

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**  
**INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

**VIOLENT NON-STATE ACTORS AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE HORN OF  
AFRICA: THE KENYAN EXPERIENCE, 2012-2018**

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**2020**

**DECLARATION**

I, John Ngala Chome hereby declare that this research project paper is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a diploma in any other University.

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This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor;

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## **DEDICATION**

I humbly dedicate this research project to my dear parents Mr & Mrs Michael Chome Ngala for their love and care.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I am sincerely indebted to my Supervisor Dr. Edward Waithaka for his continued encouragement and support throughout this undertaking.

I am also truly thankful to the Ministry of Defence in general and the Defence Staff College (DSC), Karen in particular for sponsoring me.

I would like to thank my family: my wife Lina, my daughter Valencia Masika and my son Michael Chome for their love, understanding and encouragement as I did the research and most importantly I would like to thank the almighty God for giving me the Grace to do the project.

## **ABSTRACT**

Violent non-state actors have been in existence for millennia. Even during the peak of its power, the Roman empire had to deal with roaming criminal bands that preyed on her citizens as well as with maritime pirates. Different armed groups have different motives for taking up arms to fight. They normally either fight their against or alongside their states or against other non-state groups. VNSAs dominate the modern day conflict atmosphere. Their diverse nature, influence and effect on national and international security make it necessary to establish strategies for dealing with them. The general objective guiding the study is to examine VNSAs and their effects on Kenya's national security. The specific objectives of this study include: firstly, to establish the root causes for emergence of violent non-state actors in Kenya, secondly to critically determine the effects of the violent non-state actors and thirdly to examine strategies that the Kenyan government could use to contain these actors and thus enhance her national security. The study was anchored on the rational choice theory as advanced by Cornish and Clark. That posits that man is a rational being and that whatever decision he makes including forming or joining violent groupings is arrived at after conducting a cost benefit analysis. The study employed secondary sources of data such as magazines, journals, books, and internet sources. Descriptive research design was used to explain the conditions for the appearance, and effects of VNSAs and the actions or strategies that the Kenyan government could take to contain these actors and hence enhance her national security. The study was limited by the use of secondary data and by the time available to the researcher as during the conduct of the study he was attending a staff course t the Defence Staff College in Karen, Nairobi. The major reasons for the emergence of VNSA that were identified by the study included among others socio-economic factors, historical injustices and land reforms., ethnic and political factors, poverty and the presence of ungovernable spaces in these countries among others.

The effects to national security arising from the actions of VNSA in the Horn of Africa region were identified as intimidation of businesses and human rights violation, weakened state sovereignty, loss of lives and destruction of property, and a lack in trust in security agencies. The possible strategies identified by the study to deal with the issue of VNSA in Kenya are: the traditional military approach, containment and control, preventing proliferation of SALWs, preventing radicalization, mediation and negotiations and establishing military multinational joint task forces. The study concludes that VNSAs will continue to pose a challenge to national security unless concerted efforts are undertaken. Anchored on the study findings, recommendations were made that future researches to go beyond a dichotomized understanding of violent non-state organizations and forge a debate on governance comprising of several violent non-state actors. The study also recommends the need for the Kenyan government to engage the VNSAs so as to achieve a lasting solution and avoid re-emergence of these VNSAs.

## ACRONYMS

<b>AS</b>	-	Al Shabaab.
<b>DRC</b>	-	Democratic Republic of Congo.
<b>FARC</b>	-	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia.
<b>GWOT</b>	-	Global War on Terrorism.
<b>ICU</b>	-	Islamic Courts Union.
<b>IRA</b>	-	Irish Republican Army.
<b>LRA</b>	-	Lord's Resistance Army.
<b>KDF</b>	-	Kenya Defence Forces.
<b>LTTE</b>	-	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam.
<b>MHCHS</b>	-	Mercy Hurst College Institute for Intelligence Studies.
<b>MILF</b>	-	Moro Islamic Liberation Front.
<b>MRC</b>	-	Mombasa Republican Council.
<b>NGO</b>	-	Non-Governmental Organizations.
<b>NRM/A</b>	-	National Resistance movement/Army.
<b>NSA</b>	-	Non State Actors.
<b>OLF</b>	-	Oromo Liberation Front.
<b>SALW</b>	-	Small Arms and Light Weapons.
<b>SLDF</b>	-	Sabaot Land Defence Forces.
<b>SPLM/A</b>	-	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/ Army.
<b>SPLM/A-IO</b>	-	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-In Opposition.
<b>TTPS</b>	-	Tactics, Techniques and Procedures.
<b>UN</b>	-	United Nations.

- UNHCR** - United Nations High Commission for Refugees.
- UPDF** - Uganda peoples Defence Force
- US** - United States of America.
- VNSA** - Violent Non-State Actors.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

#### 1.0 Introduction

The weaknesses level experienced in African states is of high concern more so on matters of national security strategies. For instance, terms such as ‘lawless areas’ and ‘governance voids’ are increasingly being used to refer to issues of security in many parts of Africa.<sup>1</sup> Greene and Nicholas are scholars who frequently noted the level of government’s incapacity in their different countries on dealing with violence or violent non-state actors whose implications are evident on national, international and human security.<sup>2</sup> The Shiite militia group Hezbollah for example is a VNSA whose supreme reign has been widely experienced in the southern Lebanon. Similarly, Berabiche and Tuareg are violent non-state actors whose authority and power have been experienced by a large part of Sahel area in Africa.<sup>3</sup>

Several African countries such as Nigeria, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea and Congo among others consists of warlords playing a major role in the economy and the political system. According to Adesoji, the number of armed non-state groups in Africa is increasing at an alarming rate with their involvement in violent conflict causing national security.<sup>4</sup> The number of militia gangs and groups operating in the African continent are so high that it is no longer the government against “violent groups” but rather, a matter of the government against “violent groups.” Terrorism is one of the common acts by violent non-state actors which is significantly rampant in Africa. The

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<sup>1</sup> Taya, Weiss. "A demand-side approach to fighting small arms proliferation: feature". *African Security Review*. 2003, 12 (2): 5-16.

<sup>2</sup>Owen, Greene and Marsh, Nicholas. *Small arms, crime and conflict: global governance and the threat of armed violence*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2012, p.51

<sup>3</sup> E. Uwazie. *Conflict Resolution and Peace Education in Africa*. Oxford: Lexington Books, 2003

<sup>4</sup>Abimbola, Adesoji, O. "The Boko Haram uprising and Islamic revivalism in Nigeria". *Afrika Spectrum*. 2010 45 (2): 95-108.

violent non-state actors such as Boko Haram are out using their tactics to decolonize their states and compete with other militia groups. In Africa, the big question in 2017 was whether violence from political extremists was spreading all over the continent.<sup>5</sup>

### **1.1 Background to the Research Problem**

In Africa, terrorism is not a new concept as Nigeria, Kenya, Djibouti, Tanzania, Uganda, Sudan, Congo, Algeria, Somalia, Rwanda, Eritrea and Ethiopia are just few countries facing an increase of terrorism in the recent years. In as much as the acts of terrorism lead to high level of insecurity, they can also be attributed to the poor economic prosperity which is in sync with deprivation and poverty theory.<sup>6</sup> However, their statement is counteracted by the fact that the above countries have experienced sub-state terrorism activities between late 1980 and 2008 leading to significant property destruction and death of millions of people. Since 1974 to 2008, the sub-Saharan Africa reported close to 5,000 terrorism incidents committed by around 261 violent non-state groups. To a certain extent, terrorism in Africa has been encouraged by radical and apocalyptic religious beliefs.<sup>7</sup>

Kenya has also struggled with countless issues of national security which are closely linked to the state formation process and its ability to carry out its functions. It is worth noting that Kenya is among the most diverse countries with 43 ethnic tribes.<sup>8</sup> Diversity can be a source of national unity with proper management but also a source of national insecurity. However, Kenya has experienced more challenging issues of national security in the last decade. Challenges of national security are associated to influence and growth of violent or armed non-state actors for example organized

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<sup>5</sup>Levent, Demiroglu, and Alozieuwa, Simeon H.O. "Islamic militancy in two west African states: Nigeria battles Boko Haram; Mali contends with Ansar Dine, Mujao, IMA, and AQIM". *AFFRIKA Journal of Politics, Economics and Society*. 2017, 7 (2): 39-68.

<sup>6</sup>Levent, Demiroglu, and Alozieuwa, Simeon H.O. "Islamic militancy in two west African states: Nigeria battles Boko Haram; Mali contends with Ansar Dine, Mujao, IMA, and AQIM". *AFFRIKA Journal of Politics, Economics and Society*. 2017, 7 (2): 39-68.

