

Jihadism and counterinsurgency: The Fulani as culprits and targets

Special Country Meeting: What Future for the Sahel? Institutions, religion, mobility and (geo)politics in Sahelian Africa

Han van Dijk

October 23, 2018



The Fulani issue: a new instability discourse

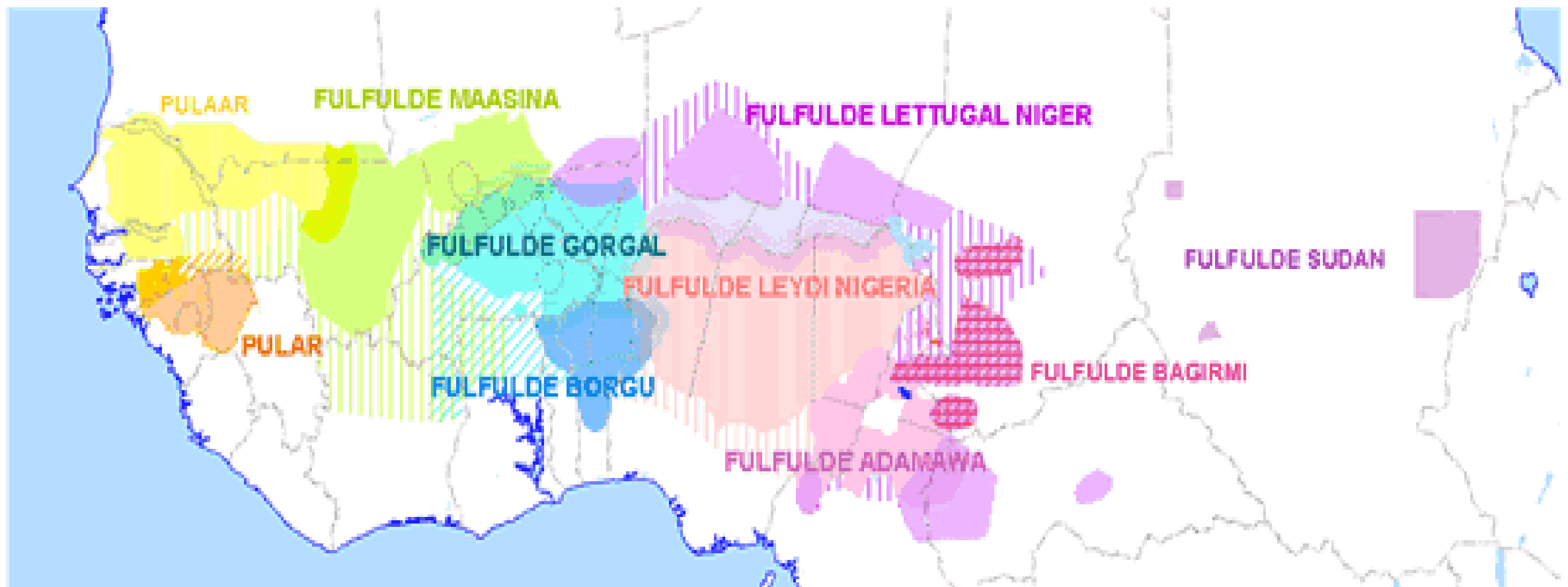
- Two reports by International Crisis Group:
 - Central Mali: An Uprising in the Making (July 2016)
 - Herders against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict (September 2017)
- Report by UNOWAS: Pastoralisme et Sécurité en Afrique de l'Ouest et au Sahel
- RFI talking about 'la question peule' as a the major focus for French counterinsurgency operations in the Sahel
 - Association of the Fulani with violent extremism (worse than the Tuareg)
 - Images of the 18-19th century Jihads

The Fulani issue: a multi-layered conflict

- They are accused of being in the forefront of Muslim extremist movements
- They are also framed as being land invaders trying to encroach on farmers' land to expand livestock keeping
- Innocent Fulani are targeted by armies and retaliation as belonging to Jihadist movements
- They become victims of land evictions, expulsions, raids and summary killings

