



PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST SOUTHERN VOICES NETWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING (SVNP) EASTERN AFRICA POLICY CONFERENCE

Theme:

Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the COVID-19 Era

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In Partnership with:



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ATPS	African Technology Policy Studies Network
CMDPS	Center for Media, Democracy, Peace & Security
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
CS	Cabinet Secretary
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IPAR	Institute of Policy Analysis and Research-Rwanda
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NCTC	National Counter-terrorism Centre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PCVE	Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
RIFU	Regional Intelligence Fusion Unit
SVNP	Southern Voices Network for Peacebuilding
WIPC	Women's International Peace Centre

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Dr. Nicholas Ozor

Executive Director, ATPS

Executive Summary

The Southern Voices Network for Peacebuilding (SVNP) is a continent-wide network of African policy and research organizations that works with the Wilson Center Africa Program to bring African knowledge and perspectives to US, African, and international policy on peacebuilding in Africa. Established in 2011 and supported financially by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the project Network avenues for African researchers and practitioners to engage with and exchange analyses and perspectives with US, African, and international policymakers in order to develop the most appropriate, cohesive, and inclusive policy frameworks and approaches to achieving sustainable peace in Africa. This conference was primarily organized to respond to issues of violent extremism in the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Era in Eastern Africa.

The objectives of the conference were to create stronger networks more effectively able to identify threats and respond to violent extremism across the region; cultivate a successfully working relation with at-risk individuals and groups through trust-based and long-term engagement in violent extremism affected communities; and build the capacity of local leaders, government officials, civil society, research institutions and informal networks to better understand and address violent extremism in their respective communities. The conference adopted a two-pronged participatory approach to deliberate on the conference theme. The plenary session enabled the delegates to make their presentations followed by questions from the audience whilst participatory sessions enabled the delegates to synthesize the lessons from the presentations based on the conference themes. It also presented a good opportunity for the audience to ask questions and give their views on issues under discussion. It was noted that recruitment into the extremist groups was widespread and did not only concentrate on traditional hotspots but was also being conducted in non-traditional hotspots. Both male and female gender were involved in radicalization and recruitment of new members of the violent extremist group. Mostly the youth are the target group of the violent extremist groups since they have the energy, are not risk averse, and have more access to digital platforms such as mobile phones. COVID-19 presented an opportunity and exacerbated recruitment of new members of the terror groups. However, no clear data has supported this viewpoint. Most of the recruits of the violent extremist groups were radicalized by their peers. Corruption in security apparatus makes violent extremists traverse the region with ease due to border porosity since they negotiate with security officers at the port of entry and obtain vital documents such as identification cards and temporary pass into new areas to recruit more members. Lack of strong and valued regional collaboration has made it difficult to successfully prevent and control activities of violent extremists in the region.

Since terrorism has kept on mutating in the region, there were calls to mobilize resources to support research to provide the lacking data to inform policy formulation and implementation. The female gender has equal potential for radicalization and de-

radicalization just like their male counterparts. Therefore, the women and girls should be incorporated in the fight against the menace in the region. There is urgent need for community engagement to stamp out the extremist groups from the region through collaborations, right from grassroots to the regional level, to enhance information flow and security. There is need for governments to review sermons from religious groups linked to radicalization before delivery to their subjects to ensure that they are not destructive to the people. Social media content should be closely monitored by governments to reduce the radicalization of the youth. Governments should create youth focused programs and jobs to involve them in nation-building and avoid idleness. It is also necessary to re-introduce post-university national youth service to engage the youth and train them on patriotism immediately after their graduation. There is need to build capacity of personnel and institutions involved in fighting radicalization in the region.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Over the past few decades, the world has experienced waves of violent extremism that have subsequently led to terrorism. As terrorism mutates in Africa, there is need for coordinated efforts at the level of research, policy and practice to formulate workable regional interventions that put into consideration changing dynamics occasioned by COVID-19 pandemic. The latter is rapidly creating an enabling environment for luring and targeting unsuspecting users into radicalization and violent extremism more aggressively owing to the increased level of exposure and time spent on social media platforms in the context of lockdown measures in countries in Eastern Africa. Research and policy direction, as well as practical interventions, should be re-oriented towards Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) pillars of support and set realistic goals to reduce the impacts of terrorism in Eastern Africa in the short term and counter other systemic and structural factors that are responsible for extremism in the long term. While terrorism has been a scourge in Eastern African region with Somalia being the hardest hit, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda are not strangers to terrorist attacks too as witnessed in the 1998 twin bombings of the US Embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam and 2010 Kampala bombings respectively. Kenya has been the worst affected state in Eastern Africa prompting the country to launch military action in Somalia through Operation “*Linda Nchi*” (Protect Country) to flush out the al-Shabaab terrorists and hopefully reduce the impact of terrorism in Kenya.

The extremists have stepped up their efforts to recruit new followers not only in their traditional hotspots but even in non-traditional landscapes, leaving neither the youth nor women behind. This has led to the loss of human lives as well as property all over the world. COVID-19 has presented an opportunity that can be exploited by the extremist groups and terrorists to accomplish their missions. There is therefore an urgent need for strong cooperation in the fight against the criminal act of violent extremism since there is no single country that can win this struggle alone. Terrorism and violent extremism call for proper and coordinated research, policy and practical interventions that seek to understand the ecology of both crimes in individual states/countries and contexts.

In this regard, the African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) hosted the first-ever Southern Voices Network for Peacebuilding (SVNP) Eastern Africa Policy Conference in partnership with the Center for Media, Democracy, Peace & Security, Rongo University, Kenya; the Women’s International Peace Centre, Uganda; the Centre for Conflict Management, University of Rwanda; the Institute of Policy Analysis and Research, Rwanda; Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia; and the Wilson Centre, USA. The two-day policy conference was held from 7-8 December 2020 in Nairobi, Kenya, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

The conference brought together 55 delegates from within and outside Eastern Africa, representing various institutions to deliberate on the conference theme tagged: **Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) in the COVID-19 Era**. However, due to COVID-19 prevention and control measures, some of the delegates attended the conference virtually. The conference was also live in the ATPS YouTube and Facebook channels.

1.2 Objectives of the conference

The objectives of the conference were to:

- i) Create stronger networks more effectively able to identify threats and respond to violent extremism across the region.
- ii) Cultivate a successfully working relation with at-risk individuals and groups through trust-based and long-term engagements in violent extremism-affected communities.
- iii) Build the capacity of local leaders, government officials, civil society, research institutions and informal networks to better understand and address violent extremism in their respective communities.

1.3 Conference Sub-Themes

The sub-themes for the policy conference were:

- i. Understanding violent extremism-in East Africa – Issues, Drivers, Facts and Figures
- ii. Regional Mechanisms in Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Strategies and Policies in Eastern Africa
- iii. Violent Extremism in the context of COVID-19: Issues, Impacts and Lessons
- iv. The Place of Technology in Violent Extremism in Africa: Promoting or Countering?
- v. The Role of Youth in Countering Violent Extremism in Eastern Africa
- vi. Challenges in preventing/countering terrorism and violent extremism in Africa
- vii. Religious radicalism and violent extremism in Africa
- viii. Strengthening Eastern Africa’s capacity for PCVE: Options for the Way Forward

1.4 The Conference Procedure

The conference adopted a two-pronged participatory process to enable the delegates to actively engage in the process. These were:

- A plenary session for paper presenters to make their presentations. Each of the plenary presentations was followed by a dialogue to harness more knowledge and information from delegates and address questions arising from the presentations; and
- A participatory session dubbed ‘High-Level Policy Dialogue’ on preventing and countering violent extremism. This session enabled some selected high-level policymakers on the subject matter from different countries to discuss on policy implications and next steps for PCVE in Eastern Africa.

1.5 Expected Outcomes

Through the two-pronged participatory process, it was envisioned that the policy conference would lead to the following expected outcomes:

- Increased understanding and shared knowledge on preventive efforts of countering violent extremism in Eastern Africa.
- Reaching consensus on the best collaborative approaches in research, policy direction and practical interventions in Eastern Africa.
- Analyses of capacities and gaps of existing mechanisms, action plans, institutions and structures for countering and preventing violent extremism in Eastern Africa.
- Underscoring the potential role of technology (social media) in radicalisation and recruitment.
- Exploring the use of social media platforms in preventing and countering violent extremism and digital peacebuilding.
- A plan of action for the Southern Voices Network for Peace (SVNP) annual conference.

2. OPENING SESSION

Dr. Nicholas Ozor, ATPS Executive Director, introduced and invited the session moderator for the Opening Ceremony, Ms Helen Kezie-Nwoha, Director, Women's International Peace Centre, Uganda, to moderate the session under the Chairmanship of Prof. Crispus Kiamba, ATPS Chair of Board of Directors.

2.1 Opening Remarks from the Moderator *Ms Helen Kezie-Nwoha, Director, Women's International Peace Centre, Uganda*



As the moderator of the opening session of the conference, Ms Helen Kezie-Nwoha gave a brief remark on the essence of the policy conference. She noted that since the outbreak of COVID-19 at the beginning of the year, the preventive and control measures restricted the movement of people thus confining people at home most of the time. She further said that as a result, the only way for communication was through information technology that has propagated the violent extremism not only in the African region but also globally. She said that it was important to hold conversations to come up with an action plan to effectively respond to the issue of violent extremism in Eastern Africa. She then welcomed the Chair of ATPS Board of Directors, Prof. Crispus Kiamba to chair the session.

2.2 Opening Remarks by *Prof. Kiamba, ATPS Chair of Board of Directors*



Region.

Prof. Kiamba, while chairing the session, welcomed Dr. Nicholas Ozor, the ATPS Executive Director and thereafter, Dr. Monde Muyangwa who is the Director, African Program Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars as co-presenters in the session. He expressed confidence that the outcomes from the policy conference would be useful in preventing and countering violent extremism in the Eastern Africa

2.3 Opening Remarks by *Dr. Nicholas Ozor, Executive Director, African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS)*



Dr. Nicholas Ozor welcomed both the physical and virtual delegates to the conference. He provided some background information on the origin and composition of the SVNPN. He also briefed the delegates about ATPS, outlining its key areas of operations and its role in the fight against violent extremism using science, technology and innovation (STI). Dr. Ozor added that the interest of ATPS is in the application of STI in fighting violent extremism in the region. He exuded confidence

that the crop of delegates drawn from governments, research institutions, private sector actors and the civil society actors would provide policy solutions to the problem of violent extremism.

2.4 Opening Remarks by Dr. Monde Muyangwa, Director, African Program, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars



While attending the conference online from the United States, Dr. Monde Muyangwa said that the COVID-19 has turned the world upside-down. She further noted that the pandemic has impacted on security situations on the continent and was delighted that her colleagues in Eastern Africa had invited fantastic speakers to deliberate on the issue of preventing and countering violent extremism. She expressed optimism that the outcomes of the policy conference will provide useful insights and strategies for PCVE in Eastern Africa. She wished all the delegates well and looked forward to very fruitful deliberation and outcomes.

2.5 Keynote Address and Official Opening by the Chief Guest of Honour

2.5.1 Keynote Address: Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the COVID-19 Era- By Mr. Onno Koopmans, Regional PCVE Coordinator East Africa, Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands, Nairobi, Kenya



Mr. Onno Koopmans in his presentation noted that COVID-19 had presented opportunities for the recruitment of people into violent extremism. He outlined ten drivers to recruitment into violent extremism. They include:

1. Marginalization and generational suffering of communities

Mr. Onno hypothesized that most of the recruitments into violent extremism happen along borderlines, especially due to marginalization.

2. Educational Level

Most of the recruits into the extremist groups were those with low levels of education. However, he also noted that recruitment had taken place even in universities where most of the people involved had high levels of education.

3. Religious Literacy

It was noted that most people get recruited into extremist groups due to low levels of religious literacy. Most of the recruits rely on others for the interpretation of the Quran and other religious books. These religious groups/people now go ahead to interpret these books to suit their nefarious mission.

4. *Need for Employment*

Many people joined the violent extremist groups due to financial constraints. Joblessness can drive people to join violent extremist groups in order to secure employment or money. Some recruits think joining Al Shabab is just like joining any military force like the police. However, some have also been forcibly recruited by the extremists.

