Terrorism and Counter terrorism in East Africa

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Abstract

This paper examines the efforts by regional and external actors to counter terrorism in East Africa.[1] It provides an overview of the apparent vulnerability of the region to increasing terrorist related activities and the weak capacities of countries to respond. Highlighting the responses to terrorism by continental and regional organisations the paper concludes with a discussion on the role of external actors such as the United Nations, the United States and the European Union in supporting the countries and organisations in the region in order to enhance their capacities to counter terrorism. The paper argues that although significant progress is being made to develop coherent counterterrorism approaches in East Africa, many challenges remain. They include extreme intra- and interstate conflict, increasing Islamic radicalisation, lack of state capacity, competing national priorities, and political sensitivity surrounding the very notion of counter-terrorism. Most counter-terrorism efforts have focused on short-term security and law enforcement efforts, which negatively affect longer-term measures to tackle the primary conditions that encourage the spread of terrorism.

Key words: Terrorism, counterterrorism, East Africa

I. Introduction

East Africa (EA) is the most vulnerable to terrorism of all regions in sub-Saharan Africa (Bashir, A.H., 2007).[2] Nearly all countries in EA have been victims of terrorist acts. These acts have either been carried out by and against a country's nationals for a domestic cause or they have focused on 'extra-national' or 'extra-regional' targets, such as Western targets located in the region (Rosand, Millar and Ipe, 2009). Examples include: the 1980 terrorist attacks on the Norfolk Hotel in Kenya, the August 1998 simultaneous attacks on the US embassies in Nairobi, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; the November 2002 simultaneous attacks in Mombasa, Kenya, on another Paradise Hotel and on an Israel-bound aircraft at take-off from the Mombasa International Airport, Kenya; the July 2010 attacks during the World Cup finals in Kampala, Uganda and the December 2010 bombing of a Kampala-bound bus in Nairobi. Local communities in the region have borne the burden of the loss of life and property as well as other economic damage from these attacks.

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[1] This paper is an outcome of desk-based research and fieldwork undertaken by the author in Nairobi, Kenya (January-February 2011). Interviews were conducted with various officials of a number of (1) international organisations: United Nations, Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, International Organisation for Migration; Officials of the United Kingdom and United States governments and local officials.

[2] In this article, 'East Africa' or the Horn of Africa (HOA) is understood to be a region encompassing the countries which are members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), i.e. Djibouti, Eritrea (despite Eritrea's withdrawal from IGAD in 2007), Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

The region has experienced prolonged and severe intra- and inter-state conflict,[3] leading to instability, poverty, and political isolation that make it vulnerable to terrorist exploitation. Civil war in Somalia has left the country without a fully functioning national government since 1991 (despite external efforts to bring about national political reconciliation) and has been an important factor fuelling the spread of violent Islamic radicalism in EA today.

This paper analyses the role of regional and international actors in responding to the challenge of terrorism in EA. Firstly, the paper briefly examines the vulnerability of countries in the region to terrorism and the capacities of EA countries to respond. Secondly, the paper highlights responses to terrorism at the regional level with a particular focus on the African Union and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Lastly, the paper explores the activities of international actors such as the United Nations (UN), the United States (US) and the European Union (EU) in enhancing the counterterrorist capacities of countries and organisations in the region. The paper argues that considerable improvement has been made in responding to the threat of terrorism in EA. However, the region is still confronted with many challenges including extreme intra- and interstate conflict, increasing radicalisation, lack of state capacity, competing priorities, and political sensitivity surrounding the very notion of counter-terrorism. Furthermore, Rosand, Millar and Ipe (2009) have observed that most counterterrorism efforts have focused on short-term security and law-enforcement efforts, which have affected longer-term measures to address primary conditions favourable for the increase of terrorist activities.

II. Vulnerabilities of East Africa to terrorism

This EA region is vulnerable to terrorism because countries in the region experience: conflicts, weak governance, collapsed state institutions; porous borders the allowing extensive and uncontrolled movement of people and illegal weapons; increased extremist

[3] For example, the Eritrean War of Independence (1961-1991); the Shifta War (1963-1967), a separatist insurgency by ethnic Somalis in Kenya; Ethiopian Civil War (1974-1991), between the ruling government of Ethiopia and various rebel groups); Ogaden War (1977-1978) between Ethiopia and Somalia; Ethiopian-Somali Border War (1982); Djiboutian Civil War (1991-1994); Ethiopian-Eritrean War (1998-2000); Somali Civil War (1986-present); Operation Restore Hope (1992-1993) which primarily involved UN intervention; War in Somalia (2006-2009) characterised by the Ethiopian intervention; Insurgency in Ogaden (2007), a conflict between Ethiopia and the Ogaden National Liberation Front; Operation Enduring Freedom - Horn of Africa October 2002-present, in the framework of the Global War on Terror. A coup and civil war in Uganda (1971-1986); Uganda-Tanzania (1978-1979); Insurgency between Lord Resistance Army and Ugandan government (2002-2009); in Kenya, there was a suppressed coup attempt in Kenya (1982); the Nubian-Luo ethnic tensions and violence (2001); the post-election civil conflict (2007-2008).

religious ideology and radicalisation of vulnerable groups. These factors generally coincide with poor socio-economic conditions and create fertile ground for the existence of terrorism.