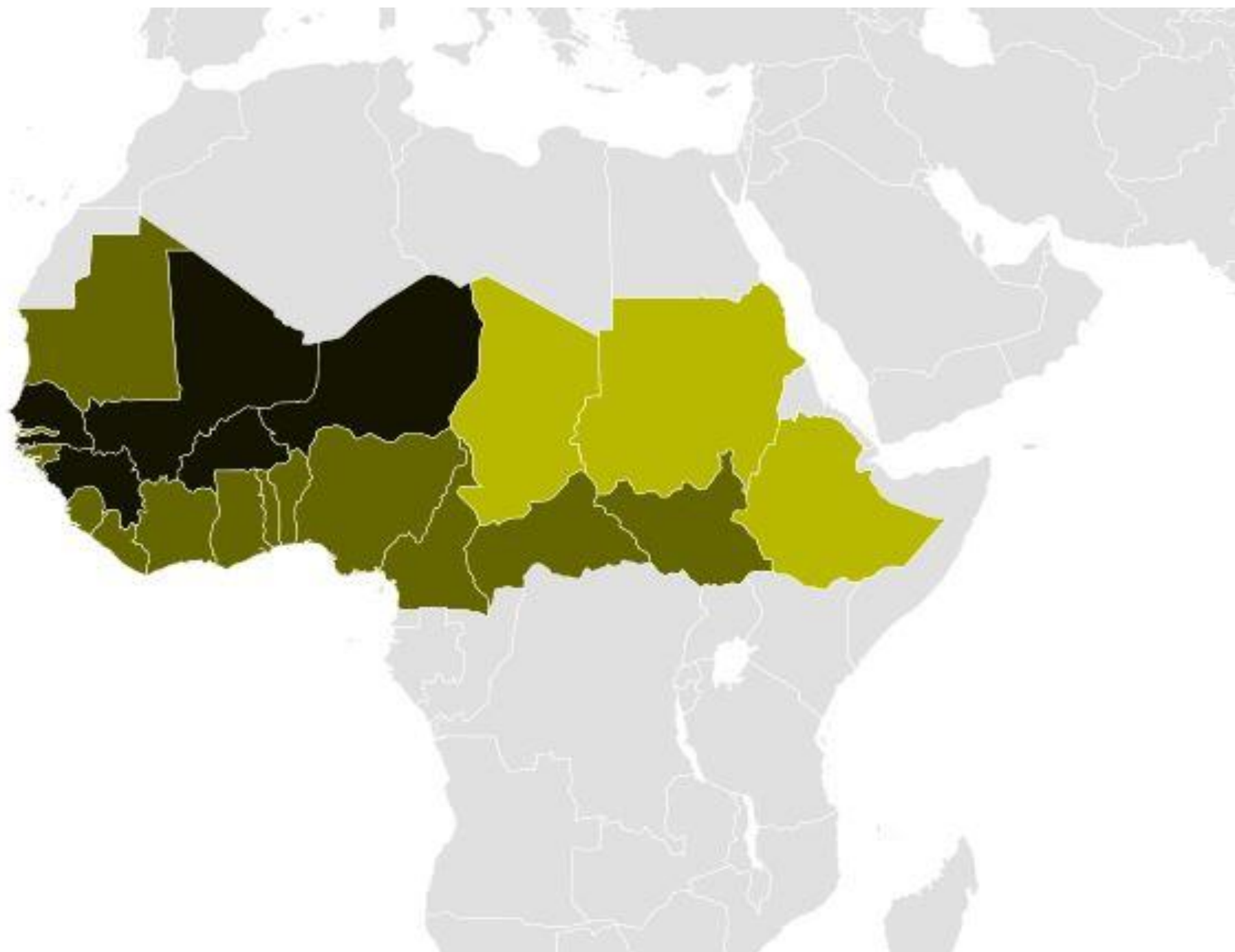


FULFULDE LANGUAGE CONTINUUM



||||| Maximal extent of Fulfulde travel areas

0 500 1000 1500 2000 Kilometers



Images of well armed Fulani on websites



Fulani Herdsmen
army

Indigenes accuse Fulani of plotting genocide in Taraba

June 28, 2017 oriental mail News 0



SUBSCRIBE TO ORIENTAL MAIL

Email Address

SUBSCRIBE

RECENT POSTS

I Owe My Survival To Israel

Kanu Reappears: To Address Pre

Scores Killed in Kaduna

Ohanaeze Embarks On Census of

2019 Polls: Campaigns Begin Nov.

RECENT COMMENTS

Augustine Chukwuma on Nigeria c
to treat Ndiya

Mambilla Committed Ethnic Cleansing In Taraba, Says Fulani Community

- This was announced in a press statement released by Fulani elders in Jalingo, Taraba State on Wednesday, who said that hundreds of Fulani villages on the Mambilla Plateau were raided by members of the Mambilla tribe on the orders of Sardauna LGA Chairman John Yep.

(Sahara reporters, (New York based website) June 22, 2017)

General News of Wednesday, 24 January 2018

Source: www.ghanaweb.com

Fulani herdsmen were killing and raping Agogo women – Deputy Minister

« Prev | Next » | Comments (14)



▶ Deputy Minister of Defence, Major Derrick Oduro has justified the sporadic shooting by members of the 'Operation Cow Leg', killing more than 1500 cattle at Agogo, a suburban in the Ashanti Region.

According to Major Oduro, the Operation Cow Leg task force had to shoot the cattle in self-defence as the Fulani herdsmen were charging them to attack the security personnel deployed to restore calm.

Speaking exclusively to GhanaWeb at the 2018 IMANIFESTO held at Tang Palace in Accra, the Minister further revealed that, Fulani herdsmen were raping and killing women at Agogo, adding that the combined police-military task force did their best to ensure the safety of Agogo residents.

"Fulani men communicated with their cows to attack the security men dispatched to ensure peace and security. A soldier must defend himself first before defending civilians. The situation is that they are raping the women of Agogo and killing the farmers so the soldiers had to protect them. It's important for the soldier to shoot cattle in self-defence," he said.





