and caused widespread displacement. Conflicts in the Central African Republic, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic

of Congo led to significant human suffering and displacement, and posed challenges to regional stability and development. The 2010s also saw an increase in piracy in the waters off the coast of Somalia and the Gulf of Guinea, which posed threats to shipping and maritime security in the region.³¹

Overall, in the last five decades, the stability of state governance has increased and inter-state conflicts reduced, but non-state actors have expanded their influence, and continue to enhance the threat to states and the economy. Macky Sall, the President of Senegal, summarised this while explaining the political and security issues in the 2019 Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security in Africa. He emphasised the requirement for the improved capacity of security forces, better education, equipment, and training to tackle key security threats of violent extremism and terrorism. To tackle asymmetric threats, his recommendations included increased border surveillance and regional cooperation, with outside assistance and the need for enhanced cooperation between the African Union and United Nations, as well as efforts to operationalise the African Standby Force concept.

MILITARY CAPABILITIES

Africa is home to a diverse range of military powers, each with their unique strengths and challenges.³² This section covers an overview of some of the major military capability parameters in Africa, highlighting their capabilities and strategic importance. In all, African states have 2.3 million active military personnel, which amounts to 1.64 military personnel per 1,000 citizens—below the world average of 2.33, and well below North Korea (4.61), and the USA (4.19). But, within Africa, Egypt has the largest strength of active military personnel which is more than double of second-ranked Eritrea. Figure 1 indicates the relative strength of active military personnel of the major states in Africa, and is indicative of heavily militarised societies in North Africa as compared to the rest of the continent.

LAND FORCES

The dominance of intra- and inter-state conflict in Africa in the last five decades, and now the threat of non-state actors, has forced the states to develop armed forces that are heavily biased towards the land component, because ‘boots on the ground’ are essential to control internal power dynamics, and guard the borders. Although a majority of states have direct access to the oceans/seas, the military maritime domain has not been a focus area, and similar is the state of the development of costly airpower.

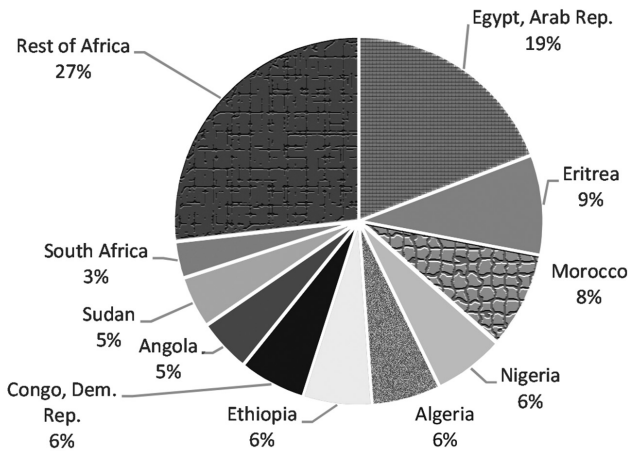


Figure 1 Active Military Personnel in Africa in 2022
 Source: African Defence Database

The Main Battle Tank (MBT) inventory of the various militaries in the continent (Figure 2) shows that only Egypt and Algeria own more than half of the total MBTs in Africa. Suitability of terrain for manoeuvre warfare, the Egypt–Israel conflict, and militarised and now unstable Libya forced both its major neighbours to raise large armoured formations.

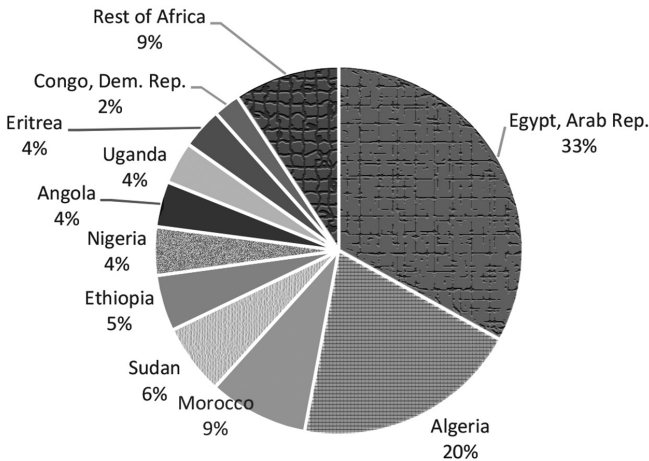


Figure 2 Main Battle Tanks in Africa in 2022
 Source: African Defence Database

As far as artillery is concerned, Egypt continues to have more than a quarter of continental inventory (Figure 3), and Morocco in the north-west, and Angola in the central region have substantial numbers. Artillery is more evenly distributed in the continent than MBTs as most of the pieces are towed, and could be deployed in almost all terrains in the continent.

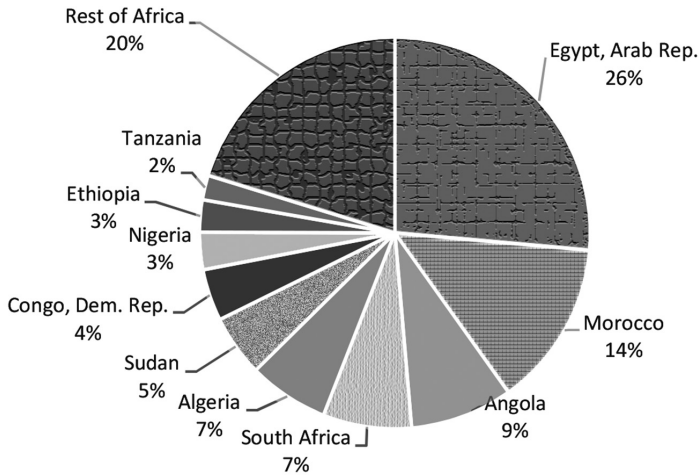


Figure 3 Artillery in Africa in 2022

Source: African Defence Database

Maritime Forces

There are no major maritime forces in Africa that are expeditionary. The object of African maritime forces normally has been to ensure the protection of trade, and not so much about power projection or offensive intent. Almost the entire continent is focused on only protecting the coastal boundary and assets. There have been no significant conflicts in the high seas, although the continent has witnessed prolonged and intense fighting in the last five decades. However, with the rise in piracy, maritime power is gradually being accumulated by various states. However, sustaining such power has been a problem area, and overall capability has not seen much change: Ghana decommissioned two UK-built warships, and Guinea Bissau acquired one Russian patrol boat in recent years. The competition over maritime boundaries related to natural gas exploration in the eastern Mediterranean, and offshore oil exploration will possibly trigger the expansion of maritime capability. Currently, with only a couple of states owning submarines, and

a handful of them having frigates, the inventory of military maritime assets is dominated by patrol vessels of various sizes. In this domain, Nigeria has the largest share (Figure 4), closely followed by Egypt. The development of Nigerian maritime capability is linked to its dependence on the security of its oil trade for economic growth, and Egypt—controlling the most important sea link in the world—has developed maritime capability. The dominance of northern Africa in the maritime domain is visible.

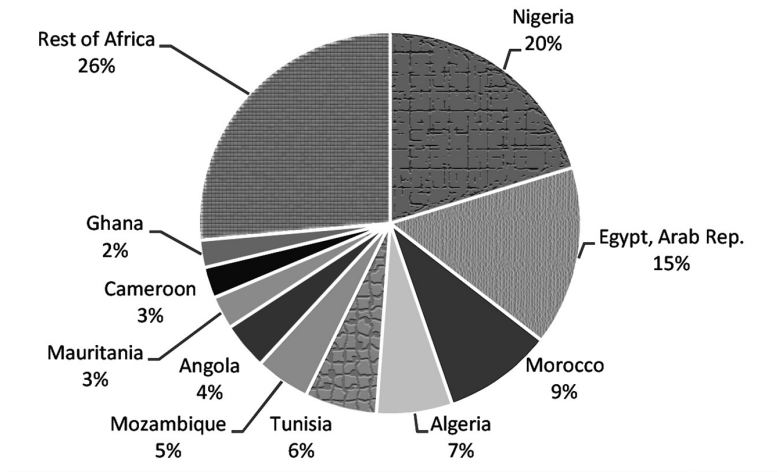


Figure 4 Military Maritime Assets in Africa in 2022

Source: African Defence Database

AIR POWER

Notwithstanding the critical role that air power can play in a conflict, strife-ridden Africa has not witnessed major movement in this direction, barring a couple of exceptions in the north. Building and sustaining air power is an expensive proposition, and needs a long time for creating suitable infrastructure. Like the case for MBT, air power is concentrated in Libya’s neighbours (Figure 5). The majority of African states have less than 10 combat aircraft. Such low numbers are operationally, maintenance wise, and economically unsustainable. As a result, a large number of aviation platforms in African states have very low serviceability and availability. In the last five decades, rarely have the conflicts in Africa witnessed extensive use of air power. Non-availability of systems and platforms that can ensure minimal collateral

damage in an internal conflict also contributes to low usage of air power. However, gradually the scenario is changing, with a large number of states going in for helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles that are relatively low cost, and can be operationalised without the necessity of creating extensive infrastructure. Currently, the military aviation landscape is dominated by small and medium helicopters that can be used for carrying out strafing and rocket attacks, but, in the coming decade, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) will proliferate throughout the continent, especially for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) functions.

