

# 本文章已註冊DOI數位物件識別碼

- The nexus between khat/miraa-trafficking and al-shabab's Terrorist activities in Kenya and its implications

肯亞境內的索馬利亞青年黨恐怖主義及其與販毒的關連性

doi:10.30392/TJWTOS.202003\_(32).0002

Taiwanese Journal of WTO Studies, (32), 2020

WTO研究, (32), 2020

作者/Author：肯林(Kennedy G. Ondieki)

頁數/Page：25-58

出版日期/Publication Date：2020/03

引用本篇文獻時，請提供DOI資訊，並透過DOI永久網址取得最正確的書目資訊。

To cite this Article, please include the DOI name in your reference data.

請使用本篇文獻DOI永久網址進行連結:

To link to this Article:

[http://dx.doi.org/10.30392/TJWTOS.202003\\_\(32\).0002](http://dx.doi.org/10.30392/TJWTOS.202003_(32).0002)



DOI Enhanced

DOI是數位物件識別碼（Digital Object Identifier, DOI）的簡稱，是這篇文章在網路上的唯一識別碼，用於永久連結及引用該篇文章。

若想得知更多DOI使用資訊，

請參考 <http://doi.airiti.com>

For more information,

Please see: <http://doi.airiti.com>

請往下捲動至下一頁，開始閱讀本篇文獻

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE



# 肯亞境內的索馬利亞青年黨恐怖主義及其與販毒的關連性

肯林

國際事務學院世界貿易組織研究中心研究員

國立政治大學

**關鍵字：**青年黨、肯亞、恐怖主義、東非、販毒、聖戰士

## 中文摘要

本文主旨在應用國際關係的政經失敗國家邏輯(**failed state logic**)與文明衝突(**clash of civilizations**)理論兩個典範(**paradigms**)來探討販毒如何支持聖戰士(**jihadists**)與索馬利亞青年黨 **al-shabab** 好戰分子在東非的恐怖活動。論析將聚焦於三個問題：販毒與青年黨恐怖主義是否有關連？肯亞是否能成功地反擊青年黨？美國與東非的戰略合作是如何減少青年黨的威脅？全文分為七節，第一節回顧青年黨的緣起；第二節論及相關的理論及其關連性；第三節聚焦於當地一種可以嚼食提神但會上癮的植物葉子(**khat/miraa**)暨其所衍生出的經濟(**khatnomics**) 及青年黨是如何利用販賣 **khat** 來吸收成員；第四節剖析販毒(**khat**)與恐怖主義的關連性；第五節檢視肯亞總統甘耶達(**Kenyatta**)政府的因應對策；第六節分析美國與東非的戰略反恐(**al-qaeda-shabab**)合作；第七節則為結論與建言肯亞如何該才能有效地對應索馬利亞青年黨的威脅。

# The nexus between *khat/miraa*-trafficking and al-shabab's Terrorist activities in Kenya and its implications

Kennedy G. Ondieki<sup>1</sup>

**Key words:** *Al-shabab* enterprise; *khat*-trafficking; *khatnomics*; Somalia failed state; clash of civilizations; counter-terrorism strategies; Kenyan terror attacks; Somali pirates in *Shimo la Tewa* prison; AMISOM; *Daadab* refugee camp; Horn of Africa; Kenyatta government.

## Abstract:

*This article is informed by two paradigms—the failed state logic (Hobbes in Somalia) and the clash of civilizations theory (Huntington in Mogadishu). This article examines how drug-trafficking (khat/miraa) support jihadists groups and finances al-shabab's terrorist activities in around the Horn of Africa and in particular Kenya. The questions raised include: Is there a nexus between khat-trafficking and al-shabab terrorism in the Horn of Africa and beyond? Can Kenya successfully*

---

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Kennedy G. Ondieki is currently an Assistant professor in the Department of Languages & Literature at National Chengchi University, Taiwan. Areas of research interests: Non-traditional Security Issues, Conflict & Crisis management, Terrorism, Critical theory of international relations; China-Africa relations, Africa-America politics; diplomacy and negotiations. Political candidate (Member of Parliament) Kenya General & Presidential Elections in 2017. Dr. Ondieki can be reached via: [kentawn@yahoo.com](mailto:kentawn@yahoo.com)

*counter al-shabab without weaning khat-trafficking from al-shabab jihadists? How has the UN-AU-Kenya joint-military operations reduced the threat of transnational organized crimes and al-shabab in Africa? The article is organized as follows: Section one examines the genesis of al-shabab; section two discusses the theories that inform the network; section three focuses on khatnomics and the recruiting narratives of al-shabab; section four critically analyzes the nexus between khat/miraa business and terrorism; section five examines counter-measures; section six analyzes the UN-AU-Kenya joint-military and strategic collaborations against the threats of al-Qaeda-shabab and section seven provides conclusions and recommendations on how the Kenyatta administration can effectively confront al-shabab's terrorist activities in Kenya, Africa and beyond.*

## **I. The Genesis of *al-Shabab* and Terrorism**

Since the 1990s, Somalia situation had disintegrated into clan warlords, civil confrontations. The brief military and humanitarian interventions (from 1993-1995) by the United Nations and United States and regional allies were inefficient to turn the tide of a failed state syndrome into a stable and functioning country (Meredith 1995; Crocker et al., 1999). After the "Black Hawk" incident and the dragging of American soldiers in the streets of Mogadishu, the United States and thereafter the United Nations missions withdrew from Somalia, allowing suburban warlords to roam with impunity in and around Mogadishu (Meredith, 1995).

For twenty years, until the invasion of the Kenyan

Defense Force in 2012, Somalia had collapsed into total anarchy beyond repair and became the bleeding ground and safe-havens for extremist and terrorist groups—*al-queda*—the genesis of *al-shabab* (Bergen, 2002; Ondieki 2005).

