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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Good afternoon. I am Dr. Vanda Felbab-Brown, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, and the director of the Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors, and co-director of the Africa Security Initiative at Brookings, which are hosting today's webinar on Chad and the internal and regional implications of the recent death of Chad's president, Idriss Déby. The death came on April 20th, apparently, since Déby suffered injuries on the battlefield, as he was trying to ward off one of several militant groups battling his government. In this case, the front for change and unity in Chad failed a splinter group from another militant group battling the Chadian government, led by his former minister of defense.

President Déby, himself, came to power three decades ago, through the battlefield and a military victory. After his death on April 20th, the Chadian government -- the Chadian military violated the Chadian constitution and appointed Déby's son, Mahamat Idriss Déby, as his successor. President, the current President Déby is a four-star military general, a 37-year-old son, who is apparently respected in the military. Nonetheless, the actions were in violation of the Afghan constitution, and the military government has since then attempted to negotiate easing of political tensions in Chad. Four days ago, it appointed a new cabinet, with various ministerial positions, but excluded important opposition elements, including the transformer party, and the country has seen numerous political protests against the violation of the legal processes in Chad. And the current government has responded its significant strength and violence against the protestors.

Meanwhile, the regions, as well as external actors, have been nervous about President Déby's death. And we have seen many illusions and comparisons to the instability that followed the end of the Muammar Gaddafi regime in Libya, more than a decade ago. President Déby was seen as a key linchpin of stability in West Africa, a staunch opponent of militant Jihadism in the region. He was a key ally of friends in the United States and counterterrorism efforts.

The Chadian military forces came to the assistance of Nigeria in 2014, when the country was deeply struggling against the Boko Haram insurgency. Incidentally, Nigeria is facing immense challenges from Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa Provide today, again. Chadian forces

have also been deployed to Cameroon to fight Boko Haram. Seen as the most potent military in the Lake Chad region, Chadian forces and Chad country have been also the centerpiece of the G5 Sahel Group, a regional organization set up in 2014 for security and development cooperation, but heavily centering on security and counterterrorism issues.

Chad contributes more than 1,400 U.N. peacekeepers in Mali. And in February, it sent a 1,200-strong detachment of the G5 Sahel Joint Force to the highly unstable tri border area, between Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. All three countries face a complex tangle of internal security challenges, entailing militant Islamic groups, such as Boko Haram, various terrorist groups connected to the Islamic State and al-Qaida, as well as decades of interethnic conflict, rising conflict between farmers and herders, compounded by climate change and the immense drying up of Lake Chad.

And all of these countries also have suffered decades of poor unaccountable exclusionary governance, and even when they have had elections, they often faced real governance challenges. So, President Déby's death just drives home, once again, the risks of building counterterrorism strategies around authoritarian leaders, and government -- governance that is neither accountable nor inclusive.

We have a terrific panel today to discuss these issues. I am absolutely thrilled that we are joined by Ms. Kamissa Camara, who is the former minister of foreign affairs of Mali. She also previously served as Mali's minister of digital economy and planning and chief of staff to the president of Mali. Ms. Camara is a senior visiting expert for the Sahel at the United States Institutes of Peace. And prior to working with the Malian government, she held various positions in Washington, D.C., including with the International Foundations for Electoral Systems and the National Endowment for Democracy. And in her role in the government of Mali, she was deeply involved in the G5 policies on development and security issues. We couldn't wish for a better contributor to today's panel.

I am equally thrilled to introduce Dr. John Mukum Mbaku, who is the Brady presidential distinguished professor of dconomics and John Hinckley fellow at Weber State University, where received the highest honor for excellence in teaching, outstanding scholarship, and extraordinary service. I'm also delighted to say that Professor Mbaku is also a nonresident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution.

He's also an attorney and counsellor at Law, licensed to practice in the Supreme Court of the state of Utah and the U.S. District Court for the district of Utah. He has received many awards for his writings and contributions, including in 2020, the 2021 John and Olga Gardner Prize, by the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters.

And for those of you who will be joining us on May 20, in our forthcoming event on Somalia and Ethiopia, I would like to highlight one book by Professor Mbaku, which is "Governing the Nile River Basin: The Search for a New Legal Regime," co-written by another colleague of mine, Mwangi Kimenyi.

And finally, Dr. Joseph Siegle is the director of research for the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, an academic institution within the U.S. Department of Defense, and I must say a leading center for the research of Africa, but which has very much to do with Dr. Siegle's immense leadership in that institution. Dr. Siegle's impactful contributions have explored the role of governance in advance in security and development, security trends in Africa, stabilization of fragile states, democratic transitions, and he has deeply explored the relationship between counterterrorism and stabilization policies, governance, and development. Prior to joining the Africa Center, he was a Douglas Dillon fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. And he also brings immense field experience from Africa, where he served in various capacities for very many years.

So, an enormously competent, talented, and highly knowledgeable panel with lots of policy experience, as well as key insights, and that we are privileged today to hear. Ms. Camara, let me first turn to you. Can you please tell us where we are, after the death of President Déby? How has the region reacted? And you've worked in the G5 and Sahel security issues in your role as key policymakers. From your perspective, how concerned are you about President Déby's death and the succession to his son?

MS. CAMARA: Thank you, Vanda, for having me. And thank you to the team at Brookings for putting this event together. I think the question you're asking is important. There have been a lot of discussions around Déby's departure, around what is going to happen in Chad, around the provisions of what will happen, and the implications of Déby's departure for stabilization efforts, in the

Sahel region, the -- also in the Horn of Africa, and Central Africa, and even in Libya. And I think these conversations were all very important, but there might be a lot of myth and misinformation about who Déby was, about the real power that he had in Chad and in the region.

And I would like to start by saying that the death of President Idriss Déby really took us by surprise. Since the event, many African presidents have privately expressed doubts as to what the real circumstances of Déby's death were. A French journalist even went as far as saying, publicly, that Déby was murdered at the presidential palace and could not have been killed on the battlefield. This question was also at the center of the recent African Union Factfinding Mission to Germania. And the official version, the Chadian authorities hasn't changed. It is that he died on the battlefield. And the date that was given is actually April 18. And the reason why this information is important is that his death was withheld, the information about his death was withheld, by his family and high ranking members of the military, for 48 hours, and only made public on April 20, when it had already been decided that Mahamat Kaka, who is Déby's son, would take over from his father.

