

## SMS Africa Report 2 – Kenya – February 2017

### Internal Security

Banditry and cattle rustling are a perennial problem in certain parts of Kenya. The conflict between communities are often exacerbated by climatic conditions, namely drought. The administrative area where these conflicts take place used to be known as Rift Valley Province but since devolution the zone of conflict can be located in three counties: Kerio Valley, Baringo and Laikipia. At one point the seriousness of the situation required the Kenya Red Cross to suspend humanitarian activities in the region. In the latter half of February #BaringoAttacks was a trending topic on Twitter.

100s of pple have fled their homes in #Baringo County, in #Kenya, due to rising insecurity fuelled by communal tensions. #BaringoAttacks (Agayare, 2017)

Pokot bandits killed James Cheserek & chopped off his head on Sunday in Kaptora, Marakwet East. The head was found 50KM away #BaringoAttacks (Atanasi\_, 2017)

#BaringoAttacks Bandits celebrating after attacking their neighbors. The gvt should disarm this people they aren't different from terrorist (Kiprowilfred, 2017)

But how can we defeat Al Shabaab yet mere cattle rustlers are giving us sleepless nights in Baringo?#BaringoAttacks (Nivaasenath, 2017)

Interior CS Nkaiserry is always quick to act on demos in Nairobi but too slow on security issues like currently in Baringo, Why? #PressPass (Danlombere, 2017)

The only difference between the Baringo attacks and the Alshabaab's is that for Baringo,the enemy is within and no strong government intervention is felt (Danlombere, 2017)

Laikipia has become an epi-center of conflict. Whether it's caused by drought or politics, it needs to be addressed urgently #kenyans4peace (MLeruk, 2017)—Hello Kenyan Initiative

Immediate suspension of All operations in Baringo county by Kenya #RedCross. KenyaRedCross, (2017)



#### Press Release

##### Immediate Suspension of All Operations in Baringo County by The Kenya Red Cross Society

**Saturday, 25 February 2017, Nairobi:** The Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) has temporarily suspended all operations in Baringo county and withdrawn all its staff from the county effective today, Saturday, 25 February 2017. This follows a confrontation with the residents that led to looting of relief food and harassment of KRCS staff, yesterday in Moinin, Lokuk.

The unfortunate incident took place on Friday, 24 February 2017 in Moinin, 12 kilometres from Marigat town, where a convoy of seven KRCS vehicles carrying 96.8 metric tonnes of relief food comprising of maize flour, pulses, cooking oil and salt meant for Kapedo and Lomelo areas in Turkana county, was blocked by the residents and forced to turn back to Marigat.

"It is with a heavy heart that the Kenya Red Cross Society announces the temporal suspension of our activities in Baringo county, as we can no longer guarantee the safety of our staff and resources. Our staff were threatened by residents despite our assurance that the consignment was headed to Turkana county, and had nothing to do with the current inter-clan conflict in Baringo county," said Dr. Abbas Gullet, Secretary General, KRCS.

At the first roadblock, KRCS staff attempted to negotiate with the residents, majority of whom were young people, but they were adamant. After one hour of negotiations, the convoy had to turn around after residents pointed on one vehicle and threatened to burn it down, only to meet another roadblock 4 kilometres from the first one. The second crowd directed the convoy to use a nearby detour back to Marigat, through a nearby small centre, where crowds from the first and second roadblocks, as well as those at the centre trapped KRCS staff.

The confrontation escalated, as the residents who are from the Tugen community accused KRCS of giving food support to the Pokot community. KRCS was forced to present the waybill that clearly indicated the food was destined for Turkana county, triggering some order. At the time, a police vehicle arrived from Marigat and in no time the youth approached one truck that had 5.5 tonnes of maize flour looting it clean, claiming they had fresh orders.

"Never in the history of Kenya Red Cross Society, have we ever been hampered from delivering our humanitarian work. We have always had access to all areas due to our neutrality and impartiality, during all crisis and emergencies," continued Dr. Gullet.

Baringo is affected by both the drought and conflict, where KRCS has been supporting residents with monthly cash transfers, non-food items, rehabilitation of water sources and medical outreaches in Baringo North, Baringo South and Tana sub counties. In addition, KRCS has been evacuating those wounded in conflict, and supporting displaced mothers and children.

"Kenya Red Cross Society may only resume operations when the Baringo County government guarantees the safety of our staff and resources. I also request the central government to intervene and shield vulnerable residents from the suffering we continue to witness," concluded Dr. Gullet.

