



Institute for Security Studies

PAPER

Assessing the vulnerability of Kenyan youths to radicalisation and extremism

INTRODUCTION

That there is an emerging trend of religious radicalisation in East Africa is not in doubt. Somalia, which has experienced various forms of conflict since 1991, has often been seen as the source of extremism in the region, especially following the attacks on the United States (US) embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi on 7 August 1998. Yet closer investigation reveals that Somali nationals were not behind most of the incidents outside Somalia's borders. Somalia provides a safe haven, training camps and opportunities for extremists to fight the 'enemies of Islam', but al-Qaeda and later al-Shabaab have executed attacks in the region by relying on local assistance and support. At the same time, al-Shabaab managed to recruit Kenyan, Ugandan and Tanzanian nationals to its ranks in Somalia. The central question that this paper hopes to answer is: what makes people – most often young people – susceptible to extremists' jihadi ideology?

Instead of presenting Somalia as the root cause of all regional problems, the focus will rather be on the domestic conditions that those behind radicalisation exploit to recruit their followers. This discussion is especially relevant in light of the growing pressure al-Shabaab faces in Somalia following the recent successes of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and other forces. If Somalia is effectively no longer a terrorist haven, then the countries in the region from which many of these foreign fighters came (e.g. Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda) might experience growing threats to their own security.

Of the three countries mentioned above, Kenya has experienced the most attacks within its borders. The

country is also central to the region and thus deserves closer scrutiny. Although Kenya's intervention in Somalia served to incite a terrorist response, the experience of Uganda, Ethiopia and Burundi, all of which have had troops in Somalia since 2006, showed different trends. Only the attacks in Uganda and Kenya were attributed to those countries' interventions in Somalia. And, despite the fact that those directly involved in these attacks were Ugandan nationals, Kenyans and Tanzanians helped plan and execute the attacks, not members of traditional Somali communities.

This is not to say that individuals within the traditional Muslim community have not used frustrations and vulnerabilities among the youth – Muslim and non-Muslim – to recruit foot soldiers, which raises the question: what is the source of the radicalisation that is driving many young people, especially in Kenya, to join extremist groups? To answer this question, the paper discusses:

- The origins of extremist interpretations of Islam and the turn to violence of extremist Islamists.
- The history of Islam in Kenya and the region.
- Early terrorist attacks in Kenya.
- Kenyans' involvement in the bombings in Kampala on 11 July 2010 and their joining of al-Shabaab in Somalia; and attacks following Kenya's intervention in Somalia.
- The role of vulnerable youths, specifically the involvement of Kenyans and newly converted Kenyans in previous attacks, focusing on the role of the Muslim Youth Centre.
- Drivers of radicalisation in Kenya.
- Strategies to prevent and counter radicalisation.

ISLAM TURNS TO EXTREMISM AND VIOLENCE

While acknowledging that extremists do not represent Islam and Muslims, an important question is: where does the extremist interpretation of Islam originate? Hassan Ole Naado of the Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance provided the explanation that follows below.¹

The Shafi'i school within Sunni Islam (the other three schools are Hanafi, Maliki and Hanbali) remained dominant in East Africa until 1979, when a significant event occurred in the Muslim world: the revolution that overthrew the Shah of Iran and the founding of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Following the political, diplomatic and ideological altercations that the leaders of the Islamic Revolution started having with Western powers, especially the US (which had supported the Shah), Western powers sought to contain the influence of the Islamic government of Iran, which was sending shockwaves and inspiring Islamic theocracy across the Muslim world. The Iranian revolution was based on Shia ideology – a system queried by Sunni Muslims.

Nationals of both Kenya and Tanzania were involved in Africa's first suicide attacks in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam on 7 August 1998

In a move to counter Iran's influence, Western powers approached Saudi Arabia, empowered it and projected it as the custodian of the Islamic faith worldwide. But since Saudi Arabia is predominantly Sunni, the majority of whom subscribe to the Hanbali school of Islamic thought, the result of the strategy to use Saudi Arabia as a counterweight to Iran was to bring Sunni and Shia Islam into even more intense conflict, resulting in a hardening of attitudes on both sides. This 'competition' between Sunni Islam, represented by Saudi Arabia, and Shia Islam, signified by Iran, did not remain in the Middle East, but extended beyond this region to Africa, including the Horn of Africa. This led to extreme positions and initiatives on both sides to spread their influence.

One of these initiatives was to award scholarships to young Kenyan Muslims to study in Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries. Therefore, in the process of empowering Saudi Arabia as a counterweight to Iran, many young Muslims from across the world started travelling to Saudi Arabia in the 1980s for advanced religious studies

and returning to their countries to teach in Islamic schools (*madrassas*). Also, Muslim scholars from Saudi Arabia and other South Asian countries immigrated to Kenya where they introduced new forms of Islamic practices, in contrast to the traditional Shafi'i practices that had been the dominant school of thought in East Africa and the Horn of Africa. Consequently, 'extremism' emerged in the region as a result of the influence of another school of thought – Hanbali, closest associated with Wahhabi Islam – that gained entry into the region.

In addition to religious developments in the region, another event indirectly contributed to the spread of extremism in Kenya: the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s, which led to the later emergence of Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda and its influence in the broader region. Bin Laden's influence in the Horn of Africa manifested in the US Embassy bombings in 1998, which will be discussed later in the paper. Being able to defeat the Soviet Union, one of the two superpowers at that stage, in Afghanistan returned Muslim pride following the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Violent opposition to the Russians turned into violent opposition to anyone who dared to interfere in Muslim affairs. This opposition was transferred to the West due to the latter's support of dictators such as Egypt's Hosni Mubarak and the Shah of Iran, its support for Israel in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the West's general dominance over, interference in and (in the eyes of bin Laden and many other Muslims) contempt for the Muslim world. This was exacerbated by the Saudi invitation to the West, and the US in particular, to send troops to Saudi Arabia to drive the Iraqis out of Kuwait in 1991, which bin Laden saw as a defilement of holy Islamic territory by infidels (Mecca, the holiest of Islamic sites, is in Saudi Arabia). The al-Qaeda attacks on the US on 11 September 2001 followed, while the Western invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 made the situation much worse, as did the war on terror, which is often seen by Muslims as being specifically anti-Muslim, not broadly anti-terror.

Islam in Kenya

Because of its contact with ideas from various parts of the Muslim world, the Muslim community in Kenya is under the influence of various schools of Islamic thought – Shafi'i, Maliki, Hanbali, Hanafi and even Shia.

Kenya is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multicultural society that is predominantly African in character. The Muslim community – roughly 30 per cent of the population – is drawn from the whole spectrum of Kenyan society and, like the rest of that society, the larger part of the Muslim population is young: 65 per cent of its members are between the ages of 18 and 35. About 30 per cent of Kenya's Muslims are of Somali origin but born in Kenya

(Kenyan-Somalis), and another 10 per cent are of Borana ethnicity residing in the regions bordering Ethiopia. The remainder constitute Muslim minorities living in Christian-dominated regions.²

Kenyan Somalis are found in the north-eastern parts of Kenya bordering on Somalia and another large group is found in the Eastleigh suburb of Nairobi, which also hosts a large population of Somalis who sought refuge in Kenya from the civil strife that erupted after the 1991 collapse of the regime of Muhammad Siad Barre. There is another very important Muslim settlement in Kenya – the coastal region, which hosts about 30 per cent of the Kenyan Muslim population, is considered the ‘gateway’ between the Islamic faith in the Arab world and the Islamic faith in Kenya and the entire East and Central African region, and links Muslims in these regions to a rich Islamic heritage that spans centuries.

For decades the traditional Islamic centres along the East African coast have produced Muslim scholars who have been instrumental in spreading Islam to the interior of Kenya and other parts of the East African hinterland. And for all the years that Islam has existed in these regions, the Shafi’i school of Sunni Islam has been the dominant creed. But, as explained above, immigrants from South-East Asia and students who went to study in Saudi Arabia and other Middle East countries have slowly but steadily introduced other forms of Islamic practice and thinking.

With these new interactions, a kind of Islamic revivalism was set off in many parts of the Islamic world as Muslims, especially Sunnis, started experimenting with and comparing different schools of thought. Although the revivalism was characterised by protracted and often violent forms of resurgence in many majority-Muslim countries, the Muslim community in Kenya and the East African region was initially characterised by gradual but peaceful attempts to participate in mainstream political processes. However, the growing tide of violent Muslim extremism increasingly led to Kenyan nationals turning to violence to achieve their political and religious aims.

VIOLENT MANIFESTATIONS OF EXTREMISM

Kenya and Tanzania, August 1998

The first suicide attacks in Africa occurred on 7 August 1998, when suicide bombers almost simultaneously detonated two truck bombs outside the US embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. As a result, 224 people were killed and about 5 000 injured.

Although a number of political officials in Kenya and Tanzania claimed that their countries were completely

innocent and had merely been used as sites to target the US and its interests, nationals of both countries were involved in the attacks. This involvement of nationals suggests that there may have been some element of failure by both the Kenyan and Tanzanian authorities that had motivated these suicide attacks, not least because the attacks resulted in the death and injury of the attackers’ fellow countrymen. Most notable here were those attackers included in the US indictment of bin Laden issued on 6 November 1998:³

- Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, a Kenyan national, who had travelled in and out of Kenya, most significantly to and from neighbouring Sudan, since the early 1990s while bin Laden was based there. Mohammed came to be recognised as the leader of al-Qaeda’s East African cell.
- Fahid Mohammed Ally Msalam, a Kenyan national, who purchased the vehicle used by the Tanzanian cell together with Khalfan Khamis Mohamed (see below) and helped to load the truck with the bomb used to attack the US embassy in Tanzania. Msalam, together with Sheikh Ahmed Salim Swedan, another Kenyan national, also purchased the truck used to bomb the Kenyan embassy. According to his uncle, Msalam became very religious after spending time in Yemen and Pakistan.
- Sheikh Ahmed Salim Swedan, a Kenyan who grew up in Mombasa, attended a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan after dropping out of school. Swedan assisted in the purchase of the trucks used to carry out both attacks.
- Mohammed Sadeek Odeh, a Palestinian who had been granted Kenyan citizenship and settled in Witu, near Malindi, Kenya where he ran a carpentry business.⁴ Using the two trucks purchased by Swedan and Msalam, Odeh oversaw the construction of both devices.⁵
- Khalfan Khamis Mohamed and Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, Tanzanian nationals. Mohamed assembled the bomb used against the US embassy in Dar es Salaam while Ghailani, a suspected explosives expert, was responsible for obtaining the bomb’s components. He also rented a room at the Hilltop Hotel in Dar es Salaam where those involved in the plot met.

Foreign involvement

In addition to the involvement of nationals in the planning and execution of the attacks, the terrorist cell responsible also contained foreigners, most notably:⁶

- Wahid el-Hage (a Lebanese), who served as bin Laden’s personal secretary and had moved to Kenya in 1994 to assist in the running of the Kenyan cell.

- Anas al-Liby (a Libyan), who conducted surveillance of potential US, British, French and Israeli targets in Nairobi.
- Mustafa Mohamed Fadhil (an Egyptian), who was accused of preparing and loading the TNT plus other explosives into the truck used in the attack in Tanzania.

Significantly, the actual suicide bombers were neither Kenyan nor Tanzanian nationals:

- The Nairobi bombing was carried out by two Saudi nationals: Mohamed Rashed Daoud al-Owhali, who threw stun grenades at embassy guards before running off, and another, only referred to as 'Azzam', who was the suicide bomber.
- In the case of the Dar es Salaam bombing, an Egyptian national, Hamden Khalif Allah Awad, was the suicide bomber.

Despite the involvement of Kenyan and Tanzanian nationals in facilitating and planning the attacks, the fact that they were ultimately carried out by foreigners may – at least to a certain degree – indicate the level of African nationals' commitment to what was then a new 'cause' – al-Qaeda. At the time of these attacks African nationals were possibly not yet ready to make the ultimate sacrifice of their lives. In contrast, a possible explanation for utilising suicide bombers from Saudi Arabia and Egypt might be the fact that both countries had been subjected to Islamist extremism and the ideologies of al-Qaeda for a longer period of time, with the consequence that more individuals were already familiar with and convinced by the concept of martyrdom than was the case on the African continent at the time of the 1998 attacks.