5. *Limited confidence in the institutions and in the democratic systems*

This is possible, especially where the people do not have confidence in their governments. If the people do not have trust in the messages put up by their governments, then they can opt to join the terrorist groups or rebel against the government itself.

6. *Speed of recruitment*

About 80% of people are recruited within a year and about 50% is done within a month. This makes it difficult to counter recruitment because it is too fast. Therefore, countering is good but prevention is even better. People who bear family responsibilities are less likely to be recruited as compared to those without family responsibilities, especially the youth. In this case, the eldest male children have less chances to be recruited compared to their younger ones.

7. *Social networks*

Is the covid-19 affecting the community cohesion? Is the social tension coming from COVID-19? Social networks are very influential in the recruitment. Social tension from the community can accelerate the chances of recruitment. If the youth are idle, not going to school, they may be influenced/lured into joining violent extremist groups.

8. *Globalized ideas generated to discredit some religions or ideologies*

Recruitment is highly localized and yet influenced by globalized ideas. For instance, the Al Shabab terrorists used messages that COVID-19 was only affecting the infidels and therefore a punishment from Allah. However, when COVID-19 reached their land and started infecting people, they changed the narrative and said they would provide health care to the people since the government did not take care of the people.

9. *Who is introducing recruits to the extremist groups?*

Most of the people are introduced by their peers. In some of the countries, young people only know that the only authority is the extremist groups and therefore, think that joining the groups is just like joining any other local police force or army.

10. *Tipping points*

Extra-judiciary killings and actions may drive people to join violent extremist groups. This may make people to rebel against an oppressive government. The security forces may also be preoccupied or overwhelmed by COVID-19 thus making people more vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremist groups.

Assumptions:

- a) Drivers might be worse due to COVID-19 than before. They may make people more vulnerable to recruitment than before.
- b) Lockdown and closure of schools might make people more vulnerable to online recruitments since they have nothing to do.
- c) Use of excessive force by government security on the people may be used as an opportunity by the violent extremist groups to recruit people.

Mr. Onno commended the government of Kenya for putting a lot of efforts in the prevention and control of the spread of COVID-19 as well as in providing detailed updates frequently.

2.5.2 Official Opening Address by the Chief Guest of Honour, the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, Dr. Fred Matiang'i, EGH.



The Chief Guest of Honour and Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, Dr. Fred Matiang'i was represented by his Principal Administrative Secretary, Mr. Moffat Kangi, EBS. Before he read the speech from the Chief Guest of Honour, Mr. Kangi thanked the organizers of the conference for recognizing the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government and the invitation to participate in the very important conference noting that it is timely. He further noted that due to the severe effects of

COVID-19, the government was concerned about violent extremism and is managing the psychology of the people. He said that terrorism has not stopped in this COVID-19 era and threats are always there. There is, therefore, need to continue to jointly hold discussions to find a solution to the problem of violent extremism. According to Mr. Kangi, the fight against terrorism requires information from research to be able to understand the prevailing circumstances exacerbated by the COVID-19. Mr. Kangi noted that the adaptation of terrorism to pandemics and other calamities of such nature is much faster than that from government institutions. Therefore, there is need to look at the roles of different actors in the fight against violent extremism. He identified six critical actors in the broad spectrum of terrorism to include:

1. Role of the government
2. Role of institutions
3. Role of civil society
4. Role of collaborative efforts of the international community
5. Role of technology
6. Role of research

The role of research is extremely important in the battle against violent extremism to understand why recruitment and radicalization abound, and why people would like to accept to be recruited into violent extremism despite their natural attitude to resist it. Mr. Kangi

thereafter read out the Address from the CS Interior and Coordination of National Government.

The CS thanked the delegates for honouring the invitation by the ATPS and its partners to attend and participate in the First Southern Voices Network for Peacebuilding Policy Conference. He noted that the conference theme tagged: *Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the COVID-19 Era* coincides with the efforts of the Government of Kenya in upscaling its efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism in the country and reminded delegates that while the world's attention at the moment focuses on the health and economic impacts of COVID-19, the threat of violent extremism remains, and has in some circumstances been exacerbated during the crisis, hence the demands for new and renewed attention so that the gains made to date in PCVE are not reversed.

The Chief Guest of Honour further noted that violent extremism coupled with COVID-19 had presented a challenging situation and added that there is need for a collective approach to handling it since no single country can win the struggle alone. The CS added that research and policy direction, as well as practical interventions, should be re-oriented towards preventing and countering violent extremism and set realistic goals that are going to reduce the impacts of terrorism in Eastern Africa in the short term and counter other systemic and structural factors that are responsible for extremism in the long term. He exuded confidence that the rich and diverse audience in terms of the knowledge repository in matters on PCVE especially in the COVID-19 Era would provide rich information in the dialogue and with more viable solutions and mechanisms for PCVE in Eastern Africa. He also observed that terrorists will continue to use new strategies to advance violent extremism and therefore, he emphasized the need to involve the use of applied research, through science, technology and innovation (STI) in the prevention and countering of violent extremism. This might involve the application of artificial intelligence (AI) since the terrorists also keep on mutating their tactics and approaches in their subsequent waves of attack.

The CS further noted that the National Counterterrorism Strategy that was proposed by the National Counterterrorism Centre (NCTC) and rolled out as a Presidential Directive in 2014 was being implemented in all the 47 Counties in Kenya. The importance of sharing the vital lessons learnt within the Eastern Africa region for coordinated responses was underscored. This according to the CS would support the realization of stronger networks that can effectively identify threats and respond to violent extremism across the region very timely.

Since many nations have embraced lockdown and curfew to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, movements have been restricted leaving the social media as the only avenue to social interaction and communication dubbed the 'New Normal'. Therefore, it is critical to examine ways in which social media can be used for preventing and countering violent extremism in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.6 Perspectives from the Opening Keynote and Official Opening Addresses

2.6.1 Perspectives by Prof. Fredrick Ogenga, Center for Media, Democracy, Peace & Security (CMDPS), Rongo University, Kenya.



Prof. Fredrick Ogenga addressed the issue of marginalization and noted that recruitment is not only concentrated in traditional hotspots in Kenya like in Garissa but also new frontier sites such as Migori. He pointed out that it would be necessary for research to be conducted to understand the extent to which COVID-19 has created a new frontier for violent extremism recruitment. According to the research done in Western Kenya, women in Kadem have complained that their children adopted funny names and could leave home for unknown destinations periodically. This raised red flags thereby generating suspicions on whether this could be a transition into terrorism. This involved both girls and boys who appeared to have been radicalized in schools.

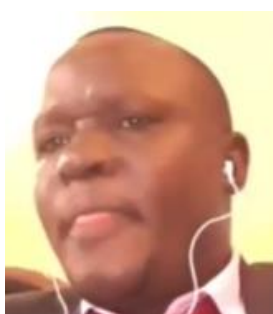
Another issue that was raised by Prof. Ogenga was related to the closure of schools due to the pandemic whereby students who are not attending schools are vulnerable to so many issues like gender-based violence, unwanted pregnancies and petty crimes among others. On religious literacy, he noted that misinterpretation of religious ideologies was very common and therefore he called upon the clergy to come up with religious literacy programs to deal with ideological issues. This should involve all stakeholders such as the business communities, opinion leaders and bloggers to correct the misinterpretation of religious matters. Prof. Ogenga also responded to issues of employment for the youth saying that employed youths are busy and as such cannot have time for extremist activities. An example of strategies for empowering the youth is by engaging them in sporting activities.

Worthy to note also is the role played by social media. There is need to initiate social media literacy programmes to educate the youth not to be easily lured into joining these violent extremist groups. He advocated for interventions informed by research and policy to help in prevention rather than waiting to control as prevention is better than cure.



Plate 1: Delegates at the policy conference

2.6.2 Perspectives by Mr. Elly Opondo, Program Director, Champions of Peace



Mr. Elly Opondo observed that a good preventive intervention program should be designed within the spectrum of speed of recruitment. After the Dusit 2 Hotel terrorist attack in Nairobi, it was realized that recruitment takes place in new areas at an alarming speed. He mentioned Gichunge in Nyeri and Bwire in Busia as cases to confirm this narrative.

According to Mr. Opondo, if there is no trust between the security apparatus and the community, the information flow is curtailed. This makes it difficult for the security architects to receive useful information and hence needing deeper digging to prevent attacks because there is no trust.

Mr. Opondo also noted that the way governments relay its messages to the public is very paramount. If the government overreacts to security issues, then it can cause a lot of harm and consequences. The government's reaction is also important in building confidence among the general public. Research is inevitable to understand what is involved in online recruitment in which most of the youths are involved and spend a lot of time in. There is need to increase community policing in order to handle the extremist activities from the grassroots communities in every country. Also, needed is a joint responsibility in the implementation of the National County Action Plans (CAPs).

2.6.3 Perspectives by Prof. Walter Oyawa, Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI)



Prof. Walter Oyawa responded to the issues raised by earlier speakers and mentioned that COVID-19 had severe impacts especially on the youths. He noted that COVID-19 outbreak and the subsequent global lockdowns locked up about one billion students who were out of school in their homes due to imposed control measures. The students consequently spend a lot of time on the internet and this enhances the efforts of terrorists to conduct online recruitment into criminal activities. He also mentioned that criminal gangs, as observed in South America take advantage of COVID-19 to expand their territories because of the lockdowns in the countries. The gangs take advantage of the lockdown and recruit the youths because they are out of school and are not engaged in any employment. He also noted that the youth have been engaged for consolidation of political powers in some parts of the world since they are energetic and idle. The untapped energies can be put to wrong use by opportunists if governments do not take swift action.

Prof. Oyawa pointed out that COVID-19 has led to the loss of income to millions of people globally due to lockdowns. This has subjected many people to suffering. He mentioned that the pandemic has led to mass teenage pregnancies across the globe since the youths became idle as schools were shut down to control the pandemic. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there were also some conspiracy theories that COVID-19 was a bioweapon or can be used as one. There is need to enhance education on the use of modern technology amongst the youth in order to divert their energies to useful activities such as research on new innovations that can enhance development. This can be done through the establishment of research and innovation hubs. He advocated for compulsory post-university national youth service that would equip the youth with various new technical skills and also engrain them with patriotism and discipline.

2.6.4 Perspectives from Ms. Evelyn Butichi, Elect Women Africa Foundation



Ms. Evelyn Butichi of Elect Women Africa Foundation accentuated that radicalization is gaining grounds in new non-traditional landscapes. When the youth are not taken care of, this becomes a serious societal problem. She advised that grounds for youth radicalization should be eliminated by establishing programmes that provide the youth with opportunities. She threw caution to the government to tap the youth energies in order to put them to good use.

2.7 Presentation on: Understanding Violent Extremism in Eastern Africa – Issues, Drivers, Facts and Figures by Ms. Marion Ngare, National Counterterrorism Centre (NCTC), Kenya



Ms. Marion Ngare of the Kenya National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) pointed out that it was important to note that terrorists remain active actors who have created group identities. The pandemic has not stopped terrorism. These terrorists never slumber and therefore there is need to always remain vigilant. She indicated that terrorism knows no boundaries and that foreigners are always involved and no country is safe. The Mozambique case also involved other nationalities including Kenyans. She outlined some of the drivers of violent extremism to include:

Religion: Misinterpretation of religion has lured some youth through financial enticement and misleading religious teaching. Religious leaders from all religious outfits have been engaged in order to attack the ideology to end the war.

Marginalization: There have been issues and claims of marginalization both perceived and real in the past. Some people in some regions feel that they have been marginalized for too long by the government and therefore, have resorted to rebel and join violent extremist groups.

Unemployment: The terror groups have been taking advantage of the unemployment status of the youth in most African countries and promised them greener pastures which they later on realize are not there. They are recruited using monetary resources. Empowering the youth would go a long way in curtailing their recruitments into violent extremist groups.

Technology. Most of the youth have access to radicalization materials from the internet and are recruited into the terror groups through social media. Individuals get access to these ideologies and content that they begin to get self-radicalized and carry out lone-wolf attacks.

