Violent Extremist Organizations and the Electoral Cycle in Africa: A Framework for Analyzing the 2015 Tanzanian Elections

Stephanie M. Burchard

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INTRODUCTION

Violent extremist organizations (VEOs), once relatively rare in sub-Saharan Africa, are rapidly becoming a serious threat to regime stability in several key African countries. In addition to generalized political violence and terrorist attacks directed at soft targets, VEOs can use and have used elections to further their organizational goals in several key ways. Because elections are regularized, high-profile events guaranteed to garner attention, they can become catalysts for VEO activity and assist groups in their recruitment efforts. VEOs have attempted to influence elections to secure victory for those who may be sympathetic to their cause. Elections may also be related to increases in violent attacks meant to disrupt the state, delegitimize the authority of the government altogether, or force a government to negotiate a cessation of hostilities. The relationship between VEOs and elections, however, is not one-sided. Ruthless politicians have also been accused of covert financing of VEOs and of using them as hired guns during election campaigns.

Groups such as Boko Haram in Nigeria and the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC) in Kenya have explicitly attempted to influence recent elections in their respective countries. For example, before the 2011 Nigerian general elections, Boko Haram assassinated several Northern politicians and detonated bombs at polling stations and electoral offices. There are also long-standing allegations that powerful politicians from the north have provided financing to Boko Haram. In Kenya, the MRC advocated for a boycott of 2013 elections on the Coast in an attempt to deprive the government of electoral legitimacy. On Election Day, the MRC is believed to have been responsible for the death of at least 13 in a series of coordinated attacks against security and election officials.

Much of the literature indicates that attacks that take place before an election have the effect (either intended or not) of reducing electoral support for incumbent governments. In countries as diverse as Spain, Turkey, Israel, and Russia, researchers have found that voters tend to punish incumbent governments for incidences of terrorism.[1] But the literature is silent about whether this effect is deliberate on the part of terrorist organizations or merely a byproduct of their actions. What do the perpetrators of terrorist attacks intend the effect to be on governments? Or are they agnostic? In Turkey, Israel, and countries in sub-Saharan Africa such as Nigeria and Kenya, the extremist organizations are domestically oriented. Thus, there may be an electoral motivation in attacks undertaken near or on Election Day by domestic VEOs.

Focusing on elections as a galvanizing event for VEO activity may provide us with leverage to better understand and reduce VEO activity in Africa. This research will examine past and upcoming elections in Kenya, Nigeria, and Tanzania—all of which have experienced VEO attacks as part of the electoral process. Past events in Nigeria and Kenya in particular will be examined

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[1]   Jose G. Montalvo, "Voting after the Bombings: a Natural Experiment on the Effect of Terrorist Attacks on Democratic Elections," *Review of Economics and Statistics* 93, 4 (2011): 1146–54; Arzu Kibris, "Funerals and Elections: the Effects of Terrorism on Voting Behavior in Turkey," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55, 2 (2010): 220–47; Claude Berrebi and Esteban K. Flor.. "On Terrorism and Electoral Outcomes: Theory and Evidence from the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, 6 (2006): 899–925; Sarah Oates, "Comparing the Politics of Fear: The Role of Terrorism News in Election Campaigns in Russia, the United States, and Britain," *International Relations* 20, 4 (2006): 425–37.

alongside a deeper analysis of Tanzania so as to forecast the potential for VEO activity prior to or after the 2015 Tanzanian election.

VEOs in Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania

Violent extremism in Africa is a relatively recent phenomenon. While rebellions and civil uprisings have been common across the continent, it is only within the recent past that movements have become sufficiently radicalized to warrant the label "violent extremist organization." VEOs focus their attacks on non-military targets, which include civilians and infrastructure. The goals of VEOs are generally, by definition, extreme and range from secession to the imposition of a new type of governing regime.[2] It is this confluence of goals and tactics that differentiate VEOs from other groups that may be threatening to take over the state but either (1) are engaged only in conflict with members of the security sector or (2) have goals considered within the realm of feasible outcomes. Religious extremism, as is often associated with a-Qaeda and the affiliated groups, was once rare in Africa but has proliferated in recent years. Groups such as al-Shabaab in Somalia, Boko Haram in Nigeria, and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) emerged as significant threats to the continent within the past eight to 10 years.

Currently, several violent extremist groups are operating in sub-Saharan Africa but only three are active and almost exclusively domestically oriented: Boko Haram in Nigeria, the MRC in Kenya, and the Association for Islamic Mobilization and Propagation (UAMSHO) in Tanzania. Because these groups are primarily anchored to domestic concerns, as opposed to the concerns of trans-national, trans-regional, or global groups, these groups are the most likely subset of VEOs to exhibit election-related or election-influenced behavior as elections are inherently an inward-looking political exercise. This is not to say that these groups do not have external linkages—all three do—but their primary areas of operation are located in their respective countries of origin; thus it can be expected that all three would interact with the electoral cycle in some way. Two of the aforementioned three groups have a history of electoral interference (Boko Haram and MRC), and two of the three groups (Boko Haram and UAMSHO) are operating in countries scheduled to hold elections in 2015. By comparing and contrasting these three groups it may be possible to gain some leverage in predicting, and perhaps preventing, future election-related attacks.

Boko Haram

Nigeria has a long and complex history of religious tensions. The country is roughly split between Christians and Muslims. The north is predominantly—although not exclusively— Muslim and the south is predominantly—although not exclusively—Christian. The north has historically been underdeveloped, especially in relation to the south of the country. Poverty and

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2   Manus I. Midlarsky, *Origins of Political Extremism: Mass Violence in the Twentieth Century and Beyond* (Cambridge University Press, 2011); Robert Eatwell and Matthew J. Goodwin, "Introduction: the 'New' Extremism in Twenty-first Century Britain", in *The New Extremism in 21st Century Britain*, ed. Robert Eatwell and Matthew J. Goodwin (London: Routledge, 2010).

unemployment are endemic, and many in the north have expressed concern that the north has been neglected by selfish and unscrupulous politicians.[3]