Embedding terrorist organisations within the local context

Those planning terror attacks use local vulnerabilities and circumstances to their advantage. In relation to the Nairobi attack, this is clearly illustrated by the prior activities of al-Qaeda, which gradually extended its reach within the Horn of Africa from the early 1990s. Initially, Sudan hosted bin Laden between 1991 and 1996, before he returned to Afghanistan, which provided him with an invaluable opportunity to exploit the crisis and instability in Somalia (from 1991 onwards) to establish al-Qaeda's East African cell, which allowed al-Qaeda to operate in Nairobi from at least 1993 and in Mombasa from 1994. In order to embed itself in Kenya, al-Qaeda undertook a number of important activities:⁷

- It established safe houses for its members and sympathisers who were passing through the region. This facilitated not only illegal cross-border movement within the region, but meant that Kenya also served as a

gateway for terrorist actors to the Gulf, the Middle East and South Asia.

- It opened various small businesses and relief organisations to subsidise and conceal its activities. For example, in 1993 Khalid al-Fawwaz, who would later become a spokesperson for bin Laden in Britain, started a business in Nairobi called Asma Limited that was later transferred to Abu Ubaidah al-Banshiri, one of al-Qaeda's military commanders. Another operative, Wadih El-Hage, similarly established a business called Tanzanite King and a relief organisation called Help African People. In August 1994 Mohammed Saddiq Odeh, a Jordanian member of al-Qaeda who had been trained in the camps in Afghanistan, arrived in Mombasa. During the same year Muhammad Atef, who would be killed during the US bombing of Afghanistan in November 2001, visited Odeh in Mombasa and gave him a boat to start a wholesale fishing business for al-Qaeda. Under the arrangement, Odeh could take whatever money he needed to cover his expenses and give the rest to al-Qaeda. In this way al-Qaeda operatives integrated themselves into the local community without arousing undue suspicion.
- Al-Qaeda operatives not only lived among Kenya's Muslim population, but also married into the local community. By becoming an integral part of society foreigners were able to identify and use local people to strengthen their cover.
- Al-Qaeda operatives in Kenya helped to train fighters, including those who attacked US troops in Somalia in 1993. It would appear that this might have occurred with the full knowledge of US officials, according to a letter written by a member of al-Qaeda's Kenyan cell, that warned that they suspected that US officials were aware of their activities.

Vulnerability to terrorist activities

The vulnerability of both Tanzania and Kenya to terrorist activities was also an important factor, not least in terms of permitting a terrorist organisation such as al-Qaeda to become embedded in their societies. In the case of Kenya, there were a number of especially notable factors:

- The ability of al-Qaeda members to settle in the region and evade capture made terrorist operations easier. It is noteworthy that prior to the 1998 bombings al-Qaeda had already been established in East Africa, including Kenya, for over six years, allowing it to assimilate important local and regional knowledge, which enabled it to operate effectively and with relative ease.⁸
- The porous border between Kenya and Somalia enabled both the movement of al-Qaeda operatives and the smuggling of weapons from Somalia into Kenya,

further assisted by the fact that many al-Qaeda associates who operated in Somalia in 1993 and later in Kenya knew one another from Afghan training camps. Consequently, according to United Nations (UN) investigators who were monitoring the arms embargo on Sudan, 17 mobile training centres were found in Kenya in 2005 under the control of organisers who were believed to be veterans of training camps in Afghanistan.⁹ Furthermore, it would also appear that terrorist units established bases in Lamu and Ras Kiamboni, along the Kenyan–Somali border, in 1996. Although these units became inactive immediately after the 1998 bombings, the members of other terrorist organisations, most notably al-Ittihad al-Islamiyya and al-Takfir w'al Hijra, similarly have established sanctuaries along the Kenyan coastal strip and within Kenya's North Eastern Province.¹⁰

- Poor socioeconomic conditions played a major part. One example is the Kenyan village of Siyu on Pate Island. Its population of approximately 1 500 people is extremely poor and without basic necessities, such as running water. Consequently, this close-knit Islamic community welcomed Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, the leader of al-Qaeda's East African cell, as both a Muslim and a generous provider of money who brought some relief to their dire economic conditions. These credentials and activities enabled him, and others like him, to further embed himself within local society. Mohammed was not the only terror suspect who lived in the area; others included:
 - Mohammed Odeh, who married a Swahili woman from the remote Witu village along the Mombasa–Malindi highway
 - Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan, who married Fatma Ahmed Talo, a young woman from Lamu town
 - Abdullah Mohammed, who married Amina Mohammed Kubwa from Siyu village.

Mombasa, 28 November 2002

On 28 November 2002 two suicide bombers targeted the Israeli-owned Paradise Hotel in Mombasa, Kenya. On the day of the attack one of the suicide bombers, who was also armed with an assault rifle and a Tokarev pistol, blew himself up at the hotel's entrance. The second suicide bomber drove a vehicle purchased by Saleh Ali Nabhan loaded with 200 kg of explosives, enhanced by gas canisters and containers of fuel, into a wall of the hotel. The vehicle exploded instantly. The attacks killed 13 tourists, two of them children, and injured more than 80 people. In another attack, Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan and Issa Osman Issa attempted to shoot down a commercial aircraft with a surface-to-air missile. In contrast to the 1998 attacks in Kenya, which targeted the US, on this occasion Israel, its

nationals and its interests were the objects of attack. The same East African cell that was responsible for planning and executing the attacks in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998 was responsible for this attack.

It would appear that this cell had split into at least two groups before the 1998 attack: one to conduct intelligence work, including surveillance of intended targets in order to determine any weaknesses, buy supplies, etc.; and the other comprising expendable martyrs to carry out the attacks.

In December 2001 reconnaissance of potential targets in Kenya began and by April 2002 a shortlist had been drawn up. It would appear that al-Qaeda members planned the attack from neighbouring Somalia. When preparations were complete, those directly involved in the attack relocated to safe houses provided by local Kenyan nationals in Mombasa in August 2002. Between August 2002 and October 2002 Omar Said Omar, a local Kenyan associate, met several times with Issa Osman Issa and Fazul Abdullah Mohammad (who used the alias Abdul Karim), who were key members of the al-Qaeda cell, at the Mombasa Polytechnic Mosque to discuss preparations for the operation.

In contrast to the 1998 bombing in Nairobi, all but one of the suspects in the November 2002 attacks in Mombasa were Kenyan nationals, including the two suicide bombers

Subsequent investigations revealed that the explosive device was assembled in a farmhouse on the outskirts of Mombasa under the supervision of Fazul Abdullah Mohammad, who also briefed the suicide bombers two days before the attack.

In contrast to the bombing of the US Embassy in Nairobi in 1998, all of the suspects involved in the November 2002 attacks were Kenyan nationals, with the exception of Abu Talha al-Sudani (a Sudanese). This included the two suicide bombers, Fumo Mohamed Fumo and Haruni Bamusa. During the subsequent investigations another Kenyan national and suspect, Faizel Ali Nassor, killed himself and a Kenyan police officer when he detonated a hand grenade on 1 August 2003 rather than be arrested.

These bombings illustrate how extremist ideas and the previously alien concepts of suicide operations and martyrdom had become further embedded within Kenyan

society. In the relatively short period of four years since 1998, Kenyan nationals were now willing to act as suicide bombers. Additionally, as will be explained below, local Kenyan nationals were a key factor in the planning phases of the attacks.

Most of Kenya's Muslims – estimated as being between 5 and 15 per cent of the country's population – practice a moderate form of Islam. Certainly, prior to the 1998 US Embassy attack, this predominantly Christian country had no previously known history of religious extremism leading to violence. The situation would appear to be that small groups of al-Qaeda sympathisers who were willing to actively participate in suicide operations now lived among the Muslim community. This phenomenon may be attributable, at least in part, to such factors as growing anti-US sentiment in response to 'the global war on terror', which has been interpreted by some as a war on Islam. Certainly, extremists have often exploited images relating to the US-led military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq to reinforce such perceptions, which may ultimately be used to recruit people for suicide operations.

Reaction from Kenyan officials

When analysing the reaction of Kenyan officials to the attacks, four key themes emerge, and each of these is outlined below.

- Initially any national root causes or responsibility for the attacks was denied. Politically, confronted with the bombing of the US Embassy in Nairobi and the acts of terrorism in Mombasa in 2002, some Kenyan governmental officials considered Kenya to be an innocent victim of a conflict between the US and Islamic extremists. For example, in July 2005 government spokesperson Alfred Mutua said: 'We do not think there is an element of terrorism in Kenyans; it's foreigners using Kenyans as conduits.'¹² Only a few officials accepted that Kenya had internal problems that needed to be addressed, such as Chris Murungaru, the then-minister for national security, who on 29 June 2003 acknowledged that 'Kenya's war against terrorism will only be won by accepting that the problem exists'. Nevertheless, despite growing evidence of the gradual radicalisation of a number of local Muslim community members and evidence that Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan was directly involved in the 2002 Mombasa attacks, the dominant opinion, including that of Kenyan investigators, remained that the attacks in 1998 and 2002 were orchestrated from abroad. This is clearly illustrated by a comment made by Ambassador John Sawe, then Kenya's ambassador to Israel, who in the aftermath of the bombing of the Paradise Hotel stated: 'There is no doubt in my mind that al-Qa'eda is behind this attack,

because we have no domestic problems, no terrorism in our country, and we have no problem with our neighbors, no problem whatsoever.'¹³

- There was a disproportionate response by the Kenyan security apparatus. While the political debate continued, Kenya's security apparatus appeared to overreact in response to political pressure, as evidenced by the disproportionate numbers of potential suspects who were arrested. For example, in September 2003 police officials in Mombasa arrested more than 800 people. This formed part of a wider campaign in which an estimated 1 200 people, mostly foreigners, were arrested in an effort to identify terror suspects. This dragnet approach caused a public outcry, which included allegations of the violation of people's right of free movement and assembly.
- Discriminatory responses further fuelled sentiments of marginalisation. Many of the arrests appear to have been discriminatory and arbitrary, with many Muslims, particularly ethnic Somalis and Arabs, being targeted. Local Muslim leaders feared that the investigation into the Paradise Hotel blast would lead to new reprisals against their community and would bolster the radicals even more. According to Najib Balala, the former mayor of Mombasa, 'Harassment and intimidation [by the government] have always been there for us. Now we are already branded as second-class citizens because we are Muslims and Arabs.' Similarly, according to the director of Muslims for Human Rights, Khelef Khalifa, police harassed Muslim residents in Mombasa in response to the attacks and arrested key suspects' relatives when they (i.e. the police) failed to arrest those directly involved in the attacks.¹⁴
- Growing frustrations as a result of anti-Western sentiments manifested themselves in attacks being perpetrated against a number of churches and businesses with Western connections. For example, on 18 December 2002 petrol bombs were thrown at Tempo Discotheque in northern Mombasa, which was operated jointly by a Kenyan and a European investor.¹⁵

It is especially the second and third factors that will be referred to in a later section.

Kampala, 11 July 2010

In Kampala, Uganda on 11 July 2010 at approximately 22:25 at the Ethiopian Village Restaurant and at 23:15 at the Kyadondo Rugby Club, suicide bombers targeted crowds watching a live screening of a FIFA World Cup match, claiming 74 lives and leaving 70 others injured. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attacks, saying they were in retaliation for Uganda's participation in AMISOM.

These attacks were significant because they marked al-Shabaab's first attacks outside Somalia. But there was something else that caught the eye of analysts and security agents – those involved included Kenyan nationals, while the logistics to carry out the attacks were almost entirely coordinated from Kenya. Those involved included:¹⁶

- Omar Awadh Omar.
- Al Amin Kimathi, chairman of Kenya's Muslim Human Rights Forum.
- Mohamed Ali Mohamed, who is believed to have trained with al-Shabaab in Somalia and allegedly brought explosive material from Somalia to Mombasa, where he may have obtained additional components for the bombs (according to investigators, Mohamed left the explosives with an associate in Kenya and then went to Uganda, where he later supervised the assembly of the bombs).
- Hussein Hassan Agade (trained by al-Shabaab in Somalia) and Idris Christopher Magondu, who according to investigators were responsible for arranging safe houses in Uganda, including in the western town of Mbale, and for facilitating the transfer of the suicide bombers from Kenya and Uganda.

According to a UN report, Issa Ahmed Luyima, the leader of the cell in Uganda responsible for executing the attacks, was radicalised in Kenya and Tanzania before training with al-Shabaab in Somalia.¹⁷

The link with Tanzania was Hijar Selemen Nyamandondo, a Tanzanian national who travelled from Tanzania to Kenya in late April 2010, where he collected the suicide vests before proceeding to Kampala in early May.¹⁸

Investigations that followed the Kampala attacks revealed a very disturbing pattern of recruitment of young people from East African urban centres, indoctrinating them with extremist ideology and deploying them to carry out deadly attacks. Later, the Kenyan security apparatus played a key role in rounding up the suspected masterminds of the attack and handing them over to Ugandan authorities. In essence, Kenya found itself in the eye of the storm of extremist elements that had emerged in the Horn of Africa.

