Al-Shabaab as a Transnational Security Threat

March 2016

Fostering Resilience, Regional Integration and Peace for Sustainable Development

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Harakaat Al-Shabaab Al-Mujaahidiiin, Al-Qaeda's affiliate in the Horn of Africa, has long been perceived as a Somali organisation – albeit one that represents a security threat to the wider region. But since at least 2010, Al-Shabaab has aspired to become a truly regional organisation, with membership and horizons that transcend national borders. In 2010 the group staged its first major external operation, in Kampala, Uganda, and issued its first propaganda video in the Swahili language. Since then, Al-Shabaab has become active in no less than six countries of the region, striking five of them with terrorist attacks.[1] Al-Shabaab is clearly no longer an exclusively Somali problem, and requires a concerted international response.

This determined expansion of Al-Shabaab's ambitions and operational reach is in large part the result of the strategic direction adopted by Al-Shabaab's former leader, Ahmed Abdi Godane, and his successor, Ahmed Diiriye, who currently heads the movement. In late 2013, Godane re-organised Al-Shabaab's military wing to include two transnational units: one, the *Jaysh Ayman*, directed against Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, and another dedicated to operations against Ethiopia. While the latter formation has yet to mount an effective operation on Ethiopian soil, the *Jaysh Ayman* launched a series of cross-border attacks into Kenya in 2014 and, despite a Kenyan counter-offensive in late 2015, the group remains a serious threat to the country's national security.

In 2013, Godane also gave instructions for Al-Shabaab's special operations wing, the Amniyaad, to step up attacks against neighbouring countries, notably those contributing troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). This resulted in a spate of attacks between 2013 and 2015 in Kenya that claimed over 350 lives, an attempted suicide bombing of a football match in Addis Ababa in October 2013, and the suicide bombing of a popular restaurant in Djibouti in May 2014. In October 2014, Al-Shabaab again attempted a suicide bombing in Addis Ababa, this time apparently targeting a busy shopping mall, but the plot was detected and foiled.

Al-Shabaab-affiliated networks in Kenya also continued to plan terror attacks during this period, but less successfully than *Jaysh Ayman*. Al-Hijra, Al-Shabaab's Kenyan affiliate, experienced growing pressure from the security services, and suffered a steady attrition of its leadership. As a result, Al-Hijra cadres withdrew from major hubs of activity in Nairobi and Mombasa, dispersing their radicalisation and recruitment efforts throughout the country – notably within the prison system. Al-Hijra operatives and recruits – including a growing proportion of women – continued to travel back and forth to Somalia, typically receiving training and instructions before returning to Kenya to engage in operations.

Kenya also witnessed increasing activity among Al-Shabaab sympathisers, organising themselves spontaneously online via social media and mobile applications. While

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[1] Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda, and Tanzania. Of these, only Tanzania has not been targeted, while an attempted suicide attack in Ethiopia ended when the bombers accidentally blew themselves up without causing any other casualties.

many of these individuals remain purely aspirational, some have gone on to plan operations, reaching out to members of Al-Shabaab or Al-Hijra for guidance and support. Others have sought advice concerning travel to Somalia or Syria.

Confronted by the evolving threat, regional states are exploring ways to strengthen their common response to Al-Shabaab. AMISOM, whose forces are drawn mainly from IGAD countries, continues to support the efforts of the Somali Federal Government and emerging federal member states to confront Al-Shabaab militarily, steadily driving the jihadists out of the last remaining strongholds and helping to build the capacity of Somali security forces. Outside Somalia, IGAD Member States have devoted greater efforts to monitoring and disrupting Al-Shabaab activities within their borders. The Heads of Intelligence and Security Services (HISS) of the member countries of IGAD and the East African Community (EAC) met twice in 2015 to deepen security cooperation and harmonise efforts to fight terrorism and violent extremism.[2] In August 2015, a two-day experts' meeting in Djibouti took the first steps towards the establishment of a Centre of Excellence to Counter Violent Extremism for the IGAD region. In addition, the IGAD Security Sector Program (ISSP) launched a new Transnational Security Threats (TST) Initiative to promote security cooperation between member states: the initiative under which this report has been commission and published.

The report concludes with a series of recommendations for further action, including:

- Enhanced security cooperation in countering Al-Shabaab, including a joint review to identify gaps, challenges, and opportunities in strengthening cooperation to combat Al-Shabaab, such as the types of information to be shared and the processes for doing so; more joint activities to confront Al-Shabaab; and inviting Tanzania to participate in any IGAD-led efforts to counter this threat.

- Better understanding of the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) threat and possible counter-measures, including appropriate Counter-IED (C-IED) strategies, enhanced technical capabilities for post-blast investigation and analysis, and improved information sharing within the region.

- Adaptation to evolving patterns of radicalisation and recruitment, such as the shifting of extremist activities away from former hubs, such as Nairobi and Mombasa in Kenya, to new geographic areas; sensitisation and training of public officials, in order to help them identify and react appropriately to potential threats; enhance surveillance of terrorism suspects and networks inside the prison system and put in place appropriate responses; and undertake additional research and analysis into current trends of radicalisation and recruitment among young women, in order to formulate appropriate responses.

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[2] http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/the-heads-of-intelligence-and-security-services-of-the-east-africa-region-conclude-their-second-meeting-in-kampala

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Context

1. The Horn of Africa has long been confronted by numerous complex and fast-evolving transnational security threats. Intra-state warfare, boundary disputes, resource conflicts, and the proliferation of small arms are longstanding and persistent challenges. But in recent decades the region has also been confronted with a newer variety of evolving and emerging threats: terrorism, organised crime, piracy, cybercrime, and trafficking in drugs, humans, and weapons – to name but a few. The expansion of Internet access, ease of travel, and the growing sophistication of extremist and criminal groups render these threats increasingly transnational, routinely involving several countries and requiring a collaborative response.

B. IGAD Peace and Security Architecture

2. Security has long been a shared preoccupation of countries of the region. The 'revitalisation' of IGAD in 1996 expanded the organisation's mandate to more directly address challenges of peace and stability in the sub-region, including, under Article 18(a), "effective collective measures to eliminate threats to regional co-operation, peace and stability."