Boko Haram, which roughly translates into "Western Education is Forbidden," primarily operates in northeastern Nigeria but conducts sporadic attacks outside this area. Initially, the group did not seek to overthrow the government; rather, it advocated strict adherence to a fundamentalist ideology that, among other teachings, prohibited its followers from receiving secular education. The group spoke fervently against corruption and inequality in the northeast.[4] Corruption is a major problem for all of Nigeria, which is routinely ranked one of the most corrupt countries in the world.[5] Boko Haram officially formed around 2002 but had earlier incarnations in northern Nigeria in the 1980s and 1990s.[6] Previous manifestations were known as the Nigerian Taliban, Ahlusunna wal' Jamma Hijra, and Yusufiyya.[7]

Under founder Mohammad Yusuf, Boko Haram was responsible for sporadic attacks during the mid-2000s, but these attacks were focused primarily upon the security sector. Most targets were police stations and public buildings.[8] It wasn't until 2009, after the death of Yusuf in police custody, that the group turned to the more extreme tactics that it is now known for.[9] Yusuf and hundreds of his followers were killed by police in a massive operation against Boko Haram in July 2009. The police are also believed to have killed hundreds of civilians who were unfortunately caught up in the exchange.[10] For a period after Yusuf's death, the group went underground where it presumably regrouped. Boko Haram emerged in 2010 under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau, and its activities have consistently escalated. The group has engaged in suicide attacks against bus stations, public markets, the UN headquarters, various churches and mosques. It has assassinated or attempted to assassinate local and national politicians. The group has also claimed responsibility for mass kidnappings, the most high profile being the taking of more than 200 girls from a boarding school in Chibok.

Between May 2011 and December 2014, more than 15,000 deaths could be attributed to the conflict with Boko Haram.[11] In 2014 alone, more than 8,000 are believed to have died as a result of the insurgency.[12] It is estimated that both Boko Haram and state security forces are responsible for almost an equal number of these fatalities.[13] As of the end of 2014, Boko Haram had escalated its activities to almost daily attacks against various targets, including several villages in the northeast. By January 2015, the group reportedly controlled significant territory in

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3   Abimbola Adedsoji, "The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamic Revivalism in Nigeria," *Africa Spectrum* 45, 2 (2011): 95–108.

4   Mohammed Aly Sergie and Toni Johnson, "Backgrounders: Boko Haram," Council on Foreign Relations, 2014, http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/boko-haram/p25739, accessed December 2014.

5   See Transparency International's country profile on Nigeria for more on the extent of corruption. Available at http://www.transparency.org/country#NGA.

6   Adedsoji, "The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamic Revivalism in Nigeria."

7   Ibid.

8   Freedom C. Onuoha, "Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?" United States Institute of Peace Special Report, 2014, http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR348-Why_do_Youth_Join_Boko_Haram.pdf, accessed December 2014.

9   Adedsoji, "The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamic Revivalism in Nigeria."

10   *Al Jazeera,* "Nigeria Killings Caught on Video," February 10, 2010, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2010/02/20102102505798741.html, accessed December 2014.

11   "Nigeria Security Tracker: Mapping Violence in Nigeria," Council on Foreign Relations, 2014, http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/nigeria-security-tracker/p29483, accessed December 2014.

12   Ibid.

13   Ibid.

at least three of Nigeria's 36 states and had marched at least once to the capital of Borno state, Maiduguri, home to approximately 1 million people.

Mombasa Republican Council

The MRC operates on a much smaller scale than Boko Haram and with a much different stated end goal. Although it officially formed in 1999 to advocate on behalf of coastal communities who felt neglected by the central government, it wasn't until 2008 that the group formally demanded independence for the region.[14] It bases its claims for independence on its historical autonomy from Kenya—prior to the 1960s the British had been leasing a 10-mile strip of land around Mombasa from the Sultan of Oman and Muscat.[15] Locals were not consulted when the British transferred authority over the coastal region to the government of Kenya in 1963.[16] The coastal area is unique to Kenya in that the majority of residents are Muslim, whereas approximately 70 percent of Kenya is Christian. Land tenure issues have plagued the area as politicians and businesspersons have seized much of the valuable land in the coast, often times evicting those that had lived on the land for years. [17]

The MRC was banned by the government in 2010, but the High Court overturned the ban in 2012. Unlike Boko Haram, the group does not take responsibility for the attacks attributed to it. MRC eschews violent tactics but is believed to have engaged in several sporadic attacks from 2012 to present day. Several violent attacks took place in Mombasa in 2012 that were attributed to the MRC.[18] The government arrested close to 40 suspected MRC members in October 2012 in anticipation of potential election-related violence.[19] On the day of the 2013 general elections, attacks believed to have been perpetrated by MRC left at least 13 dead. The MRC explicitly asked its followers—estimated at anywhere between 10,000 and 1.5 million—to boycott the 2013 elections.[20] Voter turnout in Mombasa was approximately 66 percent—around 20 percentage points lower than Kenyan average.[21]

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[14] Anneli Botha, "Radicalisation in Kenya: Recruitment to al-Shabaab and the Mombasa Republican Council," Institute for Security Studies, September2014, http://www.issafrica.org/uploads/Paper265.pdf, accessed December 2014.

[15] "Briefing: Kenya's Coastal Separatists—Menace or Martyrs?" *IRIN,* October 24, 2012, http://www.irinnews.org/report/96630/briefing-kenya-s-coastal-separatists-menace-or-martyrs, accessed December 2014.

[16] Paul Goldsmith, "The Mombasa Republican Council Conflict Assessment: Threats and Opportunities for Engagement," Kenya Civil Society Strengthening Program, 2011, http://www.kecosce.org/downloads/MRC_Conflict_Assessment_Threats_and_Opportunities_for_Engagement.pdf, accessed December 2014.

[17] Gabriel Gatehouse, "Kenya Election: the Struggle for Land in Mombasa," *BBC News,* February 27, 2013, http://www.bbc.com/news/21578446, accessed December 2014.

[18] Andrew McGregor, "Kenya's Coast Province and the Mombasa Republican Council: Islamists, Separatists or Political Pawns?" *The Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Monitor* 10, Issue 20 (November 2, 2012), http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=40056#.VJidKl4AA, accessed December 2014.

[19] Boniface Bosire, "Kenya Cracks Down on Mombasa Republican Council Violence as Election Nears," *Sabahi,* October 18, 2012. Available at < http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/features/2012/10/18/feature-01> Accessed December 2014.

