National Security and the Metamorphosis of Terrorism: the Al-Shabaab Threat

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STUDENT’S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, institution or university other than the United States International University in Nairobi for academic credit.

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This thesis has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.

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Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs (DVCAA)
DEDICATION

To my unborn baby boy, who has forced me to stay focused and strong throughout this whole process.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor David D.K Kikaya for the very helpful and constructive comments and remarks throughout the process of writing this master thesis. His engagement has ensured that this process has been a positive experience. Further I would like to thank my family, who all the way from Norway have provided me with tremendous support. Their faith in me contributed heavily to ensuring that I made the finish line. Finally a warm thanks to all my friends in school, who have showed much support and encouragement in this process.
ABSTRACT

This study seeks to examine the relationship between terrorism and security. The topic of the study is the metamorphosis of Al-Shabaab and the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya. The objective of the study is to find out how Kenyan national security is challenged by the change in Al-Shabaab’s attacks; the death of Al-Shabaab’s leader and finally; the switch from explosives to AK-47s. The research follows a descriptive design and is conducted as a case study. The data is collected from the news archive of the Daily Nation and consist of reports from Al-Shabaab attacks in Kenya from 2011 until 2015. The study makes the following main conclusions: firstly, the change in Al-Shabaab’s attacks is clearly posing a major challenge for Kenyan security forces because Al-Shabaab has proven to be so innovative that every attack appears to be unexpected. Al-Shabaab always seems to be a step ahead of Kenyan security. Secondly, the loss of Godane has not proven to break down Al-Shabaab as previously anticipated. Rather, Al-Shabaab has only posed a bigger threat to security in Kenya after the loss of Godane. Lastly, after Al-Shabaab started using AK-47s the number of victims in each attack has risen drastically. Attacks show that the use of AK-47s instead of grenades poses a whole new challenge to Kenyan security forces. In sum, the metamorphosis of Al-Shabaab attacks over the past four years has proven to be a major security challenge for Kenya.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1: Background of the study

This section will introduce the background for this study, including some general information about international terrorism, terrorism in Africa and finally terrorism in Kenya and al-Shabaab.

1.1.1: International terrorism

According to Roth And Sever (2007), there is no worldwide consensus on what exactly terrorism is. Similarly, Spencer and Croucher (n.d) argue that terrorism is a relative concept. What some people define as terrorism may not be what other people perceive as terrorism. Common definitions usually include the use of violence, combatant training and possession of weapons (Spencer and Croucher, n.d). Further, different governments define terrorism differently. These different definitions are explored further in chapter 2, which also provide a definition of terrorism for this research.

Martin (2014: 161) characterizes international terrorism as unpredictable, unexpected and unconventional. Targets are chosen because of their ability to shock, surprise, affect and disgust the international community. Hijackings, bombings, assassinations, kidnappings and extortions are thus favorable. Terrorism is thus one of the biggest threats to international security today. Martin (2014: 18) lays out four basic characteristics of terrorist behavior: intolerance, moral absolutes, broad conclusions and a new language that supports a particular belief system. Terrorists declare that they are fighting on behalf of an oppressed group.
Further, they claim that their violent actions are proportionate to their oppression and thus justified. Terrorism is thus the result of extremist beliefs, although all extremists do not end up as terrorists. There are four common motives behind terrorism that help explain terrorist behavior. Firstly, terrorists are genuinely convinced that they are fighting for the right cause. Secondly, they have a black and white picture of the world where there is only good or evil. Thirdly, they believe in the utopian ideal where violence is justified by an idealized end. Lastly, they strongly believe in self-sacrifice. There are two types of terrorism in the world: terrorism committed by the state, and terrorism committed by dissident groups. This study will research the latter type, which Martin defines as “terrorism directed against existing governments and political institutions to destabilize the existing environment as a precondition to building a new society” (2014: 133).

There have been many different terrorist groups through the years, in all parts of the world. The PKK has terrorized Turkey for years, even with its leader in prison (Roth and Murat, 2007). The ETA has fought for Basque separatism in Spain ever since the end of the Franco regime (Beck, 2005). Boko Haram has shocked the world in recent years with their brutal warfare in the northern parts of Nigeria (Okpaga et.al, 2012). Chapter 2 focuses on international terrorism and surveys these terrorist groups more in detail.

Counterterrorism is a difficult task, and Martin (2014: 229) argues that long term success in fighting terrorism has been limited so far. He highlights enhanced security and intelligence collection and analysis as the most important ways to fight terrorism. Nevertheless, so far it has been far from enough to stop terrorism from happening. Terrorist attacks have proven to be too unpredictable, unexpected and unconventional.
1.1.2: Terrorism in Africa

According to Martin (2014: 266), ethno-national communal terrorism has characterized Africa through the years. This type of terrorism refers to conflicts that are characterized by religious, ethnic or other cultural differences. This type of terrorism has been especially visible in East Africa and West Africa. Martin (2014: 266) also points out a pattern of state-sponsored domestic terrorism in countries such as Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone and Liberia. He predicts that internal conflict will continue to characterize this region in the foreseeable future.

So far throughout 2015 this predicament has proved correct. Most recently the region has seen increased terrorist behavior by Al-Shabaab in East Africa and Boko Haram in Nigeria. Both groups claim to be part of Al-Qaeda and are thus based on religious extremist beliefs (Okpaga et al, 2012 and Pitts, 2014). The US Department of State (2014) points out this increased activity in their report about terrorism in Africa in 2013. According to the report, East African countries have improved their counterterrorism strategies and cooperation against their common terrorist threat, Al-Shabaab, after the attack on Westgate Mall in Nairobi in September 2013. However, the report still points out a lack of consistent offensive operations in the fight against Al-Shabaab. This has enabled Al-Shabaab’s development and continuing attacks in the region, and especially in Kenya.

1.1.3: Terrorism in Kenya: five years of Al-Shabaab

The history of modern terrorism in Kenya dates back to August 7, 1998, when Al-Qaeda coordinated bomb attacks on the American embassies in both Nairobi and Dar es Salaam
The bombings shocked Kenyans and the international community and received a lot of attention. As a direct result, the American government upgraded its security for its embassies abroad. Kenya again became a victim of Islamist terrorism in 2011, as a result of Kenyan troops entering Somalia to fight Al-Shabaab (Washington Post, 2014). Prior to this military operation, Al-Shabaab kidnapped a number of Western tourists in Kenya. These kidnappings hurt Kenya’s tourism, and troops were sent to Somalia as part of AMISOM (the African Union Mission in Somalia). Al-Shabaab immediately answered with threats of intensified attacks in Kenya. The last four years have proven that these threats were serious. What started off as throwing hand grenades into nightclubs and buses, turned into attacks with AK-47s as the world witnessed when Westgate shopping mall was attacked in September 2013, and April 15th 2015, when Garissa University was attacked leaving 147 students dead and many more injured.

We saw, as Martin (2014: 133) argues, that dissident terrorist groups seek to destabilize governments or other political groups and establish a new society. The attacks committed by Al-Shabaab since October 2011, however, have mainly been acts of revenge. Nevertheless, the overall goal of Al-Shabaab is to establish an Islamist society in Somalia, and the Kenyan involvement in the fight against Al-Shabaab in Somalia is definitely disrupting this goal. Thus this definition still holds ground in the case of Al-Shabaab.

Homeland security needs to evolve and adapt according to the development and changing face of terrorist threats. Kenya is undoubtedly failing in doing so, as new attacks keep occurring unexpectedly. Pkalya (Daily Nation, 2015) argues that the Garissa University attack came as a result of officers sleeping on the job. The argument is that the UK and Australia had already released travel advisories to Kenya the same week. Harry Misiko (Washington
Post, 2014) lists a number of weaknesses in the Kenyan security apparatus and government: weak security intelligence; widespread corruption in the police force and immigration offices; poor anti-terror strategy; poor and inadequate equipment largely due to the uneven distribution of resources between government officials and the police force; messy investigations and lastly; poor local and regional cooperation. All of these factors make it very challenging for Kenya to respond to the Al-Shabaab threat, and the continuously changing face of Al-Shabaab’s attacks pose an additional challenge for Kenya to prevent further attacks. Chapter 3 provides a detailed survey of who Al-Shabaab is, and how they are posing a serious threat to security in Kenya.

1.2: Statement of the problem

“International terrorism is one of the best examples of asymmetrical warfare – that is, unconventional, unexpected, and nearly unpredictable acts of political violence. Although it is an old practice, asymmetrical warfare has become a core feature of the New Terrorism. Practicing it, terrorists can theoretically acquire and wield new high-yield arsenals, strike at unanticipated targets, cause mass casualties, and apply unique and idiosyncratic tactics” (Martin, 2014: 161).

Maintaining security used to be the biggest issue throughout the 20th century, with two world wars and the Cold War. However, after the Cold War the world became more stable and peaceful, and other issues became important. Then came 9/11, and international security once again became one of the most important factors. Since 9/11, terrorism has changed in high
speed. First we talked about Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. In recent years however it has become clear that Al-Qaeda has weaved a web of terrorist networks all over the world (Byman, 2003). Terrorist groups can be found in every corner of the world. The mode of terrorist attacks also changed. Western countries were shocked when the latest terror threat was revealed in the summer of 2014. In both Norway and Australia Islamist terrorists were planning to walk down the streets and randomly shoot and stab as many people as possible. Had these plans not been averted, the world would have seen a new type of terrorism, a type that we have not yet prepared for. This shows that terrorists always seem to be a step ahead of security. Terrorist groups have the ability to surprise and shock, and their innovation and adaption is their strongest card. The degree of success in the fight against terrorism will be a big factor in the future, and it will affect the global peace and stability. Terrorist groups are disrupting the international structure and system by not respecting and adhering to international laws, organizations and institutions. They place themselves outside the global community, and their presence is thus the biggest threat to global peace and stability.

In Kenya, Al-Shabaab has been a major threat to security since October 2011. Al-Shabaab started the line of attacks by throwing hand grenades into nightclubs and buses. The attack on a Sunday school for children thus came as a big surprise: all of a sudden they were targeting children. Then followed an attack that shook the whole world, when Al-Shabaab attacked Westgate shopping mall with AK-47s, and killed over 60 civilians on September 21st 2013. The attack revealed massive shortcomings in Kenya’s counterterrorism strategies, and in their ability to handle attacks of this size. Moreover, the security was clearly not meant to detect small arms, so the use of AK-47s came as a surprise and it led to the biggest attack in Kenya since the 1998 bombings up to that time. The biggest and deadliest attack so far, however, came on April 2nd, 2015, when Garissa University was attacked and left 147 innocent students
dead. Again the world was shocked, and questions soon arose about how the Kenyan government could be taken by such a surprise. The slow response was also criticized. Al-Shabaab’s ability to adapt, innovate, shock and surprise therefore pose a number of challenges to Kenyan security. Nevertheless, few studies have been done on Al-Shabaab in Kenya. Knowledge about Al-Shabaab in Kenya will be important in the years to come, and hopefully this study can contribute to the body of knowledge.

1.3: Objective of the study

1.3.1: General objective


1.3.2: Specific objectives

To find out how the change in Al-Shabaab’s attacks has affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya.

To determine whether or not the death of Al-Shabaab’s leader has affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya.

To examine how Al-Shabaab’s switch from explosives to AK-47s has affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya.
1.4: Research questions

How has the change in Al-Shabaab’s attacks affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya?

Has the death of Al-Shabaab’s leader affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya?

How has Al-Shabaab’s switch from explosives to AK-47s affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya?

1.5: Conceptual framework
1.5.1: Challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya

Security is one of the biggest challenges in the world today, largely because of the international terror threat. Following 9/11, the world has seen massive changes in security measures. Both international and domestic security has to be constantly upgraded to meet the continuous threat of terrorism. To keep the civil society safe is one of the most important tasks both domestically (homeland security) and internationally (the Security Council). In the age of modern terrorism this task is being seriously challenged worldwide. Islamist terrorist groups are developing worldwide, and they seem to grow bigger both in number and in size. Terrorism might be the single biggest challenge to global peace and stability. To fight terrorism is thus crucial.