3. In 2002, the states of the region signed the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) Protocol, which outlined the various components of a new African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) built around structures, objectives, principles, and values, as well as decision-making processes relating to the prevention, management, and resolution of crises and conflicts, post-conflict reconstruction, and development in the continent. In this context, in 2003, the IGAD Summit of Heads of State and Government endorsed a new strategy for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution (CPMR), which was enlarged upon in October 2005 to develop an IGAD 'Peace and Security Strategy' in line with APSA.

4. Although the new strategy remained heavily focused on inter-state and intra-state conflict, it called for the enhancement of IGAD activities on preventing and combating terrorism – a first step towards countering emerging transnational security threats. As a result, the IGAD Capacity Building Program Against Terrorism (ICPAT) was launched in 2006. ICPAT was soon engaged in a range of security issues that lay beyond its original scope, such as border security and piracy. IGAD as a whole was also coming to terms with the expanding scope of regional security challenges, and in December 2010 adopted a new Security Strategy. In October 2011, ICPAT was replaced by the IGAD Security Sector Programme (ISSP), whose expanded mandate included terrorism, transnational organised crime (TOC), maritime security, and security institutions capacity building.

C. IGAD Security Sector Program / Transnational Security Threats Initiative

5. Concerned that progress in strengthening regional security arrangements has not kept pace with the evolution of threats, the Member States of IGAD established a 'Task Force on Establishment of a Regional Centre for Cooperation and Coordination on Existing, Evolving, and Emerging Transnational Security Threats' in April 2014 under the auspices of the IGAD Security Sector Program (ISSP). The work of the Task Force was facilitated by Sahan Foundation, a strategic partner of ISSP.

6. On 3-5 December 2013, ISSP convened a workshop for IGAD member states, in Khartoum, Sudan, on the possible establishment of a centre to promote cooperation and coordination on transnational regional threats. Participants concluded that there were sufficiently important deficits in IGAD's security architecture to merit the establishment of such a centre, and called for the establishment of a Task Force to undertake a more detailed assessment of regional and national security arrangements, identify shortcomings, and make recommendations as how a regional centre could best contribute to efforts to institutionalise regional cooperation against TST.

7. The establishment of an entirely new institution requires careful planning and preparation, but the region already faces a variety of serious threats and should take immediate steps to enhance security cooperation between member states, pending the inauguration of a Centre. IGAD Member States' representatives therefore endorsed the Task Force's proposal to urgently establish a Transnational Security Threats (TST) Initiative under the auspices of ISSP to promote and facilitate cooperation on the most critical threats currently facing the region, including transnational terrorist groups, the proliferation of improvised explosive devices, and the rise of violent extremism.

D. Mandate

8. Within the context of the TST Initiative, two or more Member States of IGAD may request the support of ISSP to strengthen their cooperation in countering a common threat. In April 2015, the Governments of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and the Republic of Kenya (Government of Kenya, GoK) jointly commissioned a study on Al-Shabaab presence and activities in their respective countries, as well as the opportunities for enhanced cooperation in countering this threat. In August 2015, the Federal Government of Somalia expressed an interest in joining this initiative.

9. The TST Initiative is designed to complement and reinforce other national and multilateral efforts to counter Al-Shabaab, notably those of the Somali Federal Government (SFG), the IGAD Office of the Facilitator for Somalia Peace and National Reconciliation, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and the United Nations.

10. In line with United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 2023 (2011), paragraph 17, the Governments of Ethiopia and Kenya have extended their full cooperation to the UN Monitoring Group and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea. To underscore this commitment, the Governments of Ethiopia and Kenya requested that ISSP assist them in preparing a submission to the Sanctions Committee that responds as effectively and efficiently as possible to successive United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions calling on Member States to take specific actions against Al-Shabaab, and to report on their progress. The TST initiative is therefore intended to assist IGAD member states in the following ways – mainly, but not exclusively, through the issuance of this report:

a) Supply additional information on the implementation of the measures decided in resolution 1844 (2008), resolution 1907 (2009), and subsequent resolutions, including on:

    i.   Assets freeze,
    ii.   Travel bans,
    iii. Targeted arms embargo;

b) Submit to the Committee for inclusion on its list of designees, names of individuals or entities who meet the criteria set out in paragraph 8 of UNSCR 1844 (2008);

c) Provide, in accordance with paragraph 13 of UNSCR 1844 (2008), a detailed statement of case, together with sufficient identifying information to allow for the positive identification of individuals and entities proposed for designation;

d) Provide to the Committee, in accordance with paragraph 11 of UNSCR 1884 (2008), information regarding the actions taken by them to implement effectively the measures imposed by paragraphs 1, 3, and 7 of the same resolution and bring to the attention of the Committee additional information that it may consider useful in this regard;

e) Inform the Committee, in accordance with paragraph 17 of UNSCR 1844 (2008), on steps they have taken to implement the measures set out in paragraphs 1, 3, and 7 of the same resolution, notably with respect to the designated entity Harakaat Al-Shabaab Al-Mujaahidiin;

f) Inform the Committee of actions taken by national military contingents serving with AMISOM, in line with UNSCR 2036 (2012), to reduce the threat posed by Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups in order to establish conditions for effective and legitimate governance across Somalia.

11. This report is also designed to take into account the findings of the High Level Review (HLR) of United Nations Sanctions of June 2015, which urges greater cooperation between Security Council sanctions committees and

regional organisations.[3] In particular, the HLR recommends "better exchange of information regarding the peace and security efforts of regional and sub-regional organisations and the UN Security Council's own efforts to improve implementation of UN sanctions at the regional and national level," and calls upon sanctions committees to "foster cooperation and exchange of information with regional organisations and establish best practices in terms of tracking and monitoring sanctions, in particular with regard to designated persons and entities."

E. Methodology

12. Between April and December 2015, a team from Sahan, operating under the auspices of ISSP, conducted primary and secondary research on the presence and operations of Al-Shabaab in Ethiopia and Kenya, with special emphasis on cross-border networks, operations, and threats.

13. Sahan personnel worked in close consultation with government officials from Kenya and Ethiopia. With the knowledge and consent of Member States, Sahan personnel travelled within Ethiopia and Kenya, interviewed members and former members of Al-Shabaab and its Kenyan affiliate, Al-Hijra, as well as close associates of both groups. Sahan also received regular briefings from government officials, access to relevant documentation and evidence, and the opportunity to observe some operations against Al-Shabaab networks and operatives. In so doing, the Sahan team adhered strictly to the standards of evidence required of UN Expert Groups and other fact-finding bodies, or exceeded them.

