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**Analysis Into The Role of Border Raids and Attacks on Kenya's Defence Policy  
Towards Somalia (2002-2022)**

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**Abstract**

Border raids and attacks in Kenya by violent extremist groups from Somalia in 2002 to 2022 were very rampant and leading to very many deaths in schools, churches and malls. This led to various changes in Kenya's defence policy towards Somalia. The researcher sort to assess the impact cross border raids and attacks had on the perceived changes of Kenya's defence Policy towards Somalia. The respondents demonstrated that, the raids and attacks include, abduction of government officials and tourists, attacks on military bases and security personnel, attacks on schools, shopping malls and churches and lastly attacks on motor vehicles in the larger North Eastern part of Kenya. According to the data, 100% of respondents agreed that attacks on schools, shopping malls, and churches, 94.01% agreed that attacks on motor vehicles in the larger north eastern parts of Kenya, 93.75% agreed that attacks on military bases and security personnel, 78.39% agreed that abduction of government officials and tourists, and 67.71% agreed that attacks on government installations and communication equipment contributed to Kenya's defense policy shift toward Somalia. On the means of entry into Kenya, the respondents indicated that, Boni Forest, Indian Ocean in Lamu and Kiunga , motor vehicles transporting goods through common roads from Somalia by the locals and lastly major International Airport are the points of entry. The findings above demonstrate how porous Kenya's border is; you may enter Kenya from any border with Somalia. The research came up with the following recommendations, Kenya and Somalia should work together to eliminate the 'Youth Bulge' inside their borders. Kenyan and Somali governments should collaborate on intelligence sharing to track the movement of people more especially youths across both borders. Finally, Kenya Defence Forces contingents stationed deep within Somalia should be withdrawn and stationed at the country's lengthy border with Somalia to strengthen security and defence. The KDF should be outfitted with cutting-edge surveillance technology and armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) to secure border. This will allow for effective covering of large areas in the shortest amount of time.

**Keywords:** Defence policy, violent extremism, Kenya Defence Forces, Unmanned aerial vehicle, Cross border attacks and Raids.

## **Analysis Into The Role of Border Raids and Attacks on Kenya's Defence Policy Towards Somalia (2002-2022)**

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### **Introduction**

The UN Charter in Article 2/4 states “All member States refrain in their International relations from the threat or use of force against territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any manner inconsistent with the purpose of the United Nations” This principle has limited cross border conflict between states as the International laws make it very clear, but non-state actors like the violent extremist groups have no regards for these. According to (Shauri 2019), the rise and growth of regional and global violent extremist groups in Africa over the past 20 years has been a major contributor to the continent's instability. With 48% of all terrorism-related deaths worldwide in 2021, Sub-Saharan Africa has emerged as the new global center stage of violent extremism. (Din 2011) Horn of Africa that is, Ethiopia, South Sudan Kenya, Eritrea, Djibouti, Sudan and Somalia is the new arena. According to UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner, the rise not only detrimental on people's lives, security, and peace, but also poses a risk of undoing development steps made over the years.

These VEG include Al Qaeda and Al Shabaab, which have cells throughout Horn of Africa and are based in Somalia, ISIS and Al-Qaida which have captured the Northern parts of Africa and Boko Haram, which is based in West Africa. The development of violent extremism in West Africa has created security situation, where countries such as Mali, Burkina Faso and Nigeria where the Boko Haram operates freely, a case in point was the kidnapping of 200 Chibok girls. (Morena 2020). These groups cross the borders, mingling with the general population making it very difficult to identify and weed them out (Clercke, 2020).

As observed in the republic of Somalia and Mozambique to this day, these violent extremist groups represent a certain portion of the continent's lengthy security and conflict issues hence have contributed to making conflicts more tractable (Nkomo, 2020). According to a 2016 UNDP assessment, Africa's open borders, together with widespread urbanization, a large number of young people, resource shortages, Internet access, and high levels of migration, have contributed to the regionalization of violent extremist groups.