1. Conflicts, Weak Governance and Statelessness

East Africa has experienced severe civil and inter-state conflicts, which coupled with weak governance and statelessness (in the case of Somalia) have led to instability, poverty, and political isolation. These factors contribute towards the region's vulnerability to terrorist exploitation. Ethiopia, for instance, has been simultaneously at war with several rebel groups[4] (see McGregor, 2007) and against Eritrea. The main triggers of conflict have been border disputes as well as personal disputes between the Prime Minister of Ethiopia and the President of Eritrea. Furthermore, Ethiopia has also accused Eritrea of providing support to religious extremist groups with links to al-Qaida (such as Al Shabaab), which furthers Ethiopia's military objectives. The dispute has led to thousands of deaths, the repression of opposition political movements, increased human rights violations (Amnesty International, 2011), and Eritrea's withdrawal from the Intergovernmental Authority for Development. The attacks on Chinese oil exploration facility on the border with Somalia, which also led to numerous deaths (Rabasa, 2009; McLure, 2007; China Daily, 2007).[5]

In northern Uganda, insurgent groups especially the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Alliance of Democratic Forces (ADF), which fight against the Ugandan government have employed brutal and terrorist tactics that have reportedly caused the deaths of over 5,000 people across the country (International Crisis Group, 2007), which in turn has helped to increase public tolerance of measures against others under suspicion.

In Sudan, the signing of the Naivasha-Machakos Accords in 2004 led to the creation of a Government of National Unity (GNU) and brought the southern insurgency led by the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) to an end. Practically however, the country was split along ethno-religious lines between the Muslim North and the non-Muslim African South. In a referendum held on 11 January 2011 the majority south Sudanese people voted

[4] They include the Afar National Democratic Front (NDF), the Tigray People's Democratic Movement (TPDM), and the ethnic Amhara Ethiopian People's Patriotic Front (AEPPF). The two more significant groups are the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) which are both aided by Ethiopia's notorious neighbour, Eritrea.

[5] In April 2007, ONLF fighters attacked a Chinese oil exploration facility on the border with Somalia, killed 65 Ethiopians and nine Chinese oil workers, and abducted seven other Chinese expatriates, who were later released (China Daily, April 2007).

for independence from the North (McDoom, 2011).[6] Since the referendum the conflict has cooled down in the South. However, tensions have flared up in the western part of Darfur region, which has been affected by conflict since 2004. The Sudanese government has supported an Arab militia called the *Janjaweed*, which has attacked the local ethnic groups in Darfur: the Fur, Zaghawa, and Massaleit. This has resulted in a major humanitarian crisis including death, strife, and mass displacement of people (Rabasa et. al. 2007).

In the post-referendum period, a new conflict has emerged with a series of attacks by troops from (Northern) Sudan on villages disputed border region of Abyei. There are fears the Abyei dispute could reignite the two regions' civil war. Sudanese troops (North) moved into Abyei on 21 May 2011 and seized the region's capital, Abyei town. According to the 2005 peace deal, which ended the 22-year civil war, Abyei was granted special status and a joint administration was set up in 2008 to run the area until a referendum decided its fate. That vote was due to take place in January, when the south decided to separate from the north, but it has now been postponed indefinitely (Africa Review, 4 June 2011).

Southern Somalia has faced the burden of the civil conflict for the past two decades. Since the overthrow of Siad Barre's regime in 1991, Southern Somalia has not had a functioning government, making it the most unstable and insecure region of the country. Clan-based warlords ruled this part of Somalia until June 2006 when the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) took over the control of Mogadishu after defeating the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT). The ARPCT was a group of Mogadishu warlords and power brokers, who operated with the support of the US and some regional countries. However, the reign of the ICU was short-lived, ousted by the Ethiopian invasion in December 2006, which installed the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in power in Mogadishu. The TFG is supported by the US, Ethiopia, and other regional governments (Ibrahim, 2010a) except Eritrea which has been accused of supporting the insurgency groups in Somalia (United Nations, 2011). Rabasa argues that the Ethiopian intervention did little to help the country attain security and stability. External intervention by different external actors with different agendas was, of course, both the result of, and a contributing factor to, the long period of statelessness (Rabasa, 2009). Ibrahim (2010) has observed that the "policy follies of regional and international players" (p.283) in Somalia has contributed to the rise of insurgent groups such as Al-Shabaab (Ibrahim, 2010). Hon. Adan Abdi Salam, the former deputy prime

[6] On the 9 July 2011, Republic of South Sudan became the world's newest nation. It was admitted to the United Nations as the 193 member after independence on 14 July 2011.

minister of Somalia argues that the support for the transitional government that is not recognised by all Somalis has left a power vacuum in the country. This has been filled by various groups ranging from warlords and militia groups to various localised Islamic organisations. The end result was that various rival groups including Islamist movements emerged leading to a state of anarchy in the country (Hon. Abdisalam Adan, January, 2011).

2. Porous Borders: free movement people and illegal weapons

Porous borders represent a major challenge to ensuring security and stability for national governments in EA. The presence of the state security apparatus is marginal in many border areas, which reflects a general inability of the governments to enforce order within each country's territorial boundary (Rosand, Millar and Ipe, 2009; Rabasa, 2009). This allows for free movement of people and illicit trade across borders. This is particularly true in the case of the Kenya – Somalia border, which has not only allowed the movement of refugees fleeing the conflict in Somalia but also allows movement of terrorist and easy flow of illegal weapons.

There is lack of agreement on the level of terrorist operations inside Somalia itself. This could partly be because of the lack of accurate intelligence that is an effect of the operational difficulties of running human sources in such complicated operating environments especially in Central and Southern Somalia which are held by Al shabaab and Hizb Islam. However, there seems to be a consensus that the country serves as a transit and shield for al-Qaeda operatives in the region (ICG, 2005, p.11; Menkhaus 2004, p.70; Menkhaus, 2005, pp. 42-43; Dempsey, 2006, pp 14; International Crisis Group 2007, p. 4; Quaranto, 2008, p.28). Somalia has been linked with a number of terrorist attacks in neighbouring states, and in each of these cases al-Qaeda used Somalia as a co-ordination point and transit route. Of note are the use of the Somali borders for safe passage for the 7 August 1998 terrorist bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and the November 2002 hotel and international airport attacks in Mombasa (Kenya), for which al-Qaeda claimed responsibility (Kagwanja, 2006, p.76; Otenyo, 2004, p.78).