1.5.2: National security in Kenya and the change in Al-Shabaab attacks

The metamorphosis of terrorism is making this task even more challenging. In the previous decade terrorism was often related to Al-Qaeda. Now however, newer groups such as Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, ISIS and so on receive much attention for their deadly and brutal attacks and their threat to security both domestically but also potentially internationally. Moreover, the mode of attacks and geographical targets of attacks keep changing. Terrorist groups have showed the ability to surprise and shock, and their attacks are unexpected, unpredictable and unconventional (Martin, 2014: 161). We never really know what to picture when we talk about terrorism: everything from bombing of government buildings, to throwing hand grenades into public areas, to attacking shopping malls with AK-47s. Consider the threat Western countries such as Norway and Australia experienced in the summer of 2014.
According to security agencies in both countries, Islamic terrorists were planning on shooting down people in the middle of public streets in the cities. So while homeland security is busy securing public buildings and larger areas such as train stations and shopping malls, terrorists were planning on simply walking down the street and shoot around them. This type of attack would have come as a complete surprise, and it shows how ill prepared we really are and how little we succeed in predicting future attacks. Brandt and Sandler (2009) thus argue that counterterrorism strategies have to be preventive. By the time one target has been secured, terrorists have already shifted their attention to new and unsecured targets. The ability to predict future attacks from Al-Shabaab will thus be crucial in maintaining national security in Kenya.

1.5.3: National security in Kenya and the death of the Al-Shabaab leader

A common counterterrorism strategy has been to go after the leader of terrorist groups. This was made clear when the US went after Osama bin Laden, the leader of Al-Qaeda in 2011. The take down was celebrated both in the US and internationally, and it was perceived as a big step in the “war on terror”. However, in hindsight it is clear that the impact of the murder was overrated. Nevertheless, the US once again went after a terrorist group leader when they killed Al-Shabaab leader Ahmed Godane September 1st, 2014. According to BBC (2014), Godane was one of the most wanted men in the US prior to the attack. Further, Somali analyst Nuur Muhamud Sheekh claimed that the death of Godane "will deal a major blow to the group" and "It will have an impact in terms of affecting the morale of the fighters on the ground but it is not the end of Al-Shabaab in the short or medium term." (BBC, 2014).

Consider this statement from the White House after the killing of Godane: “Godane’s removal is a major symbolic and operational loss to the largest Al-Qaida affiliate in Africa and reflects
years of painstaking work by our intelligence, military and law enforcement professionals” (White House, 2014). This statement shows that leadership decapitation is still perceived as an important strategy in counterterrorism, and that the US expects that the death of Godane will have a big impact on the future of Al-Shabaab. This study shows if the nature of the attacks has changed after the loss of Godane or not.

1.5.4: National security in Kenya and the switch from explosives to AK-47s

When Al-Shabaab entered Westgate and killed over 67 people, they did so armed with AK-47s. According to Callimarch (2013), explosives had been the weapons of choice for Al-Shabaab before the Westgate attack. Security was thus not meant to detect small arms such as AK-47s, and Callimarch thus argues that it was this choice of small arms that made it possible for Al-Shabaab to commit the largest attack in Kenya in the history of Al-Shabaab to that date. Consider the following statement from Matt Bryden, former United Nations Monitoring Group in Somalia and Eritrea:

“My assessment has always been that the day that Al-Shabaab lets go of the ‘Cult of the Suicide Bomber,’ we will be in world of trouble. It’s far more complicated to procure the parts for an explosive vest, as well as to find people willing to be martyrs. I always worried that if you just get guys riding in with AK-47s and grenades, they could do incredible damage. We have now reached that dangerous place.” (Callimarch, 2013).

This statement explains why the use of AK-47s poses a whole new challenge for maintaining security. It also explains how unprepared security was for such attacks. Lastly, it shows how
Al-Shabaab always seems to be a step ahead of security and thus succeeds in shocking the world with its attacks.

1.6: Justification

The people who will benefit from this study are mainly the citizens of Kenya, because it can contribute to the body of knowledge on the fight against terrorism and better safety for people living in Kenya. It will also provide insight for security forces, academics and those who strive for peace and stability internationally. This examination of the security challenges in Kenya in the context of the Al-Shabaab threat will hopefully contribute to the body of knowledge in this topic. The Al-Shabaab threat is one of the biggest challenges in Kenya at the moment, and fighting it will make a big difference. Institutions that deal with security in Kenya can hopefully benefit from this study, as it will present an overview of the attacks, and the changing nature. By conducting a descriptive research on the topic, the researcher will hopefully benefit future researchers who might wish to attempt an explanatory or action research. To the researcher’s knowledge there is no research that has attempted to examine the totality of the changing strategy of Al-Shabaab attacks from the start in 2011, up to now. This study will therefore hopefully add to the body of studies on the topic. Since the attacks started in 2011, very few studies have actually been conducted on Al-Shabaab alone, and this is why this study attempts to do so. There is no reason to believe that Al-Shabaab will decrease its activity in the near future, so research on this topic will be necessary in the future and hopefully this study is a start.
1.7: Scope of the study

The scope of the study is limited to the national security in Kenya.

1.8: Limitations and delimitations of the study

The first challenge is the amount of data that needs to be collected. By examining the totality of terror attacks from Al-Shabaab from 2011 to 2015, a very large amount of reports have to be gone through. The strategy for tackling this challenge is to categorize all attacks into a number of larger categories in the very beginning of the data collection procedure. By doing so, the amount of data is reduced and it is possible to generalize the attacks for the sake of analysis and presentation.

The second challenge is the lack of resources on Al-Shabaab in Kenya. Since the attacks started only in October 2011, little research has been done on these specific events. Generalization has therefore been necessary when the background and the literature review were written. There is plenty of research and literature on terrorism in general and on Al-Qaeda, so much of background information is based on this generalization. Only when I started looking into the attacks in Kenya was it possible to be more specific. Although more resources available on Al-Shabaab in Kenya would have been preferable, it is not a major obstacle because of the method of this research: case studies can be a means of generalizing. So by using the literature available on terrorism and then studying Al-Shabaab in Kenya in specific, generalizations can be made about the global challenges of maintaining security.
when terrorism keeps changing its face. Al-Shabaab is only a part of a bigger organization, Al-Qaeda, and its behavior in Kenya should also be of interest outside Kenya.

1.9: Theoretical framework

This section discusses the theories that can help us understand the findings of this study. These theories are organizational resilience theory, complexity theory and categorical terrorism theory.

1.9.1: Theory of organizational resilience

The theory of organizational resilience is relevant when we study the effect of targeting the leader of terrorist groups. Organizational resilience refers to the degree to which an organization can survive. Thus in this study, it refers to how Al-Shabaab will survive after the death of Godane. According to Jordan (2014), there are two factors that determine the resilience of terrorist organizations: bureaucracy and popular support. Jordan argues that highly bureaucratized organizations are more resilient to leadership decapitation, because the leader is less important in such organizations. Further, terrorist groups with a high level of popular support are also more resilient to leadership decapitation for the same reason: the leader is less important. Not only are terrorist groups with a high level of bureaucracy and popular support harder to break down: targeting the leader is even likely to have a counterproductive effect on such organizations (Jordan, 2014).
1.9.2: Complexity theory

Complexity theory is another relevant theory. According to Beech (2004), complexity theory seeks to examine the interrelationship between events or systems in the world. Instead of examining individual, separate systems, complexity theory is interested in the interrelationship and the complexity of systems. Only through this method can we see the collective behavior that results from this interaction. If we examine the constituents of such systems individually, we will miss out on important collective behavior and characteristics.

Three concepts are central in complexity theory: emergence, self-organization and resilience. Emergence refers to the belief that the constituents of complex systems, so called agents, are characterized by the need to couple up with other like-minded agents in order to reach their goal. This creates a complex dynamic network that is characterized by collective behavior that is only possible through such a system. It is also characterized by a single purposeful entity.

Self-organization refers to the belief that such complex systems are dynamic and adaptive in nature, and they constantly change and adapt according to the needs of the agents and the environmental impacts. Lastly, resilience refers to the belief that complex systems are highly resilient to assaults on its agents because of its ability to spontaneously adapt to changes in the surrounding environment. This spontaneous adaption is the result of the fact that innovation comes from all constituents of the system, as opposed to a single, central intelligence.

Complexity theory thus claim that complex systems are much more resilient than hierarchical systems (Beech, 2004). Terrorist groups definitely fall into the category of such complex, dynamic networks, and complexity theory is thus relevant in any study of the changing face of terrorism, and its ability to survive leadership targeting.
1.9.3: Theory of categorical terrorism

Categorical terrorism is yet another relevant theory. According to Goodwin (2006), this theory argues that dissident groups target specific groups of civilians. The concept complicitous civilians refers to a group of civilians that are likely to be targeted because they benefit, support or influence the enemy of the dissidents. Such categorical terrorism against specific and pre-determined groups of civilians is likely to take place where the relationship between the terrorists and the targeted civilians is characterized by lack of political interaction and communication. Categorical terrorism is most likely to happen where the dissident group views the enemy or the “complicitous citizens” as perpetrators of extensive and indiscriminate violence against them and their constituents. However, civilians may be spared if the terrorists believe that there is a chance of converting them. This theory is relevant in the case of Kenya, where categorical terrorism is clearly taking place.

1.10: Literature review

This section reviews previous studies that deal with the independent variables as well as the dependent variable.

1.10.1: Security

In his book, Comparative Legal Approaches to Homeland Security and Anti-Terrorism, James Beckman (2007) presents a series of comparative case studies from around the world. According to Beckman, his book serves the following purposes: Firstly, to enable
governments to learn from each other and thus not have to re-invent the wheel. Secondly, to enable governments to open their eyes to other ways of dealing with certain challenges in order to fight the existing ethnocentrism. Thirdly, Beckman makes a plea for the United States government in particular to open their eyes to the fact that their way of doing things might not be the best way. Thus Beckman focuses his research on comparative legal systems, as opposed to research on a specific terrorist group. Moreover, Beckman focuses on the war on terror in general. This study focuses on the very specific and continuous threat of Al-Shabaab in Kenya. The threat that Kenya has faced since October 2011 is thus different from the general, and somewhat abstract, international “war on terror”. This study also focuses on the changing face of terror, which is not dealt with specifically in Beckman’s study. Beckman does not include any African countries in his comparative case study, and he includes other terror threats than Al-Qaeda, thus expanding his research beyond Islamist terrorist groups.

In her thesis submitted in 2014 titled Kenya’s Policy Responses to Terrorism, Irene Pere examined the Kenyan government’s foreign policy response to terrorism and how Kenya can create peace and stability. The objectives of the thesis is to understand why Kenya has been a target in most terrorist attacks in East Africa, how the terrorist attacks have impacted the country and finally how Kenya’s foreign policy has been reshaped by this terrorist threat. It also analyzes Kenya’s vulnerability to terrorist attacks, the growing number of terrorist attacks and the growing fear that has developed in Kenya because of terrorism. This study however, focuses on the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya with terrorist threats from Al-Shabaab. It examines the relationship between terrorism and security in Kenya by looking at how Kenyan national security is challenged by the change in Al-Shabaab’s attacks: The death of Al-Shabaab’s leader and the switch from explosives to AK-47. Further, the time frame is from 2011-2015. There is thus a clear difference between Pere’s
study and this study, both regarding the approach and perspective, and also with Pere only focusing on local terrorism whereas this study also examines international terrorism.

1.10.2: Security and the change in terror attacks

In their study, What do transnational terrorists target? Has it changed? Are we safer?, Brandt and Sandler (2010) researched target groups to examine how terrorist groups have changed their target focus through the years. They conclude that terrorist groups have gradually shifted their attention from military targets and officials, to business targets, and finally to private parties. Their research showed that when security is upgraded after attacks, terrorists change their attention to new and unsecured targets. Brandt and Sandler (2010) thus suggest that security measures must be preventive, instead of securing targets after attacks already have happened. Nevertheless, Brandt and Sandler conclude that target regimes, such as private parties versus officials, are long lasting. This is in contrast to the mode of attacks, which changes more rapidly. They thus argue that we should be able to anticipate future attacks, because the current target regime, private parties, is likely to last.