<sup>7</sup> IBID, p. 5

<sup>8</sup>M. Miklaucic and J. Brewer. *Convergence: Illicit Networks and National Security in the Age of Globalization*. Washington: Centre for Complex Operations, Institute of National Strategic Studies, 2010

criminal gangs, militia, or terrorist groups involved in illegal smuggling of light weapons and firearms to cause destruction.<sup>9</sup> Its dysfunctional government systems, politics, and weak and unprofessional security sector make it challenging for the government to deal effectively with such violent and armed groups or actors thus affecting national security in Kenya.<sup>10</sup>

## **1.2 Statement of the Research Problem**

In international relations, organizations, entities or individual that that are engaged in international relations leading to alterations in the system are called Non state actors(NSA). These NSA include such groups as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), terrorist organizations, civil societies, private sector, international and multi-national organizations and criminal gangs among others. The participation and involvement of these NSA in the global arena tests the very principle of the Westphalian tradition of 1648 on the importance of state authority especially in conflict. The NSA are capable and able to effect wide scale conflicts as is currently seen in the Syrian crisis where the Islamic State in Syria (ISIS) plays a vital role. The NSA can generally be classified as either unarmed non-state actors (UNSA) or violent non-state actors (VNSA). VNSA are organizations that use unlawful violence to accomplish their objectives. The VNSA have several roles that they play in society. These goals include among many others; international affairs opinion building, peace building undertakings particularly in the post conflict reconstruction period, corrupting politicians, money laundering and defying and weakening state sovereignty. According to a renowned professor of international security at the University of Pittsburg's Graduate school of public and international affairs by the name Phil Williams, there are several categories of VNSAs

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<sup>9</sup>D. Chutter. "Understanding Security Sector Reforms." *Journal of Security Sector Management*. vol 4, No.2, 2006

<sup>10</sup>Patrick, Mutahi. "Between illegality and legitit: (in)security, crime and gangs in Nairobi informal settlements". *SA Crime Quarterly*. 2011 (37): 11-18.

thus : warlords, insurgencies, paramilitary forces, militias, terrorist organizations and criminal organizations and gangs.<sup>11</sup> Most of these forms of VNSA are present in the Horn of African region.

In the recent decades, researchers have debated on the nature of VNSAs and their implications on human security and political violence. They mostly sort to find out the vital conditions encouraging and sustaining terrorism, extremism and insurgency forms of VNSAs. Very minimal researchers studied on the impact or implications of these VNSAs on national security in Africa, let alone in Kenya. Evidently, inadequacies and gaps exist when it comes to the ability of the state in handling traditional and non-traditional national security issues. Based on this reality, this research will examine activities and conditions for emergence of VNSAs in Kenya for the period between 2012 and 2018 in order to understand their impacts/effects on national security. This research paper therefore will seek to answer the following questions: Firstly, what conditions/factors favour the emergency of violent or armed non-state actors in Kenya? Secondly, what are the implications/effects of violent non-state actors on Kenya's national security? Lastly, what strategies can the Kenyan government use to contain these groups to improve national security?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The main objective of this study will be to examine the effects violent non-state actors on Kenya's national security.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

- i. To determine the root causes for emergency of VNSAs in Kenya.
- ii. To critically determine the effects of these VNSAs on national security.

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<sup>11</sup>Phil Williams. Violent Non-state actors and National and International security: International Relations Security Network \*ISN) ©2008, Pg 9-17

- iii. To examine strategies to be employed the government to contain these VNSAs and enhance Kenya's national security.

## **1.4 Literature Review**

### **1.4.1 Factors Giving Rise to Continuous Expansion of Violent Non-State Actors**

VNSAs have been in existence for millennia. During the reign of the Roman empire, even during the peak of its power, the empire had to deal with roaming bands of criminals that preyed on her citizens and also deal with sea pirates. VNSAs the world over arose due to various motives and purposes. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) for instance was a paramilitary organization formed in 1922 to seek for an end to British reign over Northern Ireland and fight for probable unification of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland. In Colombia, the left wing Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC) insurgents' movement was started with the aim of bringing about social change and justice in the country. On the other hand, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka , emerged because of the desire by the group to seek for self-determination.<sup>12</sup>

In Africa, the Boko Haram was established in 2002 with the aim of establishing a Caliphate in northern Nigeria managed by unadulterated Sharia law. By early 2015, the organization controlled huge parts of Borno State , pronounced a caliphate, gathered taxes and provided services such as burrowing wells, giving out seeds and compost and providing pasture to herders.<sup>13</sup>

Militia groups as part of VNSAs emerge and are in no doubt thriving in Kenya given the wanting state of national security. These violent groups operate in different space and it was discovered that they have a complex relationship with security agents and communities. Muggah and Sang

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<sup>12</sup> Phil Williams. Violent Non-state actors and National and International security: International Relations Security Network \*ISN) ©2008, Pg 9-21

<sup>13</sup> Smith, Mike (2016). Boko Haram. Inside Nigeria's Unholy War. London: I>B. Tarius & Co.



argued that the community provided these armed actors such as Mungiki and Al-Shabaab a safe haven.<sup>14</sup> This means that the community tolerated militia activities by providing them with a conducive environment and in exchange, the community received security from the violent non-state actors. The urban slums are recognized areas known to harbor militia groups, gangs and even place of recruiting terrorists. The violent non-state actors are tolerated in such areas since a large population in the urban slums survives of illegal margins mostly associated with tapping power and water illegally, evasion of taxes and unlawful housing acquisition.

On the other hand, there are intimidating violent non-state actors who, exhort and predate on the same community tolerating their operations. This can be attributed to the fact that some of the groups have a complex relationship with the police or security agencies. Many violent non-state actors managed to get away or engage in criminal activities disrupting national security due to their close engagement with police officers. In some cases, the police use these groups as informers and in contrary occasions are arrested or face extrajudicial killings.<sup>15</sup> The rise and growth of militia groups, gangs and terrorists is due to Kenya being considered a hybrid country meaning that non-state and state actors both enjoy provision of security from the state. This is the reason Kenya as hybrid state is not fully mandated to be the political framework offering representation, welfare and security to the entire country since the government shares its authority, capacity and legitimacy with various structures.

In the analysis of political power that these armed non-state actors have, their political and economic implications are to be properly understood. For example, in Kenya, the Al-shabaab is perceived as facilitators of shadow economies where some locals see them as effective, have large

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<sup>14</sup> R. Muggah and F. Sang, F. "The Enemy Within: Rethinking Arms Availability in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Conflict, Security and Development*, 2013, 13:4.

<sup>15</sup>Edward, Azar, E., and Moon, Chung-in. *National security in the third world management of internal and external threats*. Hants (Nueva Escocia, Canadá): Center of International Development and Conflict, 1988

amounts of resources and powerful. This translated for many poor locals in the slums into believing that such violent non-state actors show good leadership and are able to take care of their people if willing to help them. It is this way of thinking that Al-shabaab manages to attract and secure new recruits and local support respectively.<sup>16</sup> These actions by a large extent have hindered the government's ability to collect intelligence on the violent non-state actors since they get protection from the local communities.

In a research on different violent non-state actors in Africa, findings show that both government and nongovernment actors became the militia groups. An example is the government of Sudan; in Darfur was actively encouraging Janjaweed group which only shows that the militia groups are ethnic based. The best strategy to use in containing such militia is ethnic cleansing with the aim of snatching away land, seizing valuable resources and disenfranchising voters. The people protecting the militia initially protect them but eventually can change to involve in sinister activities that destabilize the community's peace in order to attain military power and financial gain. The community tolerating the violent non-state actors can change to predatory hence turn to racketeering, impunity and violent competition with the government and other militia groups. Bad governance and poverty have aggravated the rise of violent non-state actors in Kenya since the government failed to offer citizens with economic services. The circumstances created a vacuum giving way to these violent groups to exploit and lure people into joining their groups.

#### **1.4.2 Effects of Violent non-state actors**

Violent or armed non-state actors have implications on national security in the sense that their activities such as robberies, property destruction and kidnapping threatens the dignity, livelihoods

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<sup>16</sup> DipoKolawole, Jagne Baboucart-Blaise Ismaila, Olaniyan Azeez et al. "The state of human security in Africa - an assessment of institutional preparedness". *Institute for Security Studies Monographs*. 2012 (185): 276.

and survival of humanity.<sup>17</sup> As a result human life becomes intolerable resulting to a ripple effect hence causing national insecurity. An individual's life is human life, individuals make a community and communities make a nation. Some of the worst violations against humanity are linked to the activities or actions of violent non-state actors. Such activities by these groups are promoted by conflicts in circumstances where violent non-state actors fight against similar groups and the state or the government. They use violence to make a statement to the targeted groups depending on the agenda or interest they want them to meet. Use of violence on innocent citizens as retaliation or for fighting the state results to forced or voluntary displacement of people. The Al-Qaeda for example is a violent non-state group known to use violence hence violating primary human rights and international humanitarian law.

Actions as well as activities by VNSAs have directly or indirectly contributed to the displacement of civilians. For instance, the Boko-Haram in Nigeria have been linked to displacement of civilians in the Lake Chad Basin .<sup>18</sup> People end-up being displaced as a results of enforced disappearances, gender-based violence, death threats, attacks on civilians' infrastructure, torture, executions, forced labor and forced recruitment. The violent non-state actors have been reported to block assistance and supplies to the displaced groups. They block assistance by deliberately attacking the humanitarians therefore hindering civilians' access to education, health services and food. Al-Shabaab which is a Somali militant group have caused terror in Dadaab refugee camp, becoming grounds of insecurity preventing humanitarians to give food, education and health services.

