

SMS Africa– Kenya – June 2017--Report 1

Security

May had been a particularly dangerous time for security operatives and the administration went out of its way to acknowledge this. The often officious missives were replaced by a conversational and heartfelt message, posted directly onto Facebook. Recently, in some instances a post on Facebook has replaced the hardcopy press release. It is worth noting that there is a new communications officer at the Police service and the change in tenor and practice may be a result of his tenure.

CONDOLENCE MESSAGE BY THE INSPECTOR GENERAL NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE MR. JOSEPH K. BOINNET MGH, nsc(AU) DURING THE MEMORIAL SERVICE OF ADMINISTRATION POLICE OFFICERS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE LINE OF DUTY BETWEEN 24TH AND 31ST MAY 2017 IN NORTH COAST AND NORTH EASTERN REGIONS. Dear bereaved families and colleagues, I would like to begin by expressing my heartfelt condolences to the families of the fallen officers who met their cruel and untimely demise while performing their duties of maintaining law and order in the North Coast and North Eastern Regions, on diverse but in a quick succession of dates. The dates between 24th to 31st May 2017 will remain one of the darkest days in the history of the National Police Service. Within this short period, we lost seventeen officers through acts of terrorism who were executing their mandate of maintaining law and order in the areas that were assigned to them. These were gallant warriors who paid the ultimate price in the service to our motherland, and even in death, the Country owes it unto them to pay glowing tributes for their sacrifice. I wish to assure the parents of the departed officers, relatives, Police Officers and the country at large, that the unfortunate attacks which led to the loss of our colleagues will not be in vain. We are aware that we are engaged in complicated war of fighting a faceless enemy but this will never dampen our spirits to bring normalcy in that particular part of the country. The innocent members of the public who reside there are Kenyans who deserve protection from the country's security agencies, and we are the ones to do that job. I am in constant communication with the officers operating in those areas and their message to the country and colleagues is that they will continue fearlessly with this fight until the course which our colleagues were pursuing, and for which they met their untimely death is accomplished. We cannot leave this task unaccomplished as this will amount into surrendering that part of the country to the forces of darkness. We will continuously be reviewing our strategies and equipment to ensure that we have the right tools suitable for every terrain. I would like to encourage the public and every other person who has the advantage of accessing media facilities that what the security agencies of this country need at this time in the history of our country is encouragement and moral support. The country is facing a number of security challenges some of which have been around for some time, and we are doing all we can to bring order in the affected areas. Our assurance is that we are equal to the task, and committed to the course. I once more wish to express my heartfelt condolences to the families and loved ones of our departed colleagues, and quick recovery to those who have been injured. Whereas it is not possible to fill the gaps in your lives which have been left by the departed colleagues and family members, the National Police Service and the Government will do all that it can to help you settle. May the Almighty God rest their souls in eternal peace Amen. Thank you and may God bless you. JOSEPH K. BOINNET, MGH, nsc (AU) INSPECTOR GENERAL NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE (National Police Service, (2017)

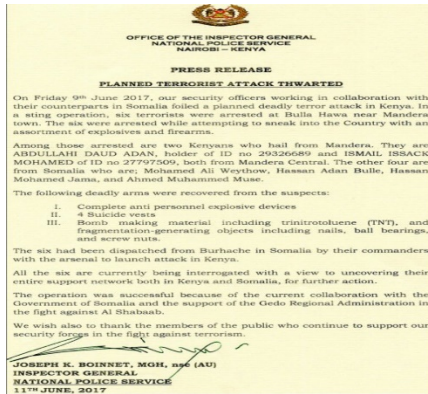
The message was accompanied by action. A memorial service was held for those who had perished in the line of duty.

CS Interior Maj.Gen (rtd) Joseph Nkaissery today led NPS in a memorial service in honour of gallant Officers killed in recent terror attacks (JBoinnet, 2017)

In the midst of the mourning and introspection, there was good news. A terror attack was ‘thwarted’.

#BREAKING Large Scale Terror Attack Preempted by Kenya security intelligence forces. More to follow (CTNSIS, 2017)

PRESS RELEASE PLANNED TERRORIST ATTACK THWARTED (NPSOfficial_KE, 2017)



Source: https://twitter.com/NPSOfficial_KE/status/873910673885073408

----I always believe in our intelligence,we are the best, congrats to NPS (Allanodim, 2017)

