



Newsletter

NATIONAL COUNTER TERRORISM CENTRE

IN THIS ISSUE...

➤ **Kenya formally admitted to global counter-terrorism forum ... Pg. 3**

➤ **NCTC concludes nationwide strategy review process ... Pg. 4**

➤ **Aviation sector players trained in CT awareness Pg. 7**

➤ **Nakuru revamps county anti-terror action plan Pg. 8**

➤ **NGAOs trained in combating radicalization Pg. 10**

➤ **PICTORIALS Pg. 11**

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Director, National Counter Terrorism Center Dr. Rosalind Nyawira, addresses participants at a public participation meeting in Mombasa to review the National Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism (NSCVE)

NCTC concludes public dialogue to review the National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism

By NCTC Team

A national discussion to review the progress made with implementing Kenya's strategy to prevent and counter violent extremism (PCVE) successfully concluded in Mombasa in December, marking a significant milestone in

the country's efforts to develop an all-of-society approach in combating terrorism.

Story continued on page 4

From the Editorial Team

Welcome to this edition of the NCTC newsletter. 2023 was a busy year for the Center, engaging with partners and stakeholders, in keeping with the mandate to help keep the country safe and secure from terrorism.

Notably, we have just wrapped up a nationwide consultative review of the National Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism (NSCVE). This exercise is the first since the strategy was unveiled in 2016, and the outcome will therefore significantly shape how Kenya progresses its counter terrorism agenda going forward.

Our successful engagements with various groups and institutions during the year underscore the centrality of a whole-of-society approach in decisively addressing the threat of terrorism and violent extremism facing our Nation.

Sustained vigilance is the bedrock of a successful national effort to counter violent extremism and neutralize the enemy. Hence, the need for every citizen and community to play their part in identifying and reporting any suspicious activities and persons to the relevant authorities, as encapsulated in the Center's mantra of "See something, Say Something."

Special thanks to the entire team at NCTC for making this publication possible through your good work. NCTC also sincerely thanks our partners and stakeholders for the continued support and collaboration. We look forward to another fruitful and engaging year 2024.

Editor



Commemorating 21 years since Kikambala terror attack



Mombasa Paradise Hotel in Kikambala

November 28, 2023, marked the twenty-second anniversary since the criminal rampage at the Mombasa Paradise Hotel in Kikambala in which fifteen people - 12 Kenyans and 3 Israelis- lost their lives in the attack believed to have been carried out by Al Qaeda. Another 80 people were injured.

The terrorists simultaneously but unsuccessful-

fully attempted to crash an Israeli airliner. Fortunately, the Tel Aviv-bound airplane taking off from Mombasa's Moi International Airport landed safely hours later with 260 people on board. Missiles launched by the terrorist had missed their target.

The incident, coming barely four years after the atrocious carnage at the US Embassy in

Nairobi, also blamed on Al Qaeda, was a painful reminder that Kenya was now squarely in the crosshairs of terror networks. However, much has been done to boost the country's ability to detect, deter and disrupt terrorist activities on our soil. We honor those who lost their lives in the 2002 Kikambala attack and the survivors of that horrific event.

Kenya takes part in Doha Forum 2023

Kenya participated in a global forum aimed at promoting dialogue on critical challenges facing the world.

The 21st Edition of the Doha Forum, held in December 2023, brought together leaders in policy-making to discuss how to build innovative and action-driven networks.

The Director, National Counter Terrorism Center, Dr. Rosalind Nyawira, participated in a panel discussion at the 21st Edition of Doha Forum, which took place in December 2023.

She highlighted the value of behavioral science in understanding what drives youth out of conflict zones and back into their countries. She spoke during a session titled, "Breaking Barriers with Behavioral Science: A New Approach to Building Resilient Communities and



Director, National Counter Terrorism Center Dr. Rosalind Nyawira, (far right) at the Doha Forum in December 2023

Promoting Social Inclusion," which focused on the role of behavioral insights in addressing global challenges.

The Forum is a global platform held annually in Doha, the capital city of Qatar.