Nation-states have come up with changes in their domestic and foreign policies which are aimed at combating this menace, Foreign policy is one of the most prominent diplomatic or militaristic tool any serious government which is keen on defending it's national interests and territories against unlawful foreign intervention would use. According to (Ambeyi, 2021), Nations have both soft and hard diplomatic tools and approaches at their disposal to defend their sovereignty. Security and defense policy is a set of contingency plans put in place to ensure safety and security within her border and national interests. It includes a wide range of measures, such as intelligence gathering, systems of alliance, border control, military operations, and diplomatic efforts. It also encompasses law implementation, regulations, and other steps to protect state security and national interests outside the borders.

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### **Chronology of Kenya –Somalia Relations**

Kenya and Somalia have established diplomatic relations over time by signing various agreements. With Kenya helping Somalia peace process through negotiation, mediation, and peace regulatory oversight. According to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 4718th Meeting, SC/7686, between 2002 and 2004, Kenya mediated the Somalia national reconciliation conference in Eldoret-Nairobi-Mbagathi under the guidance of IGAD, this undoubtedly set an atmosphere for future Kenya-Somalia ties. Kenya's foreign policy is defined as one based on the concept of not intervening in the internal affairs of other nations, but Somalia has repeatedly violated Kenya's territory integrity and autonomy, either directly or indirectly. Kenya, at some point was for a Somali government that may seek greater Pan-Somali reunification and prevent the Northern Frontier District's Somali ethnic group from the temptation to secede from Kenya.

Kenya started acting as a transit point and home to refugees fleeing from the ever-present conflicts in Somalia in 1991 after the ousting of Said Barre's government, these refugees were given shelter in Dadaab refugee camps deep inside the Kenya's territory (Osman 2016). This phase was followed by the darkest era of violent extremism which started in 2004 onwards. The phase was characterized by the rise of Somalia-based militia groupings, which resulted in the rise of Al-Shabaab, which is linked to various attacks in Kenya. They have on several occasions crossed international borders raided, killed looted in the adjacent states like Uganda and that's the case of Kenya too with Al-Shabaab of Somalia from 2002 to date. To give a glimpse of Kenya's challenges, it's one of the few nation states that share her borders with the state of Somalia, others are Ethiopia and Djibouti. These borders are vast and very difficult secure as some parts are deep into the Indian Ocean making it very easy to conduct their activities (Muteti et.al 2018). By crossing the borders, they always gain from abduction, kidnapping for money like in 2012 when a French tourist woman in Lamu area by evading detection by the security agencies (Muna 2017).

In 2013, Westgate Mall was attacked, 200 people were killed as several others were injured (Blanchard 2013). These attacks continued throughout the years making Kenya to be dubbed as a hotbed of terror by the western countries hence countless travel advisories. In 2015 the most memorable of their cross-border attack was the attack carried out in Garissa University College where 148 students lost their lives, 79 were injured, 700 were taken hostage, Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility. All the attacks were carried out by the same group, the Al-Shabaab. The group in fury, launched several attacks that took a toll in Kenyan's economy, particularly the tourism sector. Western countries issued travel advisory warning against Kenya. Kenya was labelled a terrorist hotbed from 2011-2016

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite Kenya and Somalia being allies for long, sharing vast border and Somali community living in both countries, reports by Freedom House 2018 have cast light on Al-Shabaab's activities which have brought about the tension between the two countries. The Security Council Resolution 2178 of 2014 came up with strict code for foreign fighters trooping in to join Terrorist organizations like, ISIL and Al-Qaida that they pose a great threat to world. In the Horn of Africa, it has spread in many parts with Kenya bearing the brand of it all. According to a 2017 UNDP report, youths aged 18 to 35 account for 30% of Africa's total population (Morema, 2020).