In recent years,³³ Nigeria has transferred L-29 trainers to Ghana, while Ethiopia and Mozambique have retired their MiG-17 aircraft. South Africa has already retired some of its aircraft, and plans to disband additional squadrons. Egypt and Morocco continue to prioritise air power, with significant orders for modernisation and procurement of combat and rotary-wing aircraft. These efforts are likely driven by the increasing force-projection ambitions of regional powers, and may be aided by the recent normalisation of relations between some Gulf states and Israel, potentially easing the procurement of latest-generation military equipment from the US.

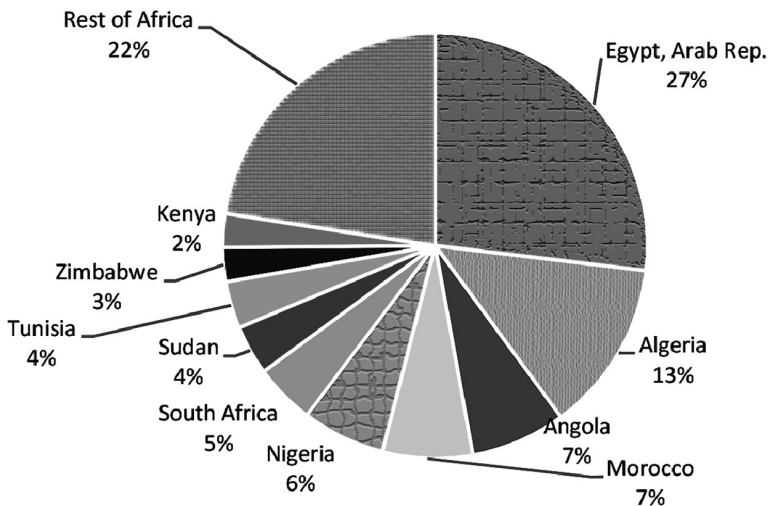


Figure 5 Military Aviation Assets in Africa in 2022

Source: African Defence Database

As the use of air power has been minimal in the continent, the air defence (AD) systems too have not proliferated. Egypt holds more than one-third of AD systems in the continent (Figure 6), and barring Egypt and Algeria, almost all air defence systems in Africa are short-range, and dominated by man-portable systems and anti-aircraft artillery. As UAV numbers increase in the continent by state and non-state actors, anti-UAV systems—including short-range quick-reaction missiles—will likely become a necessity for protecting key locations/events.

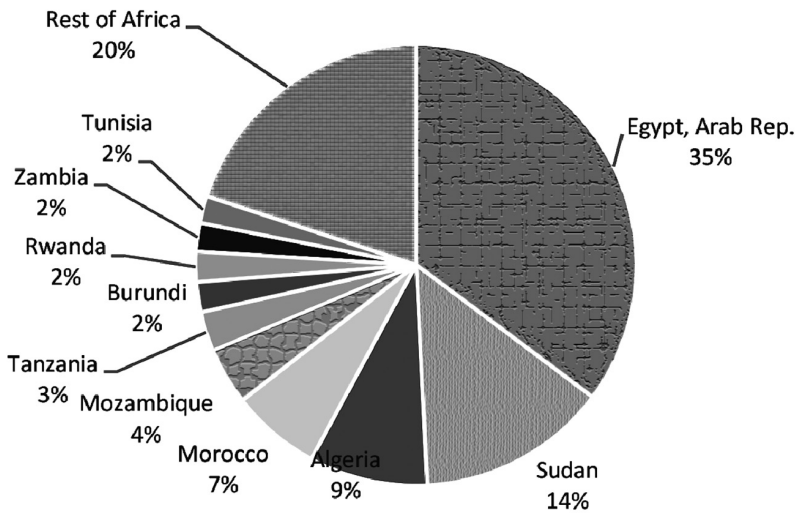


Figure 6 Air Defence Assets in Africa in 2022
 Source: African Defence Database

OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY

The operational capability of military power is based not only on its numerical strength and equipment profile, but also on how this prowess can be utilised. There are two prominent verticals in this domain. First, is the serviceability and availability of military equipment. With a limited transfer of technology, and dependence on foreign equipment manufacturers, a large number of military powers in Africa face low serviceability and availability of military hardware. Economically and logistically, it is hard to keep a large stockpile of spares and reserves, and this increases the downtime of the equipment. The other aspect is human resources. The decision-making process for operational

decisions, and the training of top leadership to the person in the field to undertake complex military operations is based on operational experience and exposure. Although a large number of advanced militaries of the world provide training capsules to African military personnel, their impact is still suboptimal as is evident from the way military operations and equipping are planned and executed in several militaries in Africa.

MAJOR MILITARY POWERS

Unless there is a direct conflict between the sides, it is difficult to assess comprehensive military power since besides the quality and quantity of military hardware and support systems, human resources and leadership play a pivotal role. However, just based on qualitative and quantitative data, Egypt appears as militarily the most powerful African state, followed by Algeria and Morocco. Practically, half of the military might of Africa is concentrated in these three states (Figure 7).

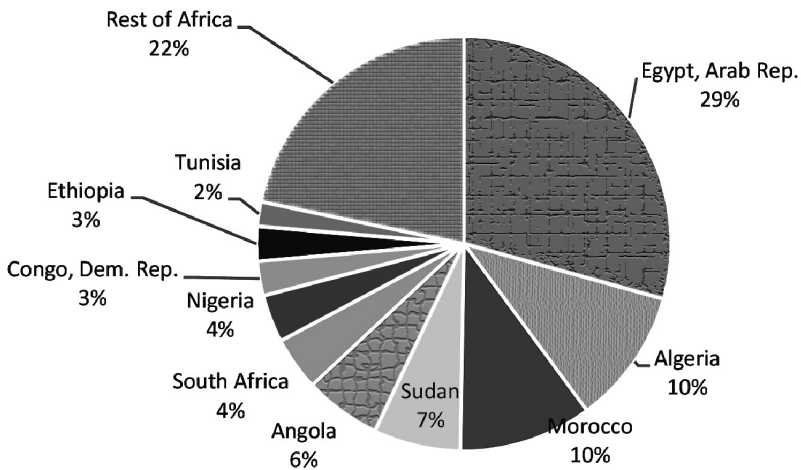


Figure 7 Military Power in Africa in 2022

Source: African Defence Database

A brief overview of the current state of affairs of Egypt in the north, and South Africa at the southern tip of Africa, sums up the conundrum that military powers in Africa face today.

Egypt's military has played a key role in regional conflicts, including the Gulf War, the Libyan Civil War, and the ongoing conflict in Yemen. It is a major recipient of military aid from the US. Like most African states, Egypt's military doctrine is largely defensive, with a focus on the protection of the country's interests, including its water resources and its strategic location at the crossroads of Africa and West Asia. Egypt's recent defence acquisitions indicate the development of capabilities to project power beyond its borders. However, there are severe limitations—like the lack of dedicated air defence, and a limited number of helicopters on board its Mistral ships for the launch of an amphibious assault. Even in the air power domain, sustaining a prolonged campaign could be problematic for Egypt, although recently unveiled footage showing its first-ever aerial-refuelling capability using under-wing pods, showcases new capability. Continued conscription in Egypt's army may lead to suboptimal force posturing.

