

STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE DAILY

Region: Somalia-Democratic Republic of the Congo-Nigeria-Mali-Burkina Faso-Niger

Date: 16 March 2026

Scope: Security | Diplomacy | Defence

Classification: Client Confidential

Executive Assessment

Recent developments across the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin indicate continued operational activity by jihadist groups despite ongoing military pressure from regional forces. JNIM maintains the capacity to conduct coordinated attacks and expand tactical influence in parts of Mali and Burkina Faso, while ISWAP continues probing Nigerian military positions with simultaneous assaults on multiple bases in Borno State. Although national armies report successful counter-operations, including airstrikes and repelled attacks, the persistence of militant operations highlights the enduring resilience of insurgent networks.

In Mali, the combination of counter-terrorism strikes and the escape of high-profile hostages suggests both continued security operations and vulnerabilities in state control over remote areas. Meanwhile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains unstable as clashes between AFC/M23, Wazalendo militias, and government forces continue across North Kivu and Walikale, indicating fluid front lines and fragmented local alliances.

Diplomatically and economically, international engagement remains active. U.S.–Niger discussions on security cooperation and IMF financial support to Niger demonstrate ongoing external involvement aimed at stabilizing governance and economic conditions in the Sahel. In Somalia, continued joint operations by national forces and local militias against Al-Shabaab reflect sustained counter-insurgency efforts, though the group remains operational in southern regions. Overall, the regional security landscape remains volatile, characterized by persistent insurgent activity alongside continued international and national counter-terrorism initiatives.

NIGER

- U.S. Senior Bureau Official Nick Checker met with Niger's Prime Minister Ali Mahaman Lamine Zeine to discuss opportunities to expand security cooperation and strengthen trade and investment ties between the United States and Niger.

MINTEL WORLD

Conflict and energy consultancy

- The IMF approved the continuation of its support program and authorized a new \$90 million disbursement; on March 13 in Washington, the IMF Executive Board endorsed the latest reviews of the program supported by the Extended Credit Facility as well as the resilience and sustainability mechanism.

BURKINA FASO

- JNIM claimed it carried out an attack on a military position between Naokui and Labarani, stating that three soldiers were killed and that a military vehicle, motorcycles, and ammunition were seized.

MALI

- The Malian army announced that several terrorists were neutralized in an airstrike in Sinewali, in the cercle of Yélimané.
- The Malian army announced that two soldiers held captive by armed groups in a refugee camp in Mauritania, along with Dioila Governor Alidji Bagna who had been kidnapped by JNIM, managed to escape from their captors.
- JNIM claimed it seized control of a Dozo headquarters in Niono in the Ségou region and targeted an Army–Africa Corps vehicle with an improvised explosive device between Nampala and Diabaly.

NIGERIA

- The Nigerian Army announced that, in Kanama town in Yobe State, troops operating under the Joint Task Force North-East / Operation Hadin Kai neutralized a suspected spy linked to Boko Haram.
- ISWAP launched coordinated night attacks targeting military bases and camps in Maiduguri, Baga, and Damboa in Borno State; the Nigerian Army reported that the attacks were repelled with the support of reinforcement troops.
- The Nigerian Army announced that ISWAP carried out a night attack on a Nigerian military camp in Bitta, Borno State, and that the attack was repelled.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

- AFC/M23 claimed that the Congolese army targeted densely populated areas of Kalingi in Minembwe with kamikaze drones.
- It was reported that Wazalendo forces captured a village in the Masisi territory of North Kivu following clashes with AFC/M23.
- It was reported that AFC/M23 reinforced its positions in villages in the Walikale territory.

MINTEL WORLD

Conflict and energy consultancy

- It was reported that the Congolese army arrested two Wazalendo commanders in Walikale.

SOMALIA

- Somalia's Ministry of Defence announced that the Somali National Armed Forces, together with local community forces, conducted an operation in the village of Busley Daud in the Lower Shabelle region, neutralizing nine Al-Shabaab militants during the operation.