

SMA Africa Report 1 – Kenya – November 2016

Incident at the US Embassy

On October 27th, 2016 a man attacked one of the guards manning the visa section line at the US Embassy.

Congrats to the GSU officer who shot this suspected terrorist outside "US Embassy" GSU kikosi maalum. #AlShabaab psycho pinned down (GroundHawkKE, 2016)

The guard shot and killed his attacker. Given my familiarity with the visa section line of the US Embassy in Nairobi, it is fair to say that this person had a 0% of making an incursion into the property. Images of the man's body lying on the pavement began to circulate on social media. Conspiracy theories about it being 'staged' began to circulate. Prompting the police to issue a statement to legitimise the attack. The phenomenon of doubt casting doubt on reports from the security services seems to be becoming the norm. Recall the contested narrative around the women who attacked Mombasa Police Station event. One can trace this trend to Westgate and to El Adde. One then wonders whether providing more information is the answer to countering public mistrust in the security services.



The recent incident at the American Embassy in Nairobi in which an individual for yet unknown reasons stabbed a Police officer on guard duty, truly happened contrary to claims being circulated in the Social Media that it was stage managed. The injured officer is still recovering while the matter is under close investigations.

Source: https://twitter.com/NPSOfficial_KE/status/793494178596548608?lang=en

The 'terrorist' narrative was disputed by the family, even as the ATPU (Anti-Terrorism Police Unit) took over the investigation:

Anti-Terror police take over case of Suspected terrorist at @USEmbassyKenya after family says he was Mentally unstable. @CTNSIS @NCTC_Kenya (Taqwamedia3, 2016)

ATPU takes over the probe into the killing of a terror suspect, Abdimahat Ibrahim, who was killed outside @USEmbassyKenya #EpukaUgaidi (EpukaUgaidi, 2016)

Reporting on Security

Sources outside of government may be perceived as more trustworthy, but that does not necessarily translate into interest. A UN report apparently delivered much sought after information without much fanfare (Link to report: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N16/300/79/PDF/N1630079.pdf?OpenElement>)

Other highlights from the UN report: Some 150 Kenyan soldiers were killed during January's El-Adde attack, at least 11 others were captured (HarunMaruf, 2016)

UN report: US air strikes on Al-Shabab base in Raaso in March eliminated at least 150 militants, the deadliest drone strike in US history (HarunMaruf, 2016)

latest UN report on Somalia-civilians killed by air strikes,el adde attack death toll=150,AMISOM failings: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/919 ...@gathara

However, a photograph of a damaged army vehicle generated much more activity as measured by retweets and reaction. Perhaps, because it was posted by Patrick Safari who has a following. He captioned the photo:

Effects of Corruption!! The government purchased fake chinese APCs for our soldiers. They cant withstand a small impact of an IED (PatrickssafariR, 2016)



Source: <https://twitter.com/patricksafariR/status/797442911264768001>

If the 200 retweets and 200 'likes' are any indicator, many people took the post at face value. I must admit to also not thinking critically about it either, until I saw most of the responses to the tweet:

@patricksafariR how small was the impact? Did u plant IED? (Ngugimaara, 2016)

@patricksafariR @C_NyaKundiH that thing survived the impact (Midgini, 2016)

@patricksafariR [...] Define "small" & "fake" plz (Daudikamjoro, 2016)

@patricksafairir You can't say a simple IED yet you are not the one who planted it (AmJoseh, 2016)

@patricksafairir says the military procurement expert. What a smart mind! (Denoickip, 2016)

The majority of the around twenty responses were sceptical. I wondered why those who took the time to respond were overwhelmingly in the sceptic camp, while the likes and retweets were numerous but they did not take the time to comment. We shall leave that to the psychologists. In the current climate, ruminations on how people consume and treat information on the Internet have become pressing.

The Kenya National Commission for Human Rights (KNCHR) clearly had a social media strategy in place for their public hearings at the Coast. They must have felt that the exercise would be served by the inclusion of social media outreach. Thus, we were provided with a window into the proceedings by dedicated ‘Twitterers’ who included photographs and direct quotes from witnesses in their posts:

@HakiKNCHR concludes Public Inquiry at YWCA Hall in Garsen today ending sessions in Tana River County. #SecurityInquiryKE (MacOtani, 2016)

Its Day two of #SecurityInquiryKE and the narrative on conflict revolves around herders against the farming community @HakiKNCHR (DjSoxxy, 2016)

Grabbing of my land, my biggest source of income, has broken my heart; I’ve gotten no help to recover it. ~ Sahra Osman #SecurityInquiryKE (Muugafm, 2016)

