



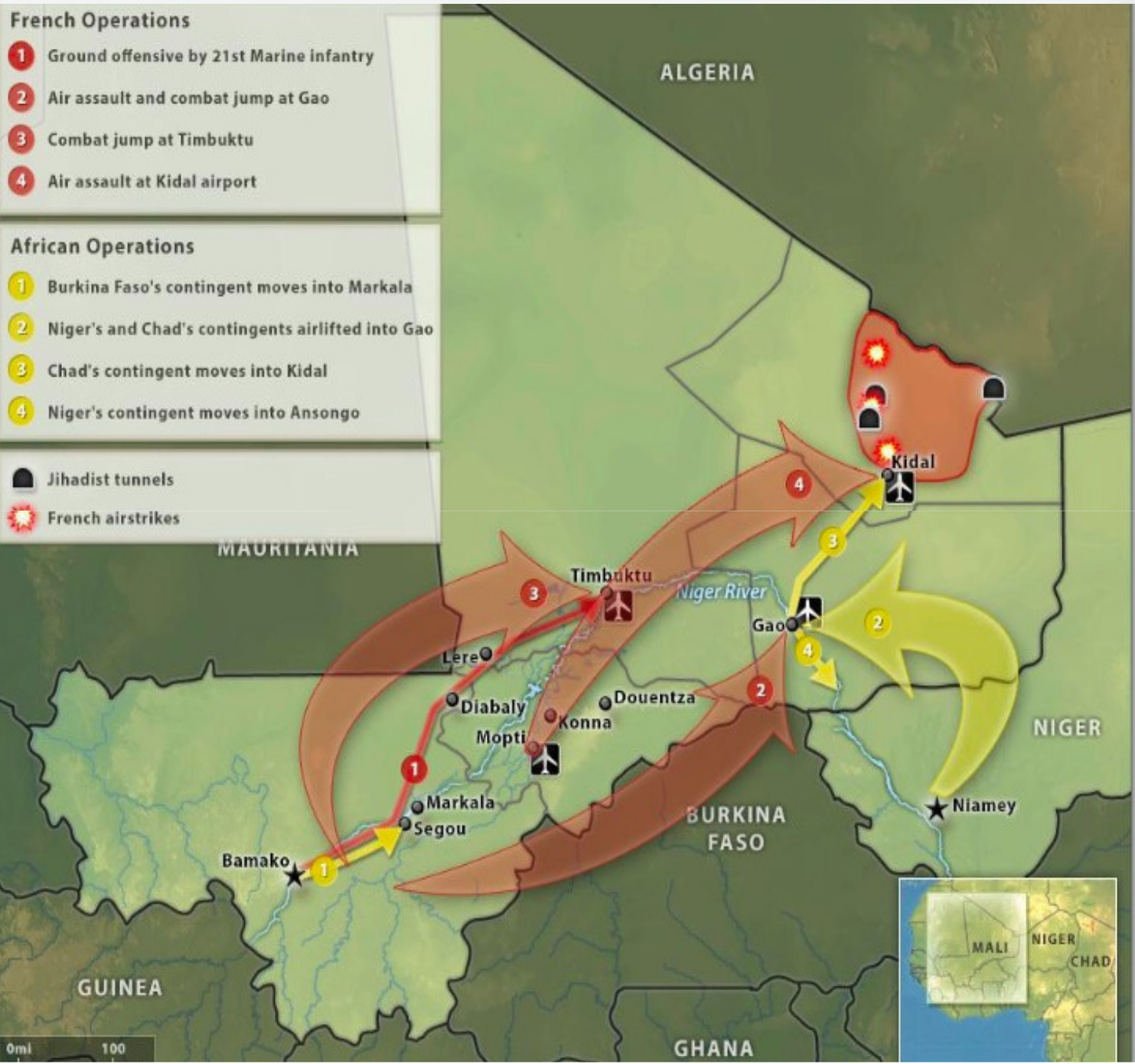
# **Mali: Collateral Damage of the Complex Security Challenges in the Sahel**

Dr. David Zounmenou  
Senior Researcher  
Conflict Prevention and Risk Analysis  
ISS, Pretoria



# Key Points

- Crisis in the Sahel: What is at stake?
- Mali: Making Sense of the Political and Security Crises
- International Response Strategy: between procrastination and confusion
- Framing a solution to the crisis: what are the options













## Crisis In The Sahel: What Is At Stake?

- Perceptions of the threats is not the same among some of the major actors involved
- US: Terrorism
- France and the dilemma of its role and presence in Africa
- Algeria/Mauritania: Sahel is the dustbin of successful counter-terrorism initiative: GIA to AQMI
- Mali: someone's else problem
  - No coherent collaborative response mechanisms





