



**AFRICAN HISTORIES
AND MODERNITIES**

Terrorism and Counter- Terrorism in Modern Sub-Saharan Africa

Edited by **János Besenyő · Moses B. Khanyile**
David Vogel

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African Histories and Modernities

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PREFACE

Africa, as a continent, has been associated with conflicts and terrorism for many years. Efforts to understand the various aspects of such conflicts and terrorism, including their root causes, personalities, motivations, dynamics, and even external role-players, have been (and continue to be) the primary focus of many academic studies by prominent scholars across the globe. However, with the nature of security threats changing and the associated mechanisms to address such threats becoming even more complex, it became necessary to revisit the prevailing paradigms linked to various forms of violent conflicts in Africa.

This edited volume seeks to shed light on the new shades of terrorism, counter-terrorism and insurgency in Africa. Their definitional nuances, practical application and implications are analysed through various thematic lenses as they unfold in the different parts of Africa. Given the complex nature of terrorism and the associated mechanisms to counter it, this volume seeks to contribute towards a better understanding of these concepts and phenomena without claiming to be comprehensive. One of the critical features of this volume is the simplicity of the analysis, which is characterised by non-technical language and the use of relevant examples. In this regard, it is user-friendly for the general public, scholars and policy-makers.

Budapest, Hungary
Saldanha, South Africa
Budapest, Hungary

János Besenyő
Moses B. Khanyile
David Vogel

CONTENTS

1	Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Modern Sub-Saharan Africa	1
	David Vogel	
2	Development, COVID-19 and Terrorism in Africa	7
	Moses B. Khanyile	
3	Ambazonia, Yet Another (Security) Challenge for Yaoundé	25
	David Vogel	
4	Countering Insurgency and Terrorism in Africa: A Comparative Analysis of Ghana and Nigeria	51
	Isaac Nunoo	
5	Islamic Insurgency in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique: Socio-economic Causes and Consequences Through a Historical Lens	83
	István Rákóczi and Éva Hegedűs	
6	Counterinsurgency Versus Counterterrorism and Beyond: What Is Suitable for the Sahel?	111
	János Kemény	

7	Maritime Counterterrorism in Africa: The Need for Proper Governance	127
	Thean Potgieter	
8	Terrorist Organizations' Activities Against Crucial Installations: Al-Shabaab's Attacks on Critical Infrastructure in Kenya	169
	János Besenyő and Gábor Sinkó	
9	The New Craft of Intelligence: Information Operations and Cyber Security	195
	Darko Trifunovic	
10	Threats and Opportunities Related to the Internet of Things (IOT) and Specific African Healthcare Developments and Risks	207
	Zoltán Rajnai and Attila Máté Kovács	
11	Countering Terrorism in Nigeria: The Imperative of Geospatial Intelligence and Information Technology	227
	Stephen Ubong Andrew and Odee Princewill Odum	
12	Shots in the Dark: Immunisation in Zones of Armed Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa	253
	Péter Marton and Buyisile Ntaka	
13	Concluding Reflections: The Future Trajectories for Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Africa	277
	Jean-Pierré Scherman	
	Index	293

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LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 2.1	Overlapping membership of regional economic communities (RECs) in Africa (<i>Abbreviations</i> : AMU, Arab Maghreb Union; CEN-SAD, Community of Sahel-Saharan States; CEMA, Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa; COMESA, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa; EAC, East African Community; ECCAS, Economic Community of Central African States; ECOWAS, Economic Community of West African States; IGAD, Intergovernmental Authority on Development; SACU, Southern African Customs Union; SADC, Southern African Development Community; WAEMU, West African Economic and Monetary Union). (Source: UNCTAD, <i>Economic Development in Africa 2021</i>)	15
Fig. 2.2	Cooperation between criminal and terror networks. (Source: UNODC, 2020 <i>Global Study on Firearms Trafficking 2020</i>)	16
Fig. 2.3	Firearms and the black market. (Source: UNODC, 2020 <i>Global Study on Firearms Trafficking 2020</i>)	17
Fig. 2.4	Sub-Saharan African emerging market and frontier economies: cumulative portfolio flows, 2020–2021 (billions in US dollars). (Source: IMF, 2021. <i>Regional Economic Outlook 2021: Sub-Saharan Africa</i>)	19
Fig. 11.1	Responses on etiology of terrorism (Source: Authors' fieldwork 2021)	234
Fig. 11.2	Pictures of Drones	242
Fig. 11.3	Zephyr-S a high-altitude pseudo-satellite (HAPS), “with the capabilities of a satellite and the flexibility of a UAV,” almost 26 days flight time at very high altitude	243