[20] "Briefing: Kenya's Coastal Separatists—Menace or Martyrs?" *IRIN* October 24, 2012.

[21] "Kenya Saw Record Voter Turnout in General Election," *Sabahi,* March 14, 2013, http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/newsbriefs/2013/03/14/newsbrief-07, accessed December 2014.

Association for Islamic Mobilization and Propagation

Tanzania is a union republic comprising mainland Tanganyika and an archipelago of several islands referred to as Zanzibar. UAMSHO began as a Zanzibari Islamic charity in the 1960s. It officially registered as a nongovernmental organization (NGO) in 2001. Beginning in 2011, UAMSHO launched a series of targeted attacks against Catholic priests, moderate Muslim clerics, and tourists. Much like in Kenya, residents of Zanzibar feel marginalized by the federal government, and there has been a growing independence movement. The constitutional review process, which began in 2011 and allowed citizens to voice their opinion about the content of a new constitution, seems to have invigorated UAMSHO. It held a series of rallies and protests calling for Zanzibari independence and an end to the union. The group also wishes to impose shari'a law on the islands.

Comparison

Table 1 presents a summary comparing the origins, goals, and tactics of Boko Haram, MRC and UAMSHO. All three began as advocacy groups addressing the needs of local marginalized groups, and all three were formed several years before radicalization or the adoption of violent, extremist tactics. Two of the groups (Boko Haram and UAMSHO) both state that they want independence and to impose shari'a law in their territories. The MRC, although largely composed of Muslims, does not have the imposition of shari'a as one of its organizational goals; it only wants separation from Kenya and independence for the coastal region.[22] Boko Haram is the largest and most active of the three groups. UAMSHO radicalized the most recently.

Table 1: VEO Comparison Chart, Origins, Goals, and Tactics

Criteria	Boko Haram	MRC	UAMSHO
Country	Nigeria	Kenya	Tanzania
Origins	• 2002 • religious advocacy/regional advocacy • marginalization	• 1999 • regional advocacy • marginalization	• 2002 • religious advocacy • marginalization
Radicalization	2009	2008	2011
Goals	Separation from state; imposition of shari'a	Separation from state	Separation from state; imposition of shari'a
Tactics	Escalating combat operations; massacres, suicide bombings	Sporadic grenade attacks, village massacres	Unsophisticated attacks; grenades, IEDs, acid attacks
Recent Electoral Activity (period)	Pre-2011, Pre-2015	Pre-2013	TBD
Reported Financing/Political Support	Opposition Parties	Opposition Parties	Opposition Parties

All three groups have explicitly targeted civilians as part of their strategy against the state. Boko Haram is the most sophisticated of the groups, as it is believed to currently control large swaths of three states in Nigeria (Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe). In Borno state specifically, Boko Haram

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22 Anneli Botha, "Radicalisation in Kenya: Recruitment to al-Shabaab and the Mombasa Republican Council."

has taken over 12 of 27 local government areas.[23] It has been waging near-daily attacks since March 2014.[24] The MRC was dormant for most of 2013, but some believe that it was responsible for a series of attacks along the coast in 2014.[25] UAMSHO's most recent attack took place in July 2014.

VEOs have assassinated political enemies to reduce competition at the political elite level. VEOs have also attempted to intimidate voters and prevent citizens from participating in elections, perhaps as a means of depriving the government some amount of electoral legitimacy. VEOs may become more active around elections to force governments to negotiate to end conflict before an election. VEOs in Nigeria and Kenya have engaged in many of the above illicit political behaviors and have attempted to influence political outcomes. Before the 2011 election, Boko Haram attempted to bomb an opposition election rally, bombed a polling center, and bombed an election commission office.[26] In Kenya, the MRC encouraged voters to boycott elections and, on Election Day, attacked police and election officials.

The relationship between VEOs and elections, however, is not one-sided. For example, politicians in both countries have attempted to use VEOs in their countries as a campaign issue of sorts. Association with a VEO could potentially damage a politician's reputation and decrease his or her electoral strength. VEOs in Nigeria and Kenya can be linked to various politicians, although in some cases the links are tenuous. Boko Haram is rumored to be financed by several high-profile northern politicians;[27] however, as the 2015 elections near, both the ruling party and the opposition are using Boko Haram as a sort of wedge issue. Both sides accuse the other of supporting Boko Harm, and there is evidence that the ruling party and members of the opposition have both supported Boko Haram at one point in time.[28] The ruling party now claims that the opposition politicians in the north are deliberately making the country ungovernable so as to turn public opinion against the government. The opposition claims that the ruling party is allowing Boko Haram to run rampant across the north to disenfranchise voters, the majority of whom support the opposition.

The government of Kenya has often accused the opposition in Kenya of providing financial and political support to the MRC. In addition, the government of Kenya has been attempting to link the MRC for several years to the Somali terrorist group al-Shabaab, but thus far, the ties cannot be proven.[29] Some have alleged that the government overplays the strength of the MRC, and its relationship to al-Shabaab, for political reasons. The opposition accused the government of using the MRC as a cover to engage in election violence along the coast prior to 2013.[30]

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23 Michelle Falu and Haruna Umar, "Nigerian Islamic Extremists Pose Regional Threat," *Associated Press,* 21 December 2014.

24 "Nigeria Security Tracker: Mapping Violence in Nigeria," 2014, Council on Foreign Relations.

25 Joseph Akwiri, "Suspected Separatists Attack Barracks, Police Camp on Kenya's Coast," *Reuters,* November 2, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/02/us-kenya-security-idUSKBN0IM0B520141102, accessed December 2014 and Bosire, "MRC in Crosshairs of Kenyan Security Forces after Deadly Attacks in Coast."

26 Alex Thurston,. "Boko Haram and Nigeria's Elections," *Sahel Blog,* 2011, http://sahelblog.wordpress.com/2011/04/25/boko-haram-and-nigerias-elections, accessed December 2014.

27 "Analysis: Understanding Nigeria's Boko Haram Radicals," *IRIN,* July 18, 2011, http://www.irinnews.org/report/93250/analysis-understanding-nigeria-s-boko-haram-radicals, accessed December 2014.

28 Peter Tinti, "Contextualizing Boko Haram," *Beacon Reader,* April 21, 2014, https://www.beaconreader.com/peter-tinti/contextualizing-boko-haram, accessed December 2014.

