

ORGANIZED **VIOLENCE** AND **TERRORISM** IN KENYA

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THE CONCEPT OF VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM

VIOLENCE

- ▶ Violence and terrorism are concepts that are conversant to all. However, they does not have a clear cut definition.
- ▶ The World Health Organization (WHO) 1996 defines violence as an intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual against oneself, another person or group of people or country that results in or has high likelihood of resulting into injury, death or psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.
- ▶ Hoffman (2004) defines terrorism as a systematic use of violence to create an atmosphere of fear to the masses with a specific political or economic agenda. The acts are always illegal, leads to loss of lives and property destruction.
- ▶ Organized violence and terrorism are closely related concepts which are hard to separate in a discussion such as this. Hence the discussion “**Organized Violence and Terrorism in Kenya**”.

The period Before 2000

- ▶ Before the August 1998 bombing of USA embassy, organized violence in Kenya was majorly linked to the neighborhood groups like Mungiki, Chinkororo, Bankongo, Jeshi la wazee, Jeshi la King'ole, Taliban among 33 others. These groups were majorly ethnic based, and used by local politicians to cause havoc to the opponents.
- ▶ Organized violence in Kenya can be traced back to 1992 when the Mau Mau flag was raised in Ruring'u Nyeri county and the freedom war was declared against the white man in Kenya. While the fighters were fighting for their land and freedom, it is important to note that the techniques and ways they used amounted to violence on another group (colonial masters and those who supported them).
- ▶ However, after the war, the independence government failed to think of what would happen to Mau mau after independence. No any sort of framework was instituted to curb such groups or even control their emergence.
- ▶ With the dictatorship, marginalization, oppression and use of state apparatus of violence against KANU's political opponents, groups similar to Mau Mau were bound to emergence and this time round more organized since Kenyans had been made to regard violence as the only mean to end dictatorship and oppression.

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- ▶ The birth of KANU Youth wingers (KYW) in the early 1960s opened more space and breeding ground for emergence of violent groups in Kenya. Oloo Adams (2010) traces the origin of neighborhood groups in Kenya to KYW
- ▶ Ngunyi & Katumanga (2012) notes that when one violent group emerges there must be another one emerging to curb its activities and this is exactly how KYW led to the emergence of several neighborhood groups in Kenya today.
- ▶ Studying the History of *Chinkororo* Movement, Nyabwengi Bosibori (2017) asserts that KYW played a significant role in the emergence of neighborhood groups in Kenya. The groups are ethnic based, political oriented and at times works for the highest bidder for their economic gain.

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- ▶ While neighborhood groups were swelling up, something else was happening outside Kenya and in 1975, when the Norfolk Hotel is bombed, Kenya was caught unaware of organized international terrorism. Mugo (2013) notes that a Moroccan Assailant Mohammed Bade Al hamid with the aid of a woman of German Accent bombed the Norfolk hotel. However, very few actions were taken and no arrests were made.
- ▶ Thereafter, apart from the local ethnic wars of the early 1980s and 1990s, Kenya remained calm until august 1998 when the USA embassy was bombed leaving 213 people lifeless and several injuries.
- ▶ Al-Qaida claimed responsibility under the command of the Osama Bin Laden. This is the bombing that shook Kenya and made violence and terrorism a reality to the Kenyan government at the time.

It is either you are with us or against us!”



The New Millennium

- ▶ After the 2001 September attack on the World trade Centre, George Bush declared global war against terror and Kenya joined its western allies in this war.
- ▶ **Question:** Did Kenya join the war knowing what it was fighting or it only happened because of the phrase “it is either you are with us or against us!” by Bush?
- ▶ Kenya enacted several security sectors reforms after the declaration of global war against terror. All these were aimed at countering terrorism in the country.