14. Consistent with the practice of other United Nations fact-finding bodies, the team based its findings on a "reasonable grounds to believe" standard of proof. Minimum standards included reliance on at least two credible, independent, and mutually corroborating sources or a single credible source supported by independently verified physical, documentary, audio-visual, or electronic evidence. Most of the information contained in this report exceeded or far exceeded these standards.

F. Human Rights Due Diligence

15. In accordance with international human rights standards, including the protection of sources, methods, and privacy, the names and other biodata or selectors that could be used to identify certain individuals cited in the report have been omitted. This information, however, remains in the possession of the IGAD Member States who commissioned this report and who facilitated access to much of the information and evidence upon which it is based.

16. No information was used or shared without the expressed permission of the proprietary Member State. Any interviews carried out for this report were conducted in compliance with the laws of the member state in which they occurred. Cases and evidence put forward were also examined in a critical manner before inclusion and required to meet the investigative standards of UN Expert Groups.

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[3] Compendium of the High-level Review of United Nations Sanctions (S/2015/432), June 2015.

II. HARAKAAT AL-SHABAAB AL-MUJAAHIDIIN

A. A Leadership in Transition

17. At the end of 2014, the Al-Shabaab leadership in Somalia was in the midst of transition. The former Amir Abdi aw-Mohamed Godane was killed in a US-led drone strike in early September 2014 and replaced by his former subordinate and advisor Abu Ubaydah (a.k.a Ahmed Diiriye).

18. Diiriye, who had previously held various positions within Al-Shabaab, such as the Governor of Lower Juba and of Bay and Bakool regions, advanced into the Amir position over more senior Al-Shabaab leaders, including Mahad 'Karate' (a.k.a. Abdirahman Mohamed Warsame),[4] the reported head of the *Amniyaad* who had previously been described as the group's deputy Amir,[5] and the spokesman Ali Mohamud Raghe (commonly known as Ali 'Dheere'). It was therefore uncertain that Diiriye's close relationship with the former Amir would translate into respect and obedience from all factions within Al-Shabaab,[6] or that other longstanding members would answer to him.[7] The newly declared leader was also left to navigate the fractious nature of an organisation that had often been divided under Godane's leadership.[8]

19. Throughout 2015, Diiriye seems to have surmounted the initial challenges facing his leadership. Although the Amir has maintained an extremely limited public profile, the publicly aired sentiments of dissent expressed by figures such as Omar Hammami and Ibrahim Al-Afghani during the later years of Godane's tenure have thus far not resurfaced. Rather, Al-Shabaab has been able to conduct a sustained campaign of terror attacks, both inside Somalia and in parts of northern Kenya. The group has also amplified attacks on AU forces inside Somalia and has overrun two AU bases[9], inflicting mass casualties in both instances. The lack of significant public discord and the level of coordination needed to drive Shabaab's current operational successes suggest that Diiriye maintains enough authority to focus the group on increased operations and away from continual discord.

20. Since Godane's death in September 2014, five other senior Al-Shabaab operatives have been killed in drone strikes, the most prominent of whom was *Amniyaad*

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[4] https://www.rewardsforjustice.net/english/mahad_karate.html

[5] http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/04/usaddsshabaab_leaders.php

[6] http://www.voanews.com/content/new-al-shabab-chief-Diiriye-said-to-be-experienced-but-difficult/2442960.html

[7] http://www.foxnews.com/world/2014/09/09/new-somali-extremist-leader-rose-amid-purge-was-close-to-al-shabab-slain-leader/

[8] https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/an-in-depth-look-at-al-shababs-internal-divisions and https://theintercept.com/2015/05/19/somalia-al-shabaab-foreign-fighter-cia/

[9] On 14 January 2016, Al-Shabaab militia overran a third AMISOM base, manned by Kenyan troops, in Gedo. At the time of writing, however, insufficient details were available to make reference to that operation in this report.

chief Abdishakur 'Tahliil', on 29 December 2014.[10] Another senior *Amniyaad* officer, Yusuf Deeq 'Isma'iil', who by some accounts briefly replaced Tahliil following his death, was killed by an American UAV on 31 January 2015.[11] Other targets included Adan Garaar, whom various foreign intelligence services, including the United States, have tied to the 2013 Westgate attack, and Jaama Dheere and Ismail 'Jabhad', who had been involved in planning and carrying out the assault on Garissa University that killed over 147 people.[12] Tahliil has since reportedly been replaced by Mohamed Abdi Musa 'Habiil al-Somaal' (see section II.C below), while other figures have also been promoted and reshuffled within the Amniyaad hierarchy to fill the gaps.

B. Divisions over Potential Alliance with ISIS

21. Despite the group's relative cohesion, disagreement has emerged over the group's position vis-à-vis the Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (ISIS). Al-Shabaab core has publicly remained loyal to Al Qaeda, but ISIS's actions and ideology have gained support from individuals and factions within Al-Shabaab and, during the course of 2015, ISIS has made several public overtures in an attempt to court the Somali jihadists into an alliance.

22. In March 2015, ISIS released a message to the Al-Shabaab Amir pointing out the similarities between the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the international coalition fighting ISIS, and urging Al-Shabaab to join forces.[13] In May, a group of Somalis claiming to be members of ISIS in Iraq released a video, once again urging Al-Shabaab to enter into an alliance with the Iraqi insurgent group and claiming that the decapitation of Ethiopian migrants by ISIS in Libya earlier that month had been done to punish Al-Shabaab's Ethiopian enemies. A third video was released on 2 October 2015 by a Somali claiming to represent ISIS and expressing remorse that Al-Shabaab had not yet joined their cause.[14]

23. Al-Shabaab has yet to respond publicly to ISIS's overtures, but reports from inside Somalia claim that Abu Diiriye has maintained his loyalty to Al Qaeda in the face of these repeated appeals from ISIS, and all of Al-Shabaab's media releases in 2015 have reaffirmed the group's loyalty to Al-Qaeda, or featured quotations by prominent figures from Al-Qaeda's past, including Usama bin Laden and Abu Yahya al-Libi.[15]

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[10] http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/31/us-usa-somalia-airstrike-idUSKBN0K90YA20141231