- Fulani burying victims of an attack on Mambilla plateau, Nigeria



Home > Headline > 300 cows rustled as attacks on Fulani settlements continue in Mambila

Headline

300 cows rustled as attacks on Fulani settlements continue in Mambila [PHOTOS]

By Ibrahim Abdul - March 4, 2018

16928 0

[Share on Facebook](#)
[Tweet on Twitter](#)
[G+](#)
[Pinterest](#)



Countdown to 2019 Election

days	hours	minutes	seconds
116	21	22	08



Le Monde **Afrique**

La Une **Pays** Politique Économie Sport Culture & Style Monde Débats Afric-Lat

DÉCRYPTAGE

En Afrique, le fantasme d'une « communauté peule » radicalisée

L'identité peule apparaît comme un épouvantail symbolisant la menace djihadiste. Pourtant, cette identité est bien trop hétérogène pour établir un lien aussi simple.

Par Dougoukolo Alpha Oumar Ba-Konaré



ggi : la guerre des lobbys fait rage dans le Golfe

POLITIQUE

Mali : au moins 32 Peuls tués dans une attaque de « chasseurs »

24 juin 2018 à 15h00 | Par AFP
Mis à jour le 24 juin 2018 à 18h05



Au moins 32 civils peuls ont été tués samedi au cours d'une attaque attribuée à des chasseurs traditionnels dozos dans le centre du Mali, région touchée par les violences...

An advertisement for Total Energy. It features a background image of an industrial oil and gas facility with tall chimneys and a yellow crane against a blue sky. The text reads: "Notre dossier exclusif Pétrole & gaz vous est offert en accès libre par TOTAL Committed to Better Energy".

AFRICA

Cameroon struggles to help refugees from Nigeria's Taraba State

Dozens of Nigerians have died while fleeing violent conflicts in Taraba State. Hundreds are critically ill but medical staff in Cameroon are running out of supplies. Moki Kindzeka reports from the border region.



Date 19.07.2017

Author Moki Kindzeka


Related Subjects Nigeria

Keywords Nigeria, Taraba state, Mambilas, Fulani Muslim Herdsmen


Send us your feedback

Print Print this page

Permalink <https://p.dw.com/p/2ghgL>



Join the discussion at facebook.com/dw.africa



twitter

A small overview

- Nigeria: more casualties in Fulani related conflicts than related to Boko Haram. Vigilantes and banditry
- Mali: targeted as Jihadists by Army and groups of hunters. Fulani settlements are systematically being cleansed in certain areas
- Guinea: closed its borders for Malian Fulani because of 'security'
- Benin: levies taxes on incoming Fulani leading to conflicts on the Burkinabe side of the border
- CAR: anti-Fulani violence
- Ghana: increasing xenophobia against Fulani

This raises a number of issues

- Who are the Fulani?
- What is the context in which all these incidents take place?
- Is it only the Sahel or West Africa as a whole?
- What are the root causes of this violence
- What is the role of counterinsurgency?

Who are the Fulani?

- Known as group of mobile nomadic pastoralists
- Who are spread over 22 countries: more than any other ethnic group in Africa
- But they are also very diverse: from real nomads to sedentary elites residing in urban areas
- Played a prominent role in history: 18-19th century emirates
- The Fulani issue is not only about Fulani versus others, but also about Fulani versus Fulani

Changes in the West African Region

- Demographic inversion: enormous internal migration
- High population growth
- Unstable production systems
- Decreasing space for nomadic pastoralists
 - Expanding cities
 - Expanding agriculture

Pastoralists in West Africa

- Moving southward since the 1960s to areas with more rainfall
- But also closer to urban markets on the coast
- Sometimes promoted by governments such as in Cote d'Ivoire
- Enormous increase in farmer-herder conflicts
- Is also a conflict over available land and space
- Not necessarily driven by climate





Possible causes

- Decreasing space:
- Internal changes in Fulani society
 - Proletarianisation
 - Widening gap urban and rural Fulani: chiefs and herdsman
 - Polarisation of wealth
- Changing property relations: most livestock is not owned by Fulani
- Incapacity of governments/states to impose an effective monopoly on violence (Nigeria vigilantes, Mali hunters, Touareg militia)

The dangers for the Sahel proper

- Widespread violence against people being labelled as 'Fulani'
- Difficult to stop because of enormous area in which they live
- Amalgamation of Fulani-Muslim-Extremist-Nomadism
- Ethnic conflict

In contrast:

- Different groups of Fulani might unite and indeed develop their Jihadist or ethnic based movement
- Will be a regional problem
- Counterinsurgency breeds terrorists (Opération Barkhane, G5 Sahel)
- Use of local militias leads to intercommunity conflict and settlement of old scores

Conclusion

- There is no such thing as a Fulani issue
- There are many issues
 - Population growth
 - Management of natural resources: pastures and fields
 - Internal divisions within Fulani society
 - Self-owning pastoralists versus hired herdsmen
 - Governments lack control
- Linkages with high politics
 - Many cattle owners are high-placed politicians and business men
 - Regional problem requires regional solutions (ECOWAS)