At present there are fears that foreign Islamist fighters may move into Somalia through its numerous porous entry ports to join forces with Islamist fundamentalist groups such as Al Shabaab. From late 2006, the steady influx of jihadi volunteers from across the Muslim world (including numerous young radicals from the Somali Diaspora around the world) was estimated to range from several hundred to, less plausibly, several thousand. According to the

International Organisation for Migration (IOM), it is the sparse population, uninhabited and poorly patrolled arid areas that have made the border between Kenya and Somalia 'leak.' In spite of the presence of some customs checkpoints at the main entry points to Kenya, the other parts of the border are mostly not patrolled. This creates ideal entry points not only for terrorists but smugglers as well (Human Rights Watch , 2002; IOM, 2011) [7]

The Indian Ocean adjoining EA is the most prone to piracy in the world (Kimani, 2009). According to the ICC International Maritime Bureau, in 2008, there were 293 actual and attempted piracy attacks globally. 92 of these attacks took place in the Gulf of Eden and 19 of them were in the coastal waters of Somalia. In 2009, there was an increase in the piracy attacks to 410 globally with 117 of them taking place in the Gulf of Eden and 80 in the coastal waters of Somalia. In 2010, the piracy attacks increased to 445 globally. Due to heightened international surveillance and counter-piracy activities, the piracy incidents in the Gulf of Eden dropped to 53 attacks in the Gulf of Eden, but the piracy incidents off the coast of Somalia rose to 139 (ICC International Maritime Bureau, 2010).

There are claims that part of the proceeds from piracy off the Somali coast and in the Gulf of Eden serve to finance extremist groups (UN, 2011, p.39). According to Ibrahim 20-50% of the ransom money pirates receive is given to Al-Shabaab (Ibrahim, 2010, p.290). He notes that although Al-Shabaab would prefer being paid cash for letting pirates use their ports, the organization (Al-Shabaab) is open to "being compensated through the acquisition of weapons. Pirates in turn, need Al-Shabaab to provide protection for captured ships and crews until ransoms could be extracted" (Ibrahim, 2010, p.290).[8]

[7] In response to the challenge, the International Organisation for Migration plays a key role in helping counterterrorism efforts in the HOA as well as other parts of East Africa. For example, the organisation runs training centres for immigration personnel on security issues in collaboration with governments in the region; helps increase the local capacities on biometric screenings at border check points; assists in coordinating inter-ministerial efforts on harmonising the legal and other aspects of counterterrorism efforts in the region, etc. (IOM, 2011)

[8] The UN Monitoring Group on Somalia has reported that despite the UN embargo on arms trafficking, Somalia continues to be supplied with arms from outside. The UN report highlights that some countries and organisations such as Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Iran, Libya, Lebanese Hezbollah, Saudi Arabia, and Syria provided arms, training, and logistical support to the ICU, while Ethiopia, Uganda, and Yemen have provided military assistance to the TFG (International Maritime Bureau, 2008; United nations Security Council, 2007). Arms trading networks based in Yemen have also facilitated large shipments of arms to a number of groups engaged in the conflict in Somalia, the same networks have also supplied arms tothe administration in Puntland (United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia, 2006).

3. Radical Islam in the Horn of Africa (HOA)

The growth of Islamic extremism in EA appears to be linked to the poor socio-economic conditions of countries in the region where Islamist groups, deliberately leveraging socio-economic grievances, penetrate EA societies (Rosand, Millar and Ipe, 2009, p.11). The use of humanitarian and development relief, social services, education, training and health care by Islamist groups on one hand aim at improving living standards of Muslims in the HOA. However, on the other hand some of these activities are linked to the proliferation of extremism in region (Colonel Gabre Egzaiabgher Alemseed, 2011).

EA has been a priority area for radical Islamist organizations and movements for a long time. Al-Qaeda set up a base in Sudan in the early 1990s after the successful military-Islamist coup in 1989. Al-Qaeda made several attempts to create operational links with Somali militants after Dictator Mohammed Siad Barre was ousted.[9] In the second half of the 1990s, EA became the centre stage for al-Qaeda operations [10] and a number of its terrorist cells conducted operations in Kenya freely without concern about being monitored or apprehended by authorities (Combating Terrorism Center, 2006). Undoubtedly the most successful operation was the bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi by two suicide bombers from Saudi Arabia on 7 August 1998 (Bergen, 2002). Over 200 people were killed and more than 5,000 injured (Oded, 2002). Simultaneous attacks targeted the US Embassy in Dar es Salaam on the same day killing 12 people. Most of the perpetrators were foreigners (Bergen, 2000).[11]

[9] These would include establishing training camps in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia and in Somalia. Kenya was apparently a more conducive setting for carrying out operations (Rabasa, 2009, p.1).

[10] In this strategy, al-Qaeda hopes to spread out between 2000 and 2020 in seven phases including the "awakening" of the '*umma* (Muslim nation); the overthrow of "apostate" regimes in the Muslim world; the reestablishment of the Caliphate; and the worldwide victory over infidel regimes (See, Musharbash, 2005). To fulfil these objectives, it seeks to (e) incorporate local radical Islamist groups into a global movement. (Rabasa et. al., 2006).