Security sector reforms

- ▶ Ochieng okinda (2016) in his study of security sector reforms in Kenya discusses a number of these reforms which include;
- ▶ Suppression of terrorism Act 2003- Faced criticism from the Civil society as it was regarded as violating human rights and targeting some specific religions especially Islam. (Kamau, 2006)
- ▶ Establishment of the National Counter-terrorism Centre (NCTC) in 2003 to coordinate the regional counter terrorism efforts
- ▶ Establishment of the Anti-terror Police Unit (ATPU)
- ▶ The prevention of organized Crime Act 2010

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- ▶ Increased security checks up and screening around the airports, hotels institutions etc.
- ▶ Intervention in Somalia (Operation Linda Nchi) in 2011
- ▶ 2012 KDF entered Somalia under AMISOM
- ▶ Reconstitution of the National police Service

ANY CHANGE ????????????

- ▶ However, with all these efforts, violent groups increased and their activities became more pronounced.
- ▶ From about the 16 neighborhood groups in the 1990s, by 2010 when prevention or organized crime Act is passed, Kenya had 33 neighborhood groups many which were operating in the urban cosmopolitan space.
- ▶ After 2010 many of them became more vibrant e.g. Gaza became the talk of the day in nairobi slums, they become more open in their activities and even openly threatens the masses.

Terror attacks since 2000

- ▶ From 2000, the terror attacks in the country increased as detailed below;
- ▶ 2002- kikambala Hotel Bombing and Arkia airline jet attack in Mombasa
- ▶ From 2011 Alshaabab attacks intensifies
- ▶ 2011/2012- Kenya recorded 17 attacks where 48 people died and 200 injured.
- ▶ 2013- sept 21, Westgate Mall attack, 67 people died and several injured
- ▶ 2014- Mpeketoni attacks - while Alshabaab claimed responsibility to some of these attacks, the government declared that it was local politicians using neighborhood groups for aims attributed to political and religious affiliations.


so, who is attacking Kenya????????????????????

Attacks

- ▶ **Note:** Between 2011 and 2014 Kenya recorded 133 attacks with 264 deaths and 923 injuries (Wafula, 2014).
- ▶ 2015- Garissa university attacks, 147 people died leading to the closure of the university for some time, Alshaabab claimed responsibility. However, religious profiling was reported too.
- ▶ 2016-Two women attacked a police station in Mombasa (the two were linked to Jayesh Al Ayman, an affiliate of Alshabaab).
- ▶ 2019- Dusitd2 complex attack leaving 21 people dead.

Other violent attacks

- ▶ There are other minor attacks marked with detonation of grenades in various parts of Kenya with Nairobi and Garissa registering the highest number
- ▶ 2010 June - Uhuru park
- ▶ 2011 October- Mwaura disco in Nairobi
- ▶ 2011- grenade shells discovered in the offices of the prime minister. No arrest was made and the government said nobody was targeted (what *were they doing in the office?*)
- ▶ 2012 September - St. Polycarp church Nairobi
- ▶ 2013 December - Nairobi bus attack

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- ▶ From the attacks above is it evident that since the new millennium begun, violence and terrorism index in Kenya is steadily rising.
 - ▶ The country is becoming more vulnerable to terror attacks than before.
 - ▶ This is the case even after the several security sectors reforms and counter terror measures that have been put in place.

Why the rise in violent and terror attacks?

Enemies within and from without.

- ▶ Kenya is still struggling to eliminate the neighborhood groups. The resources to counter insecurity is divided since some resources have to handle the neighborhood groups while other have to handle Alshaabab.
- ▶ In some attacks especially minor ones Kenya does not even know who is the true attacker. While Alshaabab claim responsibility, many a times especially during electioneering period, all attacks are attributed to political affiliation and neighborhoods groups. This makes solutions hard to come up with.

- ▶ In 15th January 2016, KDF suffered their worst **attack** in Somalia when an ambush on its camp in El-Adde left more than 170 soldiers dead. Something fishy must have happened. How comes only KDF were attacked? Where were the Somalia or fellow AMISOM fighters? Is it that somebody is targeting Kenya alone in this fight?
- ▶ These are questions that we are yet to get answers. Who is this great enemy who wants Kenya full of blood? Unfortunately, Kenya is yet to know exactly who is attacking her.