Ugandan police made many arrests in the days following the Kampala bombings and a Ugandan national was arrested in Kenya. Twenty people were arrested, including several Pakistanis. Three Kenyans – Hussein Hassan Agad, Mohamed Adan Abdow and Idris Magondu – were charged with 76 counts of murder, while Interpol also published facial reconstructions of two suspected bombers. These suggested that one was of Somali origin and the other a black African of unknown origin, some hinted from Kenya. On 18 August Ugandan officials charged 32 people with murder, including Ugandans, Kenyans and Somalis.

Kenyan nationals join al-Shabaab in Somalia

The sentiment in Kenya before the July 2010 attacks in Kampala was that the situation in Somalia was not impacting on the rest of the region. However, this changed as more Kenyan nationals were implicated in attacks in Somalia.

Not only did al-Shabaab recruit fighters in Kenya, it also recruited suicide bombers. For example, on 19 April 2007 a suicide bomber detonated his device as he crashed a vehicle through the gates of the Ethiopian army base in Mogadishu. The explosion caused further secondary blasts due to its proximity to nearby munitions. Al-Shabaab identified the suicide bomber as a Kenyan national, Othman Otayo.¹⁹

In early October 2011 another al-Shabaab suicide bomber drove an explosives-laden vehicle into a checkpoint at the entrance to Somalia's Ministry of Education in Mogadishu. The blast killed over 65 people. Shortly after the explosion al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack on one of its websites. A couple of weeks later, during a media briefing in Nairobi, a Kenya Defence Forces spokesperson, while outlining some of the reasons why Kenyan soldiers were deployed in Somalia to pursue al-Shabaab, said that the person who carried out the attack in the Somali capital was in fact a Kenyan national from Kiambu, a semi-rural town on the outskirts of Nairobi.

This last example was particularly worrying as the Kenyan national was from a rural area outside Nairobi, not from the coastal region that was an area of concern. In essence, then, the threat was closer to home than originally thought.

Kenya's intervention in Somalia

Before October 2011 Kenya experienced the following attacks:²⁰

- On 11 July 2007 two people, including one suspected of carrying explosives, died outside City Gate Restaurant next to the Hotel Ambassadeur, as the device was suspected to have detonated prematurely.
- In late September 2009 guests at the Simmers restaurant on Kenyatta Avenue found a Russian-made grenade under seats.
- On 13 June 2010 three grenades exploded at a political rally in Uhuru Park, Nairobi, killing six people and injuring 30.
- On 4 December 2010 three police officers were killed in separate grenade attacks in Nairobi.
- On 20 December 2010 one person was killed and 26 injured in a grenade attack at the Kampala Coach bus terminus in River Road.

In October 2011 Kenya deployed ground forces in Somalia in response to the kidnapping of Westerners along Kenya's north-eastern coast. Although many supported this initiative, al-Shabaab made use of this opportunity to increase recruitment to its ranks within Kenya.²¹ It is important to keep in mind that al-Shabaab employed Somali pirates from Puntland to kidnap the tourists.

Therefore, al-Shabaab did not directly venture into Kenya as originally stated by Kenyan authorities. Irrespective of the semantics, it was clear that al-Shabaab had established a considerable following in Kenya that made Kenyan security officials increasingly uncomfortable.

After October 2011 Kenya experienced a number of attacks in its coastal regions and Nairobi. Although not all such attacks are listed, the following indiscriminately targeted civilians:²²

- On 17 October 2011 one person was killed and 15 injured when a grenade was thrown into Mwaura's pub in Nairobi.
- On 24 October 2011 one person was killed and eight injured by a grenade thrown at people standing at a bus stop.
- On 16 November 2011 attackers targeting East African Pentecostal worshippers killed two people in a grenade attack in Garissa.
- On 27 October 2011 four people were killed when a grenade hit a vehicle in Mandera.
- On 24 November 2011 three people were killed in twin grenade attacks on the Holiday Inn in Garissa.
- On 4 April 2012 two people were killed and 30 injured in grenade attacks on a church service in Mtwapa, Mombasa.
- On 28 April 2012 one person was killed and 16 injured at the God's House of Miracles International Church in Ngara, Nairobi.
- On 16 May 2012 a security guard was killed after two grenades were thrown into Bella Vista bar in Mombasa.
- On 28 May 2012 one person was killed and 30 injured after an explosive device detonated at the Assanands building on Moi Avenue, Nairobi.
- On 25 June 2012 one person was killed and several others injured in an attack on the Jericho pub in Mombasa.
- On 1 July 2012, 17 people were killed and 45 wounded in grenade attacks at the Garissa Catholic church and Africa Inland Church (AIC). Among the dead were two police officers guarding the AIC, whose guns were stolen by the attackers.
- On 19 July 2012, grenades thrown into a hotel restaurant and barber's shop wounded four people in Kenya's Wajir border region.²³

- On 30 September 2012 a child was killed and three seriously injured in a grenade attack on the St Polycarp's church on Juja Road, Nairobi.²⁴

The announcement of the appointment of Sheikh Ahmad Iman Ali as al-Shabaab's 'Supreme Amir' and the subsequent video released by Al-Kataib, al-Shabaab's official media company, contained several concerns for Kenya:²⁵

- The video was delivered entirely in Swahili with English subtitles, indicating that its main target audience was Kenyan nationals.
- The Muslim Youth Centre (MYC) stated on its blog and Twitter account: 'Ali's elevation to become the supreme emir of Kenya for al-Shabaab is recognition from our Somali brothers who have fought tirelessly against the unbelievers on the importance of the Kenyan mujahedeen in Somalia.'²⁶ In essence this confirmed al-Shabaab's links with the MYC.
- It was a very important strategic move to use Sheikh Ahmad Iman Ali, a Kenyan national, to reach Kenyans. Ali was presented as a calm and charismatic individual who possessed a solid understanding of the basic Islamic concepts typically associated with the Salafi-jihadi doctrine, such as *tawhid* (monotheism) and *al-wala' wal-bara'* (loyalty to Islam and Muslims and disavowal of non-Muslims).
- More importantly, Ali spoke about Kenya as *dar al-harb*, the 'house of war' (in contrast to *dar al-Islam*) where the laws of war apply and whose people are categorised as belligerents and therefore legitimate targets.

This reference to Kenya as *dar al-harb*, which should be seen as an open declaration of war, was later confirmed by the jihadi magazine *Gaidi Mtaani*, the first Swahili-language jihadi magazine, which was first published online on 4 April 2012. The MYC has made it clear that Kenya is its main focus in the arena of global jihad and that the group's future activities both inside and outside Kenya will be focused on jihad for the sole purpose of liberating Muslims in Somalia in particular and East Africa in general under the banner of al-Qaeda in Eastern Africa (AQEA).²⁷

Through its weekly newsletter, *Al-Misbah*, its Twitter account (@MYC_Press) and its blog (themovingcaravan.wordpress.com), the MYC attempts to radicalise and recruit supporters for its 'jihad' in Kenya. For example, shortly after the February 2012 merger of al-Qaeda and al-Shabaab, the MYC issued a statement on its now-defunct blog, mycnjiawaukweli.blogspot, welcoming the 'long overdue' merger while announcing the establishment of AQEA. It added that MYC members were pleased to be part of 'this great union' and hoped that Allah would grant the mujahideen in Kenya the strength to 'set jihad alight' in

the country. The statement noted that thanks to the merger, the *kuffar* (infidel) could never again say that al-Shabaab was defeated or that al-Qaeda was weak, declaring: 'We are now multiplying from East to West and from North to South.' On 14 January 2012 the MYC vowed to carry out 'attacks against Kenya's *kuffars* for our al-Shabaab brothers until the country withdraws its troops from Somalia'.²⁸ Then in a post on 29 July 2012 the MYC wrote: 'In Kenya, the *kuffar* fears to go to the bars, church, and bus stops. We are locking down Kenya *insha'Allah*.'

This sparked the question of whether attacks against churches were only intended to intimidate the Kenyan government to withdraw its troops from Somalia, or whether their aim was to draw Kenya into a religious war between Muslims and Christians. Although this might seem far-fetched, such a conflict would be more sustainable than if the aim was solely to stop Kenya's intervention in Somalia. In wider terms, by concentrating on a religious conflict between *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb*, al-Shabaab, the MYC and the broader AQEA are given a new lifeline after losing ground in Somalia by establishing a more direct allegiance to their cause with the idea of self-determination as presented by organisations such as the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC). This growing religious divide came to the fore again after the killing on 27 August 2012 of Aboud Rogo Mohammed, a Kenyan Muslim cleric who was alleged to have been an Islamist extremist and was accused of arranging funding for al-Shabaab in Somalia.²⁹ A news report stated that immediately after the attack 'an imam in the mosque shouted through the [loud] speaker "blood for blood", and immediately youths started stoning cars'.³⁰

VULNERABLE YOUTH

A key development that emerged from the violent attacks on civilians is that local Kenyan nationals were involved and not Somali-Kenyans or Somali nationals, as was originally assumed. Understandably, concerns about violent extremists in the Horn of Africa have been aggravated by the political instability in Somalia, which gave rise to al-Shabaab in 2007. However, as mentioned above, many Kenyan youths, particularly those of Somali or Afro-Arab-Swahili origin and those drawn from urban informal settlements such as Majengo (an old informal settlement in Nairobi's Eastlands), have been linked to al-Shabaab activities. The majority of Majengo inhabitants are detribalised Muslims with low standards of living due to a lack of economic opportunities. This area attracted the attention of security agencies after it was reported that a large number of Kenyan Muslim youths who had joined al-Shabaab in Somalia came from Majengo. For example, in December 2011 the Kenyan police released the names of 15 men they believed had left Kismayu for Kenya. The

group included nine Kenyan nationals aged between 24 and 32 and known to have resided in Majengo and Mombasa before leaving for Somalia in 2010.³¹

At the same time the Muslim community, especially Kenyan nationals of Somali origin, are confronted with increasing perceptions of their being responsible for the growing security risks in the country. The fact that they are visibly part of the Muslim community, even if not in any way part of al-Shabaab, contributes to their being treated differently. Most notably, members of the Somali-Kenyan and Somali communities claim to be victims of racial or ethnic profiling and to have been rounded up and arrested for little reason other than their race and ethnicity. The consequences of such marginalisation will be discussed later in this paper.

Even before the intervention in Somalia, Kenyan authorities in March 2011 released the names and photos of suspects who allegedly received training in Somalia and were part of al-Shabaab's cell in Kenya:³²

- John Mwanzia Ngui, alias Yahya (killed)
- David Kihuho Wangechi, alias Yusuf (killed)
- Eric Achayo Ogada, alias Swaleh Ibrahim
- Steven Mwanzi Osaka, alias Duda Brown and Duda Black, charged in March 2011 with being a member of an unlawful organisation and engaging in organised crime that left two police officers dead³³
- Jeremiah Okumu, alias Duba Black or Mohamed
- Sylvester Opiyo Osodo, alias Musa
- Abbas Hussen Nderito
- Ibrahim Ruta, alias Musyoki Kyondi
- Abdulrahman Mutua Daud
- Abbas Muhamad Mwai
- Juma Ayub Otit

In addition to the above, a Kenyan national, Elgiva Bwire Oliacha (aged 28), also known as Mohammed Seif, was arrested after the two grenade attacks on 17 and 24 October 2011.³⁴ Oliacha was found with six guns, 13 grenades and hundreds of rounds of ammunition in his house. He pleaded guilty to nine charges, including causing grievous bodily harm to two people, and was sentenced to life imprisonment.³⁵ He was also sentenced to an additional 15 years for being a member of al-Shabaab and an additional seven years for being illegally in possession of firearms. It is interesting to note that according to his mother he had been brought up in a strict Catholic family, came from Busia in western Kenya and attended schools in Nairobi.³⁶

Omar Muchiri Athuman, alias Hussein, and Stephen Macharia, alias Mchangoo, were charged with engaging in an organised criminal activity with Oliacha. Both were charged with causing grievous harm to Justus Makau Mulwa and Patrick Ndolo Kinyingi when they detonated

a grenade at the OTC bus stop on 24 October 2011. They were also charged with being in possession of firearms, live hand grenades and 717 rounds of ammunition at a house in Kayole estate.³⁷

Irrespective of exactly how many Kenyan nationals found themselves within the ranks of al-Shabaab, these examples are sufficient to justify closer scrutiny of the circumstances that increase the vulnerability of Kenyan youths to radicalisation and recruitment to organisations such as al-Shabaab.