29 Andrew McGregor, "Kenya's Coast Province and the Mombasa Republican Council: Islamists, Separatists or Political Pawns?"

30 Ibid.

Interestingly, in both Kenya and Nigeria, it is difficult to detect an overall significant negative impact on their respective incumbent governments as a result of VEO activities—the opposition in both countries did not win the most recent elections. This lack of discernible effect could be due to a number of factors. First, because the opposition has been alleged to support VEOs in these two countries, whether true or not, voters might be inclined to punish the opposition for its alleged support. Second, the localized occurrence of VEO activities (northern Nigerian and coastal Kenya) might translate into localized effects on electoral outcomes, not national-level effects. Finally, it is possible that electoral fraud or electoral violence, both of which took place in each country, may be obscuring the true result of the election.

Nonetheless, VEOs in both countries did engage in activities meant to influence elections. In addition, there is no reason to think that Boko Haram will cease activities before the 2015 elections as the group is already behind at least one attempted assassination of a presidential aspirant. In July 2014, Boko Haram attempted to assassinate opposition politician Mohammadu Buhari.[31] Although it was only speculation at that point in 2014, Buhari was ultimately selected as the presidential candidate of the opposition party in December 2014. Interestingly, the government of Nigeria announced that the 2015 elections would be postponed six-weeks past the initial scheduled dates so that federal forces could continue combat operations against Boko Haram in the northeast.[32] Shortly thereafter, Boko Haram announced that it would do everything in its power to disrupt the elections.[33]

In Tanzania, elections have not yet been held since UAMSHO radicalized; however, it is more than likely that UAMSHO will attempt to influence the 2015 elections. It is unclear how the government of Tanzania will attempt to use UAMSHO in the upcoming elections. In Tanzania, UAMSHO has been linked to opposition politicians. The government, however, has thus far been silent on the suspected political ties between UAMSHO and the opposition. This is likely because in Zanzibar, the ruling party has entered into a formal powersharing arrangement with the opposition as the result of several violent, contentious elections. The government now finds itself in a precarious position. If it explicitly blames the opposition, the power-sharing arrangement that has seemed to bring calm and unity could fall apart.

Because of the newness of UAMSHO and the uncertainty around the potential of attacks related to the upcoming 2015 election, it may be instructive to take a closer look at the political context in which UAMSHO arose, what activities it has been associated with, and government response. Doing so may provide a clearer picture of how interacting with the elections may or may not benefit UAMSHO's goals.

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[31] Ishola Balogun, "Buhari's Assassination Attempt Intended to Destabilize Nigeria—Ekhomu," *Vanguard,* July 26, 2014, http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/07/buharis-assassination-attempt-intended-destabilise-nigeria-ekhomu, accessed December 2014.

[32] Alexis Okeowo, "An Election Postponed in Nigeria," The New Yorker, February 9, 2015, http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/election-postponed-nigeria, accessed February 2015.

[33] Yinka Ibukun, "Boko Haram Threatens to Disrupt Nigeria's Elections in Video," Bloomberg, February 18, 2015, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-02-18/boko-haram-threatens-to-disrupt-nigeria-s-elections-in-new-video, accessed February 2015.

TANZANIA: A CLOSER LOOK

Mainland Tanzania (known as Tanganyika during the colonial period) and the islands that comprise Zanzibar have very different histories. Tanganyika was under German and later British colonial rule. After defeating Portuguese colonizers in the late 1600s, Oman took possession of the islands of Zanzibar and used them as a major hub of the Arab slave trade. Around 1840, the Sultanate relocated its capital from Muscat in Oman to Stone Town in Zanzibar. In 1886, Zanzibar became a British protectorate after the 45-minute long Anglo-Zanzibar War. Due to the long history of trade and rule by Arabs, there is still a large Arab population in Zanzibar.

In the 1960s, the British initiated the process of decolonization of its colonial possessions. Tanganyika achieved independence in 1961. In Zanzibar, a series of elections were held to determine the composition of the post-colonial government, but each election produced a seemingly intractable deadlock between the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP), which represented mostly black Zanzibaris, and a coalition of parties—Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP)/Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party (ZNPP)—that represented mostly Arab Zanzibaris. These elections reflected, and in some ways may have reinforced, a growing racial divide in Zanzibar.

In late 1963, Zanzibar declared independence from Great Britain and established itself as a constitutional monarchy with Sultan Jamshid bin Abdullah as its leader and ZNP/ZPPP in control of the government. Within a month, a revolutionary coup took place. The leader of ASP, Abeid Karume, was installed as president. In April 1964, after secret negotiations between Karume and Tanganyikan President Julius Nyerere, it was announced that Zanzibar and Tanganyika would form a union called Tanzania, and each would have its own government, resulting in a two-tier system of government.

Since gaining independence in 1961, Tanzania (both mainland and Zanzibar) has been governed by the political party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM). Even after the restoration of multi-party politics in 1992, CCM continued to dominate the political sphere—winning majorities in the 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2010 general elections.

Many believe the political tide is turning in favor of the opposition, however. Incumbent candidate Jakaya Kikwete's share of the vote decreased nearly 20 percent between the 2005 and 2010 general elections. Some speculate that this declining victory margin, combined with CHADEMA's (*Chama Cha Demokrasia,* or Party for Democracy and Progress) popular platform on constitutional reform, forced Kikwete to concede to decades of criticism by opposition and civil society groups calling for revisions to the 1977 constitution.