Caption- Community stakeholder forum supported by the National Counter Terrorism Center

Kenya formally joins global counter terrorism body



KENYA JOINS GLOBAL FORUM

Kenya is now a member of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) and committed to advancing the forum's mission to diminish terrorist recruitment and enhance capabilities to fight violent extremism.

The announcement was made at the 13th Ministerial Meeting of GCTF in September 2023 where Kenya was admitted alongside Kuwait. Kenya's admission to the forum comes as the global body strengthens regional counter-terrorism efforts.

"This first ever expansion of the Forum reflects the commitment to increasing multilateral cooperation and strengthening regional counter-terrorism efforts in Africa and the Middle East. The admission of Kenya and Kuwait will bring valuable expertise and insight to the Forum," said GCTF in a statement.

According to the GCTF website, the organisation brings together policymakers and practitioners from around the world to share experiences and expertise on how to prevent and counter evolving terrorist threat. GCTF is currently co-chaired by Egypt and the European Union.

NCTC concludes nationwide dialogue to review terror prevention strategy



Public participation forum in Laikipia to review national counter-terrorism strategy

A national discussion to review the progress made with implementing Kenya's strategy to prevent and counter violent extremism (PCVE) successfully concluded in Mombasa in December, marking a significant milestone in the country's efforts to develop an all-of-society approach in combating terrorism. Similar forums had been convened across the country for the same purpose.

The final forum held in the coastal city was the culmination of public meetings in various counties to review the National Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism (NSCVE), first unveiled in 2016, as the roadmap for Kenya's quest for a stakeholder-driven pathway to ending the threat posed by violent extremism to its constitutional and social fabric.

Speaking in Mombasa during the closing ceremony, National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) Director, Dr. Rosalind Nyawira, hailed the consultative process as a success, saying the invaluable insights gathered from Kenyans would be incorporated into the revised NSCVE.

"Improving the strategy will align it with current and emerging threats. This underscores the NCTC's commitment to a dynamic and responsive approach to countering violent extremism and terrorism," stated Dr. Nyawira.

The nationwide public participation exercise saw citizens from various counties present their views on how they would like the country's approach to tackling the problems

associated with radicalization, extremism and terrorism addressed. Members of the public were also asked to present their views via the NCTC website on www.counterterrorism.go.ke/nscve

Civil society, community-based groups, men, women and youth groups and clergy were also instrumental in mobilizing citizens to take part in the process. The national and devolved government administrative organs also participated in the exercise.

The NSCVE is being reviewed to accommodate continuous change in terrorist modes of operation and evolution of terror activities.



Participants at the Mombasa review meeting



Garissa community representatives give their views

Regional effort to stem illicit weapons flow to terrorists



Delegates from eight Horn of Africa nations at the conference organised by the United Nations Office on Counter Terrorism to halt the flow of illicit weapons to terror groups in the region

Efforts to halt the proliferation of illicit weapons fueling terrorism in the Horn of Africa received a boost after regional partners committed to more stringent measures to prevent acquisition of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and Small and Light Weapons (SALWs).

The resolution was made at a training forum in Nairobi in September under the auspices of the United Nations Office on Counter Terrorism (UNOCT) and attended by security experts from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan and Eritrea.

The forum discussed international, regional and national legal frameworks, norms, standards and good practices in countering the use of IEDs and SALWs by terrorists and other criminal elements.

Noting that IEDs and SALWs pose a major threat to the security and stability of the region, participants at the training called for closer collaboration among States, backed by intelligence sharing, in disrupting the military capabilities of violent groups. A key preventive strategy includes ensuring such groups do not lay their hands on IED precursors used in the manufacture of the devices.

Strengthening border controls is crucial to stemming the flow of illicit arms that extremist groups like Al Shabaab procure to carry out their campaigns of terror in the region. The forum was timely as the region is grappling with an upsurge in trafficking of small arms.

According to the United Nations, disrupting illicit supply of SALWs to terrorist groups is key to winning the war on terrorism.

Kenya charts position for EAC security strategy



Caption- East African Community Headquarters in Arusha

The National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) participated in a pivotal multi-agency meeting convened to chart Kenya's position on crucial regional security issues including the fight against violent extremism.

