

Report No. 3 January 2020

Trends of Violent Extremist Attacks and Arrests in Kenya, January 2019 - December 2019

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About this report

This report draws from the Terror Attacks and Arrests Observatory of the Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies (CHRIPS Terrorism Observatory). It presents the latest data collected and analysed from 1 January – 31 December 2019. CHRIPS uses verified traditional and new media reports as well as information from local partners to generate the most comprehensive database on terror-related occurrences in Kenya.

Key highlights

- Attacks increased to 34 from 23 reported in 2018
- 6 counties affected: 9 in Mandera; 9 in Wajir; 8 in Garissa; 5 in Lamu; 2 in Nairobi and 1 in Mombasa
- 83 people were killed in terror attacks
- 74 people were injured: 37 civilians and 37 security officials
- 12 People were kidnapped: 9 civilians and 3 security officials
- 135 people were arrested for terror-related offences; the highest number being recorded in Nairobi and Garissa counties (20 people)
- Documented arrests: 44 Kenyans and 12 foreigners

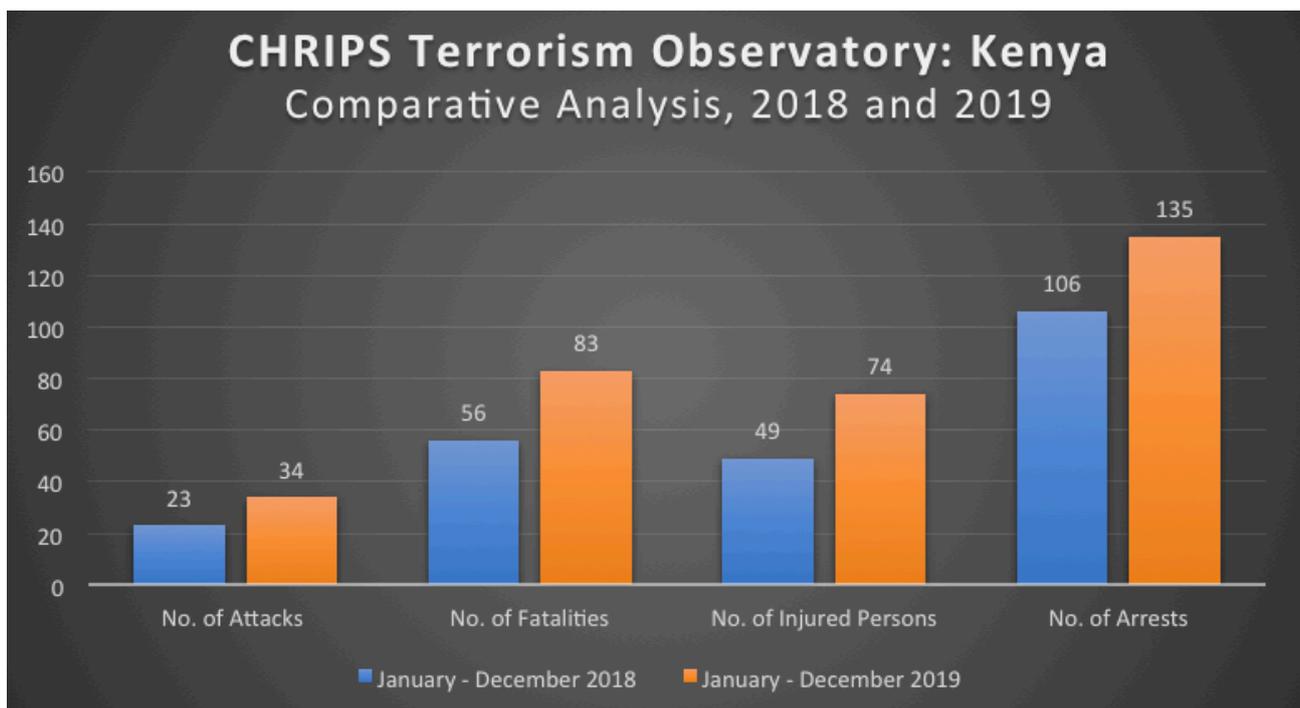


Figure 1: Comparative analysis, 2018 and 2019

Terror Attacks

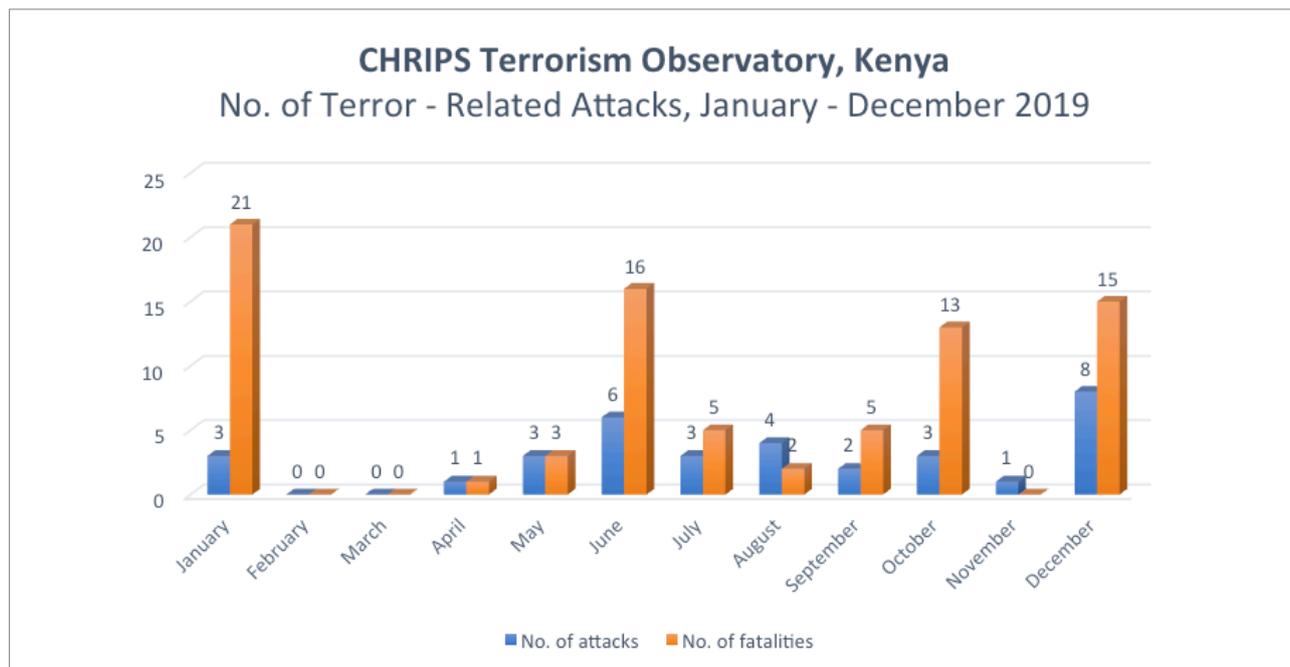


Figure 2: Number of terror-related attacks, January – December 2019

Reports of terror attacks particularly targeting civilians and security officials have increased from 23 attacks in 2018 to 34 attacks in 2019. While news reports attributed most terror attacks to *Al Shabaab*, the terrorist group has only claimed responsibility for the 15 January attack at Dusit D2 Hotel in Nairobi (*Al Jazeera* 2019) and two other attacks in June (Malalo 2019). As illustrated in figure 2 above, attacks

