

## **Security Review (1<sup>st</sup> February-28<sup>th</sup> February 2018)**

**Coverage:** Greater Horn of Africa

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The Horn of Africa is attracting high security-related investments in the recent years with Djibouti becoming a hub for foreign military bases. China, France, Japan, Italy, and the United States already have facilities in the country.<sup>1</sup> In addition, Somaliland signed an agreement with the United Arab Emirates early 2017 to build a military base at Berbera.<sup>2</sup>

Conflicts between Kenya and its neighbor is on the rise. Peace talks between the Turkana and Toposa communities were held due to worsening insecurity caused by cattle rustling at Kenya's border with South Sudan. Strategies were put in place to counter the situation to avoid more harm and bring about peace and tranquility among the communities living in that area. Across the county, parents in Marsabit lamented to the government on issues of their children being radicalized in schools without their knowledge as proof of disappearance of the youths has been noted and has become a major concern to them. This was evident from a report of Sheikhs who visited schools over the weekends and lecturing them on radical ideologies.

In Mogadishu, Lt. Gen. Owoyesigire replaced the outgoing Lt. General Osman Noor Soubagleh who has been the Force Commander of the AU Mission in Somalia. The incoming force Commander had previously served in the Ugandan military as an Air Force Commander and Division Commander of the Field Artillery Division. He pledged to continue with the work that had already started especially on capacity building of the Somali National Army. In Qunyo Barrow town, Lower Shabelle region, Al-Shabaab fighters executed two Kenyans over spying suspicions. Locals were forcefully assembled to witness the gruesome act, which the militants regularly conduct in the area. The executions are carried out either by a firing squad, throat slitting or stoning.

### **MONTHLY SECURITY DETAILS**

This month's security review starts off as the 30<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit kicked off in Addis Ababa on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018. Moussa Faki Mahamat, chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) gave a speech mentioning that African heads of state

should begin to find solutions to conflict and end the bloodletting that has caused displacement of populations in most African countries. This is because of the different conflicts which have attributed to instability of several African countries hence affecting them economically. He noted the death toll in South Sudan as deplorable and the need

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<sup>1</sup> How a tiny African country became the world's key military base; retrieved from

<https://qz.com/1056257/how-a-tiny-african-country-became-the-worlds-key-military-base/> date accessed March 1, 2018

<sup>2</sup> Somaliland: The Horn of Africa's Breakaway State; retrieved from <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/somaliland-horn-africas-breakaway-state> date accessed March 1, 2018

for the conflict to be resolved so as to ensure that leaders in the war-torn country act as role models in promoting peace among the people.<sup>3</sup> On a different note, African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), which is a platform for African countries to assess the commitment to protection of democracy in the continent,<sup>4</sup> commemorated their ten-year anniversary since its establishment in 2007. Violence and death is majorly manifested as a sign of democratic deficit during elections. Democracy has therefore been set aside as a priority of the second order since conflict management has always played a prime role in the rise of religious extremism.<sup>5</sup>

### **Kenya:**

Lamu has been on the receiving end of Violent extremism and it has affected the normal life of school going children as a result of increasing Al-Shabaab activities in the area. Ten-year-old Said Sefu confessed to not attending school for over three years after due to closure related to activities of the Al-Qaeda affiliated group terrorizing countries in the Horn of Africa. Absence of teachers is visible as the schools have been deserted and soldiers are normally seen patrolling the vicinity. As a result, 1,000 students in Lamu and thousands more across the region do not get access to basic education and end up sitting idle at home or in refugee camps.<sup>6</sup> This is a high-risk factor

as lack of education may lead to other factors like unemployment and poor living standards. They may also become vulnerable and prone to radicalization driven by the structural issues also known as the push factors associated with VE. Mohamed Saleh, Kenya's North Eastern Regional Commissioner applauded security agents on the good job done in suppression of the Al-Shabaab menace in the area, that was paying off from the effective counter-terrorism strategy they were using. He highlighted 90 percent of Mandera county was peaceful apart from the stretch from Arabia to Kotulo where the militants use the said region in carrying out activities by attacking security vehicles, target security installations and Safaricom masts as well as plant landmines before retreating to Somalia. The government is in the process of reviewing the preset strategies and formulating new ones to combat terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism in the region.<sup>7</sup>