Firstly, Brandt and Sandler’s study focuses on change in target groups, and excludes change in geographical targets or the mode of attacks. This study however looks at the totality of the changes in Al-Shabaab’s attack in Kenya. Moreover, the change in target groups is likely to be a less relevant factor in this study, since the target has always been non-Muslims. The mode of the attacks and the geographical targets are more important for this study. Secondly, Brandt and Sandler argue that it should be easier to prevent attacks since the target regime is long lasting. How much has that helped in the case of Kenya? We know that the target group is non-Muslims. However, we have less information about when, where or how the next
attack will happen. The changes in the targets, from nightclubs to big shopping malls in Kenya, makes it difficult to predict where the next attack will happen. Lastly, Brandt and Sandler’s scope is from 1968 to 2007, and it is therefore outdated since terrorism metamorphoses so fast.

1.10.3: Security and the death of Al-Shabaab’s leader

In her study, When heads roll: Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Decapitation, Jenna Jordan (2009) researched 298 cases of leader decapitation from 1945 to 2004. Her goal was to examine the effectiveness of leadership decapitation in fighting terrorism. She concludes that the bigger and older the terror organization is, the lesser chance it has of collapse after leadership decapitation. Moreover, religious organizations proved to be very resistant against leadership decapitation. Ideological organizations proved less resistant. Not only does leadership decapitation not lead to organization collapse, it is actually counterproductive for old, big and religious organizations, according to Jordan. She thus concludes that targeting leaders of Al-Qaeda and similar organizations is not likely to result in collapse and is therefore bad counterterrorism strategy. As a result of these conclusions, Jordan suggests that we pay more attention on organizational structure theory: new organizations are more likely to fall apart, whereas bigger and older organizations are likely to have enough specialized personnel to replace leaders.

Jordan’s results are interesting for this study, because they imply that the murder of the Al-Shabaab leader probably will not lead to collapse of Al-Shabaab. The researcher agrees with Jordan: there is reason to assume that Al-Shabaab is both big and established enough to survive the loss of their leader. Recruitment seems to be some of the strongest features of Al-
Shabaab, like many other terrorist groups. Moreover, there is no reason to assume that Al-Shabaab’s activity or recruitment is decreasing. It has been interesting to see if Jordan is correct in her claim that leadership decapitation often is counterproductive.

1.10.4: Security and the switch from explosives to AK-47s

There are no previous studies on the challenges posed by the switch from explosives to AK-47s because this event is specific to Al-Shabaab in Kenya. AK-47s have been used by Al-Qaeda for decades already, ever since the US left numerous AK-47s in the hands of Afghans in the fight against the Soviet Union (Kahaner, 2006). Moreover, there seems to be a lack of consensus on whether or not AK-47 is a weapon of mass destruction. Some literature seems to include it, such as newspapers and chronicles. However, the researcher has not yet come across any research that includes AK-47s in their study of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. This lack of clarity in terminology is why this study specifies that it examines the switch from explosives to AK-47s. Lack of consensus and clarity in terminology is also why the researcher has failed to find any previous research on the topic.

1.10.5: Summary and gap to be filled

It should be clear from the literature review that this study can contribute to new knowledge on the topic of security and the changing face of terrorism. The studies discussed in this literary review are either outdated with data from before Al-Shabaab existed, or they focus on different factors than this study. Al-Shabaab’s terror in Kenya started in October 2011, and there is very little research on Al-Shabaab in Kenya specifically. This study will thus contribute to this knowledge.
1.11: Methodology

The research follows a descriptive design and the research is conducted as a case study. The target population is Al-Shabaab attacks in Kenya from 2011 until 2015.

1.11.1: Research design

The research design chosen for this study is a descriptive one. This implies that the study seeks to describe the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya posed by the changing Al-Shabaab threat. The study thus does not seek to explain why Al-Shabaab keeps changing its face, or why Al-Shabaab is posing a threat to Kenyan national security. Nor does the study seek to propose solutions to the problem. According to Punch (2009: 22), even though descriptive studies may seem restricted in their purpose, they can still be very valuable. He gives two such examples: firstly, when the area of research is rather new and exploratory research is planned in the future and secondly, when description of complex social processes can help us understand what to focus our explanatory research on later. Terrorism is not a new or unknown phenomenon. However, the changing behavior and fast development of terrorist groups still mean that we are dealing with a complex social phenomena that needs to be studied thoroughly. It would therefore have been too ambitious for this specific study to embark on explanatory or action research. At this point in time, when the threat of Al-Shabaab is so imminent and we know so little about what their next move will be, the lack of descriptive research means that this will be a good starting point.

The technique in which the study is conducted is case study. According to Punch (2009), the purpose of a case study is to research a unit holistically. This is opposed to certain
quantitative studies, which seek to reduce the units down for the purpose of generalization. A case study can still seek to generalize: some cases can be so important or particular that they deserve to be studied without the purpose of generalization. Nevertheless, generalization is not necessary. Case study is chosen for this study because the Al-Shabaab threat in Kenya is so serious and imminent that it deserves to be the sole unit. However, the study still seeks to generalize: both because Al-Shabaab has brother networks in other African countries such as Boko Haram in Nigeria, and because these brother organizations are part of a bigger network globally, Al-Qaeda. Thus a descriptive study of Al-Shabaab’s movements and development in Kenya should be of interest and relevance for other similar cases. Nevertheless, the main purpose of the study is still to conduct an in-depth research on Al-Shabaab’s threat in Kenya for the sake of describing this particular situation.

1.11.2: Target population

The target population is Al-Shabaab attacks in Kenya from 2011 until 2015. The attacks started in 2011 following the Kenyan invasion in Somalia. Attacks are still occurring up to date, and the most devastating attack so far, the attack on Garissa University, happened this year. It is therefore necessary to keep the research as updated as possible, in order to capture the latest trends.

1.11.3: Data sources

The data collection instrument is document analysis. The data sources are secondary data: reports from Al-Shabaab attacks in Kenya from 2011 until 2015. Such reports are mainly collected from newspaper archives. The reason for doing a document analysis for this specific
study is simply because the purpose is to describe the movements and developments of Al-Shabaab’s attacks in Kenya over the last four years. The best way to do this is to go through reports of all the incidents, and then summarize the incidents in order to describe a pattern of the events. Other data collection instruments such as questionnaires, interviews or observation studies are complicated when we deal with phenomena that pose such a high security threat as terrorist groups do. To use secondary data and conduct a content analysis is thus the most sensible instrument for this particular study and its purpose.

1.11.4: Data analysis and presentation

The method of analysis is descriptive, and the results are thus presented in a table with following analysis.

1.11.5: Expected output

This study is expected to reveal that Al-Shabaab’s changing face poses multiple challenges for maintaining security in Kenya. Such challenges are expected to be connected to the changing mode of terror attacks and the scope and size of the attacks. Moreover, new challenges are expected to rise after Al-Shabaab started using AK-47s in their attacks, thereby causing a larger number of victims. Lastly, it is expected that Al-Shabaab will survive the loss of their leader, and that Al-Shabaab continues to be characterized by adaption, innovation, unpredictability, unconventionality and the shock effect.
CHAPTER 2

2.1: Introduction

This chapter seeks to provide an overview of international terrorism. First some definitions of terrorism will be discussed with the aim of landing on a working definition for the purpose of this study. Then a few case studies of international terrorist groups will be surveyed. Finally the chapter will be summarized in the concluding section.

2.2: Definitions of terrorism

According to Spencer and Croucher (n.d) there is no universally accepted definition of terrorism. They argue that terrorism is a relative term. Terrorism for some can be something else for other people. Some might claim that they are freedom fighters, while in other people’s eyes they are plain terrorist. Loosely speaking, Spencer and Croucher suggest that terrorism is an act that aims to install fear, intimidation, overreaction or radicalization among the targets. The targets are governments, publics or constituents. Roth and Sever (2007) discusses the same problem when defining terrorism. There seems to be no consensus worldwide about what exactly terrorism is, and what exactly makes a terrorist group. They point out one possible definition where a terrorist group is any organization that takes part in terrorist activity, even if it only funds the group. Turkey defined in their anti terror law that any group made up of two or more people with a common goal can be defined as a terrorist organization. The US on the other hand has three basic criteria in their definition of a terrorist
organization (Spencer and Croucher, n.d): a group of people who have a common goal; who uses violence; and whose movement is not governmental. Other common definitions usually include the use of violence, combatant training, possession of weapons and so on. The following definition is the researcher’s understanding of a terrorist group, based on a number of former definitions: *any group of people who are gathered for the same purpose, with a common goal, who use illegitimate means and violence in order to instill fear and anxiety in its targets*. The following sections will survey a few selected cases of terrorist groups that fall under this definition.

### 2.3: Boko Haram

Boko Haram was founded in the early 2000s by Mohammed Yussuf in a town called Maiduguri in northeast Nigeria (Clothia, 2012). The name Boko Haram loosely translated means “Western education is sin”, stemming from the words haram, which means something that is sin, and boko, which means Western education. According to Mohammed Yussuf, Western education was to blame for the poverty and suffering that characterized his region (Onuoha, 2012). His preaching started off peacefully. However, his rhetoric appealed to many young men who were victims of such deprivation. The movement thus grew fast, and the police soon became aware of Boko Haram’s position and that the group was in possession of weapons.

The first big clash between Boko Haram and the police happened in 2009, when 800 people fell victim of five days of violence (Okpaga, Chijioke and Okechukwu, 2012). Among the dead was Mohammed Yussuf, who was killed in police custody. The reason behind the violence was that the police had acted against members of Boko Haram who refused to wear
helmets on their motorbikes. According to Onuoha (2012), Boko Haram members consistently rejected certain “Western” or “modern” goods such as safety helmets. Boko Haram showed how brutal they could be when they burnt down police stations as retaliation. Moreover, the death of the Boko Haram leader definitely did not weaken the group as one would hope. Rather, the murder of Mohammed Yussuf is still cited to be one of the main drivers for Boko Haram today. His anti-government and anti-authority rhetoric still stands strong today, blaming corruption and bad governance for the problems that characterize the northeastern region (Onuoha, 2012).

According to Okpaga et.al (2012), Boko Haram has been unable to articulate a clear agenda. The group has claimed to fight for Sharia law in Nigeria, to fight against economic deprivation caused by Western education, to fight the President, the government, Christians and so on. It is thus unclear what exactly is the agenda of the group. Okpaga et.al (2012) claim that many Nigerians find it hard to separate between facts and propaganda when it comes to the agenda of Boko Haram, because the group employs all types of war tactics, including propaganda.

Nevertheless, Boko Haram seems to have no problem with recruitment. The multiple bomb attacks in Kano city on January 20th 2012 involved dozens of Boko Haram militants, including many suicide bombers, therefore showing off the strength of the group. The group is said to recruit from neighbor countries Niger, Chad and Cameroon (Onuoha (2012).

Further, the continuing poor situation in the northeast means that Boko Haram is able to appeal to disgruntled politicians and their paid thugs (Okpaga et al, 2012). The group is therefore not just made up of fanatics, but has a wide range of members. It is such factors that made previous President Jonathan Goodluck to realize that in order to fight Boko Haram, they
have to look at the factors behind the popularity of the group. Creation of jobs for young men might prove more helpful in fighting Boko Haram than military action alone (Onuoha, 2012). As long as the northeast region is characterized by economic deprivation and grievances, the rhetoric of Boko Haram will keep appealing to many (Clothia, 2012).

