

# THIERRY DE MONTBRIAL

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The session is on the Sahel and West Africa, crucial regions in Africa that considerably concern Europe, especially France, but not only. To shed some light on the subject, we will address the economy, social problems and security issues, in that order. Since many analysts and commentators posit that the social and economic situation is the root cause of insecurity, we will discuss them first.

We have four outstanding speakers. The first is Romuald Wadagni, Senior Minister in charge of Economy and Finance of Benin. I thank him all the more for being with us because he had some trouble getting here. Minister Wadagni, we are very happy to welcome you this afternoon. Mr. Wadagni has business experience. He worked at Deloitte for years in France before returning to Benin to take up his ministerial post.

Then I will give the floor to Alain Tchibozo, the West African Development Bank's chief economist. Mr. Tchibozo also has a wide range of experience. He was an economist at a major investment fund in Great Britain before taking up his current post two years ago under Serge Ekué, who is here, but attending a very important meeting at the moment, which is why he asked Mr. Tchibozo to stand in for him at this session. I thank him very much. His talk will focus on social and economic issues. Then we will discuss security issues in two parts: security and its internal aspects. I warmly thank General Béhanzin, who is on my left, for agreeing to talk about this matter. He is very experienced. Until a few months ago, he was in charge of security issues in Benin and he also has a great deal of experience in the region.

We will end with Nshuti Manasseh, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda. You may wonder why Rwanda was chosen. It is not in the Sahel or West Africa. But in recent years Rwanda has developed an original military and security capacity unique in Africa that has proven itself in Mozambique. Mr. Minister, perhaps you could quickly explain Rwanda's role in Mozambique at the beginning of your talk. Mr. Manasseh will discuss how Rwanda can help some African states strengthen their military and security capacities.

Thank you everyone.