

МИР И БЕЗОПАСНОСТЬ

A NETWORKS ANALYSIS OF TERRORISM IN AFRICA: IMPLICATIONS FOR KENYA

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This paper highlights the challenges that the international community faces in responding to the terrorists and the need to change tactics to respond more effectively to an increasingly nebulous enemy. Terrorism can take different forms and is perpetrated by both state and non-state actors. This research looks into the network structure of terrorism and terrorist groups. In the contemporary setting, terrorist organizations operate transnationally hence the use of the term 'terrorism without borders'. An enabling factor of terrorism today is the network structure that it has adopted which gives it the ability to both project its reach and prevent easy infiltration. The network structure has also brought about renewed interests in Africa, where global terror networks such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State compete for influence. Boko Haram in West Africa is an affiliate of the Islamic State and this provides possible linkages with the Islamic State in Libya. Boko Haram refers to itself as the Islamic State's Western Province. Al-Shabaab has dominated headlines by carrying out deadly attacks in East Africa. The al-Qaeda affiliate has however faced resistance from a section of its members who seek ties with the Islamic State. This resulted in the formation of Jabha East Africa, a group that aligns itself to the Islamic State. The Sinai Peninsula has also witnessed an upsurge of terror attacks perpetrated by the Sinai Province, which views itself as a province of the Islamic State. This surmounts to a complex network structure of terrorist networks in Africa and the growing threat to militant Islam. The special attention is paid to analysis of terrorist challenges in Kenya.

Key words: Terrorism, war, network analysis, radicalization

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism perpetrated by non-state actors has bedeviled the anarchic international system. Terror attacks have not been isolated to a specific region but affected states across the globe including the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Turkey, China, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Pakistan, just to name a few. The threat to terrorism is therefore global in nature. Technological advancement has created power diffusion from the state to non-state actors which have up-scaled their

level of interaction in areas of divergence. This research will look at the transnational nature of terrorism and the existing network affiliations with a focus on Africa. The difficulties at arriving at a conclusive definition of terrorism has caused divergent views and limited the extent to which collective action is employed.

Given the magnitude of the threat posed by violent extremism, it would be expected that states take the lead to create state-led linkages through which intelligence can be disseminated and shared between regional states through their security organs. Despite being the ideal, states often fail to carry out this all important task due to national interests in an anarchic international setting. Anarchy is the absence of a supreme above the state. This paper will seek to understand the linkages that exist involving terrorist groups in Africa and how this affects the international relations of terrorism in the region. The term ‘international relations of terrorism’ is used here in reference to the impact that terrorism has on the conduct of international politics and also to pinpoint that terrorist organizations operate at the global level. The increased military activities against terrorist groups have necessitated a succinct analysis on their effects on their survival and resolve to extend the terror campaign at the transnational level.

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF TERRORISM AND NETWORKS

Terrorism is among different forms of violent extremism that are politically motivated. There is also no agreed upon definition of terrorism. Despite the absence of a consensus on the definition, there are some attributes which differentiate terrorism from other forms of violent extremism such as genocide, insurgency, and uprisings. The constant factor in these different forms of violence is aggression. A clear distinction is mired by the lack of a consensus on the definition of terrorism. One key characteristic of terrorism is its reliance on fear to communicate their motivation and intentions to the masses through the mass media. Terrorism can be viewed as a tool that uses “ethnic and religious fanatics to serve political ends, such as liberation from an alien occupying group, or simply to exact righteous vengeance against a group labeled as a threat or enemy” [Forst 2009: 3]. Fanaticism however is not unique to terrorism as it exists in other forms of violent extremism. One key feature of terrorism is the target. Those killed by terrorist attacks are not the main targets of terrorism. Attacks are used to cause fear among the general population who are not the direct victims of terrorist attacks. The other feature is that terrorism is carried out for political ends and uses an ideological underpinning for recruitment. Due to its disadvantage in terms of power in relation to the state, terrorists rely asymmetric tactics.

