Newsletter

NATIONAL COUNTER TERRORISM CENTRE

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Dignitaries at the launch of the Second Nairobi Caucus on Preventing the Exploitation of Technology and Communication for Terrorist Use. The forum explored ways of curtailing misuse of emerging technologies by extremists.

Kenya hosts forum on combating exploitation of technology by terrorists

By NCTC team

Kenya hosted a successful international conference to discuss ways of curbing the use of highly advanced and innovative forms technology in propagating terrorism and other forms of violent extremism.

The Second Nairobi Caucus on Preventing the Exploitation of Technology and Communication for Terrorist Use was held on August 3-4 and brought together over 350 delegates from Kenya and other countries. *......Continued on Page 4*

Editor's Note

Welcome to the 3rd Edition of the NCTC Newsletter.

It has been a busy four months (May-August) as NCTC continues to engage with the various stakeholders. As you will read here, a lot of the work done over the last few months has focused on capacity building and training, one of the nine pillars of NCTC 's mandate as the national coordinating agency on counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism.

Empowering community-based groups with the knowledge and skills to rally citizens in their localities is crucial in taming and eliminating the threat of terrorism. The Centre prides itself in being the linchpin of a growing network of actors working towards achieving this noble imperative.

The highlight of this edition is the Second Nairobi Caucus on Preventing the Exploitation of Technology for Terrorist Use held on August 3-4, 2023. Misuse of technology by terrorist groups remains a major concern for the international community. The conference aimed at creating awareness of technological and communications vulnerabilities being exploited by terrorists and violent extremists thus enhancing capacity to disrupt terrorism.

August this year marked 25 years since the horrific and cowardly attack in Nairobi in which 257 innocent lives were lost on August 7, 1998. We honor those who lost their lives and those who continue to endure physical, emotional and psychological scars from that day.

The Centre sincerely thanks all its stakeholders for their commitment and diligence. Special thanks go to our partners for their unwavering support. As we continue to walk this path, let us remember that keeping Kenya safe and secure begins with you and me.

NCTC Editorial Team

Quote

It is imperative that the international community finds the resolve and determination to prioritise the fight against terrorism including measures to regulate online spaces and access to high-risk technologies.

Amb. Dr. Monica Juma, National Security Adviser, Republic of Kenya

Vigilance is everything, communities in North-East Kenya told

You have a role in combating terrorism by weeding out extremist elements in your midst, that was the message conveyed to communities living in Kenya's north-eastern counties during a conflict prevention forum in Garissa in June.

The forum was organised by civil society organisations (CSOs) in conjunction with NCTC and the local political leadership as part of peace initiative to prevent conflict and violence during the 2022 election period.

Top on the agenda was promoting community-led interventions in addressing the drivers of conflict, violence and extremism in Garissa. Search for Common Ground is the lead civil society group in the Uchaguzi Bila Balaa election peace initiative.

NCTC Head of Prevention and Resilience, Njenga Miiri, reminded communities living in north eastern Kenya to be vigilant against infiltration by terrorists from Somalia, further urging them to cooperate with security agencies

The National Counter Terrorism Centre uses stakeholder forums such as these to sensitize Kenyans on the need for vigilance

in ending the menace. He also encouraged CSOs to work closely with the county commissioners in identifying potential threats to peace and security.

> "You have a role in combating terrorism by weeding out extremist elements in your midst."

Lagdera MP Abdikadir Hussein emphasized the responsibility of local residents in ensuring that Al-Shabaab militia and other criminal gangs do not operate in the region. Garissa County Deputy Governor, Hon. Abdi Dagane, said communities must be at the frontline of tackling insecurity but there is need to foster trust with government and security agencies.

Mr. Dagane added that the county government will rally political and religious leaders to fight extremism and prevent radicalization of the youth.

Kenya roots for community-led war on extremism at UN forum

Kenya has made a strong case for greater involvement and participation of communities and other sectors of society in eliminating the threat posed to countries by violent extremism and terrorism, a position articulated at the United Nations General Assembly on Global Counter Terrorism Strategy held in June.

Speaking at the forum, NCTC Director, Dr. Rosalind Nyawira, emphasized the singular importance of a whole-of-society approach in curtailing the ability of terrorists to recruit followers from the populace.

The UN General Assembly on Global Counter Terrorism in session

Kenya hosts conference on combating use of technology by terrorists

Amb. Dr. Monica Juma addresses delegates during the opening ceremony of the caucus

Kenya successfully hosted an international conference to discuss ways of curbing the use of highly advanced and innovative forms technology in propagating terrorism and other forms of violent extremism.