Violent non-state actors come in different shapes and forms in cases of national conflict. On the contrary, they are sometimes considered as groups associated with violence against innocent and

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<sup>17</sup>Sabina Alkire. "A Conceptual Framework for Human Security". *CRISE Working Paper. Centre for Research on Inequality, Peace and Human Security*. Queen Elisabeth House, Oxford University, 2003.

<sup>18</sup>G. Wilson. Militancy in the Niger Delta region and its impact on Nigerian State. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 2012 2(1). 55-67

un violent civilians breaching national security and international humanitarian law. Small acknowledged that violent groups are information economies and criminal establishments and sometimes take the initiative of expressing social problems.<sup>19</sup> In such cases, they perceive themselves as the agents of distinguished interests of the people and garner a wide support in the community. Warlords, militia, criminal networks and rebel groups are violent non-state actors who mainly undermine or disturb peace and security by flaring use of violence against civilians for their own interests.

Human security, political stability and national security are essential products that the government should consider effective and legitimate. Violent non-state actors with regards to policy discourse are considered military threats.<sup>20</sup> Conversely, their activities bring complex security impacts inclusive of human security. For example, Islamic State (IS) is widely recognized to cause transnational insecurity and arguably a significant threat against civilians in its areas of operation. Nigeria's Boko Haram, a terrorist group indicated that local citizens failed to believe in their legal, political and economic organizations. The group claimed that citizens' salient grievances included human insecurity, corruption, poverty and injustice.<sup>21</sup> West Africa is now characterized by widespread of violence which is not showing any signs of decreasing since violent groups have gained momentum in the region. The violent groups resulted to displacement of millions of locals and the remaining people to live under terror causing the UN Office to declare an unprecedented humanitarian emergency after displacement of around 4.2 million people.

After evaluating the essential literature, this research has identified that no research specifically focused on studying the impact or effects of violent or armed non-state actors on the national

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<sup>19</sup>Michelle, Small. "Privatisation of Security and Military functions and the Demise of the Modern Nation-State in Africa". *ACCORD Occasional Paper*. 2006 (2): 1-44.

<sup>20</sup>D. M. Snow. *National security for a New Era: Globalization and Geo-politics*: New York: Pearson Education Inc, 2004

<sup>21</sup>Abimbola, Adesoji, O. "The Boko Haram uprising and Islamic revivalism in Nigeria". *Afrika Spectrum*. 2010 45 (2): 95-108

security in the Horn of Africa in the perspective of the Kenyan experience. The existing researches mainly focused on violent non-state actors with respect to developmental and political lenses. All the implications of security are discussed based on the two prisms. In the above topic, no research has been done in Kenya to give resident participants a chance to provide first hand data on their experience with violent non-state actors. Researches that are available are mainly from the nongovernmental and governmental organization which does not show empirical study on the subject matter. Therefore, this study will appropriately fill in the gaps by focusing on empirical research in order to explore presence of any direct link between the consequences of violent non-state actors and national security from a Kenyan lens. The study will collect secondary data from secondary sources including books, journals, newspapers among other secondary sources. The study will enable the government to develop relevant programs, strategies and policies to effectively deal with this problem of non-state actors.

## **1.5 Justification of the study**

### **1.5.1 Academic Justification**

Academically, the research paper will add to body of knowledge on existing literature on violent non-state actors by bridging the gaps that existed on the effects of VNSAs and their impacts on national security.

### **1.5.2 General Public**

This study is also relevant to the general public as it will inform them to understand the conditions that favour the emergency violent non-state actors in Kenya and how they as citizens can help the government to address or contain these armed groups.

### **1.5.3 Policy Justification**

This study will be significant to policy makers as it will recommend measures that the government needs to put in place to address the underlying reasons behind the emergence of violent groups in Kenya.

### **1.6 Theoretical Framework**

The study is based on the rational choice theory. Rational choice as advocated by Cornish and Clark posits or is anchored on the belief and premise that a human being/ man is a reasoning or rational actor or being who considers the advantages and disadvantages, pros and cons as well as means and ends, benefits and costs before making a logical choice or decision. The theory is grounded on the fundamental foundation that the cumulative social behavior results from the behavior of individual actors each of whom is making their individual decisions. The main assumption of the theory is that when faced with several alternative choices an individual will choose the one he prefers. The major tenets of the theory are; The human being is a reasonable actor, individuals strive to maximize their goals and individuals are normally self-interested-thinking about themselves and how to advance their personal goals. Crime or engaging in violent acts according to this theory is a calculated and deliberate action. Accordingly, the theory opines that all criminals or violent groups are rational and sensible individuals or groups who practice conscious and deliberate decision making, that concurrently work towards attaining the maximum benefits of their current situation. Thus, this study has it that all the individuals who join and engage in the activities of the violent non-state groups in Kenya do so rationally after conducting a cost benefit analysis.

The realism theory as advocated by Thomas Hobbes postulates that man is inherently selfish, egoistic, gangsteristic and brutish. Man therefore engages in or rather joins violent groups in order

to fulfill his inborn egoistic and brutish nature. This multi-sectoral security approach provides a basis for combined response to violent non-state actors. The research's objective is to examine violent non-state actors and their implications on Kenya's national security. Therefore, this theory will be useful with regards to analyzing internal threats to Kenya and how they influence the country's national security. It is worth stating that to understand national security, it is vital to analyze human security which focuses on understanding multi-sectoral insecurities. It is a concept that is people-centered.<sup>22</sup>This theory as advocated by Barry Buzan in 2003 advocates amalgamating all of the single human security sectors into a single multi-sectoral security complex. This study's focus on national security indicates that the state is concerned about the well-being and welfare of her people hence national security is combination of right, human security, and development. This is to say that human security plays a major role when analyzing national security.

The multi-sectoral security theory is an appropriate approach as it covers human security in a broader scope where human security relates to food, health, economic, community, environmental and political security. In simpler terms, human security is complementary to national security.<sup>23</sup>The state or national security focuses on dangers or threats channeled against or towards the state which come in the form of attack on the armed forces while human security pays focus to a wider range of attacks individuals and whole communities experience. The point is that human security dwells on the root causes affect security and facilitate sustainable and comprehensive people-centered answers.

The rational choice theory therefore is the main theory that will guide this research in trying to find out the factors giving rise to VNSAs and their effects on national security in Kenya.

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<sup>22</sup>Commission on Human Security. *Human Security Now: Final Report*, New York: CHS, 2003

<sup>23</sup>K, Gary and J. L.Christopher. "Rethinking Human Security." *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 116, No. 4, 2001-2002

## **1.7 Hypotheses**

Ho: Kenya's national security has not been affected by VNSA emergence in the country

H1: Kenya's national security has been affected by the various VNSAs in the country.

## **1.8 Research Methodology**

This research will incorporate already existing sources of data such as newspapers, books, magazines, journals and also internet sources. Books will provide additional information for the critical investigation of the topic under study. This is mainly due to the fact that various opinions and viewpoints that have been shared by various authors and scholars will aid in the effectiveness of the research. The main reason why secondary data will be used in this study is to get various views from different scholars and also to get recent information on the subject. This will help the research to be applicable and it can also be used as a point of reference.

Research methodology is important as it defines the problem in the study, developed the research question, defines the population and analyzes collected data. This paper adopted a qualitative research method. The research employed descriptive research design to analyse and present data.

## **1.9 Scope and Limitations of the Research**

This study will mainly dwell on studying the activities of violent non-state actors in Kenya. It will analyze such activities as terrorism, money laundering, organized crime, homicides, and smuggling of drugs as the main threats to national security. The research will acknowledge the activities of the violent non-state actors as being not compatible with Kenyan's national interests. The study will look into the Kenyan experience with the violent non-state actors between 2012 and 2018. The research will rely on secondary data from existing literature to gain a new perspective on the topic.



The limiting factor is that not many researches are existing on the topic of VNSA and their impact on national security in Kenya. Another limiting factor is that of time which has limited the amount of data collected since during the time of conducting the study, the researcher was attending a military staff course at the Defence Staff College, Karen Kenya.