South Africa is another major military power in Africa, and has played a key role in peacekeeping operations across the continent, including in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan. South Africa is also a major exporter of military equipment and technology, with a thriving defence industry. South Africa's army currently has 60,000 personnel, down from 77,000 due to a cut in the length of national service. A new short-service contract has been introduced to encourage national servicemen to stay in the forces after training. The South African Navy's decision to abandon deep-sea capabilities and concentrate on inshore operations as well as the reduction in the number of bases and the disbandment of the Marine Branch indicates gradual role reduction. South Africa's navy has patrolled the Mozambique channel since 2011, but has faced restrictions due to funding and operational availability concerns. The defence budget in South Africa declined significantly: from 4.3 per cent of GDP in 1989–90 to 1.3 per cent in 1999–2000, and stands at 1.12 per cent today, leaving critical gaps in equipment and capabilities, and the drawing down of its air power systems.

ANALYSIS OF AFRICAN DEFENCE ECONOMICS

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is an important indicator for assessing the economic strength of a country or region, including its ability to support defence spending. GDP per capita, which measures the average economic output per person, is also an important metric as it provides a more accurate picture of a country's economic well-being, taking into account its population size.³⁴ Other subsets related to GDP that can be useful in assessing

a country’s economic strength include its Gross National Income (GNI), which includes income earned from foreign investments as well as measures of economic inequality, such as the Gini coefficient. These indicators can provide additional insights into a country’s overall economic health and its ability to support defence spending. Like the world over, GDP in Africa too has grown steadily in the last five decades (Figure 8).³⁵

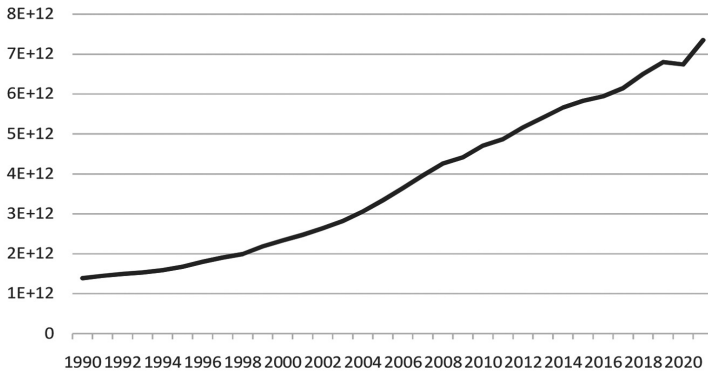


Figure 8 GDP (PPP) in Africa in Current US\$
 Source: African Defence Database

But the same steadiness is absent in the GDP per capita (Figure 9). There was a steep increase at the beginning of this century, but then, the gains were lost owing to increasing security uncertainty and prolonged internal conflicts.

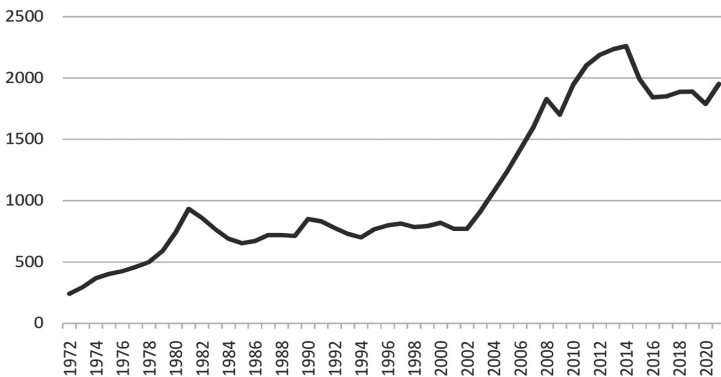


Figure 9 GDP Per Capita (Current US \$) in Africa in 1972–2021
 Source: African Defence Database

A careful look at the military expenditure in the last five decades indicates a gradual decline in terms of share of GDP since the 1990s, and Africa spending more than the world average in the 2000s. Although Africa is following the trend of the rest of the world, over the last five decades, African defence expenditure has seen significant fluctuations. In the 1970s, African defence expenditure was just above 2 per cent of GDP, but it increased significantly in the 1980s owing to various conflicts that arose on the continent. The peak was reached in 1999 when defence expenditure was over 12.5 per cent of government expenditure. Since then, there has been a decline in defence spending, with the average defence expenditure for African countries in 2022 being 1.7 per cent of GDP—marginally lower than the global average of 1.9 per cent (Figure 10).

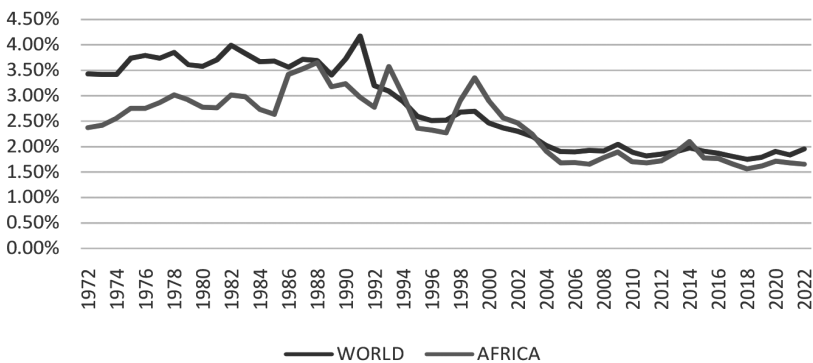


Figure 10 Military Expenditure as Share of GDP in Africa/World in 1972–2022
Source: African Defence Database

Currently, Togo is the highest military spender as far as its share of GDP is concerned; it is closely followed by Algeria, Morocco, Burkina Faso and South Sudan. These countries are spending a very large share of GDP on the military, and this is much higher than the world average and African average (Figure 11).

Looking at the trend in the last decade, Libya spent exceptionally high amounts on its military owing to the deteriorating security situation and ongoing instability and, possibly, all this was a trigger for Algeria to increase defence spending. South Sudan, Namibia and Morocco too have been big spenders in the last decade (Figure 12). The trend is likely to continue until peace and stability return to the continent.

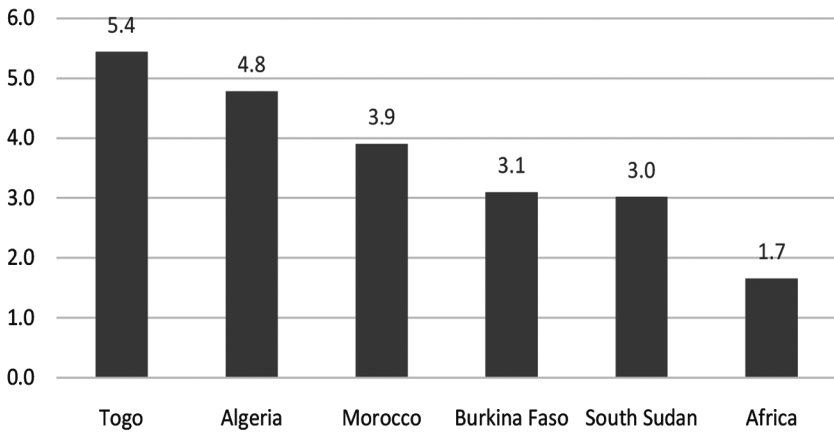


Figure 11 Military Expenditure as Share of GDP in Africa in 2022
 Source: African Defence Database

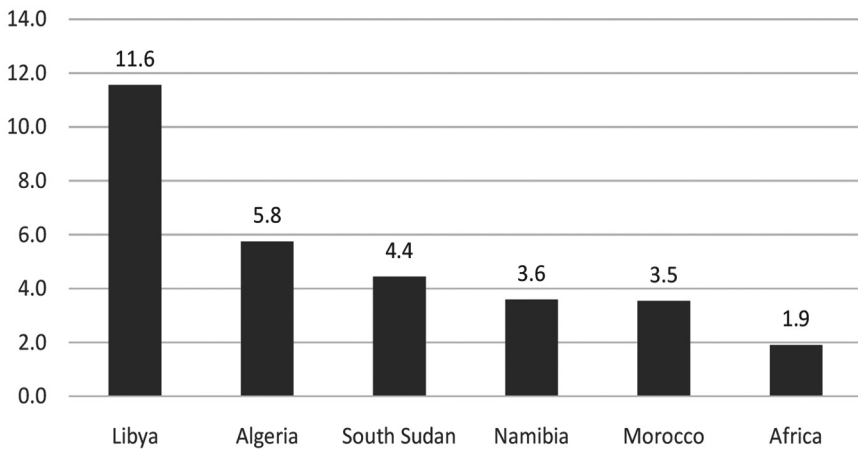


Figure 12 Military Expenditure as Share of GDP in Africa in 2013–2022
 Source: African Defence Database

However, data crunching for the last five decades indicates Angola, Egypt, Djibouti and Eritrea being big spenders (Figure 13), although the current trend of reduction in military expenditure as a share of GDP is evident for Egypt, the biggest military power in Africa.