During Somali's failed state frenzy, warlords and their disciples openly preyed-upon the people of Mogadishu as anarchy was driven by territorial sovereignty and religious fanaticism. The long hiatus of abandonment of the country by the international community ruined not only lives and but also contributed to the internally and externally displaced Somalis.

As the failed state syndrome persisted in country, it scared the "psyche nature" of the Somali people as civil wars killed, maimed and disrupted millions of Somalis. Somalia deteriorated into anarchy and lawlessness and predatory activities ensued within Mogadishu, the Gulf of Somalia, around the Indian Ocean and beyond resulting into the formation of a *salafist* sect of Islamists who morphed into *al-shabab* (the latter meaning suburb vigilantes who provided security to businessmen for money)(Middleton, 2008; Bergen, 2005; Ondieki, 2016).

Besides anarchy, civil wars and warlord activities, Somali's miseries were plentiful (famine, ruined harvests, starvation and uncontrolled gangs on rampage coercing business enterprises for ransoms and security money targeted humanitarian charities. A political machine founded by ragtag gangs in the suburbs of Mogadishu emerged (Meredith 1995; Ondieki 2005; Bakewell 2010).

Once the gangs had gained territories and power, they coalesced into *al-shabab*—neighborhood gangs that thrived on ransoms and coercion and driven by religious fanaticism that culminated into jihad destined to turn Somalia into an Islamic state (Bakewell, 2010; Meredith, 1995; Menkhaus, 2005). Once, the group joined and merged with al-Qaeda, this gave *al-shabab* an international aura to take jihadi attacks across the region and beyond—Uganda and Kenya were the first countries attacked to crown its place in al-Qaeda's "holy war against the infidels" (Bergen, 2005; Little, 2003).

Thousands abandoned Somalis migrated into Kenya and the United Nations refugee camps at *Daabab* (in Northern Kenya) whilst others acquired political asylum status and migrated to Western developed countries as the United States, Europe, Australia and around Africa (Meredith, 1995). Analysts have written on the motivations of terrorism, providing a wide range of explanations in regards to the modern resurgence of criminal activities in Somalia.

The motivations, though, have concentrated on the socio-economic and political factors. Other studies, have examined how extremists, terrorists and pirates around the Horn of Africa financed criminals activities via piracy ransoms, money-laundering, arms-sales, gambling, human-and drug-trafficking (Menkhaus, 2005; Ondieki, 2016 Middleton, 2008).

Fewer analysts and scholars, however, have studies

how in the era of the global war on terror (GWOT) and successful counter-measures of “draining the swamps” of finances and shaking-up al-Qaeda’s money-trees, *al-shabab* has managed to finance terrorist activities around Mogadishu; inside the camps of the African mission in Somalia (AMISOM); Ugandan hotels; and Kenyan cities, malls, universities and hotels (Ondieki 2016).

Considering that the Western countries, the United States, the Africa Union and Kenya government designate al-shabab and its affiliates as a regional and global terrorist network and one whose monies and financial capabilities to sponsor and fund intra-national and transnational terrorists activities are tightly monitored and disrupted, the groups, however, has managed to exist and wretch havoc around countries in the Horn of Africa and Kenyan cities. Before examining the network’s khatomics, it is pertinent to examine the international theories that inform the Somalia crisis and current al-Qaeda-shabab activities/migraines.

## **II. Theories that inform Somalia’s *al-Shabab* Inc.**

Two international schools of thought inform Somali’s civil war and anarchy. The failed states syndrome (“Hobbes in Somalia”) and the “clash of civilizations” (Huntington’s theory) can be used to explain Somali and al-shabab activities (Hobbes, 1778; Huntington, 1992).

Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan* (1778) posted that the “state of nature” is one that lacks a functioning government and rule of law. Hobbes argued that in the

absence of overarching sovereign state—a civil society that is governed by laws disintegrates into as in a state of nature, plundering and anarchic impulses ensue and war becomes the norm.

The decades-long civil war in Somalia contributed to the total collapse of the country that thither between the failed state and extinction—making is possible to recall the Hobessian description of life of man as “solitary, nasty, brutish and short”. Somali suffering and death fits the chaotic nature depicted in *Leviathan*—thence Hobbes in Somalia (Blair, 2008).

In the “clash of civilizations”, Huntington argued that the post-Cold War world, new conflicts will become not necessarily be motivated by the economic or ideological per se, but would emerge from the fault-lines of cultural and religious identities spearheaded by Islamic dogmas. Huntington's theory recognized the *raison-de'tre* of non-traditional security problems could come from extremists in the coming anarchy (Huntington, 1996).

Somalia is a homogeneous country where people share common historical, cultural traits and spoke one language that was never fractured on cultural and religious lines because majority of Somalia embrace Islam as the dominant religious faith, although Christians and animists also practiced their faith and beliefs within the greater Somalia. But, once the warlords-*al-shabab* incorporated took control of Mogadishu, western lifestyles were outlawed as *al-shabab* introduced the strictest form of Islam—*Salafism* and considered those who practice Christianity as infidels of Allah (Meredith, 1995; Ondieki,



2005).

The anarchic nature of *al-shabab* and war against infidels (near and far) perfectly situates Hobbesian “failed state/state of nature” and Huntingtonian “clash of civilizations” in greater Mogadishu and inform the state and activities of the *al-shabab* within Somalia, Horn of Africa and Kenya. The next section examines the revenue and recruitment narratives to show how *khat*-trafficking (cash-crops grown in Kenya, Ethiopia and Yemen), finance *al-shabab* terror activities in Africa and Kenya.