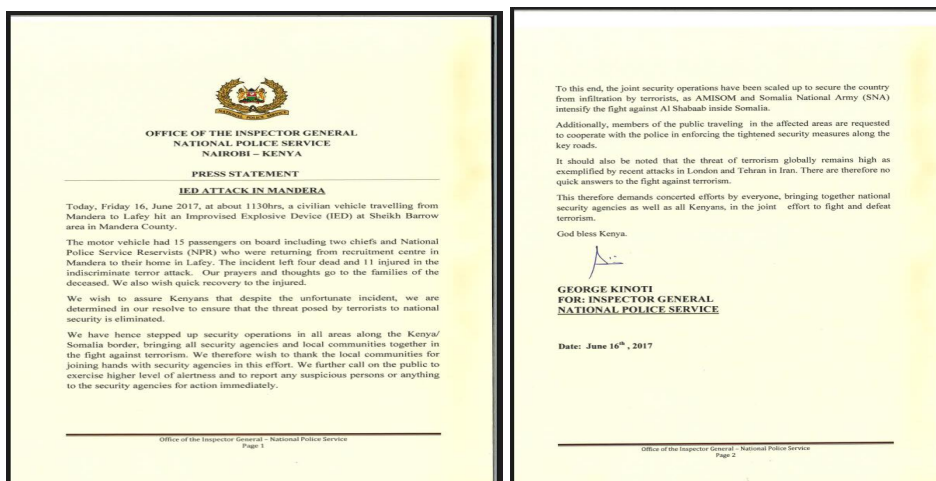
Ongoing arrests were also made public. The general response of the public was supportive.

GOOD JOB: 29 Al Shabaab suspects have been arrested in Lamu County within the past 4 months, Govt Says #EpukaUgaidi (EpukaUgaidi, 2017)

----great job from our security forces God bless them for putting their lives on line for our sake (Gosinjiru, 2017)

Suspected Al-Shabaab militant shot dead by Kenya Security and 5 others arrested for planting an IED at a remote road in Wajir County (CTNSIS, 2017)

If there is anything that we have learnt about the age of the internet is that perceptions are what matter. During this election period, security has become a partisan issue, where the government and its institutions overlap with the Jubilee party. So news of insecurity e.g. another IED attack in Mandera has the tendency to illicit a response that tows the party line.



Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/nationalpoliceke/photos/pcb.2033852980185066/2033852946851736/?type=3&theater>

When the TV AM Live asked its audience how it felt about the security situation, the responses were split between those who felt that crime and insecurity were on the increase.

KENYA's Police Security-Machinery has gone to the dogs. That is why Everyone in Town is Alert instead of being at Ease #AMLiveNTV (JOHNGITHANGA, 2017)

#AMLiveNTV Wajir, I live northern Kenya and know the terrain very well. Our security organs are doing their best. They need our prayers (AliHassanDayib, 2017)

Perspectives on Extra-Judicial Killing

In light of the infamy of the Hesys, civil society organisations began a campaign (Machosi Ya Jana [Yesterday's Tears]) to address the situation and to hear from those directly affected. They organised community gatherings and tweeted the testimony of the people who spoke during the meetings. These activities elicited a social media conversation between AmnestyKenya and HesyWaEastlando who represented two different perspectives on the matter. Interjections from others on social media and the in-person testimony tweeted out by AmnestyKenya served to provide a window in the broad base of opinion. HesywaEastlando regarded the CSO perspective as elitist and out of touch, renaming the campaign Machosi Ya Mamba [Crocodile Tears].

Join us tomorrow as we launch #StopExtraJudicialKillingsKE Campaign #MachosiYaJana @mohochis @IJM @JFJustice #EndExtraJudicialKillingsKE (ICJKenya, 2017)

"We are living in terror, everyday we are losing our sons and brothers #EndextrajudicialkillingsKE here in Kibera (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

#EndExtrajudicialKillingsKE "And now these young men in the community who have reformed, who is helping them, who is holding their hands?" (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

#EndExtrajudicialKillingsKE "I lost my only son. There is no mother who wants2give birth2a criminal. Here in Dandora we have a lot of pain." (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

#EndExtrajudicialKillingsKE "My husband was a criminal to support the family. But the police locked him in the house and slaughtered him. (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

----How else would he have been contained ? #endextrajudicialkillingsKE (HesyWaEastlando, 2017)

----We agree that crime must be combatted but it must be combatted lawfully and accountably (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

----Then let the trained pple do the job they are paid to do (HesyWaEastlando, 2017)

#EndExtrajudicialKillingsKE "My husband went on his knees&begged not2be killed, my mother also pleaded with th police, but they killed him." (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

#EndExtrajudicialKillingsKE "I've been following Hesy wa Kayole on social media. Killing criminals is not the solution, rehabilitate them." (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

----Anyone who's come across this very young n ruthless criminals wld beg to differ ! (En_izG, 2017)

----They don't understand ghetto life (HesyWaEastlando, 2017)

----Life for someone in the ghetto and life for someone in Runda is equally important. It is wrong to cheapen life in any part of the country (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

----Just go back to Runda and other gated estates, leave us with our problems. They are greek to you (HesyWaEastlando, 2017)

----By saying that you are trying to side-step the issue. The vigilante operations you carry out have no place in a law abiding society (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

----Vigilante? I think you are referring to someone else. But we appreciate those who understand our challenges (HesyWaEastlando, 2017)

---- You live in an utopia #MachosiYaMamba AMA #MachosiYaJana #EndextraJudicialkillingsKe (HesyWaEastlando, 2017)

Hesy's supporters encouraged him/them to continue their 'work'. They invoked the slogans, "watajua hawajui" and "form ni kureform" demonstration familiarity with the movement.