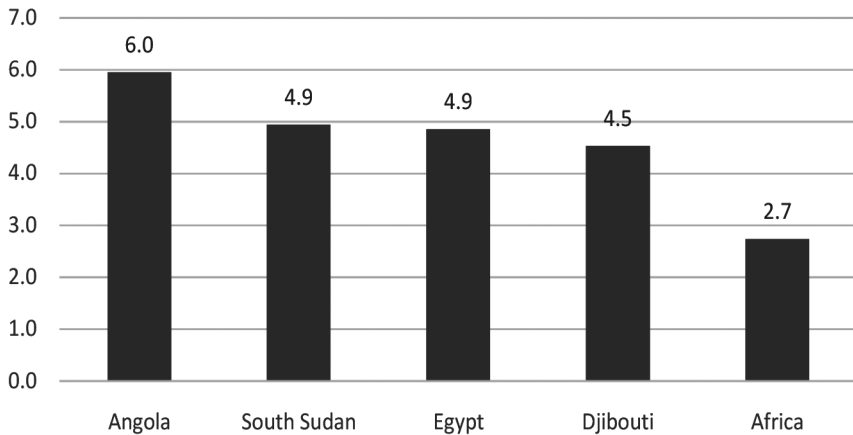


Figure 13 Military Expenditure as Share of GDP in Africa in 1973–2022

Source: African Defence Database

There are several reasons for this high level of defence spending. One of the primary reasons is ongoing conflicts and threats faced by many African countries. These conflicts require the deployment of military personnel and the acquisition of military equipment. Additionally, many African governments view the military as a tool for economic development, leading to a belief that investing in the military can boost economic growth.

While the high level of defence expenditure in Africa can be attributed to various factors, it is also important to understand how defence spending compares to economic indicators like GDP and government expenditure. An analysis of the data shows that there is a positive correlation between GDP and defence expenditure. However, this correlation weakens while considering government expenditure. This indicates that while economic growth is driving the increase in defence spending, the spending is not necessarily linked to a government's overall budget allocation. And military expenditure per capita in Africa is gradually inching up, and tops US\$ 30 currently (Figure 14), although this is well below the global average of US\$ 322 which includes high-spenders like Qatar (US\$ 5171), Israel (US\$ 2623) and Saudi Arabia (US\$ 2092).

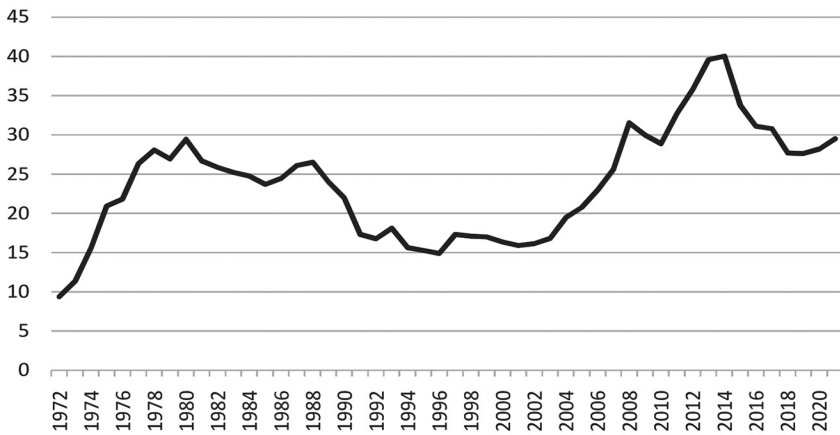


Figure 14 Military Expenditure per person (current USD) in Africa in 1972–2021
Source: African Defence Database

Military expenditure in Africa has hovered around 2 per cent of the world's military expenditure, although it peaked at nearly 3 per cent in the 1970s (Figure 15). This is indicative of low-cost low technology conflicts in the continent, where a majority of the military power is derived from human resources. This corroborates the observation of the dominance of land forces, specifically infantry, in African defence forces. These need minimal equipment.



Figure 15 Share of Africa in World Military Expenditure Constant US\$ 2021
(1972–2021)

Source: African Defence Database

The military expenditure in Africa over the last 30 years remains much lower than the world average, yet its share of world military expenditure has increased from 1.14 per cent to 1.87 per cent over the same period. Per capita, military expenditure in Africa is around one-eighth of the world average, but it has grown three times faster in Africa than the world average. The development growth of the region has been stunted by this accelerated growth in military expenditure.

The share of GDP that Africa spends on the military is lower than the world average, but it still represents a significant financial burden for developing and underdeveloped countries. Algeria remains the biggest spender on military expenditure in Africa, followed by other North African countries such as Egypt and Morocco (Figure 16). Morocco increased its defence budget by 21 per cent in real terms in 2020. There is a need for countries to reassess their threat perceptions, and synchronize them with their military capabilities. The socio-economic costs of accelerated military spending in Africa are stunted development growth, and the pushing back of the goals of Agenda 2063.

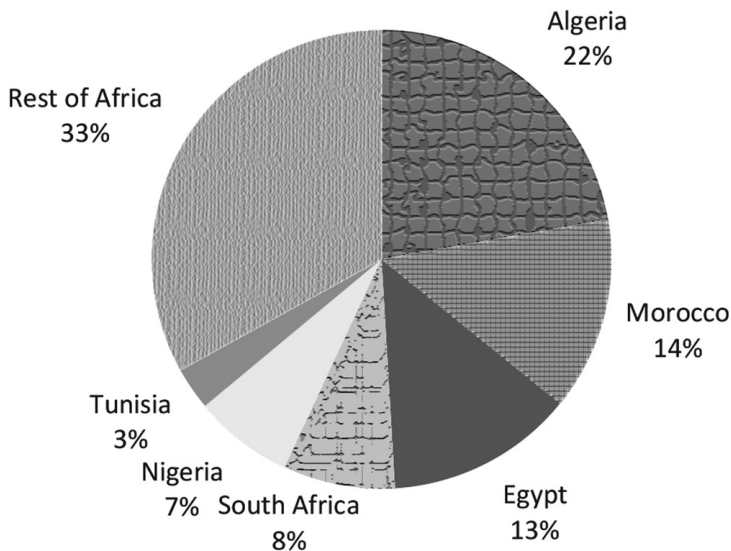


Figure 16 Military Expenditure in Africa in 2022

Source: African Defence Database

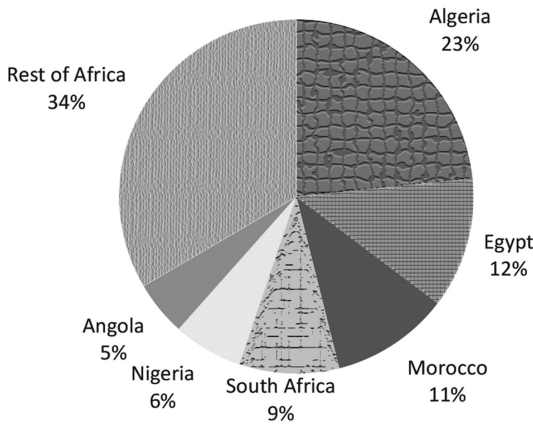


Figure 17 Military Expenditure in Africa in 2013–2022
 Source: African Defence Database

The military expenditure in the last decade has been led by Algeria and Egypt, both neighbours of war-torn Libya, and nearly one-third of continental defence expenditure (Figure 17). But, in the last five decades, Egypt has spent the most on its military, and the Arab–Israel conflict—the main reason (Figure 18). With the US-brokered peace accord, the situation has stabilised, and gradually Egypt’s military expenditure growth has tapered.

