

Abstract: Barkhane Thesis - Enzo Agoni 78669962 - 2025:

This study focuses upon the Barkhane Operation (2014-2022), analyzing its effectiveness in combating Jihadists Groups across the Sahel Strip. The goals of the operation were to maintain regional security level, to strengthen local Sahelian armies, to restore state return to all territories, to render access to development aid and to implement the 2015 Agreement of Alger. The thesis is based on a theoretical framework of counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and realist and constructivist perspectives. Establishment of successes or failure of Barkhane, will be done through an analysis of each pillar of success with a mixed methods approach. Combining quantitative data such as fluctuation of fatalities, violent acts perpetrated, number of refugees and trained personnel. And qualitative data such as analyzes of ethnic group behavior and clashes, population perception, and the understanding of Coalition and insurgent strategies through a realist and constructivist perspective.

The thesis highlights, at first a notable success in targeting and neutralizing key leaders and groups, while limiting their territorial control. However, the enemy centric approach used by France underlined short term victory, regarding adaptive Jihadist Groups which were able to constantly divide into independent cells and integrate other entities.

The Enemy Centric approach, combined with the rejection of former military strategy in the name of local sovereignty and an attempt to avoid neocolonialist perception. With a UN mandate that excluded any targeting and integration of VNSA, a lack of resources, and the limited usage of the population centric approach by its two main members (France and G5 Sahel) in a terrain of operation as vast as Europe. Rendered the elimination of profound ethnic division, distrust, recruitment proliferation & legitimacy conservation impossible to achieve.

Key Words: Counterinsurgency, Jihadist Groups, Enemy/Population centric approach, Insurgent, Counter-Terrorism, Prevention, Ad Hoc Coalition, Violent Non-State Actors.

Title: Barkhane Operation and the fight against Jihadist Groups across the Sahel Strip.

Czech Title: Operace Barkhane a boj proti džihádistickým skupinám v pásmu Sahelu.