COUNTER EXTREMISM PROJECT

Tanzania: Extremism & Counter-Extremism

In November 2017, Kenyan authorities arrested two Tanzanians on suspicion of traveling to Somalia to join al-Shabab. The arrests came five months after al-Shabab released a video announcing the graduation of a group of its soldiers, some of whom were Tanzanian nationals. (Sources: Standard Digital [1], African News [2])

Overview

Tanzania, an East African presidential republic, experienced its first and only largescale terrorist attack in 1998 when al-Qaeda [3] launched simultaneous bombings on the U.S. Embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi, Kenya, killing a total of 224 people. Since then, Tanzania has remained relatively resilient to terrorist activity as compared to its regional neighbors Kenya, Uganda, and Somalia. Nevertheless, the country faces weaknesses to its national security from violence-inciting religious leaders, networks of Islamic extremists, and Islamist-secessionist ambitions on the Zanzibar archipelago. In addition, some Tanzanian officials say that al-Shabab [4], the Somali-based al-Qaeda affiliate, has had a presence in Tanzania since at least 2008. Tanzanian authorities have linked several domestic attacks to al-Shabab, but have yet to formally acknowledge or reveal the group's level of activity in the country. (Sources: *Citizen* [5], All Africa [6], All Africa [7])

The risk of terrorist attacks in Tanzania remains high, according to the U.S. Department of State. Increasing jihadist violence in Mozambique, particularly in the Cabo Delgado province, has spread northward and across the border into Tanzania, and some terrorists have reportedly sought to exploit areas that lack a strong government presence. Certain regions of Tanzania, especially those bordering Mozambique and Kenya as well as the coastal areas, have also acted as transit points for foreign fighters from other countries in East Africa who are attempting to join al-Shabab in Somalia or Ansar al-Sunna in Mozambique. (Sources: U.S. Department of State [8], Jamestown Foundation [9], International Crisis Group [10])

ISIS [11] has not been linked to any attacks in Tanzania. In May 2016, however, six masked men appeared in a video posted to Twitter claiming to represent ISIS's East African branch. The men said they were located in Tanzania's northeast Tanga Region and called on fellow Tanzanians to join their ranks. In mid-2017, security officials warned that youth from the districts of Kibiti, Mkuranga, and Rufiji in Pwani Region (directly below Tanga Region on the Eastern coast) were particularly vulnerable to ISIS and al-Shabab recruitment. At least three Tanzanians have attempted to join ISIS abroad. In April 2016, a Khartoum-based Tanzanian national was arrested in Kenya for attempting to join ISIS in Syria. Later that year in December, Kenyan police arrested two Tanzanians, including a 19-year-old girl, on their way to join ISIS affiliates in Yemen. (Sources: All Africa [12], Citizen [13], IPP Media [14])

Tanzania passed counterterrorism legislation in 2002 with the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The government amended that act in 2016 to include stronger punishments—including the death penalty—on those found guilty of material support to terrorism. Tanzania's National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) is currently drafting the country's National Action Plan for Preventing Violent Extremism with support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The Plan will serve as a nation-wide framework for the prevention of violent extremism efforts by government, security, private sector, and civil society stakeholders. (Sources: Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism [15], United Nations [16], Prevention of Terrorism Act 2002 [17], The Written Laws Amendment 2016 [18], U.S. Department of State [19])

Tanzania is a member of several regional bodies that implement counterterrorism initiatives, including the African Union. Tanzania, however, does not participate in the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISON)—the African Union's peacekeeping mission in Somalia. It also does not participate in the U.S.-led coalition against ISIS, and has not designated ISIS or al-Shabab as a terrorist organization. Tanzanian security officials have, however, participated in counterterrorism trainings led by the U.S. Department of State, particularly in its Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program. (Source: U.S. Department of State [19])

Radicalization and Foreign Fighters

Radicalization to violent extremism is more prevalent among Tanzania's Muslim population than among any other religious community in the East African country. Islamic extremism in Tanzania is fueled by the narrative of government

discrimination against Muslims since the colonial era. Muslims who subscribe to this narrative believe that Tanzania is ruled by Mfumo Kristo, or "the Christian system," which engages in the political, social, and economic marginalization of Muslims. This narrative is magnified in Zanzibar where residents—99 percent of whom are Muslim—have deep grievances against the mainland and related desires of secession. A now-defunct Islamic extremist group, Uamsho, carried out attacks in Zanzibar in furtherance of its political-religious goals before authorities imprisoned its top members in 2012. (Sources: INSS [20], U.S. Department of State [21])

Loose networks of Islamic extremists operate on the mainland, with a majority of extremist-related incidents taking place in Arusha, Tanga, Pwani, Mtwara, and Lindi Regions. Tanzanian Islamic extremists are mobilized in part by outside actors including Saudi Arabia, where Tanzanian clerics have traveled to study Islam before returning to their communities to preach extreme versions of the faith. As of 2015, Saudi Arabia was reportedly spending $1 million per year building new mosques, madrassas, and Islamic centers in Tanzania. In addition, at least two of Zanzibar's universities are funded by the Saudi Kingdom, as well as by Kuwait. (Sources: GSDRC [22], All Africa [23], Jamii Forums [24])

The Somali-based al-Shabab has also influenced Islamic extremist networks in Tanzania, with a presence in the country since at least 2008, according to some Tanzanian officials. While authorities have linked al-Shabab to numerous domestic extremist incidents, a number of attacks—as well as extremist religious leaders—remain unaffiliated with the Somali terror group and may instead be linked to and inspired by domestic political grievances. Sheikh Ponda Issa Ponda, for example, a Tanzanian Islamic preacher, has propagated a mix of domestic grievances and religious fervor to incite followers to violence. Ponda's key message has been that the National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA)—Tanzania's official Islamic organization responsible for electing the country's top mufti—is corrupt, counter to the true interests of Muslims, and therefore inherently un-Islamic. While al-Muhajiroun of East Africa—a pro-al-Shabab group based in Kenya—has praised Ponda in its official statements, there is no evidence confirming Ponda's membership or affiliation with that group, or with any regional or international extremist movement. (Sources: GSDRC [22], All Africa [23], Jamii Forums [24])