[11] The late Osama bin Laden (Saudi) and Ayman al Zawahiri (Egyptian) facilitated the planning financing and Fatwa; the late Fazul Abdullah (Comoros citizen);, the late Ahmed Mohammed Hamed Ali (Egyptian) provided logistical support; the late Fahid Mohammed Ally Msalam (Kenyan) purched the vehicle used in the bombing in Dares Salaam; the late Sheikh Ahmed Salim Swedan (Kenyan) purchased the two vehicles used in Nairobi bombing; the late Muhammad Atef (Egyptian) acquired the Fatwa from Afghanistan Muslim scholars and faxed it to bin Laden (7 may 1998); the late Muhsin Musa Matwalli Atwah (Egyptian); Mustafa Mohamed Fadhil (Egyptian); Wadih el Hage (Lebanese), currently serving life without parole since 2001 at ADX Florence in the US; Mohamed Sadeek Odeh (Palestinian), serving life without parole since 2001 at ADX Florence in the US; Mohamed al-'Owhali (Saudi) was in the car that exploded at the Nairobi bombing the driver died but he escaped. He is serving life without parole since 2001 at ADX Florence. Khalfan Khamis Mohamed (Tanzanian) was arrested in Cape Town, South Africa on 1999, serving life without parole since 2001 in the US.; Khalid al Fawwaz (Saudi) provided logistical support. He has been held in the UK since 1998; Adel Abdel Bary (Egyptian) provided logistical support. He is held in the UK since 1999; Mamdouh Mahmud Salim (Sudanese) arrested in 1998 in Munich, Germany, formely held in the Guantanamo Bay detention camp before being transferred to ADX Florence in the US; Ahmed

Four years later in November 2002, two more al-Qaeda linked attacks took place in Mombasa. These attacks involved terrorists unsuccessfully firing a surface-to-air missile at an Israeli charter aircraft, and a suicide bombing attack on the Paradise Hotel, a tourist resort popular with Israeli tourists in the Kenyan Coast city of Mombasa. The planning for this operation included a secret meeting in Mogadishu, Somalia, and boats also secretly kept on standby for escape to Mogadishu after the attack (Rosseneau, 2005, p.3). Other attacks included the Djerba synagogue bombing in Tunisia (April 2002); the Sinai in Egypt (October 2004) the bombings in Casablanca in Morocco (May 2003 and March 2007), Sharm al-Sheikh in Egypt (July 2005), and (Terdman, 2007a)**.**

Al-Qaeda and its associated radical ideologues seek to represent African conflicts as jihads. In December 2006, a prominent Kuwaiti Salafi ideologue Sheikh Hamed al-Ali stated that Muslims in countries such as Somalia, Yemen, Sudan, and Africa in general, have the obligation to participate in the jihad. There are also various messages that have been posted on jihadi websites providing maps, encouragement, and strategic advice to fighters preparing to travel to Somalia. One such posting in January 2007 stressed that Somalia is the "southern gate" to Jerusalem and that if the country is lost, "regret, repentance, degradation, and horror will haunt the Muslims" (SITE Intelligence Group, 2006). An audio-message by Ayman al-Zawahiri, al-Qaeda's second in command, in January 2007, called on Muslims around the world, especially those in Yemen, the Arabian Peninsula, Egypt, North Africa and Sudan, to take part in a jihad against Ethiopia and provide Somali Muslims with men, experience, money, and advice to defeat the "slaves of America," i.e. Ethiopian troops in Somalia (SITE Intelligence Group , 2007).

In Darfur, the conflict involves Christians victimised by a Muslim dominated government. Nevertheless, on 23 April, 2006, al-Jazeera broadcast an audiotape in which bin Laden called on "mujahidin and their supporters, especially in Sudan and the Arabian Peninsula, to prepare for a long war against the Crusader plunderers in western Sudan" (Al Jazeera, 23 April 2006). According to Terdman, after this statement by bin Laden, interest in the Darfur conflict and region grew in jihadi circles and was followed by an increase in the number of postings on radical websites concerning Darfur and how to reach it (Terdman, 2007).

Khalfan Ghailani (Tanzanian). He was the first Guantanamo Bay detainee. He is currently serving sentence of life without parole at Metropolitan Correctional Center in Brooklyn, New York.

Al-Qaeda is however only one component of a much larger composition of radical Islamist groups and organisations in the region. There is also a number of other indigenous radical Islamist groups in EA, which have varying degrees of semblance to al-Qaeda's agenda. As mentioned above, there are also missionary and developmental organisations, many funded by Saudi and other Gulf charities that actively propagate a radical Salafi interpretation of Islam (Colonel Gabre Egzaiabgher Alemseed, 2011). In places with extreme state fragility such as Somalia, they have resorted to humanitarian and development work and become major providers of social services, education and training, health care, orphanages, etc (Salih, 2004; Colonel Gabre Egzaiabgher Alemseed, 2011).

In Somalia, these proselytising and developmental groups were not considered to have any significance to security in the country before the civil war, a situation possibly linked to Siad Barre's regime strictly monitoring their activities. It was only after Barre's regime was ousted that many Islamic Charity Organisations (ICOs) predominantly from the Middle East and Africa began operating in a more nefarious way in the country. Some of these ICOs have greatly contributed towards re-building the civil society institutions thereby becoming influential and gaining considerable public support (Hon. Abdisalaam Adan, 2011).[12] They seek to change society via education, media, summer camps, youth programs and publications (Kane, 2007; Terdman and Paz, 2007).

According to General Gabre, through the provision of social services, these radical charity organisations not only seek to achieve the acceptance of Salafi or Wahhabi ideologies among the local communities, but in some cases they also seek to justify extremism, strengthen their political support, and facilitate recruitment of Jihadis in the long-run (Colonel Gabre Egzaiabgher Alemseed, 2011).While not necessarily violent, they may function as a pathway to terrorism. For example, the Muslim Brotherhood has been the main channel for the spread of the political message of Salafism.[13] In EA, this Brotherhood has presented itself in various forms ranging from the Islamic militancy of Hasan al-Turabi's National Islamic Front (NIF)

[12] Some of the notable ICOs include: the Crescent Welfare Society (United Arab Emirates); Africa Muslims Agency and Africa relief committee (Kuwait); World Assembly of Muslim Youth, Muslim World League/International Islamic Organisation, Al-Haramain (Saudi Arabia); Munazzamat al-Dawa al-Islamiyya, Mundama Duwa (Sudan); Immah Welfare Trust (United Kingdom) and Islamic relief USA (United States).