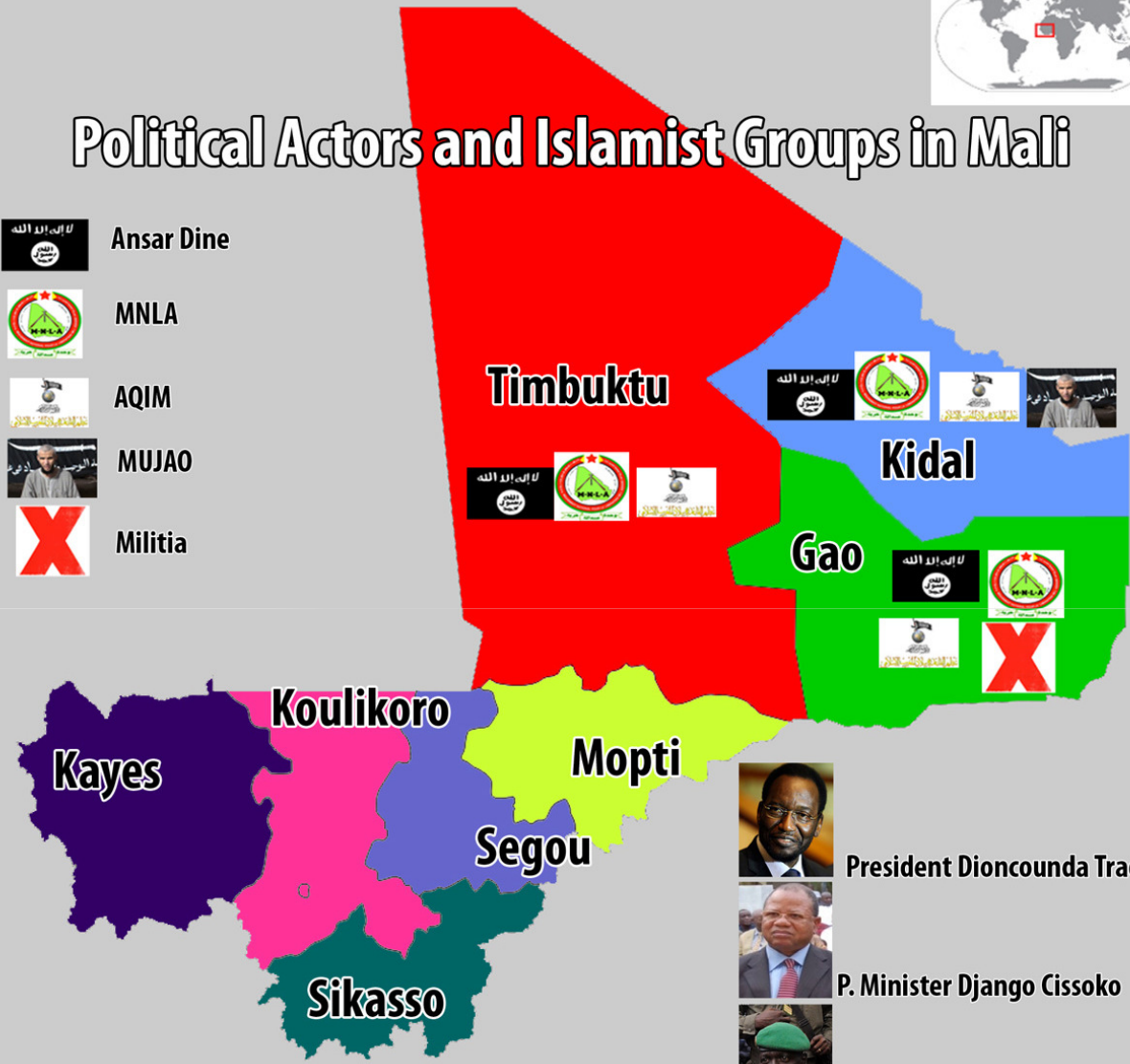
# Making Sense of the Political and Security Crises

- Weak state authority and ungoverned spaces
- Stalled and failed democratisation processes
- Serious deficiencies in anticipating and addressing the structural bases of conflict
- Tuareg rebellion and the fallacy of marginalization
- 22 March coup: a setback for democracy
- Political and security crisis



# Political Actors and Islamist Groups in Mali

-  Ansar Dine
-  MNLA
-  AQIM
-  MUJAO
-  Militia



President Dioncounda Traore



P. Minister Django Cissoko



Cpt. Amadou Hata Sanogo

# International Response Strategy: Between Procrastination and Confusion



Three major handicaps compromise the effective management of the crisis in Mali

- Procrastination of the external partners
- Divergences of approaches
- Absence of a decisive leadership

The continuous political impasse provided opportunity for the Islamist groups to consolidate their control and to seek to weight in the so-called negotiation process.



# “Operation Serval” and the changing dynamics of the crisis

Two sets of dynamics

## **Military option imposed de facto: War by default**

- Reverse sequence of the initiatives leading to the Deployment of AFISMA
- UN torn between a traditional Peace Mission or a an AMISOM-type partnership with the Africa-led force AFISMA, or a UNAMID-type hybrid mission.