[11] W.J. Hennigan, "Senior Shabab leader killed in U.S. drone strike, Pentagon says", Los Angeles Times, 3 February 2015, accessed at http://www.latimes.com/world/africa/la-fg-shabab-leader-killed-20150203-story.html

[12] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-32169080

[13] https://somalianews.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/bushra.pdf

[14] https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/english-speaking-somali-is-fighter-calls-on-shabaab-to-pledge-to-baghdadi.html

[15] http://jihadology.net/2015/09/23/new-video-message-from-%E1%B8%A5arakat-al-shabab-al-mujahidin-avenging-the-honor-of-our-prophet-storming-the-burundian-crusaders-base-leego-lower-shabelle/

24. Support for Al Qaeda, however, is not universal within Al-Shabaab's ranks. In January 2015, an individual identifying himself as an American foreign fighter in Somalia posted comments on an Internet forum urging those wishing to travel to Somalia to join Al-Shabaab to consider going to Syria instead, and expressed his own desire to leave Somalia for Syria.[16] Media reports from late September 2015 also alleged that a group of five foreign fighters had been arrested by Al-Shabaab in Jamaame because they had publicly voiced their support for ISIS.[17]

25. Frictions within Al-Shabaab over the ISIS question appear to be in part a continuation of the longstanding divide between Godane's loyalists and disgruntled Al-Shabaab figures resentful of the new leadership, as well as a historical schism between elements of the Al-Shabaab leadership and the muhaajiriin (foreign fighters) who have long felt marginalised and insecure – even more so since the deaths of prominent foreigners like Harun Fazul and Omar Hammami, allegedly at the hands of Al-Shabaab.[18] For those fighters, both Somali and foreign, who have long bristled at perceived authoritarianism and ideological deficiencies within Al-Shabaab, ISIS's invitation offers a new platform for dissent.

26. The most significant defection to date came in late October 2015, when former U.K.-based cleric and leading Al-Shabaab ideologue in north-eastern Somalia's Galgala highlands, Sheikh Abdulqadir Mumin, pledged allegiance to the ISIS Amir in a publicly released audio message.[19] Although Mumin's group is reportedly only twenty people strong, he has garnered widespread media attention for his defiance of Al-Shabaab leadership and his declaration of Somalia' first overt ISIS faction. Mumin's motivation remains unclear, but it is likely that the cleric is hoping both to gain resources from ISIS's affiliate in neighbouring Yemen, and to increase his influence within Somalia by attracting other dissidents to his faction. Media reports from late October 2015 claim that two Al-Shabaab operatives were communicating with Mumin's faction after they had been arrested and detained in Middle Jubba on charges of expressing support for ISIS.[20] Unconfirmed reports from north-eastern Somalia in October and November 2015 indicated that Mumin's group had already received several small shipments of weapons from Yemen, potentially bolstering their morale and strengthening their hand.

27. Historically, one of Al-Shabaab's key strengths has been its ability to accommodate diverse views and objectives while remaining unified and operationally effective. However, Godane's increasingly autocratic and personalised rule gravely eroded the group's cohesion and it is unclear whether Diiriye will prove capable of containing dissent. Although Al-Shabaab's loyalty to Al-Qaeda seems unlikely to

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16 https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Western-Jihadist-Forum-Digest/is-fighters-and-supporters-celebrate-reports-of-possible-pledge-from-shabaab.html
17 http://www.voanews.com/content/africa-al-shabab-decides-al-qaida-or-islamic-state/2986035.html
18 https://theintercept.com/2015/05/19/somalia-al-shabaab-foreign-fighter-cia/
19 http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/10/shabaab-leadership-fights-islamic-state-expansion.php
20 http://allafrica.com/stories/201510260799.html

wane under Diiriye's leadership, ISIS's dynamism and slick propaganda will no doubt appeal to disaffected members of the organisation and to foreign fighters, producing a steady trickle of defections and making a formal split in Al-Shabaab's ranks increasingly likely.

C. Current Structure of Al-Shabaab

28. Given Al-Shabaab's culture of secrecy, and the constant evolution of its internal configuration, understanding the movement's structure poses a challenge. But the steady stream of desertions, defections, and captured prisoners from Al-Shabaab ranks provides a degree of insight into its hierarchy and organisation.

29. Since assuming the leadership of Al-Shabaab in September 2014, 'Amir' Ahmed Diiriye has adhered closely to the choices of his predecessor. The movement's upper echelons are populated by familiar faces from the Godane era, including deputy 'Amir' Mahad 'Karate', head of the 'Wilaayad', Hussein Ali Fiidow, and spokesman Ali 'Dheere'. Diiriye also relies on a personal adviser known as 'Anwar al-Amriki' – a known pseudonym for the American jihadist Jehad Mostafa, who is on the FBI's most wanted list with a US$5 million bounty on his head.[21]

30. Al-Shabaab is understood to be internally organised around nine offices, or maktabad, each headed by a senior official, as follows:
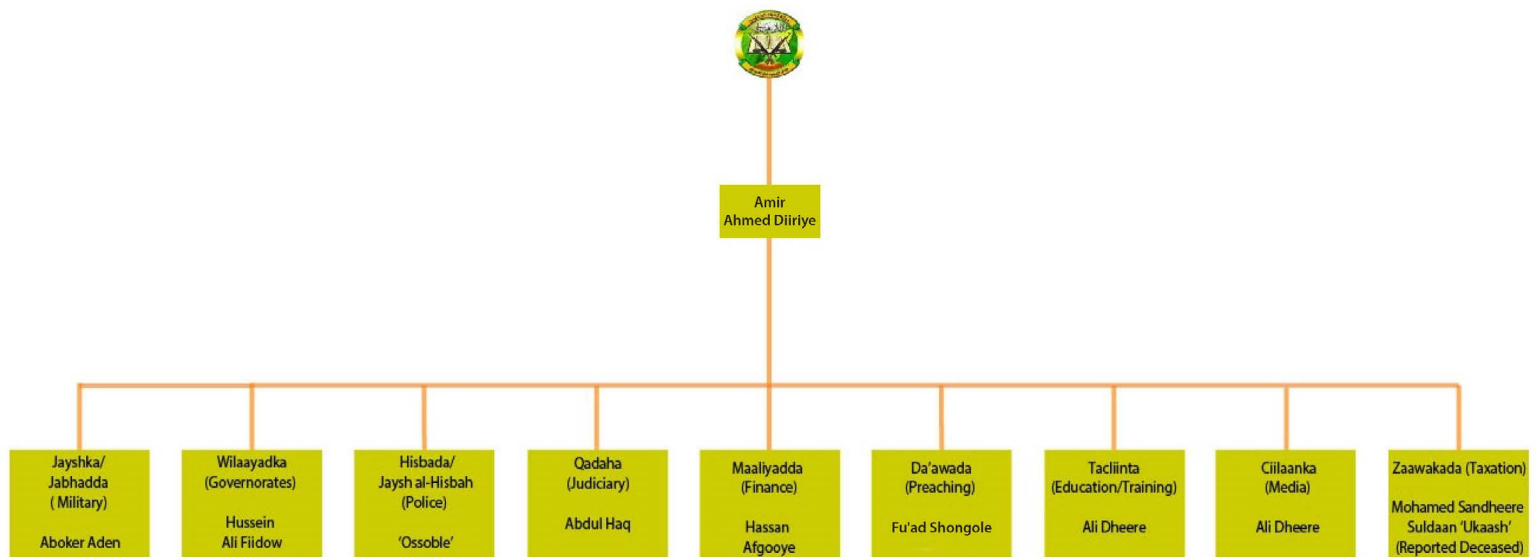

