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Editorial

Terrorism and violent extremism are well documented phenomena of our times. Although terrorism dates far back in history, it is only in the second half of the last and first half of the current century that its graphic and devastating nature to human progress has become more manifest. In the decade following independence in Africa, early warnings about terrorism in the years to come were already there. A few examples include the terror of ‘Carlos the Jackal’ and his collaborators in Europe, Middle East and Africa; the Red Army and its violent projection of terror on humans and states; the struggles in Palestine and the massacre of Israeli sportsmen in the Munich Olympics of 1972; the numerous hijackings of civilian aircraft and massive loss of lives. These incidents only got worse. They were precursors of 9/11 in the US and the bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. They are related to the current terror and violent extremism in our times.

Have the likely causes of this state of affairs changed over time? The answer is probably not. The group grievances and ideologies behind the terror have only aggravated their impacts on society. It is more apparent now than ever before that terror is an intellectual movement with ideas and thoughts by committed thinkers and practitioners. As such, the struggle against it must start here. It is no longer a question of what lethal weapon one possesses or how it is utilized. It is time for an intellectual and ideological rearmament to deal with a new kind of war. In the current issue of Africa Amani Journal, the concepts state fragility and terrorism are discussed within the context of Africa. Violence emanating from electoral processes in Africa is also addressed in light of happenings in various spots on the continent such as the DRC and Gabon. Gender is also revisited within the confines of terrorism and the increasing participation of both men and women in terror. The editor welcomes the current issue of AAJ and looks forward to wide readership and future contributions.

Prof. Timothy Gatara

Editor



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Foreword

Understanding Terrorism

The latest statistics on terrorism in the world are telling. The top terror nation on earth is Iraq, sharing the spot with Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, India, Yemen and Thailand. Africa, however, appears on this notorious list of top 10 terror nations on earth due to the experiences of Nigeria, Somalia and Libya. This is according to the Global Terrorism Index (2015). The Central African Republic ranks 14th, Sudan 16th, and the DRC, 19th. Terrorism is least in Ghana, Angola and Sierra Leone. Given the above figures and serious challenges posed by terrorism and violent extremism in the region, the IPSTC is ever aware of its mandate, to conduct timely research on issues of peace and conflict and to share the findings with policy makers in addition to developing relevant courses to address the peace and security issues of our time. Time has shown that terrorism is highly mutational and persistent. It has reached a stage that leaves little doubt in the thinking of peacemakers and governments that it is a highly intellectual phenomenon and that it is time to start dealing with it at that level too. It has a philosophy, a mind-set and an ideology. In the current issue of the Africa Amani Journal, there are articles that push the understanding of terrorism as an intellectual pursuit. The concepts 'state fragility' and 'terrorism' are examined. So is the whole issue of electoral violence that pervades most African states and sometimes exceeds simple acts of terrorism. Finally, counterterrorism and the challenge of gender in terrorism are also examined. I take this opportunity to thank all our partners and to welcome all to this 4th issue that focuses on terrorism.

Brig. Patrick Nderitu

Director.