Adventurous spirit: Some youths join the terror groups not because they lack anything but because they would like to adventure and try new things. She pointed out that there is no single driver that can make a person join violent extremist groups. The government has resorted to using the soft approach to tackle violent extremism where stakeholders drawn from religious groups, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), academia, social media etc. are engaged in dialogue or mediation to address the root causes of the violence. In preparation of the National anti-terrorism strategy, the different categories of stakeholders were involved. They were also involved in the development and implementation of County Action Plans being implemented in all the 47 counties of Kenya. She further noted that there is not enough data/research on violent extremism and called for action by scholars to provide evidence-supported information that will guide government actions and policies. She also noted that there is need for collaboration within the region in preventing and countering violent extremism.

2.8 Facilitated Discussions

Mr. Syndoph Endoni: Violent extremism is a common problem in the region and is not a one nation war. There is need for regional collaboration and no country should relax when another is under attack as the saying goes '*it is only a foolish man that goes to sleep when his neighbour's house is on fire*'. Therefore, there is need for regional cooperation. Terrorism has been mutating in the region therefore there is need to be innovative and be ahead of the violent extremists in terms of technology through research, if we have to win the battle.

Mr. Kennedy Walusala: Policymakers have no data on violent extremism and therefore there is a serious need for scholars to take immediate actions and conduct research to provide evidence to inform policy. Resources are therefore required to support the scholars to conduct applied research in the area of violent extremism. The ATPS and its partners remains committed to undertaking such research that inform policy and programmes.

Ms. Marion Ngare: Scholars are indispensable in the fight against violent extremism since they play a fundamental role in providing evidence-based research data useful in informing policy. Currently, there are no figures on violent extremism in the COVID-19 era. Collaboration is very key in the Eastern African region since the extremists traverse the whole region. The recent cases of youth from Tanzania radicalizing in Kenya and Kenyans participating in violent extremism in Mozambique call for strong collaboration in the region. There is no single driver that has been identified to be more influential in driving people into radicalization than others since research has not provided evidence on the issue.

3. THEMATIC PAPER PRESENTATIONS

This session was moderated by Ms. Evelyn Butichi, Elect Women Africa Foundation. She welcomed Mr. Alfred Nyambane, a Researcher at the ATPS, to provide a recap of Day 1 activities. After the recap of Day 1 activities, Ms. Evelyn called on delegates to present their papers as follows:

3.1 Violent Extremism in the context of COVID-19: Issues, Impacts and Lessons - **Prof. Fredrick Ogenga, CMDPS**



While presenting his paper, Prof. Ogenga said that the media has a major role to play in reporting terrorism. However, the morality of the media in reporting violent extremism needs to be questioned. He said that peace journalism needs to be embraced by following three major philosophies that were founded by eminent African leaders: Nelson Mandela, Julius Nyerere and Jomo Kenyatta. These principles are: *Utu*, *Ujamaa* and *Harambee* as used in South Africa, Tanzania and Kenya respectively.

Prof. Ogenga noted that borderline dynamics and peripheral issues are emerging because traditional terrorism sites are already saturated. This is because COVID-19 has exacerbated youth recruitments as they exchange information on radicalization due to lack of opportunities for the youths. He also mentioned that the misrepresentation of religion gives terrorism opportunities to thrive. He posed a research question: *What is the extent to which COVID-19 has accelerated grounds for further radicalization and recruitment in terms of numbers and qualitative narratives? What can we learn and what can we take home?*

These can be looked at in relation to the following questions.

1. What can we do as stakeholders in the PCVE enterprise to try and create trusted institutions that will be reliable in the war against violent extremism?
2. How can we empower the youth so that we can create a conducive environment?

Lessons from the County Action Plan

1. The Action Plans that have been developed need to be unique, accepted and owned by people
2. A lot of resources are required to actualize the Action Plans e.g., training and awareness creation programs are required to cascade and mainstream the County Action Plans.
3. Implementation of milestones requires monitoring and evaluation through information technology-based programs so that people in one location can know what is happening in another area instantly. This is easily done by logging into the fusion that shows graphs of progress.

3.2 Strengthening Eastern Africa's Capacity for PCVE: Options for the Way Forward- Mr. Basabose Denis, Commissioner of Police, Rwanda



While representing the Inspector General of Police, Rwanda National Police (RNP), Mr. Basabose recognized that there is continued radicalization in the Eastern Africa Region and that Rwanda is not immune to violent extremism in the region. Providing the experiences in Rwanda, he noted that the violent acts were being perpetrated by radical religious preachers from outside Rwanda. This, he said, has led to the death of people especially Christians whom they fight in the country. He gave an example of a police officer who killed more than five of his colleagues using his rifle while on patrol. Radicalization is a mission that does not discriminate gender. Some women are involved in acts of violence. He added that the extremists move from the traditional hotspots of radicalization to new areas where they can freely recruit new converts.

Mr. Basabose noted that the pillar of prevention has not been effective in the region since the terrorists could move from one country to another due to border porosity. He emphasized the need to allocate more resources to prevention in order to effectively deal with violent extremism in the region. Mr. Basabose identified the following points as the key drivers of violent extremism in the region.

- i) Differences in legal frameworks in member countries.
- ii) Border porosity has created free movements of violent extremists to carry out their mission in new areas in different countries in the region.
- iii) Radical preaching has misled the recruits since there is no approval of sermons.
- iv) Uncontrolled internet use, especially by the youths who spend a lot of their time surfing and gaining access to radicalization materials. Therefore, there is need to screen the information on YouTube in order to reduce radicalization.
- v) Undermining of security organs since people are not ready to divulge information to the security.
- vi) Lack of capacity, knowledge and skills in institutions fighting radicalization. For example, police do not know how to identify violent extremists.
- vii) Corruption among border security officers who just negotiate with the extremists to secure important travel documents that will allow them to cross the borders into new areas to recruit people.
- viii) Ineffective country mechanisms in dealing with violent extremism.

He further noted that there are so many frameworks such as defence, security organs, local leadership and EAC laws whose chapter 23 Article 6 allows for the formulation of counter-terrorism outfits. He, therefore, provided the following options for the way forward:

1. Joint cooperation agreements in the region with a permanent office for countering violent extremism.
2. Strengthening international capacities of academia and researchers, civil society organizations, and justice among others.
3. Organizing legal frameworks and conducting joint training and exercises.
4. Joint operations and investigations.
5. Enhancing border security by establishing permanent border posts.
6. Timely information sharing with all stakeholders to help in prevention and countering violent extremism in the region.

3.3 Regional Mechanisms in Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Policy Option for Eastern Africa by *Ms. Eugenia Kayitesi, IPAR, Rwanda*



Ms. Eugenia Kayitesi of the Institute of Policy Analysis and Research, Rwanda noted that there were so many youths in the region that are not employed and they could easily be lured into violent extremism activities. She pointed out that African countries need to have broader strategies in dealing with violent extremism and that soft approaches were the right way to handle issues of extremism given the speed at which recruitment is being conducted.

Way Forward:

She provided the following measures as proactive ways forward for PCVE in the Eastern African region:

- i) The youth need to be provided with jobs to avoid idleness that make them vulnerable to being recruited and radicalized.
- ii) Governments need to offer vocational training opportunities for the youth.
- iii) There is need for civic engagement by local governments and communities in the fight against violent extremism in the region.
- iv) There is need for the use of media to reduce cases of violent extremism through local radio programs.
- v) There is need for policies that promote good governance, education, youth employment and skills acquisition, etc.
- vi) There is need to provide adequate resources to relevant organizations and institutions to conduct research and advocacy in PCVE. The outcomes will be the formulation of evidence-informed policies and programmes for PCVE.
- vii) Reliable data from research is required to inform security apparatus in PCVE in the region.

3.4 The Role of Youth in Countering Violent Extremism in Eastern Africa by Mr. Kennedy Walusala, Regional Youth Forum for International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)



Mr. Kennedy Walusala, the President of the Regional Youth Forum for ICGLR advocated for a regional framework for youth priority projects in the region as a way of engaging and empowering them in order to dissuade them from being lured into violent extremism. He also observed that joint security management was necessary for dealing with issues of violent extremism in the region. Mr. Walusala outlined the following points as youth priority areas:

- a) Youth dialogue and conflict prevention should include and engage opposing parties and other regional actors.
- b) There is need for youth engagement in strengthening good governance, human rights and the rule of law to prevent marginalization.
- c) Empowering the youth through gainful employments enhances their participation in PCVE activities.
- d) There is need for gender equality especially for young women to ensure sustainable peace and prevention of violent extremism.
- e) Education and skills development are required to prepare young people for employment and investment in programs that promote global citizenship, technological and vocational education among others.
- f) Effective communication, internet and social media platforms are required to develop and implement digital regional strategies that empower youth in PCVE.

3.5 Challenges in Preventing/Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa by Ms. Helen Kezie-Nwoha, WIPC, Uganda



Ms. Helen Kezie-Nwoha noted that the majority of African countries are fragile and thus facilitates violent extremism in the region and that there is a huge gap in profiling gender dimensions of extremism on the continent. Border porosity has facilitated activities of terrorist groups that negotiate with the border security officers to obtain important documents in exchange for money. Movement of people and goods have increased insecurity. Violent extremists easily move and relocate to new hotspots to radicalize innocent people and lure them into their groups.

Corruption is rampant in most governments especially in offering social services while neglecting youth engagement in useful programs. Interventions that target violent extremism

do not match with the building of sustainable peace and dealing with marginalization. Military intervention alone has not succeeded in handling violent extremism in the region.

Therefore, the following Way Forward should be considered:

1. Collaboration within the region is required in order to succeed in dealing with violent extremism
2. Border security should be enhanced.
3. Softer approaches should be adopted through the participatory engagement of all the stakeholders.
4. There should be timely sharing of information leading to prevention and/or countering of violent extremism.
5. There is need to support research activities of the SVNPs consortia in identifying the underlying issues, causes, impacts and strategies for PCVE in the region.
6. There is need to increase engagements in humanitarian diplomacy.
7. Paying greater attention to development issues in the economy will empower the youth with skills and responsibilities thereby PCVE.
8. It is the states' responsibilities to initiate engagement with communities to reduce violent extremism.

3.6 Religious Radicalism and Violent Extremism in Africa by Mr. Syndoph Endoni- Nigerian High Commission, Nairobi, Kenya



In his presentation, Mr. Endoni recalled the Muslims' response to the outbreak of COVID-19 in Europe and the United States. According to him, the terrorists celebrated and claimed that the pandemic was a punishment on those who oppress Muslims and subsequently advised members of the faith to avoid entering places with plague, according to the "Quran". He noted that groups like Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Al-Qaeda have theological backing for their brands of violent extremism, especially by considering that their activities went on virtually without being challenged by mainstream Islamic scholars. An analysis of a report by the Tony Blair Research Institute revealed that religious counter-narratives are failing to confront the scriptural references used prominently by the terrorist groups to justify their methods. He, therefore, made the following suggestions for PCVE.

- a) The above scenario calls for the religious scholars concerned to take up the mantle of responsibility to correct misconceptions about Islam and combat the extremist ideology.
- b) Whereas there have been global calls for religious leaders to offer alternative interpretation to prevent extremists from defining the rule of the game in the battle of ideas, the onus is on the religious leaders and scholars to correct most of the

wrongs, including correcting emerging conceptions about Islam by highlighting Prophet Mohamed's glorious teachings through his biography.

- c) There is no doubt that extremist voices, including in Africa, have had an impact on Islam that is widely disproportionate to their numbers and their distortions, as also noted in the report by the Tony Blair's Research Institute.
- d) In order to counter the extremists' narratives, experts have called on governments to fund and establish centralised online resource where "credible religious voices" can challenge the extremist ideologies.
- e) In view of the foregoing, African governments, particularly those grossly affected or confronted by the menace, may be urged to also encourage engagements with scholars and ensure that deradicalization becomes an integral part of the counter-terrorism narrative.

In his conclusion and particularly bearing in mind the compelling security problems associated with radicalism, Mr. Endoni boldly also advocated for the following:

- i) East/West Collaboration which stresses the need to share both knowledge and expertise.
- ii) Increased vigilance and need for more caution by security agencies.
- iii) Enhanced security at both hard and soft targets.
- iv) Enhanced security including thorough checks, at all entry/border posts.
- v) Side by side, the campaigns on social distancing and self-hygiene should be urged by the appropriate authorities to sustain public enlightenment on security in the COVID-19 era, like the US dictum of 'see something, say something.'