Conversely, elections are far more competitive and contentious in Zanzibar, where CCM and CUF (Chama Cha Wananchi/Civic United Front) are the major political contenders. The Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC), widely perceived as an extension of the ruling party, intensified this rivalry when it refused to recount votes despite CUF allegations of irregularities during the 1995 polls. The situation escalated in 2000 following CUF's accusation of ZEC misconduct, rejection of the results, and calls for a new election.[34] There were several bomb and arson attacks on government institutions, including the ZEC. In another incident, 30 civilians were killed by security forces during protests in Pemba. The political impasse continued in subsequent

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[34] Ibid.; Nicole Stremlau and Monroe E. Price, "Media, Elections, and Political Violence in Eastern Africa: Towards a Comparative Framework," *Communications Policy Research* (University of Oxford, October 2009); EISA, "Zanzibar 2000 Presidential Election Results," http://www.content.eisa.org.za/old-page/zanzibar-2000-presidential-election-results.

elections, ultimately leading to a Government of National Unity (GNU) in 2010.[35] The 2010 polls were peaceful, but it is unclear if the peace will hold in 2015.[36]

At the end of 2010, President Jakaya Kikwete announced that the country would begin the process of drafting a new constitution. One of the most divisive issues in writing a new constitution has been how to structure the powers of the governments of Zanzibar and the mainland. Opposition parties and civil society groups on the mainland have long advocated for a system that devolves power away from the central government. The proposed three-tier system would consist of separate governments for the mainland and Zanzibar plus the union government. But the government contends this is unnecessarily expensive and could undermine national unity. The current draft up for referendum in April 2015 maintains the status quo and likely will be a major campaign issue in the October 2015 elections.

Stronger Opposition and Disunity within CCM

Due to the contentious nature of the constitutional review process, the opposition is also more unified than in previous elections. In October 2014, political parties under UKAWA (Umoja wa Katiba ya Wananchi/Coalition for the People's Constitution) agreed to field a single candidate for president and other key posts in 2015. Senior leaders of four parties—CHADEMA; CUF; NCCR-Mageuzi (Chama Cha Mageuzi Na Ujenzi Wa Taifa/National Convention for Construction and Reform); and NLD (National League for Democracy)—signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to "unseat CCM" in the upcoming polls.[37]

Although no UKAWA presidential candidate has been announced yet, some of the potential contenders are Wilibrod Slaa (CHADEMA), Ibrahim Lipumba (CUF), and Freeman Mbowe (CHADEMA). If the deal remains intact, many believe the opposition could win the presidential race. Twaweza, a civil society organization established to promote change in East Africa, conducted a survey of Tanzanians in September 2014. It reported that Tanzanians are very dissatisfied with politicians at all levels and of all parties. Only a slight majority (47 percent) said that if the election were held today, they would vote for the CCM candidate for president, a decline of 10 percent from a 2012 survey. These results suggest that the next election will be close, perhaps closer than any election in Tanzanian history.

While there is coordination among the opposition, the ruling party is rife with division. Internal party conflicts stem from the nomination of CCM's next presidential candidate as well as differing opinions regarding the need for, and content of, a new constitution.[38] With respect to the second issue, there was significant opposition among CCM's ultraconservative ranks to drafting a new constitution, but Kikwete made the announcement regardless. Many people believe the new constitution is an attempt by the president to secure his legacy (like Nyerere)

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[35]   The power-sharing agreement, in which the runner-up becomes vice president, received overwhelming approval (69%) in the July referendum.

[36]   Personal communication, 19 September 2014.

[37]   Songa Songa, "UKAWA Sign MoU to Field One Candidate against CCM," 27 October 2014, http://www.thecitizen.co.tz/News/Ukawa-sign-MoU-to-field--one-candidate-against-CCM/-/1840392/2500598/-/rp95s8z/-/index.html.

[38]   Hanno Brankcamp, "CCM's Identity Crisis: Comebacks, Constitution, and Corruption in Tanzania," *Think Africa Press,* 21 February 2014, http://www.thinkafricapress.com/tanzania/quo-vadis-ccm-quo-vadis-ccm-kikwe.

after two terms in office. At the same time, others speculate that Kikwete has allowed his party to hijack the process as a sort of atonement for his bypassing party wishes.[39]

President Kikwete has already served the maximum terms allowed by the constitution and, unlike many of his African counterparts, there has been no indication suggesting Kikwete plans to extend his rule.[40] Thus, pressure is mounting within CCM about *who* will contest for president. Under new rules, local (district) leaders have greater representation in CCM's National Executive Committee, which decides the nominee. Internal party nominations are scheduled for February 2015, and the consensus is that they will be turbulent.[41]

In fact, CCM has already reprimanded several politicians for illegal campaigning. Eager candidates have publicly announced their presidential ambitions despite strict party rules and procedures regarding the selection and declaration of nominees.[42] Among these aspirants is political heavyweight Edward Lowassa, former prime minister and current MP of Monduli, who in early 2014 publicly proclaimed his desire to "serve the people."[43] Other potentials include Foreign Affairs Minister Bernard Membe; Deputy Minister for Science and Technology January Makamba; former Prime Minister Frederick Sumaye; Minister of State for Social Relations and Coordination Stephen Wasira; and former Minister of Energy and Minerals William Ngelega.

But Lowassa is "determined to win the CCM presidential nomination."[44] Although he resigned as prime minister due to alleged involvement in an energy corruption scandal, Lowassa maintains popularity among the people, particularly the youth.[45] However, his preemptive announcement was met with harsh criticism by fellow CCM politicians, including accusations that he was bribing party members to ensure he received the presidential bid. In addition, there are rumors that Lowassa is not on good terms with Kikwete. This could intensify divisions given that the outgoing president traditionally plays a major role in selecting CCM's nominee.

Given these divisions, there are fears that Lowassa and others will mobilize the youth if the presidential bid does not appear to be their way. In the past, Lowassa has reportedly used his support base within the party's youth wing—*Umoja wa Vijana Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (UVCCM)—to intimidate others at important CCM leadership meetings.[46] Such frictions may also lead to independent candidates, which will be permitted to contest for the first time in the 2015

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[39]   Jenerali Ulimwengu, "Trying to Be Too Clever by Half, CCM Has Divided the Country into Two Parts," 11 October 2014, http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/OpEd/comment/-CCM-has-divided-the-country-into-two-parts-/-/434750/2482766/-/h352boz/-/index.html.

[40]   Although this has not prevented speculation that Kikwete will attempt to postpone the elections (*AC,* 55, no. 2, 24 January 2014).

[41]   Interview with Jukwaa la Katiba, 12 September 2014.

[42]   Interview with Yulli Jeremia, 10 September 2014; Jenerali Ulimwengu, "The Man Who Would Succeed Tanzania's President Kikwete," February 2014, http://www.africareview.com/Special-Reports/The-man-who-would-succeed-Tanzania-Kikwete/-/979182/2218490/-/2g3pspz/-/index.html.