### III. *Khatnomics*: Nexus of Revenue & Recruitment

The plant *khat* is consumed as pass-time herb among men and women om Africa, Middle East, Israel and Kenya. The plant/leaves is known by various names: *Qat* in Yemen, *qaat* in Somalia, *chat* in Ethiopia and *miraa*, *mairungi*, *khat-goka* in Kenya and *khat* in Europe and United States. Khat’s origin is unknown but legends and speculations argued that the plant was first grown in Ethiopia and introduced later to Africa and Arab Peninsula centuries ago (*Economist*, 2011). *Khat/miraa* is a slow-growing shrub that grows between 5 to 10 feet tall depending on the region and rainfall. It comes in various sizes, shapes and colors but the familiar feature is reddish and green with slender leafs and sour taste (see **figure 1**) (O’Rourke, 2006).

Within Africa and especially around the Horn of Africa—Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Eriterea Sudan and even Tanzania, chewing *khat/miraa* is a popular socializing

and pass-time activity of people of all social strata. *Khat/miraa* consumers include: rich and poor; men and women; young and old; civil-servants and businessmen; Muslims and Christians, educated and non-educated; urban and rural dwellers. When consumed fresh, *khat/miraa* induces mental stimulation, boost energy and calm stress. *Khat/miraa* promotes meditational and fasting rituals and works against malaria (Giannini, 1986).

Medical experts have found out that *khat/miraa* contains the alkaloid called cathinone—amphetamine-like stimulant which is believed to cause alertness, excitement, euphoria, loss of appetite and sexual desires (O'Rourke, 2006; Giannini, 1986). Other side-effects include hallucinations, addiction, impotence, tooth decay, sleeplessness, constipation and weight loss (Nutt and Blakemore, 2007). At the extreme end of the spectrum, the excessive consumption of *khat/miraa* is considered a narcotic and when with marijuana and excessive alcohol can induce criminal behavior and violent impulses (Meredith, 1995).

Since the 1980s, the World Health Organization has classified *khat* as drug of abuse that can produce mild psychological dependence but less than alcohol and tobacco (Giannini, 1986). Other studies equate *khat*-consumption and addiction with cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine. Since the 1990s, *khat/miraa* was targeted by the anti-drug organizations—the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Interpol among other agencies. And, by 2014, *khat/miraa* was outlawed in the Western nations—North America and Europe (Howard

and Oliver, 2009).

Today all western countries except Israel have de-legalized khat/miraa-trafficking and consumption to discourage users from addiction, health hazards but also to dry the money-tree that sponsor extremists criminal behaviors and activities. In Africa and Kenya, however, khat/miraa is still legally produced, consumed, and trafficked within the East Africa community, the Horn of Africa, Arabic countries and especially within the Kenya cities and towns. In Kenya, khat/miraa is grown in the eastern province (Meru and Embu) and it is considered as the “green gold”—billion dollar industry cash-crop significant source of revenue, income and mainstay to millions of Kenyans farmers and poor segment of society (Sikiru, 2010; Ondieki, 2005).

Khat/miraa-trafficking is controlled by Somali-Kenyans who have amassed wealth in the khat/miraa business enabled them dominance in real estate, transportation, construction and hotel sectors within Kenya. As shown in **(figures 1- 4)**, khat-business is billion-dollar industry and has had far-reaching implications (Sikiru, 2010). It is argued that khatnomics has financed decade-long civil war in Mogadishu and destabilized regional peace and stability in the region and finances extremist groups and terrorist networks such as al-shabab (Sikiru, 2010).



**Fig.1 Khat-plantation in Kenya**



**Fig. 2 Mogadishu Retailer**



**Figure 3. Law Enforcement**



**Figure 4. *al-shabab* militants**

Those who link *khat* with *al-shabab* terrorism argue that in the post American attacks of 9/11, the US designated *al-shabab* as a terrorist network and disrupted its money-tree. The network turned to *khat*-trafficking and mobile money transfer transactions (*M-pesa*) to launder money and sponsor attacks against Kenya and beyond (Ondieki 2005).

The recruiting narrative of *al-shabab* is supported by the most extent by *khatnomics*—revenues and monies acquired from *khat*-business and trafficking couple with the *M-Pesa* and foreign bureaus transactions available and operated within the Kenyan cities and especially Nairobi and Mombasa. The revenues earned from these legal business practices are then channeled into al-Shaba group to be used to brainwash and lure young Somalis and desperate and jobless Kenyan youth in urban cities, ghettos, mosques and even refugee camps into joining the piracy-terrorist networks run by al-shabab network (Farrah and Gregory, 2010; Ondieki 2016; Sikiru, 2010).

#### **IV. Nexus between *Khat/miraa* and Terrorism**

In Kenya, *khat/miraa* is grown in Meru and Embu and is a significant source of revenue to cultivators, suppliers and traffickers. The herb as it is often called is an important source of wealth and employment in Kenya (Cascino, 2010). However, *khat*-trafficking is predominantly controlled by Somali-Kenyans. Somalis have amassed wealth through *khat*-trafficking which has contributed to their dominance in transportation, construction, real-estate, and hotel sectors in Kenya. *Khat*-cartel is revered and sometimes protected by the government as the consumption and trafficking is a huge money-making industry (Sikuru, 2010). In recent years, state officials have somewhat admitted that *khatnomics* finance and sponsor criminal activities—piracy and terrorism as exemplified by al-Qaeda-shabab networks in the Horn of Africa (Warfa et al., 2007).

*Khat/miraa* financed two decades of Somali civil war and anarchy but also finance terrorism that are orchestrated by *al-shabab* (Middleton, 2008). Those who link *khat* with *al-shabab* terrorism argue that since the financial lifelines are disrupted, the group has turned in full-swing to *khat/miraa*-business to finance terrorism operations and activities within Africa and Kenya. Besides, *al-shabab* militants have turned into gambling and mobile money transfers (*M-pesa*—"M" for mobile and "*pesa*" for money in Swahili language) as sources of raising money and money-laundering activities to finance terrorist activities that have targeted Kenyan cities and civilian infrastructure such as malls, churches, bus-stations, universities and hotels (Fieldstadt, 2015).