### **1.10 Chapter Outline**

Chapter one of the study introduces the topic under investigation. A background to the problem under study is also provided in this chapter. Further, this chapter delves into stating the study problem, while highlighting the objectives for conducting the study. Justifications for the study, both academic and policy are also highlighted in this chapter. The chapter in addition reviews various literatures and provides a theoretical foundation for the study. Null and alternate hypotheses to be tested by the study are also covered in this chapter. The methodology to be used and sources of data to be used are also included. Chapter one then concludes with the scope and limitations of study. Chapter two's main focus will be on the conditions that are conducive or favour the emergence of violent non-state actors in countries in the horn of Africa. It will seek to investigate the factors that promote the emergence of violent non-state actors in the Horn of Africa. Chapter three will address the effects and impacts of the violent non-state actors on the national security of Kenya. It will seek to analyze how these violent and armed non-state actors influence the national security of Kenya. Chapter four critically analyses the strategies the Kenyan Government Can use to deal with the emergency and actions of the VNSAs. Chapter five provides a summary and conclusion of the research. It also provides recommendations and provides suggestions on areas for further study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### CONDITIONS FOR THE EMERGENCY OF VIOLENT NON-STATE ACTORS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

#### 2.0 Introduction

VNSAs have been in existence for ages. Studies however show that in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these types of non-state actors were comparatively inconsequential. They nevertheless played a crucial role during the decolonization process of many countries. These organizations have now become more lively and vigorous in this 21<sup>st</sup> century largely as a result of the increasing weakness of most states that they seek to propagate and strengthen. The emergency of VNSA in sub Saharan Africa specifically in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, can be analyzed best by means of an index advanced by the Mercy Hurst College Institute for Intelligence Studies (MHCIIIS). Violent non-state actors (VNSA) embody a deviation from the conventional Westphalia states system in two ways.<sup>24</sup> Firstly, it provides an substitute to state governance and secondly, it challenges and dares the state's monopoly on use of violence. Different VNSA have diverse motives for acquiring arms to fight against either their own or other states or against one or several other armed non-state groups. Most times, the main concerns for the conflicts has been and continue to be the supposed marginalization of parts of the populace from the maximum enjoyment of citizenship and nationality rights including the right to participate in governance systems and to access resources as well as due to a belief that other groups in the country are having a lion's share of the national cake.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, the objective for emergence of VNSA can be ascribed to the shortcomings of or insufficiencies of the state for example when it cannot provide security, safety, basic public

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<sup>24</sup> MacRAE, A. 2005. Counterpoint: The Westphalia Overstatement. *International Social Science Review*, 80(3/4), 159-164.

<sup>25</sup> Ken Menkhaus: Warlords and Landlords. Non State Actors and Humanitarian Norms in Somalia, Davidson College

services and economic stability for its citizens or particular groups of her citizens. This chapter aims at analyzing some of the main motives for the emergence and continued presence of VNSAs in Kenya. Some of these reasons are:

## **2. 1 Socio-Economic Factors**

Many VNSA in the horn of Africa region have emerged as a consequence of a number of socio-economic issues that include: economic marginalization and underdevelopment, youth unemployment among others. Unemployment. Under development in many parts of Kenya particularly in the North Eastern and coastal regions makes the residents of those parts unsatisfied with the government's economic policies feeling they are skewed in as much as economic development is concerned and thus encourage the residents of such regions to form violent organizations like the infamous Kaya Bombo and Mombasa Republican Council (MRC) groups at the Kenyan Coast. These socio-economic factors are further analyzed here under:

### **2.1.1 Poverty**

According to Simpson, G (1998), in South Africa, during the apartheid era, notwithstanding the apartheid government's decree, rural poverty caused colossal migration by blacks to the urban centers. Because this movement was against formal government policy, water, housing, infrastructure and other necessary amenities were not offered to the black South Africans residing in the urban townships. This situation where there were receptacles of white owned affluence amongst massive poverty, colossal unemployment and lack of even basic necessities by the blacks led to extreme inter-race struggle which led to a state where criminal action was normally seen as

justifiable and communally acceptable. Criminally gangs thus emerged as a way to fight poverty by these impoverished black youths.<sup>26</sup>

In Kenya, criminal gangs (VNSA) exists everywhere. According to Ndirangu Ngunjiri (2017), crime and existence of criminal gangs is often seen as a problem or an issue affecting areas with high poverty levels. Effects of poverty on crime and establishment of criminal gangs can be described through a variety of reasons. Firstly, it is because there is generally a high degree of mental illness amongst the poor than the rich.<sup>27</sup> Secondly, poverty leads to higher levels of stress which can in turn motivate people to organize gangs to engage in robbery, theft, or other violent acts. Crime normally offers a way through which impoverished and poor people can obtain essential livelihood goods that they cannot acquire through legitimate means. Thus many criminal gangs in Kenya especially in the urban areas emerged due to poverty and harsh economic conditions faced by the members (especially the youth) of these groups. Some of these groups include the TALIBAN in the Eastlands areas of Nairobi and the WAKALI WAO and WAKALI KWANZA criminal gangs in Kisauni Sub county, Mombasa County.

### **2.1.2 Marginalization and Underdevelopment**

Socio-economic disparities in development between different regions of the Horn of Africa countries is also a critical cause for emergence of VNSA. People from the underdeveloped areas normally feel like second degree citizens in their own country. Such feelings of resentment in the long run force these people to form armed groups to agitate for an equitable share of national resources for their regions. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) insurgent movement in Northern

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<sup>26</sup> Graeme Simpson (1998), "Urban crime and violence in South Africa". I Petty, C & Brown, M (eds), Justice for children, London: save the children

<sup>27</sup> Ngunjiri, Ndirangu (2017), Poverty increases crime rate in urban areas

Uganda for example emerged as a result of strong imbalance in the level of development in Northern Uganda compared to Central and Western regions.<sup>28</sup> The MRC and other separatist groups in the coastal region emerged among other reasons as a result of perceived marginalization and lack of development projects being undertaken by the Kenyan government in the region.

### **2.1.3 Unemployment**

The youth in Kenya constitute the majority in both absolute and relative terms compared to other demographic groups in the Kenyan society. Lack of employment makes the youth vulnerable to recruitment into VNSA groups as a way of earning a living and improving their general wellbeing. Youth unemployment is one among of the causes for the occurrence and emergence of such violent armed groups like Mungiki in the Central region and the WAKALI WAO and WAKALI KWANZA criminal gangs in Mombasa County.<sup>29</sup> Many youth in Kenya are forced to join criminal gangs and other VNSA groups because of a desire to lead a better life. Many young people especially at the Kenyan coast were recruited into AS because of the lure of leading better lives from the promises they were given by their recruiters.

### **2.1.4 Religion**

The need for religious identity and freedom is a also a condition for the continued emergence of VNSA in the Horn of Africa. Several armed groups have emerged in the region that advocate for certain religious ideals. Radicalization on religious ideologies is also one among the fundamental reasons for the advent of VNSA in Kenya. Violent non-state groups particularly the Al Shabaab (AS) have emerged in Kenya as a result of religious indoctrination.<sup>30</sup> Religious terrorism is

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<sup>28</sup> Dunn, K. 2004. Uganda: The Lord's Resistance Army. *Review of African Political Economy*, 31(99), 139-142.

<sup>29</sup> Kagwanja, P. 2003. Facing Mount Kenya or Facing Mecca? The Mungiki, Ethnic Violence and the Politics of the Moi Succession in Kenya, 1987-2002. *African Affairs*, 102(406), 25-49.

<sup>30</sup> Combs, Cindy C. 2003. *Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

principally dangerous due to indoctrination of those who engage in it and their willingness to sacrifice themselves for the cause. Religious violence is made possible by religious teachings that encourage members to utilise “all in tactics” such as suicide bombings to advocate their cause. One of the reasons for the emergence of the Mungiki in the 1980s was the need to preserve traditional Kikuyu beliefs including both male and female circumcision. In Uganda, the LRA emerged from the “Holy Spirit Movement” (HSM) with the goals of ruling Uganda according to the Ten Commandments.<sup>31</sup>

## **2.2 Historical Injustices and Land Reforms**

Historical injustice refers to those ills, wrongs or harms committed by individuals, societies, groups or institutions (including state rulers and regime elites) against other people, societies and groups some of whom might be dead, but whose descendants are alive.<sup>32</sup> Many communities in Kenya have experienced one form of historical injustice or the other. These historical injustices involves among others the barring of sections of the community or nation from mainstream social, economic, and political arenas that determine the sharing of national resources and services.<sup>33</sup> The land issue is one of the major historical injustices affecting many parts of Kenya in particular the coastal region. According to the commission on revenue allocation, selective land grabbing, alienation and lack of rights to use land related resources has had an impact on the political and socio-economic behaviour of the coastal people. The issue of land at the coast has persisted for centuries. It dates back to the Arab-Swahili rule. The Arab leaders used the land to serve their own interests and those of the ruling class. During the colonial rule, the indigenous coastal people

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid

<sup>32</sup> Commission on Revenue Allocation. Historical Injustices: A complimentary Indicator for distributing the Equalisation fund. CRA working paper No 2012/02 pg 1.

