



Exercise Flintlock

Last updated August 2012

Overview

Exercise Flintlock is an annual regional exercise among African, Western, and U.S. counterterrorism forces, which has taken place since 2006. It is a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff-directed, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM)-sponsored, Joint-Special Operations Task Force-Trans Sahara (JSOTF-TS)-conducted Special Operations Forces (SOF) exercise. Occurring in nations across the Sahel region of Africa, the exercises are planned by Special Operations Command-Africa (SOCAFRICA) to develop the capacity and collaboration among African security forces to protect civilian populations. Flintlock participation has included ground and air forces from over 16 countries across a broad spectrum of operations.

Benefits

Flintlock exercises strengthen security institutions, promote multilateral sharing of information, and develop interoperability among the partner nations of the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP). The command post exercises demonstrate the benefit of regional cooperation in response to regional crises. The exercise helps to achieve AFRICOM objectives for military capacity development training and multinational regional cooperation.

Objectives

Exercise Flintlock is designed to foster regional cooperation to enable our African partners to stabilize regions of North and West Africa, reducing sanctuary and support for violent extremist organizations. Exercise Flintlock provides increased interoperability, counterterrorism, and combat skills training while creating a venue for regional engagement among all TSCTP nations.

Participation

Past participants include Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Canada, Tunisia, Italy, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom, and the United States.

Impact

This exercise capitalizes on the groundwork laid through previous Flintlock exercises and the Joint Combined Exchange Training programs and supports Operation Enduring Freedom-Trans Sahara. The success of Flintlock can be measured by the expanding number of interested and supporting nations and the scale of participation by TSCTP Nations. Continued support of Flintlock will reinforce an effective, self-sustaining mutual regional security capacity that is capable of deterring mutual regional security threats.

More Sources

[Flintlock 11: Africans leading the way](#)

[Flintlock 10 begins in Burkina Faso](#)

[Flintlock 10: Multi-National Forces Combine at Exercise Center in Burkina Faso](#)



Senegalese Lieutenant Colonel Adam Diop, Multi-National Tactical Operations Center (MTOC) director, leads a discussion during Exercise Flintlock 2011. The MTOC serves as a focal point for multi-national information sharing, as well as for the planning and execution of synchronized situation training exercise lanes to hone such counter-terrorism skills as cordon and search, rural recon, and attack.