Indeed, there are deep roots in the region for young people to engage in violent extremism. In Kenya, this menace among youths has resulted in socio-economic effects

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throughout the country, including kidnappings, shootings, and bombings in shopping malls, schools, and churches. These violent extremist groups have combat capabilities, carrying out malicious activity on Joint military bases in Somali and strengthening cross-border attacks in the East Africa region, with Kenya being the most affected nation as (Mwai, 2020) posits. According to (Ramadhan and Ayiera, 2023), such groups are only becoming stronger and active by the day inside Kenya and even hitting hard targets like AMISOM bases deep in Somali. According to Ogada, Kenya has put some laws and policies like Nyumba Kumi and legislations like POTA (2012) among others, with the aim of suppressing violent extremist groups. Kenyan government resorted in using counter-terrorism measures, preventive like, closing down of Dadaab refugee camp, deterrence and punitive measures (military-centric) like Operation Linda Nchi, strict immigration laws limiting direct flight from Somali to Kenya, among others, thus the justification of the investigation into the role played by cross border raids and attacks in the shift of Kenya's defence policy towards Somalia from 2002-2022.

### **The main Objective**

To analyze how cross border raids and attacks has changed Kenya's defence policy towards Somalia from 2002-2022

### **Research Questions**

The research questions were formulated to give bearing to the research and to capture vital information for the study.

- (i) How do the violent extremist groups cross the border to Kenya?
- (ii) What are the type of Raids and Attacks carried out by the violent extremist groups in Kenya

## **2. Material and Methods**

### **2.1. Study Area**

The study site was Nairobi City, the capital and administrative headquarters of the Republic of Kenya. The country Kenya is located in the Eastern Africa region and by extension forming part of the Horn of Africa. With a population of 47.6 million, Kenya shares border with Somalia to the east, Ethiopia to the north, Uganda to the west and Tanzania to the South.

### **2.2. Research Design**

The study used a descriptive research design method as it required in-depth and critical analysis to bring out the correct possible results needed. Descriptive research (Kombo & Tromp 2006) ensures arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in such a way that relevance and purpose of they are visible. The research design enabled the collection of data of information and insights of which were relevant to the study under review.

### **2.3 Target Population and size**

All members of a group, people, who have or share same traits which is needed in the research process are target population (Borg et al. 2001). The research involved the following state agencies, National Counter Terrorism Centre, Immigration, Department of Defense and Ministry of Foreign Affairs Officials All dealing in one way or the other with issues of

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security of the state. The respondents in this study were determined and derived at by the Andrew Fisher formulae (1981), where the population was greater than 10,000 to participate in this research. Where:

$N$  = Target population is greater than 10,000

$Z$  = Normal deviation at the desired confidence level (95%)

$Z$  value at 95% is 1.96

$N$  = percentage of people who have the desired trait

Confidence Interval was taken to be  $\pm 5\%$ . Since the proportion of the population with the characteristic is not known.

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5(0.5)}{(0.5)^2}$$

$$\text{Sample size} = 384$$

## 2.4 Data Collection and Analysis

The research used questionnaire forms to collect data. This was done by way of simple random sampling and purposive methods. Data collected was analyzed thematically by use of content analysis. Permission for the research was first granted by the Mount Kenya University, school of social sciences and a National Council for Science and Technology Permit (NACOSTI) was obtained as a requirement for the same.

### 3.1. Response Rate

The researcher dispatched 384 questionnaires forms: all were returned to the researcher. Key informant were all interviewed by the researcher as planned. All the questionnaires were filled correctly and as such were all used to enter data, therefor the researcher analyzed 384 research instruments making it 100% percent return rate which is well above the mandatory, as posited by

(Mugenda and Mugenda 2003.) Going by the study objectives and the research questions. The returned forms were cleaned, edited and coded. The respondents were 384 drawn from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Immigration officials, National Counter Terrorism Centre and the Kenya Defence Forces. The main objective of the research was to analysis into the role of violent extremism on defence policy in the Horn of Africa with Kenya – Somalia relation being the case study.