Gender-biased counterterror measures

- ▶ Women are absent in anti-terror measures. The long-held gender stereotypes of women being motherly, non-violent, harmless and non-participants in public and violent issues have for a long-time misinformed Kenyans.
- ▶ We have failed to do profiling of each terror attack case by case and analyze them from gender -lens.
- ▶ The reality of the matter is since time memorial women have been active participants in violence and terrorism. Sample cases are highlighted below.

Sample cases

- ▶ In mau Mau - women like field Marshall Muthoni
- ▶ 1975 Norfolk Hotel bombing - woman of German Accent
- ▶ From the new Millennium women have been mentioned severally in attacks
- ▶ 2013 Westgate mall attack- the White widow
- ▶ 2016 Mombasa police station attack- Two women attackers
- ▶ 2019 DusitD2 attack- three women involved. One married to the terrorist, one transported weapon and one in constant communication with her terrorist brother and knew his whereabouts but never reported.
- ▶ 2019- USA listed a woman who severally has been linked to terror related activities in Kenya and financing Islamic state in Iraq and Syria(ISIS)

- ▶ Despite these, our counter-terror measures treat women in a special way;
- ▶ Men are easily suspected as terrorists as compared to their women counterparts.
- ▶ Pregnant women are never allowed to go through metal screening.

N/B that pregnancy can be faked

- ▶ The phrase **“what a man can do a woman can do better”** is yet to be applied in counterterrorism measures.

Kenya's Strategic location: A benefit or Curse?

- ▶ Terrorists work on the principles of popularity, fame and fear.
- ▶ In east Africa, Kenya is the most strategically located country. This implies that if Kenya is hit several nations across the world are affected. This is one of the objectives of any terror group.
- ▶ Most of the mega attacks in Kenya have focused on foreign plazas an indicator that if Kenya is hit, then the impact is felt not only in Kenya but also in other European nations that have their investments in the country.
- ▶ The media freedom in Kenya propagates terrorists' fame. People have freedom to post videos and information online without much fear.

- ▶ Each time there is a terror attack we have comprehensive media coverage on the scenes thus helping in spreading the fear across the entire globe. It also keeps the terrorist up-to-date on what is happening on the ground.
- ▶ Facebook and Whatsapp are not taxed these are platforms used mostly in sharing terror attack videos and information. As such the attackers achieve their aim of spreading fear across the globe.
- ▶ Again, the same platforms offer a good avenue for recruitment into terror groups.

- ▶ In addition to freedom of speech and online freedom, Kenya houses the world's leading media houses and firms such as CNN, Aljazeera among other thus if hit, the media popularity for Alshaabab activities will go across the world as faster as possible.
- ▶ Please note that while proximity to Somalia may be regarded as a strategic location issues, I do not think it is such a huge factor. It is worth noting that Ethiopia has one of the longest borders with Somalia but is not a constant victim of Alshaabab attacks.