The recruiting narrative is also supported by the technology of *khatnomics*. *Al-shabab* uses monies acquired from *khat*-trafficking and *M-pesa* transactions to lure young Somalis and desperate Kenyans in refugee camps, mosques and ghettos within Kenyan cities into joining the network (Sikuru, 2008; Nutt and Blakemore, 2007). The swapping of cash for martyrdom has been made possible by *khat*-business.

It is difficult to determine if de-legalizing (making the green gold illegal) *khatnomics* contributed to reducing criminal and terrorists activities in the western cities and societies. However, western countries' efforts to shake down the money-tree and/or cut-down the financial lifelines of pirates and terrorists factored in the general calculus on the global war on terrorism.

Considering low-level of terror attacks in western and minimization of piracy around the horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean, it logical to argue that drying financial swamps of terrorist finances adversely affected al-Qaeda's recruitment capabilities and attacks. The employment of hard-soft-smart power (military and drone-operations) and soft-power tactics of weaning the militants their financial capabilities have proved effective in the counter-measure approaches in piracy and terrorism phenomenon (Mcgirk 2010; Von Drehle and Ghosh 2009).

The multi-faceted strategies—banning *khat/miraa* and weaning-off finances from al-Qaeda and affiliate bent on causing mayhem within and outside the western nations' sphere have reduced piracy and terrorist incidents, the question now become: Would banning/de-legalizing *khatomics* (khat-trafficking and consumption) in Somalia make significant impact in mitigating the threats and migraines of *al-shabab* in the Horn of African and Kenya?

Western analysts, scholars, law enforcement agencies and medical experts have established correlations between drug-trafficking and usage to criminal activities and violent behavior. Studies have also shown that drug-lords and traffickers sponsor criminal activities and/or participate in violence activities—al-Qaeda-shabab networks being he exemplar (Burke, 2019'). However, western governments, and experts tend to overlook the functional uses of many indigenous herbs—coffee, tea, cocoa, betel nuts used for stimulation and boosting of energy and serve social functions, medicinal and meditational purposes.

The various generic-herbs that are around the world include: cocaine, cigarettes, marijuana, coffee, tea, alcohol, betel-nuts, *khat/miraa* and other “planet of things” can be harmful to consumers and health-hazards/life-threatening substances and herbs. But use in moderation and by the instructions of the medical practitioners, these substances and herbs serve socio-medical and meditational purposes (Steinmetz, 2016; Mcgirk, 2010).

The recent legalization of marijuana in some United States is a case in point. Marijuana usage is allowed to patients with life-long illnesses as cancer—relieves pain and suffering. Other American states as California and Nevada authorize marijuana on recreational activities—source taxes and revenue (Mapes, 2014; personal correspondence with American lawyer, 2019).

In some European countries and Paraguay (South America), smoking marijuana is lawful provided the consumers does not sale the herb to others for profit. Paraguayan Law, specifically states that: “Whoever possesses substances detailed in this Law, prescribed by a doctor, or whoever possessed them exclusively for personal consumption, will be exempted from punishment (PY: *Law N° 1.340, Art. 30*).

In Taiwan, betel-nuts plants is produced in larger quantities in southern and eastern regions of the Island and forms the main source of revenue and employment to many people including women. Betel-nuts are publicly sold in kiosks around Taiwan by young beautiful women called “the betel nuts girls”. The herb is consumed within



the Island and many Asian nations including Vietnam and China. Betel-nut-trafficking is lawful business ventures into some East and South East Asia—Vietnam (Tacon, 2014). Betel-nuts plants and usage is prevalent in the South Asia Pacific Islands of Solomon Island and Papua New Guinea (*personal correspondence with Solomon Island and Papua New Guinea University students in Taiwan 2019*)

Throughout the world, the consumption of coffee, tea, cigarettes and alcohol are lawful business ventures and endeavors. The latter, are worse health-hazards yet they rarely are associated with violence and terrorism. Throughout the world, various plants and herbs are consumed for the various reasons: Stimulation, energy boosting supplements, meditational and medicinal and cultural purposes (McGirk, 2010).

To label *khat/miraa*-consumption with life-threatening hazards without proper and sufficient scientific research to determine the health hazards associated with chewing *khat/miraa* seem double-standard. To link *khat/miraa* usage to terrorism without linking betel-nuts that are chewed and has similar socio-medicinal functions would seem unfair to farmers and businessmen of *khat/miraa* growing societies (Kenya and Ethiopia and Yemen) (McGirk 2010; Steinmetz, 2016). But if *khat/miraa*-consumers and traffickers are bent on violence and/or sponsor extremist networks, can the same be said of betel-nuts, cigarettes or marijuana users and traffickers?

Although the linkage of *khat/miraa*-consumption can be contested as a double-standard, what is, however,

uncontested is that *khat/miraa*-trafficking is the main source of revenue to groups bent on terrorist activities. *Al-Shabab* terrorist network is the best example. Sufficient and proper government response against terrorist individuals and groups must ensure that law-abiding *khat/miraa*-consumers and sellers are not labeled nor singled out as terrorists and terrorism supporters simply because in the Horn of Africa, Kenya and Israel both the rich and poor, young and old, men and women, Christians and Muslims consume *khat/miraa* and is a huge source of revenue and job-creating sector in Africa and Kenya. After all, *khat/miraa* is Kenya's cash-crop referred to as the "green-gold" in the farming sector of Eastern regions of Kenya (*Meru, Embu* and their environs).