Peace talks between the Turkana and Toposa communities from South Sudan were held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 led by Turkana Governor Josphat Nanok. These took place in Lokichoggio, Turkana West sub-county necessitated by the worsening insecurity caused by cattle rustling at Kenya's border with South Sudan. Cattle rustling has been an issue that has brought about conflict between various pastoralist

<sup>3</sup> AU to impose sanctions on South Sudan leaders; retrieved from <http://www.kbc.co.ke/international-news/au-to-impose-sanctions-on-south-sudan-leaders/> date accessed February 22, 2018

<sup>4</sup> The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance: *The Role of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs)*; retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001879/187952e.pdf> date accessed March 07, 2018

<sup>5</sup> Trapped in 'Electoral Fallacy': The African Charter on Democracy Ten Years On; retrieved from <http://www.eubulletin.com/8122-trapped-in-electoral-fallacy->

[the-african-charter-on-democracy-ten-years-on.html](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2018/02/02/terrorist-attacks-so-bad-here-kids-cant-even-go-school/1061842001/) date accessed February 26, 2018

<sup>6</sup> Terrorist attacks are so bad here, kids can't even go to school; retrieved from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2018/02/02/terrorist-attacks-so-bad-here-kids-cant-even-go-school/1061842001/> date accessed February 27, 2018

<sup>7</sup> Security agencies commended on fight against Al-Shabaab; retrieved from <https://hivisasa.com/posts/security-agencies-commended-on-fight-against-al-shabaab> date accessed February 27, 2018

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communities and the use of illegal firearms is witnessed in the fights that ensue once there is any form of disagreement. The meeting agreed on different strategies to bring peace and harmony between the warring communities. One of the strategies that was agreed upon between the two communities was dialogue, which will be encouraged through peace committees. As an agreement from the meeting, stolen livestock was to be returned. The return of livestock was to be conducted by the two Governments and Kraal leaders. Another resolution included the setup of a permanent market in Nadapal to foster trade and business between the two communities. Finally, a plan to have a disarmament drive was put in place, to get rid of illegal firearms which have fueled inter-community conflicts; including creating a barrier for rebels from South Sudan who have contributed to conflict due to their civil war.<sup>8</sup>

On 3<sup>rd</sup> February, Ciku (not her real name) narrated her heart-breaking experience at the hands of the Al-Shabaab militants in Somali. The 19-Year-Old Form Four drop out regrets rebelling against her parents. Limited or lack of attention from her parents pushed her to a Facebook page that had images of physically fit women holding guns and captioned 'A place to belong.' Messages that attracted her were mainly for self-actualization and liberation which represented what she thought she needed most at that time. She was already vulnerable hence easy for her to fall prey to

the Al-Shabaab's conniving tactics in luring desperate and disturbed individuals in the society. She got drugged and found herself in Somalia with several other young girls who were repeatedly sexually mistreated, tortured, raped and forced into early marriage. The militants prefer East African girls as they are more sexually appealing compared to their Sub-Saharan African counterparts. They however strongly believe the need to preserve the Somali mujahedeen lineage and therefore they are usually used as sex slaves not to bare children for them. Fortunately, she managed to escape and gave birth at a rehabilitation center where she confessed to have undergone more than one abortion while in captivity.<sup>9</sup>

On 6<sup>th</sup> February, parents in Marsabit requested the Government to step up in its anti-radicalization campaign to prevent their children from being recruited by Al-Shabaab. They lamented on the disappearance of youths without a trace and their high belief that they might have joined the terrorist group. Some parents have further accused five Sheikhs of being involved in radicalization of the youth, as there has been a behavioral change in most of the youths ever since they began attending teachings by the Sheikhs. A parent who sought anonymity, said most of the Sheikhs visit schools over the weekends and lecture students on radical ideologies. The government further said they had a list of 35 youth from Mandera who had been recruited by Al-Shabaab.<sup>10</sup> Elgiva Bwire