[13] The Brotherhood seeks to create an Islamic order (*al-nizam al-islami*), based on the objectives set by Hassan al-Banna, the founder Brotherhood: building (a) the Muslim individual, (b) the Muslim family, (c) the Muslim society, (d) the Muslim government, (d) the Muslim state, and (e) the Caliphate. This brotherhood was founded in Egypt in 1928, and it has developed and expanded established branches around the world. For a detailed analysis of the Brotherhood see, Mitchell, 1993, pp.232-236.

in Sudan,[14] to the apparently 'modernist and non-violent' al-Islah group in Somalia (Rotberg, ed., 2007).

Despite the positive contributions to society, however, some ICOs seek to convert people by promoting an Arab-Islamist curriculum, engaging in political activism, and advocating the transformation of Somalia into a strict Islamic state (de Waal, 1997; International Crisis Group, 2002).[15]

Ideological rivalry over the infiltration of Islam in the HOA region manifests itself as a struggle between the traditional Sufi Islam and Salafi and Wahhabi interpretations of Islam (Rabasa, 2009a). Mitchell has observed that in places where the Wahhabis have established themselves Sufism has been destroyed and replaced by traditional Wahhabi norms and practices (Mitchel 1993). Another movement that has played a major role in influencing the shape of contemporary Islam in the HOA is the Tablighi Jamaat (Menkhaus 2004).[16] The Tablighi Jamaat has a spiritual focus and is apolitical. In Somalia, the leaders of the Tablighi movement emphasise that the group is committed to a doctrine of non-violence, which makes it different from the other organisations in the country supportive of terrorism (Ibid).

While al-Qaeda seeks to incorporate local militants into the global jihad, in EA, local groups in the region, even those with that have most affinity to al-Qaeda have their own parochial agendas. For example, the al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI), a largely defunct group but active in Somalia in the 1980s and 1990s, was alleged to have established links to al-Qaeda (Shinn, 2002). However, the AIAI's main goal seems to have been a mix of Islamism and an anti-Ethiopian Somali nationalist agenda. In the case of Somalia, the situation seems to be changing with the emergence of al-Shabaab since 2007 (Harnisch, 2010). Other organisations with alleged links to al-Qaeda include the Popular Resistance Movement in the Land of the Two Migrations, an offshoot of the radical wing of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) of Somalia (Rogan, 2007).

[14] Sudanese students in Cairo founded their own Branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1940s and they were sent by the movement in Egypt to recruit members in Sudan. In 1954, a Sudanese branch of the brotherhood was formally initiated. The main aim of the Brotherhood in Sudan is to institutionalise Islamic law in the whole country, and it has worked with the Sudanese government since the era of President al-Numeiri in the 1970s as well as with the Islamist-military regime after al-Nimeiri's overthrow in 1989 (See Warburg, 2006).

[15] For example, in 2003, the activities of the al-Haramain foundation were stopped by the Saudi government following allegations by the United States that its funds were being used to support terrorist groups – especially al-Qaeda in Somalia. Another example is the Khartoum-based ICO, Munazzama al-Dawa al-Islamiyya, which operates in 17 African countries, was allegedly part of a broader Sudanese NIF strategy seeking to Islamise all aspects of the society.

[16] A Muslim revivalist movement with a global reach and it was founded in India in 1927 (Mitchel, 1993, pp.232-236.

In Somaliland, it is alleged that there is relative absence of terrorism (Rabasa 2009). The only terrorist attacks that took place there involved the killing of a British couple in 2003, an Italian doctor in 2003 and a Kenyan consultant for an international humanitarian assistance agency in 2004. These were followed by several arrests of the perpetrators and confessions that they associated with groups in the southern part of Somalia. According to Rabassa, the relative absence of terrorist activities could be because of "the strong hold of traditional clan elders on Somaliland society and on the presence of relatively well-developed government institutions" (Rabassa 2009a). Rabassa notes, however, that "while there have been no terrorist attacks since 2004, well-informed Western diplomatic sources in Nairobi believe that there is a strong underground Islamist movement in Somaliland that could surface if the political situation in Somaliland deteriorates" (Kenya Government Official, 2011).

In Sudan, there is the al-Qaeda Organization in Sudan and Africa, responsible for the beheadings of prominent Sudanese personalities (Terdman, 2007). Another extremist group in the HOA is the Jam'at al-Muslimun also Takfir wal-Hijra. It originated in Egypt and came to the region in the 1970s after breaking away from the Muslim Brotherhood. The group's ideology is takfiri in orientation. It is an extremist group that views other muslims who fail to share such orientation as *kufiri* and no longer held to be 'true Muslims.' This makes moderate Muslims legitimate targets. For this reason, the group's members tend to isolate themselves from their broader communities.

According to Rabasa, in the 1990s, the Sudanese branch of Takfir wal-Hijra branded Sudan's NIF government as an infidel government and anyone who did not share Takfir wal-Hijra's creed as a non believer (Rabasa 2009). Takfir wal-Hijra was responsible for a number of terrorist attacks on civilians, including an attack in December 2000 on members the Ansar Al-Sunna Al-Mohamadiya Sufi order, in which 25 people were killed and 60 critically injured. In 1995 the group planned to assassinate bin Laden, who was then residing in Sudan, because his views were considered to be too liberal (Nkurumah, 2000). There are reports of small *takfiri* communities in Mogadishu, Bossaso, and other towns that avoid contact with other Somalis but have no known links to other extremists or a record of violence (Render, 2007).

In Eritrea, the main violent Islamist group is the Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement (EIJM), which is based in Sudan and seeks to overthrow the Asmara government and establish an Islamic state in Eritrea. In March 2006, a new group calling itself the Islamic Eritrean Reform

Movement came to the attention of the public when it announced five operations against Eritrean military targets. According to the group, these attacks resulted in the death of twenty-two Eritrean soldiers and the capture of intelligence documents and arms.