Like other forms of political violence, terrorism predated the Westphalian state system that was formed in 1648. Its nature has changed theatrically due to globalization and technological advancement. Terrorist groups such as al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, Sinai Province, and others, have defined the new frontier in war where the *jus in bello* (the laws that govern the conduct of war) has no influence. They go against the traditional norms regarding the conduct of war. The enemy is faceless and ever changing. Despite their status as non-state actors, their capabilities have expanded to areas that were pre-

dominantly reserved for the state. Technology has increased the capabilities of terrorist networks that have carried out successful attacks aimed at soft targets and well trained state security personnel. This has been made possible due to power diffusion, where non-state actors accrue capabilities that only states could have. In the past, the ability to cause mass casualties was a preserve of the state due to the monopoly of military power. Today, technology has broken the barriers and terrorist groups can make use of improvised explosive devices to cause large scale fatalities.

Terrorist groups have also adopted the strategy of coordinated attacks against multiple targets. The September 11 attack in the US is just one example among many. In 1998, al-Qaeda carried out simultaneous bombings on US embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya. In August 24, 2004, Chechen rebels hijacked two Russian passenger planes that took off from Moscow and caused them to crash within a span of three minutes. It is suspected the planes were brought down by hexogen explosives [Mickolous, Simmons 2014: 194]. On March 11, 2004, bombs exploded in four packed commuter trains in Spain's capital, Madrid. The attack was orchestrated by Islamist radicals who were affiliated to al-Qaeda [Mickolous, Simmons 2014: 189]. These few cases demonstrate how terrorist groups make use of coordinated attacks to maximize their impact and draw increased attention. One possible enabling factor is the formation of cell based networks. Networks may take different forms from channels of communication to those of collaboration and/or structural organization. Networks can also act as agents of socialization through reinforcing and promoting ideologies to create social capital [Stohl, Stohl 2007: 99]. Krebs notes that identifying terrorist cells (which tend to be covert in nature) is much more difficult than mapping social networks [Krebs 2002: 49]. According to him, terror cells are characterized by tight knit ties which remain dormant, making them difficult to detect. Their activation is based on necessity. The dormant cells are commonly referred to as sleeper cells. Within the state, sleeper cells often consist of members who feel marginalized from mainstream society due to various factors including poverty, political isolation, and perceived historical injustices. The next section will zero in on these factors and the regions that are most affected, with a focus on how al-Qaeda and the Islamic State have competed for influence in forging ties with jihadist groups in Africa. Despite identifying the overall regions, it is difficult to identify specific cells and their members due to the difficulty in infiltration. Members of the affected communities may also be reluctant to expose suspected cell members due to "passive support for their ideas, a fear of retaliation, or a combination of both [Kennedy, Homant, Barnes 2008: 329].

MAPPING RADICALIZATION PATTERNS IN AFRICA

Both al-Shabaab and the Islamic state have their tentacles in Africa. Al-Shabaab has continued to perpetrate their terrorist agenda in East Africa, Boko Haram in West Africa, and Sinai Province in the Sinai Peninsula. Al-Shabaab has been an affiliate of al-Qaeda while the other two have established ties with the Islamic State. How have these groups been able to project their influence transnationally? Al-Shabaab has adopted a strategy of radicalizing beyond Somalia into the neighboring countries of Kenya, Tan-

zania, and Uganda. In Kenya, Garissa town has experienced one of the worst terror attacks in the country's history. The town is in eastern Kenya and in close proximity to Kenya. On 2nd April, 2015, gunmen attacked Garissa University College in an ambush that killed 147 and injured over 79. It is believed that the attack was masterminded by a Kenyan al-Shabaab fighter Mohamed Mohamud, who was a former teacher in Garissa.

Terrorism is not new and is an ever changing phenomenon. Globally, terrorist networks have evolved over time and adopted new strategies to outsmart state counter-terrorism strategies. In East Africa, al-Shabaab has in the recent past succeeded in stretching its tentacles to neighboring countries. Al-Shabaab first emerged as a local terrorist group whose main preoccupation was to preserve political leverage in order to maximize their dominance in Somalia. Its initial existence was under the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), whose aim was to consolidate power in Somalia through territorial and administrative control. Its ambitions and motivations have since changed to include interests beyond its territory. Al-Shabaab has mounted attacks in neighboring countries especially Kenya. They have been able to launch successful attacks both in Somalia and beyond through carefully planned attacks. The group has evolved from a domestic political actor, to a desperate group whose main preoccupation is survival through sporadic and well-timed terror attacks both domestically and regionally. Therefore, the threat that Kenya is facing has also evolved from being external to being a mix of external and internal. External from al-Shabaab in Somalia while internally, al-Shabaab has recruited Kenyans into its ranks and set up terror cells. The line between domestic politics and the politics of Somalia is fading at an alarming rate.