LIST OF MAPS

- Map 13.1 Major multilateral peace and security operations in Africa (Claire Klobucista and Danielle Renwick, *The Role of Peacekeeping in Africa*, Council on Foreign Relations, 5 October 2021. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/role-peacekeeping-africa>. Retrieved on 28 November 2023.) 282
- Map 13.2 United Nations—African Union partnership (Anon., *Map: United Nations – African Union Partnership*, The United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), post to X (formerly known as Twitter), 4 December 2020. <https://twitter.com/UNDPPA/status/1334963546011164673>. Retrieved on 28 November 2023.) 285
- Map 13.3 Woman in peacekeeping: A growing force (Anon., *Civilians, United Nations Peacekeeping*. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/civilians>. Retrieved on 29 November 2023.) 290

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Terrorism in UNDP’s focus countries, 2007–2019	12
Table 2.2	Operation KAFO on firearms trafficking in the Sahel, 2019–2021	18
Table 2.3	Financial flows and tax revenues to Africa and private savings (current USD, billion), 2000–2017	20
Table 5.1	Key socio-economic indicators of Cabo Delgado in a national comparison	85
Table 11.1	Showing the distribution of respondents and questionnaires	247
Table 11.2	Responses on causes of Terrorism	248



Ambazonia, Yet Another (Security) Challenge for Yaoundé

David Vogel

PRELUDE TO THE CONFLICT: A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Christianly speaking, everyone will recognize that God has created a single Cameroon, that is the starting point. (Ruben Um Nyobè) (Ngho, 1979, p. 96)

The area in question, situated in the Gulf of Guinea has a rich history. Throughout the centuries since the first Europeans, the Portuguese arrived at the coast in the fifteenth century—naming the place Rio dos Camarões (Shrimp River) thus the name Cameroon today—the rulers have changed several times. In 1884, Cameroon became a German colony. German-run Kamerun lasted only a bit more than three decades, when in the third year of World War One, on 20 February 1916, Germany lost its last stronghold Mora to the Allied Powers (Britannica, n.d.). The

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colony of Kamerun was then taken away from its European coloniser by the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June 1919 and split the colony between France and the United Kingdom as a mandate territory, the system of which was established under Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, also entering into force on 28 June 1919. As a Class B mandate—one that requires a stronger control over the former colony stating that “the Mandatory must be responsible for the administration of the territory under conditions which will guarantee freedom of conscience and religion”—Kamerun was eventually divided on 20 July 1922 to British Cameroons and French Cameroun. This system was in force until the United Nations replaced the League of Nations, and the two entities were transformed into United Nations Trust Territories (United Nations, *n.d.-f*) on 13 December 1946 (Taylor Academy, *n.d.*).

Despite the fact that previously even the ruling class of Cameroon has requested the presence of the British—like in the letter to Queen Victoria in 1879 signed by King Acqua (Akwa), Prince Dido Acqua, Prince Black, Prince Joe Garner and Prince Lawton (Ardener, 1968, pp. 19–20)—the relationship between British Cameroons and the United Kingdom was not one without any hardship.

First of all, British Cameroons was put under the administrative aegis of neighbouring Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria also governed by the United Kingdom, which in practice also meant that until 1952, the territory was not given any (political or economic) importance and was not progressing compared to the French Cameroun part. Trade links with the United Kingdom were very weak: in 1931, for example, Germany received 17 times the worth of products from British Cameroons than the United Kingdom; in 1937, the British Cameroons imported 47.57 percent of the goods from the former colonial power Germany and only 11.9 percent from Britain (Welch, 1966, p. 155). Although this all ended after World War Two when in 1946, the Cameroons Development Corporation, created by the British Government took over most of the former German plantations and by 1958, 75 percent of the goods exported by British Cameroons went to the United Kingdom.

British Cameroons lacked development, too. Infrastructure (roads, railways and air transport) were still as they used to be under the Germans. Healthcare, social and educational services were also abandoned, in 1961 there were no secondary schools run by the government in British Cameroons.