[43]   "Lowassa Dream Interrupted as CCM Chiefs Raise Red Card," 8 January 2014, http://www.thecitizen.co.tz/magazine/political-reforms/Lowassa-dream-interrupted-CCM-chiefs-raise-red-card/-/1843776/2138608/-/14awnt7/-/index.html.

[44]   *Africa Confidential* 55, no. 2, 24 January 2014.

[45]   Interview with Yulli Jeremia, 10 September 2014. Lowassa resigned in February 2008 after he was linked to the Richmond power scandal. He had ordered acceptance of a bid from Richmond to supply power, even though the shell company in Houston had no power plant and had never supplied any. Source: *Africa Confidential* 54, No 12, 7 June 2013.

[46]   *Africa Confidential* 53, no. 9, 27 April 2012.

elections. While this is a positive democratic trend, it could have negative consequences, too: because of the fierce competition among contenders, widespread vote-buying is expected.[47]

During the campaign period, CMC and CHADEMA are known to bribe youth in the informal transportation sector (*boda boda*; "motor bikes" in English) to protest in the streets. The government has no incentive to regulate/ or ban *boda boda* either; doing so would be political suicide because the youth will support the opposition. CCM has also been accused of using its trained youth brigade, known as the Green Guards, for muscle during the campaign period, although the ruling party contends this branch of UVCCM is employed to "sensitize supporters" and "instill patriotism" during the electioneering period.[48] Both CHADEMA and CUF have similar, though less organized, youth militias known as the Red Brigade and Blue Guards, respectively.

A Controversial Constitutional Review Process

Tanzania is currently operating under the 1977 constitution, which was written during the height of CCM single-party rule. Since the reintroduction of multi-party politics in the 1990s, opposition and civil society groups have been calling for reforms, specifically those aimed at the biased electoral system. At the end of 2010, Kikwete announced that the country would begin drafting a new constitution. It was hoped that the process would conclude before the 2015 elections, but a protracted and highly politicized process has made this impossible.

The process was put in motion in April 2012 when Kikwete appointed a 30-member Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) led by Joseph Warioba (retired judge). The new commission was immediately embraced by opposition parties, including CHADEMA. The process has offered Tanzanians and Zanzibaris a unique opportunity to provide their input. According to Muhammad Yussuf, one of the commission members, the commission received input from nearly 1.5 million Tanzanians in a year-long consultation process. In addition, almost 200,000 Zanzibaris attended the various forums held across the archipelago. The CRC also consulted with a 200-member secretariat composed of statisticians, economists, political scientists, and other researchers from Zanzibar and the mainland.

The CRC's first draft was presented on June 3, 2013. One of its key provisions was the establishment of a three-tier system of government (separate structures for mainland Tanganyika, Zanzibar, and a union governmental body) to replace the existing two-tier system that currently only represents Zanzibar and a union government. This provision was highly contentious for many reasons, not least that a power-sharing agreement had been signed in 2009 between CCM and CUF. The status of the Union has been a frequent problem for the federal government, with intermittent demands for secession emanating from Zanzibaris who feel marginalized by a federal structure. Some of the other provisions included removal of the ban of independent candidates, the creation of an independent electoral commission, term limits and the right for citizens to recall their MPs, and parliamentary approval of all presidential nominations.

As part of the review process, constitutional councils at the district level were tasked with reviewing the first draft and providing feedback to the commission. Based on this feedback, the CRC then released a second draft of the constitution at the end of 2013. This draft made several changes to the previous draft but again suggested a three-tier system of government. The final

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[47] *Africa Confidential* 53, no 10, 11 May 2012.
[48] *The Citizen,* "Chadema, CCM Rivalry Rages on over Party Guards," 13 July 2013, http://www.thecitizen.co.tz/News/Chadema--CCM-rivalry-rages-on-over-party-guards-/-/1840406/1913378/-/2vmeh4z/-/index.html.

stage of the process—debate and deliberations—began in March 2014 when the Constituent Assembly, comprising 629 delegates from political parties and civil society, convened. Almost immediately, the debates turned acrimonious. CCM party members and their supporters, who have a majority of delegates in the Constituent Assembly, have dominated this stage of the process. They removed the three-tier provision and reinstated the two-tier system of government.

In April, Ukawa (a coalition of opposition party members) walked out of the proceedings in protest. Despite the boycott, the mandate of the Constituent Assembly was extended, and a second round of debates on the new constitution took place in August. After much criticism about the lopsided nature of the debates, Kikwete was forced to mediate the dispute over the new constitution in late August. Ukawa and Kikwete reportedly came to agreement in September: due to the unexpected length of the process and current impasse over the content of the constitution, the reform process would be suspended and resumed only after the October 2015 elections. Even after the details of this agreement were released, the Constituent Assembly continued to meet (and collect stipends), drawing the ire of many and calls from the opposition and civil society to shut down proceedings immediately. On October 2, the Assembly approved the CCM-altered constitution, despite objections from Ukawa. A few weeks later, the attorney general of Tanzania announced that the country would hold a constitutional referendum on April 30, 2015.

In early November, the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation held a forum to discuss the new constitution. During a speech by one the new constitution's most vocal critics, former CRC-head Joseph Warioba, several youths began chanting "CCM." Some believe that the ruling party deliberately instructed members of its youth wing to disrupt the proceedings. Warioba, who had been prime minister of Tanzania from 1985 to 1990, has repeatedly come out in opposition to the changes made by the ruling party. As things stand, Ukawa has promised it will campaign against the new constitution. Although the typical campaign period for general elections is 60 days, the government has decided to limit the campaign period for the new constitution to 30 days, which may limit the effect of the coalition's protest. This also places more pressure on the National Electoral Commission (NEC) who must re-register Tanzania's eligible voters using new biometric voter registration (BVR) kits it has yet to receive from South Africa.

Violent Extremism: An Emerging Threat

Tanzania is often described as an oasis of peace and stability. Unlike many of its East African neighbors, it has no history of ethnic conflict, military takeovers, or coups. Though the country is diverse—it comprises more than 120 different ethnic groups and has sizable Muslim and Christian populations—neither ethnicity nor religion has translated into significant social conflict during the post-independence era. This peace is attributed to the republic's first president, Julius Nyerere (1965–1984), who encouraged equality and brotherly (*ndugu*) relations among Tanzanians. But this peace has been slowing eroding, partly due to the increasing politicization of religion.