Boko Haram has undergone major changes since it became active in 2009. Changes have been seen in targets, the scope of attacks, use of arms and so on. The metamorphosis is therefore creating additional challenges for those who are in charge of maintaining security in Nigeria. In the beginning, Boko Haram attacks were rather simple with attacks on Christian clubs, with weapons such as machetes, clubs and small arms (Okpaga et.al, 2012). In 2010 the group started using Molotov cocktails and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), therefore showing off some tactical advancement. In 2011 the group advanced further when they used a large vehicle borne improvised explosive device, also known as a car bomb, in a suicide attack against the headquarter of the Nigerian National Police in Abuja, the capital. This attack signaled that Boko Haram was taking major steps in its capabilities to make bombs, so much so that questions arose whether the group was working with Al-Qaeda or Al-Shabaab. According to Okpaga et.al (2012), it is unusual to move so fast from small IEDs and straight to large car bombs without having some very qualified help from the outside. 2011 also witnessed a shift in targets of Boko Haram attacks, when a UN compound in a diplomatic area was attacked on August 26th 2011. This time the target of the attack was neither a government building nor Christians.

The shift in both targets and advancement of arms raised suspicion that Boko Haram was receiving training from and being influenced by Al-Qaeda or Al-Shabaab (Onuoha, 2012). It was perceived as highly unlikely that Boko Haram was able to make such advances alone.
without training from someone on the outside. It was also suggested that Boko Haram receives funding from Al-Qaeda. For example, Boko Haram seems to have a wide access to commercial explosives. Moreover, some of the strengths of Boko Haram lie in its ability to make bombs, suicide vests and car bombs. Okpaga et.al (2012) therefore sees this proficiency within Boko Haram as a sign that the group is receiving training from Al-Qaeda. Okpaga et al (2012) points to the fact that since Boko Haram is boasting of its links with Al-Qaeda this illustrates that Al-Qaeda still has a strong name internationally, even after the death of the leader Osama bin Laden. This implies that the legacy left behind by bin Laden might be more attractive than experts first thought.

Boko Haram received serious international attention when the group kidnapped 276 girls from school (The Guardian, 2015). The number was much higher but many girls managed to escape after some time. The kidnapping received massive attention all over the world, and a campaign was started on social media called #bringbackourgirls. Famous people like Michelle Obama and supermodel Cara Deligvine posted selfies with the famous hashtag. All over the world people demanded that the girls be set free and that Boko Haram be punished. Sadly however, many girls are still held captive and are now most likely slaves for Boko Haram members. The Nigerian government has done very little to free the girls, and the attack has therefore illustrated how poorly equipped Nigeria is to tackle the Boko Haram threat.

2.4: The Kurdish Workers’ Party (PKK) in Turkey

The Kurdish Workers’ Party (PKK) was founded on November 27, 1978 in the Turkish city of Diyarbakir (Roth and Murat, 2007). The people who founded the PKK were previous
members of the Ankara Higher Education Association, one of many youth associations that were founded during the political upheavals of the late 1960s. Since its foundation, the PKK has become a major security threat in Turkey, and according to BBC (2015) they had victimized over 40,000 people since their operations started. Consequently, the terrorist group is now on the list of both the EU and the US over terrorist organizations.

The terrorist activities started in 1984 and the initial target was the Turkish government (BBC, 2015). The group launched several attacks against security forces in rural areas. After the success of such attacks, the group moved on to attack urban areas. The target population also shifted, from security forces to now attacking anything from foreign tourists to diplomats and even teachers. The weapons they used in these attacks ranged from car bombs, suicide bombs and kidnapping (Roth and Murat, 2007).

Initially, the PKK claimed that their agenda was to free the Kurds who were living scattered around in the region (Roth and Murat, 2007). Moreover, it claimed to support the creation of a larger Kurdistan state. As time went by, however, it became clear that this rhetoric was only a tool for the PKK. Liberation of Kurds and the establishment of Kurdistan was never the real agenda. Rather, the real agenda of the PKK was to spread socialism. The agenda was therefore more an ideological one, and not ethnic. The PKK turned out to be a Marxist movement more than anything. This was clear when one took a look at the members who made up the PKK: the leader, Abdullah Ocalan, had a Turkish mother and did not speak any of the two Kurdish languages. Moreover, the rest of the members were a mix of Kurds and Turks. It also became clear that on the agenda were the hatred against US imperialism and its allies (Roth and Murath, 2007).

The leader of the PKK seems to have a strong grip on the terrorist group, even from prison (BBC, 2015). He was captured in Kenya after he had been on the run ever since Syria
expelled him in 1999. Ocalan has been in prison ever since, but he is still the leader of the group. He manages to communicate with his group members, and he has sent orders many times. Such orders range from ceasefire to resurgence of violence, and the activity of the PKK has shifted accordingly, from quiet times to more violent times.

The PKK, like Boko Haram, has no problem with the recruitment of members. Just like Boko Haram, the PKK recruits especially from poor areas (Roth and Murat, 2007). Other areas include highly populated ones and industrial cities. The people recruited are typically without jobs and education. Further, the PKK is known for using force and threat in its recruitment process. This method includes abduction, drugging and brainwashing. The group is even known for using child soldiers.

Initially, the PKK received funding from the Soviet Union and Syria. But with the end of the Cold War and the Soviet Union, the PKK had to look to other sources to find funding. The PKK now engage in a wide range of criminal activities in order to fund its operations (Beriket, 1997). Such criminal activities range from drug trafficking, human smuggling, money laundering and money extortion. The PKK has shown its brutality in its way of extorting money from Kurds, both those living in Turkey and abroad (Beriket, 1997). Refusal to pay has resulted in kidnappings, murders, and vandalizing.

The PKK still poses a major security threat today, and the situation has only been made worse as a result of the Syrian civil war and the fight against ISIS. Repeatedly, peace talks and negotiations have broken down, and this summer tension arose again following the Turkish air strike against PKK in Iraq and against ISIS in Syria in July (BBC, 2015). During a peace rally against the violence between the Turkish authorities and the PKK on October 10th this year, two bombs went off near a train station in Ankara. The attack killed 99 people, and it is therefore the deadliest attack in Turkey to date. Although it still remains unclear who was
behind the bombing, the PKK and ISIS have been blamed for the attack and it is very likely that one or both groups were behind the attack (The Guardian, 2015 b).

2.5: The Basque in Spain

The terrorist organization ETA was founded in 1959, and it took nine years before it claimed its first victim (Abadie and Gardeazabal, 2003). The group remained fairly non-violent until the mid-1970s, only claiming an average of two victims each year (Abadie and Gardeazabal 2003). From 1974, however, the death toll rose to 16 victims each year, and then culminated in the three years between 1978 and 1980 when 235 people fell victim of the ETA’s operations. These three years remain the bloodiest to date. The number of victims declined steadily into the 1990s, and in 1998 ETA declared a ceasefire. The violence resumed after 14 months following the end of the ceasefire.

The agenda of the ETA was to promote the establishment of a Basque state. The Basque as an ethnic group find themselves in an area that lies in both France and Spain, and they have long fought for their own state (Beck, 2005). The agenda of the ETA is therefore rooted in nationalism. More specifically, Spencer and Croucher notes that it is the Basque language in particular that makes up this Basque identity. The right to speak the Basque language has therefore long been the struggle for Basque nationalists, since it was illegal under the rule of Franco. According to Spencer and Croucher, many people now associate Basque identity with violence and terrorism.

The ETA funds its operations through means of extortion of money and by demanding ransom for kidnapped victims (Abadie and Gardeazabal 2003). Robbery also occurs, though more rarely. As a consequence of these activities, people have fled the Basque country in
order to avoid falling victims. Basque entrepreneurs have particularly been targets. The geographical target of ETA’s attacks has overwhelmingly been the Basque country (Abadie and Gardeazabal 2003). Between 1968 and 1997, over 70 percent of the killings of ETA operations occurred in the Basque country.

The organizational structure of the ETA is different from the other typical terrorist groups in that it is non-hierarchical. Rather, the structure is characterized by several self-sufficient cells that carry out attacks. The modes of attacks are assassinations and kidnappings (Barros, 2003).

There has been a change in the operations since the 1990s (Beck, 2005:2). Especially, attacks have changed from targeted attacks to more random street violence. The group has become more radical over the years, and the prospect for cooperation with Spanish parties seems further and further away. Barros (2003) therefore argues that in order to restore peace, the ETA must not be banned from taking part in legal political action. Herri Batasuna used to represent the ETA in the Basque Parliament. Ever since Herri Batasuna was banned from political activity in 2002, terrorism has increased.

2.6: Conclusion

This chapter has surveyed a small selection of the terrorist groups that have terrorized the world in the past and present. The terrorist groups range from separatist movements to ideological movements and to Islamic fundamentalist movements. The next chapter will focus on the latter group, and Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab will be discussed in more detail.
CHAPTER 3

3.1: Introduction

This chapter focuses on religious terrorism, and more specifically on Islamic fundamentalist movements. The next section will briefly discuss such terrorism in general. It will be followed by a discussion of Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab. Finally the concluding section will summarize the chapter.

3.2: Islamic fundamentalist movements

Islamist fundamentalism is the dominating type of dissident terrorism today (Martin, 2014: 156). Martin proposes four trends in religious terrorism: extremist religious propaganda cannot be prevented; a new generation of Islamist extremists have been primed after the Iraqi war; Al-Qaeda has developed from merely an organization to an ideology; and the jihadi movement has developed into a globalized phenomena. These four trends all contribute to the rapid metamorphosis of global terrorism, which poses maybe the single biggest threat to international security right now. The most influential Islamic fundamentalist movement is Al-Qaeda. As the next section will argue, Al-Qaeda has developed from an organization to becoming a worldwide ideology. This development of Al-Qaeda is a good example of the metamorphosis of terrorism that is the basis for this study: Al-Qaeda started off as a unitary organization with Saddam Hussein as leader. Now scholars argue that Al-Qaeda has decentralized into a web of networks and cells all over the world and all of their respective leaders. It is now more common to speak of Al-Qaeda as a worldwide ideology. This ideology
gives inspiration and support to newer terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and ISIS. The following section will discuss Al-Qaeda and this metamorphosis in greater detail. It will be followed by a discussion on one of the newer terrorist groups that have been inspired and supported by Al-Qaeda, namely Al-Shabaab, which is the focus of this study.

3.3: Al-Qaeda

According to Burke (2004), it was the FBI that came up with the name Al-Qaeda in order to describe the enemy that stood behind the bombings of the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998. Before then, Al-Qaeda was merely thought of as a loosely linked group of activists gathered by Osama bin Laden. The word qaeda means “foundation” or “method”, and it has been used by Islamist fundamentalists for many decades (Burke, 2004).

Based on the grievances suggested by other authors, Byman (2003) suggests a list of five main grievances that Al-Qaeda have against the US. These are blasphemous US military presence in holy sites in the Arab world; US support for Israel; US support for corrupt Muslim regimes such as Egypt, Algeria and Saudi-Arabia; US destruction of Iraq; and finally US subordination of the Muslim world. In general, the grievances against the US are political and focus on the cultural, political and military power that the US has in the world (Byman, 2003). Based on this rhetoric, Al-Qaeda appeals to many Muslims who are not fond of the US. Jihad is a central concept in the propaganda of Al-Qaeda, where its meaning has been extended beyond the traditional spiritual battle to mean actual warfare. Moreover, the typical rhetoric of late Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden was to convince the Muslim world that a war between the US and the Muslim world was on the way. By provoking US response bin Laden hoped that Muslims would choose sides in the conflict.
The typical targets of Al-Qaeda attacks are buildings or facilities that symbolize US hegemony, such as embassies and military sites. Further, Al-Qaeda opts for a large number of casualties in their attacks in order to always shock the world and get attention from the West (Byman, 2003). In recent years however, the world has seen a change in the typical targets of Al-Qaeda attacks. Already in 2004, Hoffman argued that Al-Qaeda were shifting their targets, since the traditional targets such as embassies and military sites became increasingly secured as a result of the global war on terror and the counter-terrorism strategies that followed. Rather, Hoffman (2004) argues that Al-Qaeda is increasingly targeting softer targets such as the nightclub bombings in Bali in 2002 and the train bombings in Madrid in 2004. These attacks were carried out by terrorist groups who are associated or affiliated with Al-Qaeda (Hoffman, 2004).