Table believed to be accurate as of 21 January 2016

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21 https://www.fbi.gov/wanted/wanted_terrorists/copy_of_jehad-serwan-mostafa/view

31. The regional authorities or Wilaayadaha report to Diiriye through Hussein Ali Fidow. There are believed to be six Wilaayad, organised and led as follows:


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                          Amir
                      Ahmed Diiriye

                 Wilaayadaha (Governorates)
                    Hussein Ali Fiidow
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Lower & Middle Juba	Gedo	Bay & Bakool	Lower Shabelle	Banadir	Middle Shabelle, Hiiraan, Galgaduud & S. Mudug
Abdurahman 'Hudeyfa'	Abdirahman Fiidow	Ma'alim Janow (Reported Deceased)	Mohamed Abu Abdalla	Ali Mohamed Hussein (Ali Jabal)	Yusuf Ali Ugaas
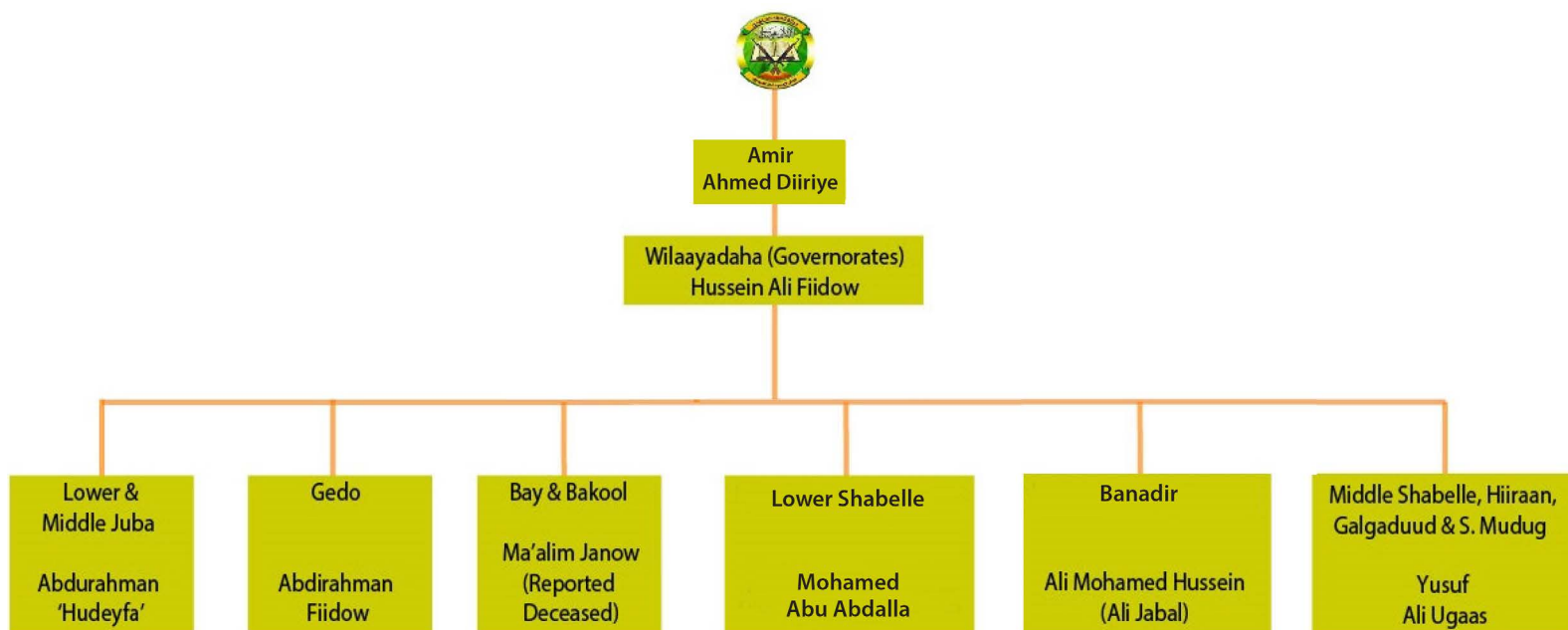
Table believed to be accurate as of 21 January 2016 when Ma'alim Janow was reported killed in an airstrike

32. Current arrangements for Puntland are unclear, and operations in Somaliland are understood to fall under the auspices of the *Amniyaad* leadership.

Jaysh al-Usra

33. Al-Shabaab's military wing, known as *Jaysh al-Usra* (the 'Army of Hardship') – and more commonly referred to simply as *Jayshka* (the Army) – is reportedly headed by Aboker Aden and his deputy, Yusuf Haji 'Da'uud'. Under their command, the *Jaysh* is subdivided along the lines of the governorates (*Wilaayad*) described above, with a military commander designated for each entity.

34. The status of the governorate of north-eastern Somalia, or *Sharqistaan* is uncertain, but it is likely to be in some disarray since the defection of Abdulqadir Mumin to ISIS in October 2015. The *Jaysh* contingent in the Galgala highlands is estimated at less than 500 in number, and despite waging a nuisance guerrilla campaign for close to a decade, has never matured into an effective military force.