And so, why is this information important? I would say, first, that to state the obvious, we've witnessed a seamless coup, where the succession of power, as described by the Chadian constitution, was blatantly overruled. It is only after it had been decided that Mahamat Kaka was going to take over that the president of the national assembly was then informed of the death of President Déby, and then officially went on record to decline the role of head of the country. And so, I think it's important to understand the chronology of events, as they happened.

The second reason why I think the chronology of events is important is that we might be thinking that we're dealing with a weak state here, and it's not the case. The information about Déby's death, again, has not leaked in 24 -- in 48 hours, and so, when the Electoral Commission declared that Déby was the winner of the presidential elections on April 19, Déby had already departed. And this tells us that the inner circle of President Déby remains as powerful as it has always been.

And finally, we here, in Washington, D.C., might view Chad as being an unstable country now that the civilian position is increasingly being vocal about what they call a military coup de force. Yet, I would argue that this authoritarian regime that Déby has led for 30 years has found the perfect

successor, and it is highly unlikely that the military will relinquish power any time soon, thus creating the conditions for this superficial stability that Chad has experienced for decades. And it's important to remember that the Chadian army has always governed, and it was to guarantee the continuity of military power that the army decided to set up the CMT, which is the Transitional Military Committee, and the objective of this being to invest in the transitional process by conditioning the modalities and especially the outcome of the transition, as was the case in the vast majority of the military transitions that the continent has experienced.

I don't want to be too long, but I would like to conclude by saying this, Chad has been in a state of perpetual instability, or rather superficial stability. If the traditional government ever has the political will to change this, there is a need to reimagine the domestic political arena to include all segments of society, and questions of national dialogue often emerge, as a solution to bring back constitutional order, stability, inclusion, in the way that the Chadian government is conducting business. I would go further and say that this big concept of truth and reconciliation to review 30 years of human rights abuses, injustice, state abuse, et cetera needs to happen, before we can even speak of national dialogue. And, Vanda, I don't know if I answered your question, but am I worried about what is going to happen? I think that this is a -- there is a unique window of opportunity for Chad, as a country, but also for the Sahel region to define who the big players are going to be, within the next 5 to 10 years. Thank you.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Excellent. Thank you very much, both in bringing us up to date about some of the myth and contested narrative, but crucially also about this duality between, on the one hand, a regime that has managed to pull off a successful seamless transition, Camara, to use, Kamissa, to use your term, and, on the other hand, the fragility or chronic instability that exists underneath, and the opportunity, yet, opportunity, that, in your own words, also struggles against the realities of power and the rule of the military, of Chadian military, for such a long time, which is a great transition to Professor Mbaku.

John, if I can ask you to reflect more on the relationship between the rule of law and security, between coercive power and developing consensus, and being able to, through a national

consensus that allows for accountability and economic development, and, you know, perhaps allows for some chance of the transitional justice for the exploration of truth and reconciliation, that Camara spoke about. You know, I can think of other region -- other countries in the region, like Nigeria, that went through a transition from a military rule to a collections-based rule, two decades ago, and yet never really had any reconning with the past commissions that tried to look at truth are suppressed, or their findings are put in a drawer, and so, the deeper issues of instability, excess of power are never really addressed. Your thoughts on this opportunity or lack of, that we have, currently, in Chad? John, you might be muted.

MR. MBAKU: No, I'm unmuted.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Okay, great.

MR. MBAKU: Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important program. I'd like to thank the Brookings Institution for giving us an opportunity to do so. Before I start, I need to remind ourselves that we have -- when we look at Chad and the region, we have to be specifically interested in the fact that stability for stability's sake is not really something that we should be interested in because, during the last 30 years, Chad had a semblance of stability, but beneath that stability was chronic poverty, extreme inequality, and a situation in which many Chadians were not able to participate in their government. So, there was a lack of institutions in the country that could be said to have been based on the rule of law, meaning that everyone in the country, regardless of their position, regardless of their ethnic relationship, regardless of their economic position, their political position, every individual was subject to the law.

Unfortunately, this was not what we were seeing in Chad because even though the government was able to maintain a significant level of a stability, there was extreme poverty in the country, and that stability was achieved at the expense of most of the people in the country. We mentioned Nigeria. You see, one of the problems that you have in Nigeria is that, after a series of military situations in Nigeria, the country transitioned into democracy, in 1999. But their problem was that the country never really sat together and brought all relevant stakeholders to discuss what kind of government they wanted.

So, this opportunity that is -- has been opened by the death of the former President of

Chad grants us an opportunity to get together all the relevant stakeholders in Chad and try to go through what Kamissa mentioned previously. There is some kind of truth and reconciliation process that will provide all sectors of Chad an opportunity to sit down, look at what happened during the last 30 years, not only in terms of governance, but also in terms of participation in the economy, in terms of providing, especially girls and women, an opportunity to participate both in governance and the economy, and sit down and really talk about what way Chad -- Chadians want to move forward, in terms of both governance, political governance, and the economy.

Chad is a very rich country. It receives a lot of money from the exploration of oil. It sits on significant endowments of natural resources. So, the potential for development, the potential for human development in Chad is enormous. The problem is that you don't have the type of leadership, you don't have the types of institutions that can make it possible for all Chadians to participate in governance and in the economy, to provide themselves with the opportunities to generate the wealth that they need to meet their own needs and move forward.

It is true that the former president emerged in West Africa as a very important individual in the area of fighting terrorism and egregious extremism. The unfortunate aspect of this is that he and his foreign supporters, mainly France and the United States, were not willing or were unable to actually go into Chad and try to figure out why so many young people are attracted to extremist groups. They were not willing, or they were not able to look at the reasons why there is so much extremism in the area. And I think that if we are going to fight terrorism effectively and bring peace and solidarity to this part of the world, we must ask ourselves why is it that so many young people in this part of the world are attracted to extremism and are easily recruited to join these groups. And if we do that, if we honestly do that, and give the people of Chad an opportunity to participate in governing the country, in developing the institutions that govern the country, I think that will be a much better way forward.

Finally, if I were advising the military, the transitional military government in Chad, what I would tell them is that they should follow the constitution and hand over the government to the parliament, so that the parliament can conduct elections and put together a transitional government of national unity, which would have representation by virtually all members of the different groups that exist in Chad. And

that transitional government should be given an opportunity, perhaps three to four years, to bring together all Chadians and try to plot a way forward. If they do that, I think that'll be the best way to move Chad in the right direction. Thank you.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you very much, Professor Mbaku. Dr. Siegle, if I can now turn to you to pick up the point, the theme, that John introduced, of the role of external power and counterterrorism policies often operate, enforcing an accountable authoritarian governance. You have looked at this issue for a long time, and, of course, there is a key dilemma for external actors, that they often feel compelled to focus on the short-term military battlefield exigencies of fighting terrorist groups, even at the expense of governance. But, of course, then, shocks to the system, like the end of an authoritarian regime or a demise of a particular individual, come about and send repercussion through the regions. Joe, if you can give us your thoughts on how to grapple with this basic challenge in West Africa and much beyond West Africa?