CCM's one-party rule ultimately left "no space" for Muslim community leaders and youths to "voice their dissent" within the political system—leading to the emergence of several Islamist organizations and movements during the late 1980s. One of these groups, Baraza la Uendelezaji wa Koran Tanzania (BALUKTA, or Council for the Promotion of the Koran in Tanzania), protested government policies and attacked markets selling pork and alcohol in Dar es Salaam. The government banned the group in April 1993, accusing it of "plotting to impose an Islamic state in Tanzania and of distributing cassettes calling for the overthrow of the government." But other

groups emerged in BALUKTA'S place, resulting in more government accusations of incitement and arrests, which were followed by protests and violence aimed at Christians.

Ironically, divisions became more apparent following the restoration of multiparty politics in the 1990s. In Zanzibar, Muslims joined CUF while Christians joined CCM. Even on the mainland, CUF is viewed as a Muslim party and CHADEMA as Christian, while CCM is conveniently secular. There is also a gentlemen's agreement with respect to the president—Kikwete is Muslim so the next president should be Christian. Others assert that politics and religion are not aligned, but rather, politicians exploit this perception and use mosques or churches during their campaigns.

According to a National Defense University (NDU) study, tensions have led to a cycle wherein "Islamist perceptions of disenfranchisement and repression beget outbreaks of Islamic violence that in turn reinforce the Islamist's original motivations to act out against the government and non-Islamists."[49] Cities with religiously mixed populations such as Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Mbeya, Arusha, and Stone Town have been the most vulnerable to inter-communal conflicts.

Yet until recently, many viewed Tanzania as somewhat immune to homegrown militant Islam. According to a 2006 study by Jeffrey Haynes, this was due to (1) the diversity of Islamic practice in Tanzania wherein Sunni Sufist tradition is likely to trump the appeal of fundamentalists; (2) the willingness of mainstream Muslim groups in Tanzania, including state-sponsored Islamic organizations, to pursue their objectives through dialogue; (3) limited local Muslim interest to support or join the ranks of al-Qaeda and its affiliates; and (4) fears that fundamentalists seek to impose a strict, authoritarian political system that would create new grievances.

The recent radicalization of UAMSHO, however, has amplified concerns about religious tensions and extremism in the run-up to the April 2015 constitutional referendum and October 2015 general elections. While religious tensions are not entirely new phenomena on mainland Tanzania, and certainly not Zanzibar, there are signs of a "gradual hardening of indigenous Muslim identity in Tanzania," as well as "growing links between militant Muslim indigenes and foreign radicals, including some with probable al Qaeda connections."[50] In fact, Zanzibar (particularly Pemba), has been a "locus of Islamic mobilization" for several years and the origin of fundamentalist movements such as Imam Mejlis (Imam Society) and Daawa Islamiya (Islamic Call).[51]

UAMSHO Radicalization

The perceived co-optation of the opposition by the ruling party may have facilitated its radicalization process, as some claim that UAMSHO emerged to fill the political vacuum left by the opposition when it joined the ruling party in 2010. Because of the GNU, however ineffective it may be, there is no party left to advocate for Zanzibar's interests. There are rumors in Zanzibar that politicians, particularly those from CUF, are operating indirectly through UAMSHO because they can no longer officially oppose government policy.

The constitutional review process seems to have galvanized UAMSHO. In 2011, UAMSHO began holding rallies and frequent anti-government protests, advocating for dissolution of the union.

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[49]   Andre LeSage, 2014, "The Rising Terrorist Threat in Tanzania: Domestic Islamist Militancy and Regional Threats," INSS Strategic Forum (September), http://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/stratforum/SF-288.pdf, accessed January 2015.

[50]   Ibid.

[51]   Ibid.

These sentiments for more autonomy are widely shared among Zanzibaris.[52] Based on data from an Afrobarometer survey conducted in 2012 in Tanzania, roughly 44 percent of mainlanders said there was no need to substantially alter the structure of the union with Zanzibar, whereas almost 90 percent of Zanzibaris wanted a change in the status, with 23 percent wanting a complete dissolution of the union.

In addition to protests and riots, UAMSHO is believed to have been responsible for a series of unsophisticated attacks (e.g., crude homemade explosives, handguns, and acid) targeting "poorly protected targets of opportunity," including Christians, moderate Muslims, and tourists in Zanzibar.[53] Three Catholic priests were attacked in incidents occurring in 2012 and 2013. Two British tourists were attacked with acid in 2013. In January 2014, a bomb was thrown from a car at followers leaving a mosque where a moderate Muslim cleric had just finished giving a sermon on peace in the face of jihad. In February, three separate attacks on churches in Zanzibar took place. *Jane's* reports, "the nature of Islamist militancy in Tanzania is likely to change drastically over the next few years…Although the capacity of Zanzibar-based militant groups is still rudimentary, their skill-set is fast improving and their target set is expanding."[54]

While attacks have taken place largely in Zanzibar, there have been reports of activity on the mainland in cities such as Arusha and Dar es Salaam and in rural areas surrounding Tanga and Mtwara. It is unclear if UAMSHO or followers of the radical cleric Issa Ponda Issa are responsible for these attacks. Ponda does have ties to Zanzibar so coordination between the groups is possible. The government and media are relatively tight-lipped when it comes to reporting on UAMSHO's activities, and it has been rumored that the Tanzanian government banned reporting on UAMSHO. Most news coverage simply refers to such incidents as acts of terrorism.

Government Response

The government response has been swift. In April 2012, the government banned all meetings, demonstrations, gatherings, or UAMSHO lectures, stating: "The government will not tolerate some few individuals threatening other people or using religion to disrupt the peace and harmony which the country has enjoyed over the past 50 years."[55] This declaration was followed by assertions from Tanzania's Muslims and Christians Brotherhood Society (UNDUGU) that UAMSHO was linked it to al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, and al-Qaeda. In March 2013, leaflets distributed anonymously in Zanzibar encouraged Christians to retaliate against Muslims for attacks against Catholic priests. In response, President Kikwete condemned the notion of religious vigilantism: "The government will not spare anyone implicated in instigating chaos."[56] In November 2014, Seif Ali Iddi, Vice President of Zanzibar, declared UMASHO's flag illegal.