<sup>33</sup>. Commission on Revenue Allocation. Historical Injustices: A complimentary Indicator for distributing the Equalisation fund. CRA working paper No 2012/02 pg 19.

further lost more land as the British collaborated with the Arabs to conveniently partition the coastal land amongst themselves while totally disregarding the indigenous people.<sup>34</sup> After independence the successive post independent Governments did nothing to address the problem. They indeed followed in the footsteps of their predecessors by enacting land laws and policies that further alienated the indigenous inhabitants at the expense of outsiders. The Kenyatta Government for instance turned the 1915 colonial Crown lands Ordinance to become the Kenyan Government's Lands Act (Cap 280) which was then used as the most effective and practical tool for political patronage by successive presidents.<sup>35</sup> The desire by the coastal people to address these historical injustices particularly the land issue led to the emergence of several VNSA among them the Kay Bombo and the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC). The MRC in particular has relied on these land grievances to escalate the stakes by stating that "*Pwani si Kenya*" (denoting that the coast region is not part of Kenya). On the other hand, the Sabaot Land Defense Forces (SLDF) in Mt Elgon also arose due to similar desires by the locals to force the government to address the historical land injustices.<sup>36</sup> The community was not happy with the way the Chebyukk settlement scheme was managed resulting to the group taking up arms to agitate for their land rights. Thus such historical land issues if not addressed once and for all will perpetuate the emergence and re-emergence of different armed groups agitating for the rectification of the historical land wrongs that alienated them from their ancestral land.

### **2.3 Ethnicity and Political Factors**

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<sup>34</sup> Commission on Revenue Allocation. Historical Injustices: A complimentary Indicator for distributing the Equalisation fund@. CRA working paper No 2012/02 pg 20.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> Ghoshal, N., Rawlence, B., & Human Rights Watch (Organization). 2011. "*Hold your heart*": *Waiting for justice in Kenya's Mt. Elgon Region*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

Tribal and ethnic exclusiveness is an important aspect contributing to the emergence of non- state armed groups in the Horn of Africa. For instance, in South Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/ Army-in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) emerged from among other factors due to the ethnic rivalries between the Dinka and Nuer communities.<sup>37</sup> The desire for self-determination, fight for power and other political objectives is an important condition for the advent of armed non-state groups. In 1973, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) emerged in Ethiopia because of the desire by the Oromo people to self-determination due to perceived oppression by the Abyssian (Ethiopian) government. The SPLM/A-IO emerged because of struggle for power and authority between President Salva Kiir Mayardit and his former Vice President, Dr Riek Machar. In Kenya the MRC advocates for secession of the Coast region based on a colonial period agreement between the British and the Sultan of Zanzibar. Lack of political inclusivity is a factor that promotes the emergence of violent non-state groups in many African countries. In Ethiopia for instance, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) emerged due to perceived non-inclusion of the Oromo people in the political affairs of the Federal republic of Ethiopia It thus strives for the realization of the of national self-determination and the establishment of an independent state for the Oromo people. The Sudanese People Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLA-IO) also rose due to perception of the Nuer community of political domination of the Juba government by the Dinka community. In Uganda, the LRA arose as a result of an ethnic-oriented war that was initiated by the National Resistance Movement/Army in Luwero triangle against the northerners. This was mainly due to a belief by part of the NRM/A leadership that Ugandan politics had since political independence been dominated by the northerners. During the Kenyan post-election crisis of 2007/2008, various ethnic groups took arms against their perceived political rivals. Some hitherto

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid



unknown VNSA like the Kalenjin warriors were pitied against other armed groups especially the Mungiki as each tried to promote /protect the political supremacy of its ethnic group.

## **2.4 Ungoverned Spaces**

Ungovernable areas are places where a government is perceived to be either unwilling or incapable of providing the essential political, social and economic goods and services associated with statehood. These critical functions include physical security, social welfare, economic management, and legitimate political institutions.<sup>38</sup>This lack of effective state sovereignty and control provides mutual benefits to the emergence of VNSA including the availability of safe sanctuaries where they can hide, plan, train, access weapons as well as have the capacity to involve in illegal smuggling to generate income. Many governments in the Horn of Africa are incapable of effectively policing the entire country largely because of the sheer size of their countries, environmental and geographic inaccessibility as well as due to insufficient manpower. This leaves a void that is normally exploited by the VNSA leading to security challenges in these areas. The LRA in Uganda exploits the massive ungovernable spaces along the porous international boundaries between Uganda, South Sudan, CAR and DRC to plan and execute their insurgency operations against the Ugandan government. The OLF in Ethiopia also straddles the harsh and inhospitable terrain along the border of Ethiopia and Kenya where government control is minimal. The AS is also another VNSA group that thrives on the vast and inhospitable areas along the Somalia-Kenyan border in the North Eastern and Coastal regions as their safe havens

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/415544/FINAL\\_Ungoverned\\_spaces.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415544/FINAL_Ungoverned_spaces.pdf)  
accessed on 2 April 2020,1849 hrs.

and operational bases. In Kenya further, especially in the North rift region, due to ineffective government authority, armed groups engaged in cattle rustling and other crimes are abounding.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

Objective one of the study was to find out the conditions that are conducive for the rise or emergence of armed non-state groups and other violent actors in the horn of African area in general and in Kenya specifically. The chapter was dedicated to analyzing some of the major conditions and factors that encourage the emergence and continued existence of VNSA in the Horn of Africa region. Therefore, it is paramount to note that socio-economic, historical injustices and ethnic/political factors, religion and the presence of ungovernable spaces are among the main causes of VNSA not only in Kenya but in the entire Horn of Africa region. The question that begs answers in the preceding chapter is how the national safety and security of the countries in the Horn of Africa region generally and specifically Kenya affected by the presence and activities of these VNSA.

## CHAPTER THREE

### EFFECTS OF VIOLENT NON STATE ACTORS ON NATIONAL SECURITY

#### 3.0 Introduction

Violent non-state actors are entities that destabilize security and peace anywhere in the world. Activities of VNSA in armed conflicts complicate matters of conventional conflict prevention, resolution and management. The involvement in conflicts by the NSA means that nowadays conflicts are no longer fought only between and among states but that they could also be fought between VNSA and states, or probably be amongst various VNSA groups. Violent non-state groups all over the globe have significantly impacted on the national security of many nations. According to Troy S Thomas, “*VNSA are not a new national security problem*”. According to him, a country like the US had a rebel start-up since her first years involved coercive struggles between the American government, native American tribes and Barbary pirates.<sup>39</sup> This chapter shall seek to critically analyse some of the effects and consequences of these VNSA on the security of the countries in the horn of Africa, particularly with reference to the Kenyan experience.

#### 3.1 Intimidate Businesses and Human Rights Violation

VNSA are responsible for intimidating businessmen to coerce them to fund their illegal activities. Many businessmen have been attacked or their businesses destroyed for refusing to adhere to the extortionist schemes of the armed non-state actors. Some criminal gangs invade business premises where they force traders to pay “protection fees.” For example, many matatus in the Eastlands area of Nairobi were torched when their owners refused to pay such protection fees to Mungiki adherents. According to Mwangiru (2008), human rights violations are rampant across the Horn of African countries. These violations have resulted to loss, pain and suffering through persecution,

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<sup>39</sup> Troy S Thomas. “Beyond pain: Coercing violent non-state actors”, (2010), pg 2.

torture, extra-judicial killings and ethnic cleansing.<sup>40</sup> As a consequence of perceived violations of human rights by the incumbent governments in the horn of Africa, VNSA emerged as opponents to the governments' excesses but they themselves in turn get involved in human rights violations. The LRA for instance despite arising as a cure against the NRM government excesses and human rights violations against the Acholi and other communities in northern Uganda have been notorious for the abduction of girls whom they sexually abuse.<sup>41</sup> They are also famed for their forceful conscription of child soldiers. The Al-Shabaab is also famed for their brutal execution of their enemies, sympathizers and those they feel as spies for infidels within their ranks.

### **3.2 Weakened State Sovereignty**

Weak states are those that lack certain qualities that are considered critical for modern states. Such qualities include legitimacy, collective interest, capacity and shared identity. Armed non-state actors have challenged states' authority and sovereignty in various areas in the greater horn of Africa. In Ethiopia for example, the government authority in the Oromia region is less compared to the influence of the OLF. The SPLO-IO dominated areas in South Sudan also experience limited national government control and authority. The LRA used to reign supreme in Northern Uganda before it was substantially degraded by the Ugandan government with support from the United States of America (USA).<sup>42</sup> In Somalia, the Al Shabaab and other clan militias have restricted the Somalia government influence to the City of Mogadishu and adjacent areas. In Kenya, the Al Shabaab (AS) militants have destabilized government control in areas along the border with Somalia particularly at the Boni enclave and the North Eastern region since the Kenyan government declared war with the AS in 2011. In most of Kenya's urban areas

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<sup>40</sup> Makumi Mwangiri "Human Security: Setting the Agenda for the Horn of Africa", (2008), pg 31

<sup>41</sup> Dunn, K. 2004. Uganda: The Lord's Resistance Army. *Review of African Political Economy*, 31(99), 139-142.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid

particularly in the slums, armed gangs dominate these areas. The government influence is minimal compared to that of these gangs. In fact, in some areas they act as the de facto government where they collect protection taxes from the innocent citizens. The Mungiki gang for example though greatly degraded is still operational in some parts of Nairobi City especially in Eastlands.