The structure of Al-Qaeda is an important factor in the group’s success and the West’s difficulties with fighting it. The best way to describe the organizational structure of Al-Qaeda is that of a wider network with a core or a base and a web of cells around the world (Byman, 2003 and Hoffman, 2004). This means that a large bulk of Al-Qaeda’s function includes training and otherwise assisting other terrorist groups that it has created links with, as was argued in the section about Boko Haram and how the group receives training and funding from Al-Qaeda. Byman (2003) argues that this complicated structure of Al-Qaeda means that it is hard to determine exactly how big the group is, and if it is one unified group or many smaller cells. Hoffman (2004) argues that Al-Qaeda has gone from a once unified organization, to a more decentralized, worldwide ideology. This is the result of the global war on terror, which saw the Al-Qaeda base in Afghanistan being destroyed. The US thought it had made a big step towards destroying Al-Qaeda. Rather, the loss of the base did not
necessarily weaken Al-Qaeda, it just led to a change in the structure. Once a unified organization, Al-Qaeda is now more of a global, decentralized concept with networks worldwide (Hoffman, 2004). In order to explain this phenomenon, Burke (2004) uses the term *al-Qaedaism* to emphasize that we are now talking about an ideology, and not so much an organization anymore.

Al-Qaeda has a large appeal and recruits from different channels (Byman, 2003). For example, ex-combatants from previous conflicts make out a pool of potential recruits for Al-Qaeda. Through its training function Al-Qaeda produces dangerous jihadists, thereby resulting in violent conflicts around the world. Al-Qaeda uses such conflict as an arena to which it can spread its propaganda, and recruit more combatants. Moreover, Al-Qaeda appeals to potential recruits far outside the Arab world only. US resentment and extremist Islamist views are found in both Africa and Europe. In order to fund itself, Al-Qaeda has a wide network of charities, fund-raising organizations and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It also relies on funding from rich Muslims who support the jihadist cause.

Byman (2003) points out four major strengths of Al-Qaeda: Firstly, its membership is extremely diverse both ethnically and geographically, meaning that Al-Qaeda jihadists have an advantage that they can blend in anywhere in the world. Hoffman (2004) points to the fact that as a result of the destruction of the base in Afghanistan, all of those jihadists who were training in Afghanistan are now spread across the world. Moreover, these members are usually well educated, highly trained and experienced. Secondly, Al-Qaeda is remarkably patient when it comes to planning for and implementing operations. The group does not rush in order to show its strength. Rather, it takes time in planning operations. Thirdly, Al-Qaeda
has shown the ability to adapt attacks according to circumstances. Previous operations are evaluated and lessons are drawn from them in order to ensure that future operations are even more successful. As previously mentioned, Hoffman (2004) argues that Al-Qaeda has shifted the targets of their attacks in accordance with the security situation at the time. When one type of target is being secured, attacks must target new and unsecured targets. A fourth strength is the fact that the organizational structure of Al-Qaeda makes it less likely to suffer greatly if a leader dies, due to the mix of hierarchy and global network structure. Further strengths include a high level of tolerance towards other terrorist groups; the ability to appeal to so many potential supporters and jihadists; and finally the high level of operational security.

It has proven very difficult to fight Al-Qaeda. Byman (2003) points to how unexpected the attack on the World Trade Center was, how it came out of nowhere. In order to come up with counterterrorism strategies it is vital to know the enemy, and we have seen how complex Al-Qaeda really is and how hard it is to establish its actual size and who the supporters are. Moreover, Al-Qaeda has known the capability of being innovative in its attacks. It is therefore very hard to determine where the next attack will be, because we cannot only consider the obvious targets. Finally, the death of the leader Osama bin Laden has in no way resulted in the end of Al-Qaeda. Even before bin Laden was killed, Byman (2003) argued that bin Laden has managed to build an image that is greater than himself, and that the web that he has weaved will keep enduring after his death. We also saw that Okpaga et.al (2012) argued that Boko Haram’s link to Al-Qaeda illustrates that bin Laden left a very enduring legacy that keeps weaving its web of alliances. The same can be said to Al-Qaeda’s link to Al-Shabaab: it shows that Al-Qaeda still is considered to be a strong force internationally, one that other terrorist groups look up to and wish to learn from (Pitts, 2015).
It is these factors that lead Hoffman (2004) to argue that Al-Qaeda has transformed from an organization to an ideology. All over the world we see terrorist groups who are not necessarily directly linked to Al-Qaeda, but who still operates under the influence of Al-Qaeda and who share the ideology of Al-Qaeda. This reflects the strategy of Al-Qaeda to support local jihadists worldwide and their case. This has been a necessary, and very clever, move as the result of the loss of its base in Afghanistan. This transformation shows the resilience of Al-Qaeda, and how capable it is of adapting to new circumstances. When it was no longer able to operate from a strong base, it rather sought to remain strong by supporting local terrorist groups all around the world who shared somewhat the same ideology. It therefore makes much sense to adopt Burke’s (2004) concept of al-qaedaism. In this way, Al-Qaeda has made sure that it remains a very strong force, and if anything it is even harder to beat since it is no longer so visible. Rather, it influences, funds, trains and otherwise supports jihadists all over the world as long as they share a relatively similar ideology as Al-Qaeda. One such group is the topic for this study, and this terrorist group shall now be examined.

3.4: Al-Shabaab

The roots of Al-Shabaab trace back to the ICU, an association of sharia courts, where Al-Shabaab was the military force (Pitts, 2015). Somalia was left in destruction and anarchy in the 1990s, and the ICU was trying to restore peace and stability through the focus on Islam. However, a group of people were not happy about the passive attitude of the ICU and they started focusing on terror and spread of fear as means of spreading sharia law. The name Al-Shabaab means the youth. Initially, Al-Shabaab gained support because they fought for equality for all, as opposed to the existing hierarchical clan system in Somalia. They also appealed through the use of Islam. Al-Shabaab grew out of the chaotic circumstances that
characterized Somalia in the 1990s, and the group used Islam as a unifying and comforting pillar when all other pillars of society were crumbling. The fight against clan superiority and the use of Islam therefore provided Al-Shabaab with a solid support base.

Recruitment was easy because there were so many young, unemployed, poor men with no better option in life than to become members of Al-Shabaab (Pitts, 2015). For many of these young men, Al-Shabaab membership was the only way to provide for themselves. However this is not to say that Al-Shabaab recruitment is always on a voluntary basis. Rather, Al-Shabaab is known for the use of force in their recruitment process, such as kidnapping of boys in schools or in their own home with their parents as witnesses. What is more surprising is that Al-Shabaab has managed to recruit a fair amount of members from the Western world. These people are typically, though not always, ethnic Somalis who fled the country during war. One example is one of the four attackers who attacked Westgate in Nairobi, Kenya. He was a Norwegian citizen raised in Norway, but he still chose to move to Africa and join Al-Shabaab, a cause he ultimately died for. Such Muslim communities in the West have long been subject to recruitment by Al-Qaeda, but it is still noteworthy that the much smaller Al-Shabaab also has such a strong appeal in the West. It implies that Al-Shabaab is an international force to be reckoned with, and it helps spread fear outside of Somalia and its neighboring countries.

This international appeal also provides Al-Shabaab with funding. Al-Shabaab receives funding through different means, both locally and internationally. Locally, Al-Shabaab is funded through links that they have created in the community such as mosques. Internationally, Al-Shabaab receives funding from other Muslim nations such as Yemen and
Iran, and through remittances from Somalis living all over the world. The latter provides quite a large amount of money each year (Pitts, 2015).

Al-Shabaab announced its link to Al-Qaeda in 2012 (Pitts, 2015). This link helps Al-Shabaab to be recognized internationally, as well as it provides funding and recruitment opportunities far outside Somalia and its neighboring countries. Al-Shabaab uses the media in order to spread its agenda and recruit more members, and in recent years much space has been dedicated to Al-Qaeda and biographies of late Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

The present Al-Shabaab threat that is felt in Kenya today stems back to 2011. After a series of Al-Shabaab kidnappings of Western tourists and aid workers in the north of the Kenyan coast, Kenya answered by invading Somalia (Andersen and McKnight, 2014). Immediately after the invasion, Al-Shabaab threatened to retaliate heavily with attacks in Kenya. Four years later, it is clear that Al-Shabaab was very much serious in their threat. Indeed, numerous attacks have left hundreds of Kenyans dead, and fear and anxiety has become part of the every day life in Kenya. Al-Shabaab wants to instill fear in Kenya. The group often justifies attacks as revenge against the presence of Kenyan troops in Somalia; the discrimination of Muslims in Kenya; and the Christian occupation of land that used to belong to Muslims. The latter was sited as the reason behind the massacre in Mpeketoni where 67 people were killed. The Kenyan government is struggling to fight the terror threat, and time and again Al-Shabaab attacks have illustrated how badly equipped and coordinated the Kenyan forces are to handle this threat.

Lind, Mutahi and Oosterom (2015) have conducted a research on the Al-Shabaab threat in Kenya, and their findings are very interesting when we try to understand the enemy and how
it operates. The main finding of the authors is that Kenya’s counter terrorism strategies are built on false assumptions. According to Lind et.al (2015), Kenya has created an image of an external threat due to the state collapse in Somalia. However, the threat seems to be very much an internal one as well. This argument is based on who makes up Al-Shabaab, where it recruits from and through which means.

So who makes up Al-Shabaab? Although the Kenyan state would love to talk about Somalis, the real picture is quite different. Al-Shabaab members are often Kenyans with fluent Swahili. Very often have we heard witnesses after an attack talk about fluent Swahili speakers who seemed very familiar with either the place or the people. For example, after the attack in Mpeketoni in June 2014, witnesses said that the attackers knew the victims by name (Lind et al, 2015). Previous attackers have been from all over Kenya. It is therefore becoming clear that Al-Shabaab attackers often are locals, and not foreigners.

Al-Shabaab’s appeal is built on existing social structures in Kenya. Kenya has a long history of social injustice and marginalization, especially of the periphery areas. This has resulted in grievances among the people who are victim of such marginalization. Al-Shabaab has translated such grievances into its own grievances, and it takes advantage of the situation in order to build an appealing rhetoric. One informant argues that Al-Shabaab gained so much ground in Somalia because it fought for equality for all groups, a rhetoric that was appealing in a society that is divided into a hierarchy of clans. The informant points to the fact that Al-Shabaab is now doing the same in Kenya, where it exploits the grievances in order to gain support. The Coastal area of Kenya illustrates this point clearly, because the area has long suffered from marginalization and as a result Al-Shabaab has a very strong presence and support base in the area. Al-Shabaab has therefore found a way to exploit the faults of Kenyan
social structure in order to recruit people for its cause. This has led informants in the research of Lind et al. to argue that even if Kenya shuts the boarder to Somalia, the terror threat will not disappear. Rather, the threat has morphed into an issue over social injustice and marginalization within Kenya. Al-Shabaab targets young, often unemployed men from marginalized areas in their recruitment. It is therefore very much an internal threat.

Lind et al. (2015) also take a critical look at the Kenyan counter terrorism strategies. At best these strategies are questionable, at worst they are a result of pure corruption and discrimination. Operation Linda Nchi was launched in October 16th, 2011 as a response to the kidnappings of Westerners in the Coast by Al-Shabaab. The justification for the operation was the right to defend Kenya against an external threat. The operation has so far not produced the wanted results. Rather, attacks in Kenya have increased in number and intensity during Kenya’s presence in Somalia. Al-Shabaab continues to site the presence of Kenyan troops in Somalia as their primary reason for performing attacks in Kenya. The mission has become a matter of pride for the government, and withdrawal would be perceived as a failure. There is therefore little discussion of whether or not the mission should continue. The real reason for the operation is also under question. For example, it has been claimed that Kenya really just wants control over strategic cities because it has economic interests there such as illicit trade of charcoal and sugar. Moreover, it is commonly argued that the kidnapping of tourists were just an excuse for Kenya to enter into Somalia, something they had planned for a while.