3.7 The Place of Technology in Violent Extremism in Africa: Promoting or Countering by Prof. Walter Oyawa, NACOSTI, Kenya



Prof. Oyawa of NACOSTI cautioned that technology is a double-edged sword that can be destructive on one hand and can also be usefully applied to offer solutions to challenges that we face in life. For example, developed countries like Italy and China used robots and drones to monitor patients and supply drugs, respectively during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to avoid physical contacts as a way of preventing the spread of the pandemic. He also gave an example of a negative and dangerous application of technology where the World Trade Centre, in the US was bombed down using technology. Prof.

Oyawa mentioned the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on extremism as outlined below:

- a) It has led to a caged public as over 1 billion students remained in lockdown during the pandemic. The students could only interact with the outside world through social media which exposed them to extremists' materials, leading to mass recruitment into extremist groups.

- b) In South America some criminal gangs used the COVID-19 opportunity to recruit many people into their groups thus expanding their territories and authority.
- c) COVID-19 also led to loss of income and human dignity as many young girls were abused and impregnated.
- d) Some state actors also used the pandemic to interfere with national elections thus creating opportunities that could be used by the terrorist groups to accomplish their missions in radicalization.
- e) Digital interaction during the pandemic posed a good opportunity for extremists to recruit new people into criminal groups through online interaction, especially the youth that spent a lot of time surfing.
- f) Conspiracy theories abound whether or not the virus was manufactured in the laboratory.

Some Suggestions:

- There is need to optimally engage the youth, especially graduates, in compulsory post-university youth service to instil national values in them.
- There is need for STI training for national and international security personnel on issues of PCVE.
- There is also need to establish grass-root youth initiatives to engage the youth and prevent them from being recruited into extremist groups.

4. POLICY DIALOGUE

4.1 High Level Policy Dialogue on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Eastern Africa by *the - Panel of Policy Experts*

This session was chaired by Prof. Crispus Kiamba, Chairman, ATPS Board of Directors and former Principal Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Kenya; and former Vice Chancellor, University of Nairobi, Kenya. The Panelists in this session were comprised of Dr. Charles Opiyo from the National Counterterrorism Centre (NCTC), Kenya; Prof. Walter Oyawa, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), Kenya; Mr. Basabose Denis, Commissioner of Police, Rwanda; and Mr. Syndoph Endoni; Nigerian High Commission, Nairobi, Kenya. The policy dialogue was designed to discuss and identify key policy issues from the conference that can inform decision-making be the relevant ministries, agencies and departments in the region.

In his opening statement, Dr. Charles Opiyo of the NCTC noted that violent extremists have well-set goals to achieve. He suggested that the only way out of their trap is to build strong resilience through regional collaboration among the relevant institutions since no single

country can win the battle alone. He mentioned that violent extremists operate under sacred values that make them die for a cause.



Plate 2: The Policy Dialogue Panelists who were physically present during the dialogue

In his own opening statement, Prof. Walter Oyawa, Director General, NACOSTI noted that the extremists usually target the youth who are very vulnerable and who spend a lot of time on the internet and social media. According to him, the youth always have access to radicalization materials on the internet and social media hence can easily be recruited online by violent extremists. Prof. Oyawa pointed out that there is need to re-introduce post-university Youth Service scheme to engage the youth in meaningful endeavours once they graduate from the university even prior to engaging in their other career endeavours. He informed delegates that COVID-19 locked down about 1 billion students globally who can potentially be involved into dangerous activities since they are idle and have access to the internet where they can easily be recruited by the violent extremists. He further mentioned that NACOSTI collaborated with UNESCO to take education programs to schools in the counties during the pandemic.

On his own part, Mr. Basabose, Police Commissioner, Rwanda, noted that policies in the Eastern African States do not align well. This gives the violent extremists opportunity to operate with ease in the region. He further noted that there is need for genuine political goodwill with proper focus on addressing violent extremism in the region. He also emphasized on the need to strengthen national mechanisms by engaging civil society organizations, government institutions, religious leaders, communities, youth and security organs in the fight against violent extremism in the region. He suggested that stakeholders from different institutions need to be engaged if the region is committed to winning the battle against violent extremism. The Commissioner gave an example of the existence of anti-terror clubs from grassroot to national level in Rwanda. He added that researchers have a crucial role to play in preventing and countering violent extremism in the region by advising on the best

approaches to be applied in dealing with terrorism based on research findings. He mentioned that it is very necessary to share information regarding violent extremism through genuine regional cooperation and collaborations. Policies without genuine communication to share information will not bear fruits in the battle against violent extremism in the region he finally remarked.

In his own views, Mr. Syndoph Endoni, Nigerian High Commission in Kenya, noted that in order to obtain the desired results in the fight against terrorism, there is need for a continuous sharing of information between and among the relevant institutions responsible for combating the menace. He pointed out that Kenya is the worst-hit nation in this region and cautioned that other nations should not sit back and watch but should come together and form cooperative actions just like the ones formed in West African region that created a Regional Intelligence Fusion Unit (RIFU) to fight terrorism by sharing real-time information on terrorism. He mentioned that community engagements should be enhanced. He cautioned that every part of the community should be on alert all the time since no one knows when and where the terrorists can strike. He, therefore, informed that there is no traditional and non-traditional hotspot for terrorist activities. He noted that attention has been paid to traditional hotspots only and that was not the best approach in handling the issue of violent extremism since the terror groups keep on traversing borders into new non-traditional areas to recruit more people and launch attacks.

On the question that had earlier been raised by the Executive Director of ATPS, Dr. Nicholas Ozor on government involvement in religious matters through the regulation of sermons before it is delivered to the audience, Mr. Syndoph said that it was the responsibility of the government to regulate religious activities by giving an example of the government of Morocco that regulates the sermons by approving them before they are preached to the audience. Mr. Syndoph pointed out that there must be a deliberate attempt by governments and religious leaders to ensure that no one is misguided by the contents of sermons. On social media, Mr. Syndoph noted that there should be a deliberate effort to ensure that there are regulations that protect the public from being weaponized since some people use the media to plant divisive information to cause chaos. He also mentioned that some people could be using the sermons for personal gains. On COVID-19, Mr. Syndoph emphasized that both violent extremism and COVID-19 require equal attention and added that governments should not concentrate on one and ignore the other.

On the good political will as a factor in dealing with extremism, Dr Ozor mentioned that it requires a lot of advocacy and sensitization to push the government to learn and adopt best practices from other countries and institutions. He called on governments and other relevant institutions to provide support to enable research initiatives to provide the much-needed data and relevant information on violent extremism. Dr. Ozor also agreed with Mr. Basabose's intervention on the need for political goodwill in dealing with violent extremism. However,

he advised that the goodwill requires investment in policy research, awareness creation and sensitization as well as advocacy. He called on governments to support the ATPS and its partners in undertaking these actions in order to sustainably prevent and counter violent extremism in the region and even beyond.

Ms. Evelyn Butichi raised the issue of gender inclusivity in the fight against radicalization. She mentioned that female gender should not be left out in the fight against violent extremism as that would be leaving out 'voices that have not been heard' since they equally have the potential for being radicalized and causing mayhem in the society using the undue advantage that they have

While still responding to the question on government regulations on religious activities, Mr. Syndoph Endoni, recommended that the church and government should work hand-in-hand for the good of the citizens. He pointed out that a lot of people had used the sermons to suit their selfish and nefarious needs noting that if the involvement of the government in religious activities such as in approving sermons can help to enhance the security of the people then it is worthy to be considered.

Dr. Ugoji Adanma in her response to the Panellists noted that one should not underestimate the role of women in terrorism. She pointed out that there should be a program for deradicalization of female terrorists. She cautioned that the role of women in radicalization should not be taken lightly. This according to her is because women are powerful and influential agents of change.

Dr. Charles Opiyo further noted that women undergo a lot of pain especially those whose children have been recruited by terrorist groups. He gave examples of women whose children have been highlighted on media for having been involved in terrorism. He advised on the need for governments to support research and advocacy activities aimed at PCVE in Kenya and region as a whole. He informed the delegates that the government of Kenya has been holding lectures to sensitize women and youth about violent extremism and how to prevent and control it. These lectures have been obstructed by COVID-19 pandemic because physical meetings are no longer encouraged. He advised that there should be some innovative ways of conducting advocacy. He also suggested that there should be some support for research institutions to help in the fight against violent extremism. He challenged the audience to come up with proposals to enable the government to support sensitization activities. He challenges researchers to find out more effective and innovative ways of engaging the youth and communities in the fight against violent extremism in the region.

Mr. Kevin Osido, from County Governance Watch, added that the government of Kenya had made some efforts to address the menace of violent extremism by coming up with County Action Plans (CAPs). However, he wondered how policy impacts can be measured.

4.2 Presentation of Conference Communique for Adoption by *Mr. Alfred Nyambane, ATPS Research Officer*



Mr. Alfred Nyambane, presented the communique for adoption by the delegates. He provided a summary of the observations made during the conference and highlighted the delegates' resolutions. These are provided in the communique found in Annex 3 of this document. In summary, the delegates resolved as follows:

- i) There is need to consider social media literacy programmes to educate the youth not to be easily lured through social media which is highly accessible nowadays. It is important to harness the potential of technology and youth through social media literacy programmes using online and offline digital peacebuilding infrastructures. The governments need to use social media to plug in and convey useful messages.
- ii) There is need for African scholars, practitioners and cyber-citizens to construct pan-African narratives and discourses of resilience when representing terrorism through imbibing African philosophies of Utu (humanity), Ujamaa (Unity) and Harambee (collective responsibility).
- iii) There is need to eliminate grounds for radicalization by providing opportunities for the youth. The “Kazi Kwa Vijana” (Work for Youth) programme in Kenya has helped cushion youth from the economic mess caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, but will it continue beyond the COVID-19 period? There is need to use incubation hubs /digital hubs to keep the youth occupied in the development of useful innovations.
- iv) Introduction of Youth programmes/Youth service as a requirement before being allowed to proceed with personal career goals has become very necessary. This would entrench patriotism amongst the youth and provide them with extra technical skills thereby empowering them further. Women also need to be brought into the dialogue given their role in either promoting or combating terrorism.
- v) There is need to encourage the provision of social amenities such as playing grounds, swimming pools, gyms and recreational centres that can keep the youth busy and occupied.
- vi) There is need to consider all possibilities and not just focus on the hotspots (traditional recruitment hot spots). There is need to take all issues seriously and not as potential threats by not only focusing on the hot spots in the fight against violent extremism but also looking at the emerging sites when designing programmes aimed at curbing terrorism.
- vii) Terrorism knows no boundaries and a good example is the case of Mozambique where some Kenyans have been implicated. There is need to have concerted efforts across the

region and work together in counter-terrorism and prevention and countering violent extremism.

- viii) There is need to design programmes within the spectrum of the speed of recruitment as well as consider the soft approach to combating violent extremism. This may include mediation where all parties are brought together to dialogue and resolve issues.
- ix) Consider regulating religious groups in a way that do not infringe on their fundamental rights of worship for example by pre-approving sermons.
- x) There is need for continuous research to clearly understand violent extremism as information is very critical in the fight against violent extremism. A deeper understanding of online recruitment is required. This can only be provided through in-depth research.
- xi) There is need to narrow the trust deficit in our communities. To this end, some community policing initiatives such as “*Nyumba Kumi Initiative*” in Kenya, “*Ujamaa*” in Tanzania, and “*Ubuntu*” in South Africa etc. are highly encouraged.
- xii) There is need to develop monitoring and evaluation systems that can be used to measure progress as well as share results of interventions. These can also be used to measure policy impacts.
- xiii) There is need to harmonize legal frameworks in the region as well as strengthen national capacities holistically targeting all stakeholders. It is important to continue to collaborate and share information in the fight against terrorism. It is not a fight for one country. There is need to innovate and make sure that the strategies used by the governments are superior to those of terrorists who also employ their own tactics.

There was No Objection to the adoption of the communique after it was presented to the conference delegates. The Communique therefore becomes a valid document on the way forward towards preventing and countering violent extremism in Eastern Africa.

5. CLOSING SESSION

The closing remarks were made by the conference hosts. Dr Nicholas Ozor expressed his joy and thanked the audience for their attendance and participation in the policy conference. He highlighted the themes tackled in the conference and noted that they have been well addressed. He also thanked the audience for adopting the conference communique before welcoming Prof. Crispus Kiamba, Chairman, ATPS Board of Directors, to officially close the conference.