## **V. Kenya's Response Against al-Shabab: President Kenyatta's Administration**

There are various pragmatic responses significant in combating *al-shabab* besides angry "vows to crush" and "end terrorism" as President Uhuru Kenyatta pledges every attack that kill and maim Kenya lives (Kenyatta 2015). President Kenyatta's efforts to ensure that the *al-shabab* does not "succeed in creating an Islamic caliphate in Kenya" nor disrupt Kenya's ways of life" has not stopped nor reduced the level of attacks against Kenyans in and around civilian infrastructures (Tomlinson, 2015:15).

The withdrawal of Kenya Defense Force (KDF) from Somalia (now that Somalia is slowly but surely rising from the ashes of anarchy and failed state syndrome) should be considered to diminish the *al-shabab's* recruitment

narrative and motives of attacks. Peace and security of Somalia must be Somalia's business. This logic should factor into the equation of counter-measures strategies in eradicating the menace of *al-shabab* in Kenya (personal correspondence with Kenya Defense Force, 2016; AMISOM civilian officials 2017).

Moreover, President Kenyatta can use the military personnel now in Somalia (Mogadishu and Kismayu among other places) to boost the Kenya's security at airports, schools, universities, malls, hotels, sports venues, borders, bridges, transport, mining, energy, tourist sectors potential targets. President Kenyatta must also deal with not only marginalized Islamic population but also the plight of women and young generation in Kenya and especially the poor and jobless; hopeless and despite segment of society. Empowering the poor via skilling and jobs; inclusive policies that engender pride among the Kenyan youth would contribute significantly in discouraging the poor and youth from becoming easy-prey from the predatory long-arm of the extremist network—*al-shabab* (Tomlinson, 2015; *The Economist*, 2011).

The Kenyatta administration must continue to revitalizing urban cities as Kibera, Majengo, Dandora, Mkuru wa Njenga, Soweto, Kayole among other ghettos around Nairobi and Mombasa to wean-off *al-shabab's* recruitment swamps. Most importantly, President Kenyatta must reach out to Kenyan populace rather than shake-hands" and hand in perks and portfolio to appease political rivals. Reaching out to all segments within the country and especially at-risk poor, unemployed young generation is

important in the fight against terrorism and *al-shabab* (Tomlinson, 2015) Kenyatta require a united front irrespective of political, religious, racial and tribal affiliations in the war against extremism and terrorist groups such as *al-shabab* (personal correspondences with KDF 2016).

Legally, the Kenyatta administration must unveil multiple strategies to battle *al-shabab* by black-listing notorious financial sectors and monitor *M-pesa* misuses; scrutinizing foreign bureaus including Western Union and Money Grams to ensure that remittances are not used to sponsor terrorist activities. Kenyatta's war on terrorism and *al-shabab* must include war on the culture of corruption in the public-private sectors (executive, legislature, judiciary and corporate Kenya). Kenyan *kleptocracy* seriously threaten national security and wellbeing of Kenyan people.

The Kenyan Parliament should also consider creating what the author of this article calls "*Mzalendo Act* (Patriotic Act) equivalent to the one established in the united State in post-9/11 terrorist attacks to confront the menaces and nuance of terrorism and corruption in Kenya. The *Mzalendo Act* could empower the law enforcement and intelligence communities and other agencies as anti-corruption commission to identify and disrupt *al-shabab*'s terrorist plots and create a counter-terrorism Czar to coordinate counter-measures against *al-shabab*'s fog of terrorism (Ondieki, 2016; personal correspondences from Kenya Defense Forces officials, 2013-2018).

Kenya should, perhaps, emulate Tanzania and

Western countries by banning *khat/miraa*-trafficking outside the Kenyan territories to weaken and disrupt extremist and terrorist groups from financing and orchestrating terrorist activities in Kenya. Disrupting *khat/miraa* trafficked into Somalia and Mogadishu would seriously disorient *al-shabab*'s sources of revenues. Besides, the Kenya government and the medical sector must conduct its own scientific research to determine whether the herbe *khat/miraa* induces violent behaviors compared to other herbs such as betel-nuts and marijuana.

The above mentioned administrative, legislative and executive orders—tactics to counter-*al-shabab* strategies might seem draconian but considering the severity of the recent major attacks inside Kenya under the watch of President Kenyatta (the West Gate Mall ,2015; Garissa University, 2016; Dustin Hotel, 2019; Kenya Defense Force in Somalia, 2012-present) and considering the hundreds of Kenyan killed and thousands maimed in these attacks in Nairobi and Mombasa cities; Kenyan border and the Boni-forest, all means necessary within the law would seem justifiable to fight Kenya's nemesis—*al-shabab* Inc.

For national security purposes, Kenya and the Kenyatta administration must employ multifaceted counter-measures including the drone-operations to engage *al-shabab* in all fronts. On the latter counter-measures (Ondieki 2016), it is important that Kenya continue to collaborate with the UN-US forces to launch drones from the Kenya's coastal areas against *al-shabab* in Somalia and *Qaida-shabab* swamps in Mogadishu and Yemen.

It would be seem ideal for Kenyatta to consider and authorize selected areas where drones can use employed to identity and disrupt *al-shabab* affiliates within Kenya (the Boni forest) to send a strong message to terrorists and *al-shabab* and domestic sleeper-agents that they are not safe within the Kenya territory. The issue of pirates and terrorists in incarcerated in the Kenyan prison of Shimo la Tewa in Lamu ("*Quantanamo* bay" of Kenya) must be addressed. Keeping hundreds of Somalia pirates and terrorists in Kenya prisons incommunicado without due process of law for prosecution has contributed to the Somali and *alshabab*'s fury against the Kenyan government and its people

## **VI. US-UN-Kenya joint efforts against al-shabab**

President Obama's trip to Kenya addressed the insecurity problem facing the country. He assured the Kenyan government that the United States will collaborate on the fight against *al-Qaeda-shabab* in the Horn of Africa and in particular in Kenya to diminish the scourge of terrorism in the region. Obama, specifically, stated that "words cannot adequately condemn the terrorist atrocities that took place at Garissa University College, where innocent men and women were brazenly and brutally massacred....We will stand hand-in-hand with the Kenyan government and people against the scourge of terrorism and in their efforts to bring communities together" (Neuman, 2015).