Recently converted Kenyan Muslim youths

Another trend was that in addition to being locals, those implicated had recently converted to Islam. This raised concern among the Muslim community as to the way in which young people were converted to Islam and the capacity of extremists to exploit new converts. This reminded the broader Kenyan community that ethnic or religious profiling is not an effective counter-measure in identifying possible al-Shabaab members or supporters. Additionally, authorities are cautioned against perceiving the spread of any particular religion or conversion to it as a threat to national security.

This concern was confirmed by the UN Monitoring Group for Somalia and Eritrea, which reported that hundreds of impoverished Kenyan youths had been recruited into al-Shabaab in recent years. The report identified the MYC based in Nairobi's Pumwani estate as the coordinator of the recruitment, which will be discussed below. According to the report, al-Shabaab's presence in Kenya has been concentrated primarily within the ethnic Somali community, but since 2009 the group has rapidly expanded its influence and membership to non-Somali Kenyan nationals.³⁸

On 12 January 2012 Kenya Defence Forces spokesperson Maj. Emanuel Chirchir was quoted as saying that al-Shabaab had executed a man within its ranks whom it accused of spying for the Kenyan military. Chirchir added that the executed 'spy' was a non-Somali Kenyan said to hail from Nairobi's Majengo area who had earlier been recruited to fight for al-Shabaab.³⁹

In another more recent example, Kenyan police officers arrested Titus Nyabiswa, 26, in a village on the Kenyan coast close to Mombasa and confiscated several firearms and hand grenades. Nyabiswa apparently converted to Islam in western Kenya before becoming involved with Omar Faraj, who was allegedly involved in a bombing incident on 24 October 2012 that killed a police officer and two other suspected members of al-Shabaab after police raided Faraj's home in Mombasa. Faraj was under close surveillance before the operation.⁴⁰

When assessing the overall vulnerability of the youth in Kenya to both radicalisation and recruitment by

organisations such as al-Shabaab, one needs to understand where and why people are susceptible to the message of radical ideologies. Although these reasons differ from person to person, some common topics will be discussed later in the paper.

An organisation that was previously implicated as being actively involved in both recruitment and radicalisation through lectures and the distribution of inflammatory material was the MYC.

Muslim Youth Centre

The MYC, also known as Pumwani Muslim Youth, is based in Nairobi, but has also developed a strong network of members and sympathisers in areas such as Eldoret, Garissa and Mombasa. In its 2008 constitution, the following objectives are presented:⁴¹

- i. To promote the self-sufficiency of the Muslim Community through identification of the causes of poverty within the Community and undertaking of effective programs to eradicate poverty;
- ii. To give the Basic Foundation of Islam in knowledge, assistance and participation and awareness to the Muslim Youth in particular and to the Community in general;
- iii. To further the Cause of Islam both inside and outside the Mosque;
- iv. To promote and protect the Religious and Communal Rights of the Muslims in our Community;
- v. To conduct or arrange for regular Islamic lectures, classes, sermons by renowned scholars in Mosques, Social Halls, Schools, Institutions within Pumwani Division;
- vi. To set up and run Religious and secular schools, libraries, resource centres for youths within the Division for the purpose of nurturing and developing talents among the youth;
- vii. To render assistance for the advancement of the Muslim community in Religion, education, health, training, social & welfare;
- viii. To give Religious Council to the youth (in particular) and foster social development by strengthening the Spiritual life;
- ix. To wage war against drug abuse, child abuse & molestation, prostitution, gangster terrorism, domestic violence and AIDS;
- x. To respond effectively to natural and man-made disasters such as diseases, famine, displacement that may befall the Community;
- xi. To advance and promote peace and peaceful co-existence by championing justice, human rights, inclusiveness and integration in national initiatives, mediation and resolution of conflict;

- xii. To network with Other Organizations and People sharing the aspirations of MYC for the benefit of the Muslims in particular;
- xiii. To implement any other charitable objectives confronting Islam and which MYC deem desirable.

These objectives are commendable, especially those addressing the social and economic needs of the community. However, the MYC advocates an extreme interpretation of Islam and prepares members to travel to Somalia for 'jihad', thus attracting the attention of security agencies in Kenya and abroad. For example, through its weekly newsletter entitled *Al-Misbah*, its Twitter account and its blog the MYC has disseminated extremist propaganda material in support of both al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda. As part of a series of weekly issues from 9 October to 26 November 2009, under the headline 'Jihad is our religion', *Al-Misbah* published an article by Anwar al-Awlaki entitled '44 ways of supporting jihad'.⁴² If we realise that jihad does not mean 'holy war', but 'struggle', then the struggle could take place on three levels: against a visible enemy, against the devil, or against the self or *nafs* (ego).⁴³

This means that jihad should be carried out in all areas of life. The most outward form of jihad can be identified as a divinely sanctioned military struggle or holy war. Under the term *jihad fi sabil Allah*, Muslims fight in the 'way of God, or for His sake in the Cause of Islam'. On returning from the Battle of Badr, Muhammad said, 'We are finished with the lesser *jihad*; now we are starting the greater *jihad*'.⁴⁴ Fighting against an outer enemy is interpreted as the lesser jihad and fighting against one's *nafs* (ego) is the greater jihad. In summary, three kinds of struggle can be identified:

- With the hand, i.e. by the 'sword'
- With the tongue, by commanding good and forbidding evil
- With the heart, by remembering God and not giving in to sin

In light of this, the question is: to which kind of jihad does the MYC refer? From MYC Twitter messages referring to jihad it is clear that it has a military struggle in mind. For example, on 3 August 2012 the MYC supported its call to violence by posting 'Basic questions on jihad answered' on Twitter:⁴⁵

- In answer to the question 'What can I expect when I join jihad?' the MYC wrote: 'For the privileged brothers and sisters who join jihad they are given training in everything from the true meaning of Islam to using RPG, AK-47s and other weapons.'
- In answer to the question 'Will I be fighting other Muslims?' the MYC responded: 'Any Muslim who supports the *kuffar* against his Muslim brother cannot call himself a Muslim.'

As mentioned earlier, the MYC has been implicated in recruiting for and financing al-Shabaab in Somalia. These allegations were confirmed on 10 January 2012 when the MYC confirmed that al-Shabaab named Sheikh Ahmad Iman Ali, alias Abdul Fatah, as its 'Supreme Amir'. The MYC's statement in its blog read:⁴⁶ 'Allah favours our beloved al Shabaab, and al Shabaab in return has placed the responsibility of waging jihad in Kenya in the capable Kenyan hands of our Amir Sheikh Ahmad Iman Ali.' Confirming Ali's participation in Somalia, the statement included:

Without hesitation or excuses ... our Amir left Majengo and MYC to begin fighting in Allah's cause. As a result, many of us in MYC and others in Kenya followed our dear Amir to the land of Somalia ... We in MYC have no doubt that our Amir Sheikh Ahmad Iman Ali will continue the unfinished work of brother Fazul [referring to Fazul Mohammed, the former leader of al-Qaeda's operations in East Africa and a senior al-Shabaab leader] in Kenya and in the region of East Africa.

On jihad, the statement read: 'We will wage defensive jihad as we have been instructed to so without mercy for the sake of our precious religion.'

A close friend of Ali confirmed that Ali facilitated the safe passage of recruits into Somalia:

It was a very secretive process. Not many people knew about it. After you agreed to join, you travelled in a group of between two and three by road to the border and then crossed into Somalia. Two weeks later, they would relay a message to Pumwani that the journey was successful. Amir is leading us. We call him Mujahideen. He is fighting in the way of Allah.⁴⁷

Subsequently, through Ali's facilitation, Kenyans reportedly constituted the largest contingent of non-Somali al-Shabaab fighters.⁴⁸ According to an article in *Sabahi* in August 2012, Ali commands up to 500 Kenyan fighters, many of whom are children, in Somalia.⁴⁹

Before the announcement of his promotion to emir, Ali featured in a video released by al-Shabaab in which Muslims were urged to travel to the global theatres of war, and if they could not make the journey, to wage jihad at home: '[If you] are unable to reach the land of jihad, like the land of Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan, Algeria, or Iraq, if you are unable to reach these lands which have established the banner of tawheed and the Shariah of Allah, then raise your sword against the enemy that is closest to you.'⁵⁰

Before Ali's open commitment to al-Shabaab, the UN Monitoring Group in its 2011 report explained that he was a student of Sheikh Aboud Rogo, an open campaigner for

al-Shabaab based in Mombasa before his death on 27 August 2012. After Ali left for Mombasa, Rogo's main ally in the MYC was Sylvester Opiyo Osodo, alias Musa, who heads MYC's resource centre. In addition to Opiyo regularly visiting Rogo in Mombasa, he also arranged Rogo's trips to and from Majengo, where the latter delivered lectures to the MYC that facilitated al-Shabaab recruitment. For example, after he converted to Islam, Suleiman Irungu Mwangi, alias Karongo (currently a senior MYC commander in Somalia), was taken to Somalia by Juma Ayub Otit Were, alias the 'Taxi Driver', a senior MYC commander in Somalia.⁵¹

Together with Ali, Rogo was another central figure behind the MYC's commitment to al-Shabaab, the radicalisation and recruitment of Kenyan youths, and the channelling of fighters to Somalia. According to the UN Security Council:

[A]s the main ideological leader of Al Hijra, formerly known as the Muslim Youth Center ... Rogo ... has used the extremist group as a pathway for radicalization and recruitment of principally Swahili speaking Africans for carrying out violent militant activity in Somalia. In a series of inspirational lectures between February 2009 and February 2012, [Rogo] repeatedly called for the violent rejection of the Somali peace process. During these lectures, Rogo repeatedly called for the use of violence against both the United Nations and ... AMISOM forces in Somalia, and urged his audiences to travel to Somalia to join al-Shabaab's fight against the Kenyan Government. ... Rogo ... also offers guidance on how Kenyan recruits joining al-Shabaab can evade detection by the Kenyan authorities, and which routes to follow when traveling from Mombasa and/or Lamu to Al-Shabaab strongholds in Somalia, notably Kismayo. He has facilitated the travel to Somalia of numerous Kenyan recruits for al-Shabaab. In September 2011, Rogo was recruiting individuals in Mombasa, Kenya for travel into Somalia, presumably to conduct terrorist operations. In September 2008, Rogo held a fundraising meeting in Mombasa to help finance al-Shabaab activities in Somalia.⁵²

The UN Security Council further stated that:

Abubaker Shariff Ahmed [another MYC leader] is a leading facilitator and recruiter of young Kenyan Muslims for violent militant activity in Somalia, and a close associate of Aboud Rogo. He provides material support to extremists groups in Kenya (and elsewhere in East Africa). Through his frequent trips to al-Shabaab strongholds in Somalia, including

Kismayo, he has been able to maintain strong ties with senior al-Shabaab members. ... Ahmed is also engaged in the mobilization and management of funding for al-Shabaab ... and has preached at mosques in Mombasa that young men should travel to Somalia, commit extremist acts, fight for al-Qa'ida, and kill U.S. citizens. ... Ahmed was arrested in late December 2010 by Kenyan authorities on suspicion of involvement in the bombing of a Nairobi bus terminal. ... Ahmed is also a leader of a Kenya-based youth organization in Mombasa with ties to al-Shabaab. As of 2010, ... Ahmed acted as a recruiter and facilitator for al-Shabaab in the Majengo area of Mombasa, Kenya.⁵³

The growing numbers of MYC members and other indigenous Kenyans involved in Somalia was further highlighted in the report of the UN Monitoring Group, which listed the following evidence:⁵⁴

- On 15 July 2008 an Al-Shabaab force of 30-40 fighters, including an MYC member named Mohamed Juma Rajab (aka Qa'Qa 'Kadume'), ambushed a patrol of TFG and Ethiopian forces at Bardaale, 60 km from Baidoa.
- In a November 2010 al-Shabaab video a senior MYC member, Wahome Tajir Ali 'Abu Jafar', was featured.
- On 20 March 2011 a Kenyan contingent in Somalia fought alongside al-Shabaab during a clash with the TFG and the Ras Kamboni militia. Among the al-Shabaab forces was Ramadan Osao, alias Captain, an MYC commander. The TFG forces had to retreat and Osao used this 'victory' to justify more members of the MYC travelling to Somalia to join al-Shabaab.

According to the US Treasury Department, following an executive order of President Barack Obama, the MYC is not the only entity in East Africa known to maintain ties with al-Shabaab. Another group that was identified is the Tanzanian Ansaar Muslim Youth Centre based in Tanga, Tanzania under the leadership of Sheikh Salim Abdulrahim Barahiyan. In addition, this executive order also identified individuals from Kenya, Tanzania, Eritrea and Sudan as having links with al-Shabaab.⁵⁵

DRIVERS OF RADICALISATION

When discussing the factors driving or drawing people to extremism, it is important to recognise that such factors differ from person to person and that, although one may identify broad trends, most deciding factors are personal.