Impunity with which herders violate farmers right in Tana Delta, pause the question, To whom do they work for?@HakiKNCHR #SecurityInquiryKE (_JosephOti, 2016)

Constant fights between herders & farmers destabilize peace in Delta, with security agencies favoring herders. ~ Witness #SecurityInquiryKE (Wimwaro_fm, 2016)

According to the OCPD, Tana Delta, conflicts is with farmers and none resident herders and not the residents. #SecurityInquiryKE (OliverMathenge, 2016)

Historical hatred a challenge to committees advancement other peace and security #SecurityInquiryKE (DjSoxxy, 2016)

@HakiKNCHR must not be seen as leaning on one side, but also speak up when police are attacked/killed @DCC #SecurityInquiryKE (_JosephOti, 2016)

Abdul alleges his 9yr old child died in the river while running away from GSU officers, during an operation in 2012 #SecurityInquiryKE (OliverMathenge, 2016)

#SecurityInquiryKE, confidentiality on the part of security agency is wanting@witness 001,a victim of shooting@HakiKNCHR #SecurityInquiryKE (_JosephOti, 2016)

They also travelled to Mpeketoni, where on 15th and 17th June, 2014, the community experienced night time attacks by a large group of armed individuals. In the aftermath, President Uhuru Kenyatta contested the ‘terror’ narrative, instead blaming political opponents. He alleged that it was ethnically motivated. To date, it is still not clear what happened. Al Shabaab did claim the second attack that occurred on the 17th. In total, 50+ people were killed and a number remain unaccounted for. Mpeketoni is an area of Coast Province that has a large number of ‘new’ settlers, who are primarily Kikuyu and Christian. No matter what instigated the violence i.e. ‘inter-ethnic violence’ versus ‘terror’...the fact that came into sharp focus was the failures of the police to prevent and repel the attacks. President Kenyatta claimed that the police had been warned of the attack and had failed to act (hinting that they were in cahoots with local leaders). Army personnel from the nearby barracks arrived ten hours later (it might be worth finding out what the regulations are on having army personnel leave their barracks on such a

mission—they always seem to arrive ‘late’). The people of Mpeketoni took to the streets, to protest what they perceived as abandonment. These KNCHR hearings were an opportunity to hear directly from people who experienced those events:

Residents of Mpeketoni, turning up in large numbers @HakiKNCHR public hearing on #SecurityInquiryKE (_JosephOti, 2016)

"Lack of coordination by security agencies in the 2014 attacks is what led to loss of lives" Emmanuel Wanyoike #securityinquiryKE (DjSoxxy, 2016)

The Big Question, where were police officers, when Mpeketoni residents were being attacked? J Wainaina asks. @IPOA_KE #SecurityInquiryKE (OliverMathenge, 2016)

Witness 3: Ibrahim says that Mpeketoni attack was planned, aimed at creating religious conflict among residents. #SecurityInquiryKE (OliverMathenge, 2016)

I lost my 1 month old tractor bought via Sh1.7M loan in 2014 Mpeketoni attacks; insecurity hampers biz. ~ Daniel Ng'ang'a #SecurityInquiryKE (Hot_96Kenya, 2016)

Iman says ethnic & religious profiling that followed Mpeketoni attacks has since been managed through community dialogues #securityinquiryKE (OliverMathenge, 2016)

Iman Ibrahim, Chair, Lamu Interfaith Peace Initiative says relative calm exists because of continuous dialogue @HakiKNCHR #securityinquiryKE (Ali_Manzu, 2016)

Residents say the presence of security agents in Mpeketoni has brought relative calm and peace amidst many #SecurityInquiryKE @HakiKNCHR (Ali_Manzu, 2016)

RT @Ali_Manzu: Currently, security is far much better in Mpeketoni area. States Wainaina @HakiKNCHR @IPOA_KE #SecurityInquiryKE (ElijahRottok, 2016)

Mpeketoni residents seek a better working relationship with especially KWS in accessing water points and farming land #securityinquiryKE (HakiKNCHR, 2016)

Ngugi: There's need to set up rehabilitation centers in Mpeketoni, to their sons overcome drug menace in the area. #SecurityInquiryKE (OliverMathenge, 2016)

Even they did not clear up the question of who the perpetrators were, the testimonies suggest that the security services had made up for their failures in 2014. And in fact the community had moved on and were highlighting different problems.

Lamu is another part of Coast province that has borne the brunt of the conflict with Al Shabaab. There too, it seems that there has been an improvement in police presence, although this may present a new set of issues.