The Second Nairobi Caucus on Preventing the Exploitation of Technology and Communication for Terrorist Use was held on August 3-4 and brought together over 350 delegates from Kenya and other countries.

The conference, attended by experts in counter-terrorism and information and communication technology (ICT) as well as delegates from the private sector, academia, media, civil society and other stakeholders, highlighted the need to share knowledge on the threats environment and design strategic responses to counter use of technology and ICT by extremist groups.

> **The growing exploitation of technology and communication by terrorists calls for sustained and innovative approaches in our counter terrorism efforts.**

The forum was hosted by NCTC in partnership with the United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT),

the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT), the British High Commission in Nairobi and the Aqaba Process.

While officially opening the conference, the National Security Advisor to the President of the Republic of Kenya, Ambassador Dr. Monica Juma, called on the international community to step up efforts to prevent terrorist organisations from exploiting the rapid advancement in technology to propagate their operational and strategic goals.

"New technological advancements are powerful tools in the fight against terrorism and have significantly enhanced our abilities to degrade the threat. However, the same tools have been effectively deployed by terrorists and violent extremists, extending their reach, and amplifying their abilities in a manner unrestrained by laws, morals and ethics," said Amb. Dr. Juma in her keynote speech.

In her welcoming remarks, NCTC Director Dr. Nyawira called for strategic responses to the ever-evolving vulnerabilities posed by the deployment of technology by terrorists.

"The growing exploitation of technology and communication by terrorists calls for sustained and innovative approaches in our counter terrorism efforts. It is incumbent on the global community to build capabilities, partnerships and mobilise the resources necessary to address this evolving vulnerability," remarked Dr. Nyawira.

Experts caution new technologies amplifying terror

High-profile speakers at the conference called for an innovative framework to anchor collective global measures to counter the use of technology as a force multiplier for terrorist groups. They noted increased deployment by extremists of Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics, the Internet of Things, Web3, Blockchain, 3D printing, genetic engineering, quantum computing, machine learning among others in planning, training, radicalisation, propaganda, communication, livestreaming, incitement, glorification and fundraising.

Dr. Erin Saltman, Interim Executive Director at GIFCT, flagged increased use of social media platforms (Facebook, WhatsApp, closed chatrooms) to spread terrorist propaganda and ideology. She also pointed to the role of the Internet in algorithmic amplification of terrorism and violent extremism as an emerging major challenge for the global tech community.

The use of smaller and isolated platforms, algorithmic amplification and emerging technologies to broadcast harmful content falling below the terrorism threshold, imposes a duty on States to adopt good practices in mitigating terrorist abuse of online spaces to disseminate malicious narratives, noted Dr. Panos Stasinopoulos of the British High Commission in Kenya.

Zaid Masarweh from the Aqaba Process, argued for more robust online moderation tools as a way of reducing the availability and accessibility of radicalisation content on digital social platforms.

A session during the Second Edition of the Nairobi Caucus on prevention of use of technology by terrorists.

Let us deny terrorists the tools to recruit and operate

> **There is urgent need for measures to moderate terrorist content online, that offer legal clarity on the obligations of infrastructure and service providers, as well as other technology companies.**

(This is an abridged version of the keynote speech by Amb. Dr. Juma, National Security Advisor to the President of the Republic of Kenya, at the Second Nairobi Caucus on Preventing the Exploitation of Technology and Communication for Terrorist Use held on August 3-4, 2023)

By Amb. Dr. Monica Juma

There is no doubt that our world is being shaped today and will be driven in the future by technology - which is going to impact in a profound way how the lives of individuals, families and societies including their development trajectory will evolve.

The fusion of technological advances that characterize the 4th industrial revolution including artificial intelligence, robotics, the Internet of Things, Web3, Blockchain, 3D printing, genetic engineering, quantum computing, machine learning among others are fundamentally transforming how we live and interact with each other.

Online spaces and the gifts of technology are global commons, for which we have a collective responsibility to advance and protect especially from the persistent, evolving and geographically diffuse threat of terrorism.

New technological advancements are powerful tools in the fight against terrorism and have significantly enhanced our abilities to degrade the threat. However, the same tools have been effectively deployed by terrorists and violent extremists, extending their reach, and amplifying their abilities in a manner unrestrained by laws, morals or ethics.

The internet including the dark web, all social media platforms, digital payment facilities, virtual assets, web hosting, cloud, archiving and file sharing services as well as unmanned vehicles have been adopted to facilitate a wide range of terrorist activities. Recently, this list has grown to include gaming and augmented reality.