intensified between June and December with no less than 2 attacks being recorded in each month. Although state agencies have upgraded surveillance infrastructure and intensified counter terrorism measures, reports of attacks particularly targeting civilians and security officials in the country increased in 2019 as compared to 2018.

Location of attacks

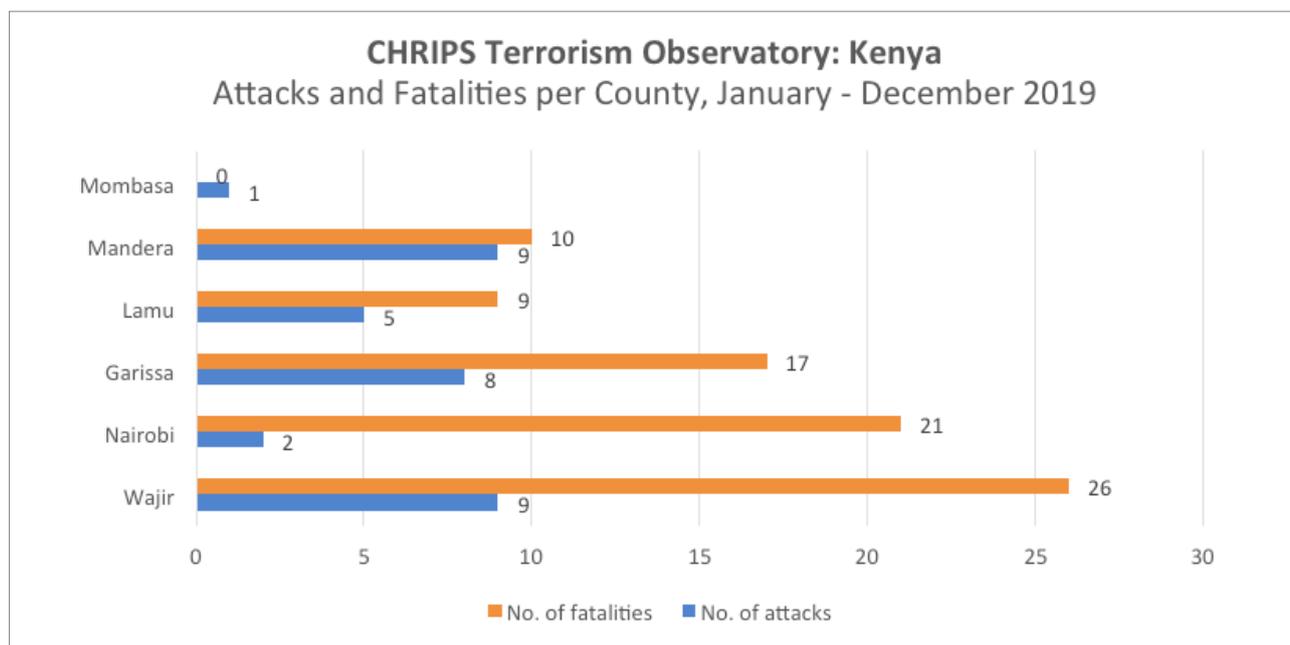


Figure 3: Attacks and fatalities per County, January – December 2019

The highest number of attacks in 2019 took place in Mandera and Wajir where 9 attacks were reported in each county. Wajir County recorded the highest number of fatalities (26) majority of whom were security officials including: 8 Anti-stock Theft Unit officers; 8 Administration Police (AP) officers; 5 Kenyan Police officers; 3 civilians and 2 *Al Shabaab* suspects. During the period under review, 11 *Al Shabaab* militants were killed by Kenyan security officials in Mandera, Lamu and Garissa counties.

The lowest number of attacks took place in Nairobi and Mombasa. Mombasa County had 1 reported attack and no fatalities. While Nairobi County only had two attacks, the county also recorded the second highest

number of fatalities as a result of the 15 January attack on the Dusit D2 hotel and business complex where at least 20 civilians and 1 General Service Unit (GSU) Officer were killed. The second highest number of fatalities in a single incident were recorded on 12 October in an IED attack in Garissa County and 6 December at a shooting in a police station in Wajir County. 11 fatalities were recorded in each of these attacks.

Nairobi County recorded the highest number of injured people at 32 while Mombasa County recorded the lowest number of injured persons in an incident on 20 June when an *Al Shabaab* suspect was injured while attempting to assemble an IED which exploded.