### 3.2. Respondents Gender Information

The research took cognizant of the respondent's gender, following on the suggestions of (Petrich and Donelly 2019) on the shift in relationship between Kenyan women and AL-Shabaab. As portrayed below, the respondents were either male or female.

**Table 1: Gender Response.**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Female	140	36.46%
Male	244	63.54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Author 2023**

Going by the above, Table 1, out of the 384 respondents, 140 (36.46%) were female, while the rest, 244 (63.54%) were male. There was need to know the take of both genders as far as

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the research was concern and also keeping up with the affirmative action the government has put in place on gender issues.

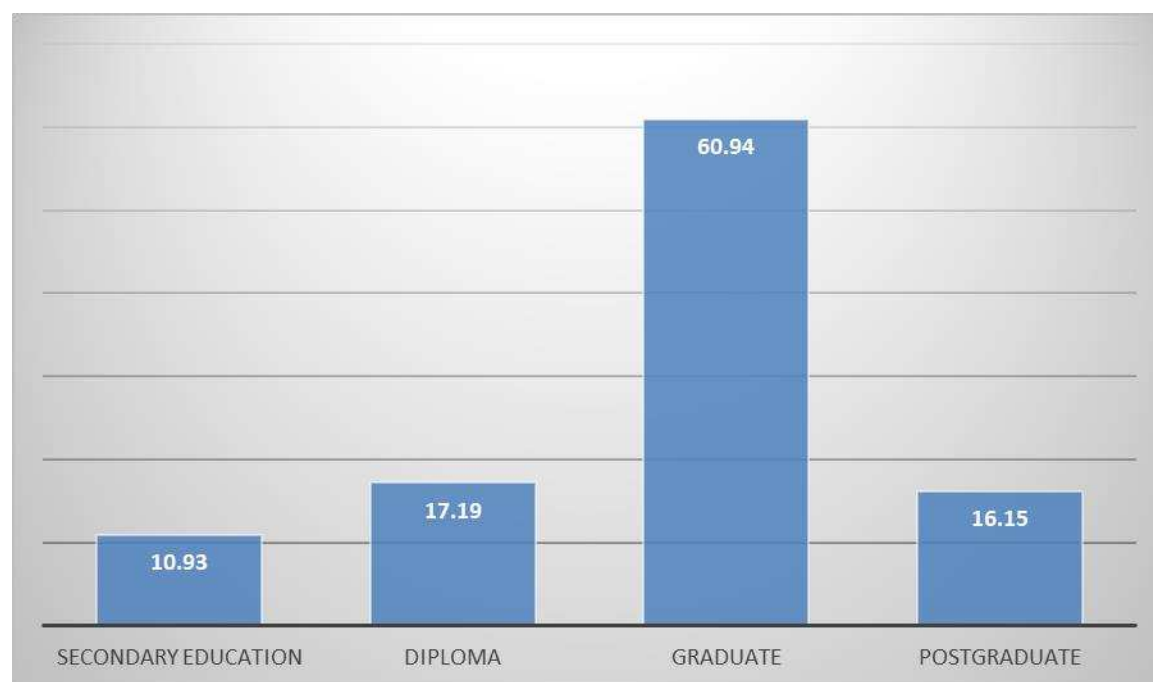
### 3.3. Level of education of the Respondents

The research endeavored to take into consideration of the level of education of the respondents, this was to factor in their comprehension of the role of violent extremism on the shift in defense policy between Kenya and Somalia. The frequencies were as follows, Secondary education, diploma, graduate and post-graduate

**Table 2: Level of Education of respondents**

Education level	Percentage	Frequency
Secondary Education	42	10.93
Diploma	66	17.19
Graduate	214	60.94
Post Graduate	62	16.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Author (2023)



**Figure 1: Level of education**

Source: Author (2023)

