'Security' and the Reconfiguration of Development in North-East Africa

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Development has long been linked with security in sub-Saharan Africa. However, in recent years development and security have been linked in new ways. These new ties reflect changing conceptualisations of threats originating from aid-recipient contexts in an interdependent world and the expectation that development should help to prevent the spread of these risks. Increasingly, development is viewed as a vital instrument for working in situations to address complex threats that transcend simple categorisation as "development problems", "political crises" or "security challenges", characterised by armed conflict, violence, social fragmentation, criminality, and contraband trade. The construction, discursively and in policy, of certain risks as "clear and present dangers" plays into the argument that "global risks" require extraordinary measures to ensure stability and security. The threat is then moved out of the sphere of everyday politics into the realm of emergency politics, where it can be dealt with swiftly and without the normal (democratic) rules and regulations of policy making. This process of securitisation is leading to new forms of governmentality. A new form of politics borne out of securitisation is driving the rapid evolution of development policy, where the highest-level objective is to promote international stability and order in the face of threats that transcend boundaries between "North" and "South". This securitisation is also shaping a field of interventions whose purpose is to contribute to a broader regime of security, whether in combating piracy in Somalia or preventing the radicalisation of Muslim youth in Kenya. Within this dynamic, global security is synonymous with security of the *status quo* (i.e. the security of interests in leading industrialised powers). Drawing on a range of empirical evidence from north-east Africa, this paper argues that these changes have profound implications for the overall orientation of development, expectations of what development should deliver, how it should be delivered and by whom.