Whether al-Qaeda currently views EA mainly as a logistical hub or as a stage for terrorist operations remains unclear. The proximity of the EA to the Arabian Peninsula increases the likelihood that the region will remain a conduit and support base for al-Qaeda activities beyond the region itself. At the same, the more developed parts of EA such as Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania present worthwhile targets because they are associated with the presence and influence of Western countries in the region. These targets range from diplomatic missions of western countries and offices of various international organisations to tourist resorts.

III. Counter- terrorism efforts in EA

The role of International and regional bodies

International actors such as the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and regional actors such as the African Union and Intergovernmental Authority on Development have comparative advantages in contributing towards counter-terrorism in EA.

1. They have at their disposal knowledge and expertise of local issues that makes them well suited to develop approaches that take into account cultural and other contextual issues and undertake region- or sub-region-specific initiatives that complement and build upon global counterterrorism objectives; increasing a sense of local ownership of global initiatives; and fostering interest and maintaining momentum on the ground that is key in implementing CT initiatives.

2. They can facilitate the exchange of expertise and information among governmental and non-governmental experts, as well as the sharing of good national practices and lessons learned from national implementation among the countries of the region.

This section focuses on the activities of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the UN, the US and the EU.

The African Union (AU)

The AU plays an important role in the HOA especially in relation the areas of peacekeeping, conflict prevention and crisis management. In the context of counterterrorism, these three dimensions of AU engagement are important given EAs persistent regional tensions and conflicts which allow terrorist activities to flourish. The AU has taken a broad approach based on a framework of treaties aimed at countering terrorism.[17] It is unfortunate that a large number of AU member states have not yet endorsed OAU convention of 1999, and the AU Plan of Action (2004) has not been ratified by some/any AU member state(s). and many others are yet to implement to be implemented (Rosand, E., Millar, A., Ipe, 2008a, p.92). Only thirty seven fifty-three AU member states have ratified the OAU convention of 1999, and the AU Plan of Action (2004) has not been ratified by some AU member state(s).

Although there are many other priorities to be addressed in the African Union's Peace and Security Council (PSC), there are also different levels of the terrorist threat perceptions within the member states of the AU. An added challenge is that the Aus CT resources are scarce thereby reducing its ability to actively fully realise its CT policy. In 2004 the AU established the African Centre for Study and Research of Terrorism (ACSRT) to specialise on matters relating to terrorism and implementation of the AU counterterrorism programme.

The ACSRT is responsible for organising functions aimed at improving counterterrorism capacities and cooperation among AU member states. It aims to educate AU members about the threat of terrorism in Africa, (b) provide capacity-building assistance to enhance national and regional capabilities, (c) create a mechanism for all member states to access expert guidance, (d) build a database to facilitate the sharing of intelligence and other terrorism-related information; (e) harmonize and standardize domestic legal frameworks with the AU and international counterterrorism frameworks; and (f) disseminate counterterrorism research across the continent.

ACSRT envisions a highly integrated network of state and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) focal points coordinated centrally from Algiers, Algeria. So far it has organised a number of meetings of national and regional level including in EA as well as a number of

[17] They are (a) the Organization of African Unity (OAU) counter-terrorism convention (1999) adopted in reaction to the 1998 al Qaida strikes in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam; (b) the African Union counterterrorism plan of action (2002); and (c) the AU protocol to the convention (2004). These treaties entail provisions on extradition, the exchange of information, capacity building, and other elements aimed at strengthening cooperation in the area of counterterrorism in Africa.

training seminars at its facility in Algiers. In general, however, much like the AU Commission, a lack of both human and financial resources has limited the ACSRT's ability to make practical contributions towards the realisation of its multi-dimensional mandate. Recently, however, funding contributions from the Councils of the European Union and European Commission have been provided to support these initiatives.[18]

Intergovernmental Authority on Development

Initially after its formation, the initial focus of IGAD was on development issues yet over time the organisation gradually took on security matters, a evolution that highlights the importance of the development-security nexus in the HOA region (Rosand, E., Millar, A., Ipe, 2008a). In 2006, IGAD launched a four-year programme in Addis Ababa called the IGAD Capacity Building Program Against Terrorism (ICPAT), funded by EU and other donors (Colonel Gabre Egzaiabgher Alemseed, 2011). This programme has largely focussed on issues regarding capacity- and confidence-building in the IGAD region and it also works closely with partners at the regional and global level. It targets five areas: (a) enhancing judicial measures; (b) working to promote greater inter-agency coordination on counterterrorism within individual IGAD member states; (c) enhancing border control; (d) providing training, sharing information and best practices; and (e) promoting strategic cooperation.[19]

Highlighting this approach, in September 2007, ICPAT, with the support of UNODC's TPB, organised the first-ever IGAD ministerial-level meeting on countering terrorism in Kampala to which six IGAD member states sent high-level delegations. The statement adopted in Kampala calls on IGAD members, to take the necessary legal, administrative, and regulatory measures to counter terrorism. These include establishing inter-ministerial counterterrorism coordination mechanisms in each country; to respect human rights while countering terrorism; and exchange information and experiences related to combating terrorism, including through the establishment of a forum of counterterrorism experts. The Kampala statement also requests member states to implement the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy and continue

[18] The Council of the European Union has allocated 665 million euros to the ACSRT for a program to support AU member states to enhance their capacities to combat terrorism. The European Commission has also contributed some one million euros to help set up the ACSRT's information technology and database system and a documentation centre, and to organize training seminars for relevant AU member-state officials.

[19] ICPAT, also works with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC), the Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) and the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (EAPCCO), and with the such institutions as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Commonwealth Secretariat, and high-level experts from the region, has carried out country-specific capacity-building initiatives in each of these areas.

with the UNODC and ICPAT capacity-building programme especially (IGAD, Kampala Statement, September 2007).