35. In late 2013, Godane directed an operational reorganisation of the *Jaysh* in order to extend its operations to neighbouring countries. This led to the creation of two new military formations to carry Al-Shabaab's fight to East Africa and Ethiopia (see sections III.b. and IV.a. below).

36. Al-Shabaab's re-organisation of the *Jaysh* to attack neighbouring countries is a relatively new development. Historically, the preferred vehicles for regional destabilisation have been the *Istiqbaarad* (or *Sirdoon*) and *Amniyaad*: respectively Al-Shabaab's 'intelligence' and 'security' services. The structure and organisation of these branches is even more opaque than that of Al-Shabaab as a whole, but interviews with a former high level *Amniyaad* officer, corroborated by regional security services, make it possible to provide a rough sketch of the organisation's main components.

37. Following the death of former commander Abdishakur Tahliil in an American drone strike in December 2014,[22] the Amniyaad is believed to have been headed by 'Habiil' (a.k.a Mohamed Abdi Musa) who, like Diiriye, is a member of Somalia's northern Isaaq clan. Formerly Al-Shabaab's chief of intelligence, 'Habiil' now reportedly heads both the *Istiqbaarad* and *Amniyaad* sections of Al-Shabaab, reporting directly to Diiriye and his deputies.

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22 http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-somalia-airstrike-idUSKBN0K90YA20141231
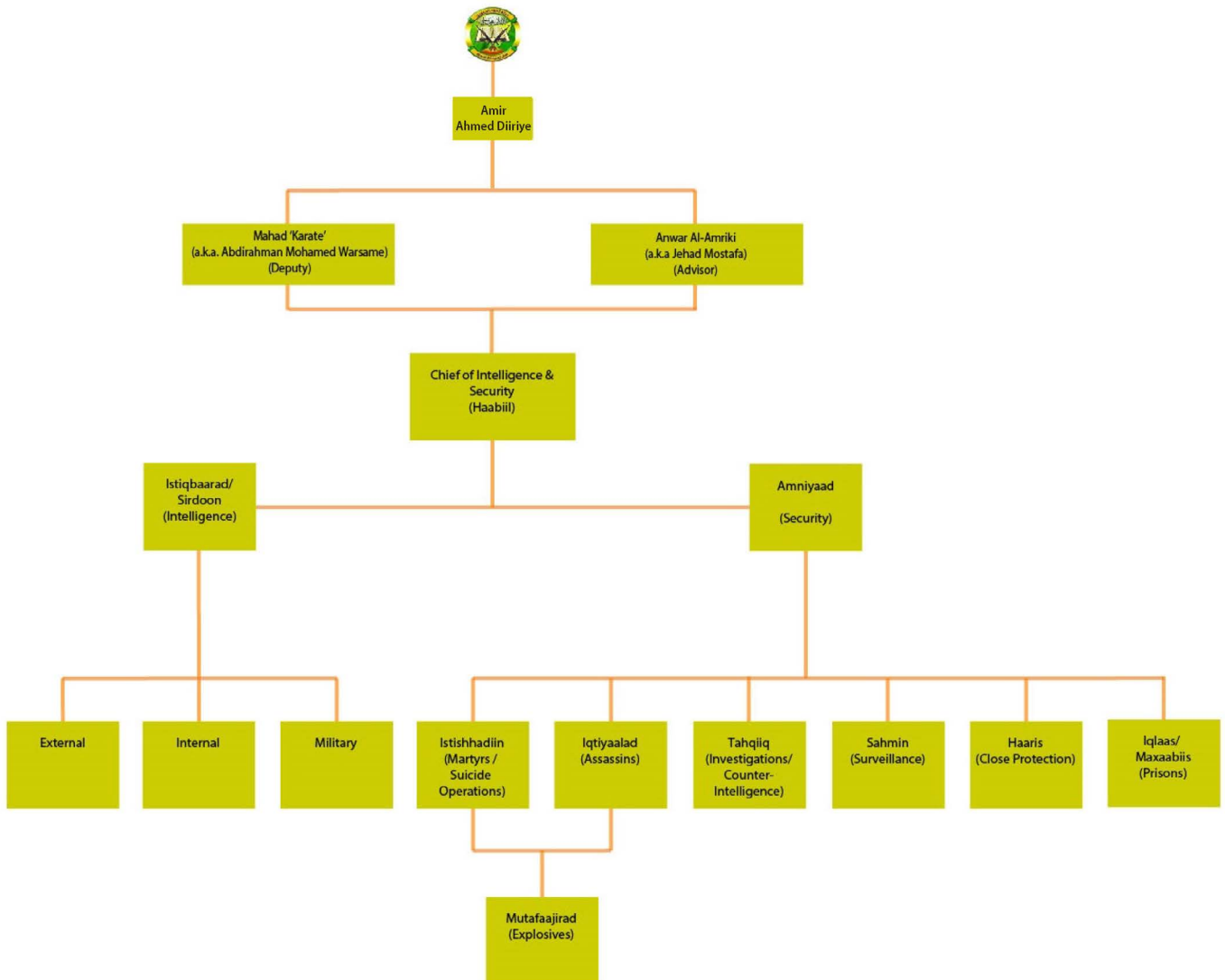
38. The *Istiqbaarad* is responsible for military, external, and internal intelligence operations, while its sister service, the Amniyaad, is organised into at least six sections, as follows:

39. Although they report directly to the Amir, when operating within the *Wilaayadaha*, both the *Istiqbaarat* and *Amniyaad* can be nominally detached in support of the local leadership. They may be embedded with *Jaysh* units and, in some cases, coordinate their actions with local *Wilaayad* Security Committees, further obscuring chains of command and control.

D. Al-Shabaab's Somalia Operations in 2015

40. Al-Shabaab's leadership losses since late 2014 have had little effect on the group's operational tempo or its ability to strike high value targets inside Somalia. On 25 December 2014, a team of Al-Shabaab operatives wearing Somalia National Army (SNA) uniforms was able to breach security and enter the AMISOM Halane base in Mogadishu, killing a number of AMISOM soldiers and an American contractor. Media reports claimed that as many as 15 to 20 attackers were involved in the assault, which Al-Shabaab claimed was staged to avenge Godane's death.[23]

Civilian Targets: Attacks on Hotels

41. Since the Halane raid, Shabaab has gone on to carry out a deadly attack in Mogadishu almost every month of 2015, beginning with the bombing of the SYL Hotel on 22 January. This was the first in a series of attacks on Mogadishu hotels that have become hallmarks of Al-Shabaab's campaign in the Somali capital.