MR. SIEGLE: Sure. Well, thank you very much, Vanda, and I appreciate the invitation to participate on this great panel and this really important topic. I'd like to try to get at your question sort of in three layers, that I'll try to address in three and a half points here.

So, you know, the first point I think is important, building, really, on what Kamissa and John were saying, is, you know, we need to push back on this backwards narrative, that is often portrayed in the press, that Déby brought stability to Chad, and it's only with his passing that we're seeing instability. You know, in fact, Déby ruled in a climate of instability. He ruled by excluding other political actors and really intimidating and using violence against political opponents. He evaded term limits multiple times. The recent election would have given him his sixth term, and, you know, with the elections that he competed for, you know, they were stolen elections. He did not have a popular mandate.

There was widespread corruption in the country. Chad ranks 160 out of 180 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, and at the same time, and not coincidentally, Chad ranks 187 out of 189 countries in the U.N.'s Human Development Index. So, we've seen, over the course of Déby's 30 years, you know, a pattern of coups, assassinations, mutinies, and armed rebellions, and as you noted, Vanda, you know, there's still, you know, four active armed groups in the country. So,

let's not confuse repression with stability, nor let us equate durability with stability. You know, those are different things, and we should be clear in our terminology.

The second point I would make is, you know, Chad's experience is actually symptomatic of a pattern we see across Africa, in terms of a relationship between autocracy and instability. Autocracies are much more inclined to political crises, coups, assassination attempts, succession crises, like we're seeing currently, and this is recognized by security actors on the continent. A couple of years ago, we did a survey of 750 African security sector professionals, and we saw a real interesting dichotomy among security professionals and autocracies: 41% saw the risk of political crises as a very high threat in their countries and something that they had to prepare for. In contrast, only 11% of the security professionals in Africa's democracies saw political crisis as a high risk.

And we see these forms of instability in other ways, as well. Autocracies are particularly recognized for their underperformance on development and growth. Growth rates in Africa's autocracies are about a third less than what we see in democracies. Social development measures are, on average, some 20 to 40% less than we see in democracies. You know, life expectancy in democracies in Africa are nine years longer than what we see in autocracies.

So, this host of factors all contribute to and are reflected in the higher rates of conflict that we see among autocracies on the continent. Just to put a number on it, you know, there are 16 autocracies currently in Africa. Nine of them are facing armed conflict, so just under 60%. In contrast of the nine democracies on the continent, none of them are currently facing armed conflict. And with that, of course, we have a host of other forms of instability. Nine out of the 10 countries that produce the most forcibly displaced persons on the continent and were at record levels of forcibly displaced, you know, they come from autocratically leaning governments. Eight of the 10 countries facing most food insecurity, acute food insecurity, are also in autocratically leaning governments.

So, the point is it's important to think about the political economy of autocracy and instability. In a autocracy, you know, any resources a regime can control are going to be used to hold up the regime, and that's going to be to support its power base, which will necessarily be a narrow base of the security sector, a party, ethnic group, or region. There isn't an incentive to try to invest in

development or to deal with marginalized areas, which are at the heart of the grievances we see in a lot of the instability and insurgencies. So, conceptually, it's an oxymoron to think about autocracy as a means to stability in Africa.

That brings me to my third point, and we look at responses, especially with regards to the insurgencies that we're seeing in the Sahel. And when we look at the best practices for counterinsurgency, you know, Rand did a series of studies, a few years ago, that looked at the history of counterinsurgency, since World War II. And so, they looked at 59 core cases, and from this, they drew out a list of 15 best practices for countering insurgency, and the idea is, you know, supported by what -- by their evidence is that, you know, governments that are able to realize a majority of those 15 best practices tend to succeed in defeating an insurgency.

And I think what's notable for our conversation is, of the 15, roughly half are governance related. You know, they have to do with issues, like legitimacy of the government, the ability of the government to deal with corruption, addressing grievances, investing in development, building trust with local communities. And even among the sort of security related best practices, there's a strong government -- governance element to them, such as avoiding repression, avoiding collective and indiscriminate punishment of communities.

So, I think the takeaway for us is that, one, of course, there's both a security and a governance element to successful counterinsurgency, but that, you know, governance is a really important element of stability, even when you have a -- an armed conflict underway. And I think another important finding from this is these insurgencies tend to go on for a long time. You know, on average, it took -- it takes 11 years to have a successful counterinsurgency operation. And so, that means that, you know, there needs to be an institutional basis in a government's response, when it faces a threat, and, again, it points to the importance of good and accountable governance.

So, that brings me to my half point, and that really is -- you know, so, when we talk about international actors, governance has to be front and center, and those that would choose to evade it are missing a core feature of what can bring stability. You know, we've seen that legitimate government has stronger mechanisms of accountability. They have stronger institutions, as John was getting at. Their

ability to control corruption and abuse of power, all those things are effective at both mitigating conflict, but also at winding down and defeating insurgent groups. And so, you know, focusing on legitimacy, focusing on good government is important for international actors, as they respond. And I guess just to conclude with another interesting study out of Rand, by a colleague, Stephen Watts, he was looking particularly at U.S. security assistance. And what he found was that in every case where the United States put human rights issues aside, in the interest of short-term security gains, as supported through security assistance, these were linked to increased incidences of instability in the countries that we are supporting. So, let me leave it there, and we'll come back in our discussion.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Great. That's actually a great ending, John, for the next question I have for everyone, which is how can we -- what can we do? We broadly, how everyone wants to define it, the United States, the international community, support some movement toward more inclusive governance, particularly, as the reality is that when external powers, such as France and the United States, focus on counterterrorism goals, they tend to deal with whoever is in power, and by dealing with whoever is providing the security assistance, that you, Joe, just spoke about, and that Steve Watts wrote about, they provide resources that often enforce the regime's stability, even as -- or at least the regime's durability to be mindful of your very important distinction, even as the regime might well be using this counterterrorism security sector assistance to repress its own population.

So, you know, I think that the -- all of us understand the importance of good governance, and many of us strongly urge and support accountable governance, but, of course, there are other international actors implicated in the region, of both powers from (inaudible), perhaps there are reports of Egypt's increasing activity, at United Arab Emirates, that do not necessarily promote the good governance agenda. Certainly actors, like China and Russia, often are not focused on democracy or human rights issues.

