**A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE DYNAMICS OF TERRORISM IN UGANDA, 1976 – 2015**

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**ABSTRACT**

Terrorism is a global issue that has impacted states and people adversely. This study historicises terrorism in Uganda between 1976 and 2015. The study draws on two competing theories Critical Terrorism Theory (CTT) and The Orthodox Terrorism Theory (OTT)in its historical construction of terrorism in select historic episodes in Uganda. The 1976 Entebbe Incident, 1996 Atiak Massacres, 1996-1999 bombings, 1998 Kichwamba Massacre, and the 2010 Kampala bombings. It further discusses the different initiatives that the state has taken to counter terrorism.

The study employed a historical research design and qualitative approach with multiple data collection methods. Documentary review of archival material, institutional documents and reports was central to the study. One on one interviews with key informants, in-depth interviews with state and non-state actors and site visits to terrorist hot spots were conducted. Narrative, content and discourse analyses were used to analyse the information obtained and research ethics were followed throughout the study.

The study established that terrorism is a changing and subjective concept that is tied to state-centred conceptions of state security. Uganda has experienced three types of terrorism: state terrorism, non-state terrorism and international terrorism manifested through disappearances, hostage-taking, bombings, kidnapping and abductions, assassinations and arson. These types have been attributed to Uganda’s interventionist foreign policy,geopolitics, and the impact of globalisation; Middle East Question, the influence of the Iranian Revolution, and American power dominance following the Cold War. The study further attributes terrorism to the structural causes such as state policies that have led to marginalization, inequitable resource distribution and other inequities forcing non-state actors to seek terrorism as a solution to their problems. It is also argued that terrorism was exacerbated by Uganda’s porous borders and the fluidityof political and security systems in Uganda over the years. On countering terrorism, the study demonstrates that despite the various Counter-Terrorism (CT) measures in place, Uganda continues to experience terrorism threatsbecause of the dynamic nature of terrorism coupled with the over-reliance on militaristic approaches which do not address the structural causes of terrorism. This study sees terrorism as a critical global issue and countering terrorism requires a multifaceted approach ranging from military response to addressing its underlying socio-economic causes because of terrorism’s ever-changing manifestations.

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 **Date of Viva Voce:** 22nd February 2021; **Time**: 10.00 am; Venue CTF1 Room 4.0 E-learning Room