Prof. Kiamba appreciated the role played by the ATPS secretariat led by the Executive Director, Dr. Nicholas Ozor in ensuring the success of the two-day conference. He also appreciated all the partners and especially the Wilson Centre Africa Program for the great support that they have provided to the ATPS and its partners that made the conference a successful one. He called on the Eastern African governments to support the SVNP program in their work in the region and Africa as a whole. He finally thanked the Keynote Speaker, Mr.

Onno Koopmans for providing great insights for the conference and the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, Dr. Fred Matiang'i for accepting to be the Chief Guest of Honour for the conference and for his wonderful address that provided more nuanced insights in the fight against violent extremism. Overall, he thanked all the delegates for their contributions to the policy conference on preventing and countering violent extremism in the COVID-19 Era and noted that a great deal of knowledge and good practices in PCVE has been learned and shared during the two-day conference.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Conference Program



THEME: Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the COVID-19 Era

SVNP Eastern Africa Policy Conference Programme 7-8 December 2020, Crowne Plaza Hotel Nairobi, Kenya

TIME	DAY 1: MONDAY, 7 December 2020	DAY 2: TUESDAY, 8 December 2020
08:00-09:00	Arrival and Registration (Physical or Virtual)	Arrival and Registration (Physical or Virtual)
09:00-10:50	Session 1: Opening Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: Helen Kezie-Nwoha, Director, Women's International Peace Centre, Uganda • Chair: Prof. Crispus Kiamba, Chair ATPS Board of Directors • Welcoming Remarks from ATPS on Behalf of E/Africa Partners – Dr. Nicholas Ozor, Executive Director, African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) • Welcoming Remarks from Wilson Centre - Dr. Monde Muyangwa, Director, Africa Program Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars • Keynote Address: "Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the COVID-19 Era"- by Onno Koopmans, Regional PCVE Coordinator East Africa, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Nairobi, Kenya. • Official Opening by the Chief Guest of Honour- The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, Dr. Fred Matiangi, EGH. 	Chair: Rt. Col. Joseph Nyamita County Executive Committee Member, Migori County, Kenya Recap of Day 1 Activities by Mr. Alfred Nyambane , ATPS Researcher Session 5: Thematic Paper Presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violent Extremism in the context of COVID-19 : Issues, Impacts and Lessons, Dr. Fredrick Ogenga, CMDPS • Strengthening Eastern Africa's capacity for PCVE: Options for the Way Forward, Mr. Basabose Denis, Commissioner of Police, Rwanda • Regional Mechanisms in Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Policy options for Eastern Africa - Eugenia Kayitesi, IPAR, Rwanda; and Yonas Adaye Adeto, IPSS • The Place of Technology in Violent Extremism in Africa : Promoting Or Countering ? Prof. Walter Oyawa, NACOSTI Facilitated Discussions - All delegates
10:50 – 11:00	GROUP PHOTO AND HEALTH BREAK	HEALTH BREAK
11:00 – 12:00	Session 2: Perspectives from the Opening Keynote Address	Chair: Bundi Mbaya, National Crime Research Center (NCRC)

	<p>Chair: Dr Nicholas Ozor, ATPS</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US Policymaker TBC • Ambassador Martin Kimani, Director, National Counterterrorism Centre, Kenya • Dr. Fredrick Ogenga, Center for Media, Democracy, Peace & Security (CMDPS)-Rongo University • Elly Opondo, Program Director Champions of Peace • Gerald Wandera, Director, National Crime Research Center (NCRC), Kenya • Prof. Walter Oyawa, DG National Commission for Science and Technology (NACOSTI) 	<p>Session 6: Thematic Paper Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Role of Youth in Countering Violent Extremism in Eastern Africa, Eli Opondo, Champions of Peace; and Kennedy Walusala, Regional Youth Forum for ICGLR • Challenges in preventing/countering terrorism and violent extremism in Africa, Helen Kezie-Nwoha, WIPC, Uganda • Religious radicalism and violent extremism in Africa, Syndoph Endoni, Nigeria High Commission, Nairobi, Kenya <p>Facilitated Discussions</p>
12:00 – 13:00	<p>Session 3: Facilitated Discussions</p> <p>Chair: Dr. Nicholas Ozor, ATPS</p> <p>Speakers: All Delegates</p>	<p>Session 7: High-level policy dialogue on PCVE in Eastern Africa</p> <p>Chair: Prof Crispus Kiamba</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassador Martin Kimani • Prof. Walter Oyawa, • Rt. Col Joseph Nyamita • Dr. Monde Muyangwa • Basabose Denis • Njenga Miiri
13:00 – 14:00	<p>Session 4: Understanding Violent Extremism in Eastern Africa- Issues, Drivers, Facts and Figures</p> <p>Speaker: Mr Njenga Miiri, Head of Resilience National Counterterrorism Center, Kenya.</p> <p>Facilitated Q&A</p>	<p>Session 8: Presentation and adoption of Conference Communiqué</p> <p>Presenter: Dr Nicholas Ozor</p> <p>Closing Remarks by the Hosts – Wilson Centre, CMDPS, ATPS</p>
14:00 - 15:00	LUNCH BREAK and End of Day One	LUNCH BREAK and End of Day Two
	End of Conference and Departure	

Annex 2: List of Delegates

S/ n	NAME	INSTITUTION	EMAIL	Physical /Online Attendance	COUNTRY
1.	Dr. Nicholas Ozor	African Technology Policy Studies network (ATPS)	nozor@atpsnet.org	Physical	Kenya
2.	Prof. Fredrick Ogenga	Center for Media, Democracy, Peace & Security	ogengafredrick@gmail.com	Physical	Kenya
3.	Prof. Crispus Kiamba	African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS)	crispuskiamba@gmail.com	Physical	Kenya
4.	Felix Musila	African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS)	fmusila@atpsnet.org	Physical	Kenya
5.	Alfred Nyambane	African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS)	anyambane@atpsnet.org	Physical	Kenya
6.	Mark KImani	African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS)	mkimani@atpsnet.org	Physical	Kenya
7.	Onno Koopmans	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands	Onno.koopmans.minbuzi.nl	Physical	Kenya
8.	Njenga Miiri	National Counter-terrorism Centre	miiri@counterterrorism.go.ke	Online	Kenya
9.	Bundi Mbaya	National Crime Research Center (NCRC)	kmbaya5@gmail.com	Online	Kenya
10.	Isaiah Nyambariga	National Crime Research Center (NCRC)	isaiahndege@crimeresearch.go.ke	Online	Kenya
11.	Vincent Opondo	National Crime Research Center (NCRC)		Online	Kenya
12.	Prof. Walter Oyawa	National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI)	oyawaw@yahoo.com	Online	Kenya
13.	Elly Opondo	Champions of Peace	info@cop-k.org	Online	Kenya
14.	Onno Koopmans	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands	Onno.koopmans.minbuzi.nl	Physical	Kenya
15.	Ambassador Martin Kimani	National Counter-terrorism Centre	m.kimani@citizensupport.co.ke	Online	Kenya
16.	Kennedy Walusala	ICGLR Youth Forum	kenwalusala@gmail.com	Physical	Kenya
17.	Castro Baraza	Peacenet Kenya	castrobaraza@ymail.com	Online	Kenya
18.	Caleb Gichuhi	BuildUp Kenya	caleb@howtobuildup.org	Online	Kenya
19.	Yonas Adaye Adeto	Institute for Peace and Security Studies	yonas.a@ipss-addis.org	Online	Ethiopia
20.	Hellen Kezie-Nwoha	Women's International Peace Centre	khelen@wipc.org	Online	Uganda

21.	Dr. Aggee Shyaka Mugabe	Centre for Conflict Management (CCM) of the University of Rwanda	amshayka@gmail.com	Online	Rwanda
22.	Eugenie Kayatesi	Institute of Policy Analysis and Research	e.kayitesi@ipar-rwanda.org	Online	Rwanda
23.	Dr. Monde Muyangwa	Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars	Monde.muyangwa@wilsoncenter.org	Online	USA
24.	Hannah Akuiyibo	Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars	Hanna.akuiyibo@wilsoncenter.org	Online	USA
25.	Prof. Walter Oyawa	National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI)	walter.oyawa@nacosti.go.ke	Online	Kenya
26.	Isaiah Ndege	National Crime Research Centre (NCRC)	isaiahndege@crimeresearch.go.ke	Online	Kenya
27.	Moses Osiro	Menno Peace and Reconciliation Initiatives (MEPERI)	adamanyus@gmail.com	Online	Kenya
28.	Bonny Alaneme	Oracle solutions limited	alaneme@gmail.com	Online	Nigeria
29.	Diana Warira	Innovations for Policy Action (IPA)	dwirira@povertyactionlab.org	Online	Kenya
30.	Basabose Dennis	Rwanda National Police Service		Online	Rwanda
31.	Ngozi Onyejeli	Policy Researcher	ngozi@yahoo.com	Online	USA
32.	Winnie Auma	Nation Media Group	wauma@nationmedia.co.ke	Online	Kenya
33.	Stella Sabiiti	International Peace and Security Consultant	mysticasabiiti@yahoo.com	Online	Ethiopia
34.	Rapudo Hawi	Kijiji Yeetu	rhawi@cgwkenya.org	Online	Kenya
35.	Charles Dalcourt	Triple Strand Global Solutions	Charles.dalcourt@triplestrands.com	Online	USA
36.	Tessa Snyder	The George Washington University	tessamsnyder@gmail.com	Online	USA
37.	Edna Miriti	County Governance Watch (CGW)	emiriti@cgwkenya.org	Online	Kenya
38.	Josephat Mong'are	African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS)	okemwajosephat@gmail.com	Online	Kenya
39.	Paul Omole	Rural Aids Prevention and Development Organization (RAPADO)	paul.omole@rapadokenya.org	Online	Kenya
40.	Dr. Ugoji Adanma Eze, Esq	Renew Our Earth	ugojiaeze@gmail.com	Online	USA
41.	Getachew Zeru Gebrekidan	Ethiopian Civil Service University	getachewzerug@gmail.com	Online	Ethiopia

42.	Sharon Anyango	Science Communications	sharonatieno@gmail.com	Online	Kenya
43.	Mathew Imulia	African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS)	mimulia@atpsnet.org	Online	Kenya
44.	Ian Njuguna	African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS)	iannjuguna@atpsnet.org	Online	Kenya
45.	Christopher Hockey	Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)	christopherh@rusi.org	Online	USA
46.	Nakili Fitzwanga	Judiciary (Advocate)	nfitzwanga3@yahoo.com	Online	Kenya
47.	William Owande	African Technology Policy Studies Network	wowande@atpsnet.org	Physical	Kenya
48.	Winton Zak Nyambega	Association of Young Criminology	zakwinton@yahoo.com	Physical	Kenya
49.	Simon Keremeri	Mescop Peace Building Network	keremerii@kemereri.com	Physical	Kenya
50.	Syndoph Endoni	Nigerian Mission	syndoph@jakare.com	Physical	Nigeria
51.	Bemtareni Benjamin	Nigerian Mission	bemtareni@gmail.com	Physical	Nigeria
52.	Godwin Ibrahim	Nigerian Mission	godex101@yahoo.com	Physical	Nigeria
53.	Marion Ngare	NCTC	mngeci39@gmail.com	Physical	Kenya
54.	Dr. Charles Opiyo	NCTC	copiyo@counterterrorism.go.ke	Physical	Kenya
55.	Chinelo Ndego	NIDO'R	Chinelo.ndigo@gmail.com	Physical	Kenya

Annex 3: Conference Communiqué

COMMUNIQUE

THE FIRST SOUTHERN VOICES NETWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING (SVNP) EASTERN AFRICA POLICY CONFERENCE

7-8 DECEMBER 2020 AT CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL,
NAIROBI, KENYA.