From the table 2 above, out of the 384 respondents, 10.93% had ‘O’ level education, 17.19% had college diploma, 60.94% had university degree and 16.94% were post-graduate holders. This clearly indicated that all the respondents had high literacy level and were in a position to understand research questions and answer them appropriately. It further indicated that respondents with diploma, degree and postgraduate contributed immensely to the outcome of

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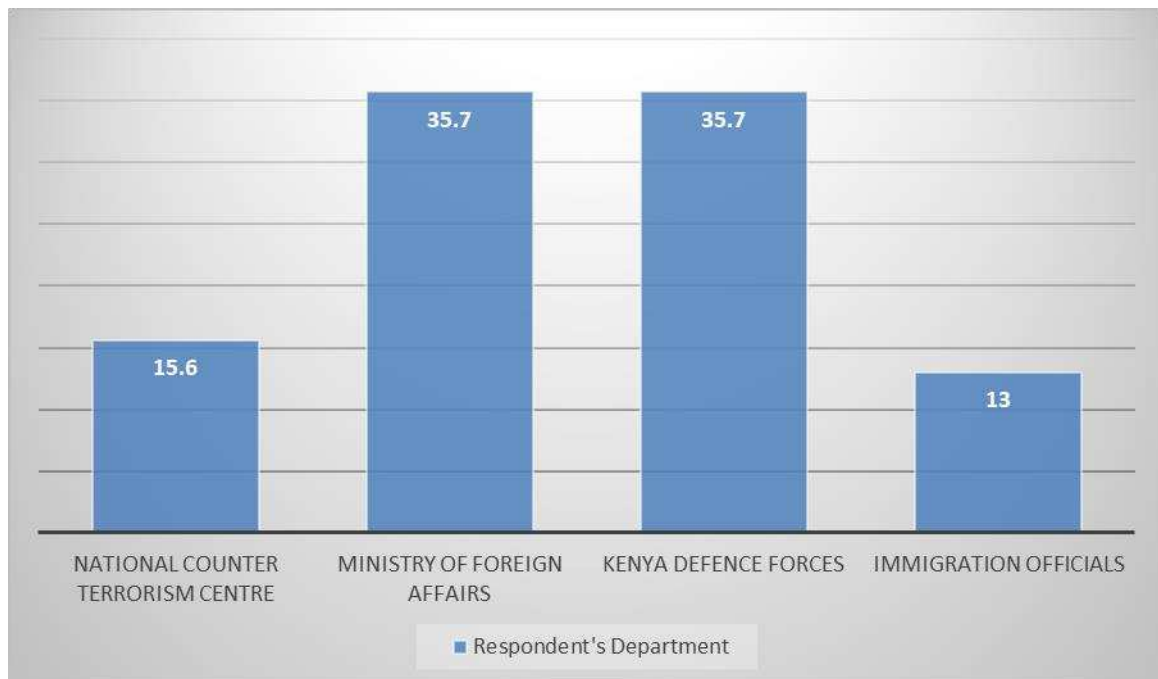
this study. Figure 1, displays the distribution percentage of level of education. This clearly shows the competency of all the respondents had to understand and answer the questionnaire forms.

The study targeted and interviewed respondents from the following government departments; Kenya Defence Forces, Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials, National Counter Terrorism Centre officials and Immigration Officials. They deal with defence policy formulation and implementation and as such were in good position to give the much-needed insights.as the distribution shown in the Table 3.

**Table 3: Department of the Respondents**

<b>Respondents Department</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
National Counter Terrorism Centre	60	15.6
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	137	35.7
Kenya Defence Forces	137	35.7
Immigration Officials	50	13.0
Total	384	100

**Source: Author (2023)**



**Figure 2: Respondent's Department**

**Source: Author (2023)**

Knowing the department of the respondents in this study is very important. Immigration Official had 13% of the respondents, National Counter Terrorism Centre had 15.6% Ministry of Foreign Affairs had 35.7%, Kenya Defence Forces had 35.7%. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Kenya Defence Forces had the highest number of respondents. This was done due to the fact that, the KDF deal with violent extremism both in the country and in Somalia making them suitable to answer most to have more respondents. As for the MFA, they deal with all foreign policies between Kenya and other nations.