Politically speaking, the policy of “indirect rule” was adopted by Britain, giving much room for the local “fons” and chiefs to rule in their area. In 1954, British Southern Cameroons was vested with a limited degree of self-government—“quasi-federal”—status within the Nigerian federation; four years later, Southern Cameroons was given local autonomy and a ministerial government (Ngoh, 1979, pp. 80–81).

All things considered, despite the few efforts from the British, they were accused of neglecting their territory politically, economically and socially. The population of British Cameroons felt to be the “colony of a colony”, and many of them accused the Nigerians—more particularly the Ibos—for their political, social and economic problems. All these issues together paved the way for the future of this land as independence started to become an increasingly pressing issue in the second half of the 1950s. This was especially true when French Cameroun started to have the legal background for gaining independence, speeding up from 1957 with the first prime minister through full self-government in 1959 till becoming the fully independent Republic of Cameroun on 1 January 1960 (DeLancey et al., 2010, p. 32).

On 11–12 February 1961, a referendum was held in British Cameroons to ask the local population whether they want to join Nigeria—a British mandate territory also about to gain independence—or to join the already independent Republic of Cameroun. There was no option for either region to become independent since the British did not see it as a political or economically feasible alternative.

The event was based on United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1352:

1. *Decides that the arrangements for the plebiscite referred to in General Assembly resolution 1350 (XIII) shall begin on 30 September 1960, and that the plebiscite shall be concluded not later than March 1961;*
2. *Recommends that the two questions to be put at the plebiscite should be:*
 - “(a) *Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria?*”
 - “(b) *Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of the Cameroons?*” (United Nations, n.d.-c)

The Muslim majority of British Northern Cameroon voted 60 to 40 in favour of joining Nigeria to become Sardauna Province of Northern Nigeria, while the mostly Christian Southern Cameroon voted 70 to 30

favouring integration to the Republic of Cameroun (African Election Database, 1961). Based on the results, Northern Cameroon became part of Nigeria on 1 June 1961, while Southern Cameroon joined the Republic of Cameroon on 1 October, the same year. The former French Cameroon was renamed East Cameroon, and the former British Cameroon was renamed West Cameroon.

The day of unification marks the birth of the Federal Republic of Cameroon where according to the Constitution of 1961, the former French and the former British territories became equal parts of the federation, with each state with its own prime minister and legislature (bit of a difference that in the Anglophone part it was a bicameral legislature with the Southern Cameroons House of Chiefs included). This “honeymoon phase” reached its end by the end of the decade when in 1969, the constitution started to be changed to “prolong the life of the federal assembly” and most importantly, the following year, a modification banned the vice-president to hold any other government office, putting an end to the system where the prime minister of West Cameroon served as the vice-president as well (DeLancey et al., 2010, p. 84).

The timeline of the changes in the constitutions and of the constitutions shows clearly how the once equal status of the Anglophone part slowly started to erode. After the first president of Cameroon, Ahmadou Ahidjo started to concentrate power in East Cameroun, he turned to West Cameroun and looked for means to decrease their autonomy, expend federal authority and made efforts to assimilate the Anglophones (e.g. the introduction of bilingual schools). Blaming the weak economic status of the country besides other things like the poor implementation of public policies and the country’s general underdevelopment, Ahidjo proposed a fundamental change to the constitution and to the federal structure of the country: a unitary state, giving more power to the president. This new approach of assimilation and marginalisation against the Anglophones was the reason for John Ngu Foncha, the prime minister of West Cameroun, also serving as the vice-president to express his discontent to the president that eventually cost his job as vice-president in 1970.

After the president’s very long and thorough campaign for the approval of the draft constitution, a referendum was held on 20 May 1972, where voters needed to answer the following question: *“Do you approve, with a view to consolidating national unity and accelerating the economic, social and cultural development of the Nation, the draft Constitution submitted to the People of Cameroon by the President of the Federal Republic of Cameroon*