Sheikh Ponda Issa Ponda gained prominence in October 2012 for spreading messages inciting violence against Christian leaders. Those messages followed an incident in which a 14-year-old Christian schoolboy urinated on the Quran of his Muslim peer. Rumors subsequently spread within the Islamic community that a Christian leader had instructed the boy to defile the Muslim holy book. Ponda's pleas for "retaliation" led to numerous arson attacks on churches throughout Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania, including five in Dar es Salaam alone. Authorities arrested Ponda—and approximately 125 others—in the wake of the attacks. Since October 2012, Ponda has faced repeated arrests. He was shot and wounded in August 2013 as police arrested him in the central region of Morogoro. According to authorities, Ponda's supporters threw stones at the police during and directly following the cleric's arrest. (Sources: BBC News [25], Morningstar News [26], Morningstar News [27], BBC News [28], BBC News [29])

Indeed, Tanzania's Islamic extremist landscape is a blurred mix between domestic networks incensed by local grievances and the influence of the most powerful terrorist group in the region, al-Shabab.

Al-Shabab

Al-Shabab, or "the Youth," is al-Qaeda's formal affiliate in East Africa. Established in the late 1990s, the Somali-based terror group seeks to establish a fundamentalist Islamic state in the country that it hopes will ultimately expand to encompass the whole Horn of Africa. Al-Shabab controls much of southern Somalia and small pockets in Kenya and Ethiopia along the Somali border. In areas under the group's control, al-Shabab imposes its strict version of sharia, prohibiting activities like listening to music or shaving one's beard. The group predominately conducts attacks targeting the Somali government and AMISOM troops.

Al-Shabab has had a presence in Tanzania since at least 2008, when four of the group's operatives arrived in Kilindi District, Tanga Region, and joined a local mosque. It is unclear if these operatives traveled directly from Somalia. According to reports from Tanzanian security officials, the mosque-goers and other local citizens distanced themselves from the extremists—leading to a physical fight between citizens and the al-Shabab implants in late 2008. Following that altercation, the operatives purchased a piece of nearby land to build their own mosque to espouse strict al-Shabab teachings. (Sources: All Africa [23], Jamii Forums [24])

Since 2008, Tanzanian authorities have linked numerous incidents to al-Shabab. In October 2013, in the first largescale

arrest of al-Shabab operatives, police in the southeast region of Mtwara confiscated firearms, machetes, and 25 DVDs containing al-Shabab training materials. According to authorities, the suspects—all Tanzanian nationals—had engaged in "intensive" military training exercises. Later that month, over the course of a week, police in Kilindi District, Tanga Region dismantled an al-Shabab training camp, arresting 69 suspects and freeing dozens of recruits aged 4-13. Security forces seized 12 al-Shabab videos during the raids, containing lectures instructing followers to liberate Muslims in East Africa and throughout the world. According to Kilindi District Commissioner Selemani Liwowa, the children at the camp had been "completely brainwashed" by al-Shabab operatives at the local mosque. (Sources: *Citizen* [5], All Africa [6], All Africa [7], INSS [20], *Citizen* [30], INSS [20], All Africa [23], Jamii Forums [24])

The following raid on al-Shabab suspects occurred in February 2015 when security forces in Tanga Urban District stormed the Amboni Caves, a known home to criminal and extremist networks. The raid resulted in the death of one Tanzania Peoples' Defense Forces (TPDF) soldier and the wounding of five others. The suspects were able to flee, leading police commissioner Paul Changoja to concede that officials "[did] not have any idea" if they were associated with al-Shabab—though he said that they were "more than bandits." Following the raid, al-Shabab released an 11-minute video online, claiming responsibility for the killing of the soldier and warning of attacks on Tanzanian prisons where inmates were "inappropriately jailed." The following month, in a rare disclosure related to national security, then-Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete suggested that the incident had "terrorist inclination." (Sources: *Citizen* [31], Somali Agenda [32], Quartz [33], East African [34], East African [35])

Later in 2015, in July, gunmen killed seven people—four police officers and three civilians—and seized ammunition at a police station near Dar es Salaam's international airport. The U.S. State Department attributed that attack to al-Shabab, though Reuters made no mention of al-Shabab affiliation. The incident was not covered in Tanzanian news outlets. (Sources: Reuters [36], U.S. Department of State [37])

Determining al-Shabab's true level of activity in Tanzania is difficult due to authorities' lack of investigation into the group's domestic networks and hotspots. In addition, authorities may at times be eager to link extremist suspects to al-Shabab despite a lack of supporting evidence. In September 2013, for example, Zanzibar police claimed that 15 suspects arrested for acid attacks were linked to the Somali terror group, but failed to provide evidence when pressed by reporters. At other times, however, authorities have been reluctant to connect violent attacks to the group despite locals' determination of al-Shabab affiliation. (Sources: Associated Press [38], *Telegraph* [39])

Nevertheless, the seizure of al-Shabab materials and videos inside Tanzania suggests some level of the group's presence and influence. In April 2017, security forces warned that youth in the Kibiti, Mkuranga, and Rufiji Districts of Pwani Region were vulnerable to recruitment by al-Shabab and ISIS. An unnamed security force told the *East African* that "some [youth] are being trained in local camps in the forests and some are being taken to…Somalia." (Source: East African [12])

As al-Shabab faces counterterrorism crackdowns in neighboring countries like Kenya, members of the terrorist groups have sought safe haven in Tanzania, the International Crisis Group reported in November 2018. According to local security officials and community leaders, the Somali terrorists focused their recruitment efforts in the Pwani region, where citizens harbor anti-state grievances. Since 2015, militant activity has increased in the Pwani, Tanga, and Mtwara regions—as a number of compounding political, economic, and geographic factors have made Tanzanians in those areas vulnerable to radicalization. However, the International Crisis Group also reported that threat of a full-blown insurgency remains low. (Sources: International Crisis Group [10], Jamestown Foundation [9])