The meeting on October 12, 2023, was a precursor to the East African Community's (EAC) 8th Meeting of the Sectoral Council on Interstate Security in November. The Sectoral Council on Inter-State Security was established to oversee the implementation of the EAC Regional Strategy for Peace and Security.

NCTC was one of the government agencies that met to finalize Kenya's position paper on the EAC Counter Terrorism Strategy.

Article 124 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community recognizes the need to promote peace and security within the Member States. As such, the regional strategy envisages changes to incorporate new and emerging security challenges.

NCTC has prioritized partnerships with national and multilateral institutions as part of its mandate of coordinating counter-terrorism in Kenya. By aligning with the regional security strategy, Kenya remains committed to strengthening collaboration to address the threat posed by violent extremism.

IGAD hosts communication training on terrorism prevention

The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) convened a Strategic Communication Training Workshop in Addis Ababa Ethiopia on October 11-13, 2023.

The training focused on entrenching gender perspectives into PCVE strategic communication approaches. The training workshop also underscored the necessity of crisis communication as a component of PCVE strategic communication.

The event brought together representatives from the security, justice, legal and ministerial sectors of Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda.

Dr. Simon Nyambura, who heads the IGAD centre of excellence, emphasized the timeliness of the training in enhancing local capacities in PCVE. He also conveyed a message from IGAD Executive Secretary Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu to the participants.

NCTC as part of the Kenyan delegation shared the Kenyan experiences with Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) with their regional counterparts



Participants at the forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on the use of strategic communication to highlight gender perspectives in countering violent extremism

ATMIS officers trained in counter terrorism methods



ATMIS forces at a parade in Somalia/COURTESY

The National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) in September conducted a counter-terrorism sensitization course for military officers deployed in Somalia under the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS).

The training, held at the Kenya School of Infantry in Isiolo County, was geared to strengthening the counter-terrorism (CT) skills of the ATMIS III contingent stationed in the conflict-ravaged nation.

The officers were trained on how to decipher the terrorist's mindset and tactics thus improving their competencies and capabilities in combating Al Shabaab and other terrorist groups.

Senior military officers who conducted the training alongside counter-terrorism experts from NCTC called for well-planned responses as a potent weapon against the terror threat. "The real risk is in our response, not in the capabilities of the enemy and related threats we face," he said.

Since 2011, Kenya's military has been active in Somalia as part of ATMIS, to counter violent extremists and stop terrorist attacks on Kenyan soil. Equipping soldiers with CT skills will therefore bolster Kenya's war on terrorism.

Aviation sector players trained in CT awareness



Aviation workers and operators at the counter terrorism sensitization workshop at Wilson Airport, Nairobi, in September 2023

Protecting critical infrastructure like airports is one way of minimizing vulnerability of public spaces to terrorist attacks. The National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) has therefore prioritized sensitization on protection of sensitive national installations as part of its mandate of coordinating Kenya's counter-terrorism activities.

NCTC organised a series of capacity building activities during the months of September and October 2023, at the invitation of aviation service providers in Nairobi and the Coastal region.

The first was a Counter Terrorism Awareness Training at the Wilson Airport in Nairobi where participants benefitted from knowledge and skills to identify gaps that extremists could exploit and

responses to suspected terrorist activities happening in airports.

The training was attended by 465 staff drawn from Kenya Airports Authority (KAA), Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA), Kenya Airport Police, Aviation Training schools and airline operators domiciled within the airport.

This was followed by a training exercise for 1,540 staff from Moi International Airport, Mombasa, and from Malindi, Ukunda and Manda airports. Apart from protecting the public spaces within the airports, the teams were trained in preventive measures like countering radicalization in the workplace.

They also learnt how to detect and deal with suspicious passenger behavior and close screening of human and vehicular

traffic in airports. The trainees were also sensitized on the importance of reporting suspicious activities, items and persons to the relevant security authorities in line with NCTC mantra of "See Something, Say Something."

KAA Regional Airports Manager, Mr. Joseph Okumu, described the training as an instrumental aspect of the whole-of-government approach to combating terrorism. Mr. Githinji from NCTC emphasized the need to for collaboration among aviation sector players in ensuring safety and security of the country's airports.