Theme: Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the COVID-19 Era

Preamble

As terrorism mutates in Africa, there is need for coordinated efforts at the level of research, policy and practice in order to formulate workable regional interventions that put into consideration changing dynamics occasioned by corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19). COVID-19 is rapidly creating an enabling environment for luring and targeting unsuspecting citizens into radicalization and violent extremism more aggressively owing to the increased level of exposure and time spent on social media platforms in the context of lockdown measures in countries in East Africa. Research and policy direction, as well as practical interventions, should be re-oriented towards supporting key pillars in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) and set realistic goals that are going to reduce the impacts of terrorism in Eastern Africa in the short term as well as counter other systemic and structural factors that are responsible for extremism in the long term. To this end, the African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) hosted the first-ever **Southern Voices Network for Peacebuilding (SVNP) Eastern Africa Policy Conference** from 7-8 November 2020 in Nairobi, Kenya. This conference was organized in collaboration with other partners including the Wilson Center, USA; Centre for Democracy Peace and Security (CMDPS), Rongo University, Kenya; Centre for Conflict Management, University of Rwanda, Women International Peace Center, Uganda; Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia and the Institute of Policy Analysis and Research, Rwanda.

The delegates observed that:

- The issues of violent extremism and radicalization have been a major issue in the Eastern African Region. This has grown to even cross border sites not traditionally known for recruitment. The emerging new sites include Migori in Kenya where extremist groups are targeting to recruit new members. There have been complaints by parents about teenagers joining strange groups and disappearing for certain periods of time or even calling themselves strange names characteristics of children becoming recruited or radicalized.
- Religious literacy is a major issue. Misinterpretation of religious teachings is very common and the leaders of these religious groups have a big role to play to prevent it as such situation usually leads to terrorism acts. Extreme religious ideologies need to be addressed through Inter-faith dialogue groups. The action plans need to involve all actors on the ground such as opinion leaders, bloggers, business people, civil society and the relevant government agencies among others.
- Introduction of recruits to the terrorist groups is usually done by friends, peers and some religious leaders. In some countries where the factional authority is the extremist groups, the youth are easily recruited as they deem joining the groups to be similar to joining the police or the army.
- Gender issues are also critical. Youth vulnerability is high especially with the emergence of social media and the internet where they have access to everything and anything they are looking for. When youth are not taken care of, this becomes a serious societal problem. Young women/girls have also been involved in violent extremism as perpetrators or as victims and their participation cannot be underestimated/overemphasized.

- Increased access to the internet has exposed youth to increased access to content that may lead to self-radicalization or has made access to negative influence from elsewhere very easy.
- Low education level/ illiteracy has been noted to have contributed to high levels of radicalization and recruitment to the extremist groups. It was also noted that the highly educated people are also involved in violent extremism as was the case in Garissa University attack in Kenya.
- There is not enough data or research conducted to provide accurate facts and figures about violent extremism especially in the COVID-19 era. Research needs to be conducted to ascertain some of the assumptions made regarding radicalization and recruitment, especially in the COVID-19 Era. The pandemic has not stopped terrorism. In fact, it has increased it in certain Eastern African countries such as Somalia.
- Conspiracy theories have emerged around COVID-19. Such as allegations that COVID-19 is a biological weapon and/or can be modified to be used as a weapon. Lockdowns and curfews have been used to the advantage of terrorists to recruit or strengthen their presence on the ground in certain areas/countries. However, data is still required to prove these.
- Trust in the security/government systems connects with the speed of recruitment. It is important to work with the community to bridge the trust deficit. Overreaction by the government affects the confidence of the people especially with regard to COVID-19. COVID 19 has created divided attention with very little attention being given to counter violent extremism.
- No single driver can be attributed to a particular terrorist act. There is usually a combination of factors that drive violent extremism. Marginalization (both perceived or real) has made the youth or people feel neglected by government (regional marginalization). Poverty/unemployment, desperation, and hopelessness cause youth to be drawn with a promise of economic benefits by the terrorists. Adventurous spirit in trying new things especially among the youth has also been cited as a driver.
- Corruption has been cited as one of the key drivers of terrorism, especially at the border points where terrorists may be allowed access to essential national documents and identifications in exchange for money.
- Poor understanding of terrorism and extremism by the national institutions is also a major impediment in the fight against terrorism.
- Technology can be used to fight or promote terrorism or violent extremism depending on how it is used.

Based on the foregoing observations, the delegates therefore resolved that:

- There is need to consider social media literacy programmes as an avenue to educate the youth not to be easily lured through social media which is highly accessible nowadays. It is important to harness the potential of technology, youth, and youth language through social media literacy programmes using online and offline digital peacebuilding infrastructures. The governments need to use social media to plug in and convey useful messages to this target group.
- There is need for African scholars, practitioners and cyber-citizens to construct pan-African narratives and discourses of resilience when representing terrorism through imbibing African philosophies of Utu (humanity), Umoja (Unity) and Harambee (collective responsibility).
- There is need to eliminate grounds for radicalization by providing opportunities for the youth. The “Kazi Kwa Vijana” (Work for Youth) programme in Kenya has helped cushion youth from the economic mess caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, but will it continue beyond the COVID-19 period? There is need to use incubation hubs /digital hubs to keep the youth occupied in the development of useful innovations.
- Introduction of Youth programmes/Youth service among young university graduates as a requirement before being allowed to proceed with their personal career goals has been

necessitated. This would entrench patriotism amongst the youth and provide them with extra technical skills thereby empowering them further. Women also need to be brought into the dialogue given their role in either promoting or combating terrorism.

- There is need to encourage the provision of social amenities such as playing grounds, swimming pools, gyms and recreational centers that will keep the youth busy and occupied.
- There is need to consider all possibilities and not just focus on the hotspots (traditional recruitment hot spots). All issues relating to terrorism should be taken and dealt with seriously and not as potential threats. There is need to not only focus on the hot spots in the fight against violent extremism but also look at the emerging sites when designing programmes aimed at curbing terrorism.
- Terrorism knows no boundaries and a good example is the case of Mozambique where some Kenyans have been implicated. There is need to have concerted efforts across the region and work together in preventing and countering violent extremism.
- There is need to design programmes within the spectrum of the speed of recruitment as well as consider the soft approach to combating violent extremism. This may include mediation where all parties involved are brought together to dialogue and resolve issues.
- Consideration should be given to regulating religious groups that have been fingered in violent extremism in a way that does not infringe on their fundamental rights of worship for example by pre-approving their sermons.
- There is need for continuous research to provide more understanding and insights around violent extremism and how best to prevent and counter it in Eastern Africa. Information sharing is critical. A deeper understanding of online recruitment is required and this can only be provided through in-depth research.
- There is need to narrow the trust deficit in our communities. To this end, some community policing initiatives such as “*Nyumba Kumi Initiative*” in Kenya, “*Ujamaa*” in Tanzania, and “*Ubuntu*” in South Africa etc. are highly encouraged.
- There is need to develop monitoring and evaluation systems that can be used to measure progress as well as share results of interventions. These can also be used to measure policy impacts.
- There is need to harmonize legal frameworks in the region as well as strengthen national capacities holistically targeting all relevant stakeholders. It is important to continue to collaborate and share information in the fight against terrorism. It is not a fight for one country. There is need to innovate and make sure that the strategies used by the governments are superior to those of terrorists who also employ their own tactics.
- The African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS), its partners, and the Southern Voices Network for Peacebuilding (SVNP) program should be supported by relevant governments and development partners to undertake further research and policy advocacy actions aimed at addressing violent extremism more sustainably in the region.

Appreciation:

Delegates expressed their appreciation to ATPS and partners for organizing and hosting the very first ever SVNP conference.

Annex 4: Livestreaming Report

Livestreaming Technical Report presented by Buzz Planet Studios

Introduction

Buzz Planet Studios was awarded the contract to provide the livestreaming services, photography and videography services to the 1st SVNPE Eastern Africa Regional Policy Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya from 7-8 December 2020. The conference was a hybrid event (physical and virtual).

The deliverables of the contract were:

Deliverables
Conduct simulation/dry-run of the event
Provide livestreaming, videography and photography services of the 2020 SVNPE Eastern Africa Regional Policy Conference
Submission of a Group picture (A3 size, framed) with partner logos and name of the event and 20 clear quality pictures (Soft copy)
Provide 20 high resolution pictures of the conference
Submission of the final fully edited HD video of the entire conference in a web transfer format
Provide ALL the raw footage of the entire event in web transfer

Conference Format

- The conference format adopted was *Zoom*.
- In addition, the event team crew recorded the entire conference proceedings and streamed it live on the ATPS YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIg-4jQaVKwegODDLPOOwCg>) and Facebook Live (https://www.facebook.com/atps_network-105564534279362).
- Project website: <https://atpsnet.org/default-item/first-southern-voices-network-for-peace-building-svnp-eastern-africa-regional-policy-conference/>
- The event was live tweeted on *Twitter* using the hashtag *#SVNPEastAfricaConference*

Conference Poster



Zoom Link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83071081039>
Meeting ID: 830 7108 1039

Chief Guest of honour



Dr. Fred Matiangi
Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of
Interior & Coordination of National
Government



Dr. Nicholas Ozor
ATPS Executive Director (Host)



Prof. Fredrick Ogenga
Director, CMDPS (Co-Host)



Onno Koopmans
Embassy of the Kingdom of the
Netherlands



Prof. Crispus Kiamba
ATPS Chair of Board



Dr. Monde Muyangwa
Africa Program Director
Wilson Centre-USA



Prof. Walter Oyawa
Director-General-National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)

African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS)
First SVNP Eastern Africa Regional Policy Conference, 7-8 December 2020
Nairobi, Kenya

THEME: Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the COVID-19 Era




SVNP Eastern Africa Policy Conference

7th – 8th December 2020,
Crowne Plaza Hotel Nairobi, Kenya.

THEME: Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
in the COVID-19 Era



Conference Registration Form-Online



SVNP East Africa Regional Conference

Event Timing: December 7th-8th, 2020
Event Address: Nairobi - Kenya
Contact us at (254) 202 714 092 or info@atpsnet.org

* Required

Email address *

Your email

THEME: Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism during and Post-COVID 19 Era

The African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) in conjunction with its partners is delighted to announce a virtual/physical international conference to be held from the 7th -8th December 2020 in Nairobi, Kenya. The conference will be seeking to interrogate national and regional mechanisms and action plans in East Africa and how research, policy and practice can be streamlined and coordinated considering ecological factors and changing global and regional dynamics occasioned by disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

PLEASE REGISTER FOR THE EVENT BY FILLING THE SHORT FORM BELOW

Name *

Your answer

Email *

Your answer

Institution/Organization *

Your answer

Country *

Your answer

Gender *

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Other: _____

Phone Number *

Your answer


Area of Expertise (Title) *

Your answer

A copy of your responses will be emailed to the address you provided.

Submit

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Google Forms

Social Media Management

There was a twitter hashtag developed to enhance the participation towards the event *#SVNPEastAfricaRegionalConference*. The event was also streamed live on the ATPS YouTube channel, on Facebook live and also tweeted live on Twitter.