Uamsho

Uamsho, ("awaking" in Swahili), also known as the Association for Islamic Mobilization and Propagation, is a now-defunct Islamist separatist group in Zanzibar. Founded in 2002, the group sought the archipelago's secession from mainland Tanzania and called for a constitution based on sharia. Its leader, Sheikh Farid Hadi Ahmed, demanded a dress code for foreigners and limitations on the consumption of alcohol. The group gained traction in 2011 after Tanzania's strongest political opposition party, Civic United Front (CUF)—which receives most of its support from Zanzibar—entered into a Government of National Unity with the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM). The resulting grievances toward CUF may have propelled Zanzibaris to support Uamsho, which began to hold frequent rallies and anti-government protests, as well as launch attacks against Catholic priests and moderate Muslim clerics. (Sources: Institute for Defense Analysis (PDF) [40], TRAC [41])

Many of the group's key leaders were arrested as terrorist suspects in 2012. That May, following a spate of arrests, hundreds of Uamsho members in Zanzibar's Stone Town clashed with police and set two churches on fire. Zanzibari authorities arrested Uamsho leader Farid Hadi Ahmed that October, leading to riots in Stone Town during which a suspected Uamsho member hacked a policeman to death with machetes. Following Hadi Ahmmed's arrest, Uamsho members reportedly released leaflets containing messages threatening local Christian leaders, such as "We now want the heads of all church pastors in Zanzibar." Attacks against religious leaders continued when, the following month, suspected Uamsho members carried out an acid attack against a moderate, anti-Uamsho imam, Sheikh Fadhil Suleiman Soraga. Uamsho was also suspected in the shooting of a Catholic priest, Father Ambrose Mkenda in Tomodo, Zanzibar, in December 2012, as well as the acid attack on two British teenage girls in Stone Town in August 2013. Uamsho-linked attacks have since dwindled as most of the group's leaders and members are believed to be imprisoned. (Sources: Deutsche Welles [42], All Africa [43], Reuters [44], Reuters [45], Morningstar News [46], *Independent* [47], INSS [20])

Al-Muhajiroun of East Africa

Al-Muhajiroun of East Africa is a Kenyan-based extremist group that seeks to implement sharia across East Africa. The group—which reportedly pledged allegiance to al-Shabab at its founding in January 2015—has released statements directly threatening Tanzania. In one statement titled "Protecting Our Sheikhs," released in either February or March 2015, the group declared: "To sit by idly, and watch the government of Tanzania harass, intimidate and humiliate our Sheikhs is untenable and must now end. Ending such a policy and tactic in Tanzania is not just the responsibility of the Mujahideen but also of all Muslims in Tanzania." The statement mentioned Sheikh Ponda Issa Ponda, claiming he had been "tested, challenged and provoked by the Kuffar. But on every attempt, [Ponda] remained steadfastly firm in the path of Allah." The statement also noted that the Tanzanian government's "tactic of labeling Sheikh Ponda as an 'extremist and member of Al-Shabaab' has seen the Sheikh repeatedly and forcefully incarcerated in Tanzanian jails." Despite al-Muhajiroun of East Africa's affiliation with al-Shabab and its blatant admiration of Sheikh Ponda, the sheikh has never publically pledged allegiance to al-Shabab and there is little publically available information on his alleged ties to the terror group. (Sources: Jihadology [48], ESISC [49], SITE [50])

On May 4, 2015, al-Muhajiroun of East Africa released a statement online threating attacks against western interests in Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya. In its statement, the group accused the United Nations of "encouraging repressions against Muslims." The group also publishes a Swahili-language online magazine, Al-Ghurabaa, in which it calls for recruits to al-Shabab and al-Qaeda, incentivizes attacks on Western targets in East Africa, and lectures on the importance of Muslim unity. (Sources: ESISC [49], SITE [50], Jihadology [51], Jihadology [52])

Al-Muhajiroun of East Africa has no official links to al-Muhajiroun in Britain, a banned Islamist group founded by Anjem Choudary [53], an incarcerated ISIS extremist. In April, al-Muhajiroun of East Africa posted on its Twitter account that it had "no links" to Choudary, referring to him as a "brave Muslim known for promoting Islam." Al-Muhajiroun of East Africa has not claimed responsibility for any terrorist attacks to date. (Sources: ESISC [49], SITE [50])

ISIS

ISIS is not believed to have a strong foothold in Tanzania. In May 2016, however, six masked, unnamed men appeared in a video posted to Twitter claiming to represent the East African branch of ISIS. The men said they were located in Tanga Region, and called on fellow Tanzanians to join ISIS's ranks. In response to the video, Minister of Home Affairs Charles Kitwanga told BBC News that security forces were investigating the potential presence of jihadists inside the country. (Sources: BBC News [54], IB Times [55])

While ISIS may not have operational networks inside Tanzania, at least three Tanzanians have attempted to join the terror group in its strongholds abroad. Ummul Khayr Sadir—a Zanzibari woman living in Khartoum—was arrested in Kenya in April 2016. She had planned to fly from Mogadishu to Turkey before crossing into ISIS-controlled territory, according to investigators. Sadir had reportedly been recruited online by a female ISIS recruiter. Later, in December 2016, Kenyan police arrested two Tanzanians, including a 19-year-old girl, on their way to join ISIS affiliates in Yemen. (Sources: All Africa [12], Citizen [13], IPP Media [14])

Foreign Fighters

There is no evidence suggesting that Tanzanians have traveled in significant numbers to join foreign terrorist groups, though a handful of citizens have been arrested while attempting to join al-Shabab in Somalia. There are three public cases of Tanzanian citizens attempting—and failing—to join ISIS abroad.