INDEX¹

A

- Abbas, Abu, 134
Abubacar Ismael “Mangira,” 104
Acherina, 90
Achille Lauro, 134, 138
Adamawa, 231, 239
Adelino Gwambe, 94
Africa, 7–21, 127–162, 277–291
African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), 14
African religions, 102
African Union (AU), 8, 13, 14, 40, 41, 141–143, 146, 148, 149, 154, 281, 284–286, 288
African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), 171n6, 175
Agenda 2063, 13, 14, 21
Ahlu Sunnah Wa-Jamo, 86
Algeria, 118
Almajiris, 234
Al-Qaeda, 10, 12, 15, 141, 235, 236, 241
Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), 112
Al-Shabaab, 10, 11, 15, 86–88, 104, 141, 151, 152, 169–188
Ambazonia (Federal Republic of Ambazonia), 31–38
Ambazonia Defence Forces (ADF), 32, 33, 36
Ambazonia Governing Council (AGovC), 36–38, 42
Ambazonian Interim Government, 33
Ambazonian Self-Defence Council, 34
Ambazonia Restoration Council, 29
Amniyat, 171n7
Andrada, Joaquim Carlos Paiva de, 99, 100
Anglican religion, 103
Animism, 91
Ansar al Din, 112

¹Note: Page numbers followed by ‘n’ refer to notes.

Ansar al-Sunna, 86
 Anti-colonial movement, 95
 Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, 235
 Arabia Boys' Secondary School, 174
 Arabic influence, 90, 97
 Armed conflict, 253–271
 Armed violence, 84
 Armée de libération nationale,
 National Liberation Army (ALN),
 118, 119
 ASSANA, 96
 Assimilation, 91
 Association of Natives and Friends of
 Maputo, 96
 Atande, 90
 At-risk countries, 12
 Auguru, 90
 Autonomy, 27, 28, 40, 43

B

Bad governance, 233–235
 Bank of Beira, 101
 Bantu, 89, 90
 Beira, 94, 100, 101
 Berlin Conference (1885), 93, 99
 Big Data, 211
 Bitonga, 92
 Biya, Paul, 29, 31, 32, 34–37,
 40, 41, 43
 Black market, 15–17
 Boko Haram, 52, 58, 61, 63–66, 68,
 70, 141, 147, 150,
 228–231, 234–239
 Border Patrol Unit, 176, 178
 Borno, 231, 239
 Britain, 99–101
 British Cameroonians (aka. British
 Northern Cameroon, British
 Cameroon), 26–28
 British-Portuguese relations, 100, 101
 British-Portuguese treaty (1891), 100
 British ultimatum (1890), 100
 Bulla Karatasi massacre, 170n4
 Burkina Faso, 113, 115

C

Cabo Delgado, 83–107
 Cameroon, 25–29, 31, 33, 38–42, 44
 Cameroon People's Democratic
 Movement (CPDM/
 Rassemblement démocratique du
 Peuple Camerounais, RDPC), 30
 Camp Simba, 183, 184n13
 Catholic church, 42
 Causes of terrorism and
 insurgency, 58, 74
 Chaca, 90
 Changana, 90
 Change of regime, 96
 Chibok girls, 241
 Chope, 92
 Christianity, 103
 Cindau, 92
 Civil society organisations (CSOs), 69,
 73, 74, 96
 Close Circuit Television (CCTV), 244
 Colonial expansion, 91, 92, 94
 Communication towers, 173, 177,
 178, 180, 181
 Company of Mozambique, 99,
 100, 102
 Company of Ophir, 100
 Compulsory sit-at-home policy, 232
 Convention, 8, 14
 Corruption, 84, 107
 Counter-insurgency, 111–124
 Counter radicalization
 Campaigns, 239
 Counterterrorism, 65–69,
 111–124, 127–162
 COVID-19, 7–21
 COVID-19 pandemic, 254, 269, 271

Criminal networks, 14, 15
 Critical infrastructure, 213
 Cybersecurity frameworks, 217

D

Democratic Republic of the Congo
 (DRC), 278, 279, 281, 283, 284,
 286, 289
 Development, 7–21
 Dhlakama, Afonso, 96
 DusitD2 complex, 169, 174, 174n8

E

Economic Community of West African
 States (ECOWAS), 113, 119
 Economic decline, 278–280
 Economic development, 7, 11, 14
 Economic exclusion, 105
 Economic opportunities, 84, 87
 Enes, António, 99
 Epicentre countries, 12
 Ethiopia, 255, 261, 264
 Ethnic confrontation, 86
 Ethnic diversity, 86, 89
 Ethnic dividedness, 86
 Evangelical/Pentecostal religion, 103
 Extreme poverty, 107
 Extremism, 53, 56, 65, 69