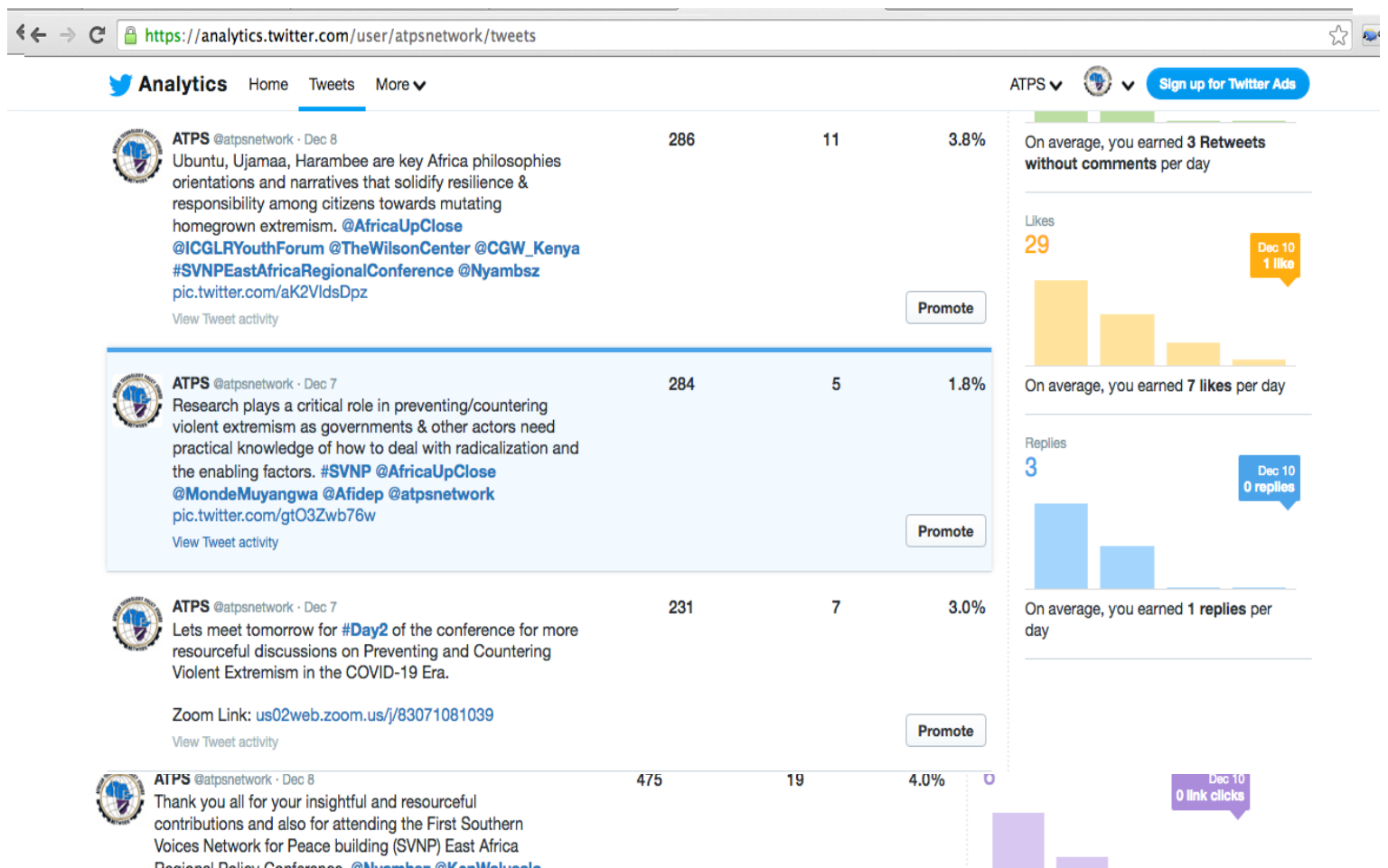
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIlg-4jQaVKwegODDLPOOWCg>
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/atps_network-105564534279362

Twitter handle: @atpsnetwork

- Project website: <https://atpsnet.org/default-item/first-southern-voices-network-for-peace-building-svnp-eastern-africa-regional-policy-conference/>

Twitter Highlights

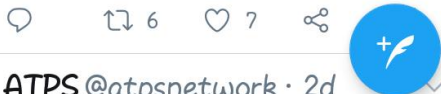
- Number of Tweets: 13
- Tweet Impressions: 573
- Engagements: 79
- Engagement rate: 13.8 %
- Top tweet: 600 impressions



Examples of Tweets Tweeted during the Conference (pictorial)



ATPS @atpsnetwork · 2d
Onno Koopmans from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands making his keynote speech on "Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism" @TheWilsonCenter @Nyambusz @musila_felix1 #SUNPRegionalPolicyConference



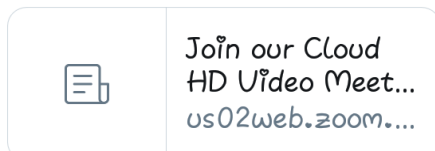
ATPS @atpsnetwork · 2d

Tweets Tweets & replies Media Li



Africa Up Close @Afr... · 2d
Thank you to everyone that joined @atpsnetwork for the first SUNP Eastern Africa Conference on "Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the COVID-19 Era."

Day 2 of the conference begins tomorrow at 9:00 AM EAT (1:00 AM U.S. EST). watch it here:



Africa Up Close retweeted



ATPS @atpsnetwork · 2d

ATPS
1,405 Tweets

Tweets Tweets & replies Media Li



ATPS @atpsnetwork · 1d
Ubuntu, Ujamaa, Harambee are key Africa philosophies orientations and narratives that solidify resilience & responsibility among citizens towards mutuating homegrown extremism. @AfricaUpClose @ICGLRYouthForum @TheWilsonCenter @CGW_Kenya #SUNPEastAfricaRegionalConference @Nyambusz

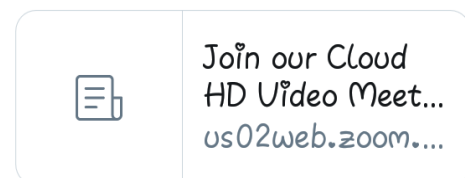


Tweets Tweets & replies Media Li



ATPS @atpsnetwork · 2d
Let's meet tomorrow for #Day2 of the conference for more resourceful discussions on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the COVID-19 Era.

Zoom Link:



Show this thread

All

Mentions



Dee Warira @deewarira · 3d

The lockdown due to COVID-19 has left many youth susceptible to recruitment into violent extremism as they spend a lot of time online. Internet platforms are being actively used for recruitment.

@InteriorKE @AfricaUpClose
@atpsnetwork
@MondeMuyangwa @Afidep
#SUNP @TheWilsonCenter



4




6



YouTube

← → ↺ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkwZGdkJ6d8>


☰ YouTube^{KE} Search



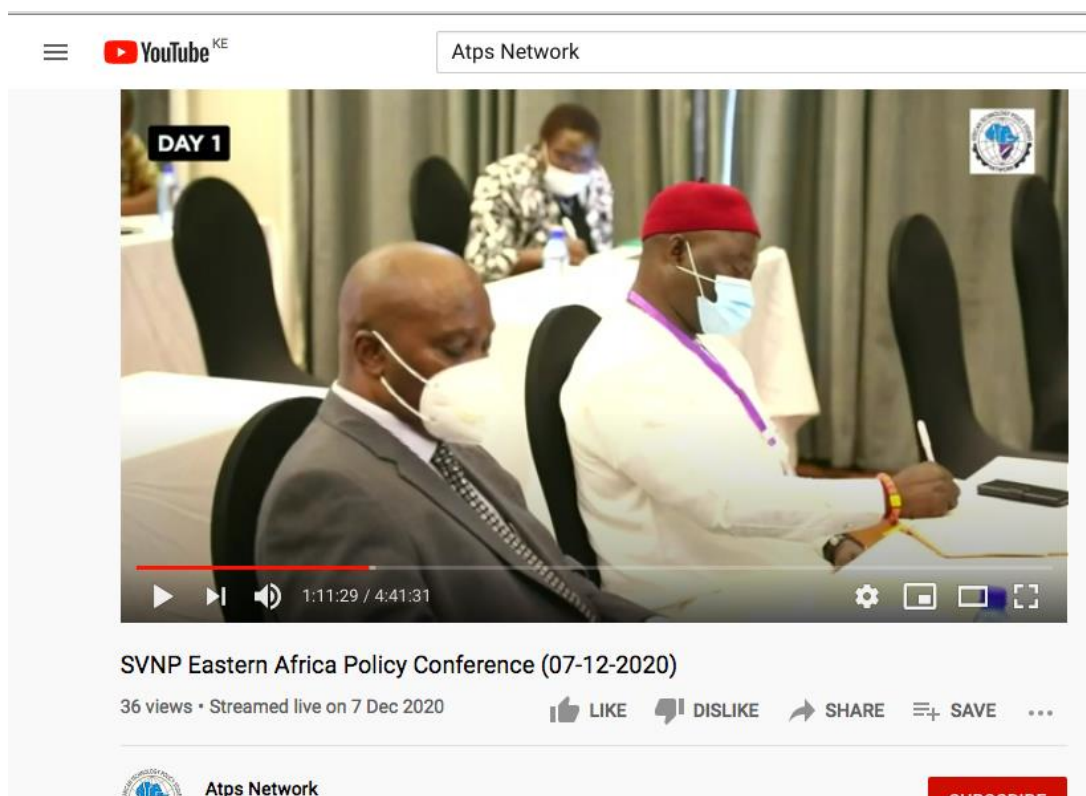
SVNP Eastern Africa Policy Conference Day 2--(08-12-2020)

19 views · Streamed live on Dec 7, 2020

👍 0 💬 0 ➦ SHARE ⚙️ SAVE ...

 **Atps Network**
1 subscriber

ANALYTICS EDIT VIDEO



Zoom recordings Links

- Pictures Link: <https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=1qwNQUMbSD8mliFQlBrhXR-GFkPa5VNWB>
- Youtube Video Link Day 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFfSz3LkEVU>
- Youtube Video Link Day 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkwZGdkJ6d8>
- Facebook Live Link Day 1: <https://www.facebook.com/105564534279362/videos/378814323222165>
- Facebook Live Link Day 2: <https://www.facebook.com/105564534279362/videos/2490168657943987>
- Zoom Recordings Link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15FXM8zaFM3Rt5yFKnwrq-98fDBiC4xoA?usp=sharing>

Interactive chats from the online participants

09:54:54 From STELLA SABIITI : good morning everyone
09:56:37 From Isaiah Ndege, NCRC : Good morning to you too Stella
10:34:09 From Tessa Snyder : Very thorough and insightful presentation Professor Ogenga. Your discussion really spoke to the importance of providing resources to and evaluating evidence-based, youth-focused programming. We suspect this will create good opportunities to promote media literacy and strategic community engagement, particularly when COVID limits other opportunities (in school or work) for positive engagement. Great presentation!
10:34:12 From STELLA SABIITI : Prof, that's great indeed
10:39:45 From ATPS STUDIO 1 To Eugenia Kayitesi(private) : Hello Eugenia, you will be making your presentation next.
10:40:01 From Rapudo Hawi : Insightful voice of inspiration and reason from Prof. Ogenga lies in cultivating african philosophies of Ubuntu, Umoja and Harambee spirit.
11:05:33 From STELLA SABIITI : thanks Denis, new insights indeed
11:07:52 From Rapudo Hawi : Thanks Sir Dennis, valuable input is great
11:11:16 From Helen Kezie-Nwoha : There is no background noise from my end
11:17:11 From Helen Kezie-Nwoha : Thank you Eugenia for the presentation
11:17:22 From STELLA SABIITI : any gender implications indicated for our learning?
11:18:24 From Helen Kezie-Nwoha : I guess there are gender implications Stella
11:19:05 From STELLA SABIITI : could someone give us info on this?
11:25:25 From Charles Dalcourt : Mr. Basabose, great presentation! Your thoughts and insights truly resonate with me as a 34-year Veteran of the U.S. Army. Your discussion and encouragement to conduct joint training, exercises, and investigations are foundational to enhancing communication amongst practitioners and can lead to increased harmonization of legal and operational frameworks. Thank you for your thoughts and professional perspective.
11:26:33 From Kevin Osido, CGW : Most Governments have put in place measures to ensure employment opportunities. What are VEOs doing to lure the youth that we haven't responded to?
11:27:20 From Kevin Osido, CGW : Kenya for example has about 7 various affirmative action funds.
11:30:37 From STELLA SABIITI : I'm also wondering if other religions are not involved in this challenge?
11:45:25 From Rapudo Hawi : Thanks Dr. for presentation. Drones for social change might be important to deal with threat to national security?
11:49:59 From Charles Dalcourt : Prof Oyawa, great briefing. Your comments reference the internet's transnational nature and the use of technology by VE groups to overcome boundaries and cross societies speaks to the good and bad aspects of the access technology provides.
11:56:14 From STELLA SABIITI : impact on boys and families?
11:57:01 From STELLA SABIITI : and role of Masculinity?
12:01:34 From Tessa Snyder : @Stella, I think addressing role of

masculinity is a great point. This is an area we also need to discuss.

12:34:34 From Edna Miriti To ATPS STUDIO 1(privately) : the screens are not clear

12:37:14 From ATPS STUDIO 1 To Edna Miriti(privately) : It should be better now..

12:38:13 From Edna Miriti To ATPS STUDIO 1(privately) : not yet

12:40:44 From Edna Miriti : great.

12:44:11 From Rapudo Hawi : Great presentation from Kennedy to showcase ICGLR youth commitments to cascading national priorities to deal with extremism and radicalization. we need to adopt new research projects on this process to inform our policies. Asante

12:51:52 From Aggee Shyaka Mugabe : The voice has gone!