Between 2009 and 2012, Tanzanians represented the second largest cohort of foreigners who joined al-Shabab after Kenyans, according to security officials. In November 2011, Tanzanian authorities on the Kenyan border arrested 10 Tanzanian nationals seeking to join the Somali-based terror group. Kenyan authorities have carried out similar arrests. In October 2013, Kenya Defense Forces arrested three Tanzanian youth on the Somali border for attempting to join al-Shabab. More recently, in November 2017, authorities in central Kenya arrested two Tanzanians on suspicion of the same offense. (Sources: International Crisis Group [10], U.S. Department of State [56], INSS [20], Sabahi [57], Standard Digital [1])

One Tanzanian citizen who successfully joined al-Shabab was Rashid Charles Mberesero who, at 20 years old, participated in al-Shabab's April 2015 attack on Garissa University in Kenya that left 148 people dead. Some Tanzanian citizens are also believed to actively fight in the group's ranks in Somalia. In May 2017, al-Shabab released a video purporting to show a graduation ceremony for its fighters, including Tanzanian citizens. Some returnees from Somalia have established training camps in Tanzania, according to Tanzanian officials. In recent years, Tanzanian police have clashed with militants during raids at these suspected terrorist training camps. (Sources: Citizen [58], African News [2], International Crisis Group [10])

While Tanzanian foreign fighters have overwhelmingly sought to fight alongside al-Shabab, at least three Tanzanian citizens have attempted to travel to join ISIS abroad. A young Zanzibari woman named Ummul Khayr Sadir was arrested in Kenya in April 2016 and had planned to fly from Mogadishu to Turkey before crossing into ISIS-controlled territory, according to investigators. Sadir had reportedly been recruited online by a female member of ISIS. In December 2016, Kenyan police arrested two Tanzanians, including a 19-year-old girl, on their way to join ISIS affiliates in Yemen. (Source: Citizen [13], IPP Media [14])

Tanzania has been used as a transit point for extremists traveling to join al-Shabab. In May 2009, authorities at the Dar es Salaam international airport arrested British national Mohammed Emwazi—the man who would later become an infamous ISIS executioner known as Jihadi John—on his way from the Netherlands to Somalia. He was deported to Amsterdam and returned to the United Kingdom. Three years later, in June 2012, airport authorities arrested German national of Turkish origin Emrah Erdogan**,** alleging that in early May Erdogan crossed into Kenya from Somalia where he had been fighting with al-Shabab. (Sources: *Washington Post* [59], *Telegraph* [60], BBC News [61])

Major Extremist and Terrorist Incidents

Tanzania has experienced a variety of extremist incidents, most notably the 1998 al-Qaeda bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam that left 11 people dead. There was little-to-no extremist activity in the years directly following that bombing, though extremist-related arrests and attacks began to take place in 2009. In November of that year, authorities at the Dar es Salaam international airport arrested Mohammed Emwazi—later known as ISIS executioner Jihadi John—on his way from the United Kingdom to Somalia to join al-Shabab. (Source: *Telegraph* [60])

Since 2009, Tanzania has experienced low-level, sporadic extremist violence in the form of arson, acid attacks, shootings, beheadings, and bombings. Tanzanian authorities rarely investigate these attacks fully, leading to an intelligence gap with regard to the identity, affiliation, goal, and ideology of the perpetrators.

Acid Attacks in Zanzibar

There have been numerous documented incidents of acid attacks—wherein a perpetrator throws acid onto a victim—in Zanzibar since 2012. Perpetrators have targeted moderate Muslim clerics, Christian leaders, and tourists on the archipelago. In September 2013, Zanzibar police arrested 15 suspects and seized 29 liters of acid amid ongoing acid attacks. Police claimed that the suspects were tied to al-Shabab, but provided no supporting evidence. (Sources: Associated Press [38], *Telegraph* [39], Sky News [62], *Telegraph* [63], *Independent* [47], INSS [20])

Arson Attacks on Churches

Perpetrators carrying out arson attacks have predominantly targeted churches, both in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. The first largescale arson-related incident occurred in May 2012 when hundreds of suspected members of the Zanzibar-based Uamsho movement set two churches on fire and clashed with police in Zanzibar's Stone Town. Following the incident, mainland Tanzanian opposition lawmaker Zitto Kabwe warned that the arsonists were attempting to create "chaos [about] religion so as to achieve their own political goals." Later that year, in October, suspected Islamists waged arson attacks on numerous churches throughout Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania—including five in Dar es Salaam alone. The attacks reportedly stemmed from inflammatory comments made by Islamic leaders including Sheikh Ponda Issa Ponda against Christians. Since then, arsonists have attacked churches in Zanzibar as well as Tanga and Kigera Regions in mainland Tanzania. The motivations behind these attacks have not been publicized. (Sources: Reuters [44], Morningstar News [26], Morningstar News [27], BBC News [28], U.S. Department of State [21], Morningstar News [26])

Dismantling of al-Shabab-linked Training Camp in Tanga (October-November 2013)

Between October 28 and November 5, 2013, security forces in Kilindi District, Tanga Region worked to dismantle an alleged al-Shabab child indoctrination and training camp, arresting 69 suspects and freeing dozens of recruits aged 4-13 and at least 32 women. Many of the child recruits were found in the local mosque, where al-Shabab operatives had supplied them with training manuals instructing "how to kill using a knife [or] a machete, how to fight aggressors with weapons and without [weapons], how to sabotage the economy and how to liberate East Africa from the hands of the kuffar [infidels]," according to Kilindi District Commissioner Selemani Liwowa. Police also seized 12 al-Shabab videos containing lectures instructing followers to liberate Muslims in East Africa and throughout the world. The children were reportedly brainwashed into believing that their parents were not true Muslims due to their association with non-Muslims. (Sources: INSS [20], All Africa [23], Jamii Forums [24])

The leader of the training camp, referred to as "Ayubu" by cell members, fled just before security forces arrived—though police were able to arrest Ayubu's assistant known as Mr. Jumanne. Following the raids, officials placed 20 children who had been "completely brainwashed" into a three-week rehabilitation program with local social workers, according to reports. (Sources: INSS [20], All Africa [23], Jamii Forums [24])

U.S. Embassy Bombing (1998)

On August 7, 1998, at approximately 10:30 a.m. local time, al-Qaeda operatives simultaneously detonated trucks laden with TNT at the U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya. The explosions killed 11 people in Dar es Salaam and 213 people in Nairobi, and wounded more than 4,500 people altogether. The attacks popularized Osama bin Laden's nascent terrorist group—turning "al-Qaeda" into a household name. The bombings in Tanzania represent the largest, most notable attack on that country's soil to date. (Sources: PBS [64], CNN [65], FBI [66])