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Local authorities were vocal about how dangerous the conflict had become, yet despite the clamour on social media and coverage by the media, the response by security agencies and central government was muted. A senator attracted a bemused response from the public when he took to Twitter to express his annoyance over the insecurity in Kerio Valley.

Police declare some parts of Baringo unsafe and uninhabitable <https://goo.gl/gdSgH0>  
#BaringoAttacks (RonohKechem, 2017)

Out of curiosity, I checked to see if there is even a single tweet from @InteriorKE or @NPSOfficial\_KE on #BaringoAttacks. Unfortunately NONE (Moskemrop, 2017)

The insecurity in Kerio Valley really sucks. I am totally pissed off! (Kipmurkomen, 2017)

---- So you contacted Twitter support to fix it? (MuthuriKinyamu, 2017)

---- @kipmurkomen So what do u want KOT to do? I thought uko kwa gava [you are in government]...otherwise endelea kukula nyama! [keep on eating meat<sup>1</sup>] (Monicaatieno191, 2017)

---- @kipmurkomen you r in govt, ask Pres, DP & Nkaisery to send the GSU who were ready to clobber innocent doctors to go stop the fighting (TinakrisKe, 2017)

Perhaps, this response indicates KOT's understanding of the utility of social media, there was a difference in the roles and expectations for citizens versus for those in power.

Things came to a head when two local, Pokot politicians were shot and killed on the evening of February 18<sup>th</sup>, at a local watering hole. This was no longer an age old resource conflict between neighbouring peoples. The security services had to act:

BREAKING NEWS: Gunmen kill MCA and parliamentary aspirant in Baringo, burn their vehicles  
<https://goo.gl/eaU25y> (KTN Kenya, 2017)

PRESS STATEMENT: BARINGO MURDER INVESTIGATION UPDATE (NPSOfficial\_KE, 2017)



<sup>1</sup> 'wakula/wala nyama' [those who eat meat] versus 'wameza mate' [those who salivate] refers to political elites versus regular people.

The lack of character limits on Facebook means that there was more depth and detail in the conversations. In fact, it was possible to develop a contextualised understanding of what was going on. The platform's group creation feature also means that one can build a community around particular topics. I took to Facebook to and by searching 'Baringo attacks' I found a series of comments posted as a response to a news bulletin on the deaths of the politicians.

This insecurity in Baringo, Kerio and Samburu and upper Laikipia is becoming bothersome. The thugs behave like there's no government with security organs while those charged with security have left citizens to their own means. Question is: does this government consider the people in these areas to be citizens of Kenya? (Stevenson Kinyanjui, 2017)

I have always had a feeling Asman Kamama<sup>2</sup> is part of the reason of banditry in this region yet he chairs is it security committee in parliament. He should be a prime suspect in this case (Omondi Okello, 2017)

It was a revenge mission by Tugens after one teacher from Tugen was butchered other day by Pokots from Tiaty. I think Tugens expressed their displeasure by killing the two. Some of us in Marakwet this morning we were attacked by Pokots from Tiaty. One person was killed near Tot trading Centre & some attackers were injured by gun shots by police. We call [for] the government security agencies to wait the injured person in Kapenguria or Cherangany & arrest them (Wisley Kipronoh Maiyo, 2017)

An attack by Pokot rustlers from Tiaty at Baringo south and Baringo north villages at end of 48hr ultimatum given by Kamket [local politician]. No Pokot professional has posted anything to condemn the attack by their kinsmen, none at all. The KANU senator is silent. No red cross at scene of attack.....Wait till the Nairobi government attempt to resolve this frequent attacks by even sending a lorry full of paramilitary [to engage the Pokot].... You will see Lonyangpoor [local politician] marauding around Chesitet accompanied by Kamket.... You will read fb posts from the Ngeleiyos...you will hear Kamama [local politician] talk.....Gideon Moi [local politician, son of former President Daniel Arap Moi] will fly to Tiaty to asses safety of Pokots following the impending government operation..... The redcross will come all the way led by Abas (sic) Gulet.....you will see Pokot professionals assembling microphones to address the press at Eldy [Eldoret] and Nakuru.....The rustler is the learned Pokot. The gun wielding boys are tools for use...If rustling and killing of innocent people in Baringo north and south is to be stopped this Pokot who has gone to school should be made to account. Kamket should be recording statements with CID...A lactating mother shot dead when running away with her 2month old baby at Yatya....No....No.....No....it must stop. Who are Pokots to be a problem to Marakwets???? A problem to Tugens???? A problem to Turkana???? A problem to Samburu???? A problem to the rangers at Laikipia???? They must be supermen indeed. Let all of us, neighboring Pokots, pledge our loyalty to this supermen from Tiaty...let us recognise them as another government... So we either belong to the Pokot/Tiaty government or the Uhuru Kenyatta government.... Choose the government near you not the Nairobi one (Victor Man Lokimer, (2017),