We have to contend with the pressing and manifest challenge of terrorism exploiting communication particularly the continued spread of terrorist content in social media platforms. Terrorist propaganda, disinformation, incitement and recruitment in online spaces remains rife and is often unchallenged or unmoderated.

There is urgent need for measures to moderate terrorist content online, that offer legal clarity on the obligations of infrastructure and service providers, as well as other technology companies. Further, such measures need to provide a common criterion for determining designated, proscribed, dissolved, or banned organisations as well as clarity on what constitutes terrorist content and recommendations on how to adjudicate it.

It is necessary that we consistently invest in understanding how this threat is mutating by investing in research and other knowledge products. We are all on a very steep learning curve because our enemy is resilient, innovative and highly adaptive.

We also need to evolve a domestic policy and legal framework that is versatile and effectual. Our response must be anchored on rule of law which is what contrasts us from the violent utopia terrorists seek to create and which reaffirms our shared values, common aspirations and enduring commitment to a just and peaceful world.

Women, youth more vulnerable to online radicalization

The intersection of gender and security came to the fore during the Second Nairobi Caucus.

According to Dr. Fathima Azmiya Badurdeen, a lecturer at the Technical University of Mombasa, enhanced use of social media by women and youth made them vulnerable to radicalisation. "Radicalisation sometimes starts online and continues offline and vice versa. We need to develop counter-narratives using music, arts and culture as well as digital peacebuilding."

The failure to pay attention to these emerging demographic dynamics, says Dr. Ali Mustafa of the Horn Institute for Strategic Studies, does not augur well for the fight against terrorism into the future since the world is now entering a new wave of radicalisation with AI being the force multiplier of this wave.

The digital journey of radicalisation is a tiered process that involves the use of sophisticated online techniques to lure sympathizers. Terrorist recruiters usually begin with subtle narratives in visible moderated layers before shifting to hidden unmoderated spaces characterised by direct narratives and trolling to identify sympathizers. They also use private unmoderated layers with explicit narratives using popular encrypted social media sites like WhatsApp and Telegram.

We must curtail growing affinity for technology by terror groups

Dr. Nyawira is Director, National Counter Terrorism Centre

The growing exploitation of technology and communication by terrorists calls for sustained and innovative approaches in our counter terrorism efforts. It is incumbent on the global community to build capabilities, partnerships and mobilise the resources necessary to address this evolving vulnerability.

Terrorist groups active in our region have demonstrated an affinity for technology including unmanned systems, digital currencies and informational tools necessary for communication, recruitment and incitement.

We are witnessing a resurgence of terrorist operated websites, the development of sophisticated moderation evasion tactics, increased decentralisation, enhanced dissemination techniques.

This enhanced ability to circumvent moderation efforts points to moderation blind spots among infrastructure and service providers including language and a limited understanding of the indigenous attributes of terrorist activity specific to East and Southern Africa.

These are challenges that we have to address collectively, and which can only be sufficiently degraded if we mobilise all stakeholders; creating synergies, building capabilities and deploying resources to deny terrorist an information advantage and free reign over high-risk technologies. In doing so, we have to walk a tight balance between safety, free speech and privacy.

Kenya recently hosted the Second Nairobi Caucus on Preventing the Exploitation of Technology and Communication for Terrorist Use. The Caucus is a framework born of the understanding that terrorism and violent extremism are a shared, complex and constantly mutating challenge that is best addressed through concerted, collective efforts that are locally inspired and locally owned.

There is need to complement existing efforts by providing strategic yet practical solutions to the dynamic ways terrorism and violent extremism is manifesting in our specific context.

Tech companies and the academia have a valuable role as partners in this conversation and action, especially in carrying out research on the new technology and its impact on security, and co-create responses.

25 years since US Embassy bombing, progress made in securing country

It remains the biggest attack in Kenya's history in terms of lives lost and destruction to property. The August 7 1998 bombing of the US Embassy in Nairobi marked what security experts term as a watershed moment in the country's history with terrorism.

The significance of the attack, which happened simultaneously with a similar hit on the US Embassy in Dar es Salaam, lies in the fact that it set Kenya on a new counter-terrorism trajectory both in terms of preparedness and response.

"It was a watershed moment in so far as Kenya's understanding of international security is concerned. Also, it was a wakeup call for us as a country to be vigilant beyond our borders," reminisces Dr. Hassan Khannenje, a director at the Horn Institute of Strategic Studies.