- **November 7, 2017:**Authorities in central Kenya arrest two Tanzanians on suspicion of traveling to Somalia to join al-Shabab.
  Source: Standard Digital [1]
- **May 23, 2017:**Al-Shabab in Somalia releases a video of a purported graduation ceremony, claiming that some of the graduating insurgents are Tanzanian.
  Source: African News [2]
- **April 13, 2017:**Gunmen ambush a police vehicle in Kibiti, Pwani Region, shooting dead eight officers and stealing their weaponry.
  Police pursue the assailants back to their hideout, killing four of them—though other assailants escape into a nearby forest. According to Police Commissioner Nsato Mssanzya, the incident "does not in any way relate to terrorism," and is instead "criminal activity which was carried out by a group of bandits." The incident follows a string of small-scale killings in Kibiti. In August 2017, Tanzanian security officers apprehend and shoot dead 13 individuals allegedly tied to the April Kibiti killings. Sources: BBC News [67], *East African* [68], Azania Post [69], All Africa [70]
- **December 1, 2016:**Kenyan police arrest two Tanzanians, including a 19-year-old girl, on their way to join ISIS affiliates in Yemen.
  Source: IPP Media [14]
- **October 2016:**Police arrest a 48-year-old female teacher at the Akha Laagul Islam madrassa in Bagamoyo District, Pwani Region, on the suspicion of training children in terrorist tactics.
  According to one local resident, "police had discovered a bomb…at the teacher's…home." Source: All Africa [71]

- **August 23, 2016:**Armed assailants attack a police station in a neighborhood outside of Dar es Salaam, killing two police officers and stealing a number of weapons.
  Source: U.S. Department of State [19]
- **April 1, 2016:**Tanzanian citizen Ummul Khayr Sadir is arrested in Khartoum, Sudan, for allegedly attempting to join ISIS in Syria.
  According to investigators, Ms. Sadir had planned to enter Somalia and fly from Mogadishu to Turkey before crossing into ISIS-controlled territory. She had been recruited online by a female ISIS agent, according to reports. Source: Citizen [13]
- **May 30, 2016:**Unidentified assailants wielding machetes behead eight people after invading three homes in Mzizima Ward, Tanga Region.
  According to media sources, the assailants had been living in Tanga's Amboni Caves and had carried out the killings fearing that the victims would reveal information to authorities about accomplices in the group. Tanzanian news outlets refer to the assailants as "thugs" and "bandits." On June 27, 2016, police in Dar es Salaam shoot dead a suspected accomplice in the incident, and that city's Special Police Zone Commander Simon Sirro says his security forces are making progress against "terrorism." Sources: All Africa [12], *Citizen* [72]
- **May 19, 2016:**Fifteen masked perpetrators wage an attack with IEDs, machetes, and axes at the Masjid Rahmani mosque in the northwest region of Mwanza—hacking to death three people, including the mosque's imam.
  According to eyewitnesses, the assailants, carrying black flags, begin the attack by turning off the lights and asking worshippers: "Why are you praying while our fellow Muslims are unfairly held by the police?" Police describe the incident as a "terrorist-style attack" and arrest at least three suspects. No group claims responsibility. Sources: BBC News [73], U.S. Department of State [19], IB Times [55]
- **May 18, 2016:**Six masked men appear in a video on Twitter claiming to represent the East African branch of ISIS.
  The men say they are located in Tanzania's coastal region of Tanga, and call on fellow Tanzanians to join the fight. Minister of Home Affairs Charles Kitwanga tells the BBC that security forces are investigating the potential presence of jihadists inside the country. Sources: BBC News [54], IB Times [55]
- **May 4, 2016:**Police kill four suspects linked to a recent robbery at Tanga's Central Bakery Supermarket, during which perpetrators had reportedly killed four people.
  The May 4 shootout occurs at the Amboni Caves in Tanga city where the perpetrators had set up camp. Police recover swords, machetes, bullets, balaclavas, and militia uniforms. Tanzanian newspaper The Citizen does not directly link the perpetrators to al-Shabab, saying that "the [Amboni] caves are also believed to be a hideout for a well-functioning criminal syndicate." Sources: All Africa [74], *Citizen* [72]
- **February 29, 2016:**Police kill three men in a shootout in Arusha after the individuals resist arrest and attempt to evade the police.
  Officials later seize an AK-47, 18 rounds of ammunition, and two flags with Arabic inscriptions at the men's houses. Media reports refer to the men as "suspected terrorists." Source: Daily Nation [75]
- **October 25, 2015:**Security forces uncover a number of IEDs in Zanzibar following the national elections on October 25.
  The explosives are not publicly linked to any specific group. Source: U.S. Department of State [37]
- **September 2015:**Assailants carry out a number of arson attacks on churches throughout Bukoba, a mixed Muslim-Christian area in Tanzania's western Kagera Region.
  In the following months, Bukoba police arrest 37 suspects in connection to the attacks, charging three of them with arson at the end of the year. Source: U.S. Department of State [21]
- **July 2015:**Gunmen kill seven people—four police officers and three civilians—and seize ammunition at a police station in Dar es Salaam near that city's international airport.
  The gunmen are linked to al-Shabab, according to the U.S. Department of State. Sources: Reuters [36], U.S. Department of State [37]
- **April 26, 2015:**Tanzanian foreign fighter Rashid Charles Mberesero takes part in the al-Shabab attack on Garissa University that leaves 148 people dead.
  Source: Citizen [58]
- **April 14, 2015:**Security forces arrest nine al-Shabab-linked suspects during a raid on a mosque in central Morogoro Region.
  A tenth suspect is shot after attempting to behead a police officer. Officials seize explosives, a detonating cord, a black flag, military uniforms, masks, and swords. Source: *Citizen* [76]
- **February 14, 2015:**Security forces conduct a raid on suspected al-Shabab militants hiding in the Amboni Caves in Tanga City, weeks after those operatives are believed to have robbed police of two machine guns.
  The raid results in the death of one Tanzania Peoples' Defense Forces (TPDF) soldier and the wounding of five others. The suspects are able to flee, leading police commissioner Paul Changoja to concede that officials "do not have any idea" if they are associated with al-Shabab—though he says that they are "more than bandits." Following the raid, al-Shabab releases an 11-minute video online, during which a man calling himself Kaisy bin Abdullah claims responsibility for the killing of the soldier and warns of attacks on prisons where inmates are "inappropriately jailed." Sources: *Citizen* [31], Somali Agenda [32], Quartz [33], East African [34], East African [35]
- **January 20, 2015:**Arsonists attack a church in Mashewa in Tanga Region, a Muslim-majority area.