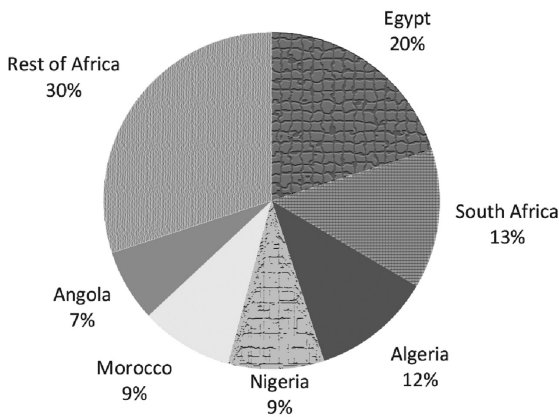


Figure 18 Military Expenditure in Africa in 1973–2022
 Source: African Defence Database

The major issue of concern is the higher share of government expenditure on the military by Africa as compared to the world. In 1999, African governments spent 300 basis points on their militaries more than the rest of the world. Although that gap has narrowed down to 60 basis points currently, widespread unrest in the continent could again open this up (Figure 19).

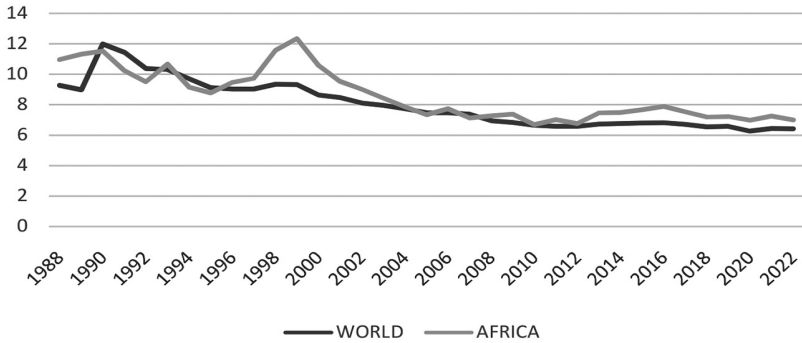


Figure 19 Military Expenditure as Share of Governmental Expenditure in Africa 1988–2022

Source: African Defence Database

Currently, Somalia, Chad and Togo are spending a substantial part of government expenditure on their militaries (Figure 20). However, looking at the last decades, Algeria has spent nearly 15 per cent of its government expenses on its military (Figure 21).

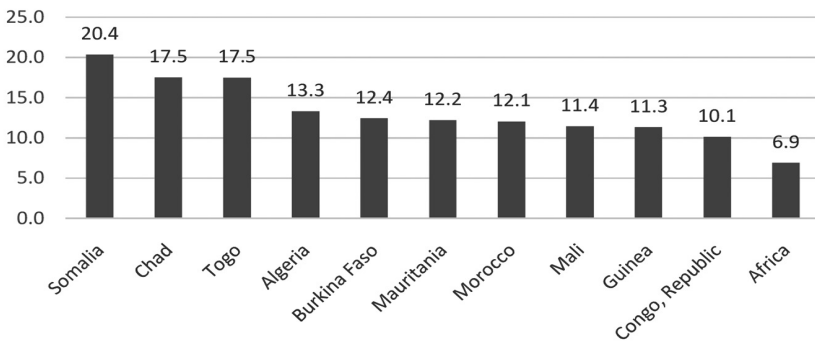


Figure 20 Military Expenditure as Share of Governmental Expenditure in Africa 2022

Source: African Defence Database

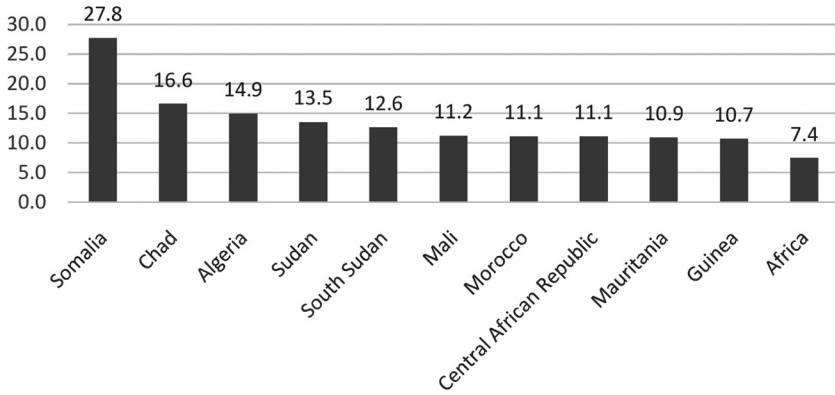


Figure 21 Military Expenditure as Share of Governmental Expenditure in Africa 2013–2022

Source: African Defence Database

In the last three decades, the Eritrea military has garnered almost a third of its government expenditure (Figure 22).

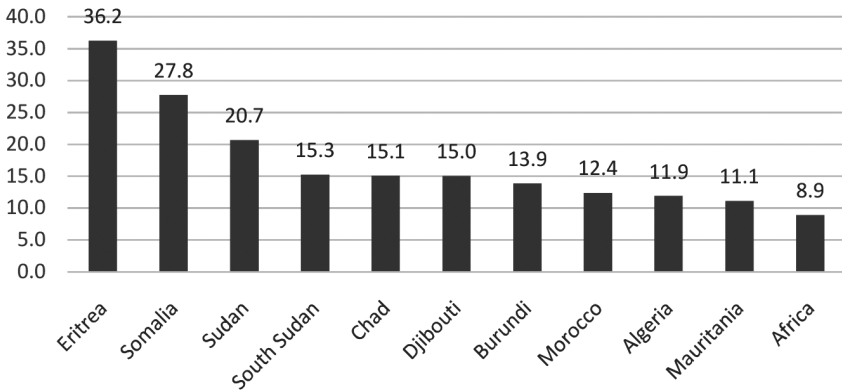


Figure 22 Military Expenditure as Share of Governmental Expenditure in Africa 1993–2022

Source: African Defence Database

In the last 30 years, seven countries account for three-fourths of the total military expenditure in Africa. The scenario has not changed much,

and Algeria continues to be at the pole position with a greater lead over other nations in military spending in Africa. The big spenders in this arena need to relook at and reassess their threat perceptions, and synchronise them with the military capabilities that need to be developed. While countries in North Africa need preparations to deter any expansion of conflict from war-torn West Asia, the same is not true for the central and southern parts of Africa. The induction of frontline combat aircraft, like SU30 and Gripen, in countries with no military threat to their borders is perplexing.

ARMS TRANSFERS AND PRODUCTION

In addition to defence expenditure, it is also essential to analyse arms transfers and production in Africa. The SIPRI database shows that Africa is a significant importer of arms, with many African countries importing arms from various countries, including China, Russia and the US. The database also shows that African countries are increasingly investing in arms production. The number of African countries producing their arms has increased significantly over the last few decades, indicating a desire for self-sufficiency in defence production.

In the 1970s, several North African countries such as Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, relied on weapons from different countries, such as the Soviet Union, China, France, and the UK. Egypt was also a significant recipient of military aid from both the Soviet Union and the US. However, arms movements in the region were complex, with some countries supplying arms to guerrilla groups, or third nations funding foreign arms purchases.³⁶

Recently, Egypt has taken delivery of surplus M-60A1 tanks from the US, and built up a force of Chaparral M-54 SP SAM. Libya had increased its military capabilities with more Su-24 FGA aircraft, T-72 tanks, BMP AIFV, and attack helicopters before the civil war expanded. Algeria has also increased its AIFV holdings by acquiring more BMP-2, while Morocco and Tunisia have received M-60A1 tanks. China has been increasingly involved in supplying military equipment and support to African states, including Ethiopia which has received military equipment—and even a remote-sensing satellite—from China. Chinese-designed weapons, including armed drones, armoured vehicles and artillery pieces, are increasingly being operated by African armed forces.