If the sentiments expressed in this last posting are representative of feelings on the ground, it reveals the motivations behind the tragic killings of Pokot leaders in Tiaty. What was surprising was the daring of the attackers.

The level of daring was yet to be exposed. During this pre-election year, Deputy President Ruto has made frequent visits to his base of support, especially since it is reported that he is

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<sup>2</sup> MP for Baringo East

not as popular as he once was. Thus, it was no surprise that he hastened to his ‘stumping’ grounds after the deaths of the politicians to hold a peace rally. The gathering was not well attended; his would-be audience had opted to protest the ongoing violence at a nearby town, lo and behold, bandits ambushed the meeting and shot and killed an area chief “metres away” from the Deputy President. It was then that DP Ruto awoke to the danger in the region. He returned days later with a heavy paramilitary police presence and the security bosses, and unveiled his plans to secure the locality, including a shoot-to-kill order reminiscent of former Internal Security Minister during the Kibaki era, John Michuki, and his campaign against the mungiki.

#Kenya: Gunshot sounds rip the air as Deputy President William Ruto addresses Kenyans in Baringo (WatsupAfrica, 2017)

Chief killed metres away from DP Ruto during his visit in Baringo (Juliusogondo, 2017)

JUST IN: Deputy President William Ruto issues a Shoot -to-kill order on bandits wreaking havoc in the North (Rift K24Tv, 2017)

DP William Ruto during his visit today to Kipsaraman in Baringo North said that Intensive security operations will start tomorrow in Baringo .He said that parts of Baringo South ,lower parts of Baringo North and some parts of Mochongoi will be declared Dangerous and disturbed zones. At the same time ,he added that the insecurity in the county will become a thing of the past by two weeks time, saying that 381 police officers will be deployed into the county. More details to follow (Baringo News, 2017)

"The Operation to rid Kerio Valley off cattle rustlers has been stepped up with deployment of additional officers and specialised equipment (JBoinnet, 2017)

The 230 new National Police Reservists will work with regular police to stop the menace of cattle rustling that has led to deaths (WilliamsRuto, (2017)

Dear Baringo, I'm sure you heard what Ruto, the vice president of a sovereign state Kenya said. When you shoot a 2-yr old baby you deserve nothing else: the bullet. Let me remind you; Hii haina TAFADHALI. MTALIA. [There will be no courtesy. You will weep]. When the VP says what I heard him say, be afraid (Arthur Bells, 2017)

The response to the ‘shoot-to-kill’ directive was mixed—celebrated by some and decried by others. The opposition coalition (now called NASA, not CORD) was opposed. The general public fell on either side but according to a Twitter poll of 80 respondents, 60% of them did not agree with the order (see link:

<https://twitter.com/paulkiarie001/status/835334364070313984>) another Twitter poll conducted by KTN News with 448 respondents produced similar results (see link: <https://twitter.com/KTNNews/status/836973772825579520>).

You started the issue of shoot to kill... utaenda Hague..[you will go to the Hague] DP William Ruto (CalvoMjinga, 2017)

Shoot to kill is the appropriate remedy in Baringo, i stand with Dp Ruto on this (Dr\_kaaria, 2017)

The Kenya Red Cross felt reassured enough by the government's response to resume delivering food aid to this drought-stricken region of the country. The KDF also got in on the act—of food distribution not pacification:

KENYA Red Cross resumes humanitarian operations in Baringo after attack on its personnel prompted a 3-day suspension (Robjillo, 2017)

Our vehicles ferrying drought pellets & water under @ndmkenya @EUinKenya Livestock Drought Emergency Supplement Prog. #DroughtMitigationKe (Kdfinfo, 2017)

CEO @ndmkenya Mr James Oduor flags off our vehicles ferrying drought pellets & water to Turkana & Marsabit counties. #DroughtMitigationKe (Kdfinfo, 2017)