Source: U.S. Department of State [21]

- **October 9, 2014:**Unidentified perpetrators kill a churchgoer, Dioniz Ng'wandu, in Bukoba District, Kagera Region, northwest Tanzania.
  The pastor of the church tells congregation members that they had been receiving threats from Muslims in the area. Source: World Watch Monitor [77]
- **September 6, 2014:**Suspected Islamist assailants storm a police station in Bukombe District, Geita Region, killing two policemen and injuring two others.
  Police arrest the perpetrators and, according to the U.S. Department of State, claim that they are Islamists seeking to steal weaponry to use in attacks against Christians. Tanzanian news sources, however, refer to the assailants as "armed gangsters" and "robbers." Sources: U.S. Department of State [78], *Citizen* [79]
- **July 8, 2014:**Unidentified assailants throw an IED into the window of an Indian restaurant frequented by tourists in Arusha Region, injuring eight people.
  Police arrest two Tanzanian suspects and say that they "do not suspect any involvement with al-Shabab." Source: BBC News [80]
- **July 3, 2014:**Two moderate Muslim clerics are injured when an IED is hurled into a private house in Arusha Region. Sources: BBC News [80], All Africa [81]
- **April 14, 2014:**Unidentified perpetrators carry out a bombing near a mosque in Stone Town, Zanzibar, killing one person and injuring several others.
  Source: Agence France-Presse [82]
- **April 13, 2014:**Homemade bombs explode at the Arusha Night Park bar in Arusha Region, injuring 15 people.
  One person later dies in the hospital. Authorities arrest two assailants and report that they are members of an Islamist group seeking to implement sharia and to attack Christians and westerners, according to the U.S. Department of State. Sources: Reuters [83], U.S. Department of State [78]
- **February 2014:**Unidentified perpetrators carry out a bombing near an Anglican cathedral and at a restaurant popular with tourists in Stone Town, Zanzibar, wounding one person.
  Source: Reuters [84]
- **October 31, 2013:**Police in Tanga Region arrest Tanzanian businessman Juma Abdallah Kheri, suspected of working with and funding al-Shabab elements in Kenya.
  Source: All Africa [85]
- **October 28, 2013 - November 5, 2013:**Police in Tanga Region dismantle an al-Shabab-linked training camp, arresting 69 suspects and freeing dozens of recruits aged 4-13.
  Security forces seize 12 al-Shabab videos, containing lectures instructing followers to liberate Muslims in East Africa and throughout the world. At least 20 children are placed into a rehabilitation program following their release. According to officials, the children had been "completely brainwashed" by al-Shabab at the local mosque. Sources: INSS [20], All Africa [23], Jamii Forums [24]
- **October 22, 2013:**Kenya Defense Forces arrest three Tanzanian nationals in Somalia on the Kenyan border on suspicion of attempting to join al-Shabab.
  According to authorities, the three men—aged 19, 21, and 22—had traveled from Dar es Salaam up the eastern coast to Mombasa, Malindi, and Lamu before crossing into Somalia. Source: Sabahi [57]
- **October 2013:**On October 7, Tanzanian police arrest 11 al-Shabab suspects on Mt. Makolionga in Tanzania's southeast region of Mtwara.
  During the arrest police seize firearms, machetes, and 25 DVDs containing al-Shabab training materials. According to authorities, the suspects—all Tanzanian nationals—had engaged in "intensive" military training exercises. On October 18, Mtwara police arrest two other al-Shabab suspects, allegedly tied to the previous group of 11. During the same month, Kenyan military forces arrest three Tanzanians in Somalia as they attempt to travel to an al-Shabab training camp there. Sources: *Citizen* [5], All Africa [6], All Africa [7], INSS [20], *Citizen* [30]
- **September 17, 2013:**Zanzibar police arrest 15 suspects allegedly tied to al-Shabab amid ongoing acid attacks on the archipelago.
  Police reportedly seize 29 liters of acid during the arrests. Sources: Associated Press [38], *Telegraph* [39]
- **September 13, 2013:**A Catholic priest, Reverend Joseph Anselmo Mwangamba, is the victim of an acid attack by suspected Islamist extremists in Zanzibar's Stone Town.
  Sources: Sky News [62], Morningstar News [86]
- **August 12, 2013:**Sheikh Ponda Issa Ponda is shot and wounded as police arrest him for sedition in the central region of Morogoro.
  According to authorities, Ponda's supporters throw stones at the police during and directly following the cleric's arrest. Police respond by firing shots into the air to disperse the crowd. Source: BBC News [29]
- **August 7, 2013:**Two suspected members of Uamsho throw acid on two British teenage girls—Kirstie Trup and Katie Gee—in Stone Town, Zanzibar.
  Zanzibari authorities fail to arrest the perpetrators. Two years after the attack, in September 2015, Trup and Gee tell British media that "justice has never been served. We have lost all faith that the attackers will ever be found." Sources: *Telegraph* [87], *Telegraph* [63]
- **July 6, 2013:**Tanzanian police arrest British terrorist suspect Assan Ali Iqbal at the border with Malawi.

Iqbal is carrying a fake Tanzanian passport as well as a laptop containing "seditious material" designed to cause "religious incitement," according to authorities. Source: BBC News [88]