Targets

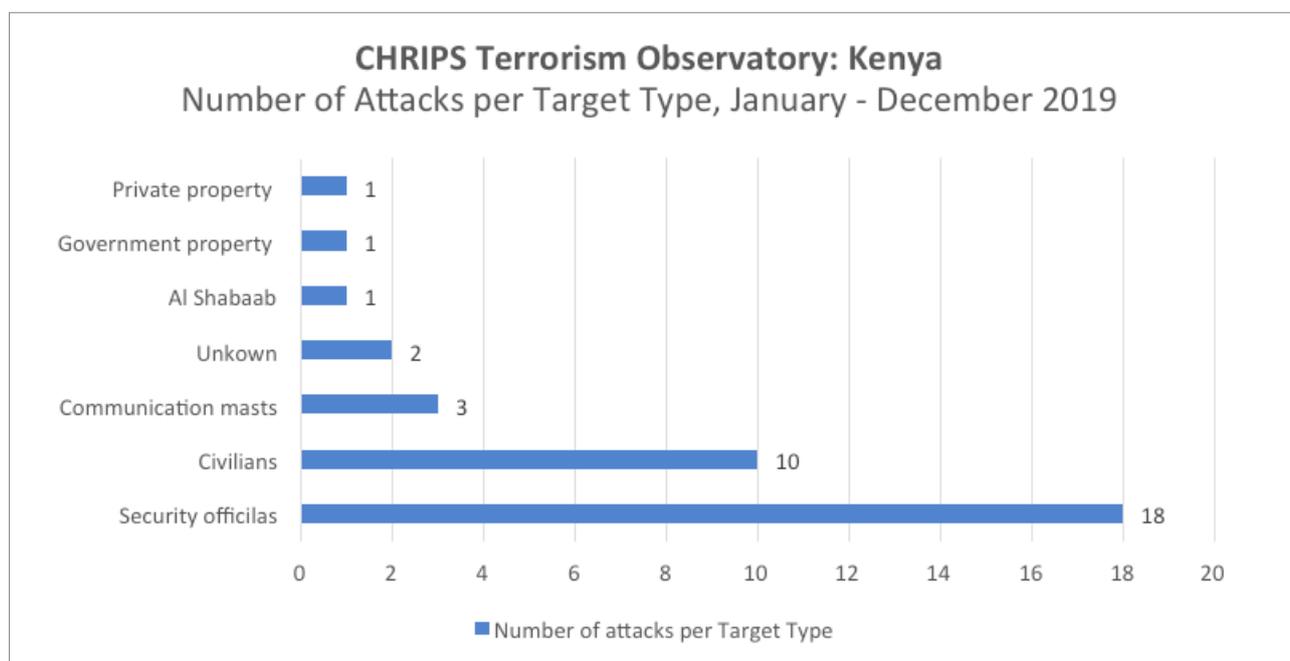


Figure 4: Number of attacks per target type, January – December 2019

Security officials were the primary target in terror attacks recorded in 2019. This is similar to 2018 where security officials as well as their vehicles including armored personnel carriers and patrols cars were burnt to ashes in numerous incidents (Mungai 2019).

Civilians were targeted in 10 of the total attacks in 2019. They were the primary target in the 15 January attack at Dusit D2, a Nairobi hotel and business complex; and a construction site along the Mandera-Arabia-Lafey road where they burnt down 4 construction machineries valued at Ksh. 38 million (Vidija 2019). Civilians in public transportation were victims of an *Al Shabaab* attack in Mandera township on 23 October when the militants sprayed bullets at a matatu carrying 8 passengers; the driver managed to speed off and no fatalities or casualties were reported (Otsialo 2019a).

Reports also show that there have been 3 attacks targeting communication masts especially in Mandera and Garissa which occurred in August and December inhibiting communication in the areas. In Garissa, a communication mast together with a diesel generator that powers it were destroyed by alleged *Al Shabaab* militants on 4 December. No fatalities and injuries were reported in this particular incident (Hajir 2019). *Al Shabaab* militants have in the past also targeted communication infrastructure thus grounding free flow of information particularly in areas close to the Kenya-Somalia border.

A vehicle belonging to Kenya Power and Lightening Company (KPLC) was hit by an explosive device in Mandera on 15 July in an incident that saw the driver narrowly escape death. The KPLC vehicle might not

have been the main target in this incident as reports indicated that *Al Shabaab* militants planted IEDs along the Rhamu-Elwak Road primarily targeting security officials in patrol cars (Otsialo 2019b). In addition, *Al*

Shabaab militants reportedly targeted and raided a store in Hareer Hoosle Mandera on 5 May and stole food stuff of unknown value (Astariko 2019).

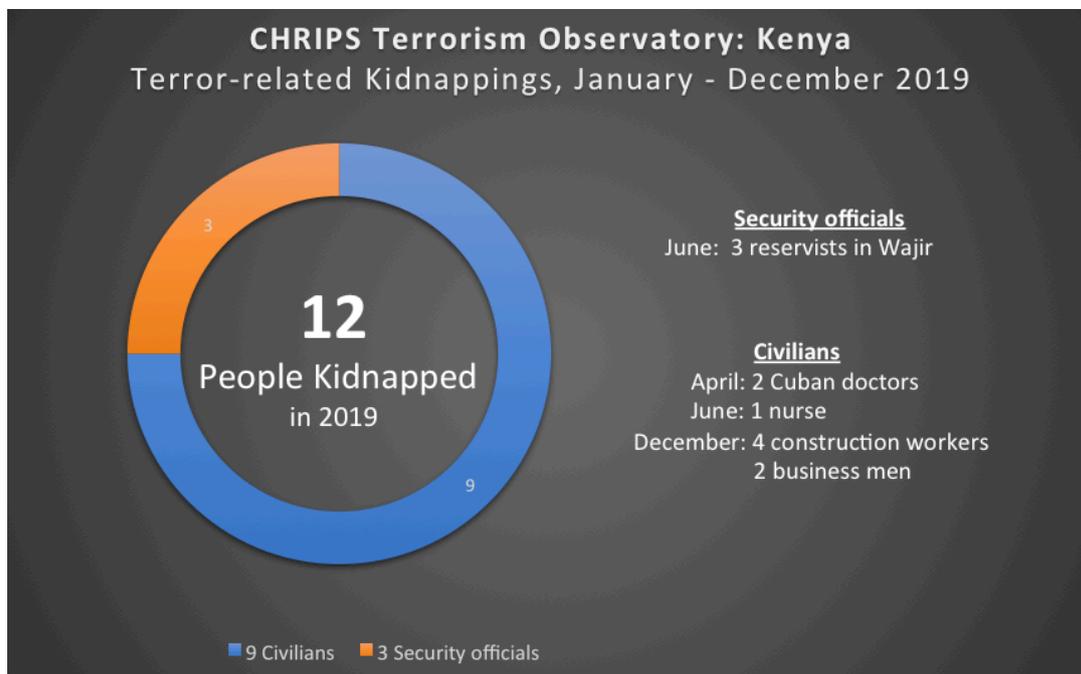


Figure 5: Terror-related kidnappings, January – December 2019

Both civilians and security officials have been victims of kidnapping during the period under review. 4 kidnapping incidents were reported in North Eastern region involving 9 civilians, including 2 Cuban doctors and 3 security officials. The first incident was reported on 12 April when an Administrative Police officer was

murdered following the kidnapping of 2 Cuban doctors in Mandera County. Reports indicate that the doctors together with the *Al Shabaab* militants later crossed the border into Gedo region in Somalia. (Otsialo & Misiko 2019a).