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<sup>8</sup> Nanok pushes for peace between the Turkana, South Sudan's Toposa; retrieved from [https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018/02/03/nanok-pushes-for-peace-between-the-turkana-south-sudans-toposa\\_c1708276](https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018/02/03/nanok-pushes-for-peace-between-the-turkana-south-sudans-toposa_c1708276) date accessed February 28, 2018

<sup>9</sup> I was lured into sex slavery by Al Shabaab militants through Facebook; retrieved from [https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001268355/i-was-](https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001268355/i-was-lured-into-sex-slavery-by-militants-through-facebook)

[lured-into-sex-slavery-by-militants-through-facebook](https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001268355/i-was-lured-into-sex-slavery-by-militants-through-facebook) date accessed March 5, 2018

<sup>10</sup> Kenyan parents urge government to prevent children from joining Al-Shabab; retrieved from <http://radioshabelle.com/kenyan-parents-urge-government-prevent-children-joining-al-shabab/> date accessed March 5, 2018

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Oliacha, a 35-year-old man, will serve 15 years in jail after the court of appeal on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February, did away with a life sentence that was imposed on him. This was after he pleaded guilty of being a member of Al-Shabaab terror group six years ago. He was fortunate that the prosecutor failed to table in court a P3 form of two victims who had suffered grievous harm during an attack at Kaka Bus stage on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2011. Oliach was arrested after the terror attack that took place along Race Course Road in Nairobi. He was found with an AK47 rifle, a sub-machine gun, 2 revolver pistols, 2 automatic pistols, 717 bullets, 1 SNG machine gun magazine and 13 hand grenades.<sup>11</sup>

Three bodies of Al-Shabaab militants were found by security agents on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2018 following a foiled attack on a police camp in Kutulo on 8<sup>th</sup> February. The local police commander Stephen Ngetich confirmed that the attackers invaded the special forces camp, which is a combination of elite officers drawn from the Administration Police mainly the Rapid Deployment Unit and the Rural Border Patrol unit, that led to gun battle ending with the assailants retreating. It has been noted that the militants had moved from Mandera to Wajir since there have been repeated attacks in the recent months with them targeting at least five communication masts. The decrease in Mandera attacks has also been attributed to the border wall that was

constructed covering 10Km and plans of extending it to 28 Km is ongoing.<sup>12</sup>

On 16<sup>th</sup> February 2018, two non-local teachers alongside the wife to one of the teachers were killed by suspected Al-Shabaab militants at Qarsa Primary School in Wajir. The militants also set an improvised explosive device (IED) on the route to the school with aim of targeting anyone who would possibly try to reach the area. The IED hit one of the security vehicles that was responding to the attack, fortunately no officer was injured. Shadrack Bundi, vice chair of Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers in Wajir branch, demanded action to be taken in addressing the security issue within seven days or a major demonstration would be carried out in the county which would cause an uproar from different communities and organizations.<sup>13</sup> On the 17<sup>th</sup> of February, Education CS Amina Mohamed warned of a trend of Al-Shabaab militants who were targeting different learning institution in their attacks in Kenya, after they had attacked Qarsa Primary School in Wajir county. She notified the country on the ministry's awareness of security issues and its steps in formulating appropriate measures and guidelines to ensure safety of learners and teachers from terrorism and other threats.<sup>14</sup> Response from the Teacher Service Commission came faster than expected as the teachers demand to be relocated to other schools were met. Adan

<sup>11</sup> Al-Shabaab man sentence is reduced to 15 years; retrieved from <https://www.nation.co.ke/news/Elgiva-Bwire-Oliacha-sentence-is-reduced-to-15-years/1056-4298906-wegiv5/index.html> date accessed March 5, 2018

<sup>12</sup> Bodies of Al-Shabaab fighters found after attempted attack on AP camp; retrieved from <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001269375/al-shabaab-fighters-killed-after-police-foil-night-raid> date accessed March 5, 2018