The second major operation took place in Eastleigh in April 2014 by the name Usalama Watch. More than 6,000 police officers participated in a raid to detain Somalis who were in the country illegally. Far from only arresting those who could not produce documents, the officers rather arrested anyone who could produce a bribe. This means that wealthy
businessmen became particular targets. In the aftermath of the operation, the officers were accused of harassment, extortion and assault. The result of the operation was a deepened sense of marginalization and social injustice. Informants claimed that the operation has nothing to do with countering terrorism. Rather, it was an economic war since Eastleigh is known for its entrepreneurs and bustling business activity.

As a result of these findings, Lind et al. (2015) argue that the counter terrorism strategies in Kenya are not suitable in order to fight Al-Shabaab. The image that Kenya has created of a dangerous external threat, that is Somalis, feeds into the already existing grievances and social injustices in Kenya, which in turn allows Al-Shabaab to spread its propaganda based on these issues. An informant argued that the withdrawal of the Kenyan troops in Somalia will probably not make the threat go away since the terror threat is internal and not just external. Rather, Lind et al (2015) propose three main ways of fighting the terror threat based on their findings. Firstly, they argue that Kenya needs to address the issues of marginalization and social injustice that Al-Shabaab is taking advantage of in their propaganda. Secondly, Kenya needs to stop the discrimination against Somalis and Muslims. The image of Somalis as a threat against security simply leads to an even deeper feeling of marginalization and therefore gives Al-Shabaab more to exploit. Lastly, more focus needs to be put on the issues of corruption and lack of accountability. The Kenyan police was ranked on the very top over Kenyan institutions that are prone to bribery, in the most updated study by the East African Bribery Index, which is for 2014. The police also needs to join forces and work more closely together in the fight against terrorism. In the aftermath of many attacks it has become clear that the police knew that an attack was imminent in the affected area.
When Kenya invaded Somalia in October 2011, the revenge attacks in Kenya started immediately (Andersen and McKnight, 2014). After only two days attackers threw hand grenades into a nightclub in Nairobi. This event was followed by a hand grenade attack on people who were waiting at a bus stop. Similar attacks happened in other parts of Kenya too: in Mandera, Garissa and Dadaab refugee camp. The attacks continued for months. It was clear that Al-Shabaab meant business when they threatened to retaliate after the invasion. Then Al-Shabaab shocked the world when they attacked the upmarket mall Westgate in Westlands, an area made up primarily of rich people. The attackers entered the mall with grenades and small arms, and they managed to kill 67 people and injure over 200 people before they were finally defeated four days into the attack. The attack caught people by surprise. Earlier attacks had been rather low profile grenade attacks. There was nothing low profile about the Westgate attack. Rather it was sophisticated and it targeted rich people. Lind et al. (2015) therefore argue that Al-Shabaab attacks have morphed from low profile attacks to sophisticated attacks, thus illustrating that Al-Shabaab is escalating the violence campaign in Kenya. The Westgate attack proved that Kenya was nowhere near ready to handle such a serious threat, so the metamorphosis of Al-Shabaab attacks have proven to be a major security challenge for Kenya. This is the background for the rest of this study.

3.5: Conclusion

This chapter has shown that Islamic fundamentalist movements pose a major security threat in the world. Al-Qaeda has shown the capability of adapting and adjusting to the new circumstances, and the group has therefore proved far more resilient than the world first anticipated. Al-Qaeda has found new ways of holding own to its position as a major influence, and newer terrorist groups have developed with the support and influence of Al-
 Qaeda. Al-Shabaab is one such group, and this chapter has argued that also Al-Shabaab has shown a remarkable ability to adapt to new circumstances and to be innovative and shocking in their attacks. The terrorist group is therefore posing a massive security threat in Kenya, and time and again the aftermath of an attack has revealed how poorly prepared the Kenyan government has been for terror attacks. Al-Shabaab seem to always be a step ahead, and therefore the group still manages to shock the world with its violent and brutal attacks. It is this metamorphosis of the Al-Shabaab that is the focus of the rest of this study. The next chapter will present the results from the data collection and analyze the findings.
CHAPTER 4

4.1: Introduction

This chapter will present and analyze the findings from the data collection. The first section will present the findings in a table (table 1). All the data in this table is collected from The Daily Nation’s archive on their online webpage www.nation.co.ke. The table is a presentation of all the Al-Shabaab attacks between the start of the attacks in October 2011 and to date. The table contains the dates, targets, locations, victims and weapons used of the attacks. The table only includes attacks where Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility, or where investigation clearly states that Al-Shabaab was behind the attack. The purpose is to provide an overview of the development of the attacks, from rather simple grenade attacks to the highly deathly attacks with AK-47s at Westgate Mall and Garissa University College. The next section seeks to analyze these findings. The specific research questions will be discussed based on the findings. Finally the concluding section will summarize the chapter and provide some conclusions.

4.2: Presentation of results from data collection

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of victims</th>
<th>Weapon used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 24th, 2012</td>
<td>Night club and matatu</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Grenade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Casualties</th>
<th>Type of Weapon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 24th, 2012</td>
<td>Civilians and Kenyan troops</td>
<td>Mandera and Garissa</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Grenades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1st, 2012</td>
<td>Night club</td>
<td>Garissa</td>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Grenades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 10th, 2012</td>
<td>Bus station</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Grenades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 29th, 2012</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Grenade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 24th, 2012</td>
<td>Sports bar</td>
<td>Mombasa</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Grenade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1st, 2012</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Garissa</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Guns and grenades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 18th, 2013</td>
<td>Eatery</td>
<td>Garissa</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>AK-47s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 25th, 2013</td>
<td>Police post</td>
<td>Garissa</td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 16th, 2013</td>
<td>Police camp</td>
<td>Garissa</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 21st, 2013</td>
<td>Westgate Mall</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>AK-47s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3rd, 2014</td>
<td>Business district</td>
<td>Mombasa</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Hand grenade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Casualties</th>
<th>Weapons/Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 16th, 2014</td>
<td>Market</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>12 IEDs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 15th, 2014</td>
<td>Villagers</td>
<td>Mpeketoni, Lamu</td>
<td>48 Guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 16th, 2014</td>
<td>Villagers</td>
<td>Mpeketoni, Lamu</td>
<td>15 Guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 5th, 2014</td>
<td>Villagers</td>
<td>Lamu and Tana River</td>
<td>22 Automatic rifles and machetes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 18th, 2014</td>
<td>Commuting bus</td>
<td>Lamu</td>
<td>7 Guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 20th, 2014</td>
<td>Villagers</td>
<td>Mpeketoni, Lamu</td>
<td>48 Guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 22nd, 2014</td>
<td>Commuting bus</td>
<td>Mandera</td>
<td>28 AK 47s and guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2nd, 2014</td>
<td>Quarry workers</td>
<td>Mandera</td>
<td>36 Guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2nd, 2015</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Garissa University College</td>
<td>147 AK 47s and grenades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 7th, 2015</td>
<td>Quarry workers</td>
<td>Mandera</td>
<td>14 IED and guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 14th, 2015</td>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>Bargoni, Lamu</td>
<td>5 Explosive device</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3: Analysis of the specific research questions

This section will seek to answer the specific research questions based on the findings in the table, and in light of the theories that were discussed in chapter 1.

4.3.1: How has the change in Al-Shabaab’s attacks affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya?

As discussed in chapter 1, Martin (2014: 161) characterizes international terrorism as unpredictable, unexpected and unconventional, and targets are chosen because of their ability to shock, surprise, affect and disgust the international community. It is these characteristics in particular that make it so hard for security forces to fight terrorism: they rarely know where the terrorists will strike next. Terrorist groups have the capability to always find new loopholes in security, and their attacks therefore always seem to shock and surprise. Brandt and Sandler (2009) thus argue that counterterrorism strategies have to be preventive: by the time one target has been secured, terrorists have already shifted their attention to new and unsecured targets. The ability to predict future attacks from Al-Shabaab will thus be crucial in maintaining national security in Kenya.

Table 1 shows how the attacks have changed over the four years since Al-Shabaab started its attacks in Kenya. The attacks started off rather modestly as grenade attacks the first nine months. Victims usually ranged from one to seven. The first attack happened on October 24th, 2014, when one person was killed after a twin grenade attack on a nightclub and a matatu in Nairobi. The following five attacks were also grenade attacks, killing between one to seven people in each attack. The targets of the attacks were crowds at public places such as bus
stations, matatus, nightclubs and sports bars. In other words, attacks followed a rather clear pattern the first months: hand grenades were being hurled into crowds at public places. This pattern changed on July 1st, 2012, when terrorists attacked a church in Garissa with not just hand grenades but also guns. 18 people were killed in the attack. This attack signaled changes in several ways: not only had Al-Shabaab advanced from the use of hand grenades only, but the groups had also changed its target: a church is not only a public site, but it is a holy site, one of the pillars in society in a country like Kenya where the majority of people are Christians. An attack on a church therefore sends a different message than an attack on a sports bar, because a religious site holds a higher status in society. It also illustrates who the wanted target is: an attack on a matatu on a bar can potentially kill anyone who finds themselves at that spot at that time. It is rather coincidental who falls victim of such attacks. An attack on a church, however, is more calculated because the attackers know that the church is filled with mostly Christians. Therefore, the attack proved that Al-Shabaab had now shifted its target to Christians specifically. It also showed that Al-Shabaab attacks had moved beyond simple grenade attacks on public sites with a single digit number of victims.

The year that followed after this attack was relatively quiet. The few attacks that happened during this year did not kill more than 10 people in each attack. This led many people to argue that Al-Shabaab was becoming a decreasing threat in Kenya. However, the silence meant rather the opposite: Al-Shabaab again shocked the world when attackers raided Westgate shopping mall and killed 67 people on September 21st, 2013. This attack was by far the deadliest in Al-Shabaab history in Kenya, and it absolutely shook the world. The attack received enormous attention, and news agencies were reporting from all over the world. Although the number of victims was high, the attack will perhaps be remembered more for the pathetic response from Kenyan security forces. The attack went on for four days until the
mall was cleared. Witnesses have told how it was civilians who heroically entered the mall and saved hundreds of people. Unofficial reports tell how Kenyan police and Kenyan security forces were shooting at each other in the confusion that arose. The attack therefore revealed how unprepared Kenya was for such an attack. Not only was the security at Westgate not good enough, but even the response from Kenyan security forces was nothing short of disastrous. Al-Shabaab declared the attack to be a huge success on its part, and it showed just how capable the terror group was. The attack revealed that Kenyan security forces were facing an enormous challenge when it came to maintaining national security, and that the enemy was far bigger and far more capable of destruction than previously anticipated.

Al-Shabaab again changed its target when it performed several consecutive attacks on villagers in Lamu during the summer of 2014. As mentioned in chapter 3, Al-Shabaab has used existing grievances in order to gain support for its own cause. Lamu is one such area where Al-Shabaab has been able to manipulate existing grievances among the Muslim population against Christians, because during the time of independence, land was taken from Muslims and given to Christians (Andersen and McKnight, 2014). During the attacks, which happened on June 15th, 16th and July 5th, 2014, terrified villagers were attacked with machetes, guns and automatic rifles, and their houses were burnt down. These attacks illustrated a shift in Al-Shabaab’s strategy: while the Westgate attack was sophisticated and included long-term planning in advance, the attacks in Lamu were rather simple in comparison. To put it this way: while Kenyan security forces were busy securing malls and other public buildings around Kenya, Al-Shabaab simply entered a village and massacred whoever they came over. This shows that Al-Shabaab is always a step ahead: when security forces are busy securing one type of target as a result of an attack, Al-Shabaab is already attacking new and unsecured targets.
This last point was proven again on November 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2014, when Al-Shabaab attacked a commuting bus in Mandera and killed 28 people. Once again Kenyans were shocked and appalled by the attack because it was so unexpected. Out of nowhere, Al-Shabaab members armed with AK-47s stopped a commuting bus along the road, shot the driver and made all non-Muslims step out of the bus. With the Muslims left in the bus as witnesses, the attackers shot everyone outside on the spot. They then ran away, leaving the shocked survivors on the bus behind. The attack was so shocking because it was such a brutal and unexpected attack. The idea that a bus could be stopped and everyone dragged out and shot on the spot terrified Kenyans. The attack showed that Al-Shabaab always manages to come up with new ways to attack, ways that are always unexpected.