Fatalities and injured persons

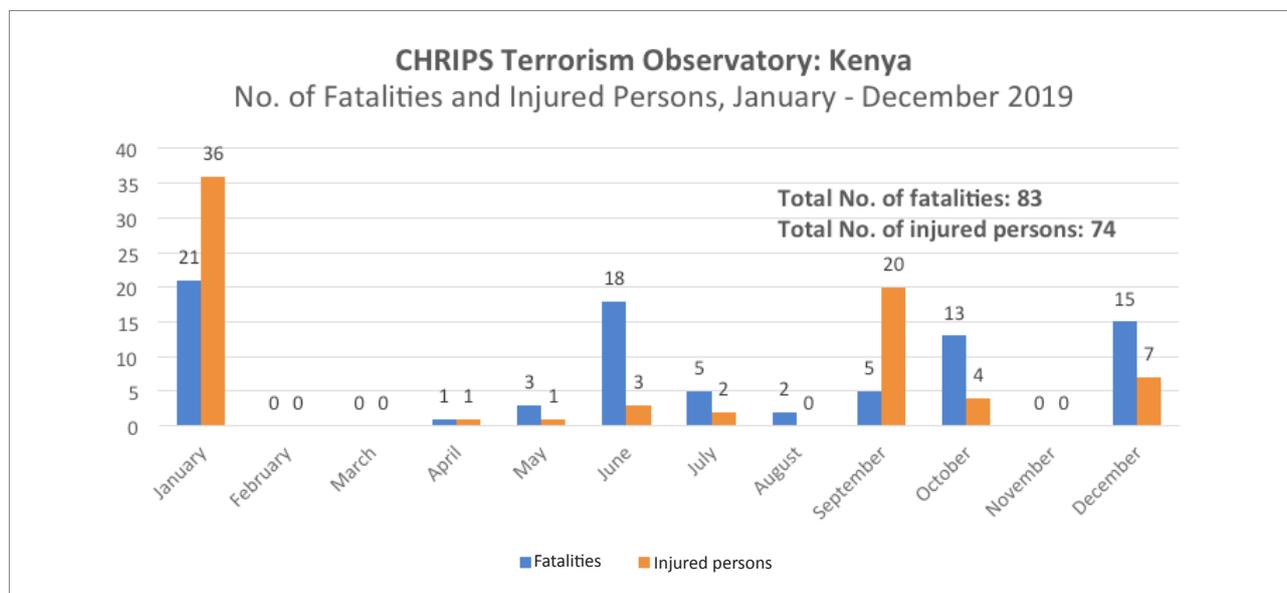


Figure 6: Number of fatalities and injured persons, January – December 2019

There were 83 deaths resulting from terror-related occurrences in 2019. This is a considerable increase from the number of deaths reported in 2018, which stood at 56 people. Security officials were the most targeted group and also recorded the highest number of fatalities in 2019. A total of 42 security officials were killed across the 5 counties including: 12 General

Service Unit (GSU) officers; 10 Anti-stock Theft Unit officers; 8 police officers; 8 Administration Police (AP) officer; 3 militants from the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) and 1 police reservist. This is similar to 2018 where the highest number of fatalities were of security officials.