So, you know, given this complex international environment and the reality on the ground in Chad, right now, the regime in power, the seamless transition, as Kamissa phrased it, from one military regime to another military regime, what, in practice, can be done? Work through -- they asked for a community support for the protestors in one form. What would be some concrete steps to move to the

kind of national dialogue, truth and reconciliation, greater inclusivity, that John and Kamissa talk about? Kamissa, maybe I can start with your thoughts on how to nudge a more inclusive, more governance.

MS. CAMARA: Thank you, Vanda. I think your question is not an easy one, and I don't think that there is an easy answer for it. I think looking at Central Africa, but specifically at the Sahel region as a whole, security makes or breaks regimes, and it defines the country's relationships with one another. It defines countries' relationships with international partners, such as France and the United States. It defines the success or the perceived success of a president and his government. And the security lens in this region has really taken over everything, at the expense of fundamental and basic sectors, such as education, social security, job creation, which have taken a backseat, and it's a worrying trend that we're seeing, specifically in the Sahel region.

But to come back to your main question about what can we do as the international community is, first of all, be very clear about our objectives. I think I am 100% certain that in the question-and-answer session, the role of France is going to come up. During Déby's funeral, we've seen President Macron, who was frontline, we've seen his foreign minister, who was also frontline. That was a very official and diplomatic backing of the French to the military regime, that this was the French saying, we have no problem with this military government, we're even in favor of Chad being governed and ruled by a military government. And I think, you know, many countries in the international community have followed France's cue, in Chad and in other countries of the region, and this is not a positive signal.

Another point that I would like to make in the same vein here is that diplomacy plays an important role, and we should not dismiss the power of diplomatic action. I think it could have been a good thing, if main powers, like the United States, had, very early on, called the military coup, in Chad, a military coup. I think it was a military coup. There was absolutely no doubt about it. And when we're talking about democracy promotion, here in the United States, we have great institutions working on those issues. Democracy promotion is also saying this is a military coup. We recognize it as a coup. This is not constitutional order. So, this is what I wanted to say.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: John, if I can turn over to you for your thoughts on concrete actions that can be taken now to promote rule of law, greater accountability, greater inclusivity, and pick

up on Kamissa's comments here about the role of diplomacy. What capacity is there for African institutions, the African Union to act? Kamissa, in her important opening remarks, spoke about the Factfinding Mission in Germania. What else in that space can be done, and what can be done with other actors? Is there role, for example, for the diaspora, and how can it -- if so, how can it be channeled to be a positive one?

MR. MBAKU: Thank you very much, Vanda. Yes, I'll follow up from what Kamissa said, and her comments are very relevant and very timely. I think that one of the things we have to do, at the moment, if we are to -- going to help Chad and the region, is to try to define exactly what it is we want to happen in Chad. These are overemphasis on security. It is not very appropriate, primarily because the problems that people in Chad and the region suffer from are economic development, poverty, extreme poverty, extreme inequality.

I believe that if we who live abroad, Africans in the diaspora, are able to channel our ability to talk to the governments that we live in, so, the Africans in the diaspora, here in the U.S., in the UK, in France, are able to get together and make sure that we tell the governments of the U.S., the governments of France and so on and so, that the most important way, the most effective way, to fight terrorism and provide the security that they want in the region is to promote economic development, to promote a better treatment of vulnerable groups, like women in the Sahel, that will be a much more appropriate way to approach this issue of security because, as I told someone yesterday, security for whom? What are we talking about? Is this security simply for the purpose of maximizing the objectives of funds, or maximizing the objectives of the U.S., or is this security for the Chadian people and the people in the region?

If we are interested in resolving this problem, we have to go down and ask ourselves why there is so much instability in the region. The answer is obvious. There is a lot of poverty in the region. I mean, when we start talking about security, as Joe mentioned, you can -- if you oppress people enough, you will end up getting them to be quiet and not bother anybody anymore. But that's not the appropriate way to promote governance and development in a region. So, I think that those of us in the diaspora have a role to play, in terms of trying to get some types of diplomatic initiative going on, especially with

respect to the African Union, which has not done very much to help the people of Chad. And I think that the African Union has a very important role to play. Equal wise, in West Africa, especially with the leadership of Nigeria, they have a very good role to play. And I think that through this diplomatic route, we can be able to convince the military to take a different approach to the solution of what is going on in Chad now and emphasize education for girls, for example, education for vulnerable groups, participation in economic activities, participation in the economy, as a way to get people to start doing the kinds of things that would allow them to buy in, into the system. So, you provide institutions in which people become invested in, and so, they will no longer be willing to destroy those institutions.

And I think that what is going on in the region now is that people are willing to fight and even destroy whatever institutions are available because they have no interest in those institutions. See, they are not invested in those institutions. When you talk of the rule of law in Chad, most people are going to tell you, what are you talking about, the rule of law? Why should we obey the law, when most of our governors are not willing to obey the law? Why should we worry about corruption, when most of our governors are corrupt?

So, we want to be able to develop and introduce institutions that people buy in, the ordinary person buys in, and as a result, we can be able to provide an opportunity for development in Chad because I really believe that more development in Chad will eventually solve the security problem that we have going on now. Thank you.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Joe, if I can turn to you and put you a little bit on the spot here. You know, development, I think few would argue it as a bad thing. Many, as we all said, would suggest inclusivity of an overall accountability, all very important. So, how do we get there? Would you recommend? Would it be appropriate? What are your views on should the United States cut off military assistance, try to divest from its dependence on Chad for counterterrorism purposes, significantly lessen their engagement? Should it condition economic aid of other kinds, whether on the assistance under the Fragility Act, for which there will be availability for West Africa, perhaps, on some measures of progress toward good governance?

John mentioned earlier that Chad is a very rich country, yet, Chad is also a country that --

Chad is rich in resources, rather, but Chad is also a country that has been really suffering from COVID related economic decline and of low oil prices. It's one of the three countries on the risk of being significantly downgrading on its debt ratings, along with -- along with Zambia, and so, you know, should there be linkages between the renegotiating Chad's debt, for example, and some measures of movement toward dialogue with the opposition groups in Chad or to progress toward girls' education? How do we move toward those important objectives, that Kamissa, John, and you were speaking about?