He alludes to Kenya being an ally of the US as a primary factor motivating to the Al Qaeda to strike in the heart of Nairobi. "The jihadists had targeted the United States as their number one enemy. Any ally of the US was naturally going to be seen as an extension of that enmity."

He however points out that Kenya's counter-terrorism capabilities have significantly improved. "The systematic involvement of diverse actors under an all-of-society approach has had a tremendous impact in reducing terror-related incidences.

> **Kenya has a very vibrant prevention strategy in place to minimize such incidences**

This view is echoed by Dr. Rosalind Nyawira, Director, National Counter Terrorism Center. "We have really matured and grown in counter-terrorism and violent extremism. We have had to learn and generate our own capacity as a country to deal with this threat. Kenya has a very vibrant prevention strategy in place to minimize such incidences," explains Dr. Nyawira.

Dominic Wabala, a Nairobi-based crime and security journalist who covered the attack, says Kenya has had to learn and adapt over the years and that the responses to such tragedies have vastly improved, the most notable case in point being the attack in Nairobi's Riverside suburb in 2019.

NCTC honors the memory of the 259 people who lost their lives in the August 7, 1998, terrorist attack and salutes those who survived, as well as the many gallant men and women who were involved in the rescue and efforts.

NCTC to strengthen Wajir County Engagement Forum

The government through the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) and working with other stakeholders has stepped up efforts to strengthen community resilience against violent extremism in Wajir County.

For this reason, NCTC has been working closely with the Wajir county government and other actors to sensitize the local community on the dangers of radicalisation and other extremist activities.

In May, NCTC in collaboration with Act! organised a two-day workshop for Wajir County Engagement Forum (CEF) members, to strengthen their capacity to develop and implement effective and sustainable strategies to fight violent extremism at county level.

The initiative is supported by the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), through the Accelerated Response Initiative against Violent Extremism (ARIVE) program being run by Worthy Vision, the lead CSO in implementing the County Action Plan in Wajir County.

The CEF is the body tasked with executing the County Action Plan (CAP) on counter-terrorism and PCVE. It brings together diverse actors including security sector players, religious leaders, civil society groups, private sector, youth leaders and cultural elders.

NCTC has set a target to deliver PCVE training programs targeting 20 counties to have established and effective CEF structures and develop annual work plans to effect the CAPs.

Forums like this one in Garissa organised by the National Counter Terrorism Centre and partners like the European Union helped in fostering peace before, during and after the 2022 elections

EU-funded election peace effort at the coast concludes

A project aimed at championing peace in Kenya's coastal region before, during and after the 2022 general elections, has been hailed as a success.

The 18-month program dubbed 'Uchaguzi Bila Balaa' and supported by the European Union, brought together local communities, civil society organisations (CSOs), and government agencies, to identify and address threats to peaceful elections. It involved community vigilance and social media listening, focusing on potential triggers of conflict and violence.

Stakeholders who convened in Mombasa in June to review the impact of the project declared that it had met its objectives. The highlight was an early warning system

monitoring online conversations, especially Facebook and TikTok, to help track hate speech, misinformation and their impact on communities.

Among the CSOs that participated in the initiative include Search for Common Ground, Human Rights Agenda (HURIA), Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI), Kiunga Youth Bunge Initiative (KYBI), Tana River Peace Reconciliation and Development and Ijara Women Peace for Peace.

The National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) was involved in coordinating the various stakeholders and conducting training in Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE).

Isiolo police trained on tackling violent extremism

Seventy-five National Police Service (NPS) officers in Isiolo County were in May trained in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism (PCVE) as part of efforts to enhance security in the region.

Officers drawn from various NPS formations - Administration Police, General Service Unit, Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Critical Infrastructure Police Unit – were involved in the exercise coordinated by the National Counter Terrorism Center.

Speaking at the launch of the two-day event, Isiolo County Police Commander, Ahmed Barua, lauded the training terming it a boost to the county's counter-terrorism quest. "Police officers are the first responders and thus require continuous training to deal with crime and terrorism dynamics," said Mr. Barua.

David Mugambi, who represented the Director of CVE & OC at NPS, said the course aims to equip officers with the right skillset for dealing effectively with an ever-evolving threat to society and national security.

"Terrorism and violent extremism still pose a threat to national security. As front line responders, I urge the officers who benefited from this training to put the knowledge to positive use in preventing and countering violent extremism, said Mr. Mugambi.