Police operations have also resulted in several arrests, with at least 60 people arrested in connection with terrorist attacks over the past two years. Sheikh Farid Hadi Ahmed and Sheikh Msellem Ali, both from UAMSHO, are currently in police custody awaiting trial. Farid, believed to be UAMSHO's leader, was detained briefly before. He went missing in October 2012 and in response his supporters rioted for two days. He was released shortly thereafter. According to

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[52]   UAMSHO advocates Zanzibari independence and espouses support for Wahhabism. It has called for a public code of conduct for tourists, including dress and abstention from alcohol.

[53]   Ibid, 26.

[54]   *Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst,* "Rising Tide: Islamist Terrorism in Tanzania," 2–3.

[55]   *IRIN,* "TANZANIA: Islamist Riots Threaten Zanzibar's Stability," 24 October 2012, http://www.irinnews.org/report/96631/tanzania-islamist-riots-threaten-zanzibar-s-stability

[56]   *Sabahi News,* "Anonymous Leaflets Threaten Christian Retaliation in Zanzibar," 3 March 2013, http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/newsbriefs/2013/03/03/newsbrief-07

Farid, he was kidnapped by the police, but the police have denied this accusation. He was arrested in late December 2012 and is being held in detention on the mainland.

Regional and Global Links?

In 2006 the expert Haynes posited, "the notion that Tanzania has begun to degenerate into a new territorial beachhead for transnational Islamic extremism is misplaced."[57] But several developments within the region and Tanzania suggest it is more credible than once thought. For example, between October and November 2013, Tanzanian authorities found several training camps, weapons caches, and "child indoctrination centers" linked to al-Shabaab—leading to 82 arrests.[58] In addition, the Tanga-based Islamist organization, Ansar Muslim Youth Centre (AMYC), has been linked directly to al-Hijra (Kenya) and al-Shabaab. Specifically, the group is speculated to be "one visible part of a loose network that includes hardline Islamist preachers, their radical mosques, Islamic social centers and schools, likeminded businessmen who finance militant activities, and multiple small cells of armed youth."[59]

CONCLUSIONS

In past elections, VEOs in Nigeria and Kenya have worked to influence elections. In Nigeria, Boko Haram has assassinated aspirants and attacked election infrastructure. In Kenya, the MRC has attempted to organize a boycott of sympathizers and launched an attack on Election Day. Both groups did not necessarily escalate their tactics or increase the scale of their attacks, but continued with the level and type of attack they had been previously known for.

In Tanzania, it is uncertain what activities UAMSHO will engage in prior to the 2015 elections, but it seems likely that they will attempt to influence the electoral process in some way—either during the constitutional referendum or general elections, or both. There is no evidence that UAMSHO has dramatically increased its capabilities—although its last known attack was in July 2014—so it will likely continue with the types of attacks it has been known for. The group could resume sporadic grenade attacks and small-scale bombings using improvised explosive devices, and if it does so, it is more than possible that ruling party politicians could come under attack. The group could also encourage an election boycott in Zanzibar in an effort to delegitimize the process. This may prove a fruitful strategy as the constitution must pass with a majority on both the mainland and in Zanzibar.

UAMSHO activity has the possibility of undermining the GNU, already fragile from the Ukawa coalition. In addition, the government itself is in a tough position and may not be able to politicize the issue of terrorism around the elections as the governments of Nigeria and Kenya

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[57]   Ibid., 30.

[58]   *Sabahi News,* "Two More Arrested in Connection to al-Shabaab Military Training in Mtwara," 18 October 2013, http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/ hoa/articles/newsbriefs/2013/10/18/newsbrief-02; *Sabahi News,* "Tanzania Dismantles al-Shabaab Child Indoctrination Camp in Tanga Region," 15 November 2013, http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/features/2013/11/15/feature-01.

[59]   According to a study drafted by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service: Formed in the 1970s as the Tanzanian Muslim Youth Union (UVIKITA), the organization was renamed AMYC in 1988 for the purpose of propagating Salafi Islam. In the late 1990s, the AMYC began to drift toward radicalism, apparently through its association with the Saudi-based charitable foundation Al-Haramayn, which provided funding to the AMYC. Source: Ibid., 26.

have both attempted. Nonetheless, it seems likely that UAMSHO will play a role in Tanzanian politics in 2015. More than likely, terrorism and violence will increase in the coming months.

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1. REPORT DATE *(DD-MM-YYYY)* February 2015	2. REPORT TYPE IAD Final	3. DATES COVERED *(From - To)*

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Violent Extremist Organizations and the Electoral Cycle in Africa: A Framework for Analyzing the 2015 Tanzanian Elections	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER HQ0034-14-D-0001
	5b. GRANT NUMBER — — —
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER — — —
6. AUTHOR(S) Stephanie M. Burchard	5d. PROJECT NUMBER AE-55-5564
	5e. TASK NUMBER — — —
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER — — —

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Institute for Defense Analyses 4850 Mark Center Drive Alexandria, Virginia 22311-1882	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER NS D-5428 H 15-000126

9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Institute for Defense Analyses 4850 Mark Center Drive Alexandria, VA 22311-1882e	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) — — —

12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
   Approved for public release; distribution unlimited (20 March 2015).

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES
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14. ABSTRACT
Violent extremist organizations (VEOs), once relatively rare in sub-Saharan Africa, are rapidly becoming a serious threat to regime stability in several key African countries. In addition to generalized political violence and terrorist attacks directed at soft targets, VEOs have used elections to further their organizational goals in several key ways. This paper examines past and upcoming elections in Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania, all of which have experienced VEO attacks as part of the electoral process. Past events in Nigeria and Kenya in particular are examined alongside a deeper analysis of Tanzania so as to forecast the potential for VEO activity before or after the 2015 Tanzanian election. Focusing on elections as a galvanizing event or focal point for VEO activity may provide us with leverage in order to better understand and reduce VEO activity in Africa.

15. SUBJECT TERMS
Boko Haram, elections, Kenya, MRC, Mombasa Republican Council, Nigeria, Tanzania, VEO, violent extremist organization

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Philip Major
a. REPORT Unclassified	b. ABSTRACT Unclassified	c. THIS PAGE Unclassified	Unlimited	21	19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER *(include area code)* 703-845-2201