<sup>13</sup> Three teachers killed in Wajir Shabaab attack; retrieved from [https://www.nation.co.ke/counties/wajir/Teachers-](https://www.nation.co.ke/counties/wajir/Teachers-killed-Al-Shabaab-attack-Wajir-Qarsa-Primary-School/3444790-4306966-kjo6htz/index.html)

[killed-Al-Shabaab-attack-Wajir-Qarsa-Primary-School/3444790-4306966-kjo6htz/index.html](https://www.nation.co.ke/counties/wajir/Teachers-killed-Al-Shabaab-attack-Wajir-Qarsa-Primary-School/3444790-4306966-kjo6htz/index.html) date accessed March 5, 2018

<sup>14</sup> Schools becoming soft target of al Shabaab attacks, warns Amina Mohamed; retrieved from [https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018/02/17/schools-becoming-soft-target-of-al-shabaab-attacks-warns-amina-mohamed\\_c1716215](https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018/02/17/schools-becoming-soft-target-of-al-shabaab-attacks-warns-amina-mohamed_c1716215) date accessed March 5, 2018

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Duale, National Assembly Majority Leader, criticized the Teachers Service Commission on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2018 for transferring non-local teachers from Northeastern to their homes counties, citing that it was discriminatory and a violation of the students' rights and residents who pay taxes to the government. This was after Al-Shabaab attacked Qarsa Primary School and killed two teachers and a wife to one of the teachers.<sup>15</sup>

One person was arrested on 18<sup>th</sup> February suspected to be among the group that carried out an attack at Qarsa Primary School. He was apprehended in Konton area that borders Somalia. This was after Mohamud Saleh, Northeastern regional coordinator, revealed three names of individuals suspected to have masterminded the attack. He mentioned Maalim Yusuf Abdullahi who comes from Bojigaras, Daud Ahmed Mohamed from Kutulo and Abdirashid Ibrahim Osman who are said to be cousins. Residents were warned against harboring terrorist as they would be prosecuted. This has been a major challenge as the government finds it difficult to eradicate the militia while they are housed by the same people who are falling prey to the numerous attacks being laid.<sup>16</sup>

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of February in Isiolo County, Security officers pieced together details of a bomb plot that was meant to occur in the city. Luckily, the terror plot was obstructed. It was discovered that one of the suspects had apparently booked into a hotel opposite

the Central Police Station ten days earlier. The police confiscated five AK-47 assault rifles and 36 fully loaded magazines from one Abdimajit Adan, who was arrested alongside Mohammed Nane after a brief exchange of fire with one other suspect killed at the scene. Two other people believed to be part of a larger terrorism cell that was planning to carry out a massive attack in Nairobi, were also arrested in the Central Business District. However, it is not clear the exact location of the imminent attack, but the police attached to the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit (ATPU) clarified that the improvised explosive devices and grenades recovered would have been powerful enough to bring down more than one multistoried building. Preliminary reports indicate that the car bomb was assembled by Al-Shabaab experts at El-Adde in Somalia.<sup>17</sup>

20<sup>th</sup> February 2018, approximately 40 Al-Shabaab youth returnees in Kilifi County were taken to various rehabilitation centres in Mombasa as they had surrendered themselves to the Government. The youths are from Malindi, Mambrui, Kilifi town and Mtwapa. Most of them were lured into the terror group in Somalia with the promise of a good life and have combat trainings. Returnees are normally offered amnesty if they surrender to the police or other government officials for counselling after which they are then reintegrated into the society. Most returnees hide in Malindi to avoid arrest as it is a haven for wanted terror suspects. Unfortunately, two human rights

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<sup>15</sup> Duale criticises TSC for moving teachers out of Northeastern; retrieved from <https://mobile.nation.co.ke/news/education/Aden-Duale-criticises-TSC-teacher-transfer-Wajir-northeastern/3126398-4318212-11e1wst/index.html> date accessed March 5, 2018

<sup>16</sup> One suspect arrested over Wajir school terror attack; retrieved from <https://mobile.nation.co.ke/counties/Suspect-arrested-Wajir-terror-attack-Qarsa-Primary-School/1950480->