As part of its mandate to build capacity of law enforcement agencies under the security pillar, the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC), was instrumental in the training. NCTC Director Dr. Rosalind Nyawira noted that upskilling law enforcement officers with PCVE is critical in enhancing their effectiveness in detecting, deterring and disrupting terror-related activities.

Under the National Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism, security sector players are tasked with ensuring that all terrorist activities including radicalization are dealt with conclusively under the criminal justice system. In the past, NCTC has trained personnel from various security institutions to infuse them with skills to carry out PCVE activities within communities and in prisons.

> **Police officers are the first responders and thus require continuous training to deal with crime and terrorism dynamics**

Enhancing the capacity of law enforcement agents in detecting and dealing with terror threats is a critical aspect of the national counter terrorism strategy. Here, police officers in Isiolo County are trained on responding to the ever-evolving threat of terrorism.

Lamu, Kwale leaders commit to promoting cohesion

Consultative forum organised by Kiunga Youth Bunge and Search for Common Ground in Lamu County.

The political leadership of Lamu County has committed to be at the forefront of fighting violent extremism and promoting cohesion among communities living in the area.

Led by Lamu Governor Issa Timamy, the leaders reiterated the need to build trust and collaboration among political actors to ensure peace and stability in the county. They spoke at a consultative meeting organised by Kiunga Youth Bunge and Search for Common Ground in collaboration with the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC), and supported by the European Union.

The event was attended by Mr. Timamy, his deputy, Raphael Munyua, Senator Joseph Kamau, Lamu County Woman Representative, Monica Muthoni, among a host of dignitaries from the area.

Lamu has over the years borne the brunt of terror attacks perpetrated by the Al-Shabaab militia based in Somalia, making it one of the counties where the government has stepped up efforts to identify and mitigate risks related to electoral violence and violent extremism.

A similar initiative is ongoing in Kwale County where leaders have resolved to uphold peace and coexistence among the communities living there. The local administration organised a peace conference in June attended by religious leaders, boda-boda operators, as well as community, business, youth and women groups.

One of the PCVE strategies at the grassroots involves securing economic livelihoods for the youth through sports and small business ventures.

A key mandate of the Centre is to guide engagements with political actors at the local, county and national levels towards prevention and countering of violent extremism (PCVE). Political leaders are instrumental in rallying the citizenry to be peaceful and united. In both Lamu and Kwale, NCTC has been pushing for local leaders to play the role of PCVE ambassadors.

Meanwhile, Lamu County has stepped up sensitization of locals on how to identify and report suspicious activities and individuals. Speaking at the launch of the initiative, Njenga Miiri from NCTC called on locals to participate in the initiative as it would help improve security in the region by preventing attacks by Al Shabaab and other criminal elements.

Search for Common Ground, National Police Service and UK-based Royal United Services Institute the partners involved in the program.

> **One of the PCVE strategies at the grassroots involves securing economic livelihoods for the youth through sports and small business ventures.**

Enhancing the capacity of law enforcement agents in detecting and dealing with terror threats is a critical aspect of the national counter terrorism strategy. Here, police officers in Isiolo County are trained on responding to the ever-evolving threat of terrorism.

Kilifi to remodel county anti-terror action plan

Kilifi County has embarked on realigning its response to emerging dynamics of radicalisation with a view to shrinking the pool of terror activities. This latest move was revealed at a forum to review the county roadmap on responding to the threat of terrorism.

"We are confident that with the support of all stakeholders, the revised Kilifi County Action Plan will address the critical needs of the persons at risks the county, in order to deny any opportunities for terror activities to thrive in Kilifi County," said Dr. Ruth Masha, Kilifi County Executive for Gender, Social Services, Youth and Sports, representing the governor.

Other speakers at the meeting highlighted the urgency of addressing religious extremism as a social malady as seen in the Shakahola tragedy. "We cannot pretend that extremism is manifesting itself in ways that require us to re-evaluate our strategies to fight this deadly vice," said a representative from the Kenya Society Support Centre, a local non-government organisation.

Security remains a national government constitutional function but counties are required by law to formulate and effect plans to prevent and counter violent extremism. All the 47 counties in Kenya have a County Action Plan (CAP) while some have even gone further to enact county legislation tackling violent extremism.

Victims of terrorism to continue receiving support

One of the missing links in the war on terrorism is lack of awareness among community members of their role in identifying and countering dangerous narratives that eventually erupt into violence. One way to address this is by equipping individuals and community groups with knowledge of their role in stemming violent extremism.

Building the capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) to receive and disseminate information on preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE) is yet another strategy towards enhancing this know-how.