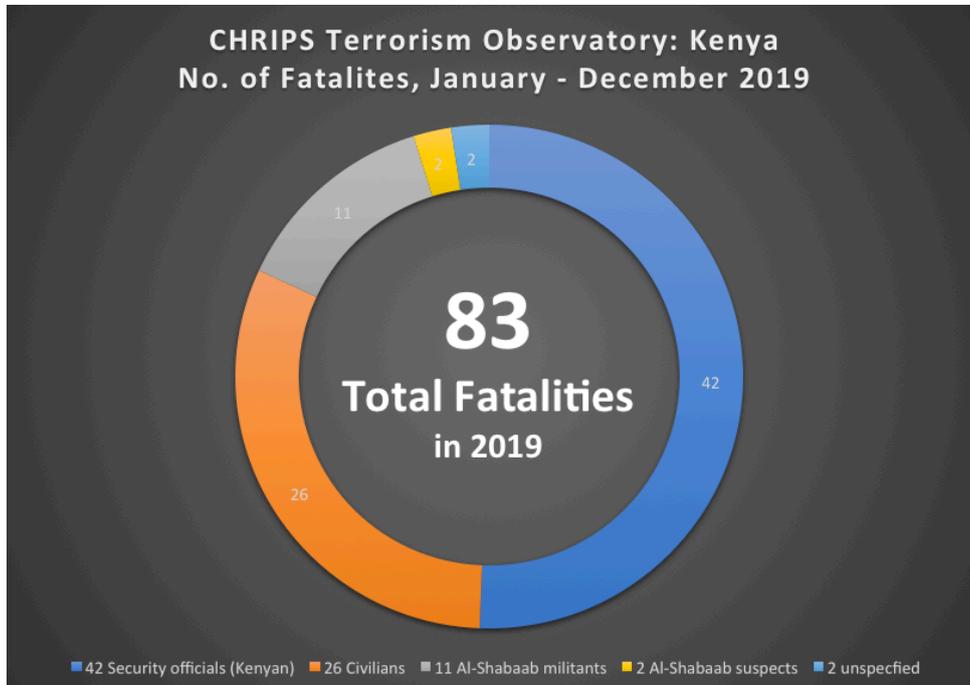


Figure 7: Number of fatalities, January – December 2019

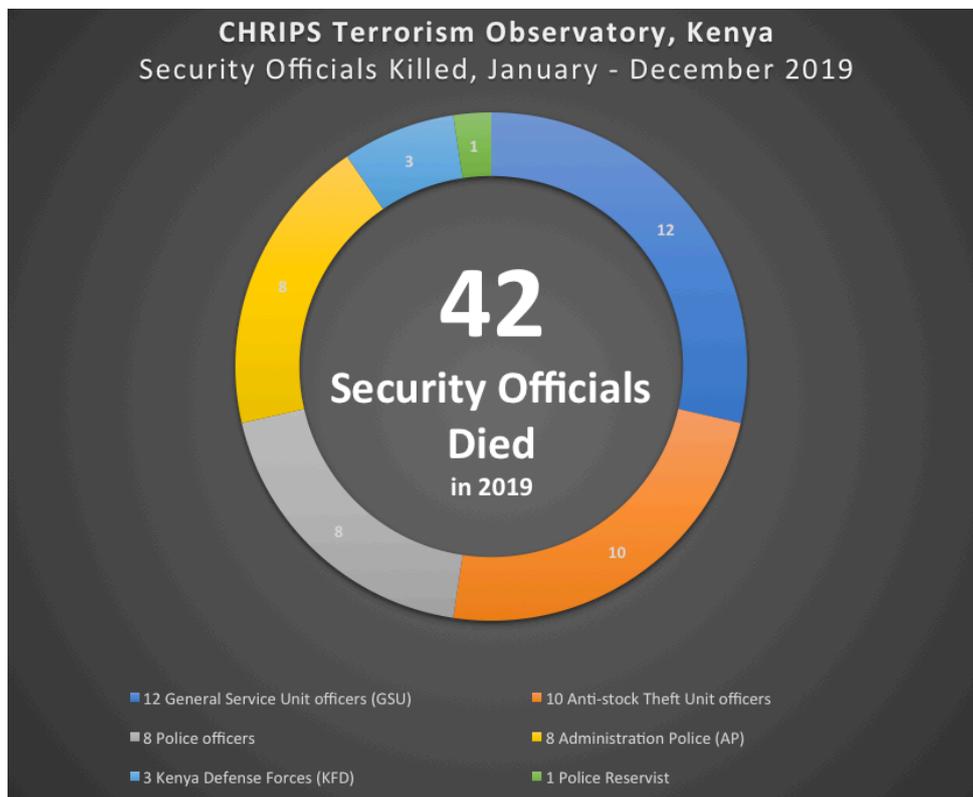


Figure 8: Security Officials killed, January – December 2019

Civilians were the second most targeted individuals with 26 deaths being reported during the period under review. The largest number of civilian deaths was reported during the Dusit D2 attack in January where 20 civilians died including 1 American and 1 Briton (AFP 2019).

11 *Al Shabaab* militants were also killed in separate incidents involving crossfire between the militants and Kenyan security officials. 2 *Al Shabaab* suspects held in a police station in Dadajabula, Wajir County were killed on 29 October in a shootout in what reports described as a rescue mission (Otsialo & Misiko 2019b).

The number of injured persons reported during the period under review stood at 74: 37 civilians; 36 security officials and 1 *Al Shabaab* suspect. The highest numbers of injured persons was recorded in Nairobi County where at least 30 people were injured in the 15 January Dusit D2 attack (AFP 2019). The lowest numbers of injured people were reported in Lamu and Mombasa. In Mombasa, an *Al Shabaab* suspect was injured while attempting to assemble an IED which exploded in a house in Likoni on 10 June (Karani 2019).

Weapons used

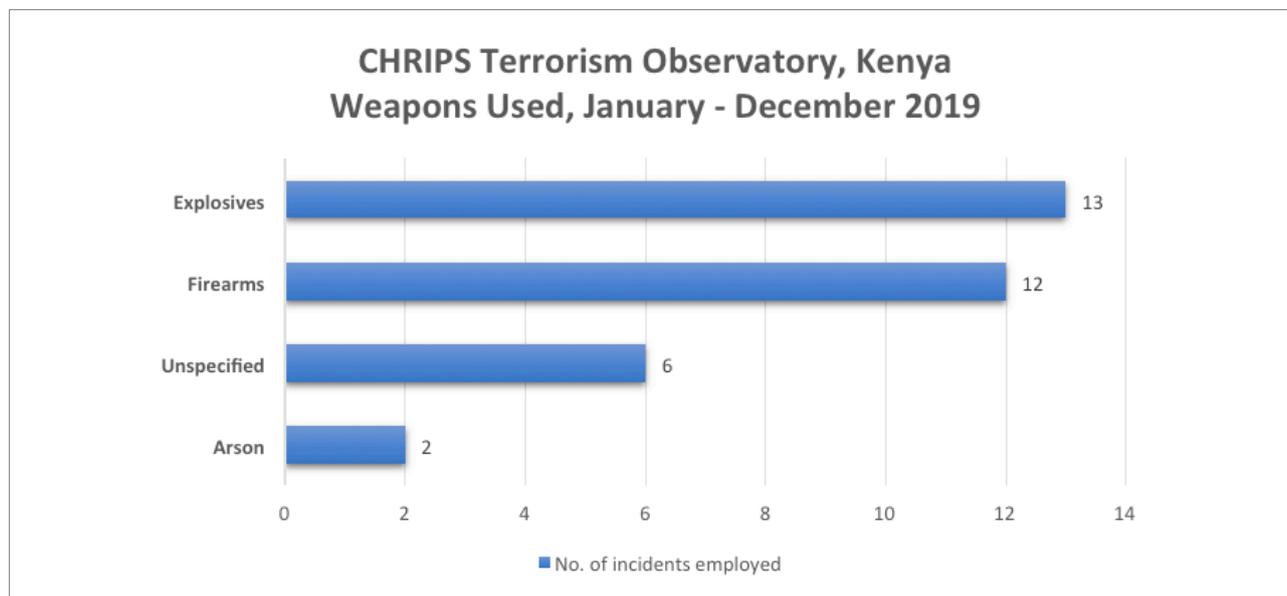


Figure 9: Weapons used, January – December 2019

Firearms and explosive devices (grenades and improvised explosive devices, and bombs) were each employed in 13 and 12 separate incidents respectively.