42. In January, February, and March of 2015 Shabaab attacked the SYL, Central, and Makka al-Mukarama hotels respectively, followed by an attack in July on the Jazeera Palace. These operations involved the use of Vehicle Borne Improved Explosive Devices (VBIEDs), escalating in both intensity and sophistication. The SYL attack utilised a single VBIED that detonated outside the hotel, whereas the Central Hotel attack utilised both a VBIED that went off outside the hotel entrance, followed by a suicide bomber who detonated his explosive vest inside the hotel.[24] The Makka al-Mukarama attack was carried out using a VBIED followed by a group of armed attackers who then stormed and held control of the hotel from Friday afternoon to the following morning.[25]

43. The fourth hotel attack occurred in July, when a Large VBIED (LVBIED) was detonated at the main entrance of the Jazeera Palace. This attack not only illustrated al-Shabaab's capacity to exploit a small window of opportunity to launch an attack within one of the most highly secured zones of Mogadishu, it also highlighted its ability to prepare several hundreds of kilograms of explosive

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[23] http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/12/reports-al-shabab-strikes-au-base-somalia-20141225112253311677.html

[24] http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/22/world/africa/attack-in-mogadishu-on-friday-leaves-25-people-dead-and-40-wounded.html

[25] http://in.reuters.com/article/2015/03/28/somalia-attacks-idINKBN0MO07820150328

within the capital city undetected, and to transport it unhindered to its target through multiple checkpoints. The Jazeera attack was also the first time that a LVBIED (a truck) had been used in Somalia in several years.

44. On 31 October 2015, Al-Shabaab staged a fifth attack, targeting the popular Sahafi Hotel and reportedly killing at least 15 people including the owner of the hotel, a member of parliament, and the general who led the 2011 offensive that drove the jihadists out of Mogadishu.[26] The attack was initiated at approximately 5:30am by a VBIED that detonated at the gate of the hotel, providing access to a team of four Al-Shabaab fighters. A second VBIED detonated near the hotel wall roughly an hour later, apparently targeting first responders and onlookers. Al-Shabaab subsequently claimed the attack and released an audio recording purporting to carry live reports from the fighters inside the hotel.

45. During 2015, Al-Shabaab repeatedly demonstrated the ability to produce VBIEDs and PBIEDs, and to deploy them successfully throughout Mogadishu without detection or disruption by security forces. Since these types of operations represent Al-Shabaab's most lethal threat to security and stability in the capital, a more concerted effort to identify and attack the networks involved, while improving security at hotels, government offices, and other potentially high value targets, should be priorities in the immediate future.

Attacks against the Somali Federal Government

46. Throughout 2015 Al-Shabaab has continued to pursue its aim of destabilising the Somali Federal Government (SFG) through attacks on Somali government targets and assassinations of government personnel. Starting in January, Al-Shabaab specifically targeted Somali military and intelligence personnel, with an attack on the elite '*Gaashaan*' or 'Alpha' group of the National Intelligence Security Agency (NISA).[27] That operation was followed up two weeks later by the assassination of the mayor of Afgooye during an attack in Mogadishu.[28]

47. In February, four government officials from the Ministry of Aviation and one from the Ministry of International Planning and Coordination were assassinated in Mogadishu.[29] In May, a district commissioner of Mogadishu was killed, and in June the group conducted a VBIED attack on a NISA base inside the capital.[30] In August, several SNA troops in Kismayo were killed during a training exercise

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[26] http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-34691602

[27] https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/shabaab-claims-car-bombing-targeting-intel-forces-in-mogadishu.html

[28] https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/shabaab-claims-blast-killing-afgoye-mayor-in-mogadishu.html

[29] https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/shabaab-claims-assassinating-officers-in-somali-aviation-commission-international-planning-and-cooperation-ministry.html

[30] https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/shabaab-attacks-intelligence-center-in-mogadishu-ambushes-kenyan-forces-in-lamu.html and https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/shabaab-ambushes-kenyan-troops-near-border-kills-deputy-mayor-of-mogadishu-district.html

when Al-Shabaab detonated a VBIED on the training grounds.[31] Finally, in November, an Al-Shabaab ambush of SNA trainees near the military base at Bale Dogle reportedly resulted in dozens of recruits being killed and several SNA vehicles being seized.[32]

Attacks against AMISOM

48. While undertaking continual operations within Mogadishu, Al-Shabaab has simultaneously been waging a more aggressive campaign against Somali government and AMISOM forces than in recent years. Historically, Al-Shabaab fighters have withdrawn from towns or regions in advance of AMISOM operations, rather than offering pitched resistance. Nevertheless, Al-Shabaab forces across southern Somalia have engaged governmental and AMISOM troops on a regular basis, conducting numerous ambushes of military convoys, staging brief hit-and-run attacks against fixed positions, and assassinating local officials whom they view to be supportive of the government or AMISOM. In late October, Al-Shabaab posted a statement online claiming that its fighters had conducted 83 attacks against AMISOM troops between August 14 and September 16, 2015.[33]

49. In June 2015, Al-Shabaab ambushed Ethiopian forces in the town of Jamee'o in Bay region, subsequently claiming to have killed over 60 Ethiopian soldiers during the course of the attack, which also included the use of a suicide bomber. Al-Shabaab released a video of the operation, which it referred to as "a 'gift' for Eid al-Fitr."[34]

50. The Jamee'o ambush was quickly followed by one of the most brazen attacks on AMISOM to date, in which Shabaab attacked and overran an AMISOM Forward Operating Base (FOB) in Leego, Lower Shabelle region.[35] Operatives used a VBIED to gain access to the base, which was followed by an assault carried out by the 'Sheikh Mukhtar Abu Zubeyr Battalion', named for the group's former Amir.[36] The base was manned by 120 Burundian soldiers and reports of casualties range

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[31] http://amisom-au.org/2015/08/au-special-representative-for-somalia-condemns-attack-on-somali-national-army-recruits-at-a-training-camp-in-kismayo/ and http://mgafrica.com/article/2015-08-22-somalia-bombing-kills-nine-army-recruits-in-port-city-of-kismayo-al-shabaab-claims-attack

[32] See, for example, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-security-idUSKCN0SR1Z620151102#zo3qQ85lZpUMI233.97 and https://www.enca.com/africa/30-somali-trainees-killed-ambush-al-shabaab

[33] https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/shabaab-claims-over-80-attacks-in-somalia-from-aug-14-sep-16-2016.html

[34] https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/shabaab-video-shows-june-11-12-2015-attack-on-ethiopian-convoy-in-bay.html

[35] See https://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/2015/06/26/al-shabaab-attacks-amisom-base-in-leego- somalia/ or http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2016/01/shabaab-overruns-african-union-base-in- southern-somalia.php and AS Leego Video.