### **3.3 Loss of Lives and Destruction of property**

Many people in the horn of Africa (HOA) have lost their lives because of the activities of VNSA in the region. A report compiled by the United Nations High Commission for refugees (UNHCR) on 14 May 2010 indicates that the LRA was reported to have killed over 100 people between 22-26 February at Kpanga area, Bas-Uele district in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). According to another report published by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, an estimated 383000 people died as a result of the South Sudanese civil war that pitted the South Sudanese government forces against the rebel SPLA-IO. The report further indicated that about half of the dead people were killed as a result of direct combat between ethnic rivals as the fighting spread across the country while the other half died as a result of hunger, disease and other causes aggravated by the conflict. In Kenya, Kaya Bombo raiders were responsible for the death of 6 police officers on 13 August 1997 when they attacked Likoni police station. The AS have caused the deaths of many people during their various attacks in various parts of Kenya. On 21 Sep 2013 during the West Gate attacks, 71 People were killed. On 2 April 2015, about 148 students were executed by AS during the Garissa University attack.<sup>43</sup> 60 more people were killed during the Mpeketoni attack of 15 - 17 June 2014, while 21 people were killed during the attack on the Dusit

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<sup>43</sup> Pate, Amy, and Michael Jensen, Erin Miller. 2015. "Background Report: Al-Shabaab Attack on Garissa University in Kenya." College Park, MD. [http://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/STARTBackgroundReport\\_alShabaabGarissaU\\_April2015.pdf](http://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/STARTBackgroundReport_alShabaabGarissaU_April2015.pdf)

D2, Riverside Drive complex in Nairobi on 15 January 2019. The AS has also been involved in other deadly attacks particularly in the Coastal and North Eastern regions of Kenya.

Property worth millions of shilling has also been lost because of the activities of VNSA in the horn of Africa region and Kenya in particular. The 1998 Al Qaeda attack on the American Embassy and Cooperative house as well as the West Gate and Dusit D2 attacks by the AS terrorist groups are good examples of property worth billions of shillings lost as a result of the actions of VNSA in Kenya.<sup>44</sup>

### **3.4 Lack of Trust in Security Agencies and Breakdown of Law and Order**

If members of a community are convinced that their government security forces are more inimical to their safety and wellbeing, they are more likely to lose faith and trust in them. VNSA in the horn of Africa have terrorized and committed atrocities against communities to the extent that the societies in those areas have started questioning the capacity of government security agencies to provide them with security. In Mombasa County for example, citizens in Kisauni and Likoni Sub-Counties have been forced to organize themselves into community vigilant groups to protect themselves from merciless attacks from the WAKALI WAO and WAKALI KWANZA armed groups out of fear that the government security agencies are either incapable or unwilling to protect them from these armed groups.

The emergence of armed non-state actors has contributed to the disruption of law and order in some parts of the horn of Africa. Some areas have become ungovernable spaces. The state of Somalia became ungovernable after clan based militias emerged and fought against each other as a result of the overthrow of dictator, Siad Barre in 1991.<sup>45</sup> To date despite the government having

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<sup>44</sup> Ryan, M. 2019. The War on Terror in Sub-Saharan Africa. In *Full Spectrum Dominance: Irregular Warfare and the War on Terror* (pp. 77-113). Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. doi:10.2307/j.ctvqsdmb2.7

<sup>45</sup> Mohamed Haji Ingiriis. 2016. How Somalia Works: Mimicry and the Making of Mohamed Siad Barre's Regime in Mogadishu. *Africa Today*, 63(1), 57-83. doi:10.2979/africatoday.63.1.0057

some form of authority in Mogadishu, the majority of the country is ungovernable due to the AS and other armed groups controlling those areas. In Kenya some areas particularly in the North-Rift region where inter-communal cattle rustling is prevalent, these criminal armed groups exert more influence/authority in these areas compared to the national government. As a result of inability by the states in the Horn of Africa to reign on the violent activities by the VNSA in parts of their territories, the masses of people in these areas often lose trust in the governments' security agencies. Law and order in these areas may also pose a great challenge as the communities may decide to take law into their own hands and engage the VNSA due to sheer desperation resulting from the government; inability to secure the population against the violent activities of the armed groups.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

Objective two of the study dealt with an analysis of the major effects of VNSA on the Horn of African countries. Some of the effects analysed included intimidation of businesses, human rights violations, weakened state sovereignty, loss of lives and destruction of property, lack of trust in security agencies and breakdown of law and order. From the above mentioned effects of VNSA in the Horn of Africa region, with specific reference to Kenya, the question that now begs and seeks answers in the next chapter shall constitute a critical analysis of the strategies that need to be put in place by the Kenyan Government to deal with the issue of VNSA.

## CHAPTER 4

### STRATEGIES THAT THE KENYAN GOVERNMENT CAN USE TO CONTAIN VIOLENT NON-STATE ACTORS TO ENHANCE NATIONAL SECURITY

#### 4.0 Introduction

VNSA dominate the modern conflict environment in a dramatic way. Their extent of distribution, impact and influence on both national and global security makes it essential to establish strategies for dealing with them. According to Claudia and Ulrich, there are no gratifying solutions to the problems of VNSAs. They argue that in light of past experiences, there is need to adopt flexible arrangements in dealing with VNSA.<sup>46</sup>This chapter mainly focuses on identifying strategies which can be employed to contain VNSA to improve national security. These strategies include suggestions and observations made by various scholars. The strategies suggested are to show how they can help the Kenyan Government to contain the VNSA and if they are effective. This will be based on evidence from other countries that have contended with the issue of violent non-state actors to promote national security.

#### 4.1 Traditional Military Response

This strategy involves the use of State's defense forces to deal with the VNSA. The government resorts to the military element of national power to address the issue of VNSA in its borders. This strategy entails the use of tough measures that include the utilization of deadly force by the government security agencies especially by the military to fight and arrest members of armed groups. The Nigerian Government has used this strategy against the Boko Haram militants. However, the ruthless force used by the Nigerian Military that involved extrajudicial executions as a strategy in managing the Boko Haram had negative impact because apart from aggravating

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<sup>46</sup> Claudia Hofmann and Ulrich Schneckener: Engaging non-state armed actors in State and Peace-building: Options and strategies.



the situation it also drew more popular support for them. In Uganda the NRM/A has conducted several military operations against the LRA. The major military operations conducted by Uganda (with or without external support) against the LRA includes OPERATION NORTH, OPERATION IRON I and II, OPERATION LIGHTING THUNDER and OPERATION OBSERVANT COMPASS. These operations have to a great extent been effective in degrading the LRA that is currently inactive as it was years back.

In this strategy, the Kenyan government can enlist the help of its military force to deal with the problem of VNSA. This strategy is to be employed when the actions of the VNSA can't be effectively diminished by the internal security organs particularly the police. The Kenya Government successfully employed this strategy in 2008 when it deployed its military forces to Mt Elgon to defeat the SLDF. Additionally, the Kenyan government in cooperation with the Somalia Federal government started operation "LINDA NCHI" on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 2011 against the AS militia that were purported to have engaged in the kidnapping of foreign tourists and aid workers in Kenya. This operation lasted up to 31 March 2012 when the Kenyan forces integrated into AMISOM.<sup>47</sup> During this operation more than 700 AS militias were killed and 61 captured with few casualties on the Kenyan side.<sup>48</sup> Currently the Kenyan government has deployed its military to the North Eastern region as well as in the Boni enclave in Lamu County to help the police to curtail the activities of the AS terror group.

## **4.2 Containment and Control**

This is a strategy that focuses on having a systematic containment and control over the actions of VNSAs to diminish their communication and maneuver. Control and containment is objectively

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<sup>47</sup> Peter V G Gatuiku: Countering Terrorism in the Horn of Africa; a Case study of Kenya., pg 39

<sup>48</sup> Ibid

for the state to maintain its national security status quo by putting a strict surveillance on the violent non-state actors' activities through intelligence measures and police. According to Atzili, this is strategy is very effective in cutting off violent groups concentrated on a particular territory from the rest the country.<sup>49</sup> For instance, Kenya can take use intelligence to find and raid Al-Shabaab territories to cut off its activities. This measure is evident in Kenya as the government sent troops to Somalia in Al-Shabaab territories to contain them from spreading to other areas. This strategy is aimed at discontinuing VNSA activities by ensuring that the groups' organization is disrupted.

#### **4.3 Preventing Proliferation of Small Arms and light Weapons**

The activities of VNSA in Kenya, keep on being sustained mostly because of the ease with which they can gain access to and acquire small arms and light weapons (SALW). The Kenyan Government thus needs to increase its efforts to suffocate the means by which these groups gain access to the SALW. It is worth noting that several armed groups including the notorious cattle rustlers in the North Rift region emerge due to the ease with which they can access weapons. The Government should therefore institute measures to keep such dangerous weapons from falling under the control of wrong people. Such measures should include strict border controls to frustrate the smuggling into the country of such weapons. The government should also impose strict legal punishments for those caught using or trading in illegal weapons.