- **May 5, 2013:**Suspected Islamist extremists carry out a hand grenade attack at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in the northern region of Arusha, killing three people and wounding 58 others.
  Then-President Jakaya Kikwete describes the incident as "an act of terrorism." In the following days, authorities arrest eight suspects—four Tanzanians and four Saudi nationals—in relation to the attack. Sources: BBC News [89], All Africa [90]
- **May 2013:**Tanzanian authorities convict Sheikh Ponda Issa Ponda, who they had arrested in October 2012, of inciting religious hatred.
  He is handed a one-year suspended prison term. Sources: BBC News [29], BBC News [29]
- **April 20, 2013:**Suspected Islamic extremists demolish the Pool of Siloam church in Kianga, Zanzibar.
  The incident follows several attacks on the same church, including an arson attack in February 2013 and a sledge-hammer attack in November 2011. Sources: Morningstar News [91], Morningstar News [26]
- **February 17, 2013:**Two young men shoot dead Christian priest Father Evarist Mushi at the entrance to his church in Zanzibar City, Zanzibar.
  Three people are arrested in connection to the attack, one of whom, Omar Makame, is later charged with murder. The Zanzibar High Court dismisses Makame's case in November 2015 on the grounds that the government had not presented sufficient evidence to continue prosecution. Sources: *Telegraph* [92], U.S. Department of State [21]
- **February 11, 2013:**Suspected Islamists behead a priest, Mathayo Kachila, in the northwest region of Mwanza amid interfaith rioting related to Christian butchery practices.
  A group of Christians had reportedly arranged for a non-Muslim butcher to prepare meat for a Christian funeral reception, setting off the violence. Muslims generally oversee all butchery practices in Tanzania, as Muslims only eat meat that has been ritually slaughtered and Christians have no such restraints. Sources: World Watch Monitor [93], INSS [20]
- **December 25, 2012:**A Catholic priest, Father Ambrose Mkenda, is shot in the cheek and shoulders in Tomondo, Zanzibar, by two unidentified gunmen on a motorcycle.
  Local Christian leaders reportedly suspect Uamsho as being responsible for the attack, saying its members have been inciting violence against Christians since the October 10, 2012, argument between a Muslim and Christian schoolboy in Dar es Salaam during which the Christian boy reportedly defiled a Quran. Sources: All Africa [94], Morningstar News [46]
- **November 2012:**A moderate, anti-Uamsho imam in Zanzibar, Sheikh Fadhil Suleiman Soraga, is hospitalized after suffering an acid attack in Stone Town.
  Source: *Independent* [47], INSS [20]
- **October 28, 2012:**The principle secretary of BAKWATA in Arusha, Abdulkareem Jonjo, is wounded in an explosion at his residence after operatives hurl an IED into his bedroom where he had been resting.
  Source: Mwananchi [95]
- **October 17, 2012:**Tanzanian authorities arrest controversial Muslim leader Sheikh Ponda Issa Ponda for giving speeches inciting hatred against other religions and the government.
  According to authorities, Sheikh Ponda's speeches led to violence including numerous arson attacks on churches throughout Tanzania from October 12-18, 2012. Source: BBC News [25]
- **October 12, 2012 - October 18, 2012:**Suspected Islamists wage arson attacks on numerous churches throughout Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania—including five in Dar es Salaam alone.
  The attacks are reported to stem from inflammatory comments made by Islamic leaders including Sheikh Ponda Issa Ponda against Christians, following an October 10, 2012, incident in Dar es Salaam in which a 14-year-old Christian schoolboy urinated on the Quran of his Muslim peer. Rumors subsequently spread within the Islamic community that a Christian leader had instructed the boy to defile the Muslim holy book. Authorities arrest at least 126 people in the wake of the church attacks. Sources: Morningstar News [26], Morningstar News [27], BBC News [28]
- **October 10, 2012:**A policeman is hacked to death with machetes in Zanzibar's Stone Town amid rioting by Uamsho members related to the arrest of Uamsho leader Sheikh Farid Hadi.
  Following Hadi's arrest, Uamsho members begin to release leaflets containing messages threatening local Christian leaders. Sources: Reuters [45], Morningstar News [46]
- **June 2012:**Tanzanian authorities at the Dar es Salaam airport arrest German national of Turkish origin Emrah Erdogan, alleging that in early May, Erdogan crossed into Kenya from Somalia where he had been fighting with al-Shabab.
  Authorities suspect that Erdogan was complicit in an al-Shabab bombing at a Nairobi shopping center just before flying to Tanzania. Source: BBC News [61]
- **May 2012:**Hundreds of Uamsho members set two churches on fire and clash with police in Zanzibar's Stone Town after authorities arrest a number of the group's top leaders.
  Source: Reuters [44]
- **November 2011:**Tanzanian police arrest 10 Tanzanian nationals with suspected links to al-Shabab on the Tanzanian-Kenyan border.
  According to authorities, the suspects had been planning to join al-Shabab in Somalia. Sources: U.S. Department of

State [56], INSS [20]

- **May 2009:**British national Mohammed Emwazi, the man who will later be known as ISIS executioner Jihadi John, is arrested upon arrival at Tanzania's Julius Nyerere International Airport en route to Somalia to join al-Shabab. He is extradited to the United Kingdom. Source: *Telegraph* [60]
- **August 7, 1998:**In al-Qaeda's first largescale attack, operatives explode near-simultaneous bombs at the U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya, killing a total of 224 people. More than 4,500 others are wounded. Sources: CNN [65], FBI [66]

Domestic Counter-Extremism

The Tanzanian government has not publically confirmed the presence of terrorist groups or activity inside the country, and has failed to designate groups like ISIS and al-Shabab as terrorist entities. To that end, Tanzania allocates minimal effort and funds to both hard- and soft-core counterterrorism measures.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is working alongside Tanzania's National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC)—an interagency body under the Ministry of Home Affairs—to draft the country's National Action Plan for Preventing Violent Extremism (NAP for PVE). Each United Nations' member state is recommended to draft such a framework, as suggested in the United Nations' 2015 Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. In order to draft Tanzania's National Action Plan, UNDP has formed a National Advisory Council on PVE comprised of Tanzanian law enforcement, security personnel, and civil society stakeholders. (Sources: Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism [15], United Nations [16])

Legislation

Tanzania's counterterrorism framework is found in the 2002 Prevention of Terrorism Act. The 2002 Act defines terrorism as an act or omission that "seriously damage[s] a country or an international organization" and is intended to "seriously intimidate a population, unduly compel a government [to] perform or abstain from performing any act, [or] seriously destabilise or destroy the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of country or an international organization." Terrorism may involve "attacks upon a person's life" as well as "attacks upon the physical integrity of a person," including kidnapping. The act also classifies chemical, microbial, and other biologically-based attacks as terrorism. Sentencing guidelines for terrorism-related crimes were added to the Prevention of Terrorism Act in May 2016 through The Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendment) (No. 2) Act, 2016, § 55. The amendment imposed strong punishments—including the death penalty—on those found guilty of material support to terrorism—but stopped short of listing sentencing guidelines for those found guilty of membership in a terrorist organization or of committing a terrorist act. (Sources: Prevention of Terrorism Act 2002 [17], The Written Laws Amendment 2016 [18], U.S. Department of State [19])