But the deadliest attack to date was yet to happen. The attack came on April 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2015, when Al-Shabaab stormed Garissa University College with AK-47s and grenades and killed 147 people. Most of the victims were non-Muslim students. Just like so many times before, Al-Shabaab carried out an attack that came as a complete surprise to everyone. While shopping malls and other public and governmental buildings had very high security by now, schools did not. It was therefore easy for Al-Shabaab to shoot down the guard and storm the university. Once inside, the attackers shot the guard in front of the hostel and entered the building. Inside the hostel the attackers could easily attack students because the windows had metal burglarproof bars, making it impossible for terrified students to escape from the hostel. It is easy to see that the attack was an easy job for Al-Shabaab, because of the poor security. This is reflected in the number of victims, which is even twice the number of victims at Westgate.
Following the attack on Garissa University College, security has been beefed up at universities and colleges around Kenya. But as history has shown, it is not likely that Al-Shabaab will strike again at a university. Rather, while Kenya is busy with improving the security at schools and university, Al-Shabaab has probably moved on to other, unsecured targets.

4.3.2: Has the death of Al-Shabaab’s leader affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya?

After examining the different terrorist groups in chapter 2 and 3, it is clear that the death of the leader is most definitely not necessarily the end of a terrorist group. As has been discussed before, the PKK continued terrorizing Turkey even with its leader behind bars for years. Boko Haram used the murder of its leader as fuel for further recruitment. Finally, the death of Osama bin Laden has most definitely not resulted in the demise of Al-Qaeda. One can therefore question why counter terrorism strategies so often focus on catching the leader, when time after time this has proven not to result in the destruction of a terrorist group. It was definitely a goal for the US to catch the previous Al-Shabaab leader, and the US ultimately succeeded on September 1st, 2014 when Ahmed Godane was killed in an attack against Al-Shabaab. The White House called the murder of Godane a major symbolic and operational loss for Al-Qaeda, and a result of years of hard work from US intelligence (White House, 2014). The US therefore undoubtedly assumed that the loss of Godane would severely hurt Al-Shabaab.

As mentioned under theoretical framework, Jordan (2014) argues that there are two factors that determine how resilient a terrorist organization is to the loss of its leader. These are the
level of bureaucracy and the level of popular support. If a terrorist group is organized around a high level of bureaucracy, it is less likely to suffer from the loss of its leader. Similarly, if a terrorist group has a high level of popular support it is also less likely to suffer from such a loss. The second factor in particular is very relevant in Al-Shabaab’s case: it should be clear from the discussion in chapter 3 that Al-Shabaab indeed has a lot of popular support. It has been discussed how Al-Shabaab has managed to tap into an already existing pool of grievances in Kenya, mainly focusing around the issues of marginalization, discrimination and other social injustices. The discussion showed how Al-Shabaab has been able to manipulate these existing grievances into support for its own cause. Al-Shabaab therefore has support among many layers in society, even when the grievances among many Kenyans are not linked to the grievances of Al-Shabaab. With this ability to manipulate any cause into a reason to fight for Al-Shabaab, it is not surprising that the loss of the former leader has not resulted in the demise of Al-Shabaab. Rather, Al-Shabaab has found a way to recruit and to appeal to people so much so that the loss of the leader will not break down the group.

Another theory that was discussed in chapter 1 is complexity theory. It was argued that complex systems are highly resilient to assaults on its agents because of its ability to spontaneously adapt to changes in the surrounding environment (Beech, 2004). This spontaneous adaption is the result of the fact that innovation comes from all constituents of the system, as opposed to a single, central intelligence. In relation to Al-Shabaab and the loss of Godane, this means that the loss of the leader is not likely to destroy Al-Shabaab because of Al-Shabaab’s ability to adapt to the circumstances. As has been argued earlier, this is one of the major strengths of Al-Shabaab. It is therefore reasonable to believe that the loss of Godane will not have lead to an easier job for security forces in Kenya.
A look at the table of Al-Shabaab attacks in Kenya will reveal that the loss of the leader in September 2014 has not resulted in an easier job for Kenyan security forces. Rather, the challenge to maintain national security in Kenya is higher than ever in the time after the death of Godane. The first attack after the death of Godane happened on November 22\textsuperscript{nd} the same year, when 28 people were killed after a commuting bus was stopped in Mandera. The passengers who were not Muslim were told to step out of the bus, and were then shot on the spot. This attack shocked Kenyans for many reasons: not only was it a brutal attack where many innocent people were killed, but it also signaled a change in the mode of attacks. This last reason scared many people because it meant that Al-Shabaab were now using new ways to terrorize Kenyans, ways that Kenya was not prepared for. The thought that terrorists could stop a bus and shoot down all the passengers spread fear across the country. It also showed how unprepared Kenyan security forces were for such an attack: while they were busy securing shopping malls, Al-Shabaab simply stopped a bus and slaughtered the passengers. Such a simple, but yet gruesome attack, that revealed how the death of Godane was not about to stop Al-Shabaab. Rather, Al-Shabaab seemed stronger, more innovative and more shocking than ever.

The second attack after the death of Godane came on December 2\textsuperscript{nd}, when 36 quarry workers were shot dead in Mandera. The closeness between the bus attack and this attack showed that Al-Shabaab was in no way weakened by the loss of its leader. Rather, it seemed more aggressive than ever.

However scary these attacks were, the worst was yet to come. On April 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2015 Al-Shabaab attacked Garissa College University and killed 147 people, most of them young students. This attack was the worst since the beginning of Al-Shabaab, and it still is to date. The attack was a
very clear message to all of those who still thought that Al-Shabaab was in any way weakened by the loss of Godane: Al-Shabaab has only started. Few people could imagine an attack worse than Westgate, but the Garissa attack resulted in more than twice the number of victims. Al-Shabaab therefore made it crystal clear that it is not about to stop its activities. The group also made it clear that it continues to be a step ahead of Kenyan security forces. While security has been beefed up massively at shopping centers following the Westgate attack, schools and universities remained unsecured. Al-Shabaab has always showed the ability to find the loopholes in Kenyan security, and the Garissa attack was another proof of this strength. Today it therefore seems very naïve to think that the loss of Godane would make any noticeable difference in the challenges to fight Al-Shabaab and maintain national security in Kenya.

These findings support the claim made by Jenna Jordan (2009) in her research *When Heads Roll: Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Decapitation*. As discussed in the literary review in chapter 1, Jordan researched 298 cases of leader decapitation from 1945 to 2004. Her goal was to examine the effectiveness of leadership decapitation in fighting terrorism. Her conclusion was that large, old and religious terror organizations had a smaller chance of collapsing as a result of leadership decapitation, and that leadership decapitation could be counterproductive as a counterterrorism strategy against such terror organizations. After analyzing the findings in table 1, there is definitely reason to agree with Jordan: not only has Al-Shabaab not been destroyed by the loss of Godane, but it has even performed deadlier attacks after Godane was killed. There is therefore serious reason to question leadership decapitation as a counterterrorism strategy. Rather, it seems to strengthen groups like Al-Shabaab.
4.3.3: How has Al-Shabaab’s switch from explosives to AK-47s affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya?

Chapter 1 discussed the following statement from Matt Bryden, former United Nations Monitoring Group in Somalia and Eritrea:

“My assessment has always been that the day that Al-Shabaab lets go of the ‘Cult of the Suicide Bomber,’ we will be in world of trouble. It’s far more complicated to procure the parts for an explosive vest, as well as to find people willing to be martyrs. I always worried that if you just get guys riding in with AK-47s and grenades, they could do incredible damage. We have now reached that dangerous place.” (Callimarch, 2013).

The statement from Callimarch points to the fact that Al-Shabaab poses a whole new type of threat to Kenyan national security after the shift from explosives to AK-47s. Table 1 clearly shows how Al-Shabaab attacks have metamorphosised from simple grenade attacks with few victims, to disastrous attacks with AK-47s with high numbers of victims. The first six attacks from Al-Shabaab were grenade attacks where the number of victims ranged from one to seven. Hand grenades were hurled into crowds at places such at bus stations, nightclubs, sports bars and. Obviously, hurling grenades into crowds is not the most accurate way of performing attack: sometimes there were no victims at all after such attacks, either because the grenade did not explode or because it did not land close enough to any people. These attacks are not included in table 1 due to the lack of victims. It was not until July 1st, 2012 that grenades were no longer the only weapons in an Al-Shabaab attack. For the first time the attackers also used guns in addition to hand grenades. The number of victims was 18, which is
far more than any of the previous attacks. This attack showed that when attackers armed themselves with guns and opt to shoot around them they are able to cause far more deaths then by the use of hand grenades only. It was therefore clear that Kenyan security forces were facing a different and more serious threat, one that could potentially cause much damage.

Al-Shabaab proved that the days of simple grenade attacks were a thing of the past on September 21st, 2014, when Westgate Mall was attacked with AK-47s. The Westgate attack showed that when Al-Shabaab members decide to bring AK 47s and shoot randomly at a big crowd, they are capable of causing enormous destruction. A type of destruction that Kenyan security forces were not at all prepared for, as discussed in 4.3.1. According to Callimarch (2013), explosives had been the weapons of choice for Al-Shabaab before the Westgate attack. Security was thus not meant to detect small arms such as AK-47s, and Callimarch thus argues that it was this choice of small arms that made it possible for Al-Shabaab to commit the so far largest attack in Kenya in the history of Al-Shabaab.

As can be read from table 1, the number of victims rarely numbered 10 or less in the two years that have gone by after the Westgate attack. Table 1 clearly shows that grenade attacks rarely occurred after the Westgate attack. Rather, guns became the preferred weapon to use, and AK-47s in particular. Because of this change in weapons, attacks now resulted in far higher number of deaths. In the summer of 2014, repeated attacks on villagers in Lamu killed 48, 15 and 22 people respectively. Al-Shabaab never managed to reach such numbers of victims during the time of grenade attacks. The attack on the commuting bus in Mandera on November 22nd, 2014 was also carried out by attackers with AK-47s. 28 people were shot dead on the spot, and the attackers could escape before getting caught.
Finally, the largest attack so far was also carried out with AK-47s when attackers raided Garissa University College on April 2nd, 2015. The attack reveals just how much damage Al-Shabaab can do when attackers are allowed to shoot around with Ak-47s for some hours unhindered. The slow response from Kenyan security forces allowed the attackers to massacre 147 people, mostly students. The attack can be compared to the Paris terrorist attack that happened on November 13, 2015. It has proven very difficult for domestic security forces to hinder terrorist attacks of this sort, when attackers simply start shooting around indiscriminately at crowds. The number of victims after the Paris terrorist attack is still unclear at the time of writing, but it is close to the number of victims in the Garissa attack. Both attacks, the Garissa attack and the Paris attack, are a message to the world that we are not prepared for such attacks. As long as there are people out there who are willing and capable to arm themselves with guns and attack random crowds of innocent people, and who are able to find the loopholes in security, there is little security forces can do to stop them.

4.4: Conclusion

This chapter has presented the data from the data collection in form of a table consisting of all Al-Shabaab attacks from 2011 until the end of 2015. The purpose has been to provide an overview of the attacks with the aim of highlighting the metamorphosis of the attacks. As mentioned in the introduction in this chapter, the data collection only consists of those attacks where Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility, or where Kenyan intelligence explicitly expressed that Al-Shabaab was behind the attack. Table 1 therefore excludes all attacks where the reports do not clearly express that Al-Shabaab was responsible. This excludes many attacks that were most likely carried out by Al-Shabaab, and this omission needs to be taken into
consideration. One such example is the church attack in Likoni, Mombasa on 22nd of March, 2014. The attack made many headlines because a young boy needed surgery after the bullet that killed his mother entered his own head. The young boy became a symbol of the barbaric actions carried out in the name of terror. Nevertheless, Al-Shabaab did not come forward to claim responsibility, and reports could only speculate on who was behind the attack. The increasing Al-Shabaab activity in Kenya was often mentioned in reports, but responsibility was only generally put on extremists or terrorists, not on Al-Shabaab specifically (Standard Digital, 2014). The attack has therefore been excluded in table 1, together with many other similar attacks. Table 1 is therefore only a presentation of the attacks where there is no doubt that Al-Shabaab indeed was responsible. The conclusions in the following paragraph must therefore been seen in this light.