Terror- related Arrests

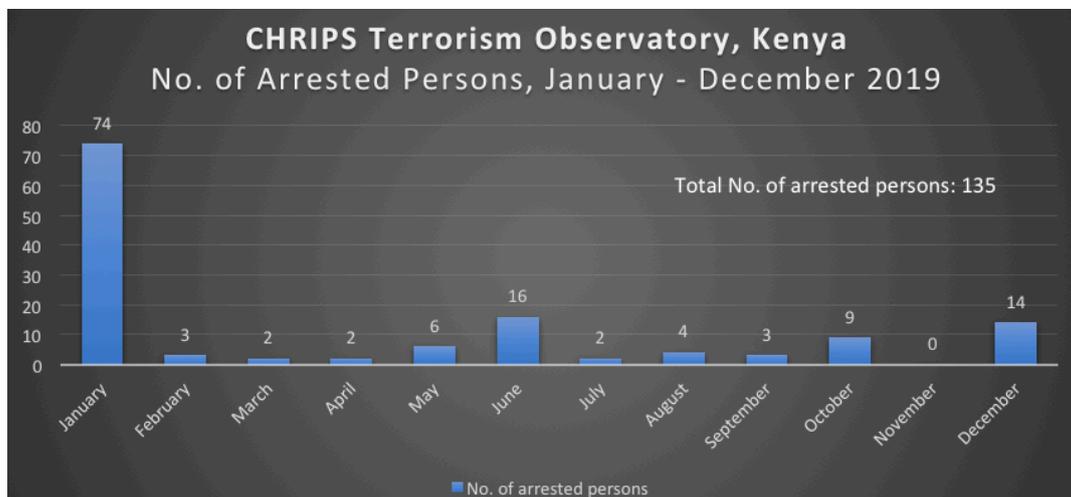


Figure 10: Number of arrested persons, January – December 2019

135 people were arrested during the period under review. Further, 6 people have been charged with terror-related offences in court which are linked to the Dusit D2 attack (Kakah 2019). January had the highest number of arrests owing to security sweeps following the Dusit D2 attack, which saw suspects arrested in Nairobi, Kitui, Garissa, Meru, and Wajir counties in relation to the attack. It is however notable that many of the arrests made in January also did not have a direct correlation to the Dusit D2 attack but might have been the result of intensified police activity and raids following the shocking attack.

According to reports, majority of the persons arrested were accused of being members of a terrorist group. Other suspects were arrested for a diversity of terror-related offences including: participating in terror attacks; planning terror attacks; aiding and abetting; facilitating commission of terror attacks; possession of explosive material and transporting explosive material among other offences. Some suspects were arrested owing to their family ties with the terrorists for example, the father and wife of the suicide bomber in the Dusit D2 attack in January (Capital FM Online 2019).

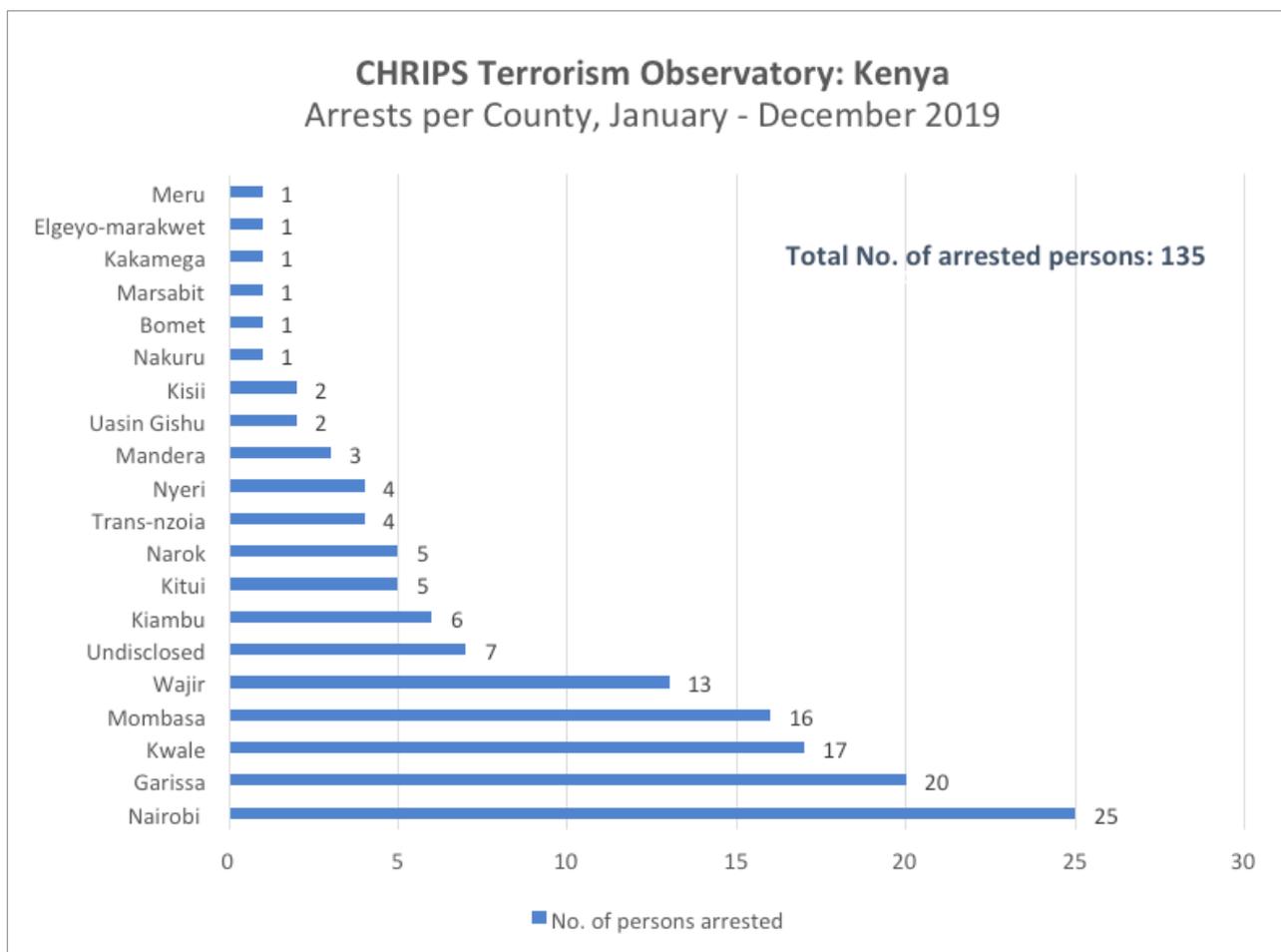


Figure 11: Arrests per county, January – December 2019

Nairobi County recorded the highest number of arrests totaling at 25. Garissa County followed closely with a sum of 20 while 17 arrests were reported in Kwale. Notably, the 17 —aged between 18 and 27 years— were all arrested on the same day, in a two-bedroom apartment at Samburu area, Kwale County (Suche 2019a). They were charged with membership to a terror group and possession of counterfeit goods but later released (Suche 2019b).

2019 saw arrests in counties where terror-related arrests had not previously been reported in 2017 and 2018, including: Elgeyo-marakwet, Marsabit, Bomet, Kisii, Uasin Gishu, Kiambu, Trans-nzoia, Narok and Kitui counties.