Al-Shabaab can be traced to the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) which was a coalition of *sharia* courts. It formed the militant wing of the union. With the defeat of the Islamic Courts Union by Ethiopian forces, the group disintegrated and al-Shabaab re-grouped to wage a deadly insurgency against the foreign troops [Hansen 2013: 50]. Ever since, al-Shabaab has become a major threat to peace and security in Somalia and beyond. Terrorist networks have also succeeded in creating and maintaining international links with other extremist groups. Coupled with religion are the twin societal ills of corruption and marginalization that pervade most of Africa and which have become the leading precipitants to the emergence of local terrorist groups. At their initial stages where the group seeks to acquire membership and spread ideas, they are not treated with urgency. Over time, the groups begin to make demands that are often met by aggressive measures from the security arm of government.

In Mogadishu, al-Shabaab continue to launch deadly attacks. Car bombs seem to be the preferred weapon of choice. In February 2016, a car bomb was detonated at the entrance of a popular recreational park. A month prior, the terrorist group attacked a beach hotel in the capital using gunmen and suicide bombers. In April 2016, the terrorist group executed an attack that involved suicide bombing by using a vehicle borne improvised explosive device (VBIED). All these point towards a terrorist group that has the capability to attack in different ways. Security troops are facing a major challenge in the fight against terrorism due to its changing face. Beyond Somalia, the militant group has attacked various soft targets in Kenya including a shopping mall, university,

churches, and other social places. It has succeeded in recruiting Kenyan citizens to carry out the attacks, a move that changes the enemy and brings it close to Kenya's territory. Al-Shabaab is therefore involved in a hybrid warfare with targets both within and beyond Somalia, some of which are security installations.

In East Africa, various terror groups operate in affiliation to either al-Qaeda or ISIS. Smaller groups have emerged to align with either al-Qaeda affiliate al-Shabaab or ISIS linked Jahba East Africa. Among the members of Jahba East Africa are former al-Shabaab militants who were in support for alignment with the Islamic State. This places the region at the center in the battle for dominance between the two global jihadi movements, al-Qaeda and ISIS. This is part of the grand strategy of the two dominant groups, who were once closely affiliated to create an Islamic Caliphate. I will therefore demonstrate where Africa falls in the global fight for dominance by al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. Many commentators have propagated the idea that these groups are mere paper networks which portray strength but are weakened by counter terrorism strategies. To gauge this assertion, global links will be drawn to determine their global influence is diminishing or increasing, and the nature of their patterns.

Since its inception, al-Qaeda has established networks globally through affiliates. In West Africa, Boko Haram has continued to wage an insurgency against the Government in Northern Nigeria. The jihadist militant group is an affiliate of the Islamic State. This has enabled the group to also establish ties with the Islamic State in Libya. This elevates the level of influence that the Islamic State is achieving in Africa. These links defy the norms of sovereignty and create complex networks that transcend the globe. To the north, Algeria has faced major terrorist threats from al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which was established in 2007. Its genesis can be traced back to Algerian militants who travelled to Afghanistan to fight alongside the Taliban against Russian forces in the 1980s. AQIM is the North Africa branch of the global al-Qaeda network and has succeeded in perpetrating regional attacks including a brief overrun of a UN police base in Mali's city of Timbuktu. The group penetrated the defences of the base by exploding a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED), a tactic that was also used to overrun the AMISOM base in El-Adde, Somalia. This shows capacity by the group to carry out transnational activities against citizens, state armies, and international institutions such as the UN. This ability has also been evident in al-Shabaab in East Africa, Sinai Province in North Africa, and Boko Haram in West Africa. The international relations of Africa is therefore being influenced by extremist terrorist groups, a trend that if not stopped will lead to re-shaping of the continents landscape in terms of sovereignty and national boundaries. Daesh (IS) has also established a footprint in the politically volatile Sinai Peninsula through its affiliate Sinai Province, formerly Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (ABM).

