Dirty Money: Breaking the Link Between Organised Crime and Politics

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THE VULNERABILITIES IN WEST AFRICA

- Poor Management of Natural Resources
- Poverty and Youth Unemployment
- Radicalization
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- Corruption & Weak Government Institutions
- Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons
- Religious Extremism and Radicalization
- Pandemic Diseases and Natural Disasters
- Elections and Bad Governance
- Lack of Rule of Law
- Non-State Armed Groups
- Porous Borders
SECURITY RISKS IN WEST AFRICA

- STOLEN VEHICLES TRAFFICKING
- HUMAN TRAFFICKING
- DRUG TRAFFICKING
- TERRORISM AND BANDITRY
- CIGARETTE TRAFFICKING
- OIL, DIAMOND, GOLD, URANIUM, TITANIUM
- CIVIL WARS AND ETHNIC VIOLENCE
- PIRACY
- TRANSIT ZONE OF NATCO-CARTEL
- COUPS D'ETAT
GENERAL SCHEME OF THREATS TO SECURITY IN THE REGION:

Arms, drugs, cigarettes trafficking, religious fundamentalism

CAPTION:

- Religious fundamentalism
- Illegal immigration
- Weapons, Drug Cigarette trafficking
- Trade areas
A CASE FROM GHANA

Of all the types of organised criminal activity in Ghana, drug trafficking is the most significant, pervasive and one which interacts most with political processes and state actors.

This is best exemplified by the arrest and incarceration of Eric Amoateng, a former member of Parliament and traditional chief in November 2005 by US law enforcement officials for possessing 136.4 pounds of heroine estimated to be valued more than $6million.

Though he was sentenced in 2007 to a prison term of 120 months, subsequent public enquiries into the case revealed deep penetration of Ghana’s political elite by drug trafficking networks.
Key X’tics of the Case

• Political patronage and clientelism
  – Winner-take-all politics has created an elaborate system for rewarding loyalists and supporters for their allegiance. Politicians assist their supporters to find jobs, win contracts, distribute money for daily subsistence or help to deal with government authorities. Drug barons use this system to channel funds into political activity
  – Expansive executive powers permeates all levels of governance in the country, with the president having the power to appoint 4050 individuals including chief executives of 110 districts, chief of police, Commissioner of CHRAJ, etc
  – With parliamentarians often the beneficiaries of presidential patronage, oversight of government business is ineffective.

• Use of foundations and NOG’s
  – Foundations have successfully been used as shells or fronts to facilitate criminal enterprises. During investigations by NACOB into the Amoateng saga, a minister admitted to receiving donations from a facilitator of Amoateng’s business. But a sudden ministerial reshuffle effectively ended the investigation

• Increasing cost of elections
  – The spending of large amounts of money during the 2008 campaign season has led to allegations of involvement of some political leaders in the drug trade. The long term result is a lack of transparency and loss of credibility in political processes.
Structural Challenges

• Weak Legislation
  – Political party funding, campaign financing, and asset disclosure laws are weak. No penalties prescribed for violations enables the use of illicit funding to underwrite key political processes

• Lack of requisite institutional capacity and frameworks
  – Inadequate logistical, human and financial resources to fight organised crime
  – Lack of accountability mechanisms regarding the executive, legislature and political parties makes involvement in the illicit activity an irresistible source of funding

• Poor delivery of social services
  – Allows political and economic elites to legitimize their illicit activity. Thus, addressing socio-economic challenges and increasing transparency and accountability will help prevent organised criminal activity.