ICPAT faces a number of challenges, the first of which regarding the conditions in the region sub-region, which hinder the development of a successful sub-regional security and counterterrorism agenda. For instance, it has been difficult to date to launch a special programme for Somalia in light of its unique needs. Furthermore, the absence of Eritrea from the IGAD forum has a negative impact on the overall effectiveness of ICPAT. There is also little political will among the member states countries in EA to cooperate to implement effective counterterrorism strategies (Colonel Gabre Egzaiabgher Alemseed, 2011).

The U.S. Counterterrorism Programmes in the HOA

The U.S. military presence in the HOA with headquarters in Djibouti is known as the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA). The CJTF-HOA is a component of the wider U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), which was established in October, 2008. CJTF-HOA operations encompass Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, Yemen, and the Seychelles and it also works on projects in Uganda and Tanzania.

The main strategic objectives of the CJTF-HOA are (a) to foster a regional perspective on security problems, (b) build littoral capabilities, and (c) support the AU and UN peacekeeping operations. For example, the CJTF-HOA took part in the logistical organisation of transport and support Ugandan troops in the AU peacekeeping force, which were deployed to Mogadishu after the collapse of the Islamic Courts Union there (US Official, January 2011). The CJTF-HOA has worked with other external powers especially the UK to provide counterterrorism training in Yemen as well as build its Coast Guard. It has also provided military training to Ethiopia, Uganda, and Djibouti; and trained the navies of Kenya and Djibouti.

The CJTF-HOA also recognises the importance of civil affairs operations in efforts towards countering insurgency and terrorism. Hence, it has focussed on providing civil affairs training to personnel in Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Djibouti, and Yemen and it has also contributed towards renovation of schools in Djibouti and Ethiopia; provided medical and veterinary services; and drilled water wells in Kenya.

The main Western counterterrorism programme in the HOA and EA is the EA Counter-Terrorism Initiative (EACTI) led by the U.S. This programme is based on the model of the

Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Initiative (TSCTI)[20] and the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI).[21]

The United Nations and Counterterrorism in the HOA

The UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (UNGC-T Strategy) on 8 September 2006, which calls for a holistic, inclusive approach to counterterrorism. Both the UNGC-T Strategy and the 2008 Resolution adopted by the General Assembly recognize the need to enhance the role of regional and sub-regional organisations (SROs) as well as other stakeholders especially the UN member states.[22] This included the establishment of the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (UNC-T Task Force)[23] and its working groups. The UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy marked the first time that all UN member states agreed on a common framework for addressing the terrorist threat. It presents a unique opportunity to improve both regional counterterrorism cooperation in EA and the UN system's engagement with the sub-region.

The UN four-pillar plan of action includes measures to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, measures to prevent and combat terrorism, capacity-building, and an

[20] This counterterrorism programme is an enhancement of the Pan-Sahel Initiative which was completed in 2004. Its focus includes African countries especially Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Chad. TSCTI added Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal, Ghana, and Nigeria. The initiative seeks to strengthen counterterrorism capabilities, enhance institutional cooperation among military and security forces in the region, and promote sound democratic governance. The U.S. military part of the TSCTI is Operation Enduring Freedom–Trans-Sahara (OEF-TS). For details see articles on "Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI)," as well as "Operation Enduring Freedom–Trans Sahara (OEF-TS)," at GlobalSecurity.org. The EACTI aims at enhancing the security in the HOA region by providing funding for (a) military training for border and coastal surveillance; (b) programs designed to strengthen the control of the movement of people and goods; (c) aviation security capacity-building; (d) assistance for regional efforts to counter terrorism financing; and (e) police training.

[21] At the G8 Summit in June 2004, the US introduced the five year GPOI programme aimed at increasing peacekeeping capacities of countries worldwide. Specifically, the main objective of the programme are: (a) to train and, where appropriate, provide suitable non-lethal equipment to 75,000 military peace support operations troops worldwide, with emphasis on Africa; (b) to arrange a system that can support transportation and logistics endeavours in peacekeeping missions.

[22] See the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 60/288, A/RES/60/288, New York, 8 September 2006, para. 3; United Nations General Assembly Resolution 62/272, A/RES/62/272, New York, 5 September 2008, para. 5.

[23] The 24 bodies which are represented on the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force are the Counter-Terrorism Committee's Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate; the Department for Disarmament Affairs; the Department of Peacekeeping Operations the Department of Political Affairs; the Department of Public Information; the Department for Safety and Security; the Expert Staff of the 1540 Committee; the International Atomic Energy Agency; the International Civil Aviation Organization; the International Maritime Organization; the International Monetary Fund; the International Criminal Police Organization; the Monitoring Team of the 1267 Committee; the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; the Office of Legal Affairs; the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism; the United Nations Development Programme; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute; the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; the World Customs Organization; the World Bank; and the World Health Organization.

approach based on human rights and the rule of law to counter terrorist threats. The plan is holistic and reinforces what many EA terrorism experts have long believed, namely that an effective counterterrorism strategy must combine preventative measures that address both real and perceived grievances and underlying social, economic, and political conditions (Rosand, Ipe, Miller, 2007, p.103).

Given the significant capacity gaps and vulnerabilities in the EA region, nearly every part of the UN system represented on the UN Counterterrorism Implementation Task Force has an important role to play in building counterterrorism capacity in EA, in addition to ICPAT and bilateral donors. Given the often counterproductive emphasis placed on hard security approaches to combating terrorism in the EA to date, I would argue that UN's holistic and more balanced approach to addressing the threat is the most appropriate way to counter terrorism in the EA region.