In private discussions with Kenyatta, Obama indicated that the threat of *al-shabab* is "existential" issue. He stated

that the “battle we are fighting is not a Kenyan war; Kenya just happens to be on the frontier.” He quipped that anarchic nature and its failed state syndrome of Somalia continues to be as swamp and “breeding ground for Islamist extremists” (Neuman, 2015). Obama noted that even though collaboration between the US-East African states “have systematically reduced the territory that *al-Shabab* controls...” and disrupted *al-shabab*’s strongholds, the threat remains unresolved (Pande, 2015).

Obama, however, praised the cooperation of regional security apparatus that have contributed to the “shrinkage” of *al-shabab*. Nevertheless, there is need to “put pressure” on the network to reduce the waves of terrorism within Africa” (BBC, 2015). Obama, particularly stated that in “the counterterrorism strategy against *al-shabab*, the military should dovetail with the operations of the judiciary, the Kenya Police and border security”. This is because in “the face of despicable violence such as the attack on Garissa University college and the Westgate Mall, the Kenyan people have shown incredible resolve and remarkable resilience (Pande, 2015).

In a joint discussion with Kenyatta, Obama indicated that the two leaders deepened security alliance as part of the regional governance initiative which culminated to the signing of an action plan which would also support Kenya’s efforts to strengthen its judiciary, police and border security. The two leaders spoke extensively on counter-measure efforts against extremists in Kenya, the Horn of Africa and the rest of world. Obama stated “We have to continue to make progress in intelligence sharing

and being able to identify and prevent threats before they occur here in Kenya and elsewhere in the region" (Imbali, 2015). The demise of some of the masterminds of Kenya's recent attacks is exemplar of the America-Kenya collaborations on war on terrorism. Whereas the United States employ the drone-programs, Kenya provided ground support, information, and intelligence pertinent for such strikes (AFP, 2015; Ondieki 2016, McGirk, 2010).

In retrospect, Obama's security apparatus and counter-terrorism measures against the network involve resilience and extensive use of drone-programs to weaken *al-shabab* network to stabilize the East African region to allow foreign investments to venture into the region. For example, since the US embassies bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, the United States warned tourists and investors in venturing in Kenya citing high insecurity environment.

The decade-long warning had damaged the Kenyan reputation abroad and seriously jeopardized its economy and especially the tourism sector (the major foreign currency earner and employment industry) suffered the most (Ondieki 2016). President Obama visit to Kenya in 2017 lifted warnings against doing business in Kenya and ultimately assure Americans and foreigners that was safe to visit and invest in Kenya again. This sense relief contributed to the rise in tourist and investment of the Americans and Europeans.

Whether these legal and administrative counter-measures would contribute to winning the war against *al-*



*shabab* remains to be determined. The fact of the matter is that unveiling tough pragmatic approaches and finding solution around *khat/miraa*-trafficking and other financial nexus that *al-shabab* employ to raise funds; unveiling selected use of drone-operations around vulnerable areas within Kenya critical to identify and disrupt terrorists before they conduct actual attacks would seriously weakens *al-shabab*'s capabilities to raise funds, recruit, train, and conduct acts of terrorism in Kenya and beyond.

Pragmatically speaking, for Kenyatta to decisively respond to the "fog of terrorism" from *al-shabab*, Kenyan leaders from all walks of lives must first and foremost overcome indecisive politics of tribalism, partisanship, pork-barrel, blame-game and unite and speak with one voice the many vices confronting the country besides *al-shabab* challenges. A Kenyan united front must strongly support President Kenyatta's wars on culture of corruption and kleptocracy; terrorism and *al-shabab*.

A much more nuanced approach against *al-shabab* must also confront the realities of terrorists that are embedded within Kenya (the enemy from within). The use of *khat/miraa* that finance recruitment and sponsor terrorism must be addressed. The marginalized and at-risk groups the poor and young segment of society must be addressed. The problems of marginalization, unemployment and poverty within Kenyan urban centers and ghettos must be addressed. The issues of pirates and terrorist prisoners (mostly Somalis and Kenya-Somalis) in Shimo la Tewa prison must be public addressed and resolved (*personal correspondence with KDF, Kenya*

2015-2017).

*Shimo la Tewa* prison in the Coast province is considered the new Guantanamo Bay prison of Kenya. The prison houses al-Qaida-shabab's most notorious terrorists—a radicalizing swamp in the recruitment narrative. Human Rights Activists have reported that 2011, Somali pirates and terrorists (which amount around two thousands) have been held inside the Shimo la Tewa prison incommunicado. Human Rights also reveal some incidents of mistreatment and torture of prisoners. Detentions without prosecution and due process of law has resulted into al-shabab's hatred of Kenya and its people—labelled as the infidels. This fury has contributed relentless attacks against Kenya's infrastructure and establishments; civilian and KDF soldiers within and outside Kenya—African mission in Somalia (AMISOM) camps (*personal correspondence with KDF Nairobi Kenya 2016; UN official, Nairobi, Kenya 2018*).

## VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

*Al-shabab* is a menace to national, regional and global security as its activities knows no boundaries and its impacts have far-reaching implications—fear and instability, disruption of business, tourism and foreign investments ventures. Because the network attacks civilian infrastructure and soft targets (shopping malls, tourist destinations, places of worship and schools, universities, hotels inter alia an environment of fear has been magnified with each successful attacks. The message *al-shabab* sends to Kenya and its allies is that

no one is immune from the attacks of the group. Under these circumstances, understanding the *modus operandi* of *al-shabab* and identifying and shaking the money-trees and shutting-down financial capabilities to raise and recruit; sponsor and orchestrates terrorist attacks are significant counter-measures against the menace of *al-shabab* within Kenya and beyond ( *personal correspondence with KDF 2016-2019*).

