

October 22, 2018.

"ASALAAM ALEIKUM WARAHMATULLAHI WABARAKATUHU

His Excellency Governor of Isiolo Mohammed Kuti,

His Excellency Governor of Garissa Ali Korane, H.E Ahmed Mukhtar, Deputy Governor Wajir

County, Hon Senator of Mandera County, Hon MP Mandera East, Hon. MP, Mandera North,

Hon MP Mandera South, Honourable Former MPs, Members of the County Executive,

Honourable members of County Assembly,

Representative from the National Police Service,

Brigadier D.K. Ruto from Kenya Defence Forces,

Mr John Sampson from DAIWETU-USAID Representative

County Commissioner

Distinguished facilitator Dr Mustafa Ali and Dr. Steve Akoth

Members of the County Executive,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for being here today to be part of the first all inclusive meeting that brings on board National Government, security actors, Non-State actors, elected leaders, religious leaders, community leaders, elders, the youth to discuss an agile monster called terrorism.

The time for our undiminished vigor and long term commitment of political goodwill is now.

Mandera County has had its fair share of violent extremism and terror attacks. These acts have compromised the peace and progress of our society and shattered dreams of many families who continue to lose loved ones and survivors who are tormented.

The threat from terrorism is one of the starkest that we face today. (I would like to request all of us to stand up for a moment of silence in honour of gallant Kenyans including our security officers who have fallen in line of duty from the sickening acts of terrorism.

\*\*\*\* Thank You May be seated.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Your presence here underlines our firm commitment to addressing the challenge of radicalization, and its causes as we step up community led efforts towards preventing, and countering violent extremism and terrorism.

We have invited all partners in the security dockets so that we can look at each other face to face and agree on how to confront this monster.

I laud the positive steps have been taken on border protection, information sharing, and detection. But still we have lapses. It's a hard battle that all of us need to fight in our counties.

Allow me to repeat some of the sentiments I made during Mashujaa Day at the weekend....We are faced with very serious crises. It is crises that strike at the very heart and soul and threatens the spirit of our existence as a county. Indeed we are hosting this historic conference against the

backdrop of increased terror incidents that are threatening our vision for the devolvement of our county. As predicted before, it seems we are not only suffering as a result of targeted terror attacks on our population but we seem to have fallen for the trap set by the terror cells. While the Alshabab are targeting only locals in Somalia they have changed tact to pit Kenyans against each other by targeting only locals within our borders and in so doing managed to win the hearts of the National security managers into falling for the real intent of Alshabab which is that of making the locals economically alienated through economic sabotage and total sanctions. The people of Mandera are now suffering in the hands of Alshabab through socio-economic sanctions imposed on the people by the Alshabab through the following:-

- ⇒ By killing the non-local teachers, they have managed to cripple our learning institutions,
- ⇒ By killing our non-local health workers, they have managed the cripple health service provision in our county,
- ⇒ By killing non- local Quarry workers they have successfully managed to bring down the entire construction industry which is the only major economic opportunity employing directly and indirectly thousands of Mandera residents. To make the matter worse as if what the Alshabab is doing is not enough, our own Government has fallen into the trap of closing Quarry operation in the whole county and in so doing aided the true intension of Alshabab to succeed by making the population of this county even more pressed economically. The multiplier impact of the closure of the quarry activities in Mandera are as follows:-
  - ⇒ The closure of the quarry activities has led to massive unemployment of the population who depended directly and indirectly on quarry activities and because of closure of the quarry activities hardware shops have closed in Mandera, lorry operators have packed their vehicles, drivers of lorries and matatus have been all fired due to lack of activities, the circular flow of income has been completely stopped, taxis that depended on the booming construction industry have all been left unemployed, the level of unemployed youth have increased in our settlements making the potentially explosive youth unemployment even worse. Not only has this increased the success of the economic sanction being imposed by terror but it has also successfully tested the resilience of our population which is something terror has failed to achieve. Our own Government has succeeded in grounding the economy of our county in an unknowing support of terror intensions.
  - ⇒ Finally our Governments directive of closure of quarry activities in our county without any regard for its repercussions has succeeded in testing our resilience and steer us off the economic development course. I would like to appeal to the president and the national security team to help us in lifting this burn on quarry activities in Mandera. The suffering of our population must be an issue of great concern to our Government particularly in an area where the only economic activity is that of county Government developments which has now been brought to a grounding halt.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we work together towards realizing a peaceful, safe, terror-free Mandera, we cannot forget to address the psychological impact of violent extremism. Our people have shown resilience and unity even in the face of these attacks that have brought about a great deal of loss and pain, but we are not blind to the fact that there need be a widespread community-based intervention to

enhance unity and resilience in the region.

The psychological effects of trauma can follow a family or a community decades after if not addressed properly, leading to a cycle of repeated violence. Research has shown that it takes months even years for victims of terror attacks to be able to reconstruct to some extent a new life. We are looking to integrate psychosocial support to enhance individual and community healing and build resiliency in the community.

Our youth are our main focus since they are more susceptible to radicalization as they are very impressionable and majority are unemployed. We want to create avenues to train them in soft psychosocial skills (Self-esteem, Assertiveness, Goal Setting, Positive thinking) to enable to better cope in hardship environments.

From the outset let me announce that religious leaders, community leaders and elected leaders from Mandera County have agreed unanimously to hold this two day conference as we mobilize a community-led effort on deradicalisation, prevention and countering violent extremism.

We must maximize our efforts to counter violent extremism, radicalization and recruitment of young people in Mandera, and the entire Kenyan Nation. To this end my Government has appointed a Chief Officer to deepen civic engagement in matters of terrorism and deradicalization.

As chair of Frontier Counties Development Council, we have received petitions from Development partners in the implementation of projects particularly those funded by World Bank through the North and North eastern Development Initiative (NEDI).

At risk are projects worth Ksh120billion funded by World Bank that include roads and water and sanitation

Security concerns have slowed multibillion projects that are intended to transform lives and infrastructure for our people to benefit"

H.E Ali Roba- Governor, Mandera County.