Emergence of the Sinai Province as a formidable force in the region was occasioned by the collapse of the Mubarak regime in 2011, creating favorable political climate for the emergence of an insurgency terrorist group similar to al-Shabaab in Somalia. This has exposed the Egyptian forces and security agencies to deadly attacks by the Salafist militant group. The Sinai Province militant group predominantly comprises of the Bedouin

local population, whose grievances have made them vulnerable to radicalization. Under Israeli rule, the Bedouin people felt included in the decision making process of government through consultation and the provision of social services. The 1982 reclamation of the region by Mubarak changed the fate of the Bedouin who were treated with suspicion and marginalized from the decision making process as well as uneven resource allocation. The region contributed to the national budget through tourism. This provides a case where political events created societal cleavages through which extremist ideologies could germinate. Resentment towards government by the local population caused erosion of state nationalism and gave rise to supranationalism pegged on Islamic militancy.

Al-Qaeda has also access to the region through its affiliate Ansar al-Jihad (al-Qaeda in the Sinai Peninsula), founded in 2011. The terror group possesses advanced weapons and is led by a former personal physician of Osama Bin Laden, Ramzi Mohamoud al-Mowafi. This shows the dynamic nature of terrorist groups in the Sinai Peninsula, with competing loyalties to the global networks of al-Qaeda and al-Shabaab. At the non-state level, there is increasing competition in terms of global influence and power, similar to the power politics of states. This global competition amongst global militant networks complicates the security dynamics of African states, which have not succeeded much in formulating a common front against Islamic militancy

IMPLICATIONS FOR KENYA

Kenya has borne the brunt of the al-Shabaab militant attacks within its territory despite having ventured into Somalia in search of peace. Kenya launched “*Operation Linda Nchi*” (operation protect the country) on 14th October 2011 in pursuit of al-Shabaab within Somalia [Kenya Defence... 2014: 2]. The move was occasioned by continuous kidnappings of foreign tourists in Kenya who were taken to Somalia to be released on ransom or be killed. This marked the decline of the tourism industry, which promotes economic growth and development. Nevertheless, the terrorist threat in Kenya has evolved from being predominantly external to domestic due to increasing cases of recruitment of Kenyans into terrorist groups and infiltration of the Kenyan society by extremist ideologies. In the past, aggrieved sections of society resorted to violence in the pursuit of ‘justice’.

In Kenya, the local terrorist networks are slowly transforming from being local, to transnational through linkages with transnational groups aided by the media and internet, especially the social media. The al-Shabaab in Kenya has succeeded in establishing strong ties with the al-Hijra terrorist group, which has kept its operations secret. Despite being suspected to have taken part in the Westgate Mall attack in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, the group has desisted from taking responsibility of attacks publicly. This introduces yet another complex dimension of the group where it remains underground while avoiding publicity. Therefore, the groups’ danger to the national security of the country may be downplayed or misunderstood. Al-Hijra is also embarking on a mission to create links with a Tanzanian based radical group known as Ansar Muslim Youth Centre. The Islamist terrorist group has carried out low profile attacks in Tanzania

targeting restaurants, churches, and moderate Muslim clerics whose members have sought training from Somalia. However, these have received little attention in the international setting. Nonetheless, the existence of al-Shabaab, al-Hijra, and the Ansar Muslim Youth Centre pose a significant threat in the East Africa region. The Mombasa Republican Council (MRC) on the other hand is a local group in Kenya that has called for the secession of Mombasa, due to alleged marginalization of the indigenous population. The threat of Islamist militancy in Kenya has been reinforced by increased politicization of security which has greatly eroded nationalism. Al-Shabaab has launched a branch in Kenya headed by Sheikh Ahmad Iman Ali who previously served as the supreme leader of the Muslim Youth Center, a radical Islamist group in Kenya that transformed into al-Hijra.