The necessity for Kenya government and regional states to collaborate and apply multifaceted strategies to fight the network is important to national and regional security and prosperity. Besides, the resilience of the Kenyan government to tackle *khat/miraa*-trafficking to dry the swamps of *al-shabab*'s means of finance that enables the group to recruit, train and fund terrorist activities is critical to national security. President Kenyatta must also put *khat/miraa*-trafficking on the agenda to factor his general calculus of protecting the country. Kenyatta should also consider unleashing what I call "flashing out the enemy to protect Kenya" (*mulika adui, linda nchi—MALN—personal correspondences with KDF, 2016*).

Furthermore, since Somalia has been stabilized (thanks to the efforts of Kenya forces and other hybrid global forces) and now that the country has functioning government, law enforcement agencies and officially recognized by the international community.

The Kenyan Defense Forces (KDF) should consider drawing-down and withdrawing from Somali to allow the hybridity of the UN-AU peacekeeping operations (UN-AU-

PKOs) to provide security. Somali Prime Minister and authorities have indicated that Somali forces and law enforcement is capable of protecting its territories and sovereignty. The Kenya forces and resources should be used to protect the Kenyan porous borders, vulnerable places such as the airports, ports of entry, schools, malls, universities, tourist area, national parks, city streets, residential areas, oil and energy fields among others (*personal correspondence with Kenya Defense Force 20114-2016*)

In summary, this article argues that there is a nexus between *khat/miraa*-trafficking and *al-shabab*'s terrorism operations in Kenya. The revenues and monies acquired from the *khat/miraa* sales within Kenya, the Horn of African and especially within the greater Somalia enables *al-shabab* to recruit and train; sponsor and orchestrate acts of terrorism inside Somalia, Kenya and beyond. The article also asserts that the current terror related crimes in Somalia and within the AMISOM are largely financed by *khat/miraa* the "green gold" leaves grown in Kenya and known to induce mental stimulation and euphoria; reduce physical fatigue and hunger; boost energy and improve focus.

Excessive consumption and misuse of *khat/miraa* can have negative side-effects—severe withdrawal, weight-loss, sleeplessness, hallucinations, tantrums and lone-wolf syndrome. On the extreme spectrum, addiction to *khat/miraa*-consumption can lead to criminal behavior and violence tendencies; easy-prey to indoctrination and recruitment; likelihood of *khat/miraa* addicts gravitating

towards extremism and willingness to become participate in terrorism as suicide-bombers.

The article raised three questions—whether there was possible nexus between *khat*-trafficking and *al-shabab*'s terrorism? How else does *al-shabab* raise cash to finance terrorist activities in the Horn of Africa, Kenya and beyond? How President Kenyatta's counter-measures against *al-shabab* "crushed and diminished" *alishabab* without shaking the money tree of *khatnomics*?

National, regional and global wishful thinking that a political solution short of military intervention would be found through humanitarian missions and hybrid of the UN-AU peacekeeping operations to stabilize Somalia into a functioning entity. The fact of the matter is that military operations and the use of drone-programs have contributed in significantly in restoring Somalia into some form of normalcy; piracy incidents around the Gulf of Somali and Indian Ocean has been reduced (*personal correspondence with KDF 2016; UN official Nairobi, 2018*)

The unfinished business, however, is that *al-shabab* which still orchestrate terror attacks within Somali (Mogadishu) and Kenya (Nairobi and Mombasa) cities. Although the Kenya Defense Force (now in AMISOM) played significant role in the stability and security of Somalia, Kenyan people and solders are the major targets of attacks by the *al-shabab* network.

The first term of President Kenyatta's leadership was mired by the trips to Hague's International Criminal Court

(ICC) to answer on charges of allegations in regards to post-election violence in Kenya in 2007. These trips to Hague together(2013-2014) with deputy president contributed to some type of leadership-vacuum that allowed *al-shabab* to recruit, train and orchestrated major attacks in Kenya and against the KDF in Somalia.

After the acquittal of President Kenyatta and his deputy of all the charges at Hague, President Obama visited Kenya and lifted travel warning and collaborated with Kenyatta on war on terrorism. Upon President Kenyatta's reelection in 2017, he has been relentless in the fight against a host of Kenyan vices (corruption and *kleptocracy*; extremist and terrorist groups) The Trump administration and UN Secretary General has been to Kenya providing support against the terrorism threat in Kenya and around the Horn of Africa.

It remains to be determined whether President Kenyatta will stay the course of resilience against *al-shabab* or he will continue with "hand-shakes" to appease political rivals at the detriment of national security and stability. It is equally important that Kenyatta reach across party-lines and throughout the country to find support in his policies to fight and diminish the tidal wave of *al-shabab* in Kenya.

Should the President Kenyatta squander the opportunity in his last term of office to continue to appease political rivals at the detriment of the Kenyan national security and prosperity, history will charge him harshly. Confronting *al-shabab*'s threats and bureaucratic vices in

Kenya (“war on culture of corruption”) requires pragmatic multifaceted and multilateral approaches; tactics to strategies that could include attempts to address issues of *khatnomics* in the “war on *al-shabab*” to dismantle the financial money-trees and diminish the network’s recruitment narratives and terrorism operations in within Kenya, Somalia and beyond.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

AFP. “Al-shabab jihadists linked to Kenya attacks 'killed by drone’”. (July, 16, 2015), *The Telegraph* <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/kenya/11744138/Kenya-university-attack-mastermind-killed-by-drone.html> Retrieved July 30, 2019.

Angel Rabasa, “Al-Qaeda Terrorism and Islamist Extremism in East Africa,” report published by the Real Instituto Elcano, Madrid, June 5, 2009.