In September 2018, Tanzania amended its counterterrorism legislation to include a new witness protection statute and made changes to its mutual legal assistance (MLA) law. The MLA law amendments increase Tanzania's capacity for cooperation with the United States and other countries in terrorism and criminal investigations. (Source: U.S. Department of State [8])

Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) Efforts

For several years the NCTC has spearheaded a small-scale community policing program in at-risk areas throughout Tanzania, aiming to build communication and trust between security personnel and civilians. The government has also urged religious leaders to encourage moderate preachers and discourage revisionist, extremist voices at their places of worship. According to the U.S. Department of State, in 2015 and 2016 Tanzanian police confiscated cassette tapes containing extremist messaging that were being sold on the streets. (Sources: U.S. Department of State [37], U.S. Department of State [19])

Beginning in spring 2017, the NCTC partnered with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for a multi-year project to prevent terrorism. The Tanzanian government worked in 2018 to draft a national preventing violent extremism strategy and action plan, which was supposed to be finalized in 2019, though its status remains unclear. Such efforts are

not widely recognized in some communities, especially Muslim majority regions, where heavy-handed police tactics have bred distrust of security officials, according to the U.S. Department of State. Accusations against the Tanzanian Police Force (TPF) include alleged extrajudicial forced disappearances and execution of extremist suspects. To support the country's PVE efforts, the Tanzanian government established community policing programs, wherein civilian volunteers provide information on safety and security issues to local leaders and the TPF. However, these programs suffer from a lack of resources, inconsistent application, and overemphasis of intelligence gathering. Furthermore, the Tanzanian police and community have not come to a consensus on the definition of violent extremism, according to a report by the United States Institute of Peace. (Sources: U.S. Department of State [8], United States Institute of Peace [96])

Combatting Terrorist Financing

Tanzania is one of 19 members of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), a regional body that seeks to combat terrorist financing and money laundering in Eastern and Southern Africa. The ESAAMLG Secretariat is located in Dar es Salaam. The ESAAMLG is modeled after the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a separate intergovernmental organization that sets "standards and promote[s] effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating…terrorist financing," according to the organization's website. Tanzania's financial intelligence unit is a member of the Egmont Group, an international network of national financial intelligence units. (Sources: FATF- ESAAMLG [97], U.S. Department of State [19], FATF [98])

International Counter-Extremism

Regional and International Cooperation

Tanzania is a member of several regional bodies that implement counterterrorism initiatives, including the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, and the East African Community. Tanzania has not joined the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), the African Union's peacekeeping mission in Somalia. (Source: U.S. Department of State [19])

The Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD), a Djibouti-based regional body, has also sought Tanzania's participation in its Regional Strategy on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism for Eastern Africa and the Horn of Africa. Tanzania's NCTC has cooperated on security measures with the East African Police Chiefs' Organization, the Southern African Police Chiefs' Organization, and INTERPOL. NCTC has also coordinated with Nairobi's Antiterrorism Center, and successfully extradited suspects of the 2010 Uganda bombings to Uganda for trial. (Sources: U.S. Department of State [37], U.S. Department of State [19])

The Tanzania Peace Training Centre in Dar es Salaam has launched counterterrorism trainings for security officials from East African Community member states (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania). In December 2017, more than 50 Kenyan military, police, and prison officers partook in a military skills exchange program on counterterrorism and disaster management at the center. (Source: The Star (Kenya) [99])

Tanzania has participated in the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF), an international body launched in September 2011 that aims "to reduce the vulnerability of people everywhere to terrorism" by convening international counterterrorism experts to share counterterrorism strategies, according to its website. (Sources: GCTF [100], U.S. Department of State [19])

On January 15, 2018, the Tanzanian and Mozambican police forces signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which codifies the countries' coordination on terrorism, drug trafficking, and money laundering efforts. The agreement also provides a mechanism for intelligence sharing. (Sources: U.S. Department of State [8], AllAfrica [101])

Cooperation with the United States

Tanzania and the United States have cooperated on counterterrorism efforts. In recent years, Tanzanian law enforcement officials have participated in the U.S. Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program to build capacity in

crisis response, counterterrorism investigations, and border operations. Through the ATA, the U.S. Department of State has mentored the Tanzanian Police Force in terrorist crime scene investigations and forensic lab techniques. (Source: U.S. Department of State [19])

Tanzanian officials helped the United States to prosecute 1998 U.S. Embassy bomber Ahmed Ghailani. According to the U.S .Department of State, the Tanzanian government "was instrumental in assisting with the investigation and providing the testimony that brought Ghailani to justice. The director of Tanzania's NCTC provided key testimony during the Ghailani trial [in New York]." (Source: U.S. Department of State [56])

Cooperation with Iran

During an October 2017 meeting in Tehran, Iran, Tanzanian foreign minister Dr. Augustine Mahiga and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani agreed to bolster counterterrorism cooperation. An Iranian newspaper quoted President Rouhani as saying that Iran was ready to share its counterterrorism experiences with friendly countries, including Tanzania. During the meeting, Minister Mahifa was quoted as saying, "Tanzania wants to take advantage of the Islamic Republic of Iran's experiences in countering not only terrorism and extremism, but also the fight against organized international crime, human trafficking and money laundering." This came as part of a larger conversation about boosting economic cooperation between the two countries. According to reports, President Rouhani wishes to begin developing monetary, financial, and banking relations with Tanzania—viewing the country as Iran's "gateway into East Africa," according to Iranian news outlets. (Source: *Citizen* [102], Mehr News Agency [103])

ISIS

Tanzania does not participate in the U.S.-led coalition against ISIS and has yet to designate ISIS as a terrorist organization under Tanzania law. (Source: U.S. Department of State [19])

Public Opinion

There is little-to-no publicly available information regarding Tanzanians' sentiments about extremism. In 2014, however, Pew Research found that 8 percent of Tanzanians had a favorable view of al-Qaeda, whereas 75 percent had an unfavorable view of the terrorist group. (Source: Pew Research via ICCT [104])