The greatest threat to Kenya's national security lies both within and beyond its borders. The internal threat has been amplified by the participation and direct links with an external terrorist group, the al-Shabaab which has local, national and transnational networks. In the aftermath of the attack at Garissa University College in April 2015, it became evident that Kenyan youth were being radicalized at an alarming rate. One of the gunmen who attacked the learning institution was said to be a Kenyan citizen, a graduate of law from the University of Nairobi, who was the son to a local leader. Therefore, unlike in the past, al-Shabaab has crossed the economic divide to recruit the learned and well off. Their success greatly lays in their exploitation of the fault lines that have existed in the Kenyan society. Corruption within most sectors of society have taken root and replaced nationalism. One argument that this paper puts forth is that anti-terrorism strategies are bound to fail if not backed by increased efforts to entrench nationalism and decrease corruption.

The Islamist militants in Kenya stress on the corruption of state machinery, historical injustices, and marginalization as justification for war. Unlike state relations where *jus ad bellum* (the conditions for going to war) is recognized under international law, terrorist groups resort to radicalization which creates a "just-cause" theory of jihad within its ranks. Terrorist members are therefore convinced that jihad is a just war, fighting for perceived justice. Counter-terrorism measures should therefore address these three basic factors that have made society vulnerable for a long time: corruption, marginalization, and perceived historical injustices. These domestic factors create fertile ground for terrorists to infiltrate the state and exploit social problems to propagate their global influence. Both al-Qaeda and the Islamic State are seeking dominance in the region.

CONCLUSION

Today's terrorists operate under the framework of networks through affiliation and collaborations. Terrorism in Africa is therefore influenced by global currents created by the global terrorist networks. In the contemporary setting, it is neither a domestic or regional phenomenon, but one that exists in a global network structure. These global networks operate parallel to an anarchic international order whose main participants are states. States are formal political organizations based on hierarchy. Terrorist groups on the other hand adopt a mixture of hierarchical and non-hierarchical structures of

intertwined networks. These networks are both in terms of collaboration and affiliation amongst the terrorist groups, and also the structure of a specific terrorist group. The internal structure of a terrorist group consists of cells all of which are interconnected through a network structure. The nature of the linkages that connect terrorist groups affect its ability to survive.

In Africa one might say terrorist groups are succeeding because of issues like poverty which makes target groups for recruitment easier, corruption which aids in movement of arms from one region to another and also movement of people even without documents across borders and lastly lack of nationalism or patriotism which means citizens really do not care about protecting the rule of law. If these issues were to be addressed it could be a start even though not an end towards fighting the terrorist groups.

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СЕТЕВОЙ АНАЛИЗ ТЕРРОРИЗМА В АФРИКЕ: ПОСЛЕДСТВИЯ ДЛЯ КЕНИИ

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В статье освещаются проблемы, с которыми сталкивается международное сообщество в борьбе с терроризмом, а также необходимость изменения тактики для более эффективного противодействия. Терроризм может принимать различные формы и совершается как государ-

ственными, так и негосударственными субъектами. В данном исследовании рассматривается сетевая структура терроризма и террористических групп. В современной обстановке террористические организации действуют транснационально, следовательно, актуально использование термина «терроризм без границ». Стимулирующим фактором распространения терроризма является его сетевая структура, которая дает возможность быстрой экспансии и предотвращения несанкционированного проникновения. Сетевая структура также особо касается Африки, где глобальные террористические сети, такие как Аль-Каида и т. наз. Исламское государство, соперничают за влияние. Боко Харам в Западной Африке является филиалом Исламского государства, и это обеспечивает возможные связи с ИГ в Ливии. Боко Харам рассматривается себя в качестве западной провинции ИГ. На Синайском полуострове также были зафиксированы всплески террористических нападений, совершенных так называемой провинцией Синай, которая рассматривает себя в качестве провинции Исламского государства. Это говорит о сложной сетевой структуре террористических сетей в Африке и растущей угрозе воинствующего ислама. Особый акцент в статье посвящен анализу террористической угрозы в Кении.

Ключевые слова: терроризм, война, сетевой анализ, радикализация

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