### 3.5 Findings and Discussion

The researcher sort to assess the impact cross border raids and attacks had on the perceived changes of Kenya's defence Policy towards Somalia. As the table below shows, the respondents demonstrated that, the raids and attacks include, abduction of government officials and tourists, attacks on military bases and security personnel, attacks on schools, shopping malls and churches and lastly attacks on motor vehicles in the larger North Eastern part of Kenya.

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### **3.5.1 How has cross border raids and attacks changed Kenya's defence policy towards Somalia from 2002-2022?**

**Table 4: Types of Raids and Attacks distribution**

The research embarked to interrogate types of raids and attacks that contributed to the shift in Kenya's defence policy towards Somalia.

<b>Types of Attacks and Raids</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Abduction of government officials and tourists	301	78.39
Attacks on military bases and security personnel	360	93.75
Attacks on schools, shopping malls and churches	384	100.0
Attacks on motor vehicles in the larger north Eastern part of Kenya	361	94.01
Attacks on government installations and communication equipment's.	260	67.71

**Source: Author (2023)**

From the data above, 100% of the respondents agreed that, attacks on schools, shopping malls and churches, 94.01% agreed that, attacks on motor vehicle in the larger north eastern parts of Kenya, 93.75% agreed that, attacks on military bases and security personnel, 78.39% said, abduction of government officials and tourists and 67.71% said attacks on government installations and communication equipment contributed to the shift in Kenya's defence policy towards Somalia. This strongly indicate that border attacks and raids contributed immensely to the changes the Kenyan government made towards Somalia.

### **3.5.2 How do they cross the border to Kenya?**

The respondents were asked the major means of entry in to Kenya's border from Somalia, a number of options were laid out and the respondents were allowed to choose more once depending on their choice.

**Table 5: Means of entry into Kenya.**

Means of entry to Kenya	Frequency	Percentage
Through the vast Boni Forest	384	100
Through the Indian Ocean in Lamu and Kiunga areas	384	100
Trafficked by motor vehicles transporting goods across the border.	12	3.125
Through common roads from Somalia by the locals	203	52.9
Through major International Airports	14	3.65

**Source: Author (2023)**

The response was as follows, through the vast Boni Forest 100%, through the Indian Ocean in Lamu and Kiunga areas 100%, trafficked by motor vehicles transporting goods across the border 3.125%, through common roads from Somalia by the locals 52.9%, through major International Airports 3.65%. The results above show how porous Kenya border is, you can enter into Kenya from any border with Somalia. This shows that cross border raids and attacks could be carried out from any point since there are multiple entry points.

The study was intended to investigate the types of raids and attacks that contributed to Kenya's shift in defense posture toward Somalia. According to the data, 100% of respondents agreed that attacks on schools, shopping malls, and churches, 94.01% agreed that attacks on motor vehicles in the larger north eastern parts of Kenya, 93.75% agreed that attacks on military bases and security personnel, 78.39% agreed that abduction of government officials and tourists, and 67.71% agreed that attacks on government installations and communication equipment contributed to Kenya's defense policy shift toward Somalia.

On the means of entry into Kenya, the response was as follows, through the vast Boni Forest 100%, through the Indian Ocean in Lamu and Kiunga areas 100%, trafficked by motor vehicles transporting goods across the border 3.125%, through common roads from Somalia by the locals 52.9%, through major International Airports 3.65%. The findings above demonstrate how porous Kenya's border is; you may enter Kenya from any border with Somalia. Because there are various entrance sites, cross-border raids and attacks might take place from any spot. In the bid to tame the runaway security threat, Kenya government came up with both local (legislations) as well as responses which greatly affected the relationship between Kenya and Somalia on one hand and Kenya and the rest of the world on the other hand.