While a number of factors play a role in the radicalisation process, political socialisation provides important insights into the process through which an individual increasingly becomes involved in terrorist activity. Hogan and Taylor, for example, noted: 'What we

know of actual terrorists suggests that there is rarely a conscious decision made to become a terrorist. Most involvement in terrorism results from gradual exposure and socialisation towards extreme behaviour.¹⁵⁶ Thus the process is gradual and includes many occurrences, experiences, perceptions and role-players: 'As with all social learning, political learning is gradual and incremental. There is no magic point in youth when the "political self" is suddenly acquired. Each citizen's political views result from lifelong experiences. Political socialization is the gradual moulding of the political self.'¹⁵⁷

While basic socialisation agents provide the initial framework for later radicalisation, additional factors that contribute to radicalisation need to be identified, including:

- Factors influencing the individual's development of political participation on the psychological level.
- The political, social and economic environment in which individuals grow up.
- The domestic circumstances of a country or community, including ethnic, national and religious discrimination, and socioeconomic marginalisation.
- Social and political changes and challenges.
- International political developments.
- The nature of the state, most notably the form of government and the relationship between those in power and the populace, including the impact of violence on the political socialisation of children; the relationship between the state and organisations in providing a theoretical perspective on the 'conflict' between organisations and the state for political control; the use of state structures, namely the police and the military, in counter-terrorism; the legitimacy of the state as an essential element; the lack of the rule of law and good governance; violations of human rights; and political exclusion and repression.
- Psychological trauma, particularly the death and injury of a family member at the hands of security forces.
- Prolonged unresolved conflicts or the impact of conflict on the socialisation process in terms of which domestic conflict and war abroad (most notably Somalia) provides a central organisation (al-Shabaab) that individuals can associate with (while a group such as al-Shabaab might not reflect each individual's overarching sentiments, individuals can turn to it when placed under pressure).

The role of each of these factors is unmistakable in the radicalisation process and will be discussed further.

In Kenya, socioeconomic, political, religious, national identity, counter-terrorism and internal/personal factors were identified as driving people, including the youth, into radical groups. Each of these will be discussed briefly.

Socioeconomic factors

Socioeconomic drivers of radicalisation in Kenya include real and perceived marginalisation and exclusion from national resources, frustrated expectations, and relative deprivation. Despite the immediate links that are often made between poverty and radicalisation, the issue of economic conditions extends well beyond just poverty. In other words, other indicators (see below) facilitate or provide favourable circumstances for radicalisation and eventual recruitment. Therefore, economic difficulties that include, for example, unequal access to resources and expertise contribute to a state's vulnerability to terrorism. In assessing the impact of economic conditions, brief reference will be made to: population growth as well as uneven development and the growing divide between rich and poor.

A common perception is that poverty is a cause of terrorism. However, when studying the background of those behind terrorist attacks, it has been noted that not only poor people are drawn to terrorism. The possibility of better-off people being drawn to extremism makes it necessary to determine the role poor economic conditions plays.

Poor economic conditions increase pressure for economic change that in turn impacts on government reactions. Situations where increased economic disparities occur within or are limited to identifiable ethnic and religious groups definitely affect the political climate, raising questions of discrimination and marginalisation. Generally speaking, deteriorating social conditions increase the possibility of such conditions becoming a political issue. Therefore, the monitoring of socioeconomic trends is the most clear-cut way of identifying an emerging issue that will have political consequences.

However, drawing a distinction between leaders and followers, or those planning and those executing acts of terrorism, might be helpful in assessing the influence of economic circumstances as being conducive to terrorism. Leaders are often charismatic, educated, capable of manipulating their followers and able to exploit socioeconomic conditions. Under normal circumstances it is to be expected that leaders might come from a professional middle class that is difficult and expensive to replace, while economic circumstances are used to 'sell' a cause to the less fortunate. Manipulated through their need to belong and matter, those who are less fortunate become replaceable foot soldiers. In transnational terror networks educated members of the middle class have another advantage: the ability to blend in with the societies they are attacking, which probably explains the involvement of individuals coming from better socioeconomic conditions in the execution of terrorist operations.

Despite these exceptions, poor socioeconomic conditions in terms of population growth, poor access to public services, uneven development, urbanisation, lack of economic prosperity, unemployment and illiteracy can contribute to a country and community's vulnerability to social conflict and radicalisation. It is, however, important to keep political conditions, most notably the ability to express these frustrations, and other sociological circumstances in mind when conducting an analysis. In other words, those assessing the role of economic conditions should guard against the assumption that socioeconomic or political conditions 'compel' individuals or groups to commit acts of terrorism. The central argument is that a combination of factors can eventually manifest in acts of terrorism. On the African continent, countries are increasingly confronted with socioeconomic frustration. The introduction of a political or religious ideology can allow poor socioeconomic conditions to throw up individuals who have nothing to lose – in other words, replaceable foot soldiers. But in a country or community where everyone is poor, bad economic conditions alone do not drive people to radicalisation or to commit acts of terrorism without other more prominent factors playing a role.

Population growth

Population growth and the possibility of conflict are directly linked to the ability of the state, more directly the 'land', to fulfill people's basic needs. Although a larger workforce can financially contribute to the sustainability of the state, a situation can also develop where neither the state nor the 'land' can sustain the population. Associated with this is the growing concern that population growth and climate change will further enhance the possibility of conflict over water and food on the African continent. Overpopulation, particularly in situations where the majority of the population is underage, can place additional strain on basic service delivery.

High population growth, particularly in developing countries, can enhance the vulnerability of a country to instability and conflict on two levels: firstly, through putting strain on government to fulfill the basic needs of its citizens and, secondly, as a result of competition among people for scarce resources made worse by overpopulation. Countries with a large youth population that are unable to provide education, employment and broader upliftment opportunities are particularly at risk of growing marginalisation and frustration. When accompanied by urbanisation, slums can be a breeding ground for extremism: '[S]lum belts around many cities in the developing world are living with explosive population growth placing in the hands of revolutionary organizations, dedicated to destroying governments, legions of young

women and men with few good prospects – the veritable working capital of violence.'⁵⁸

Uneven development

In addition to overall access to basic needs and services, access to these facilities is often unequally distributed within a country. For example, people often expect that there should be less access to basic services in rural than in urban areas. It is also to be expected that richer communities will have better access to services than poorer communities. According to the Failed State Index of the Fund for Peace, uneven development in Kenya in 2012 is scored at 8,2 (on a scale where fully uneven development = 10 and fully even development = 1).⁵⁹

However, when access to resources is based on ethnic, cultural or religious characteristics or there is a growing divide between the 'haves' and 'have nots' in countries and communities, economic conditions further contribute to instability. In other words, countries confronted by large differences between 'haves' and 'have nots' are additionally vulnerable to conflict, which may include resorting to acts of terrorism.

The relationship between inequality and conflict extends beyond socioeconomic or even political conditions. According to the World Bank's 2004 World Development Report:

High inequality can lead to *latent social conflict*, which manifests itself through political struggles for public resources. Inequality may mean that different social groups have different interests, and the outcome of the political process through which those interests are reconciled may lead to reduce aggregate outcomes. This may happen because political processes (electoral or otherwise) seek to effect redistributions, but may do so in ways that have high economic costs.⁶⁰

Latent social conflict caused by factors such as inequality, ethnic and linguistic fragmentation, and social distrust in government institutions play a key role, directly impacting on the state's ability to deal with social conflict. In other words, the greater the latent social conflict, the less state institutions will be able to effectively manage that conflict.

Inhabitants of the coastal region in Kenya, where 30 per cent of the country's Muslim population lives, complain that this area is less developed than the rest of the country. What makes this uneven development more volatile is the perception that the religious divide in the country ultimately contributes to this situation. It is therefore not only a debate about development, but becomes a religious and eventually a political debate. Subsequent calls for self-determination and independence from the rest of the country become intertwined with

religious, political and economic circumstances that are increasingly difficult to separate.

Kenya's scores in the annual Failed State Index indicate that the country experiences considerable demographic pressures, group grievances, uneven development, poverty and decline, despite nominal improvements here and there (see Table 1).

Table 1 Kenya's Failed State Index scores

	2009	2010	2011	2012
Demographic pressure	9,0	9,1	8,8	8,9
Refugees & IDPs	9,0	8,7	8,5	8,4
Group grievances	8,6	8,9	8,7	8,9
Human flight	8,3	7,9	7,6	7,7
Uneven development	8,8	8,7	8,5	8,2
Poverty & decline	7,5	7,4	7,0	7,3

In terms of coastal people's claims that the Kenyan authorities disregard their needs, the coastal region was traditionally far more developed as a trade route from the Middle East and India to the interior, but this situation has changed dramatically since independence:

Apart from Mombasa, no intermediate urban centres have been designated. There has not been any concerted effort or planning for the development of this part of the country by successive governments. Since Independence the centre has been dominated by up-country groups and there has been an under representation of ministerial positions given to coastal representatives. Not surprisingly, the Coast has also taken a relative marginal position in respect to the distribution of investments and services ... the Coast appears the most deprived region.⁶¹

Political factors

Associated with the above, the development of the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC) (see below) indicates that a number of Muslims in Kenya, especially in the coastal region, feel politically marginalised to such an extent that they are demanding independence from Kenya. In an attempt to understand the origins of the MRC, Hassan Ole Naado provided a historical analysis of how Muslims, especially in the coastal region, perceive the 'other' (see below).⁶²

The history of Kenya as a nation has also contributed to the radicalisation that today leads many Muslim youths to join extremist groups. Although Kenya is a secular state, it is essentially a Christian country because of the dominant Christian population and the fact that, as a former British colony, the structures of government are

based on Christian principles. Consequently, there is the perception that Islam is 'alien', despite the fact that it came to Kenya before Christianity. A number of factors affect this process.

Shifta War

Following independence, the Kenyan government adopted the British model, while the seat of political power was based in Nairobi, a predominantly Christian area. Consequently, while further strengthened by a geographical divide (see above), Muslims in post-independence Kenya have been kept on the fringes of the national agenda. This caused the Muslim community to feel that it was not part of Kenya. Equally, it caused the government and non-Muslims to question the patriotism of Muslims, a perception that was strengthened by the fact that after independence the Kenyan-Somalis started agitating for a separate homeland with the option of joining their brethren in Somalia.

This feeling of not being part of Kenya started when Kenya's independence was being negotiated. During forums such as the Lancaster House conferences, many ethnicities were adequately represented, except for the Kenyan-Somalis. Consequently, when Kenya attained independence in 1963, the Somali community in Kenya felt that it had been left out and was not part of the new government. This ultimately led to the Shifta separatist war (1963–67). This war, initiated by the Somali ethnic community, was an attempt to have the Northern Frontier District (NFD) secede from Kenya to join a Greater Somalia. The Kenyan government named the conflict after the Somali word for 'bandit', which is *shifta*.⁶³

Calls for a Greater Somalia uniting all the Somali-speaking people in the Horn of Africa can be traced back to 26 June 1960, days after the British government granted independence to the former British Somaliland as Somalia. This Greater Somalia included areas in Djibouti (the former French Somaliland), Ethiopia and Kenya.⁶⁴ Thus, in addition to negatively impacting on stability in Kenya, the source of the Ogaden separatist movement in Ethiopia can also be traced back to this period.

In an attempt to find a solution to the Shifta uprising, the Somali community was allowed to vote in the first referendum since independence on whether to remain part of Kenya or join Somalia. The outcome of the referendum was obvious – the Somalis chose to join Somalia – but the authorities told those who voted for independence that they were welcome to leave Kenya for Somalia, as Kenya was not prepared to surrender its territory. This marked the beginning of the Shifta separatist war, during which Somalis claimed part of the Kenyan coast from Kilifi to Lamu as part of Somalia and started a guerrilla war to reclaim it.⁶⁵

The Kenyan government responded with brutal force by declaring the entire north-eastern part of Kenya and all regions bordering the Somali-populated regions security operation zones. In an article published in the *Daily Nation* on 1 February 2012, members of the Bajuni community, who reside in the Kiunga coastal area of Lamu on the Kenyan border with Somalia, told the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) of the atrocities they suffered 40 years ago during the Shifta uprising. Athman Ali, who fled to Manda Island and later returned to Kiunga, told the TJRC that they were happier under the British colonialists than during the rule of Jomo Kenyatta, Kenya's first post-independence president. He accused the former president of sending security officers to uproot local people from 12 villages on the pretext that the Bajunis (a predominantly Muslim community) had sided with the Somali *shifita* militia. Such are the grievances that Muslims have harboured against successive governments in Kenya, terming them historical injustices against Muslims.⁶⁶

Because of the Shifta War and the fact that the Somali-Kenyans in many ways represent the face of Islam in Kenya, the entire Muslim community has been marginalised. As a result of this, many Muslims in Kenya have grown up with some sort of 'rage' against successive Christian-dominated governments, thus making it easy for young Muslims to join extremist groups in the name of 'defending' their faith.⁶⁷

Mombasa Republican Council

In a renewed drive to fight for the self-determination of Muslims in the coastal region, the MRC was established in 2008. Despite the fact that a different area, influenced by a different history, is being contested to that in question in the Shifta War, the underlying reasons are remarkably similar: socioeconomic and political marginalisation.