F

Federal Republic of Cameroon, 28, 29
 Federation, 27, 28
 Firearms, 14, 16–18
 Foreign private capital influx, 99
 Fragile and conflict-affected states
 (FCS), 10
 Fragile states, 18
 France, 114, 119
 Francisco Mello e Castro, 97

Freedom of religion, 105
 FRELIMO, 88, 92–97, 103,
 103n16, 104
 Front de libération nationale/National
 Liberation Front (FLN), 118
 Fulani-herders, 231, 233, 236–238

G

Garissa Gubai massacre, 170n4
 Garissa University College, 169, 174
 Gaza, 90, 92, 95
 Geodetic data, 240
 GEOINT, 240–242, 246, 248, 249
 Geospatial intelligence, 227–249
 Geospatial reasoning, 240
 G5 Sahel (G5 du Sahel), 114
 Ghana, 51–75
 Gi-Ronga, 92
 Global Polio Eradication Initiative
 (GPEI), 259, 260
 Global Terrorism Database (GTD), 9
 Global terrorism index, 9, 10, 227,
 229, 231
 Glocalisation, 10
 Governance, 10, 11, 127–162, 254, 268
 Government, 7–9, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21
 Gulf of Aden, 134, 151, 154, 155
 Gungunhama, 92

H

HAMAS (Harakat al-Muqawamah
 al-Islamiyyah), 235
 Hanafi, 104
 Hanbali, 104
 Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahedeen, 87
 Hezbollah, 235
 Hindu, 103
 Hormuud Telecom Somalia, 174, 180
 Hostage taking, 232
 Humanitarian assistance, 83

I

Ibo Investment Trust, 98
 Ibo island, 97
 Ibo Syndicate, 98
 IED attack, 183
 Illicit economy, 87
 Illicit financial transfers, 14
 Imitation, 245, 246
 Imitation theory, 229, 245–248
 Independence war, 94, 95
 Indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB),
 37, 228, 229, 231–233,
 235, 237–239
 Information and communication
 technology (ICT), 243–246,
 248, 249
 Insurgency, 14, 16, 21, 51–75
 Insurgent groups, 269–271
 Intelligence, 195–205
 Internally displaced people, 83
 Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)
 camps, 229, 231
 International Maritime Organization
 (IMO), 134, 138
 International Ship and Port Facility
 Code (ISPS), 139
 International trade, 13
 Internet protocol (IP), 244, 245
 ISIL, *see* Islamic State of Iraq and
 the Levant
 Islamic Council, 88, 104
 Islamic expansion, 86
 Islamic insurgency, 83–107
 Islamic radicalization, 83, 84
 Islamic sect, 84, 105
 Islamic State (IS), 87, 141
 Islamic State in Iraq and
 Syria, 116
 Islamic State in the Greater Sahara
 (ISGS), 112, 113
 Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
 (ISIL), 10, 12

Islam religion, 84, 86–88, 94, 103, 105
 Island of Mozambique (Ilha de
 Moçambique), 91

J

Jewish community, 103
 Jihadists, 87
 José Baltazar da Costa, 94
 Joshua project, 89

K

KAFO, 16–18, 21
 Kamuthe Boarding Primary
 School, 174
 Kanamma, 231
 Katakata, 239
 Kenya, 86, 87, 94, 142, 144, 145,
 151, 152, 169–188
 Kenya Defence Forces (KDF), 171,
 180, 180n12, 184, 184n13, 186
 Kenya Police Service, 176
 Khoi, 90, 90n3
 Kingdom of Barué, 92
 Kiswahili, 86
 Koranic school, 231

L

Land appropriations, 84, 98, 102, 106
 Liberation movements, 7
Limburg, 131, 134, 135, 139
 Linguistic diversity, 86
 Linguistic dividedness, 86
 Liquefied natural gas, 84
 Lomé Charter, 143, 144, 149