NCTC mantra of See Something, Say Something



NCTC trains officers on safety at Wajir Air Base

Security and aviation personnel stationed at the Wajir Air Base have benefitted from training in counter terrorism preparedness. The training was conducted by the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) with the support of the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF).

The capacity building exercise is part of an ongoing program by NCTC and aviation sector stakeholders to strengthen security in the country's airports.

Wajir Airport's proximity to the Kenya-Somalia border necessitates an enhanced level of security and safety to minimize potential attacks by terrorist militia active in the region.

The officers were immersed in current and emerging trends in Counter Terrorism (CT) and Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE). They also learnt how to identify signs of radicalized individuals and threats associated with terrorism.



Officers from the Kenya Defence Forces stationed at Wajir Air Base during a counter-terrorism training session by the National Counter Terrorism Center

Nakuru revamps county anti-terror action plan

Government, civil society organisations and community-based groups in Nakuru County embarked on a review of strategies on preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE).

Meeting under the auspices of the County Engagement Forum (CEF), the forum tasked with coordinating PCVE activities at the devolved level, the stakeholders assessed the context and interventions towards creating awareness and addressing vulnerabilities to violent extremism.

They also discussed ways to revamp the County Action Plan (CAP) in response to evolving dynamics on the ground. The two-day meeting also focused on the Nakuru CAP implementation framework. Area residents had an opportunity to give their opinions on the plan with the process culminating in the launch of the revamped Nakuru CAP within a year.

The forum was coordinated by the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) in partnership with MIDRIFT HURINET and Act Change Transform under the ARIVE program supported by the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF).

The CEF includes representatives



Nakuru County Engagement Forum during the review of the county action plan

of various sectors including security, education, religious leaders, community groups and the private sector. Head of Prevention and Resilience at NCTC, Mr. Njenga Miiri, urged stakeholders to support the process as it would positively impact communities in the

region in terms of countering radicalization and other terrorism activities.

“We must be vigilant to prevent terrorism before it happens, through seamless collective action by all actors. In your various spaces, share messages

to counter the extremists and you will have saved a person from radicalization,” he said.

On his part, Nakuru County Police Commander Samuel Ndany called on residents to play their part in ensuring security of the communities they live in.

Tana River communities support peace initiatives

Communities living in Tana River County has resolved to do more to address insecurity in the region, including curbing the spread of narratives that fuel animosities among locals.

In a meeting that brought together various community-based actors to chart ways of countering radicalization activities by suspected terrorist elements operating in the county, it was agreed that residents will be sensitized on the need for alternative positive narratives to promote peace and security.

The capacity building forum was organised by the Tana River Peace, Reconciliation and Development, a local non-governmental organisation, in collaboration with the County Government of Tana

River.

Other partners in the project were the National Counter Terrorism

Center, MIDRIFT HURINET, Caritas Kenya, Youth and Women for Peace and Sustainable Development, Kiunga Youth

Bunge Initiative, Voice of Peace for All in the Horn of Africa, Human Rights Agenda, SOWED Kenya, among others.



Local administrators in Tana River County attend a sensitization workshop on tackling radicalization. The officers act as a vital link between the government and the local communities

Garissa residents urged to report suspicious activities

Community responses to terrorism and violent extremism are more effective when members of the public are in a position to identify and act on suspicious activities or persons in their midst.

This entails boosting the ability of ordinary citizens to work with security institutions to stop terrorists in their tracks before they harm the community. Among the reasons why many Kenyans are unable to take action is lack of awareness of what constitutes suspicious activities and the steps one should take in

reporting these to the relevant authorities.

These issues were among those discussed at a recent forum convened in Garissa County by the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) for its stakeholders in Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE). The meeting was attended by representatives from the National Government Administration Office (NGAO) and local civil society organisations (CSOs).

Key on the agenda was developing a framework for linking the

civilian community with security agencies, particularly in identifying and reporting suspicious activities and persons. Participants learnt how to spot telltale signs of terror planning activities that could act as an early warning mechanism at the community level.

In order for community members to relay crucial information on suspected terrorist activities, participants singled out the need to build trust and protect whistleblowers from reprisals. Proper reporting channels were also shared with the participants

to enable them provide accurate and timely information to the relevant authorities.