#### **4.4 Preventing Radicalization**

The sustenance of VNSA activities especially the terrorist groups like AS depends on the ceaseless and endless ability to enlist new recruits. Diminishing the number of recruits is a viable route through which the Kenyan Government may disrupt these groups' powers to recruit. The Kenyan Government can utilize this technique by focusing its efforts on mosques and religious leaders

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<sup>49</sup> Atzili, B. and Pearlman, W. 2012, "Triadic deterrence: coercing strength, beaten by weakness", *Security Studies*, Vol. 21 No. 2, pp. 301-335.

suspected of radicalizing youths. As the rational choice theory opines most of the youth are radicalized voluntarily. The government thus needs to identify such radicalized individuals and employ tactics and strategies that will appeal to them and encourage them to voluntarily accept to be re-radicalized and re-integrated back to society. However, the Government needs to exercise caution as allegations of disregarding the norms of places considered sacred such as mosques while conducting its anti-radicalization programmers may have counter-productive results.

#### **4.5 Isolation and marginalization**

This is a method that explores on ways of reducing violent non-state actors' ideological and political influence on a part of a country or on the entire country. The point is to marginalize these actors' demands and worldview in public discourses while isolation is to prevent them physically and politically from potential and actual constituencies and followers. For this to happen, there is need for a large consensus among societal groups and political elites to avoid associating with VNSA and also avoid reacting to their violent provocations, instead, follow a political process. This method can work properly when dealing with weaker VNSA such as small marauders or rebel factions.<sup>50</sup> In Kenya, this approach can best be employed to deal with smaller and ideologically motivated violent non-state actors such as Mombasa Republican Council (MRC). The government can use the rational choice theory to warn those individuals or areas that support the activities of VNSA that they chose a wrong option and must be prepared for the consequences of their decisions including isolation and marginalization of their areas from governmental development programs. With such governmental sanctions, some people and organizations may be compelled to denounce any association with the VNSA operating in their areas thus alienating them and thus help government security agencies in enhancing security in these areas.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid 47

#### **4.6 Enforcing internal rivalry and splits**

This approach aims at dividing and fragmenting the violent non-state actors using moderate force and hardliners. Achieving this can be done by giving deals to some of the top figures in the group; using force threat indiscriminately or even invite factions to be part of a political procedure as an encouragement to change the group into a political movement or leave the group. On the contrary, this approach should be implemented with caution because it's a strategy that can lead to development of splinter and radical fringe groups that are more extreme compared to the previous unified groups. It is indicated that enforcing rivalry and split can work with terrorist or rebel groups. A good example is the split from the Philippine's Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) by the Kato militia group and the splinter of Somalia's Islamic Courts Union (ICU) into various offshoots in 2006 where one became the Al-Shabaab terrorist group.<sup>51</sup> The Kenyan Government needs to penetrate and sow seeds of discontent among the leadership of the VNSA groups operating in the country. It can do so by enticing some of the leadership with government appointments and job opportunities to their followers. According to the rational choice theory the government can thus entice factions of these VNSA groups with benefits and advantages that will accrue to them once they choose wisely by cooperating with the government in ensuring splitting and rocking the boats of these violent groups from within. This will create ideological and idiosyncratic differences amongst the key leadership making them to jostle for power and influence among themselves resulting into splits and subsequently leading to the weakening of such armed groups. Once these groups are weakened the government can thus get in and re-establish its authority.

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<sup>51</sup> Fleet, M. 2015, "Defense and counter-terrorism in Israel: the misappropriation of deterrence", *Politikon: IAPSS Political Science Journal*, Vol. 26, pp. 66-83.

#### **4.7 Establishment of Civilian Joint Task Force**

In this strategy, the government enlists the active participation of the general public in assisting it deal with the VNSA. This government engages the services of law abiding citizens in the areas where these armed groups operate to help it effectively fight them. In June 2013 for instance, the Nigerian Government set up a Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) composed of neighborhood trackers and young people from the locale to give nearby policing and assist the Government's regular security forces. This not only reassured the civilians of their protection but it indeed also filled the security void in the expansive region. These civilian Joint task forces are a decent source of military insight on the insurgents' forts and their supporters. Despite the fact that the CJTF don't have military training their presence closed numerous security gaps.<sup>52</sup>

The Kenyan government can borrow a leaf from the Nigerian government by establishing these CJTFs in the areas where these VNSA are providing a challenge to national security. Because these CJTFs will be operating in areas where they are very familiar with, they will be able to provide real time intelligence on the activities of the VNSA thus facilitating timely response by the regular government security agencies. The governmental responsibility will be to offer help in organizing, training and providing logistics support to these groups. These joint ventures between the government and the public are likely to be very successful and effective in solving the VNSA menace in the country as the public will feel part of the government's security initiatives. Thus public participation and involvement in tackling the menace of VNSA in Kenya will go a long way in ensuring sustainable safety and security of the populations in the affected regions. The

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<sup>52</sup> International crisis group. "Curbing Violence in Nigeria(Li)African Report No. 216: The Boko Haram insurgency." 9 April 2014. Accessed 10 February 2020. [https://www.eco.net/file\\_upload/1226\\_1396951718\\_216-curbing-violence-in-nigeria-ii-the-book-hraminsurgency.pdf](https://www.eco.net/file_upload/1226_1396951718_216-curbing-violence-in-nigeria-ii-the-book-hraminsurgency.pdf).

government should propagate to the civilian population in regions affected by VNSA on the pros of joining the CJTF as opposed to the cons of joining the VNSA groups.

#### **4.8 Negotiation and Mediation**

Negotiation refers to an agreement between two or more parties involved in a conflict. This approach entails the use of external facilitators to work and engage parties to a conflict including the VNSA to a negotiating table with the aim of finding a political solution to grievances that led to the conflict. Most of the VNSA normally emerge because of a desire for their grievances to be heard and addressed by the government in power. By acknowledging the grievances and offering a chance to negotiate with some of the VNSAs, the Kenyan government may be able to resolve the issues advocated by some of these groups. The government can also engage the services of renowned mediators to mediate a pacific settlement of the conflict between it and the VNSA. For example, in the case of the AS, the war against them seems to be protracted. The government can now try to negotiate with the AS to see whether the war can come to an end. The government can also bring to the negotiating table such armed groups as the MRC so as to solve their issues once and for all and thus enhance its national security. These negotiation and mediation mechanisms will involve addressing the root causes for the emergence of these VNSA to ensure they don't reemerge again once an agreement has been reached.

#### **4.9 Establishment of Multinational Joint Task Forces**

More often than not, most of the VNSA normally operate across borders of the country of origin either because of foreign support or because of ungovernable spaces along the borders. The Boko Haram for example has extended its areas of operations to Northern Cameroon and Niger while the LRA operates in the countries of Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan, South Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR). The AS operates between Somalia and

Kenya. Because of these cross border operations by these VNSA, there is need for the concerned governments to establish joint task forces to counter them. The Nigerian government for instance has relied on the help from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), regional economic bloc in its campaigns against the Boko Haram. As a consequence of this regional intervention mechanism, a Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) was established in Ndjamena, Chad on 20 January 2015 to contend the Boko Haram. The MNJTF involves troops drawn from Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and the Republic of Benin. This MNJTF has on several occasions succeeded in driving out Boko Haram from their hide outs close to the outskirts of Nigeria, filling in as a barricade to book Haram's operations across the border.<sup>53</sup> In Uganda, on 14 Dec 2009 the Uganda Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) jointly with DRC, and South Sudan launched operation LIGHTNING THUNDER after Joseph Kony failed to honour signing of peace agreement deal on 30 November 2009. Further, the Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces in collaboration with special forces launched another operation against the LRA in 2010 with the sole objective of capturing its leader, Joseph Kony. This operation ended in 2011 without the capture of Kony but the LRA had greatly been degraded. The Kenyan government can thus enlist the collaborative efforts of other friendly states both regionally, continentally and internationally to collectively defeat armed non-state actors. Currently, the Kenyan Defense Forces are involved in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) as part of a continental fight against the terrorist group AS. It is therefore paramount that the Kenyan government endeavors to engage in joint operations with other countries against current and future armed non-state groups that may pose threat to national security.

#### **4.10 Conclusion**

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<sup>53</sup> Falode, James A. "The Nature of Nigeria's Boko Haram War, 2010-2015: A strategic Analysis. Perspectives on Terrorism 10, No. 1 (2016). Accessed 14 March 2020. <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/488/html>.

