

War on Terror or Scramble for Resources?

News:

Nigerian President Muhammad Buhari has urged the US to relocate US Africa Command to Africa from its headquarters in Germany. In a virtual meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on April 27, 2021 said U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), should be relocated to Africa itself. "Considering the growing security challenges in West and Central Africa, Gulf of Guinea, Lake Chad region and the Sahel, weighing heavily on Africa, it underscores the need for the United States to consider re-locating AFRICOM headquarters... near the theatre of operation," said Buhari, according a statement issued by the presidency. [Source: Reuters]

Comment:

The United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM, U.S. AFRICOM, and AFRICOM), is one of the eleven unified combatant commands of the United States Department of Defense, headquartered at Kelley Barracks, Stuttgart, Germany. It is responsible for U.S. military operations, including fighting regional conflicts and maintaining military relations with 53 African nations. Its area of responsibility covers all of Africa except Egypt, which is within the area of responsibility of the United States Central Command. U.S. AFRICOM headquarters operating budget was \$276 million by the year 2012. Currently, the US has 7,000 military personnel on rotational deployment in Africa. These troops carry out joint operations with African forces against 'extremists' or 'jihadists'. They are hosted in military outposts across the continent, including Uganda, South Sudan, Senegal, Niger, Gabon, Cameroon, Burkina Faso and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Amid multiple security challenges in West Africa's Sahel from school kidnappings in its northwest and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea as well as the attacks in neighboring Niger, Cameroon and Chad, Buhari seem to plea and bow down urging US to 'flush out Islamic Militants' in Africa. His words come a week after the death of the longtime president of Chad, Idriss Deby, in a battle against rebels. Deby was an important Western ally in the fight against Islamist militants and under him Chadian soldiers formed a key component of a multinational force fighting 'terrorists'.

Since 9/11, the U.S. military has built a sprawling network bases in more than a dozen African countries. It has been providing billions of dollars in security assistance to local partners, conducting persistent counterterrorism operations that include commando raids, and a record number of U.S. airstrikes in Somalia (just over one attack per week in 2019). The formerly secret documents, created by the Pentagon's Africa Command and obtained via the Freedom of Information Act, offered an exclusive window into the footprint of American military operations in Africa. The US military officials maintain that the purpose of the command is to work alongside African military personnel to support their military operations in their 'mission to fight terrorism'.

The War on Terror led by America backed by European powers is increasingly gaining momentum in Africa where we have seen draconian laws enacted across the continent. Since September 11, America has run a mock in which its foreign policy has turned to be more aggressive and militarized aimed at protecting and securing her access to her strategic resources.

It has piled pressure to many governments in the World to pass terror bills which has seen Muslims across the continent faced with forced disappearances, rendition and killed in a horrendous manner.

The real selling point is that, every day, the U.S. military forges closer ties with African governments, promotes U.S. values and interests. Over security concerns, America has focused mainly Africa at a time when China is ramping up diplomatic and business links with the continent. Under both the Obama and Trump administrations, the military has relied on partners in other countries to carry out crucial missions against suspected terrorists, to avoid American casualties after years of massive direct involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Africa's hope for renaissance lies only in and Independent state free from Western intervention – a liberator from the vicious schemes US and its European allies. The state is Khilafah (Caliphate) upon the methodology of the Prophet (saw) that will protect and guarantee peace, tranquility and prosperity to not only Africa but also the whole world.

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