MILITARY INDUSTRIES

Africa has a growing defence industry, with several countries investing in the development and production of military equipment. The defence industry in South Africa has shrunk in recent years due to a reduction in acquisition spending by the SANDF, with only a few major South African groups remaining, along with some foreign companies that have acquired stakes in local companies. Regarding Egypt, there is continued interest in developing the local defence industry, with plans to build at least one frigate locally as part of economic diversification plans and potential for future sovereign production capabilities. As for Nigeria, while allocations to DICON have been maintained over the last five years, they have fallen as a proportion of the defence budget—from 1.1 per cent in 2016 to just 0.4 per cent in 2020.

LEADING AFRICAN DEFENCE COMPANIES

The above sub-section covered salient aspects of key military industries in Africa. Described below are some leading defence companies in Africa.

- Denel (South Africa) is one of the largest and most well-known defence companies in Africa, with a wide range of products and services that includes aircraft, missiles, artillery systems and armoured vehicles. The company has a long history of military innovation, and has been involved in several high-profile projects, including the Rooivalk attack helicopter and the Umkhonto surface-to-air missile system. Denel is also a major exporter of military equipment, with customers in more than 60 countries around the world. The company has faced some challenges in recent years, including financial difficulties and corruption scandals, but still remains a key player in Africa's defence industry.
- Paramount Group (South Africa) is a leading African defence company that specialises in the development and production of armoured vehicles, including the Mbombe and Marauder models. Paramount Group also provides a range of services, including logistics and training, and has been involved in several high-profile projects, including the supply of armoured vehicles to the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali. The company has a presence in several African countries, and is committed to helping African nations build their defence capabilities.
- Armscor (South Africa) is a South African government-owned defence company that is responsible for the procurement and management of military equipment for the South African Defence Force. The

company has a wide range of products and services, including small arms, ammunition and naval vessels. Armscor also works closely with South African defence companies, including the Denel and Paramount Groups, to develop and produce military equipment for both domestic and international markets.

- SNTA (Algeria) is a leading Algerian defence company that specialises in the development and production of military equipment, including small arms, artillery systems and armoured vehicles. The company projects include the development of the Kornet-E anti-tank missile system. SNTA is also a major exporter of military equipment, with customers in several African and West Asian countries.
 - The Ethiopian Defense Industry (Ethiopia) is a government-owned defence company that is responsible for the development and production of military equipment for the Ethiopian Defense Forces. The company has a wide range of products and services, including small arms, ammunition, armoured vehicles UAVs and electronic warfare systems.
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MAJOR MILITARY HARDWARE EXPORTERS TO AFRICA

Africa is one of the largest markets for military hardware in the world. As many countries across the continent face security challenges, including terrorism, insurgency and conflict, there is a growing demand for military equipment to support defence and security operations. Some of the major exporters of military hardware to Africa are listed below.

- Russia is one of the largest exporters of military hardware to Africa. The country has a long history of military cooperation with African countries, dating back to the Soviet era. Today, Russia continues to supply a wide range of military equipment to Africa, including fighter jets, helicopters, armoured vehicles and small arms. In recent years, Russia has established closer ties with several African countries, including Egypt, Algeria and Sudan. These countries have become major customers for Russian military hardware, with Egypt being the largest purchaser of Russian military equipment in Africa.
- China is another major exporter of military hardware to Africa. The country has a growing defence industry, and is becoming increasingly competitive in the global arms market. China supplies a wide range of military equipment to Africa, including fighter jets, UAVs, and naval vessels. China has also been involved in several major infrastructure

projects across Africa, including the construction of ports and railways. These projects often include a security component, with China supplying military equipment to support security operations.

- The US is a major exporter of military hardware to Africa, particularly in the areas of small arms and ammunition. The country also supplies a wide range of other military equipment to Africa, including armoured vehicles, helicopters and surveillance technology. In recent years, the US has increased its military presence in Africa, establishing several military bases across the continent. This has led to an increase in the supply of military equipment to African countries, particularly those that are considered strategic partners of the US.
- France is a major exporter of military hardware to its former colonies in Africa. The country has a long history of military cooperation with African countries, and has supplied a wide range of military equipment to support peacekeeping and counter-terrorism operations. In recent years, France has been involved in several major military interventions in Africa, including in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. These interventions have led to an increase in the supply of French military equipment to African countries.
- Israel is a major exporter of military hardware to Africa, particularly in the areas of UAVs, missiles and surveillance technology. The country has a highly developed defence industry, and is known for its advanced military technology. Israel has established close ties with several African countries, particularly in the areas of defence and security. The country has supplied military equipment to support counter-terrorism operations in countries such as Kenya and Nigeria.

CURRENT SECURITY AND DEFENCE CHALLENGES

Africa continues to face significant security and defence challenges, many of which are rooted in long-standing conflicts, terrorism and organised crime. One of the most significant security challenges facing Africa today is the continued presence of armed conflict in several countries, including the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. These conflicts have caused widespread displacement, human suffering and instability, and pose significant challenges to regional peace and security. Terrorism also remains a significant threat to Africa's security, with various groups—such as Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, and the Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA)—carrying out attacks on civilians and security forces.

For example, Boko Haram continues to carry out attacks in Nigeria and the surrounding region, while al-Shabaab has targeted civilians and security forces in Somalia and neighbouring countries. Organised crime is another challenge facing Africa, with illicit activities such as drug trafficking, human trafficking and arms smuggling, all posing significant threats to regional security. For example, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports that West and Central Africa have become major transit and destination point for drugs smuggled from Latin America to Europe.

Maritime security is also a significant challenge in Africa, with piracy and armed robbery affecting shipping routes in the Gulf of Guinea and the Indian Ocean. The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) reported 38 incidents of piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea in the first quarter of 2021 alone, highlighting the ongoing threats to maritime security in the region.

The conflicts in North Africa, particularly in Libya, and the involvement of foreign powers in the conflict, as in Turkey, Russia and the UAE, have provided military assistance to the warring parties in Libya, despite calls for a ceasefire and UN arms embargo.

African states and regional organisations are taking steps to enhance their security and defence capabilities, and international organisations are providing support to these efforts. While significant challenges remain, these developments provide a foundation for continued progress in promoting peace and security on the continent.

WHYS AND WHEREFORES

Since its inception, the Africa Union (AU) has done a reasonable job of reducing the number and intensity of interstate conflicts in the continent. Is there a sense of insecurity among states in Africa? Possibly, yes.³⁷ That appears to be the main reason for the development of military capabilities in certain countries. A perception seems to prevail that a developed military capability allows negotiations from a position of strength. This, possibly, has resulted in large spending on militaries. The AU needs to take the initiative to build and evolve robust and transparent conflict-resolving mechanisms. That will allow states to cut back on their military expenditure. Secondly, democracy is still taking root in Africa. Militaries, being loyal to the state, tend to be pampered by the ruling class who intend to retain control of the state.³⁸ For internal dynamics and extension of control, states exercise little direct control over military expenditure. This mechanism suits the political class and the military, but the state suffers. Lastly, in most parts of the world, military

expenditure skips professional scrutiny, and hides behind the garb of national security—a fertile ground for corruption. Agenda 2063 unambiguously lists corruption as a major risk.³⁹ The procurement of high-value desirable military hardware instead of low-value necessary equipment is a common folly. Several high-value deals for military equipment in Africa may not meet the essentiality criteria.

The complex political and economic landscape in Africa, with a focus on the consolidation of power and the use of the military as well as the challenges faced by the governments in navigating both domestic and international pressures, will dictate the future course. With communication improving, democracies will mature, and so will transparency. This will allow the growth of apolitical militaries with enhanced professionalism. The result will be a rationalisation of military expenditure. This could lead states to re-prioritise elements within defence budgets, rather than cut them. In this scenario, states could sharpen focus on capabilities, including cyber security and artificial intelligence, rather than conventional platforms. Nonetheless, where an urgent operational requirement or specific threat emerges, states will likely continue to prioritise the funding required.