Many Muslims in Kenya have harboured grievances against successive Christian-dominated governments, making it easy for young Muslims to join extremist groups

Whereas the Shifta War called for the integration of the NFD with Somalia, the MRC claimed that the ten-mile coastal strip of Kenya that used to be under the control of the Sultanate of Zanzibar in 1820 should be given

independence. Similarly in Tanzania, a number of Islamic organisations, including the National Association of Koran Readers in Tanzania (Balukta) and the Civic United Front (CUF), emerged in 1980 in opposition to the government. Since then, fundamentalist Muslims have tried to enforce an Islamic lifestyle that resulted in riots in 1993–94 when owners of butcher shops selling pork were attacked.

Consequently, friction between Muslims and Christians has increased and separatist voices have grown louder. Some called for the transformation of Tanzania in its entirety into a Muslim state. Others called for the secession of Zanzibar and its conversion into an Islamic state. New Muslim organisations have been formed and political tension gradually escalated, especially directly before and during elections. For example, in January and February 1998, there were violent clashes in Dar es Salaam between the radical Khidmat Al-Dawa Al-Islamiya and the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party. The Uamsho (Awakening) organisation, previously known as the Association for Islamic Mobilization and Propagation, has called for a referendum on Zanzibar's exit from its union with mainland Tanzania. Uamsho has been gaining popularity following the dissatisfaction of supporters of Zanzibar's main opposition party, CUF, with its decision to form a government of national unity with the CCM.⁶⁸ This has in turn affected Kenya. In both Kenya and Tanzania religion has thus merged with politics to create a volatile situation.

Religious factors

Wahhabi influence in Kenya

Like many other Muslims in various parts of the world, young Kenyan Muslims have been indoctrinated into the belief that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the Palestinian-Israeli crisis are part of a broader global campaign against Islam. By promoting universal Muslim brotherhood, the Hanbali school started to oppose the Shafi'i school in Kenya, resulting in local Muslim youths starting to regard the situations in Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine as problems affecting all Muslims across the world and, therefore, worthy of their involvement. This ideology, which preaches universal Muslim brotherhood, led to young people from various parts of East Africa being recruited as mujahideen to fight in Afghanistan against the Soviet occupation. These factors combine to provide fertile ground for Muslim youths in Kenya to become radicalised and join extremist groups.

To understand this, the historical origins of the Hanbali school need to be briefly discussed. Ahmad ibn Hanbal was taught by Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, the founder of the Shafi'i school. There is therefore a direct link between the Shafi'i and Hanbali schools. The Hanbali

school derives its rulings almost solely from the Koran and Sunnah, which proves to be popular with those wishing to return to a 'purer' Islam (the Wahhabi movement, for instance, emerged from the Hanbali school). Additionally, during the Abbasid period (750–1258), when the Hanbali school was formed, jurists focused on the issues of the legitimacy of the government and the 'unity of the community'. Ahmad ibn Hanbal introduced an important precedent when he placed the unity of the community over the legitimacy of the government should there be conflict between these two principles: 'From now on the emphasis in the juridical theory was on the authority of the leader (caliph) as a political symbol and the unity of the group as a human base.'⁶⁹

For the past two decades, Kenya has also witnessed the rapid growth and spread of the Wahhabi strain of Islam after the return of Muslim students who went for religious studies in Saudi Arabia. Wahhabism was developed by the 18th-century Muslim theologian Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–92) from Najd, Saudi Arabia. Al-Wahhab advocated purging Islam of what he considered to be 'impurities' and 'innovations'. Wahhabism claims to adhere to the correct understanding of the general Islamic doctrine of Tawhid – the Uniqueness and Unity of God – shared by the majority of Islamic sects, but uniquely interpreted by al-Wahhab. Al-Wahhab was influenced by the writings of Ibn Taymiyya and questioned classical interpretations of Islam, claiming to rely on the Koran and the Hadith as his authorities. Wahhabism therefore dismisses Hanafi, Maliki, Hanbali and Shafi'i interpretations of the Hadith as impurities and innovations. Al-Wahhab also condemned what he perceived as moral decline and political weakness in the Arabian Peninsula, as well as 'idolatry', the popular cult of saints, and shrine and tomb visitations (in this he was actually attacking Shia Islam because of its tradition of shrine and tomb visitation). The terms Wahhabi and Salafi are often used interchangeably to mean ultra-conservative.

Since then, Salafi/Wahhabi missionaries have penetrated Muslim communities in Kenya, particularly in urban villages and marginalised rural areas. Poverty, hopelessness and lack of opportunities have provided fertile ground for the Salafi movement to enter the lives of destitute Muslim youths by establishing strategically targeted social and economic empowerment programmes. These programmes include the provision of bursaries for needy students to pursue their (Islamic) education and giving start-up capital to small businesses. In doing so, Salafists have increasingly offered local governance structures in 'ungoverned spaces', thus creating significant exposure to and support for radical interpretations of Islamic teachings and upsetting the erstwhile serene Muslim community that for centuries followed the

non-radical Shafi'i school of thought. Therefore, through religious and other educational institutions influenced by extremist ideals, the Kenyan Muslim community is under threat from within.

Furthermore, the Salafist movement is largely decentralised, yet unified by a common strategy that includes infiltrating existing insurgencies throughout the Islamic world, hijacking parochial goals and radicalising local populations. This strategy has been adopted in Kenya by Saudi-trained Wahhabi scholars to take over mosques, *madrassas* and welfare societies. It has succeeded in rendering the Shafi'i, who for centuries dominated Islamic affairs in Kenya and the east coast of Africa, increasingly impotent and irrelevant in the governance of the welfare of Muslim communities.

Funding of Muslim charitable organisations

The 1998 bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam was partly funded by money channelled through charities such as the Al-Haramain Foundation (AHF). According to the UN narrative summary of reasons for listing organisations as terrorist organisations:

The Kenyan branch of AHF as early as 1997 was involved in plotting terrorist attacks against Americans. As a result, a number of individuals connected to AHF in Kenya were arrested and later deported by Kenyan authorities. In August 1997, an AHF employee indicated that the planned attack against the United States Embassy in Nairobi would be a suicide bombing carried out by crashing a vehicle into the gate of the Embassy. A wealthy AHF official outside East Africa had agreed to provide the necessary funds. Also in 1997, AHF senior activists in Nairobi decided to alter their (then) previous plans to bomb the United States Embassy in Nairobi and instead sought to attempt to assassinate United States citizens. During this period, an AHF official indicated that he had obtained five hand grenades and seven 'bazookas' from a source in Somalia. These weapons were to be used in a possible assassination attempt against a United States official. Wadih el-Hage, a leader of the Al-Qaida cell in East Africa and personal secretary to Osama bin Laden, visited the Kenya offices of AHF before the 1998 attacks on the United States Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es-Salaam. El-Hage possessed contact information for a senior AHF official who was head of AHF's Africa Committee, the overseeing authority for AHF's offices in Kenya and Tanzania. AHF (Kenya) was deregistered in 1998, following its alleged links with Al-Qaida and the United States embassy bombings

in Kenya and Tanzania ... However, in 1999, AHF (Kenya) successfully contested deregistration in the courts and resumed operations the following year ... Although AHF has reportedly scaled down its activities and closed its offices, some personalities associated with it may be operating other similar organizations in the country.⁷⁰

The 11 September 2001 attacks in the US caused Western countries to embark on wide-ranging security measures that included tracking down suspected sources of financing of terrorist activities and the blacklisting and shutting down of international Muslim charitable organisations thought to be involved in this process. These actions caused further socioeconomic desperation among Muslim communities that depended on these organisations.

This in turn led to a change of tactics by people considered to be direct beneficiaries of these organisations, the majority of whom are Saudi-trained scholars and imams. This group developed new mechanisms for accessing funds and controlling the Kenyan Muslim community's socioeconomic and political infrastructure by establishing new bodies and associations, and taking over those that already existed. For example, in 2009 a bitter leadership feud erupted at the Riyadh Mosque in Nairobi's Majengo area when young Muslims violently took over the management of the mosque and several income-generating ventures, ousting a committee of elderly people. The leader of the young people who led this Salafist 'palace coup' was later to go underground and resurface in a video recording sent to a local media house brandishing heavy machine guns and claiming to have joined al-Shabaab.

This is, however, not an unfamiliar strategy, as more and more indigenous people in Africa are turning towards Islam, not always as a result of religious convictions, but to benefit from Islamic educational institutions, social welfare and mobile clinics, which cater for people of all faiths. This is apart from the mushrooming of mosques and *madrassas*. People with socioeconomic problems need help, a factor used by humanitarian organisations of all faiths, but it can also lead to the acceptance of an ideology that will give meaning and purpose to the lives of such people. In the case of Islam, the mosque plays an important role as a gathering place to preach a message, and in the hands of an extremist religious leader it can become a centre of religious indoctrination that preaches a message of intolerance and hatred towards those not supporting the leader's particular interpretation of Islam. The spread of literature (written and audio), the organising of Muslim Youth meetings and the use of mass media are some of the ongoing projects used to spread an extremist agenda.

What is important to understand in this regard is that this strategy is a slow process that works over a period of time and as a result does not attract the attention of moderate Muslims or security forces.

These organisations filled a vacuum created by the inability of the Kenyan state to provide basic services, as well as by disorganised Shafi'i leaders and moderate Muslim scholars whom the Salafists accused of mismanaging Muslim community-based projects and being 'compromised' by their association with the Kenyan state. Through the distribution of financial assistance from Middle Eastern-backed charity organisations driven by individuals with an extremist agenda, ordinary people become important targets of the drive to spread extremism. By fulfilling the basic needs of ordinary people, these institutions and individuals in effect 'buy' support and loyalty.

Islamist extremist movements are known to use the following issues to enhance their foothold:

- Poverty and unemployment
- The growing gulf between rich and poor
- Inadequate government services
- Political corruption
- Perceived government subservience to US demands, which leads to anti-US and anti-Western sentiments.

Islamists deal with these issues through a comprehensive critique of modern life and argue persuasively that a return to core religious values would bring social justice, good government and a higher level of moral life, which would put Muslims in touch with their glorious past.

After taking over the affairs of established Muslim organisations, the new Salafist movement adopts a pragmatic approach that includes providing direct support to religious institutions (mosques and *madrassas*) in addition to social services to local Muslim communities. In the process of adopting a dominant position, the Salafists have dealt harshly with anyone who opposes their activities, responding to such opposition with an elaborate propaganda machinery that includes using the mosque and other religious infrastructure to incite unsuspecting Muslims against their opponents. They go as far as infiltrating and undermining moderate Muslim organisations by invoking the Wahhabi doctrine that denounces the classical Sunni schools of Islam as 'impurities and innovations'. This 'take-over' strategy has been made possible through the following: Middle Eastern financial assistance, and the influx of imams and scholars who conduct regular visits to Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries to collect funds.

Against this background a number of study groups appear to be flourishing in many mosques in Kenya. While religious freedom is any person's right, the unfortunate

reality is that some mosques and smaller religious groups may harbour a small number of extremists whose sole responsibility is to identify regular visitors to the mosque and approach them with the intention of recruiting them to attend their 'classes'.

This is where new recruits undergo indoctrination through lectures presented by scholars who subscribe to the Salafist doctrine. Through this strategy, extremists have also established cells in institutions of higher learning, particularly universities, and have penetrated professional bodies and online discussion groups. This has led to the mushrooming of purely religious online discussions in Kenya and the East African region, the main aim of which is to demonstrate that certain Islamic schools of thought are wrong and not worth following. They also discuss socioeconomic issues, lack of opportunities for the ever-growing youth population, 'injustices' and the political marginalisation of Muslims, and engage broadly in global jihadi discourses.

Kenyan national identity

When talking to Kenyan Muslims, especially in the coastal region, one notices a growing perception of being treated as second-rate citizens. People complained and gave examples that despite being born and regarded as Kenyan nationals, fellow Kenyans and especially police officers treat them as 'foreigners'. Particularly as a result of the growing insecurity in Kenya since the intervention of Kenyan forces in Somalia, Muslim people are told to 'go home', are often disregarded as fellow Kenyans by government officials and arbitrarily arrested.