Prompt identification and reporting of questionable activities enables early detection and deterrence of potential terror-related incidents, a critical component in PCVE success.

The forum was supported by NCTC in conjunction with the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) and Search for Common Ground (SFCG). Among the CSOs participating were Ijara Women for Peace and Kiunga Youth Bunge Initiative



Stakeholders at a past forum in Garissa on promoting preventive approaches to countering the threat of terrorism. Local civil society organisations have been actively involved in the process.

Rongo University community sensitized on dangers of extremism

The National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) in collaboration with Rongo University held a training seminar on counter terrorism awareness in September, calling on youth to be vigilant against the dangers of extremism in society.

The seminar involved over 850 students from the university and neighboring secondary schools and was geared to creating awareness among the learners as well as staff on prevention of terrorism within and outside of the learning environment. Rongo University regularly participates in NCTC's counter-terrorism awareness initiatives.

The NCTC team, led by Donald Kimutai, emphasized that reporting suspicious activities to the relevant security agencies is an effective weapon against terrorism. The chief guest at the event was Mr. Nickson Amuomo from the university.

NCTC conducts counter-terrorism awareness campaigns as part of its capacity building mandate under the education pillar of the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism. This involves working closely with learning institutions to promote safe behavior in light of a constantly evolving counter terrorism environment.

Central Rift NGAO trained on tackling radicalization



Administrative officers in Nakuru County attending a workshop on counter-radicalization in October

National Government Administrative Officers (also known as NGAO) stationed in Nakuru County, were in October trained on their role in identifying, preventing and disrupting terrorist activities in the region. Those trained included Deputy County Commissioners, Assistant County Commissioners and local chiefs.

The training was overseen by the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) in conjunction with MIDRIFT HURINET and Act Change Transform through the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF)-funded ARIVE program.

Nakuru East Senior Deputy County Commissioner Mr. Were Simiyu, urged the administrators to fully utilize the 'Nyumba Kumi' community policing initiative to step up efforts to counter radicalization activities in their areas.

MIDRIFT HURINET Executive Director Mr. Joseph Omondi lauded administrators and security officers in the region for collaborating with local community-based organisations under 'Nyumba Kumi' (a nationwide community policing initiative) to promote peace in the county.

Kenya hosts seminar on protection of public spaces

Experts in protection of public spaces drawn from the European Union, Kenya, Ghana and Senegal gathered in Nairobi in September for the 2nd International CT Seminar on Public Spaces.

The forum was organised by the International Collaboration in Action, Spain's Guardia Civil, European Union and Kenya's National Counter Terrorism Center. The experts tackled regional and global terrorism challenges.

Kenya has had a successful collaboration with the European Union in rolling out a counter-terrorism initiative on protection of public spaces. This includes training of security officers and private guards in securing premises that are frequented by the public



National Counter Terrorism Center Director Dr. Rosalind Nyawira (third left) and other officials at the international seminar on protection of public spaces held in Nairobi.

Pictorials



Citizens from Nairobi present their views at a forum to review the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism



Director General of the Spanish Intelligence Centre for Counter Terrorism, Manuel Navarrete plants a tree to commemorate his visit to the National Counter Terrorism Center in Nairobi



PCVE stakeholder workshop in Garissa County. Such forums are critical in building synergy between communities and security agencies in fighting violent extremism



Participants at one of the nationwide public forums to review the national counter-terrorism strategy



Residents of Laikipia County deliberate on ways to strengthen grassroots initiatives to prevent violent extremism



Delegates follow proceedings during a national counter terrorism strategy review meeting in Mombasa



In the tapestry of our history, threads of resilience are woven alongside threads of unity. As we reflect on our ability to endure, let's also acknowledge our duty to keep our communities safe. Stay watchful, report concerns, and be an active part of our collective strength.
#TuweTayariKuilinda

#StayVigilant #SecureKE #wearestrongertogether

#WeAreStronger



Let's expose terrorists in our midst for our security and safety. **See something, say something.**

Report it to NCTC at **0800721600**
(toll free)

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