Every life is precious but kwa wale "hawajui watajua" hatutaki BS na PR ya UPUS [Every life is precious but those who don't know, will know we don't BS and silly PR].if you harass us you should also be harassed *10 (WaMabururi, 2017)

@AmnestyKenya @En_izG FormNiKureform ama WajueHawajui. Fagia kunguni Hesy. Safisha Mtaa. Countdown iendeelee [Good form is to reform or they will know that they don't know. Sweep the cockroaches Hesy. Clean the City] (OmorisiaChakobo, 2017)

They kill anyone along the way including policemen & a nd you say human rights!criminals shouldn't have more rights than the toiling victims (Zepphimobby78, 2017)

Amnesty Kenya address issues about law elsewhere! What law do these criminals use to kill!?Jungle law! hawajui watajua! Hesy fanya kazi [They will know that they don't know! Hesy, do your work!] (Zepphimobby78, 2017)

Amnesty my foot, thug uses an illegal gun, kills me and leaves my family destitute, enjoys the loot then moves to next victim ah.msiwatete wezi [Don't defend thieves] (Zepphimobby78, 2017)

They dance, eat, get paid & leave us with our problems ,meanwhile cop has bn shot @ Mowlem #EndExtrajudicialKillingsKE (HesyWaEastlando, 2017)

The courts, national police service & prisons exist to deal with these killers. In a nation that respects rule of law, crime wld not thrive (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

----Well said but that is as per the written laws. ukifika eastlands mambo ni tofauti, [when you get to Eastlands, things are different] those kids are ruthless! (JeffGitehi, 2017)

What about the innocent, harmless,hardworking members of the public ? Do u consider them #EndextrajudicialKillingsKE (HesyWaEastlando, 2017)

@En_izG The police have been killing criminals4a long time but new ones keep coming up. This shows that killing is an ineffective strategy (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

#EndextrajudicialkillingsKE "The officer who killed the boys in Eastlands is currently interdicted, even if ppl praised him on social media." (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

Some of those who spoke attempted to make suggestions about how to deal with the problem of youth crime and meeting their doom at the hands of the police:

#EndExtrajudicialKillingsKE "An old man was knifed yesterday by 3 youths & died. Us youths should rethink what we do & stop cursing our futures." (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

"Mothers, if ur children r misbehaving, take them 4 discipline at juvenile centers. Don't wait till they killed." #EndExtrajudicialkillingsKE (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

"We always say police are bad but do we sit down with them & tell them what we want? We can influence their work." #EndExtrajudicialKillingsKE (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

What is clear is that the Hessys are very familiar with the locality and its problems, and see themselves as a solution. Even demonstrating a willingness to attend the gatherings where they were being vilified:

Tomorrow we're on at Mukuru kwa Reuben Center Hall for the 6th #MachosiYaJana community forums to #EndExtrajudicialkillingsKE Join us! (AmnestyKenya, 2017)

----I'll be there #EndExtrajudicialkillingsKE #MachosiYaMamba #MachosiYaJana (HesyaWaEastlando, 2017)

HesyaWaEastlando even contacted a hero of the Gaza gang in order to try and get him to denounce their activities. The message below was tweeted to Vybz Kartel a famous Jamaican dancehall musician who often references Gaza in his lyrics:

Follow back for a DM, we have a criminal gang in Kenya that worships you and have been terrorizing people, stealing and raping (HesyaWaEastlando, 2017)

Another indicator that they are not merely bloodthirsty, the Hessa(s) sent out a tweet asking for support for a Sparta Vinnie who has been making comic book renderings of Team Hessa's activities.

Hallo, We're thinking of sponsoring artist #SpartaVinnie to write comic books on "Crime" & help reform our youths. Ideas & support r welcome (HesyaWaEastlando, 2017)





Source: <https://twitter.com/HesyWaEastlando/status/874131843418927105>

In the above drawing one sees the HESSY's meeting with parents and guardians of the wayward youth. If this is true, then the HESSY's are known to the members of the community, and in fact are a part of it.

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