Faraj concurs that security is better than before, stating that police has done their best to tame insecurity. #SecurityInquiryKE (OliverMathenge, 2016)

Faraj: Security officers should use intelligence to isolate suspect, and not suspect people for growing beards. #SecurityInquiryKE, (Online), Twitter, 07 November (OliverMathenge, 2016)

Faraj: Residents suffer silently for fear of victimization for speaking out on violation of rights. #SecurityInquiryKE (OliverMathenge, 2016)

Unemployment and lack of ID cards for youth are largely contributing to insecurity in Lamu County. ~ Omar Faraj #SecurityInquiryKE (MacOtani, 2016)

Children at Basuba (Boni Forest) can't access education; 5 schools turned into barracks for security agents. ~Barissa Deko #SecurityInquiryKE (Inooroke, 2016)

@samanfatma encourages locals to come forth & lodge any complaints against the police to IPOA
#SecurityInquiryKE (Ali_Manzu, 2016)

@samanfatma of IPOA~It's against the law for police to instill fear and intimate citizens they should
be protecting #SecurityInquiryKE (OliverMathenge, 2016)

Local IPOA representatives were present at all the hearings, making their mandate and availability known to the local populace.

The KNCHR also managed to get the proceedings into the mainstream media. On one front the tweets produced by the dedicated KNCHR team were being echoed verbatim by the *Twitter* accounts of vernacular radio stations owned specifically by Royal Media Services (InooroFM, MulembeFM, WimwaroFM, MuugaFM, etc.). I assume that tapping into vernacular stations was KNCHR's way of reaching as many rural people as possible. Although, I noted that the vernacular radio station accounts tweeted in English, which may reveal either something about who they think uses the platform or who they hired to do the job (perhaps, one individual who cannot possibly speak all twelve languages).

The newspapers produced long-form versions:



Source: <https://twitter.com/HakiKNCHR/status/796960696219082752>

#SecurityInquiryKE As reported by the Standard Newspapers @NLinkKenya @IPOA_KE @ambhusseindado @NPSOfficial_KE @IssaTimamyHon @HassanAliJoho (HakiKNCHR, 2016)



Source: <https://twitter.com/HakiKNCHR/status/795962921020981248>

If the success of KNCHR's social media public information strategy can be measured by its ability to trend, then it is fair to say that it worked. However, perhaps more importantly, people were interacting with the information that was being generated and narrating their own stories:

Trending: #SecurityInquiryKE #God is answering my prayers to #expose #police for #injustice. Until they #stop they #will be exposed forever (Lexwahome63, 2016)

I was just about to switch off my data until I seen #SecurityInquiryKE had dropped, where's my reading glasses? Nevermind never used them (DStvinstall, 2016)

Following #SecurityInquiryKe (Ajwala_sam, 2016)

Witness Wainaina calls on the County and National govts to come up with speedy solutions to the herder - farmer conflict #securityinquiryKE (DjSoxxy, 2016)

---- @djsoxxy @kagwiriambogori @knchr @hakiknchr #SecurityInquiryKE is a waste of taxpayers money and giving false hope with unimplemented! #GMW (WaiguruGM, 2016)

Children under 15 have become drug lords in Lamu; walking with knives & slashers to threaten "sell outs." ~ Yusuf Said #SecurityInquiryKE (Muugafm, 2016)

---- #SecurityInquiryKE These gangs aren't only in Lamu they are also here in Nairobi. It is a serious problem @AfUncensored (Gakurusonia, 2016)

i wish Gaza group is eradicated in Kayole they robbed me at a gun point n left me injured, AP Senior kayole was shot too #SecurityInquiryKE (HamWambui, 2016)

Insecurity is worsening in the city as criminals are busy looking for X mas money, myself and colleague have been victims #SecurityInquiryKe (JacksonArunga, 2016)

Who gave police powers to fleece other Kenyans. #SecurityInquiryKE (Pitahnjuguna1, 2016)

#SecurityInquiryKe moi Avenue, Ronald ngala and luthuli are so insecure, @JBoinnet @JNkaiserry (Kym_12841, 2016)

"@Ibrahimmeso: I fear meeting police than a robber. There is no citizen-police relationship #SecurityInquiryKE" (EmmanuelAmunala, 2016)

Police wamekuwa kama pastors, wanakula kondoo [they eat the sheep] instead of protecting #SecurityInquiryKE (PlangatK, 2016)

Police brutality has been a real concern amongst we Kenyans. Police training has to focus on professionalism. #SecurityInquiryKE (Ng_kagombe, 2016)

It is safe to be handled by Kenya Robbers that than Kenya Police, taught to be inhuman #SecurityInquiryKE (ItsWycliffeKe, 2016)