## **Political dynamics**

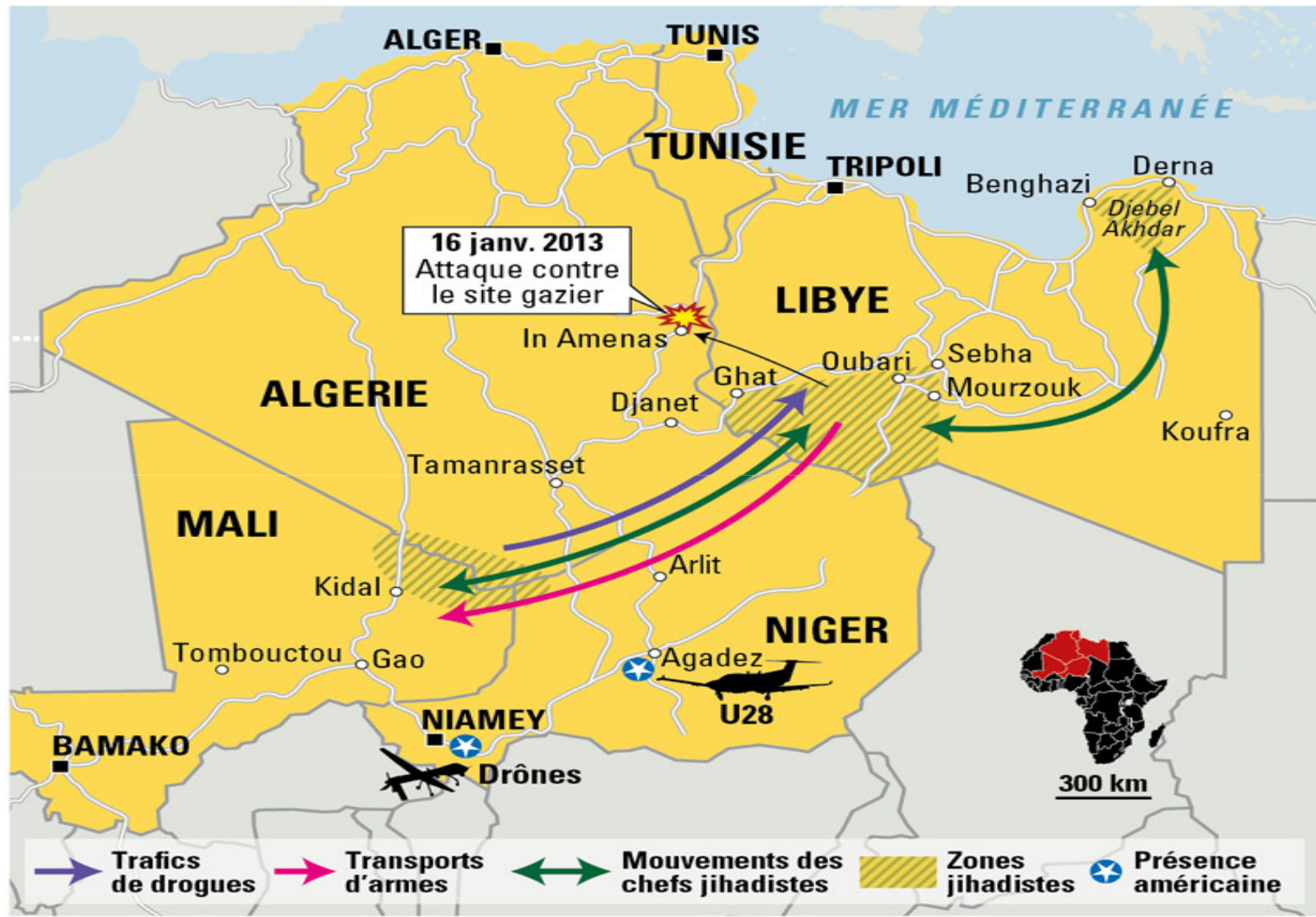
- New configuration of power while putting on hold a serious political discontent.



# Challenges

- AFISMA without a clear command and control
- Effectiveness of border control
- Fear of terrorist attacks as retaliation
- Urban warfare
- Civilian casualties
- Worsened humanitarian crisis: IDPs and Refugees
- Prolonged economic hardship
- Inter-communal violence and revenge

# Liaisons dangereuses





# Framing Solution to the crisis: what are the options



Restoring democratic governance:

- Ensure the credibility of the electoral process
- What form of reconciliation for Mali?
- Transition from AFISMA to UN Peace Mission needs to take into consideration
- Regional comprehensive strategy for security and peace.



# Questions? No Thanks!





For more in-depth ISS analysis, notifications about events and publications, follow us on Twitter @issafrica and/or visit us on Facebook.

Website: [www.issafrica.org](http://www.issafrica.org)