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## **Discussion**

In 2011, in pursuant to Article 52 of the UN charter, to defend itself Kenya took on a military intervention campaign against the al-Shabaab from the Al-Shabaab constant raids in its territory. with the hope of Keeping Kenya safe. (Kaburu, 2020). The operation was dubbed “Operation Linda Nchi, it was designed rout out and eradicate the operations of the Al-Shabaab in Kenya and Somalia. This was a major step in Kenya’s defence policy towards Somalia given that Kenya had never invaded any nation since independence and the Kenya Defence Forces only had records of Peace Keeping missions under the auspices of the United Nations. Kenya This marked the first time since independence, the KDF engaged in combat on foreign soil. This clearly suggests that border attacks and raids had a significant role in the Kenyan government's defence policy shift towards Somalia.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) which was passed in 2012 to counter the growing influence of violent extremism in the country. This Act criminalizes terrorist acts, including those that are committed with the intention of intimidating the public. Kenya put in place the Prevention of Organized Crime Act, in 2011 which criminalizes all the groups that the government of Kenya feels are a danger to it’s national security.

In Africa IGAD came up with preventing and countering violent extremism programs and later founded center of excellence for prevention of and counter violent extremism, amid all this development, Kenya is the only country in the Horn of Africa that has formal CVE policies to support the obvious and which some scholars such as, Gichiri (2020) consider punitive in nature. National Strategy to CVE was formed in 2016 to coordinate the efforts of various government agencies in combating terrorism. The NCTC is responsible for intelligence gathering, analysis, and dissemination. According to the NCTC also works closely with the police and other security agencies to develop and implement counter-terrorism strategies. It also works with the media to educate the public about how to stay safe in the public areas where there may be threat of terrorism attack (Mutahi et al. 2017) the securitized hypothesis has long been fronted by the Kenyan government. (Gichiri, 2020) notes that Kenya has not coherently put in place CVE policies and national security mechanisms but instead it has adopted the GWOT mechanisms.

In March 2021, Kenya called for the disbandment of Dadaab and handed the UNHCR exactly two weeks to develop a strategy. The camp housed refugees from Somalia, who some were born and raised in the camp. The Kenya government cited cases of terrorism planning, hosting, recruitment and execution in the refugee camp which were done by the violent extremist group members who were operating inside the camp as undocumented refugee. Hence call for closer, which aimed at reducing the cases of attacks and constant raids inside Kenya territorial grounds. This was seen as a major shift in Kenya’s defence policy towards Somalia and the international community.

## **Conclusion**

From the data collected and analyzed, all of the respondents agreed that, cross border attacks and raids in Kenya and her interests like, schools, shopping malls and churches, strongly indicated immense contribution to the changes the Kenyan government made on her defence policy towards Somalia.

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### **Recommendation**

Kenya and Somalia should work together to eliminate the 'Youth Bulge' inside their borders. Job creation should occur both within and outside the country in order to drastically reduce the number of idle youngsters of fighting age on the streets who may fall prey to violent extremist organizations. This should be accomplished by authorizing, supervising, and registering recruiting companies to assist in securing employment. Labour agreements should be anchored in memoranda of understanding at bilateral level to secure them from predatory agencies and violent extremist groups. This should be done all over the world with the assistance of the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Labour.

Kenyan and Somali governments should collaborate on intelligence sharing to track the movement of people more especially youths across both borders. These youths cross into Somalia to get insurgency training from various violent extremist organizations and travel from one country to the next, selling their skills. Finally, Kenya Defence Forces contingents stationed deep within Somalia should be withdrawn and stationed at the country's lengthy border with Somalia to strengthen security and defence. The KDF should be outfitted with cutting-edge surveillance technology and armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) to secure border. This will allow for effective covering of large areas in the shortest amount of time.

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