Arrests by gender

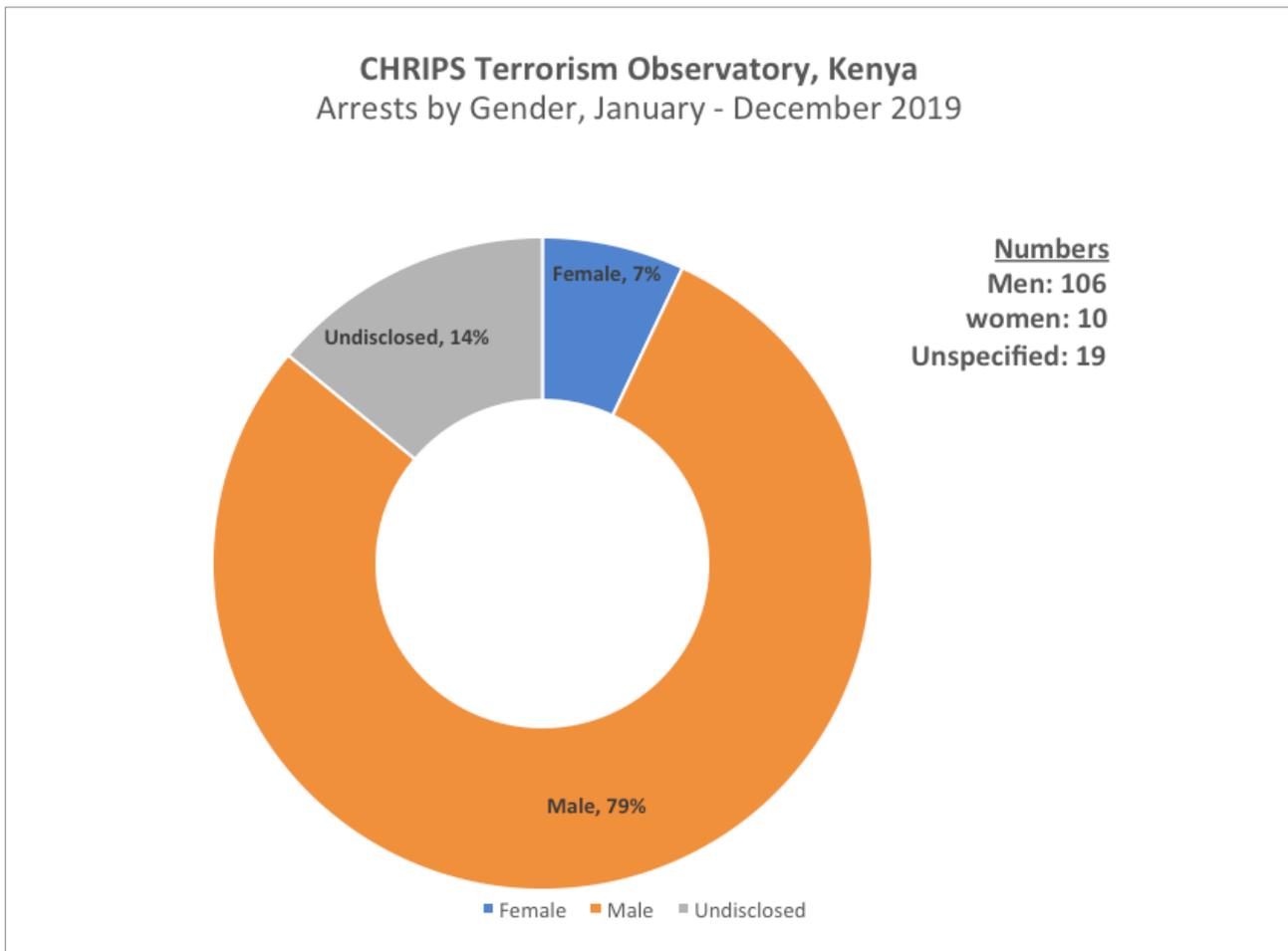


Figure 12: Arrests by gender, January – December 2019

135 arrests were made during the period under review: 106 men and 10 women. For the remaining 19 arrests, the gender was undisclosed. Compared to statistics from 2018, the number of persons arrested during

the period under review has increased by 11%. 109 people were arrested in 2018 including 20 men and 15 women.