12:59:24 From ATPS STUDIO 2 : We invite comments, feedback and questions here on chat or via Zoom, please alert us here or when the moderator gives the alert.

13:06:23 From STELLA SABIITI : thanks Helen, this is a great learning and sharing platform

13:06:30 From Helen Kezie-Nwoha : Thank you Dr. Ozor. I will step out as I have another meeting starting at 1pm EAT

13:06:50 From denis Basabose : I think the military/security organs response to CVE comes as a last option because prevention has not been achieved. so, the civil society, local leadership. community leadership should be proactive

13:07:09 From Helen Kezie-Nwoha : I agree @Denis

13:07:10 From ATPS STUDIO 2 : Asante Hellen Kezie.

13:08:00 From Eugenia Kayitesi : Thanks Helen for an informative presentation . Are we going to have copies of these presentations?

13:15:19 From ATPS STUDIO 2 : Yes. The presentations will be shared with all attendees after the conference via email.

13:16:51 From Omole Paul : Thanks.May be some of us will follow up better via the presentation s

13:20:34 From Ugoji Eze : Excellent presentation

13:20:38 From STELLA SABIITI : about porous borders, especially in Africa where the borders were arbitrarily drawn, we have families across all our borders. we need to be creative about this

13:23:08 From Getachew Zeru Gebrekidan : Excellent presentation!

13:30:50 From STELLA SABIITI : we sleep in our home in one country and cross the border to access our gardens, our children go to school across the border and our cattle are grazed across, and the other way round. Ditto the issue of some border lines cutting across one family compound, so, a homestead straddling the border, bedroom in one country, living/sitting room in another!

13:30:51 From Isaiah Ndege, NCRC To ATPS STUDIO 1(privately) : Hi, If time allows, may I please make a comment. Thanks.

13:38:00 From ATPS STUDIO 1 To ATPS STUDIO 2(privately) : Isaiah wants to make a comment

13:38:21 From Ugoji Eze To ATPS STUDIO 1(privately) : How can we move from rhetoric to reality ?

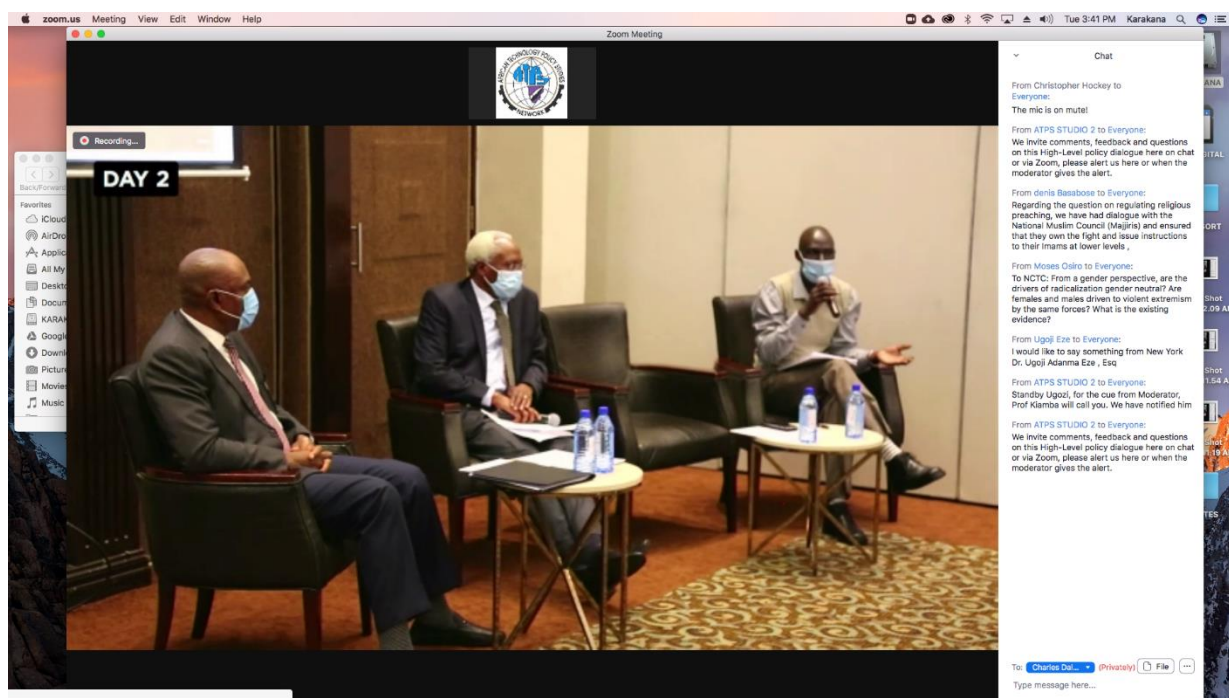
13:38:28 From Ugoji Eze To ATPS STUDIO 1(privately) : My question

13:40:10 From Ugoji Eze To ATPS STUDIO 1(privately) : And counter

Screen grab of the online participants



Policy dialogue session with the panellists



The conference registration opened on 18/11/2020 and closed on 8/12/2020 with **107** individuals having registered.

Event Registration (Responses)									
fx									
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
1	Timestamp	Email Address	Name	Email	Institution/Organization	Country	Gender	Phone Number	Area of Exp
2	11/18/2020 14:29:04	imuliamathew037@gmail	Mathew	imuliamathew037@gmail	ATPS	Kenya	Male	0716773774	ICT
3	11/18/2020 14:38:30	ianjuguna@gmail.com	Ian	ianjuguna@gmail.com	ATPS	Kenya	Male	721913968	IT
4	11/24/2020 16:58:16	fmsila@atpsnet.org	Felix	fmsila@atpsnet.org	African Technology Polic	Kenya	Male	+254711496520	Communica
5	11/24/2020 17:33:59	nakili.fitz8@gmail.com	Nakili Fitzwanga	nakili.fitz8@gmail.com	Judiciary	Kenya	Female	0727416866	Advocate
6	11/24/2020 17:45:00	judyouma@gmail.com	JUDY ALUOCH OUMA	judyouma@gmail.com	Technical University of Ki	Kenya	Female	0720829280	HEALTH EC
7	11/24/2020 17:52:37	donchim2000@yahoo.co	Donald Chimanikire	donchim2000@yahoo.co	Political Science	Zimbabwe	Male	+263773020486	Internationa
8	11/24/2020 18:41:01	anselm.onyimonyi@unn.	Prof. Anselm Onyimonyi	anselm.onyimonyi@unn.	University of Nigeria, Nsu	Nigeris	Male	+2348035479386	Animal Scie
9	11/24/2020 18:42:05	akreha@gmail.com	Tofonga	akreha@gmail.com	MU	USA	Male	09090909	Sociology
10	11/24/2020 22:33:43	banji230@yahoo.com	Baniji Michael Adeleye	banji230@yahoo.com	Makerere University, Kan	Uganda	Male	+256 774650545	Urban Planr
11	11/25/2020 0:01:08	pragmaticgbengus@gme	Olugbenga Adebisi	pragmaticgbengus@gme	Global Youths Action Soc	Nigeria	Male	+2348068376778	Behavioural
12	11/25/2020 0:52:31	georgemadoda@yahoo.c	GEORGE MADODA	georgemadoda@yahoo.c	ATLO	Tanzania	Male	+255744979755	Policy Anal
13	11/25/2020 0:57:14	teghechrist@yahoo.com	Kum Christian Tegha	teghechrist@yahoo.com	ATPS-Cameroon chapter	Cameroon	Male	+237677188198	Environmen
14	11/25/2020 2:37:45	teghechrist@yahoo.com	Kum Christian Tegha	teghechrist@yahoo.com	ATPS-Cameroon chapter	Cameroon	Male	+237677188198	Environmen
15	11/25/2020 6:04:39	bossbig24@gmail.com	JOSEPH SENYO KWAS	bossbig24@gmail.com	COMMUNITY AND FAM	GHANA	Male	+233274313220	PEACE AD
16	11/25/2020 6:19:59	bettygichohi@gmail.com	Beatrice Gichohi	bettygichohi@gmail.com	KRA	Kenya	Female	+254722358741	Statistics sn
17	11/25/2020 8:33:44	victorymandat@gmail.co	NYANDAT	victorymandat@gmail.co	Ministry of interior and	Kenya	Male	+254718788046	Assistant C
18	11/25/2020 9:07:12	phinamagara@yahoo.co	Phina Magara	phinamagara@yahoo.co	Kenya Railways	Kenya	Female	0724664752	Strategic Me
19	11/25/2020 12:01:57	ido.chilokwu@unizik.edu	Chilokwu Darlington Oke	ido.chilokwu@unizik.edu	Nnamdi Azikiwe Universi	Nigeria	Male	+2348034303310	Agriculture,
20	11/25/2020 14:12:24	asamoah38@icloud.com	Akwasi Asamoah	asamoah38@icloud.com	Carbon Holc	Ghana	Male	00233555284922	Instrumenta
21	11/25/2020 14:25:49	ianjuguna@atpsnet.org	Ian Njuguna	ianjuguna@atpsnet.org	ATPS	Kenya	Male	0721171300	IT
22	11/25/2020 14:47:40	wowande@atpsnet.org	William Owande	wowande@atpsnet.org	African Technology Polic	Kenya	Male	+254726705454	Community
23	11/25/2020 15:36:40	kihilaj@gmail.com	Dr. Jacob M. Kihila	kihilaj@gmail.com	Ardhi University	Tanzania	Male	+255782599733	Researcher

Event Registration (Responses)

Sign In as Atps Network

fx									
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
1	Timestamp	Email Address	Name	Email	Institution/Organization	Country	Gender	Phone Number	Area of Exp
98	12/7/2020 9:24:20	amshyaka@gmail.com	Shyaka Mugabe Aggée	amshyaka@gmail.com	university of Rwanda/CC	Rwanda	Male	+250788302766	Conflict ana
99	12/7/2020 10:03:01	getachewzerug@gmail.c	Getachew Z Gebrekidan	getachewzerug@gmail.c	Ethiopian Civil Service U	Ethiopia	Male	+251911964375	Assistant pr
100	12/7/2020 10:19:02	jkimamo@sfcg.org	Judy Kimamo	jkimamo@sfcg.org	Search For Common Grc	Kenya	Female	254725862695	Transformin
101	12/7/2020 11:15:05	domondi@ndi.org	Dennis Omondi	domondi@ndi.org	National Democratic Insti	Kenya	Male	+254736763746	Developmer
102	12/7/2020 11:55:36	trish.a.basile.mil@mail.m	Trish Basile	trish.a.basile.mil@mail.m	Southern European Task	USA	Female	+39 3475044694	South-East
103	12/7/2020 16:09:29	hijmale@gmail.com	HASSAN JIMALE	hijmale@gmail.com	STUDENT	Kenya	Male	254796219621	Counter Vio
104	12/7/2020 20:42:06	rosiestone@talktalk.net	Rosemary Stone	rosiestone@talktalk.net	UK Ministry of Defence	United Kingdom	Female	+447930184954	Human Sec
105	12/8/2020 0:48:02	emmaasige@yahoo.com	Emmaculate Asige Liaga	emmaasige@yahoo.com	University of Basel	Switzerland	Female	07746363075	Peacebuildi
106	12/8/2020 2:58:47	aabdelislam@hotmail.cc	Abdelislam Elfahal	aabdelislam@hotmail.cc	Independent Professiona	Canada	Male	12265001021	Environmen
107	12/8/2020 12:40:48	bobadoyed@gmail.com	Ayodotun O Bobadoye	bobadoyed@gmail.com	Global Emerging Pathog	Nigeria	Male	08120561552	Climate cha
108									

Conference Group Photo



Challenges

- The platform used (*Zoom*) has very limited capabilities in terms of analytics and features
- Some of the online participants are not very well versed with virtual conference participation etiquette e.g some of the participants were on making their contributions while driving and hence their cameras were not stable and the sound not audible enough
- Some of the participants had poor backgrounds in terms of video quality
- The hotel projector failed at some point causing a slight delay
- Some of the participants were not available online during their turn to make their presentations

Recommendations

- Allow the use of more advanced virtual conference platforms like *Vimeo*
- Make sure that the hotel has a standby projector incase of failure to avoid delays once live
- Virtual participants need to be briefed properly on proper conference etiquette before the conference starts