THE WAY FORWARD

Despite plenty of natural resources, Africa remains low on the Human Development Index.⁴⁰ It needs to develop its infrastructure. However, with finite financial resources, investments need to be prioritised, and the government expenditure on the military needs to be rationalised. Operationally, the possibility of large interstate conflicts is low, and diminishing further. Credit for this goes to the visionary leadership of the African Union. However, intrastate conflicts and non-state actors continue to threaten Africa.

The statistical analysis of African defence expenditure, military personnel and military capability provides an insight into the trajectory of African defence over the last five decades. Military and security forces in Africa continue to face problems arising from the activity of non-state actors; weak defence organisations; and capability challenges despite external assistance. Fragile state structures and persistent insurgency from groups such as Boko Haram that use mobile tactics, pose a formidable challenge. The threats that Africa faces today, do not need strong and large conventional military forces. However, what is required is small and potent groups that can move quickly to thwart potential threats. While the armed and paramilitary

forces, traditionally, had modest inventories of armoured vehicles and aerial platforms, the focus on mobile-combat tasks has led to the introduction of more light armoured vehicles and enhanced ISR capabilities, with the induction of unmanned and manned aerial vehicles. The armed forces must build tools and systems for enhanced battlespace transparency and mobility systems to cut down the reaction time and, where possible, to act proactively.

To implement this strategy, the most critical tool is battlespace transparency. A synergetic pan-Africa approach can ensure a high level of transparency, with a large number of sensors monitoring the critical areas. This approach will help Africa skip the third and fourth generation of conventional capability reforms, and move directly to what is relevant today. Broadly, the focus needs to be on trimming conventional military capabilities, and building smart forces that can handle the security challenges of tomorrow. Infusion of technology in the intelligence and decision-making loop, along with the development of rapid deployment capabilities will hold the key. An audit of required military capabilities and, therefore, military expenditure in Africa is essential. Efforts need to focus on scaling down conventional military capabilities. An appropriate step taken in this direction at this juncture will assist Africa in achieving its visionary goal of Agenda 2063.

NOTES

1. 'Frame Work Document, Agenda 2063', The African Union Commission, September 2015, available at www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/agenda2063.pdf, accessed on 17 January 2023.
2. 'First Ten-Year Implementation Plan 2014–2023', The African Union Commission, September 2015, available at www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/agenda2063-first10yearimplementation.pdf, accessed on 17 January 2023.
3. SIPRI Databases, available at <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>, accessed on 17 January 2023.
4. At present the African Union has 55 member states.
5. This is evidenced by the fact that, on an average, Africa is spending 60 percentile points more than the world average on its military. Despite a decline in military spending since the peak in 1999, African defence expenditure continues to remain higher than the world average, which is a cause for concern.
6. Items analysed to gain insights into African defence expenditure include the number of military personnel, arms transfers and arms production. This analysis includes a comparison of African defence expenditure with global averages, as well as a comparison of defence expenditure with economic indicators like GDP and government expenditure.

7. In the 1960s and 1970s, Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq entered into a series of defence pacts, which later dissolved. Libya, Syria and Egypt formed the Federation of Arab Republics, but this was not implemented. Sudan, Uganda, Angola, Zambia, Guinea, Liberia, Central African Republic, Chad and Zaire have all signed bilateral defence treaties. The US and the Soviet Union have had mutual defence and assistance agreements with various African countries. France has defence and military co-operation agreements with several African countries. Other countries like China, Spain, Belgium and Cuba, have also given military aid or entered into military agreements with African countries.
8. The US has had mutual defence and assistance agreements with Ethiopia (1975), Ghana (1972), Kenya (1980), Liberia (1972), Mali (1972), Niger (1962), Senegal (1962) and Zaire (1972). An agreement is under negotiation with Somalia to allow limited US access to Somali facilities.
9. The Soviet Union has Treaties of Friendship and Cooperation with Angola (1976), Mozambique (1977) and Ethiopia (1978), all of which led to large-scale Soviet military aid programmes over the years, with the provision of both military hardware and advisers. The Soviet Union's 1974 Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation with Somalia was abrogated in November 1977, but treaties with Angola (October 1976), Mozambique (March 1977) and Ethiopia (November 1978, ratified April 1979) have remained. Military aid has been given to Angola, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Somalia and Uganda. Soviet naval facilities constructed in Somalia are no longer in use, and the Soviet Union has transferred its operations to South Yemen. Guinea was used as a Soviet staging and maritime reconnaissance base until 1977.
10. China has military assistance agreements with Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Mali and Tanzania, and has given aid to Mozambique and Zaire.
11. Britain maintains overflying, training and defence agreements with Kenya, and is working closely with Zimbabwe.
12. Cuba has given military aid to the Congo, Guinea, Somalia, Ethiopia and Algeria. About 20,000 men were positioned in Angola to train the Angolan armed forces, and assist in internal security, with 16,000–17,000 men in Ethiopia. Cuban, Soviet, and East German advisers were present in a number of other African countries in the 1970s and 1980s.
13. Belgium has a military co-operation agreement with Zaire.
14. France entered into a number of defence agreements with the Francophone states of Africa: Cote d' Ivoire (1961), Togo (1963), Cameroon (1974), Senegal (1974), Djibouti (1977), Mali (1977), Niger (1977) and the Comoros Islands (1978), and has technical military assistance agreements with 22 African states (including the eight listed) as with Benin, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Gabon (1974), Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger and Zaire.
15. The Federation of Arab Republics, formed by Libya, Syria and Egypt in April 1971, provided for a common defence policy and a Federal Defence Council, and an

Egyptian was appointed Commander-in-Chief of all Federation Forces in January 1973. Algeria and Libya signed a defence agreement in December 1975, and Egypt with Sudan in January 1977. A 1977 agreement between Mauritania and Morocco was abrogated in August 1979. Bilateral defence agreements, or agreements including defence matters, have been signed between: Angola and Zambia (1978 and 1979), Guinea and Liberia (1979), Central African Republic and Chad (1984), Central African Republic and Zaire (1985), and Angola and Zaire. In April 1990, Sudan and Uganda signed a treaty of non-aggression, and agreed not to permit hostile armed activity across their mutual border. Either formal defence treaties or less formal agreements including security and military cooperation, have been reached between: Algeria and Libya (1975), Egypt and Sudan (1977), Saudi Arabia and Morocco (1982), Libya and Morocco (1984).

16. The conflict was sparked by the struggle for independence by three nationalist movements: the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), and the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA). The MPLA, which was backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba, emerged victorious after a protracted conflict that lasted from 1975 to 2002. The Angolan Civil War had far-reaching consequences for the region, as it drew in various regional and international actors who supported different sides in the conflict.
17. The Ethiopian Civil War lasted from 1974 to 1991. The conflict was sparked by a military coup that overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie, and established a military junta known as the Derg. The Derg government was faced with a series of challenges, including opposition from various ethnic groups and separatist movements. The conflict drew in various regional actors, including Somalia and Eritrea, which supported different sides in the conflict. The Ethiopian Civil War ended in 1991 when the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) overthrew the Derg government.
18. The Mozambican Civil War lasted from 1977 to 1992. The conflict was sparked by the struggle for independence by the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), which had been fighting for independence since the early 1960s. The conflict drew in various regional actors, including Rhodesia and South Africa, which supported different sides in the conflict. The Mozambican Civil War ended in 1992 after the signing of the Rome General Peace Accords between FRELIMO and the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO).
19. Ethnic tensions were also prevalent during this period, as many African countries struggled with the challenge of managing diverse ethnic groups. The struggle for independence by minority ethnic groups in many countries often led to armed conflicts, as was the case in Angola.
20. The conflict was sparked by the struggle for autonomy and self-determination by the people of southern Sudan, who felt marginalised by the predominantly Arab government in Khartoum. The conflict drew in various regional and international

actors who supported different sides in the conflict. The conflict ended in 2005, with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