Arrests by nationality

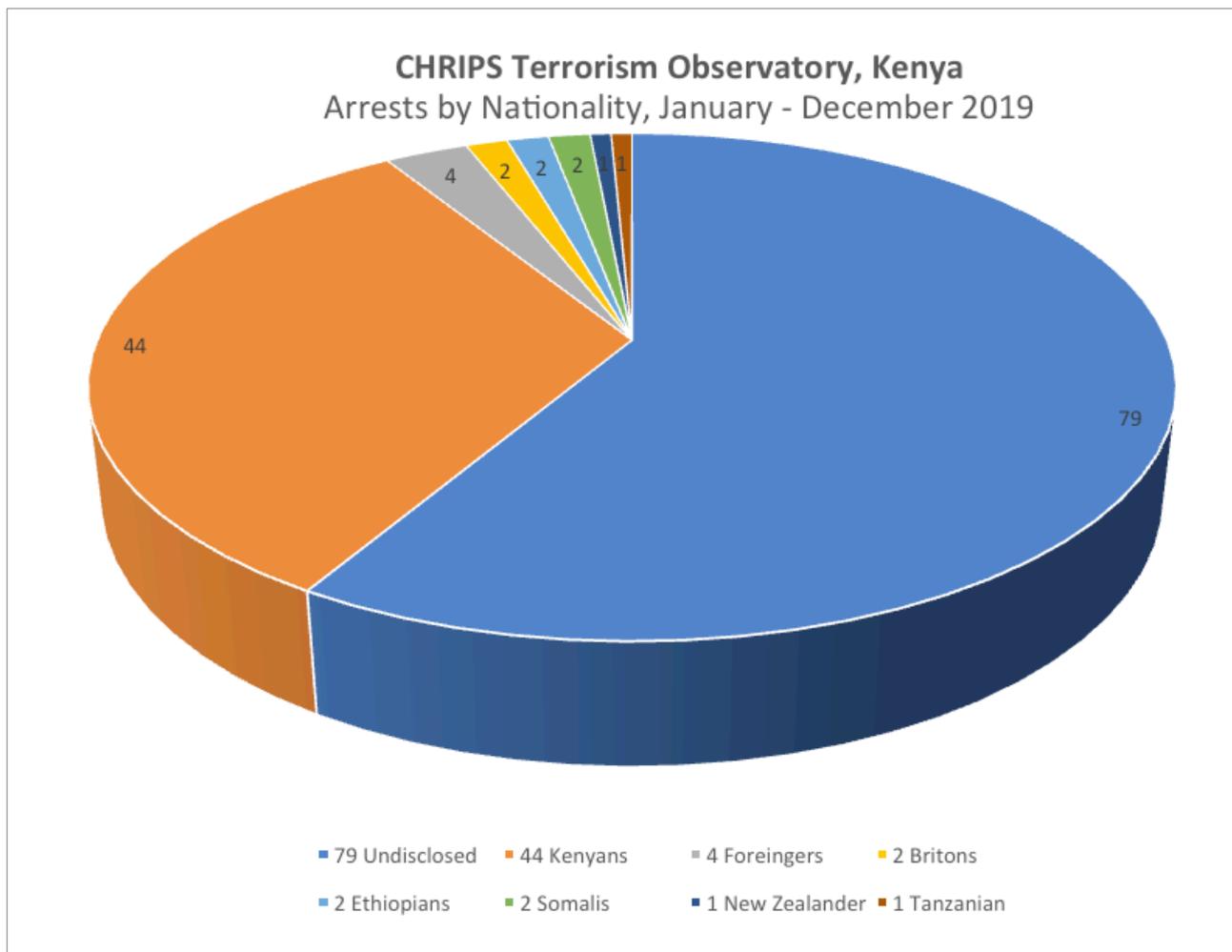


Figure 13: Arrests by nationality, January – December 2019

According to the monitoring data, 44 Kenyans and 12 foreigners were arrested in 2019 for terror related offences. The foreigners included: 2 British citizens; 2 Ethiopians; 1 Tanzanian; 1 Somali national; 1 Somali-Canadian national 1 New Zealander and 4 other unspecified foreigners.

The arrested person from New Zealand was apprehended at Dajabula near the Kenya-Somalia border during a security crackdown on terror suspects after the Dusit D2 attack (Cherono 2019). The New

Zealander was arrested alongside an Ethiopian (ibid). The other Ethiopian was arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to commit a terrorist attack together with an assistant sheikh at Jamia Mosque, Mandera county, who allegedly communicated with one of the terrorists and facilitated their movement before the incident (Nation Team 2019). Lastly, the arrested person from Canada is being held in police custody for communicating with one of the attackers (Muthoni 2019).

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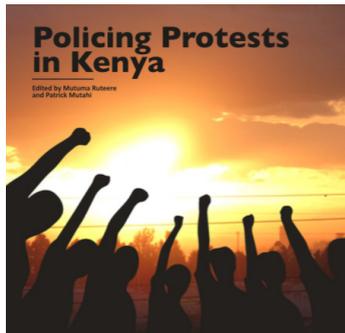
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Acknowledgement

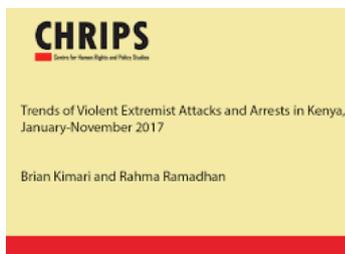
Rahma Ramadhan is a Junior Research Fellow and Melissa Mungai is a Research Assistant both at the Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies. Research and publication was made possible through a grant awarded to CHRIPS by the Open Society Foundations (OSF).

PUBLICATIONS



Policing Protests in Kenya

The papers in this volume grapple with the questions of laws and institutions as well as attitudes and culture in policing and are aimed at contributing to the policy and scholarly discourse on policing of public gatherings and protests in Kenya.



Trends of Violent Extremist Attacks and Arrests in Kenya, January-November 2017

The data and analysis in this report draws from the terror attacks and Arrests Observatory of the Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies (CHRIPS). It presents and analyses the latest data, collected from media reports, on terror attacks and arrests between January 1, 2017 and November 30, 2017. Data on terror-related attacks will be regularly updated on the observatory and reports published periodically.



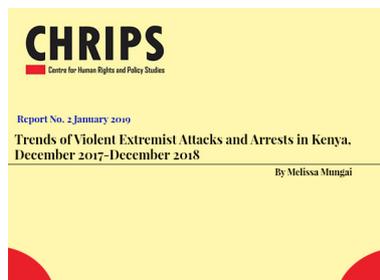
Policy Brief No. 1 May 2019

Police Management of Public Assemblies in Kenya

Melissa Mungai

Policy Brief No. 1 May 2019

In this policy brief, Melissa Mungai discusses factors concerning police management of public assemblies in Kenya including Police Training, various aspects of their 'duty to facilitate', as well as the prior notification requirement.



Trends of Violent Extremist Attacks and Arrests in Kenya, December 2017 – December 2018

The data and analysis in this report draws from the Terror Attacks and Arrests Observatory of the Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies (CHRIPS). It presents the latest data collected and analysed from media reports on terror attacks between 1 December 2017 and 31 December 2018.



Comments on the Proposed Public Order (Amendment) Bill, 2019

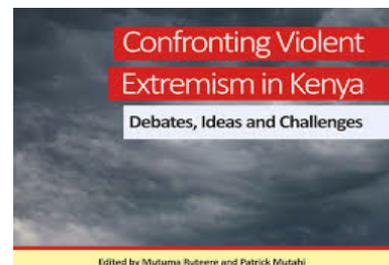
By Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies

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Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies is pleased to submit its analysis on the Public Order (Amendment) Bill, 2019 which was introduced through a Special Issue of the Kenya Gazette Supplement on 15 March 2019. The amendment reads as follows.

Comments on the Proposed Public Order Amendment Bill 2019

This commentary submitted to the National Assembly analyses the Public Order (Amendment) Bill, 2019 introduced on 15th March 2019, highlighting the various human rights concerns that the Bill raises.



Confronting Violent Extremism in Kenya: Debates, Ideas and Challenges (CHRIPS, 2018)

This pioneering collection brings together critical analyses on a range of issues touching on violent extremism by a multidisciplinary team of scholars and scholar-practitioners with an intimate and long-standing interest on the subject in Kenya, the region and globally. They cover the breadth as well as depth of the complex problem of violent extremism in a manner and language that speaks to both scholars and policy makers.

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