MR. SIEGLE: Yeah, thanks, Vanda, and I echo Kamissa and John's reflections. You know, it's obviously a complicated and challenging situation. You know, we're not starting from neutral playing field. We're starting from a deep ditch, here, in how we're talking about this. But I think it is important that international actors, including the United States, take a clear and strong stance on this because it will have broader implications for engagements across the continent. Many other actors are watching, and whatever happens here will set the bar for what else can go on, in terms of governance norms.

I think the first point I would emphasize, it's a -- you know, we need to align our conceptualization and getting at the points that we are each making. There's a knee-jerk impulse to support the new military government because the international actors are afraid of insecurity, and they feel that the two, you know, a strong military and security, go together. But I think that's a false narrative. There's nothing that says you can't have a strong democracy and security. All of the factors that go into an effective and stable state are perfectly possible, and, in fact, enhanced under a democratic form of government, and that's true, in terms of fighting insurgencies, as I was referencing earlier.

Well, I think, first, just to do a reconceptualization of what we see as the problem, and then, to -- you know, to follow that up through actions, I do think we have to do a strategic alignment, that we want to incentivize better behavior on governance, on the security activities, and so, yes, governments and security actors, that are doing the right thing, should have more opportunities. They -- and they should have a stronger relationship, and more access to assistance than countries that are purely focused on repression to hang on. Moreover, from the international standpoint, doubling down on these autocratic actors is a losing strategy. It's not advancing international -- Western democratic interest. As

we've said, these countries are inherently unstable, and they're likely to lose the insurgencies that they're fighting.

So, we're at risk of channeling a lot of resources down to prop up these repressive regimes that are ultimately going to collapse. That's not a winning strategy or trajectory to go. So, I think there is a way of engaging, you know, your mentioning of debt relief, of other forms of assistance, but I would, you know, broaden it to just say, you know, there's an opportunity for a longer term relationship, through these alternative, more inclusive paths, and, you know, the West offers a much more attractive long-term partnership, for African governments, in terms of, you know, economic opportunities, investments that this might hold. So, I don't think we want to react impulsively to the situation in Chad, and I don't think we respond to the, you know, the Boogeyman of China and Russia, that somehow because they may come in, therefore, we have to throw away all of our strategic interest and values.

And what do we get our of doubling down with a repressive regime? It isn't clear that that really adds to the U.S.'s long-term interest. I think we have to recognize out benefits are from long, you know, from stable governments, that are investing their people that are creating economic opportunities, and that's where we can get the biggest payoff, in terms of our engagements. And so, you know, in terms of what that means, and in terms of short-term, echo what Kamissa and John is -- were saying, you know, I would put a big focus on the national dialogue. You know, this was -- been put out there by opposition, prior to the elections.

It has come out, you know, since Déby's death, you know, bringing all the Chadian political actors around the table, talk about where things are, and set forth a genuine transition process that they can buy into, and, you know, there's a role for the military in that. There's a role for the current leadership. But let it be done in a more constitutional manner, and, in that way, show that, you know, we're supporting a rules-based process, in Chad, and then that will send signals for U.S. engagement, in Africa, more broadly.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thanks very much. Oh, I want to come to the issue of China, Russia, Egypt, U.A.E., Middle East, a much more competitive external environment with hardly an alignment of interest and values, among the external actors. Later in the Q&A, and incidentally I have

already been folding the themes and questions from the audience, in our conversations so far. We have received tremendous amount of questions, and so, I'm bundling them and bring them in, already, in the conversation. But before I -- before we go to them yet, I would also want to reflect with us on the issue of the impact of Chad and the transition there, on security in the neighboring countries, Cameroon, Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria.

I mean, you know, I think it was Kamissa who first introduced the notion of myths. There are a lot of myths about the regime, that both of you have, both John and Joe, you have reinforced, and there's similar myths about the importance of Chad, for the G5, or at least the role of the Chadian military. You know, let me sort of start with my own reflections, that, certainly, in 2014, when Chad became part of the multinational task force for Nigeria, its role, I think, was very important in stimulating both more effective response on the battlefield, but I would say crucially more resolute will, on the part of the Nigerian Government, of then President Goodluck Jonathan, in responding to the festering, Boko Haram crisis.

But since about 2016, 2017, of that role of Chad, I would say has flattened, has plateaued. We have really not seen it as very significant, and, in fact, we are seeing a very significant increase in instability in Northeast Nigeria, and also very significant instability in Northwest Nigeria, and certainly hardly adequate military law enforcement, and other governance, like policy responses, by the Nigerian government, in a difficult situation with great insecurity, for people in the region, and many transnational dimensions to it, including with respect to Boko Haram.

So, you know, if I can go back to you, Kamissa, now, on the regional dimension of the impact of Chad's U.N. peacekeepers, in Mali, in country, that you have played such a crucial role in developing policies, as well as elsewhere in the region, and then have John's and Joe's part on that, as well. Are we overplaying here how significant Chad is, or is Chad truly very crucial in managing the regional security issues as well?

MS. CAMARA: Thank you. So, I think there is this admiration for Chadian soldiers in the Sahel. As you might recall, when the Malian State collapsed, in 2012, I guess the main reason that was advanced was that the Malian army was weak, at the time, and so, the Chadian army was one of the few,

in this region, which came to the rescue of the Malian government. And I remember when President Ibaka was -- during his inauguration ceremony, in 2013, when Idriss Déby, entered the stadium, we almost felt like he was the new President. He was being invested because people were so ecstatic that he was there, that he sent his son to the battlefield in Mali, to fight the Jihadists. And so, I think, from there on, there has been, of course, some -- a lot of gratefulness towards Chad for having -- participating in the liberation of Northern Mali, from the hands of Jihadists. But then the implication of Chadians in the peacekeeper contingence of the MUNISMA but also the G5 Sahel because we don't really -- we don't talk a lot about the G5, but Chadian military has also been involved, quite a bit, in the MINUSMA.

Now, talking about whether their presence is expective or not, it's really difficult to gauge the effectiveness of any counterinsurgency operation, as a whole, and so, it's difficult to say whether Chadian -- the Chadian contingents were helpful or not. But what countries of the region remember is that Chad has never hesitated one second, in sending contingents in supporting stabilization efforts in the region. Chadian soldiers have a reputation of not -- of being war soldiers, soldiers who've won wars and were not afraid of combat. And so, that has played in the favor of Chad, a lot, when it comes to the image of its army and its participation in military operations in the region.

I also wanted to say one other thing. Chad has -- has had, up until now, I think, a very successful diplomatic presence, throughout the African continent. We tend to forget that the president of the Commission of the African Union is a Chadian national. He is a former foreign minister of Chad, from prime minister of Chad. There are some very powerful Chadians also at the African Development Bank, who are administrators. And Chad has also position itself as a king maker in Central Africa, and, really, Idriss Déby has taken over the role of big brother, the role that Gaddafi used to play in the region, and Déby has picked up that role, and has played it very successfully.