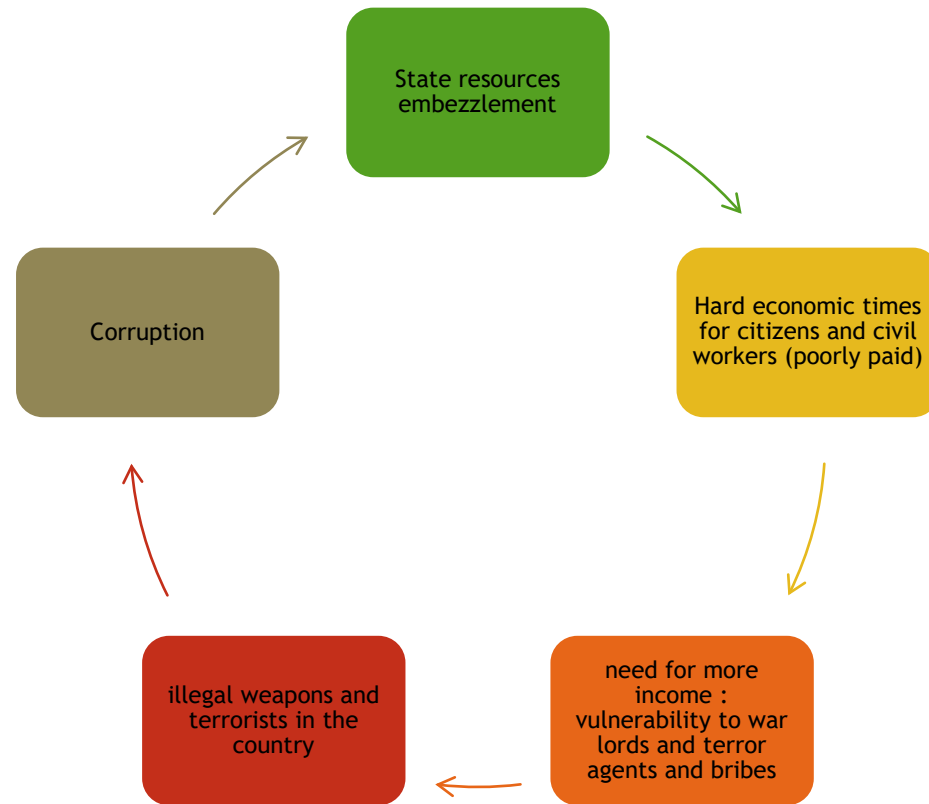
Corruption !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!




Corruption: The silent terror agent in Kenya

- ▶ Corruption has become a national disaster in Kenya.
- ▶ Corruption is becoming a culture in Kenya. Transparency International reports that Kenya was ranked 144/180 in terms of corruption in 2018.
- ▶ There are warlords who make a living out of terrorism and violence and corruption plays a significant role in sustaining and protecting their operations.
- ▶ The warlords pay security officers along the borders to allow weapons and explosives into the country. The poorly paid security men, fall prey of such warlords.
- ▶ Just 100K is enough for the security people to allow explosives enter the country through our porous borders.
- ▶ Corruption also blurs investigations and castigates Justice and the truth

Corruption and terrorism cycle



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- ▶ Corruption also leads to nepotism in getting jobs in state offices. Academic qualifications no longer determines entry into an office. The size of the pocket matters.
 - ▶ With hard economic times , many jobless youths are easily lured into joining terror groups. It is easy for the war lords to recruit them for their own economic and political gains.
 - ▶ It is not surprising that many youths in violent and terror groups do not know why they are fighting. For the youths, Violence is the available means to survival.

DAD, I'M
CONSIDERING
A CAREER IN
ORGANISED
CRIME.

GOVERNMENT OR
PRIVATE SECTOR?



Major controversial issues about terrorism and violence in Kenya

1. Human rights: when does national security take precedence over individual human rights?
 - ▶ Kapedo killings: when does the human rights of security officers considered human?
 - ▶ Operation Linda Nchi
 - ▶ Should we go “the Michuki Way?”
2. The KDF in Somalia Question: Will their withdrawal reduce terror attacks in Kenya?
 - ▶ Kenya is in Somalia under AMISOM
 - ▶ Ethiopia and DRC among the countries with the largest number of soldiers fighting in Somalia under AMISOM.
 - ▶ Kenya is among the countries contributing few soldiers to AMISOM.
3. Dadaab refugee complex
 - ▶ To what extent can we say that the closure of the camp will reduce terror attacks and violence in Kenya?

Conclusion and Recommendations

- ▶ Organized violence and terrorism in Kenya will keep on skyrocketing until that time when we shall shift from reacting to attacks and start acting.
- ▶ The human right question and politics associated with security in Kenya need to be addressed as soon as possible.
- ▶ There is need to historicize violence and terrorism as this will be the only way we can easily identify what led us into the current state.
- ▶ There is need to deal with corruption within the country once and for all.
- ▶ Counter-terror measures should be gender inclusive.

Any Question ????





THANK YOU!