Three specific areas have been discussed in this chapter based on table 1: the change in attacks, the loss of Al-Shabaab’s leader and the switch from explosives to AK-47s. The discussion sought to examine the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya in the light of the influence of these three areas. Some conclusions can be made from the discussion: firstly, the change in Al-Shabaab’s attacks is clearly posing a major challenge for Kenyan security forces. This is because Al-Shabaab has proven to be so innovative that every attack appears to be unexpected. Al-Shabaab always seems to be a step ahead of Kenyan security. Secondly, the loss of Godane has not proven to break down Al-Shabaab as previously anticipated. Rather, table 1 shows that Al-Shabaab has only posed a bigger threat to security in Kenya after the loss of Godane. The two largest attacks in Kenya both came after the loss of Godane. It is therefore clear that Al-Shabaab has enough popular support and strength to keep growing after the loss of Godane. Lastly, the switch from the use of grenades to the use of AK-47s has completely changed the challenges that Al-Shabaab pose for Kenyan security.
After Al-Shabaab started using AK-47s, the number of victims in each attack has risen drastically. The attacks on Westgate and Garissa University College illustrated how deadly Al-Shabaab attacks can be. But also the attacks on villagers in Lamu in 2014 shows that the use of AK-47s instead of grenades poses a whole new challenge to Kenyan security forces.
Chapter 5

5.1: Conclusions

Maintaining security used to be the biggest issue throughout the 20th century, with two world wars and the Cold War. However, after the Cold War the world became more stable and peaceful, and other issues became important. Then came 9/11, and international security once again became one of the most important factors. Since 9/11, terrorism has changed in high speed. First we talked about Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. In recent years however it has become clear that Al-Qaeda has weaved a web of terrorist networks all over the world (Byman, 2003). Terrorist groups can be found in every corner of the world. The mode of terrorist attacks also changed.

Security is therefore one of the biggest challenges in the world today, largely because of the international terror threat. Following 9/11, the world has seen massive changes in security measures. Both international and domestic security has to be constantly upgraded to meet the continuous threat of terrorism. To keep the civil society safe is one of the most important tasks both domestically (homeland security) and internationally (the Security Council). In the age of modern terrorism this task is being seriously challenged worldwide. Islamist terrorist groups are developing worldwide, and they seem to grow bigger both in number and in size. Terrorism might be the single biggest challenge to global peace and stability. To fight terrorism is thus crucial.
Martin (2014: 161) characterizes international terrorism as unpredictable, unexpected and unconventional. Targets are chosen because of their ability to shock, surprise, affect and disgust the international community. Terrorists always seem to be a step ahead of security, and their innovation and adaption is their strongest card. The degree of success in the fight against terrorism will be a big factor in the future, and it will affect the global peace and stability. Terrorist groups are disrupting the international structure and system by not respecting and adhering to international laws, organizations and institutions. They place themselves outside the global community.

The world has seen many different terrorist groups through the years, in all parts. The PKK has terrorized Turkey for years, even with its leader in prison (Roth and Murat, 2007). The ETA has fought for Basque separatism in Spain ever since the end of the Franco regime (Beck, 2005). Boko Haram has shocked the world in recent years with their brutal warfare in the northern parts of Nigeria (Okpaga et.al, 2012). Counterterrorism is a difficult task, and Martin (2014: 229) argues that long term success in fighting terrorism has been limited so far. He highlights enhanced security and intelligence collection and analysis as the most important ways to fight terrorism. Nevertheless, so far it has been far from enough to stop terrorism from happening. Terrorist attacks have proven to be too unpredictable, unexpected and unconventional. According to a report made by the US Department of State (2014), East African countries have improved their counterterrorism strategies and cooperation against their common terrorist threat, Al-Shabaab, after the attack on Westgate Mall in Nairobi in September 2013. However, the report still points out lack of consistent offensive operations in the fight against Al-Shabaab. This has enabled Al-Shabaab’s development and continuing attacks in the region, and especially in Kenya. Kenya started becoming a victim of terrorism by Al-Shabaab in 2011, as a result of Kenyan troops entering Somalia to fight Al-Shabaab
Prior to this military operation, Al-Shabaab kidnapped a number of Western tourists in Kenya. These kidnappings hurt Kenya’s tourism, and troops were sent to Somalia as part of AMISOM (the African Union Mission in Somalia). Al-Shabaab immediately answered with threats of intensified attacks in Kenya. The last four years have proven that these threats were serious. What started off as throwing hand grenades into nightclubs and buses, turned into attacks with AK-47s as the world witnessed when Westgate shopping mall was attacked in September 2013, and April 15th, 2015, when Garissa University was attacked leaving 147 students dead and many more injured. The Westgate attack revealed massive shortcomings in Kenya’s counterterrorism strategies, and in their ability to handle attacks of this size. Success in fighting Al-Shabaab has been limited so far. Harry Misiko (Washington Post, 2014) lists a number of weaknesses in the Kenyan security apparatus and government: weak security intelligence; widespread corruption in the police force and immigration offices; poor anti-terror strategy; poor and inadequate equipment largely due to the uneven distribution of resources between government officials and the police force; messy investigations and lastly; poor local and regional cooperation. All of these factors make it very challenging for Kenya to respond to the Al-Shabaab threat, and the metamorphosis of Al-Shabaab’s attacks pose an additional challenge for Kenya to prevent further attacks.

This research set out three specific objectives: to find out how the change in Al-Shabaab’s attacks has affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya; to determine if the death of Al-Shabaab’s leader has affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya; and finally to examine how Al-Shabaab’s switch from explosives to AK-47s has affected the challenges of maintaining national security in Kenya. The mode of attacks and geographical targets of attacks keep changing, and so we never really know what to picture
when we talk about terrorism: everything from bombing of government buildings, to throwing hand grenades into public areas, to attacking shopping malls with AK-47s. Brandt and Sandler (2009) thus argue that counterterrorism strategies have to be preventive. By the time one target has been secured, terrorists have already shifted their attention to new and unsecured targets. The ability to predict future attacks from Al-Shabaab will thus be crucial in maintaining national security in Kenya. Further, a common counterterrorism strategy has been to go after the leader of terrorist groups. This was made clear when the US went after Osama bin Laden, the leader of Al-Qaeda in 2011. The take down was celebrated both in the US and internationally, and it was perceived as a big step in the “war on terror”. However, in hindsight it is clear that the impact of the murder was overrated. Nevertheless, the US once again went after a terrorist group leader when they killed Al-Shabaab leader Ahmed Godane September 1st, 2014. According to BBC (2014), Godane was one of the most wanted men in the US prior to the attack. Further, Somali analyst Nuur Muhamud Sheekh claimed that the death of Godane "will deal a major blow to the group”. This research has therefore sought to determine if the loss of Godane actually has been a major blow for Al-Shabaab, or if the group has come out of it even stronger.

Chapter 4 presented the results from the data collection, and some conclusions were made based on the discussion that followed: firstly, the change in Al-Shabaab’s attacks is clearly posing a major challenge for Kenyan security forces. This is because Al-Shabaab has proven to be so innovative that every attack appears to be unexpected. Al-Shabaab always seem to be a step ahead of Kenyan security. Secondly, the loss of Godane has not proven to break down Al-Shabaab as previously anticipated. Rather, table 1 shows that Al-Shabaab has only posed a bigger threat to security in Kenya after the loss of Godane. The two largest attacks in Kenya both came after the loss of Godane. It is therefore clear that Al-Shabaab has enough popular
support and strength to keep growing after the loss of Godane. Lastly, the switch from the use of grenades to the use of AK-47s has completely changed the challenges that Al-Shabaab pose for Kenyan security. After Al-Shabaab started using AK-47s, the number of victims in each attack has risen drastically. The attacks on Westgate and Garissa University College illustrated how deadly Al-Shabaab attacks can be. But also the attacks on villagers in Lamu in 2014 shows that the use of AK-47s instead of grenades poses a whole new challenge to Kenyan security forces. In sum, the metamorphosis of Al-Shabaab attacks over the past four years has proven to be a major security challenge for Kenya.

Chapter 3 discussed how Al-Shabaab is largely a domestic threat, as opposed to an international threat. Lind et al (2015) argue that the Kenyan government does not want to admit this fact, and therefore the counterstrategy measures are not suitable in fighting Al-Shabaab. Rather, Kenya needs to acknowledge that most Al-Shabaab attackers in Kenya are Kenyans, and that Al-Shabaab uses existing grievances in Kenya as a way to recruit. Lind et al (2015) therefore propose three main ways of fighting the terror threat based on their findings. Firstly, they argue that Kenya needs to address the issues of marginalization and social injustice that Al-Shabaab is taking advantage of in their propaganda. Secondly, Kenya needs to stop the discrimination against Somalis and Muslims. The image of Somalis as a threat against security simply leads to an even deeper feeling of marginalization and therefore gives Al-Shabaab more to exploit. Lastly, more focus needs to be put on the issues of corruption and lack of accountability. The Kenyan police was ranked on the very top over Kenyan institutions that are prone to bribery, in the most updated study by the East African Bribery Index, which is for 2014. These arguments provide some useful insight, in any discussion of Al-Shabaab, who Al-Shabaab is, what Al-Shabaab wants and how to fight the group.
The researcher agrees with these arguments to a large extent. Terrorist groups will always be here, so it is important to work on the roots of the issues. How the terrorist groups recruits, why it appeals to so many people and so on. The Nazi and fascist movements in Europe during the period between the two world wars can serve as relevant illustrations: if Germany did not suffer from tremendous financial issues as a result of World War 1, Hitler probably would not appeal to people to the extent that he managed to. Although Kenya is the most developed country in its region, there is still no doubt that Kenya suffers from issues to do with marginalization of urban areas, and big gaps between rich and poor. This is not to say that marginalization is the only explanation for why Al-Shabaab is such a big threat. Rather the opposite, one can argue that Kenya has made major steps at decreasing marginalization since 2011 when devolution was included in the new constitution. As a result of devolution, resources have been allocated to reach marginalized areas. However, one can question if these resources are actually being used for this purpose? Kenya does struggle with corruption, and it has often been felt that devolution simply means devolution of corruption. So even if one can argue that marginalization and the gap between rich and poor are just poor excuses for why Al-Shabaab is such a big threat, they are still factors that need to be taken into consideration to a larger extent than they have been up to now by the Kenyan government. As long as these issues exist, someone can always find a way to tap into them. Stopping immigration and closing down refugee camps and killing top leaders are therefore not suitable measures in fighting Al-Shabaab. The same can be said for Boko Haram who fight against corruption and marginalization, and PKK who fight for Kurds, and ETA who fight for Basque rights. It will be of people’s interest to accept that there are existing issues in society, which terrorist groups manage to tap into, even if it means that the root of the problem is domestic and not international.
5.2: Recommendations

The arguments presented in the previous paragraph seem to be watered down, because they do not fit with the image created in Kenya of a foreign threat. Terrorist groups are often talked about as crazy people, and counterterrorism strategies often focus on military measures. However, more emphasis should be put on the roots of the issue, which is often political or economical. Poverty, social injustice, marginalization, corruption, and bad governance are some of the factors that have proven to be the underlying causes of why terrorist groups manage to rise and become so powerful. It would therefore make more sense to fight these issues first, instead of merely trying to destroy the terrorist group. Further studies should therefore seek to examine the root causes further. Why does a terrorist group appeal to people? Which type of people are recruited? What does the group really want to achieve, beyond the official statement of its goal? Only when we fully understand the enemy can we put in the appropriate counterterrorism strategies, and ultimately fight it and defeat it.
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