Associated with this perception of not belonging to the broader Kenyan populace is the reality that Somali nationals, including Kenyan-Somalis, are suspected of being 'terrorists' and treated as such. For example, Kenyan nationals turned against and attacked Somali and Kenyan-Somali nationals following the detonation of an explosive device on 18 November 2012 in Eastleigh, Nairobi. This was, however, not the first occasion on which people had retaliated against Somalis: on 30 September 2012 an angry mob armed with sticks and stones attacked Somalis living in Eastleigh after a grenade attack on St Polycarp Church killed one child and injured nine others. During this incident at least 13 Somalis were injured and property was destroyed.⁷¹

Fighting an often-unidentifiable enemy that uses the masses as a place to hide and from which to strike and then disappear is extremely frustrating. However, lashing out against the collective is not only ineffective, but is also counter-productive. In effect, a real danger exists that those not involved in affected communities might see the need to defend themselves against the 'other', thus driving individuals to extremism.

In addition to countering radicalisation, the Kenyan government needs to initiate a constructive nation-building campaign. Following post-election violence in 2007 and in light of the way in which politicians used the ethnic divide to secure votes in the 2013 elections,⁷² it is clear that the religious divide is not the only factor extremists can use to enable radicalisation.

Counter-terrorism initiatives

The effectiveness of counter-terrorism initiatives depends largely on the level of cooperation between government forces and local communities. When explaining the influence of counter-terrorism strategies on conditions that are conducive to terrorism, Kofi Annan stated:

Past cases show that Governments that resort to excessive use of force and indiscriminate repression when countering terrorism risk strengthening the support base for terrorists among the general population. Such measures generally invite counter-violence, undermine the legitimacy of counter-terrorism measures and play into the hands of terrorists.⁷³

Political factors have pushed Muslim youths to join extremist groups as a counter-reaction to or in retaliation against what they see as 'collective punishment' driven by a misguided perception around the world, Kenya included, that all Muslims are terrorists or potential terrorists. Since the anti-terrorist campaign began in Kenya following the US embassy bombings in 1998, many Muslim youths have been arbitrarily arrested and incarcerated on suspicion of being engaged in terrorist activities, which is part of a wider pattern that intensified after the terrorist attacks in the US on 11 September 2001.

For Muslim youths who feel marginalised and 'guilty of terrorism until proven otherwise', joining extremist groups is virtually accepted

Consequently, Muslim youths in Kenya feel marginalised and that there is no justice for them in Kenyan society, which declares every Muslim 'guilty of terrorism until proven otherwise'. Joining extremist groups for such youths is, therefore, a virtually accepted or expected option. They are already viewed as terrorists, whether they are or not, so in their mind it makes no difference if they actually become terrorists.

Strategies based on mass arrests, racial profiling, etc. have often proved to be counterproductive. Also, a police-led criminal justice response to terrorism is more effective than a military response. A prominent recent example occurred following the killing of three soldiers in November 2012 in Garissa. After the incident, the attackers reportedly fled to the Bumula Mzuri area, resulting in troops being sent there to pursue them. These troops burnt markets and opened fire on a school, leaving civilians dead, including a local chief, women and children.⁷⁴ This incident opened debate on how the state should respond to a very challenging security threat.

The security forces have experienced constant attacks since Kenya's intervention in Somalia, making it difficult not to be drawn into retaliating rather than acting within the law. However, the following basic human rights are provided for under the new Constitution and should guide the way in which the state and its security forces prevent and combat terrorism:

Article 21: All State organs and all public officers have the duty to address the needs of vulnerable groups within society, including women, older members of society, persons with disabilities, children, youth, members of minority or marginalised communities, and members of particular ethnic, religious or cultural communities.

Article 27(1): Every person is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law.

Article 29: Every person has the right to freedom and security of the person, which includes the right not to be—

- (a) deprived of freedom arbitrarily or without just cause;
- (b) detained without trial, except during a state of emergency, in which case the detention is subject to Article 58;
- (c) subjected to any form of violence from either public or private sources;
- (d) subjected to torture in any manner, whether physical or psychological;

Article 32:

- (1) Every person has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion.
- (2) Every person has the right, either individually or in community with others, in public or in private, to manifest any religion or belief through worship, practice, teaching or observance, including observance of a day of worship.
- (3) A person may not be denied access to any institution, employment or facility, or the

enjoyment of any right, because of the person's belief or religion.⁷⁵

Putting these ideals into practice requires substantial commitment on the part of state structures and agencies responsible for safety to not treat members of other communities (whether religious or ethnic) differently and to avoid racial profiling, arbitrary arrest and torture. Not only are these activities illegal, but degrading treatment will also marginalise people and drive them to extremism.

Internal/personal factors

Internal or personal interpretations of the external environment are influenced by psychological considerations that affect political socialisation. General factors such as the Internet, prisons, mosques or churches, the role of family, and friendship ties need to be taken into consideration.

Central to this is a search for identity. It is an unfortunate reality that a person who is unsure of their identity can easily be manipulated. In these cases the identity of an organisation can become the identity of an individual. According to Post, '[b]elonging to the terrorist group becomes ... the most important component of [the individual's] psychological identity',⁷⁶ while Johnson and Friedman make the same point: '[M]embership in a terrorist organisation provides a sense of identity or belonging for those personalities whose underlying sense of identity is flawed.'⁷⁷ One can refer in this regard to a collective identity, where individual identities are replaced by a sense of being part of something bigger. Taylor and Louis point to the difficulty of establishing such an identity in a disadvantaged community:

... young people find themselves at a time in their life when they are looking to the future with the hope of engaging in meaningful behaviour that will be satisfying and get them ahead. Their objective circumstances including opportunities for advancement are virtually non-existent; they find some direction for their religious collective identity but the desperately disadvantaged state of their community leaves them feeling marginalised and lost without a clearly defined collective identity.⁷⁸

Role of the family

The saying that a village raises a child is most relevant in the fight against radicalisation. Starting with the immediate family, the broader community has a role to play in teaching children acceptance and respect, despite being different. The family plays an essential role (positive or negative) throughout any person's life (although it is most important before the child reaches school-going age). The family is considered as the first step in the transmission of

fundamental values. It is therefore to be expected that the absence of a parent will play an important role in the later radicalisation process. In particular, when the young person experiences abandonment or lack of belonging, these feelings might contribute to making him/her susceptible to a father figure or the need to belong to a group where he/she will experience acceptance and a feeling of belonging. The role of the family includes the following:

- It teaches acceptable behaviour.
- It provides an individual with a personal identity and a sense of national loyalty (belonging).
- The child also becomes aware of ideologies associated with the authorities and learns obedience to the state or political authority. By forming basic loyalties and identifying with political systems, 'the child also learns to sort people into social categories – linguistic, racial, class, tribal, occupational or geographical ... Children learn to classify people according to certain characteristics and to behave differently toward them depending on how they are classified ... Learning his society's category system and identifying with particular categories are not in themselves political orientations. They ... serve as important reference and interpretation points.'⁷⁹ Dawson and Prewitt further explain that the first loyalties and identification are the strongest and most difficult to change: 'These feelings serve as the foundation upon which subsequently acquired orientations are built. Political events and experiences later in life are interpreted within the context of these basic orientations. They serve as "political eyeglasses" through which the individual perceives and makes meaningful the world of politics.'⁸⁰
- The bond (or lack thereof) between parent and child will play an extremely important role in developing a person's self-esteem, sense of identity, personality and emotional health.

It is therefore not surprising that when analysing the family history of many of those who are susceptible to the al-Shabaab network in Kenya, it is clear that many lacked a father figure. It is by no means a prerequisite for radicalisation, but the void left by the lack of such a figure is clearly an issue.

COUNTER-RADICALISATION STRATEGIES

A variety of countermeasures involving multiple actors are required to successfully counter the message of extremists. The first step is addressing the factors or circumstances enabling radicalisation. One of the greatest mistakes governments and security agencies often make is to copy other countries or regions in this regard. This does

not imply that countries cannot borrow from other successes, but they should primarily understand that the circumstances of each country are unique. What drives individuals to extremism in Europe is different to what one experiences in Africa. Furthermore, even within the same continent, one cannot compare Algeria with Kenya, or even Kenya with Uganda. Understandably, Kenya and Uganda are neighbouring countries and circumstances in one will impact on the other, but the local dynamics in each country are different. The following sub-sections suggest initiatives to counter the factors that enable radicalisation in Kenya. None of the following offers an instant cure and each requires continuous, dedicated commitment over a long period of time. Nor should each topic be dealt with separately, but should rather be seen as part of a larger strategy.

Socioeconomic challenges

Socioeconomic development is called for not only in Kenya but the entire continent. As explained above, poverty alone is not driving people to radicalisation, but poor socioeconomic circumstances undoubtedly make individuals more susceptible to it. A key factor is the unequal opportunity for upward social ability as a result of religious, ethnic or political differences.

In Kenya the difference between Nairobi and the coastal region is unmistakable. In the coastal region, the contrast between luxury hotels and the poverty of ordinary Kenyans living near them is equally striking. While protecting income from tourism, much can be done to help local businesses benefit financially from this resource. For example, hotels could buy fresh produce from local markets instead of importing it.

Creating new jobs is not the responsibility of only government; it requires innovative thinking by ordinary people. However, government can create an environment that encourages innovation. By offering tax breaks and low-interest loans to start changing the mentality of future entrepreneurs at school, much can be done to encourage and equip young people not only to become educated, but also to contribute to the financial stability of the country and to their own well-being.

In addition to encouraging economic development, the government also has the primary responsibility of providing basic services to all people, but especially to communities regarded as marginalised. State absence in providing health care, education, infrastructure, etc. creates a void that other role-players are willing to fill. Many of these non-governmental organisations, charities and foreign governments provide valuable assistance to communities in need and should be allowed to continue with their activities under careful supervision. However, governments need to realise that providing these services

is essentially their responsibility, and that allowing others to take over this responsibility could come at a price. Since the complete absence of government allows questionable elements to gain support by 'buying' the loyalty of ordinary people, a possible solution might be for the government to form partnerships with these non-governmental organisations, charities and foreign governments and work with them to deliver services.

Political representation and participation

In light of the above discussion, initiatives are needed to re-establish Kenya's national identity and put in place constructive programmes to enable effective political participation with visible impact.

The concept of a Kenya for all Kenyans recognises diversity, but the real test lies in the way in which individuals from different backgrounds treat others. Government can set an example in this regard. Individual politicians need to accept responsibility for what they say and do that divides society; equally, it is essential not to use tribal affiliation to secure votes. This strategy divides people in the long run. The electorate, for their part, need to be educated that they should vote for policies, not tribal affiliations.

Additionally, political parties based on a religion, especially Islam, are treated with suspicion because they have been used for ulterior motives, but also as a result of a lack of information and understanding. One of the factors that has enabled Salafi preachers and missionaries to successfully penetrate the social fabric of the Kenyan Muslim community is the obvious disconnect between that community and the state. In this regard, the key issue is the weakness of existing Muslim political mobilisation structures and their ineffectiveness in representing the interests of the country's Muslim community.

Currently, the main quasi-political organisations focused on matters affecting Muslims include the National Union of Kenya Muslims, the Young Muslim Association, the Islamic Foundation, the Muslim Education and Welfare Association, the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya, the National Muslim Leaders Forum, and the umbrella body, the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims. All these organisations tend to adopt an exclusively Muslim identity such that they only seem to pursue an agenda where 'Muslims speak to fellow Muslims', without acknowledging that Muslims in Kenya are a minority and need to pursue an agenda where 'Muslims speak to the rest of Kenyan society'. These organisations have also suffered from poor management and weak leadership, which adversely affect their legitimacy within the broader Muslim community.

Another factor is that extremists in the region have an additional advantage over moderate Muslim scholars by having established regional networks that provide resources and organisational capacity to sustain their

operations. Expansionist by design, extremists have been successful in intimidating, marginalising and silencing moderate Muslim voices by using recruited youth to lead rebellions in mosque committees and other Muslim welfare organisations. Moderate Muslim scholars and activists are simply being disregarded and isolated. Because of limited capacity to mobilise, inadequate financial resources, threats of violence and negative campaigns against moderate *ulamas* (Muslim scholars recognised as expert in Islamic sacred law and theology), extremists have succeeded in intimidating or even silencing moderate Muslim scholars. Consequently, the few moderate Muslim scholars who support a democratic culture, including recognition of human rights, respect for diversity, acceptance of secular laws, and opposition to terrorism, lack the capacity, organisation, and strategies needed to counter the ever-growing influence of extremists.