21. The LRA emerged in Uganda in the 1980s, and became notorious for its brutal tactics, including the abduction of children for use as soldiers and sex slaves. The LRA remained active in Uganda and other neighbouring countries until the mid-2000s, when its leader, Joseph Kony, was driven into hiding.
22. ECOMOG played a key role in ending the conflicts in both countries, and paved the way for the establishment of democratic governments.
23. The conflict was sparked by tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, and drew in various regional actors, including Uganda, which supported the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). The conflict ended in 1994, with the victory of the RPF, and the establishment of a new government.
24. The conflict was sparked by the rebellion of ethnic Tutsis in eastern Congo, and drew in various regional actors, including Rwanda and Uganda, which supported different sides in the conflict. The conflict ended in 1997, with the victory of Laurent-Désiré Kabila, and the establishment of a new government.
25. Africa saw progress in the area of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants. DDR programmes were implemented in various countries, including Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and played a key role in promoting stability and preventing the re-emergence of conflict.
26. The AU was established to promote peace, security and development on the continent, and has played a key role in addressing conflicts and promoting stability in Africa. The African Union also established the African Peace Fund to support peacebuilding efforts on the continent.
27. In response to these challenges, African states and regional organisations took steps to enhance their security and defence capabilities. For example, in 2013, the African Union launched the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC), a rapid response force intended to provide a quick response to emerging crises on the continent. The ACIRC was later replaced by the African Standby Force, which aims to enhance Africa's capacity to respond to security challenges through a range of regional and continental mechanisms.
28. The conflict in Darfur, Sudan, which began in 2003, resulted in the deaths of an estimated 3,00,000 people, and the displacement of millions more. The conflict was sparked by tensions between the central government and rebel groups in the region.
29. The fall of the Gadhafi regime in Libya in 2011 led to the spread of weaponry, mercenaries and armed groups across the Sahel region. This resulted in a weak Malian government response to a rebellion in January 2012, which led to a coup in March, and the subsequent takeover of northern Mali by Islamists. The African Union approved the deployment of 3,300 troops to help the Malian government regain control of its territory. Islamist groups also caused growing concern in

Algeria, Mauritania, Niger, and particularly Nigeria, where Boko Haram continued its bombing campaign. Meanwhile, established security crises continue to impact development progress and state resources across the continent, with conflict continuing in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, between the Sudans, and in areas straddling national boundaries.

Several rebel groups, such as the FDLR, CNDP and M23, continued to harass civilian populations in various regions. Diplomatic tensions arose between Rwanda, Uganda and the UN due to allegations of support for the M23 militia. Uganda threatened to withdraw its troops from UN peacekeeping missions and Somalia in the light of these accusations.

30. Boko Haram, for example, carried out a range of attacks in Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad, resulting in the deaths of thousands of people, and the displacement of millions more.
31. The International Maritime Bureau reported that there were 54 incidents of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia in 2010, compared to just one incident in 2009. The Gulf of Guinea also saw a rise in piracy, with the number of incidents increasing from 26 in 2010 to 90 in 2019.
32. For example, Senegal's armed forces are well balanced in regional terms, with a mix of equipment reflecting their need to act in regional and wider contingencies, tackle insurgency in the Casamance region, address maritime insecurity, and maintain internal security with a gendarmerie.
33. The only major change in the air forces of the region is the transfer of 12 combat-capable L-29 trainers from Nigeria to Ghana. Both Ethiopia and Mozambique have retired, perhaps more than a year ago, their MiG-17 FGA aircraft. The second South African Cheetah FGA squadron is a Full Time Force training unit, and not part of the Citizen Force; Angola's six SA-342 helicopters are armed with HOT ATGW; and Zambia's eight SF-260MZ trainers also have a COIN capability while the number of Jastreb J-1 COIN/trainers was four. In the 1990s, the South Africa Air Force has already retired its Canberra bombers and SA-321 helicopters, and plans to disband three more Full Time Force and two Citizen Force squadrons.

North Africa is home to a number of major importers of defence equipment, and has routinely seen orders of significant size and cost. Procurement trends in the Arabian Peninsula, Egypt and Morocco indicate that air-power remains a continued priority, notably the modernisation of combat aircraft and rotary-wing fleets. Examples include Morocco's Foreign Military Sales (FMS) contract for 24 AH-64E Apaches in 2020, and the FMS notifications for sales/refurbishment of Apache helicopters to Egypt in 2020. At the end of 2019, Egyptian and US military officers also formally reopened the fighter base at Cairo West Airport, which now operates the Block 52 F-16C/D. The priority given to airpower reflects the growing force-projection ambitions of regional powers. Recent years have seen some regional air forces add heavy transport aircraft to their inventories, and an increasing number of operational deployments in, for instance, the conflict in Libya.

One issue that had stymied regional States' procurement ambitions for the latest-generation military equipment from the US was Washington's determination to maintain Israel's Qualitative Military Edge (QME), though for some states this situation may now have changed after the normalisation of relations between some Gulf states and Israel in late 2020.

34. In absolute terms, the military expenditure in Africa is much lower than the world average. However, in the last 30 years, Africa's share of world military expenditure has increased from 1.9 per cent to 2.3 per cent. Today, per capita military expenditure in Africa is around one-sixth of the world average (see Figure 2). Trend analysis of the last 30 years indicates that the per capita military expenditure in the world has increased by 26.8 per cent, and in Africa, it has grown three times faster. Low base and inflation can be cited as contributory factors, yet the growth rate is alarming.

This accelerated growth in military expenditure in Africa obviously has socio-economic costs. The development growth has been stunted, and the goals of Agenda 2063 pushed a little further. Percentage changes in defence spending can vary considerably from year to year, as states revise the level of funding allocated to defence. After discounting for inflationary and exchange rate effects, the real increase in regional defence spending was an estimated 4.6 per cent (at constant 2010 prices and exchange rates). North Africa witnessed an upward trend in 2019, and most of the non-oil-dependent countries there have managed to avoid implementing cuts in 2020.

In June 2019, Morocco, for example, announced that its defence budget would be increased by 21 per cent in real terms in 2020 to US\$ 6bn (US\$ 5.5bn in constant 2015 dollars), building on the milder growth seen between 2015 and 2019 when the defence budget increased from US\$ 4.3bn to US\$ 4.8bn (US\$ 4.4bn to US\$ 4.6bn in constant 2015 dollars). While Algeria implemented a 3.4 per cent real cut to the 2020 defence budget, increases were evident in Egypt, Tunisia and Mauritania.

35. Defence spending, Defence budgetary transparency across the North African region generally tends to be low, with few states providing details on the composition of defence outlays. Opacity has increased in recent times, in part due to heightened governmental concerns over the increasingly fraught civil–military relations in the region. Civil conflicts over 2011 and 2012 in Libya and Tunisia have also increased uncertainty over the true levels of defence spending in these states.
36. In the 1970s, Algeria and Morocco relied on weapons from the Soviet Union, which also supplied to Egypt under the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation with the Soviet Union in May 1971 (till March 1976 when the treaty was abrogated). The US also provided military aid on a grant, credit, or cash sale basis to Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. China supplied arms to Sudan, and spare parts to Egypt under an arms agreement signed in 1978/9. Egypt and Sudan were main recipients of British military hardware and France supplied to Morocco, Egypt, Libya and Tunisia. Arms movements in the region are complex. Egypt has supplied arms to Morocco. Algeria and Libya reportedly supply arms to Polisario guerillas, and most

countries have supplied arms to the Palestinian guerillas. In some cases, a third nation funds the recipient's foreign arms purchases. In 1975, an Arab Organization for Industrialization (AOI) was set up in Egypt to encourage indigenous Arab arms production. Initially, under the aegis of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE and Sudan, this project was ended following Egypt's rapprochement with Israel. Egypt is attempting to continue it with British and US support. In 1979, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE agreed to set up an US\$ 8-bn arms industry in the UAE to replace the AOI.

37. 'Frame Work Document, Agenda 2063', The African Union Commission, September 2015, n. 1, p. 102.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 64. It states that modest progress is being made in fighting corruption. However according to Transparency International, four out of five African countries are below the world average; see also p. 102 which mentions corruption in the military.
40. As per the Human Development Report of the UNDP, 2015, available at https://ipfs.io/ipfs/QmXoyvizjW3WknFiJnKLwHCnL72vedxjQkDDP1mXW06uco/wiki/Human_Development_Rep,ort.html, accessed on 17 July 2018.