<4312730-item-1-a4bh04z/index.html> date accesses March 5, 2018

<sup>17</sup> Shabaab terrorist rented room next to city police base retrieved from; <https://www.nation.co.ke/news/How-city-dodged-big-Shabaab-bomb/1056-4311896-yo4mjhz/index.html> date accessed March 5, 2018

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groups at the coast have refused to deal with them as the government blacklisted Haki Africa for allegedly supporting terrorism with their accounts being frozen.<sup>18</sup>

### **Somalia:**

The main problem in Mogadishu Somalia has been Al-Shabaab, and the need to eradicate them has been seen from efforts put in place by the government in the fight against the terrorist group. With regards to that, The Peace and Conflict Resolution on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018 replaced the outgoing Lt. General Osman Noor Soubagleh who has been the Force Commander of the AU Mission in Somalia since July 2016, with a career soldier, Lt. Gen. Owoyesigire who holds two masters' degrees in Defense and Strategic Studies and in Religion. The incoming force Commander had previously served the Ugandan military as Air Force Commander and Division Commander as well as Field Artillery Division, he pledged to continue with the work that had already started especially on capacity building of the Somali National Army. Some of his duties include; overseeing a seamless, gradual and condition-based transition and transfer of the security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security forces as well as destroying the remaining pockets of the al Qaeda affiliated Al-Shabaab militants.<sup>19</sup>

Due to an increase in Al-Shabaab activities, the United States has stepped up its drone

attacks and combat operations in the Horn of Africa states. This has raised security questions about the innocent civilian's casualties or displaced as they are majorly not the targeted individuals or groups. The primary victims are normally women, children and the elderly.<sup>20</sup> Also in Lower Shabelle, Wanlaweyn district which lies about 90km Northwest of Mogadishu, a cargo airplane crash landed in a territory that is controlled by Al-Shabaab militants. It was assumed that the wreckage of the aircraft including any survivors were seized by the militants as there were no reports of anything found at the scene hence information on what the plane was carrying is still unknown.<sup>21</sup> A fatal incident occurred in Somalia's capital Mogadishu on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2018, in Taredishe village where an improvised explosive device struck a minibus killing three civilians and injuring two who were later taken to a nearby hospital for medical help. The bomb missed a Somali national army vehicle which seemed to have been the target from the onset. However, no group has claimed responsibility of the attack though Al-Shabaab has frequently targeted densely populated areas near Mogadishu.<sup>22</sup>

The Somali government confirmed on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> the killing of a senior member of Al-Shabaab by its military and allied AMISOM troops during a raid at Bay region. They raided a compound in Rahoole village where

<sup>18</sup> State takes 40 Kilifi Shabaab returnees for rehabilitation; retrieved from <https://www.nation.co.ke/news/State-rehabilitates-40-Shabaab-returnees-amnesty/1056-4312004-sp5wewz/index.html> date accessed March 5, 2018

<sup>19</sup> Somalia: AMISOM's new force commander formally assumes office; retrieved from <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/press-releases/somalia-amisoms-new-force-commander-formally-assumes-office> date accessed February 22, 2018

<sup>20</sup> Pentagon Drone Attacks Escalate in Somalia While AMISOM Plans Withdrawal; retrieved from [https://www.globalresearch.ca/pentagon-drone-attacks-](https://www.globalresearch.ca/pentagon-drone-attacks-escalate-in-somalia-while-amisom-plans-withdrawal/5627979)

[escalate-in-somalia-while-amisom-plans-withdrawal/5627979](https://www.globalresearch.ca/pentagon-drone-attacks-escalate-in-somalia-while-amisom-plans-withdrawal/5627979) date accessed February 22, 2018

<sup>21</sup> Somalia: Cargo Plane Crashes in Southern Somalia, Fate of Crew Unknown; retrieved from <http://allafrica.com/stories/201802020349.html> date accessed February 28, 2018

<sup>22</sup> Bomb attack in Somalia kills 3; retrieved from <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180202-bomb-attack-in-somalia-kills-3/> date accessed February 27, 2018