----@kdfinfo @ndmkenya this is a patriotic event worth of fully fledged news coverage! Hope media were present to capture (Mwendanjoka, 2017)

## Hate Speech Acquittals

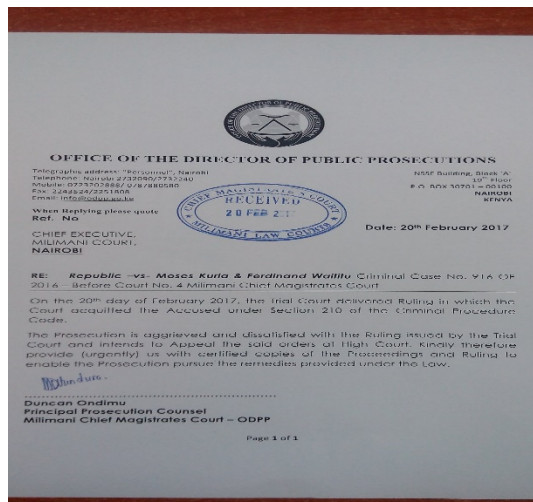
Provocative political speech is a definite factor in the tensions surrounding the North Rift. In fact several of the local politicians have run afoul of the law and faced charges of hate speech in the past. The most recent prosecution of six loud-mouthpieces drawn from both sides of the electoral divide suffered a setback when a court ruled to acquit all the politicians facing prosecution. The DPP, Keriako Tobiko, and ODPP staff member Duncan Ondimu seemed to feel that two Jubilee MPs, Waititu and Kuria, should not have gone free. Perhaps their conviction stemmed from the existence of video evidence of the hate speech. They expressed their dismay on social media and revealed their plans to continue to prosecute.

In other news Moses Kuria and Ferdinand Waititu found innocent on the hatespeech remarks. Court says video not real. #ThisIsKenya (Bwayo, 2017)

Unajifanya hapo mavideo na smartphone recordings kumbe Waititu na Moses Kuria wanajua admissible ni nini. [There you are with your video and smartphone, meanwhile Waititu and Moses Kuria know what 'admissible' is] Look at our lives! (Miguelmuguchia, 2017)

@ODPP\_KE dissatisfied with acquittal of MPs Moses Kuria & F. Waititu over incitement to violence charges. To appeal ruling #Hatespeech\_ODPP (ODPP\_KE, 2017)

@ODPP\_KE is aggrieved and dissatisfied with the Ruling and shall be appealing "MPs Kuria & Waititu" (Matundura78, 2017)



Most of the public response was that of jaded disappointment similar to:

MPS MOSES Kuria, Ferdinand Waititu acquitted of hate speech charges, court rules video recording cannot be used as evidence (NationBreaking, 2017)

----Woow!! So why did NCIC employ video recorders to monitor hate speech? What actually is wrong with Kenya? (Amerix, (2017)

MOSES Kuria, Ferdinand Waititu acquitted of hate speech charges, court says video recording cannot be used as evidence. That's Kenya for you (AbdullahiDerow, 2017)

Despite the existence of institutions dedicated to investigating and enforcing ‘hate speech’ laws—the National Cohesion and Integration Act (its commission, NCIC, did not make any comment on social media about the acquittals even though they were tagged in many tweets)—the application of the law in the courts has not been settled. The acquittal of the ‘Pangani Six’ may reflect an ineffectual and corruptible judicial system or a problem with the law as it is written (see an analysis here: [http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2016/08/13/what-we-need-to-understand-about-hate-speech\\_c1401178](http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2016/08/13/what-we-need-to-understand-about-hate-speech_c1401178)). Whatever the case, the outcome is that the public perceives that their institutions do not work.

How can a Court Acquit "MPs Kuria & Waititu" That there was no sufficient Evidence. I wonder what is Hate Speech in Kenya. It's Sickening (Gittss, 2017)

If Moses Kuria and Ferdinand Waititu can't be judged in court following their outright bile spews with the potency of sparking tribal animosity during the IEBC demos for lack of evidence ;who else should? Sometimes our judiciary misses the mark so badly (Elias Bosire Nyaberi, 2017)

I disagree with judge on this ruling.but @NCIC\_Kenya has also failed to define it, some hated truths are confused for hate-speech. @DPPS\_KE (Zecky\_obonyo, 2017)

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