From the foregoing discussion, the violent non-state actors affecting Kenya's national security are similar to those experienced in Nigeria, Uganda and other African countries. The strategies used in the other countries to counter the VNSA can also be adopted by the Kenyan government to address their effects on Kenya's national security. These approaches include use of traditional military response, containment and control, preventing radicalization and negotiation and mediation among others. The preceding Chapter will provide a summary of the study, conclude and provide recommendations that can aid policy makers in the Horn of Africa region generally and Kenya specifically on how best they can deal with the issue of VNSA and thus ensure sustained national security.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Summary

For successful termination of contemporary conflicts and wars, the engagement with VNSA has become of central importance. This project paper delved into the issue of VNSA in the Horn of Africa region. Its main purpose was to highlight conditions conducive for the emergence of VNSA in the Horn of Africa, identify the effects of these actors on national security of the Horn of Africa nations and suggest effective strategies that the Horn of African region governments and the Kenyan government in particular could implement to address the issues of VNSA .The major reasons for the emergence of VNSA that were identified by the study included among others socio-economic factors, historical injustices and land reforms., ethnic and political factors, poverty and the presence of ungovernable spaces in these countries among others. The effects to national security arising from the actions of VNSA in the Horn of Africa region were identified as intimidation of businesses and human rights violation, weakened state sovereignty, property destruction, loss of lives in addition to a lack in trust in security agencies. The possible strategies identified by the study to deal with the issue of VNSA in Kenya are: the traditional military approach, containment and control, preventing proliferation of SALWs, preventing radicalization, mediation and negotiations and establishing military multinational joint task forces.

Chapter two of the research found out that socio-economic factors are some of the main objects for the occurrence and continued existence of VNSA in the Horn of Africa region. These factors include marginalization and underdevelopment of certain parts of the nations in the Horn of Africa like the Coastal region in Kenya. Youth unemployment was found to be another socio-economic factor contributing to the advent of the armed non-state actors.

Chapter two also found out that poverty is another predisposing factor responsible for the rise of these violent non-state actors. The study found that out in South Africa during the apartheid era rural poverty forced black Africans to migrate to the urban areas to look for better livelihoods. However, because the government did not provide essential services to the blacks, life became unbearable and some formed criminal gangs to eke a living. The study further found out that in Kenya several violent groups also emerged because of lack of employment opportunities. Such groups include the TALIBAN in the Eastlands area of Nairobi and the WAKALI WAO and WAKALI KWANZA armed groups in Kisauni Sub-County in Mombasa.

Chapter two of the study further established that religious radicalization and fanaticism propagated by religious teachings and ideologies encouraged members to utilize “all in tactics” to advocate their case. The study found out that religious terrorist groups like AS emerged due to the need by their leaders to compel other to adhere to their religious ideals. The Mungiki criminal gang in Central region and parts of Nairobi city was found to have originated in the 1980s due to the need to preserve traditional Kikuyu beliefs.

In addition to the aforementioned, Chapter two also found that historical land injustices were a significant contributing factor to the emergence of VNSA in Kenya. The MRC separatist movement in the Coastal region was found to have emerged due to a desire by the indigenous inhabitants of that region to correct historical injustices committed since the Arab era and exacerbated by successive governments. These land injustices alienated the indigenous people of their land. The SLDF in Mt Elgon area also emerged due to perceived land injustices relating to the management of the Chebyukk settlement scheme.

Chapter two of the study further highlighted that the presence of ungovernable spaces in most territories in this region of Africa was also a reason for the emergence and continued activities of VNSA due to limited or non-existent government influence in these areas.

Chapter three of the study found out that the activities of VNSA weakened state authority in majority of the countries in the Horn of Africa. The study found out that the influence of criminal gangs in some urban areas particularly the Eastlands part of Nairobi was more compared to the government's.

Chapter three of the study further established that VNSA in Kenya particularly the AS had resulted into considerable life loss and property destruction. During the Westgate attack of 23 September 2013 for instance 71 people were killed while during the Garissa University raid of 2 April 2015, some 148 students' lives were lost. The study also found out that several properties worth millions of shillings have been destroyed by AS and other armed groups across the country.

Chapter three of the study also found out that the activities VNSAs led to a waning of trust and believe in the government's security agencies by members of the public. The study found out that in Mombasa county, residents of Kisauni and Likoni had lost faith in the ability of the security agencies to reign on the criminal gangs operating in those areas forcing them to organize community vigilant groups to protect themselves.

Chapter four of the study found out that the traditional military response of deploying the military as one of the main strategies the Kenyan government can use to address the threat to national security posed by the VNSA. Further, this chapter established that preventing the proliferation of SALWs will go a long way in depriving such VNSA of their sources of weapons thus effectively weakening them.

Chapter four also advocated the importance of Kenyan government to deliberately engineer internal rivalries and splits among the leadership of the armed groups thus weakening them and forcing them to fight among themselves.

Chapter four also found that the establishment of a MJTF among friendly regional and international partners was critical strategy in defeating VNSA. The study found out that the AMISOM is a good example of a MJTF against a VNSA (AS).

Chapter four also found out that negotiating with the VNSAs by addressing the root causes for their emergence is a great strategy that is not only effective but also sustainable as the VNSA feel part of the negotiated settlement. The use of neutral mediators to mediate between the government and the VNSAs was also explored as a possible strategy chapter four.

## **5.1 Conclusion**

In general, this analysis was done to encourage a debate on VNSA and national security. A good starting point was first getting to understand VNSAs' effects on the national security of the Horn of African countries. This was done by getting to learn about their activities and influence they have in the society. The existing range of scholarly researches have indicated that VNSA are competing for control and power among themselves in the border regions of Kenya and beyond. It has been discovered that these groups in many cases create complementary forms of governance using stable and complex relationships with each other. This research had the purpose of identifying and understanding security threats from violent non-state actors so as policymakers may be in a position to develop applicable and appropriate policies to curb these threats making the assessment of armed non-state actors' behaviors important. The contemporary world has rare conflicts between states hence VNSA are the major source of violent activities.

Based on the analysis in the succeeding chapters, violent non-state actors present the most pervasive threat to national security of the Horn of Africa Countries. The study showed that the cause for origin and existence of VNSA can be ascribed to the shortcomings or inadequacies of the state for example when a state fails to provide safety, security, basic public services and economic stability for its citizens or certain groups of citizens. For instance, lack of employment makes the youth vulnerable to recruitment into VNSA groups as a way of earning a living and improving their general wellbeing. Youth unemployment was found to be one of the reasons for the emergence and increase of such violent groups like Mungiki in the Central region and the WAKALI WAO and WAKALI KWANZA criminal gangs in Mombasa County. Furthermore, more youths were lured to join terrorist organizations like AS in Somalia because of the promise of better standards of living. The study found out that Violent non-state actors are those organizations that destabilize peace, harmony and security anywhere in the world. Matters of conventional conflict management and resolution in armed conflicts are normally complicated by the activities of VNSA. These actors' involvement in conflicts implies that conflicts are nowadays fought not only between states but may also be between VNSA and states, and possible amongst multiple VNSA groups. Violent non-state actors all over the world have significantly impacted on the national security of many nations.

These findings have important implications on policy in that; treating violent non-state actors as a threat to the nation can result to militarized responses that are prone to unexpected and dangerous consequences. Therefore, developing policies to mitigate and contain the threats to civilians needs the government to have an extensive understanding of VNSA's organization and behaviors. Interventions used to contain these groups have to be designed carefully which involves the first step of understanding the extent of their threats to civilians. Coercion is one of the grand strategies

for intervention that the US has employed to deal with VNSA such as terrorists. The strategy of coercion involved using military means together with non-military means to obtain a political end. This means that Kenya can also use the same method to contain the VNSA groups within the country. Prevention of the spread of SALW in the Horn of Africa through effective border control and enhancement of government authority in ungovernable spaces is also critical in addressing the VNSA issue.

Enforcing internal rivalries and splits among the leadership of the VNSA groups was seen as another viable option as was the isolation and marginalization of these groups. Further the use of mechanisms that address radicalization and religious fundamentalism were analyzed. The use of both civilian and military task forces were also identified as key strategies. Mediation and negotiation that address the root causes for the emergency of the VNSA was also seen as one of the best strategies.

The findings thus confirmed the alternate hypothesis that the VNSA have affected the national security of Kenya based on the threats to security and losses of lives attributed to these VNSA in the Republic of Kenya. The null hypothesis was consequently discarded.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

(i) Based on the findings, this study recommends that future researches to go beyond a dichotomized understanding of violent non-state organizations and forge a debate on governance comprising of several violent non-state actors. This research has found that the conditions likely to lead to emergence of VNSAs include unemployment, economic disparity, and radical religious ideologies among others. This research however fails to note whether the governance structures and “modus operandi” of these violent non-state actor groups are similar throughout the Horn of Africa region, hence future research pursuing this area would provide insights as to why these

groups form governance structures. Findings of this research is that violent non-state actors across Africa are viewed as irrational groups instead of rational groups trying to pursue their self-interests through making strategic decisions. There is more to learn about the influence of their decisions on government beyond national security.

It is important to recognize that this research solely focused on static portrayal of violent non-state actors and its influence on national security thus mistakenly overlooking its effects on political conditions and socioeconomic dynamics on political authority.

(ii) The study further recommends that the Kenyan government should attain a nuanced understanding of individual and collective violent groups behaviors and decision-making to have insights on how it can influence these groups. Overall, future research should find out how the state can learn from the interactions, relationships and connections among various violent non-state actor groups. Future research should reveal the role of government or the state for the mentioned arrangement.

(iii) The research also recommends the need for the Kenyan government to engage these VNSAs so as to achieve a lasting solution and avoid re-emergence of these VNSAs.

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