So, I think that a lot has gone in favor of Chad, in their reputation, in the way that they portraited themselves, as a stabilizing force in the region. But, in my opinion, it's quasi-impossible to say whether Chadian soldiers have been successful, or not, in the different operations that we are talking about now.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Great. Your thoughts, John, on the issue of the significance of

Chad's military forces and, more broadly, its role in stabilizing the area and acting against the various terrorist groups and insurgent groups that operate it.

MR. MBAKU: Thank you very much. I believe that Chad has been quite successful, especially under Idriss Déby, in providing stability, or the appearance of stability, in the region. In areas like Northern Cameroon, for example, where Boko Haram has been very active, the Chadian army was quite successful in helping the Cameroonians in that particular process. But I think, personally, what I think we should be doing is taking into consideration or taking the realization that military force is not going to solve this problem of religious extremism and terrorism in the Sahel and the Central African region.

And I say that, primarily, because, even though Chad was very successful in helping the Nigerians, under Goodluck Jonathan, deal with Boko Haram, what we see today is that Boko Haram has reemerged and has become an even bigger threat in the area. And in addition to that, there are other problems in Nigeria, that spill into Cameroon, that have nothing to do with the religious extremism, the problem between nomadic herders and farmers in the region, not just in Nigeria, but it's also across the region in Cameroon. Those things also contribute to instability.

So, I think that, despite Chad's successes, if we can look at it that way, what we should be thinking, or rather what we should be talking about, is that military force is not going to be the solution to the problem of instability in the region. Economic development, better governance, providing opportunities for people to engage in entrepreneurship, so that they can generate wealth for themselves, providing opportunities for all sectors of the country to participate in governance, so that people can govern themselves and make decisions that affect both the way they worship and both the way they want to live with each other. I think, if we go in that direction, we would provide more stability in the long run, than this short-term stability that we are talking about, right here.

So, when we think in terms of the Chadian army, we -- I don't really think we should be talking so much about whether the Chadian army contributed significant stability in the region. What we should be talking about is what -- how can we provide stability without relying on the army? Because the terrible stability that is achieved through military force usually does not last very long. We need to look at

the structural problems, that are creating those things that cause instability in the region, and try to resolve them, through negotiation, through corporation, through inclusiveness, and so on, and so on, so that vulnerable groups, like women, minority ethnic groups, and so on, and so on, can be able to participate in governance and provide the opportunity for the region to use the resources that they have to develop.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: John, I'm very glad that you brought up the issue of the herders-farmer conflict, across the region, a very significant issue, a very complex one greatly exacerbated by climate change, but really based or stemming from decades of very problematic policies having to do with the use of water resources, agriculture, etc., and I look forward to exploring their issues specifically, in one of the future Africa Security Initiative and Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors events.

You know, Joe, before I go to you, on your thoughts on the regional counterterrorism architecture, as it has been set up, and perhaps the overemphasis on forces like Chad, I would also like to remind all of us, of course, that it's not just official Chad forces that have been critically involved in security operations and security developments, in the region, but also Chadian militias, mercenary forces, or fighters that come from Chad, that have played, for example, an outsized role, in places like Libya, and also President Déby's, former president, deceased President Déby's, close relationship with General Haftar in Libya, in his willingness to send Chadian forces to prop up Haftar, about a year ago. So, a much more complex picture than simply the role of Chad, in battling terrorist groups linked to al-Qaida or the Islamic State. Your thoughts on this broader role of Chadian forces, in the security counterterrorism space. Joe, please.

MR. SIEGLE: Sure. Thanks, Vanda. Well, a couple of thoughts. One, I think, you know, we do want to recognize that Chad has a, you know, a capable military and it has been contributing these troops, both to the Multinational Joint Task Force in Lake Chad, as well as to the G5 Sahel, in, you know, with -- along the Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger borders, and they're supporting MINUSMA, and I think that's important, and if they were to withdraw, that's -- you know, those are real capabilities that would be lost. So, I don't want to minimize that.

At the same time, you know, as we have been saying, the, you know, the equation for

stability in the Sahel isn't just about more troops. It isn't just about the security part. There's an important governance element, and so, when you look at what's going on in the Sahel and why the insurgents have been gaining ground, you know, we see porous borders. We see their growing access to controlling artisanal gold mines. We see their effectiveness at extortion and kidnapping for ransom. We see their ability to play up intercommunal differences, particularly with the Fulani.

We see them, you know, putting out a narrative about the corruption of the governments in the Sahel. And so, as we look at solutions, as we look at stabilization, you know, troops only -- you know, more troops and Chadian troops only deal with a fraction of those problems. Ultimately, the challenges -- the security challenges in the Sahel are going be won or lost by the governments and the people in those affected countries.

And so, the question is how do you help them most effectively? And I would also underscore, as I noted earlier, you know, we were in this for -- it's a long haul. You know, this is -- if the average counterinsurgency operation is 11 years, you know, we're still in the middle of this, and so, we're needing to get behind a strategy that can be sustained over time. That's going to require, you know, building the capacities and institutions of these governments, on the security side, you know, improving their mobility, improving their communications, improving their intelligence, providing some arial support for those, you know, objectives, helping them control the borders and the gold mines.

But it's also going to require equal support to strengthen governance, that there needs to be presence on the ground. There needs to be trust with these local communities. You know, that is one of the key determining factors of successful counterinsurgency, and, you know, it shouldn't be overlooked that one of the tactics of the violent extremist groups is to attack schools, to attack government workers, you know, and why is that? You know, they're trying to create a vacuum. They realize that the presence of the government is working against their interest, and so, trying to help stabilize, you know, those government -- you know, that government presence, trying to help protect local leaders, trying to strengthen local institutions of justice. All those things are going to help gain back support and more stability in -- at the local level, which can be -- which will be very important for pushing back on these -- a lot of extremist groups and ultimately coming out victorious.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: You know, thank you, Joe. Well, perhaps that'll be even more pointed and suggest that frequently there is, in fact, a tradeoff between engaging the security forces, building up the counterterrorism capacity, and in sustaining through governance, and that -- or encouraging with governance, and that if actors, like the United States, are indeed serious about promoting good governance, they need to be willing to cultivate, to limit some of the military engagement, counterterrorism engagement, that governments abroad very effectively used as a pressure tool against the U.S. to back off on issues of inclusivity and accountability.