The absence of a moderate voice that speaks for the majority will fuel the perception among non-Muslims that the actions of extremists represent the entire Muslim community

In the absence of a political party or parties able to articulate feelings of marginalisation and frustration within the framework of the law, extremists will be the only voice both Muslims and non-Muslims hear. The absence of a moderate voice that speaks for the majority will further fuel the perception among non-Muslims that the actions of extremists represent the entire Muslim community. This contributes to a vicious cycle of distrust and lack of understanding on the part of non-Muslims, which in turn results in Muslims being treated as 'terrorists' and second-rate citizens, leading to marginalisation and possible radicalisation.

To counter these threats, policymakers should consider the following recommendations:

- A code of conduct should be developed for politicians and public figures to guard against political, ethnic and religious hate speech. An independent commission could be established to investigate claims of abuse, in line with Article 33 of the 2010 Constitution.
- A position should be established in the Office of the President to represent and speak for marginalised

communities in Kenya. This should not be a political appointee, but rather someone who will be able to advise the president on issues that could lead to marginalisation among communities who are unable to effectively express themselves. This person should also be responsible for providing feedback to those needing this information.

- The government needs to provide professional and technical assistance to Muslim scholars who preach moderation and denounce extremism.
- Education programmes should be started in schools, government departments, and businesses to raise awareness on diversity and respect for the background and viewpoints of the 'other'.
- Open discussions and dialogue forums should be established at the community level to oppose underground networks such as Hizb-ul-Tahrir and other Salafist and jihadist groups. It is essential that the government supports religious authorities and community members to take centre stage in order to enhance their legitimacy and impact.

Connecting young people and the government

A possible success story is the Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance (KMYA), established in November 2003. The KMYA incorporates 153 youth-led community-based organisations, student movements, young imams and *madrassa* teachers. Established by young Muslim activists who believed in 'dialogue between Muslims and the rest of the Kenya society', the KMYA was established to address the unique issues confronting young Muslims, because it is they who are the main targets of recruitment by extremist groups. In establishing the KMYA, its founders identified poor leadership, weak institutions, radicalisation and extremism, low levels of education, socioeconomic exclusion and marginalisation, and lack of civic awareness and participation as the main challenges confronting Muslim youths in Kenya – challenges that make them feel hopeless and, thus, vulnerable to the patronage of any group that they come across.

Through civic awareness and participation programmes, the KMYA seeks to create a platform through which Muslims can understand what concepts such as democracy, gender equality, human rights, freedom of expression, religious tolerance and jihad really mean. In essence, the KMYA seeks to address the misinterpretation of these concepts by certain Muslim scholars who have taken advantage of their patronage to confuse and mislead Muslim youths into believing that concepts such as democracy are anti-Islam.

By explaining the essential role of civil society organisations in counter radicalisation, the KMYA has repeatedly challenged extremist narratives through the

targeted use of media and the establishment of moderate Muslim scholarship networks. On this score, one of the issues that have contributed to the challenges confronting young Muslims is the deliberate misrepresentation of classical Islamic teachings by extremist Muslim scholars and imams. In this regard, the KMYA has developed and implemented a number of counter-radicalisation programmes aimed at connecting young, marginalised Muslims to civil society and relevant government departments that deal with security and national cohesion.

International political developments

In an increasingly globalised world, international developments will impact on what individuals involved in radicalisation can use to recruit people in Kenya to commit acts of terrorism. Instability in Somalia will remain a factor, but beyond the Horn of Africa unresolved conflicts to which Muslims are party can be used to rally support and encourage recruitment to participate in hostilities.

Additionally, many Muslims are still very suspicious of Western policies in and towards the Muslim world, and view concepts such as democracy and human rights as an insult to Islamic teachings and ploys by the 'enemies of Islam' to undermine and weaken the religion. Moreover, appreciating concepts such as democracy and human rights is still a challenge because many Muslims, under the influence of conservative ideology, are sceptical about whether these are legitimate norms and values, and have not yet internalised the ethos of human rights, democracy and participatory governance. This is made worse by the 'global war on terror' and the push for democracy across the world, which arouses scepticism among Muslims, who see this as being in the interests of the West. Then there is the double standard used by the West in its dealings with the Muslim world: why don't the Western powers that preach democracy preach the same message to despotic regimes in the Muslim world, especially in the Middle East? Extremist groups have picked up on these concerns and used them to justify resistance to Western-backed values and activities.

Addressing these issues is not an easy matter and completely beyond the control of Kenya alone. The solution is to encourage critical thinking and open discussion on sensitive topics. Failure to openly defuse misconceptions and provide a different interpretation of international developments will provide a foothold that extremists will capitalise on.

Security apparatus

In answer to the growing terrorism threat, Kenya took steps to establish a dedicated criminal justice response to terrorism within the police through the establishment of the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit. Although this unit has learned

valuable lessons since its creation, preventing and combating terrorism extends well beyond a dedicated unit. It starts with the overall perception that ordinary people have of the entire security apparatus, followed by trust.

As in other East African countries, security institutions in Kenya are generally weak and plagued with corruption, both of which directly impact on trust: what assurances do ordinary community members have that information they provide will be protected and treated with the necessary confidentiality?

Community involvement is also a crucial component of any strategy to prevent and combat terrorism. With this in mind, the unfortunate reality is that ordinary people do not know how and where to engage with those tasked with preventing and combating terrorism. Allegations of racial, religious or ethnic profiling, mass arrests, and torture are additional stumbling blocks to building trust and encouraging community involvement. Then there is the suspicion on the part of security personnel if a community member comes forward with information. Although suspects might want to get close to those investigating them in order to gather their own intelligence, security officials still need to treat those coming forward with information in a way that encourages ordinary people to do so. This also applies to the way in which security officials treat eyewitnesses. Even though terrorists use their ability to blend with the population as one of their key strengths, treating all people as suspects will have a reverse effect on the building of community partnerships. The reality is that if actions and words do not correlate, the noblest intentions will go to waste. Politicians might call for community involvement, but treating ordinary citizens as the enemy will not go far in building community partnerships. Similarly, saying that Muslims are not the enemy, but treating all Muslims with suspicion will have a reverse effect. The value of intelligence here is central to identifying and investigating only those involved. Other policy advice includes the following:

- A training curriculum on cultural and religious diversity should be designed for all police officers.
- A direct line of communication should be established between community and religious leaders and the local police station. There should also be an alternative line of communication to the area commander and provincial commander for when abuses occur.
- Similarly, instead of only calling for information, communities should be informed of what the police expect from them in terms of feedback on complaints and new developments ordinary people should be aware of. Ultimately, building partnerships and communication is a two-way process.
- Police officers should be trained to differentiate between

eyewitnesses and suspects, and to treat both so that they will effectively assist in subsequent investigations.

- Police officers should be trained to consider the new Constitution not as an obstacle, but as an instrument to assist and protect them. This will require that all existing (and future) laws and operating procedures be tested against the Constitution and supplemented with new techniques and lessons designed to assist officers to more effectively carry out their responsibilities.
- A constructive relationship should be established between police and prosecutors. Although both have their respective responsibilities, by involving a prosecutor early in an investigation, especially in complex crimes such as terrorism, police officers will realise that the prosecutor brings added advantages to the investigation. Often, when the prosecutor is only seen days before the case goes to court, the suspect will not be convicted, not because he/she is innocent, but because the docket was not complete, statements were incomplete or absent, the wrong charges were brought or the prosecutor was not prepared or misunderstood the case. Many of these problems could have been prevented or dealt with if a partnership based on mutual respect existed.
- For these policies to succeed, policymakers should consider appointing specialised and dedicated prosecutors for specialised crimes.

Internal factors

Radicalisation is not only sparked by external factors, but also by who the person is, and how he/she develops. The family plays an essential role in any person's development. Despite programmes to equip mothers or women in the de-radicalisation process, people often disregard the important role a father figure or an absent father figure plays in radicalisation. In the profiles of suspects implicated in acts of terrorism, an absent father figure was a recurring theme. In their search for acceptance and guidance, it is to be expected that these individuals will be susceptible to the influence of a mentor or a person the individual concerned looks up to. This is not to say that everyone growing up without a father will be radicalised, but rather that the importance of both parents should be taken into consideration. In addressing these challenges, the government can play a role by developing healthy mentoring programmes for families in which one parent is absent.

Additionally, those at risk of being radicalised should be identified as soon as possible. The way these individuals will be treated will be crucial to the success of any long-term de-radicalisation effort. It is especially here where security officials need to work closely with families, the broader community and social services via a multidisciplinary approach.

CONCLUSION

Kenya is critical to the stability and regional development of the entire Horn of Africa. Following the post-election violence in 2007, it became apparent that Kenyans are extremely divided. While diversity can be celebrated if mutual respect exists, it can also destroy a country from within if that respect is not present. How does this relate to the radicalisation and vulnerability of Kenya's youth? Young people are at the centre, for they are not only Kenya's future leaders, but also Kenya's future parents. They are unfortunately also the easiest to manipulate and operationalise into a collective.

The biggest threat to stability in Kenya will be if extremists succeed in dividing Kenya between Muslim and non-Muslim. The reality is that Islamist extremism on the continent often manifests around issues that are a concern to the Muslim community as a whole. These issues are then 'hijacked' by Islamist militants with the ultimate goal of converting moderate Muslims to their interpretation of the world. In order to achieve this, the Islamist militant will endeavour to exploit existing sub-standard socioeconomic conditions, accompanied with feelings of frustration and alienation from the government. In attempting to secure the success of this strategy, extremists capitalise on the government's inability to provide basic services and offer an alternative. Creating or infiltrating bona fide charity organisations in areas with poor socioeconomic conditions and uplifting the community is a sure way to win the general support of ordinary people and 'buy' loyalty.

The biggest threat to stability in Kenya will be if extremists succeed in dividing Kenya between Muslim and non-Muslim

The new Constitution recognises freedom of religion. Although everything should be done to protect not only this right but all basic human rights, these rights also bring with them responsibilities, the most important of which is the responsibility to respect the rights of others. Irrespective of your family heritage, being a citizen means that you are equal not only before the law, but also as a human being in relation to others. This calls for introspection on the part of the police officer stopping and searching a person because he looks Somali or the Muslim throwing a hand grenade into a church because he sees Christians as the 'enemy'. Both of these examples touch on collective

punishment based on perceptions. Even more challenging is the fact that most perceptions are completely wrong, especially that Somali nationals or Somali-Kenyans are responsible for attacks in Kenya or that Kenya is an innocent bystander when acts of terrorism are committed on its soil.

Addressing and breaking down these perceptions extends well beyond the responsibility of the police or the Kenyan government, but the government can set an example and provide some of the tools to prevent radicalisation and enable de-radicalisation. Importantly, there is no quick fix for the level of radicalisation seen in Kenya.

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ABOUT THE PAPER

Following the intervention of the Kenya Defence Forces in Somalia in October 2011 in reaction to the increase in kidnappings on the Kenyan coast, the threat of terrorism in Kenya increased considerably. Initially the perception was that the threat originated from Somalia and that Somali nationals or Somali-Kenyans consequently committed attacks in Kenya. As arrests were made, Kenya was confronted with the reality that Kenyan nationals were responsible for the majority of these attacks. This sparked introspection and the need to understand where this threat originated. This paper aims to provide an overview of the threat of terrorism in Kenya; to consider the drivers of radicalisation, especially among the youth; and to propose counter-strategies that policymakers and security officials might adopt to prevent and counter radicalisation.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anneli Botha has been a senior researcher on terrorism at the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria since 2003. After completing an honours degree in International Politics she joined Crime Intelligence in the South African Police Service in 1993, focusing inter alia on terrorism and religious extremism. Anneli has a Masters in Political Studies from the Rand Afrikaans University. Her specific areas of interest are the underlying causes of terrorism, radicalisation and counter-terrorism strategies.

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ISS Pretoria

Block C, Brooklyn Court,
361 Veale Street
New Muckleneuk, Pretoria
South Africa
Tel: +27 12 346 9500
Fax: +27 12 460 0998
Email: pretoria@issafrica.org

ISS Addis Ababa

5th Floor, Get House Building
Africa Avenue, Addis Ababa
Ethiopia
Tel: +251 11 515 6320
Fax: +251 11 515 6449
Email: addisababa@issafrica.org

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4th Floor, Immeuble Atryum
Route de Ouakam, Dakar,
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Tel: +221 33 860 3304/42
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ISS Nairobi

Braeside Gardens,
off Muthangari Road
Lavington, Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 20 266 7208
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