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the militant was found and killed. Ibrahim Mohamed Noor, Diinsor District Commissioner, said the commander whose name was withheld oversaw militants in the said village and its surrounding areas monitoring and executing most of the attacks near Baidoa. Three of his comrades were also arrested during the raid.<sup>23</sup> On 4<sup>th</sup> February 2018, at least four people died including women and children after an IED that was being assembled exploded inside a house in Odweyne village located in Deynile district. The house was sealed off by Somali Security agents and investigations were launched concerning the explosion.<sup>24</sup> A former district commissioner, Abdi Idow Warsame, in Beledweyne was killed on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018, at the regional capital of Hirran province in central Somalia. He was assassinated as he walked out of a mosque by unknown gun-wielding men who escaped the scene unchallenged on foot. There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but suspicion falls squarely on Al-Shabaab who carry out numerous attacks in the country. No arrests were made for the murder incident. Investigations were launched as well as a manhunt mission.<sup>25</sup>

At least two people, one being a soldier and the other a civilian, were killed on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018 in clashes that took place between the Somali National Army (SNA) and suspected Al-Shabaab militants in Jalalaksi

town in Hirran region of Central Somalia. The fighting began after insurgents stormed and attacked a police station. The militants received a blow as they were no march for the military force present and hence retreated with their casualties. They also claimed to have killed one of the bodyguards of the head of state of Jalalaksi town. In Beledweyne town same region, a militant was killed when an improvised device he was planting exploded.<sup>26</sup> Hassan Aden Isak was sentenced to death after being convicted of coordinating the October 14<sup>th</sup> truck bombing terrorist attack. Abdullahi Ibrahim was convicted of being a member of the Al-Shabaab group and sentenced to life in prison while Abdiweli Ahmed Diriye was also convicted of releasing the truck bomb from the first checkpoint on the outskirts of Mogadishu. The court on the other hand, ordered the release of Mukhtar Hassan Roble and Abdulle Abdi Warsame Ali who were not found guilty.<sup>27</sup>

Four soldiers were wounded in an overnight attack at a police station in Bosaso which is the main commercial city of Somalia's Northeastern region of Puntland. The militants who were heavily armed with machine guns, rockets, and grenades exchanged fire with police officers. The assailants were disguised as police when they went to the station before the attack.<sup>28</sup> How and where they get the military regalia

<sup>23</sup> Somali government kills Al-Shabaab commander in Bay region; retrieved from <http://sunatimes.com/articles/5031/Somali-government-kills-Al-Shabaab-commander-in-Bay-region> date accessed February 28, 2018

<sup>24</sup> Somalia: At Least 4 Killed in IED Explosion in Mogadishu; retrieved from <http://allafrica.com/stories/201802050710.html> date accessed March 5, 2018

<sup>25</sup> Somalia: Former District Commissioner killed in Beledweyne; retrieved from <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/somalia-former-district-commissioner-killed-in-beledweyne> date accessed March 5, 2018

<sup>26</sup> 2 killed in clashes with al-Shabaab militants in central Somalia; retrieved from [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-02/06/c\\_136953898.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-02/06/c_136953898.htm) date accessed March 5, 2018

<sup>27</sup> Somali Court Issues Death Sentence Over Bombing That Killed 500; retrieved from <https://www.albawaba.com/news/somali-court-issues-death-sentence-over-bombing-killed-500-1085230> date accessed March 5, 2018

<sup>28</sup> Somali: 4 injured in Al-Shabaab attack on Bosaso police station; retrieved from <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/puntland/somalia->

is an alarming issue since it's not the first time they have used the same strategy. This is evidence of a collusion between some military officers and militants.

On 10<sup>th</sup> February 2018, the Al-Shabaab militant group was repelled by Somali Forces in Afgooye town. The fighting caused panic to residents as the clash was devastating and took some time before it finally subsided. The militants incurred injuries in the process, but no casualties were mentioned or indicated on the force's side. Three civilians were injured in the attack.<sup>29</sup> Two days later on February 12<sup>th</sup>, Al-Shabaab fighters executed two Kenyans for allegedly spying for Somalia and Kenyan Intelligence service in Qunyo Barrow town, Lower Shabelle region. Locals were forced to witness the execution which they had earlier announced using vehicle-mounted loudspeakers. It is however not the first time that they have carried out this heinous act, as the locals confessed to having witnessed regular executions carried out by the Al-Qaeda-linked terror group. They do so by a firing squad, throat slitting and stoning.<sup>30</sup>