This is why CSOs in Mandera County came together in June to explore solutions to lack of information on the role of community actors in PCVE. Participants at the forum agreed that in order for CSOs to be effective, they require a deeper understanding of PCVE for their activities to be more impactful at the grassroots.

The National Counter Terrorism Centre facilitated the training which sponsored by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) through Royal Danish Embassy and Danida.

NCTC initiates consultations on 'soft target' protection

Delegates follow proceedings at the consultative forum on protecting 'soft targets' held at the United Nations Office on Counter Terrorism in Nairobi in May 2023.

The National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) hosted the initial consultations on enhancing safety and security of critical infrastructure and other "soft targets" in collaboration with the Global Program on Countering Terrorist Threats against Vulnerable Targets, in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Counter Terrorism (UNOCT) Programme Office in Nairobi.

The purpose of the talks is to earmark Kenya's needs and priorities in the area of safety and security of sites considered exposed to terrorism-related attacks. The forum also explored the legal, institutional and operational frameworks. The expected outcome is a national plan of action for the country's future activities in this area.

The consultations, held in May 29-31, was funded by the Government of Qatar and brought together 33 participants from the Government of Kenya and the private sector, the UN Office in Nairobi, UNOCT (implementing partners of Vulnerable Targets Programme), the Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI).

NCTC conducts live public spaces protection drill

General Service Unit Commandant Eliud Lagat addresses guests during the live exercise dubbed Livex in Nairobi in May to test preparedness of security agencies in responding to a terrorist attack.

Protection of public spaces is one of the most effective ways of deterring and disrupting attacks by terrorists. Many countries have now prioritized enhancement of public protection capabilities in their counter-terrorism toolkits.

Kenya is no exception. Having endured terrorist attacks that have claimed hundreds of lives, strengthening the security of public spaces like hotels, malls, cinemas, schools, hospitals and offices is imperative.

In partnership with Spain, Kenya successfully implemented a training programs aimed at enhancing the protective skills of law enforcement personnel guarding public buildings and areas including critical infrastructure. This culminated in a live exercise in May dubbed Livex in Nairobi, where the officers showcased their skills in neutralizing a mock "terror attack".

The National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) in partnership with Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Spaces and the Spanish Guardia Civil rolled out the CT Public Spaces training program for the National Police Service. The program was funded by the European Union.

Pictorials

A forum to sensitize local residents in Lamu County on the dangers of extremism and need for action by all community actors.

Officers drawn from various security agencies take part in a live security exercise to test preparedness to handle a terrorism situation. Protecting public spaces is a key pillar of counter terrorism.

Sensitization of stakeholders in the media and online space constitutes an active measure in countering extremist narratives. Here, journalists from the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation undergo training organised by the National Counter Terrorism Center.

National Counter Terrorism Center participated in a workshop on addressing irregular migration as part of capacity building for law enforcement agencies involved in prevention and countering of violent extremism. The workshop held in Naivasha in August was organised by IOM and NCM.

National Counter Terrorism Centre Director Dr. Rosalind Nyawira delivers her welcome remarks during the opening ceremony of the Second Edition of the Nairobi Caucus in August.

Discussions during one of the breakout sessions during the Nairobi Caucus on Preventing the Exploitation of Technology and Communication for Terrorist Use.

Hoteliers benefit from public spaces protection skills

Representatives of hospitality service providers in Kenya's coastal region attend a workshop on protecting public spaces

Hotel operators in the North Coast region had the opportunity to gain new skills as part of a program to entrench best practice in protection of public spaces from terrorism.

The training in June in Watamu, Malindi, was attended by 42 hotel managers and 170 staff and was conducted by experts from the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC). Among the crucial skills acquired by the trainees include detection of suspicious activities and items, basic knowledge on managing attacks involving firearms and other weapons, and improvised explosive device and bomb threats.

A similar exercise was conducted for staff of Hill Park Hotel in Nanyuki. NCTC is mandated to undertake training and capacity building for counter terrorism and prevention of violent extremism.

The Centre has been carrying out training for staff involved in security and protection of public buildings and businesses to enhance their ability to detect, deter and disrupt potential attacks.

This year, NCTC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) to collaborate in such programs. The hotels fall within the ambit of KEPSA. A similar training exercise was organised for a leading Kenyan auto firm in the month of July.

Jeremy Ndegwa, Principal Liaison Officer at NCTC, said the Centre is committed to working with all stakeholders to achieve the goal of safer public spaces in Kenya.

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