The Obama administration was, of course, willing to deny even the aerial surveillance assistance to Nigeria because of the severe egregious human rights abuses of the Nigerian military in the fight against Boko Haram. And it'll be very interesting to see where the Biden administration comes in on it. President Biden made a very courageous -- political courageous decision to end U.S. military engagement of Afghanistan, and in -- after 20 years, and emphasized that the terrorisms threat has diffused, and he and other top officials of the Biden administration spoken about the significance of terrorism, in places like Africa.

The Biden Administration also, in March, designated two groups in Mozambique and DRC as terrorist groups. Those designations have very significant implications of various kinds, and so, you know, clearly, Africa is being strongly emphasized by the Biden administration, as a centerpiece of counterterrorism efforts, and so, the balance between that and efforts against corruption and for democracy, that the Biden administration has also very strongly embraced, will be very much playing out, in places like Chad, and we'll see what kind of decisions, what kind of tradeoffs and balance the administration is willing to make.

You know, I would -- sticking with the Afghanistan analogy here, or rather be the examples and lessons that can be drawn from Afghanistan, I would emphasize, in fact, how ineffective the international community, including the United States, has been in the country, and arguably elsewhere frequently, also, in inducing that the governance, even at times when there are elections, parochialism, problematic governance, corruption, highly predatory governance, and even underdo the rubric of elections, frequently dominate. And the U.S. has both struggled in being willing to step back

from the short-term counterinsurgency, counterterrorism exigencies and absorb risks. But even when it mounted efforts to prioritize, at least temporarily, improvements in governance struggled to and do so. You know, another example, in Somalia, which we will have an event on, along with Ethiopia on May 20th, where the U.S. finally found the will to suspend military aid to the Somali forces at least temporarily, but even so, that has not been sufficient in producing better governance.

There are many questions from the audience, and I want to open it up, to whoever wants to come in here, on some of the armed rebellion that Chad is facing and, more broadly, terrorist groups in the region. So, many questions about the fact, who are they? Questions about union forces for democracy and development. How linked are they to international Jihadi groups, like the Islamic State and al-Qaida, the power of al-Qaida in the region, you know, your thoughts to any of these issues. What is the true terrorism picture in the region? How significance a threat it poses, and any details about groups, like UFDD, or fact. Anyone who would like to take that on?

MS. CAMARA: Vanda, if you allow me, I think the -- we've had a great discussion, so far, discussing what is happening in Chad, the role of the international community. But we have not -- I guess none of us has really mentioned the civil society and their position. I think, in such a turning point for a country like Chad, the international community could have an agenda, but, really, the ones who will -- should set the agenda, right now, are the civil society in Chad and the opposition parties.

Over the past 30 years, they have been weakened, and now is their time. Now is their time to set an agenda for their own country, and it's not -- it's even inappropriate, I think, for the international community to come in and say, this is the agenda that we have for you. They already have an agenda. They've been weakened over the past 30 years. They have a unique opportunity to rise up, and now is their time. And when the international community comes in and says, we acknowledge the military government, and we recognize them as your leader, we are saying, de facto, you, in civil society and opposition, that do not count. And this is not right. This is one point that I wanted to make.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you. Joe or John, on either the issue of civil society and how to enforce it, I would add here that, you know, one way to reinforce it is to give comparable face time to democratic actors, as to the government. So, if a president of an important country goes to -- attends

the funeral of President Déby, perhaps he should also meet with key opposition actors, key civil society actors. That's one way. Joe or John, your thoughts on civil society, but also if you would like to add or respond to the questions from the audience about fact, about al-Qaida, various other Islamist groups, and the potency of terror groups in the area?

MR. MBAKU: Yes, I'd like to say something. I agree with Kamissa about the importance of civil society. I had mentioned earlier about the participation of women, especially in Chad, because my experience in Chad, the last time I was there, was that during the discussions that I had with young people, one of the frustrations that they had was that they -- they felt that they were living in a country where nobody cared about what they were interested in, that the values that they were interested in pursuing were not being given any hearing, by anybody at all. So, I think, that civil society is the key to solving the problem that we have in Chad today. And as Kamissa said, it would be unwise for France or the United States, or any other external actor, even including the African Union, to come in and start defining the way forward, for Chad. In order for Chad to move forward, in a peaceful way and in a way that would enhance development in the country, the people of Chad must be given an opportunity to participate, and when I say the people of Chad, I'm not saying the leaders of the groups that have been fighting against the Central Government.

While it may be necessary to have those leaders participate, the more important thing is to have ordinary people, especially given the opportunistic approach, that those groups have had, in that many of the groups that have been involved in fighting, the government in Chad, have primarily interested in capturing the government, and maximizing their own narrow interests. It is true that some of those groups have argued in favor of having policies that provide for more participation by other groups in Chad. But, in reality, they are fighting the same way that Idriss Déby did, and that is to capture the government and maximize the narrow interest of his family, himself, and his supporters.

So, I think that the way forward must involve ordinary people, ordinary Chadians, and there must be a place there for girls and women to participate, especially young people, to participate in defining the agenda that Chad would have, in moving forward. So, yes, the civil society is very important. Civil society organization is very important, and I think that the U.S. and France can support that

approach, by supporting civil society by targeting civil society and providing them with the resources that they need, to be able to get their voices heard, especially if there is going to be a transitional government coming, that is a representative of the people of Chad.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: So, you know, one of the questions has asked about concrete facts of steps. If either or you were in a high position of influence in the U.S. government, what would be the five key steps that you would adopt to move the agenda toward greater inclusivity and development? So, perhaps we suggested meeting with civil society, making an effort to extensively engaged civil society, and hear their agenda on how to move the country forward. John just articulated funding civil society. Joe, I'm turning over to you with, you know, those top five priorities, as well as any comments that you want to make on the various terrorist groups and the rebel groups like fact.

MR. SIEGLE: Sure, thanks, Vanda. Well, clearly, civil society is important, and the -- you know, they need a seat at the table. I had mentioned earlier that had there been a call for national dialogue, even prior to the elections, which of course, we are not free and fear. And I think that is a forum that can be utilized to start to air out, you know, alternative ways forward, for Chad. You know, we should be, you know, very realistic about the situation. I mean the opposition and civil society has been sidelined for 30 years, and so, they're starting from, you know, a very narrow base, and, you know, in these sorts of situations, that's often a rationale by the part of the international community to dismiss civil society. In the opposition, I think, we can't make that mistake, you know, realize that they haven't had a voice. People don't have to be experienced at the national level, but they have important legitimacy, they have important ideas and credibility within the communities to move things forward.

