

Kenia: Journalist fordert Minengürtel an der Grenze zu Somalia

In einem jüngst erschienen Artikel fordert der Journalist Andrew J. Franklin die Errichtung eines Zaunes an der 700km langen Grenze zu Somalia - und das Verlegen von Minen, um die Menschen zu zwingen, nur an den erlaubten Übergängen nach Kenia einzureisen (auf Englisch)



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Barrier planning along the entirety of Kenya's border with Somalia is long overdue. The deteriorating situation in Yemen will soon give both Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS new opportunities to penetrate the Horn of Africa via Somalia and Northern Kenya.

Announcements from the office of Interior Cabinet Secretary Joseph Nkaissery concerning construction of a "wall" along our porous border should be seriously interrogated in order to ensure we get cost effective integrated security solutions that are technically appropriate, conceptually sound and within Kenya's existing capabilities to build and maintain.

Aufklärung über die Gefahr von Minen © S. Bonnet / Handicap International

During the last 12 months I have been promoting in digital and print media a 'Somalia Border Control Project', which can be fully implemented in 12 to 18 months. Massacres of innocent Kenyans by al Shabaab since June 2014 (eg Mpeketoni-Hindi, Mandera – twice) and al Shabaab's ongoing campaign of ambushes on official convoys or gun and grenade attacks on business premises, government facilities

and essential utilities in the Front Line counties of Mandera, Lamu, Garissa and Wajir need urgent response by government agencies at all levels, whether national or county.

The existential threat to Kenya's security is the al Shabaab-instigated insurgency spreading through the historically marginalised areas of the four Front Line counties, whose porous borders with Somalia constitute a two-way conduit for terrorists, migrants, weapons and ammunition, logistics or supplies and illicit goods.

The total budget for a 'Somalia Border Control Project' is roughly \$260 million (Sh23.6 billion), including cost of materials and labour. This will result in substantial improvements in security throughout the Front Line counties as well as in the rest of the country as al Shabaab insurgents are shut off from their support networks in Somalia and their ability to launch terrorist attacks against civilian targets in Nairobi and Mombasa starts to degrade.

Weapons proliferation, human trafficking, commodities smuggling and other "apolitical" criminal activities will also be curtailed and mitigated as salutary consequences of government actions to close our border. To put this into context, the budget for the Safaricom Integrated Surveillance Project is Sh15 billion, and it is being rolled out only in Nairobi and, latterly, in Mombasa; \$160 million is being spent while al Shabaab fighters turn large swathes of Kenya into "no go" zones.

Funds for various aspects of this project can be drawn from counties' budgets, Lapsset, national infrastructure allocations, as well as existing KDF, National Police Service and National Intelligence Service budgets (ie procurement, facilities construction, etc).

Kenya's foreign allies in its war against terror are willing to support security related infrastructure development – as has been done elsewhere (eg Afghanistan, Kurdistan, Djibouti) – and the government needs to put forward its case for no strings attached financial assistance without delay. The unfolding Yemen debacle will only further destabilise our Front Line counties as al Shabaab ramps up its efforts to create sanctuaries along the border from which to launch attacks against the government in Mogadishu and its Amisom supporters.

The cost of the Somalia Border Control Project is a known quantity, whereas the cost of doing little or nothing or acting without thought is incalculable.

The basic components of this Somalia Border Control Project include: Immediate declaration of a one kilometre-wide "exclusion zone" with curfew along the entire 700km border with Somalia; establishment of four to six properly manned border posts or reception centres to control all entry and exit between Kenya and Somalia; construction of physical and electronic barriers along the entire border to include laying of properly marked and mapped minefields to channel potential cross border traffic to the reception centres; 24/7 patrols initially by KDF elements along a military grade murrum all-weather road within our exclusion zone.

A concomitant and immediate solution to our current deteriorating security situation will be the construction of an all arms forward combat base into which KDF elements deployed to Sector Two can be withdrawn to be reconstituted into appropriate manoeuvre units capable of offensive action against al Shabaab along Kenya's border with Somalia. Whether these units remain part of Amisom is for the government to determine, based on careful considerations of Kenya's national interests and aggressive negotiation with its partners in Igad.

Effectively closing the Somalia border while ensuring KDF combat units remain in close proximity to launch ground-air assaults on al Shabaab and to continue to train, equip and support Amisom's local allies in Jubaland is no loss for the Federal Government in Mogadishu, nor is it a victory for al Shabaab.

We can prioritise certain tasks such as emplacing security integrated solutions to protect critical infrastructure in Mandera, Garissa and Wajir; immediate solutions are needed to be able to lift the seemingly open-ended Lamu curfew.

Ultimately Kenya needs to fully implement the NPS Act 2011 so that the KDF can hand over its activities within Kenya's borders to a reconstituted NPS Rapid Deployment Unit supported by locally recruited organised NPS Reserve Units 'married' to their regular RDU elements who are permanently assigned to border control in the four Front Line counties.

Within 12 months, the Wajir Combat Base would become the hub for all security related activities in NEP and would be under NPS Command and include KDF, NIS, Kenya Revenue Authority, NPS – regular and reservists – not merely to fight al Shabaab but to enable the county authorities to roll back the spreading domestic insurgency.

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