BBC, July 27, 2015. “Obama praises Ethiopia over fight against al-Shabab”, (<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-33671340>) Retrieved June 21, 2018.

Bergen, Peter L. (2002). *Holy War Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama Bin Laden*. New York: Simon & Shuster.

Blair, David. "Somalia: Analysis of a failed state", *The Telegraph*, (November 18, 2008), p. 9.

Collins, Tom. March. “At last, open skies for Africa? *New Africa* March 2018: 42-43.

Crocker, Chester A. "The Lessons of Somalia: Not everything went wrong". *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 1995, pp. 2-8).

Von Drehle, David and Bobby Ghosh. "An Enemy Within: Time, October 2009 (pp. 16-21).

Gellman, Barton. "Locked and Loaded", *Time*, 2010, (pp.16-25).

Giannini Burge A. et al. (1986), "Khat: another drug of abuse?" *Journal of Psychoactive Drug* 18 (2): 155-158.

Hobbes, Thomas, 1778. *Leviathan*. London: Penguin Group.

Howard, Jamie and Shah Oliver. "There are many drugs that help people get out of their minds yet stay within the law-they're called 'legal highs'", *The Observer*, 26 April 2009, p. 9.

Huntington, Samuel P. (1996). *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Fieldstadt, Elisha. "Obama Says U.S. Stands with Kenya After al-Shabab Attack on College", *NBC News*, April 3, 2015.

Imbali, Fiona. "Obama pledges support in al-Shabab battle", (July 27, 2015), <http://mg.co.za/article/2015-07-27-obama-pledges-support-in-al-shabab-battle>) Retrieved June 21, 2019.

"Somalia: To Move Beyond the Failed State", *Africa Report* 147 (Dec. 2008): 11.



Lewis. M. 1998. *Saints and Somalis: Popular Islam in a Clan-based Society*. The Red Sea, Press, 2002

*A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*. James Currey.

Mapes, Jeff. "Former U.S. attorney for Oregon endorses marijuana legalization measure", *The Oregonian* (September 14, 2014).

Mateen J. Cascino. 2010 "Khat Chewing: A Smokeless Gun?" (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov> ) Retrieved July 31, 2018.

Mcgirk, Tim. "Afghanistan's Fix Time, March 22, 2010 (pp. 22-25.)

Menkhaus, Ken. 2005. *Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism*. London: Routledge.

Meredith, Martin. 1995. *The Fate of Africa: From the Hope of Freedom to the Heart of Despair*. New York: Public Affairs.

Middleton, Roger. (2008). "Piracy in Somalia: Threatening global trade, feeding local wars" (<http://chathamhouse.org.uk>).

Middleton, Roger. (2008). "Piracy in Somalia: Threatening global trade, feeding local wars", *The Royal Institute of International Affairs*, (pp. 1-12).

Nasir, Warfa et al., (2007). "Khat use and mental illness: A critical review", *Social Science & Medicine* 65(2):309-318.

Neuman, Scott. (<http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo->

[way/2015/07/26/426477719/while-obama-talks-security-in-kenya-al-shabab-carries-out-attack-in-somalia](http://www.africaonline.com/way/2015/07/26/426477719/while-obama-talks-security-in-kenya-al-shabab-carries-out-attack-in-somalia)) Retrieved July 30, 2019.

- Nutt, D. King and Blakemore C. (March 2007), "Development of a rational scale to assess the harm of drugs of potential isuse", <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>.
- Ondieki, Kennedy G. 2005. "Responses to Transnationals Non-governmental Terrorism in Kenya and the United States: An Anthropological Analysis". (University of Nevada Las Vegas, Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation).
- Ondieki, Kennedy G. 2016. "THE AUDACTY OF DRONE OPERATIONS: OBAMA'S COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS", *Panorama Journal* (pp. 519-528).
- O'Rourke, Simon (13 December, 2006), "Concerns over African methamphetamine like drug in Hamilton", ([http://m.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=10415187](http://m.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10415187)). Retrieve May 14, 2018.
- Perry, A. Galcayo. "Somalia's Sea Wolves", *Time* (August 1, 2011), pp.54-59.
- Randrianame, Szendrei. "The Health and Socioeconomic Aspects of Khat", *Journal of Toxicology: Clinical Toxicology* 19 (5):455-459.
- Serwer, Adam. "The Recruits: Why some young Western Muslims final al-Qaeda's narrative so appealing". *The American Prospect*. (April 2010: 25-27).
- Sikiru, Lamina. 2010. "Khat (Catha Edlilis): The Herb with Officio-legal, Socio-Cultural and Economic

Uncertainty". *South African Journal of Science*. Vol. 1061, Issue 3/4, (pp. 1-25).

Steinmetz, Katy. "Golden State's big green bet". *Time*. (November 14, 2016:32-33).

Tacon, Dave. "Taiwan's betel nut beauties", *Al Jazeera* (September 18, 2014).

Tomlinson, Simon. "Kenya Bombs al-Shabab Positions in Neighboring Somalia in Revenge for University Massacre that left 148 dead", *Kenyan Daily Nation*, (April 15, 2015), p.15.

Warsi, Sayeeda (15 June 2008). "Conservatives will ban khat", (<http://www.guardian.co.uk>).

"Who to punish", *The Economist*, May 7, 2011 (pp.70-71).

"No stopping them", *The Economist*, February 5, 2011 (pp.59-61).

"Yemen's bad habit", *The Economist*, (October 20, 2010: 45). (<http://www.standardmedia.co.ke>).

Personal Correspondences with Kenya Defense Force (Nairobi, Kenya 2014 & 2017).

Personal Correspondence with AMISOM personnel (2014 & 2016).

Personal Correspondence with UN official Nairobi, Kenya, 2018).