So, we certainly want to engage. There have been people, in opposition, there might have been people trying to have their voices heard, over the years, at great personal risk and cost. And so, they deserve that, and I would particularly put an emphasis on the media, which has regularly faced intimidation, and repression, but, you know, there are some journalists who are trying to report independently. You know, we should focus on, you know, creating more space for those individuals and those in institutions, so that there can actually be a national dialogue in Chad.

I'd like to pick up point -- your broader points about terrorism or the violent extremist

groups. And so, you know, I think, we need to separate. You know, what's happening in Chad is internal, due to the instability there, you have these armed opposition groups and other sources of instability. You know, the terrorists, I should say, the violent extremist threat in the Sahel, more generally, you know, it is a serious concern, it's been growing. The last year was a record number of violent incidents in the Sahel, you know, concentrated in Mali and Northern Burkina Faso, but there were 1,100 violent incidents involving militant Islamist groups, over 4,100 fatalities associated with that. That's a 44% increase over the previous year, and, you know, had been -- it's been growing since the early 2010s. But I should also note that, you know, we've also seen an increase in the number of attacks against civilians by these militant Islamist groups. And I think it's important because it means, you know, these populations are not rallying behind these militant Islamist groups. These are coercive entities that are trying to, you know, carve out their own little autocracies. They aren't militarily powerful, but they're able to penetrate through, you know, the weaknesses of these fragile states, and play up on the intercommunal differences within these societies.

And just briefly on this issue of al-Qaida, you know, I think that's been an easy narrative, by some of the media that talk about how these are, you know, franchises of al-Qaida, or Islamic State. You know, by and large, these are locally grounded groups. They have their own organizational structures. They're able to get resources, locally, or, you know, through raiding government facilities, or controlling gold mining areas. You know, if the al-Qaida Headquarter operations or Isis Headquarters are completely wiped out tomorrow, these groups would still be around.

And so, we shouldn't get that confused. You know, these are going to have to be dealt with at a local level, dealing with local issues. They have to grind it out. It's going to be, like I said, a long sustained effort that's going to be required, and so, really, it's incumbent on the national governments and communities first, but then with the support of the international community, to support that long-term effort to take these countries on a better path.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Great, Joe. Thank you for bringing that nuance. You know, I would reinforce it and add that governments in the region and in other parts of Africa, in the Horn, often love the narrative, that the principle source of violent Jihadism is an ideology, an ideology

from abroad, and often tend to minimize the real grievances that exist in population frustrations with a lack of the economic development, that John spoke about, or the lack of capacity to influence politics, the politics that, so often, build about parochialism and clientelism, and those underlying deep seeded issues get overlayed with the Jihadi narrative or the Jihadi promises but are fundamental.

You know, we are three minutes before the end, by my count. So, I want to give each of us, or each of you, rather, an opportunity for one minute of closing remarks, in, please, one minute. We will need to end at 3:30, before I formally close. Kamissa, over to you.

MS. CAMARA: Thank you, Vanda. I think it was a great discussion, and I hope that the participants were able to get some information or some new information or perspectives about what is happening in Chad, the role of the country in the region. But also, I think the priority here is not necessarily the impact but that that -- the departure of Déby will have for the region, and I think that's an international agenda, in itself. I think that for some international organizations based in Washington or elsewhere, who have programs in Chad, I think the emphasis is really to give the tools to civil society, to opposition parties to set the agenda for their own country. We have to keep in mind, again, it has been said multiple times, that have been muted for 30 years. Now is their time. And we should really acknowledge their existence, their presence, their skills, and their hopes for a better country.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you. John, your 60 seconds, please, of any closing thoughts.

MR. MBAKU: Okay, thank you, Vanda. This has been a very timely and informative discussion. What I would like to say here is that, number one, those of us -- those Africans in the diaspora who are interested in development back home, we need to step up and try to convince the countries that we live in, especially in the U.S., in France, and in the European Union, that the way forward for Chad and other countries in the region is to emphasize economic development, political participation, empowerment of local communities to develop themselves. I believe that if we approach Chad and countries in the region in that manner, we will be able to deal with many of the problems that currently are endemic in the region. And just to remind ourselves of what Joe said, if the Islamic State were to go away today, you will still have problems with Boko Haram, you will still have problems with al-

Shabab in East Africa. So, we need to look at the problems that occur locally, in terms of the conflicts that are occurring in each country, in Chad, and other countries in the region, and provide a governance structure that will allow people to live together peacefully and be able to develop themselves. The absence of those institutional structures is a contributing factor to some of the problems that are occurring in the region, and so, we need to look at government -- governance, provide ourselves with better institutions, so that we can live together peacefully and be able to develop ourselves and not continue to look up to Europe or the U.S. to help us solve our own problems. Thank you.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Excellent. Joe, please.

MR. SIEGLE: Thanks, Vanda. I would just bring us back to the notion that we need to broaden our definition of and application of security in the Sahel. And, yes, there are challenges, but, well, the response to those challenges isn't just more military capacity. The situation there is going to be stabilized, yes, through smarter and more effective security actions, you know, by lease and armies, but it's also -- it's equally going to be supported by more effective government institutions, and that's by, you know, building ties to local communities, by strengthening more transparency, and auditing capabilities, so that the challenges of corruption and the perceptions of corruption are diminished. It's about advancing more credible elections. It's about stronger parliamentary oversight of what's going on. It's about strengthening justice and thinking about justice as a means to conflict mitigation. And I think really applying that lens is important, not only in the countries where we're currently seeing, you know, a lot of violence in a Sahel, but also in the -- in (inaudible) countries, where there's the risk of spillover. You know, good governance is a preventative mechanism to instability and conflict, as well. So, we want to be focusing and elevating, really, our engagement on governance issues, both as a response, but also as a mitigating force in the region. Thank you.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Well, Dr. Siegle, Professor Mbaku, and Minister Camara, let me thank you enormously for your very thoughtful nuance and courageous remarks. The overarching takeaway for me is when -- our own need to break out from the trap, from the bonds of the counterterrorism agenda dominating everything else and being very narrowly defined as immediate short-term battlefield gains and our willingness to absorb some risks in the short-term to maximize stability, true

stability, not simply durability, as Joe explained to us for that purpose.

So, enormous thanks to you, enormous thanks to our audience. I tried to wrap in as many buckets of questions, out of the very many that have come in, but we have hardly exhausted the conversations, and I look forward to being able to continue the conversation with our three terrific speakers today, as well as on other African security issues, such as on May 20th. Goodbye.

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