The Kenyan police are becoming too much. I think there is a need for them to stop over-exercising their power #SecurityInquiryKE (Mary_mwakesi, 2016)

In kenya 2day police officers act without professionalism in dischargng their mandate to the citizens @PoLycarpFM #SecurityInquiryKE (Anselm254, 2016)

"What is the government doing about clan militias who are used by politicians to kill! #SecurityInquiryKe (Hananmuhsin, 2016)

A special police unit to combat general crime along the Northern Corridor route in the country has begun its operations. #SecurityInquiryKE (Taqwamedia3, 2016)

#SecurityInquiryKE how is Security in your estate? Do you think is doing enough. People are suffering in Kerio Valley @ElgeyoMarakwetC (ItsKimosopJr, 2016)

#SecurityInquiryKE @HakiKNCHR assist this man who blames police for breaking his leg while at Muranga police cells (Ndungugachane, 2016)

Killer group Gaza terrorizing Muranga residents arrested. Police ask victims to record statement #SecurityInquiryKE (Ndungugachane, 2016)

I think all security agents working along our borders should be remunerated well #SecurityInquiryKE (Oscarnalyanya, 2016),

#SecurityInquiryKE any disagreement with a kenyan corp can leave you dead. Many are cold-blooded killers (NderytuMosez, 2016),

Among the reasons as to why our military personnel aren't performing well is due to government oppression and dejection #SecurityInquiryKe (Oneeddiekevin, 2016)

Despite losing our loved ones to terrorism, I think the threat has brought unprecedented reforms to security in Kenya. #SecurityInquiryKe (Teeaitteeou, 2016)

The police are used in protecting business premises of the so called rich 24/7 yet there paid by our tax nahawatuprotect #SecurityInquiryKE (Ed_mwah, 2016)

#SecurityInquiryKE it should not be utumishi kwa wote but uporaji kwa wote (Norahkalunda, 2016)

In our country, we live in fear. Gov't should act with speed to ensure that both internal & external attacks are tamed. #SecurityInquiryKE (SidneyFestusK, 2016)

Police unable to track thugs because most of them collude with them, woe woe!! #SecurityInquiryKE (Erwoti, 2016)

The kerio death valleys, Marsabit massacre fields, so much promise less actions #SecurityInquiryKE (DaudiMuya1, 2016)

If security starts with me, then should all security agencies be disbanded #SecurityInquiryKE (Musutch, 2016)

Ask @UKenyatta how #SecurityInquiryKE starts with me? But corruption end with his cronies and relatives (DaudiMuya1, 2016)

The PRESIDENT told Us, Security starts with us.I am Still trying to understand what he meant by that. #SecurityInquiryKe (JosephMuindiKis, 2016)

The president and his DP are proud of the current security accorded their families. Wengine [For others], security starts with you #SecurityInquiryKE (JubileePartyyK, 2016)

There's something wrong when the president's cows & DP Ruto 's maize are accorded better security than you & me #SecurityInquiryKE (RiekMachar3, 2016)

Unfortunately for the police, an upload of photographs of a heavy-handed policeman coincided with (or accelerated) the popularity of the #securityinquiryke tag.



Source: <https://twitter.com/UjingaKE/status/795568272750034944>

Surely; utumishi kwa wote [Service for all]. SHAME!!!! #StopPoliceBrutality #SecurityInquiryKE #KCSE2016 #BettingOnFraud cc @bonifacemwangi (UjingaKE, 2016)

Kidogo kidogo utasikia Nkaiseri akisema [Shortly you will hear Nkaisery saying that] those pictures doing rounds on social media are photoshops & works of opposition #SecurityInquiryKE (CMwabili, 2016)

Seems the police slogan changed from "Utumishi kwa wote" ["Assisting all"] to "Uvamizi kwa wote" [Assailing all] Few rogue officers tainting entire force? #SecurityInquiryKE (Yegonemmanuel_, 2016)

Polls relevant to the topic were created:

To be frisked at the gate or not? #SecurityInquiryKE (IPoll_Official, 2016)

Results: 166 votes

79% - to be frisked

21% - not to be frisked

The government will be glad that in spite of how it may otherwise appear, the messaging of ‘security begins with you’ is well received for the most part. Again the dissenters were the ones who took the time to type.

Does security start with you or with the Police? #SecurityInquiryKe RT (iPoll_Official, 2016)

Results: 320 votes

59% - me

41% - the police

---- @iPollsKE that's their primary purpose. Otherwise let every Kenyan own a gun and we will never bother them (Hngare, 2016)

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