M

Macequece, 100
 Machel, Samora Moisés, 95

- Macina Liberation Front, 112
 Maconde, 88, 90, 91, 91n6, 94, 96,
 98, 98n12, 105, 106
 Maganja, 90
 Major National Dialogue (MND,
 Grand dialogue national), 35, 41
 Makhwa-Lomwe, 90, 91
 Maliki, 104
 Mali Mission multidimensionnelle
 intégrée des Nations Unies pour
 la stabilisation au Mali/United
 Nations Multidimensional
 Integrated Stabilization Mission
 in Mali (MINUSMA), 114
 Malka Mari massacre, 170n4
 Mallianga, M. M., 94
 Manda Air Strip, 183, 184n13
 Manica, 92, 94, 99, 100
 MANU, 94
 Maritime security, 128, 138, 143–146,
 149, 152, 153, 155, 156, 158,
 161, 162
 Maritime terrorism, 128, 131–134,
 131n9, 132n15,
 136–149, 151–162
 Marxist/Communist anti-
 religiousness, 102
 Mateus Mole, 94
 Matsangaissa, André, 96
 Melinde, 91, 91n4
 Middlebelt, 233
 Mineral wealth, 86
 Mocímboa da Praia, 86
 Mocímboa de Rovuma, 99
 MOCIZA, 96
 Mohammed, Aboud Rogo, 104
 Momade, Ossufo, 86
 Mondlane, Eduardo, 95, 97
 Money laundering, 15, 21
 Monomotapa, 92
 Movement of Unity and Jihad in West
 Africa (MUJAO), 112
 Mozambican Council of
 Christians, 103
 Mozambique, 133, 152, 153
 Mozambique Channel, 146, 152
 Multiculturalism, 93
 Multi-party system, 96
 Mumbai, 135
 Muslim-Christian confrontation, 88,
 91, 103, 104
 Mussoco individual taxation
 system, 101
 Muwaqqi'un Biddam, 112
 Mwani, 88, 90, 94, 97, 105
- N**
 National Company of
 Mozambique, 100
 National identity, 89, 93–97
 Nationalist terrorists, 228
 National Movement for the Liberation
 of Azawad (MNLA), 112
 Natural resource curse, 11
 Natural resource exploration,
 84, 87, 106
 Ndaou, 92, 96
 New wars, 254, 268
 Nguni, 90n2, 92
 Nhanja, 90, 90n2
 Niassa Company, 98, 106
 Niger, 112, 115
 Niger Delta Militants, 228, 231, 233,
 235, 237
 Nigeria, 51–75, 149, 150, 156, 157,
 227–249, 255, 257, 259–261, 263
 Nkrumah, Kwame, 95
 North Atlantic Treaty Organization
 (NATO), 115
 North-south opposition, 94, 104
 Nyassa Consolidated, 98
 Nyassa Rubber Company, 98
 Nyusi, Filipe, 94, 106

O

Oil pipelines, 171, 173, 185–186, 188
 Open Data Kit (ODK), 229, 247
 Operation Barkhane, 114
 Operation Linda Nchi, 171
 Operation Serval, 111, 114
 Organisation of African Unity
 (OAU), 8, 10

P

Palestinian Islamic Jihad, 235
 Palma attack 2021, 106
 Pan-Islamic doctrines, 228
 Peace-building, 10
 Peacekeeping, 10, 114, 117, 118
 Peace negotiations (1992), 103
 Pemba bay, 97
 Pemba town, 98, 99
 Piracy, 128, 129, 131, 132n15, 133,
 134, 139, 142, 144–146, 150–152,
 154, 156, 158, 161, 162, 232
 Pluralist theory, 56
 Podzo, 90
 Political exclusion, 84
 Political inclusion, 88
 Political power, 96, 97
 Political vigilantism, 52, 58–61, 69
 Population increase, 278–280
 Porto Amélia, 98, 99
 Portuguese colonization, 93
 Portuguese language, 86, 89,
 91n7, 92, 93
 Post-communist period, 102
 Post-independence, 7
 Poverty, 84, 85, 97, 107
Prazos land system, 99, 102
 Pre-Conversion faiths, 102
 Pressured resettlements, 106
 Privacy concerns, 208
 Private capital, 99
 Private exploration, 99, 106

Private sector concessions, 98
 Protestant Christianity, 102
 Public-private partnership, 97–102

