THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN INFLUENCING THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to underline the role of the media in influencing the war against terrorism in Kenya. It seeks to present the current status of the fight against terrorism in Kenya against the background of the Global War on Terror since the first major terrorist attack in Kenya on August 28, 1998, and subsequently the redefining events in the United States on September 11, 2001. Since then, terrorism incidents have attracted rolling Media coverage. Terrorist and terrorist networks, along with counter-terrorist organizations (Governments), seek to exploit extensive global media networks and New Media highways instantly to carry news of their violence and to spread political propaganda in order to generate support for their cause.

The media often finds itself in the middle of debates over this issue. Apart from the role of informing the public, the media has a responsibility of avoiding the creation of animosity amongst the audience, and/with government. This study seeks to explore ways in which the Media, the public and government will have symbiotic relationship in the War against Terrorism to avoid an atmosphere of mutual distrust and often hostility that at times characterize the relationship.

Employing both primary and secondary data, the study seeks to contribute to the growing discourse and ultimately supplement available literature on relationship between the Media and the Global War on Terror with a unique Kenyan experience.