Puntland soldiers battling militants in Galgala Mountains received a hit from a roadside bomb on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2018 that killed two soldiers injuring one in the process. There were no independent sources that confirmed the casualty figures apart from statements that were posted on their

affiliated websites.<sup>31</sup> In addition, two car bombings have killed 38 people in Somali capital Mogadishu on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018. The first blast, involved the use of a vehicle loaded with explosives, followed by gunfire which occurred at a security checkpoint close to Villa Somalia while the second followed shortly at a hotel according to the police. The 5 suspects were killed by security force. Al-Shabaab took responsibility of the attacks claiming to have targeted the Government and security services.<sup>32</sup>

### **Uganda:**

Jinja in Uganda is home to the planning and preparation for a multinational peacekeeping exercise, and a command post that brings about military partners of East Africa with other participants from United States, Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Uganda has been contributing troops to the multiple operations in Africa to Counter Violent Extremist. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 the second Justified Accord exercise that was hosted by the Uganda Peoples' Defense Force (UPDF). It is inclusive of both governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations who are participating and contributing to the said exercise as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Operations and the United Nations Mine Action Service.<sup>33</sup>

[4-injured-in-al-shabaab-attack-on-bosaso-police-station](#) date accessed February 8, 2018

<sup>29</sup> Somali forces foil al-Shabaab attack near capital; retrieved from [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-02/11/c\\_136967359.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-02/11/c_136967359.htm) date accessed March 7, 2018

<sup>30</sup> Two Kenyan al Shabaab fighters executed for spying for KDF; retrieved from [https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018/02/14/two-kenyan-al-shabaab-fighters-executed-for-spying-for-kdf\\_c1714573](https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018/02/14/two-kenyan-al-shabaab-fighters-executed-for-spying-for-kdf_c1714573) date accessed March 7, 2018

<sup>31</sup> Roadside Bomb Blast Kills Puntland Soldiers In Galgala Mountains; retrieved from <http://radioshabelle.com/roadside-bomb-blast-kills-puntland-soldiers-galgala-hills/> date accessed March 7, 2018

[bomb-blast-kills-puntland-soldiers-galgala-hills/](#) date accessed March 7, 2018

<sup>32</sup> Death toll rises to 38 in Mogadishu bombings; retrieved from [https://nation.com.pk/24-Feb-2018/death-toll-rises-to-38-in-mogadishu-bombings?show=previewutm\\_medium?version=amp/?version=amp](https://nation.com.pk/24-Feb-2018/death-toll-rises-to-38-in-mogadishu-bombings?show=previewutm_medium?version=amp/?version=amp) date accessed March 5, 2018

<sup>33</sup> Exercise Justified Accord 2018 plan takes shape in Uganda; retrieved from <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/264372/exercise-justified-accord-2018-plan-takes-shape-uganda> date accessed February 26, 2018

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## **CONCLUSION**

This month has seen an increase in the number of civilian deaths totaling to sixty-two individuals with nine of them being Law Enforcement Officers. The Somali incident of two car bombings had the largest number of deaths totaling to thirty-eight civilians. Ten militants were also killed.

It is evident that the drone attacks are assisting in the eradication process of the terrorist groups however, this comes at a price as harmless civilian population including women, children and the elderly are caught in the crossfire and are either killed, injured or maimed. Measures should be put in place to ensure that lives of innocent people are not at threat while the counter attacks are still in effect. It has also been noted that there is change of tactics by the militants in their execution of attacks. They have now opted to carrying out hit and run style attacks against Somali and AMISOM troops with the guerilla tactics also coming into play.

Human Rights groups such as Haki Africa in the Coast have been shut down due to suspicions from the Government, who thinks they are supporting terrorist activities. Such organizations should be supported as their main role was to de-radicalize and re-integrate them back to the society. Government should resist from referring to individuals or groups working with returnees as sympathizers.

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