Q

Quelimane, 90
 Quionga, 90
 Quiteve, 100

R

Radical Islamists, 84
 Rae, Janet, 95
 Railway construction, 101
 Referendum (Cameroon), 27, 28
 Regional economic communities
 (RECs), 14, 15
 Regional peace and stability, 105
 Regional separatism, 93
 Relative deprivation, 233–234
 Relative deprivation (RD) theory, 56
 Religious confrontations, 86, 102–105
 Religious diversity, 86
 Religious dividedness, 86
 Religious pluralism, 102
 Religious radicalism, 233, 235–236
 Remote sensing, 240
 RENAMO, 86, 92, 96, 103, 103n16
 Retributive terrorists, 228
 Roman Catholicism, 102
 Ronga, 90
 Routine immunisation (RI), 256,
 261, 269
 Rovuma River, 84, 91, 95, 98
 RUGA, 238
 Rule of law, 10

S

Safaricom, 175–180
 Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 139

- Sahel, 111–124
 Sako, Samuel, 31, 33, 36, 37
 Salafism, 87, 104, 105, 111–115, 118, 120
 Salafist Group for Call and Combat (GSPC), 112
 San, 90, 90n3
Santa Maria, 133
 Santo Egidio Community, 103
 Saretho Primary School, 174
 Scarcity, 11
 Security, 195–205
 Security management, 204
 Security risk assessment, 198
 Security science, 196–198, 200, 205
 Security system, 195, 203
 Senga, 90
 Separatism, 34, 36, 37, 40, 93, 95
 Shafi, 104
 Shangaan, 92
 Shifta War, 170
 Shiites, 104
Shi-Ronga language, 97
 Shona, 92
 Simango, Uria, 95
 Slave trade, 90, 91, 97, 98
 Smallpox eradication, 260, 262, 263, 265, 266, 271
 Social inequalities, 84
 Social integration, 87
 Société des Fondateurs de la Compagnie Générale du Zambeze, 99
 Socio-economic development, 84, 88, 107
 Socio-economic marginalization, 84
 Sofala, 92, 94, 95, 99, 100
 Somalia, 86, 87, 149, 151, 155, 169–171, 176, 179–181
 Somali Civil War, 173
 South Africa, 93, 98, 149, 152
 Southern African Development Community (SADC), 145, 146, 152, 153
 Southern Cameroons Ambazonia Consortium United Front (SCACUF), 32
 Southern Cameroons Defence Forces (SOCADEF), 36
 Southern Cameroons Liberation Council (SCLC), 34, 35
 South-West Bantu, 89
 Spill-over countries, 12
 Sudan, 257, 261, 263–265, 267
 Sufism, 104
 Sunni, 104
 Support Group for Islam and Muslims (JNIM), 112, 113
 Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA), 139, 140, 149
 Surveillance cameras, 244
 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 13, 21
 Syncretism, 103
- T**
 Tabe, Ayuk, 32, 33, 36
 Tanzania, 86, 90, 94, 142, 144, 152
 Task Force Takuba, 114
 Telecommunication, 169, 171, 173–181, 187, 188
 Terrorism, 7–21, 51–75, 227–249
 Terroristic enterprises, 229
 Terrorist organisation, 9, 10, 21
 Terror network, 16, 17
 Threats, 195, 196, 198, 201–203, 205
 Total Energies company, 106
 Tourism-dependent countries, 18
 Transnational criminal activities, 14
 Tribal division, 96
 Tribal interests, 93–97

Tsonga, 90, 92, 95
Tsua, 90

U

UDENAMO, 94
UNAMI, 94
UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
(UNCLOS), 138, 139
Unemployment, 84, 105
United Nations (UN), 13, 114, 119,
129, 138, 140, 144, 147, 151,
155, 159
United Nations Development
Programme (UNDP), 12
United Nations High Commissioner
for Refugees (UNHCR), 113, 115
United Nations peacebuilding
missions, 289, 291
United Nations peacekeeping missions,
280, 284, 286, 290, 291
United States Africa Command, 184
University of Eduardo Mondlane, 96–97
Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV),
241, 243
UN Security Council, 129, 138, 144,
151, 154
USS *Cole*, 131, 134, 135, 155

V

Vaccination, 253–268
Vanhungu, 90
Vasco de Gama, 91
Violent extremism, 86, 88,
89, 105

W

Wagalla massacre, 170n4
Wahhabi Islamic Council, 88
Wahhabists, 104
Wealth distribution, 84
Weapons, 14, 15
Westgate, 169, 173, 174,
174n8
Woman in African
Peacekeeping, 286–291

Y

Yobe State, 231

Z

Zambezi valley, 92
Zionist Christianity, 103
Zulu, 90n2, 92