The European Union and Counterterrorism in HOA

The EU has adopted a very broad approach to cooperation with Africa. Most EU diplomatic and policy interventions in Africa are undertaken within the framework of Cotonou Partnership Agreement and the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement (2007).[24] Both call for cooperation in various areas, including politics, development and security. Under these treaties parties commit themselves "to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 on Women in Peace and Security and 1612 on Children in Armed Conflicts" (Africa-EU Strategic Partnership , 2007, paragraph 22). Both the EU and the AU have an interest in undertaking measures to protect children in wars, empower women, and offer protection to women in situations of war and conflict.

As set out in its Action Plan to Combat Terrorism, (European Council, 2005) the EU seeks to address root causes of terrorism to tackle the factors that lead to the recruitment and radicalization of people by radical Islamist organizations. Root causes refer to the eradication of poverty, introduction of democracy, protection of human rights and the rule of law. Violent radicalization may simultaneously be an aid to terrorism and a threat to democracy in

[24] In the area of terrorism, Article 11a of the 2005 *Revised Cotonou Partnership Agreement* states that the Parties (EU and ACP states) "condemn all acts of terrorism and undertake to combat terrorism through international cooperation, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, relevant conventions and instruments and in particular full implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1456 (2003) and other relevant UN resolutions". Hence they have agreed to exchange information on terrorist groups and their support networks and views on means and methods to counter terrorist acts, including in technical fields and training and experiences in relations to the prevention of terrorism.

developing countries. Thus, by creating a favourable environment for democracy, there is a chance of 'killing two birds with one stone' (Makinda, 2009, p.8). As African state institutions are still relatively new, weak and fragile, they are not in a position to maintain democracy and combat radicalization on their own. Radicalization may in developing countries have greater impact than in other parts of the world.

The EU Political and Security Committee (EU-PSC) and the AU Peace and Security Council (AU-PSC) have held regular consultations on security matters, including the operationalisation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), especially as it relates to the Continental Early Warning System and the African Standby Force.[25]

The EU has funded a counterterrorism programme through IGAD with one billion euros allocated to the APSC.[26] The IGAD Capacity Building Programme Against Terrorism (ICPAT) was established in 2006 and is based in Addis Ababa. ICPAT is currently guided by a Steering Committee made up of local ministerial representatives of IGAD member states.[27] The EU has also been a strong supporter of the peace and state-building process in Somalia and has recently launched the EU Training Mission – Somalia (EUTM Somalia). The EUTM seeks to provide specialized training to up to 2,000 Somali soldiers. In particular, the mission is a response to the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Somalia, which has expressed its need for some 5,000 well-trained soldiers, i.e. eight battalions.[28]

IV. Conclusion

This paper examines the efforts of regional and external actors to support counterterrorism activities in EA. A number of conclusions can be drawn from the examination of the susceptibility of the region to terrorist activities and the responses to the countering terrorism.

[25] Additionally, the EU has also funded the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, which was established in Algiers, Algeria, in 2004. The purpose of this centre is to centralize information on terrorism and terrorist organizations in Africa, initiate research and organize training programmes and symposia with a view to raising awareness of the threat of terrorism on the continent.

[26] This support covers terrorism as well as a range of other activities such as the Continental Early Warning System, the definition and implementation of disarmament and counter-terrorism policies and the operationalisation of the African Standby Forces, and the African Training Centres

[27] Six donor countries, –Canada, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden– sit on the ICPAT steering committee but they are not voting members.

[28] The EUTM Somalia training is organized in seven different modules, as agreed with both AMISOM and the Uganda Peoples Defense Force (UPDF) Authorities. These modules are: Fighting in Built-Up Areas (FIBUA), Mine awareness and Counter Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED), Communications, Combat Life Saver, Infantry, Non Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and Junior Officers. Out of the 1,000 Somali soldiers, 670 would follow the general training provided by the UPDF and the other 330 the one provided by the EU Trainers. EUTM Somalia members also provide limited training to the UPDF-trained Somali soldiers in the specifics of FIBUA and C-IED; See: European Commission, "EUTM Somalia." at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=1870&lang=en. Accessed 20 July 2010.

Firstly, understanding the vulnerabilities as well as the root causes of terrorism in the EA region is crucial for ensuring a more proactive approach to enhancing the effectiveness of counter-terrorism efforts in the region. Secondly, external actors have a major role to help in raising the capacities of countries and organisations in the region. While International and regional organisations (especially AU and IGAD) are emerging as key players in the area of counterterrorism in East Africa, they are faced with many challenges rooted in the socio-economic and political conditions of many countries in the region, and the lack of capacity within countries of the region to effectively respond and counter terrorism.

It is recognised that the use of military measures in countering terrorism can be counterproductive. This was clearly demonstrated by US and Ethiopian military intervention in Somalia in 2006. The reliance on conventional military tactics in an unconventional 'conflict' will only lead to massive casualties. This approach creates low morale towards the US and its allies. It undermines the strategic objective of effectively dealing with the immediate threat by creating sympathy for the terrorists. This local sympathy can easily be converted into an environment conducive for terrorism for terrorist activities, either in the form of the provision of safe havens for terrorist groups, actual support (money, weaponry, and knowledge) and direct involvement of local populations through recruitment.

The UN and EU's human security approach is significant because it seeks to address the broader social and political conditions favourable for the spread of terrorism. Their programmes focus on issues such as the lack of rule of law, political exclusion, socio-economic marginalisation and lack of good governance, and enhancing dialogue, supporting peace-building and human rights protection in the region. Lastly, it is necessary to encourage coordination and division of labour between the external actors for example the UN, EU, and US along with the regional and sub-regional organisations e.g. IGAD, EAC and the national governments in the HOA. While this will help in avoiding duplication of efforts by actors in the region, it will also ensure maximum use of each actor's strengths and comparative advantage such as financial as well as technical expertise and knowledge in enhancing the capacities of countries and organisations in the region to prevent and counter terrorism.

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