[36] 'Sheikh Mukhtar Abu Zubeyr' was a nom de guerre for Godane.

from 30 to 50.[37] AMISOM officials also confirmed that Al-Shabaab had taken control of the base at one point, and the insurgents also kidnapped a number of local Somalia officials who had been working with AMISOM.

51. On 19 July 2015, AMISOM announced the beginning of 'Operation Jubba Corridor', a joint offensive aimed to remove Al-Shabaab from towns in Bay, Bakool, and Gedo regions.[38] Within the first week of the operation, AMISOM had successfully retaken Diinsoor and Bardheere from jihadist control.

52. On 1 September 2015, Al-Shabaab attacked Ugandan forces at an AMISOM Forward Operating Base (FOB) in Janaale, Lower Shabelle, using the same tactics as at Leego: a VBIED explosion to gain entry, followed by an assault by Shabaab fighters. The death toll from this attack remains unconfirmed but media reports based on eyewitness testimony suggest that at least 50 African Union soldiers were killed.[39] Al-Shabaab released a video from the incident showing their fighters overrunning the base, killing AU soldiers, and displaying the equipment and weaponry that they seized during the raid. The group also claimed that the attack had been carried out in revenge for the killing of 40 Somali civilians by Ugandan forces in Marka during the previous month.[40]

53. The attacks at Leego and Janaale signalled an important shift in Al-Shabaab tactics on the battlefield.[41] Having long avoided major confrontations with AMISOM forces, Al-Shabaab has relied instead on IEDs, snipers, ambushes, and occasional hit-and-run raids. These recent, large scale operations required a high degree of preparation and planning, and entailed considerable risk in mounting a direct assault against heavily armed defenders in fortified positions. Al-Shabaab's demonstrated capability to assault and overrun isolated company-size positions challenges the mission's current concept of operations and highlights the need for a review of AMISOM's standard operating procedures at forward operating bases. In the meantime, because of the success of the Leego and Janaale operations, the weapons and ammunition seized, and their propaganda value, Al-Shabaab is likely to seek similar targets against which to replicate these attacks.[42]

54. Al-Shabaab's heightened operational tempo and effectiveness illustrate Al-Shabaab's growing confidence in the face of renewed AMISOM offensive operations, and appear to represent a concerted effort both to regain the initiative within Somalia and to undermine support for the AMISOM mission within troop contributing countries and their international partners.

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[37] http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-militants-idUSKBN0P60BX20150626
[38] http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/update-on-operation-jubba-corridor
[39] http://in.reuters.com/article/2015/03/28/somalia-attacks-idINKBN0MO07820150328
[40] https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/shabaab-gives-photo-report-on-raid-at-au-military-base-in-janale.html
[41] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHOsDi3MVQ8 Uganda's military brand Al-Shabaab's Janaale attack a game-changer CCTV Africa September 4, 2015.
[42] On 14 January 2016, Al-Shabaab militia overran an AMISOM base manned by Kenyan troops in the Gedo region, employing similar tactics. However, at the time of writing, insufficient details were available to make reference to that operation in this report.

III. AL-SHABAAB AS A TRANSNATIONAL THREAT: KENYA

A. Overview of the Regional Threat

55. Although Al-Shabaab's geographic centre of gravity remains Somalia, its identity and aspirations have shifted, transforming the Al-Qaida affiliate into a transnational organisation with membership from across East Africa and concomitant operational reach. As early as 2010, Godane harboured aspirations for Al-Shabaab to acquire a regional character. In a video message recorded by one of the suicide bombers who attacked Kampala in July that year, 'Salman Al-Muhajir' warns his audience that Al-Shabaab includes fighters from across the region who know their own countries' vulnerabilities intimately.[43] Since, Al-Shabaab has inspired and encouraged the emergence of affiliated groups and autonomous networks of jihadists across the region. Although they differ considerably with respect to operational capability and in the nature of their relationship with Al-Shabaab, all of these groups aspire and actively plan to engage in acts of terrorism.

56. The most active of Al-Shabaab's regional affiliates has long been Kenya's Muslim Youth Centre (MYC), widely known as Al-Hijra. In 2012, Godane reportedly named Al-Hijra's leader, Ahmed Iman Ali, as Al-Shabaab's 'Amir' in Kenya (although Ahmed Iman has denied this appointment), but Al-Hijra's performance fell far short of expectations, and during the course of 2013 Godane began to explore other options to transform Al-Shabaab into a truly regional, transnational organisation.

57. In late 2013, Godane ordered that Al-Shabaab's military wing, the *Jaysh al-Usra*, redouble its efforts to expand the 'jihad' beyond Somalia's borders. The *Jaysh* commander in Lower and Middle Juba regions, Mohamed Mohamud Kunow 'Dulyadeyn', began to extend his operations into Kenya's Garissa and Wajir counties, while Adan Garar in Gedo region targeted Mandera county (and sometimes beyond).[44] At the same time, two new Jaysh units were established, focused on external operations. The first of these, known as *Jaysh Ayman* (or *Jeshi la Ayman*) after its first commander, comprises fighters mainly from East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda) and is dedicated to staging operations in those countries. The second is dedicated to operations inside Ethiopia and is headed by an Ethiopian-Somali Al-Shabaab commander named Ali 'Diyaar'.

58. Godane also tasked key figures in Al-Shabaab's special operations and intelligence branch, known as the *Amniyaad*, to begin planning and preparing operations against Somalia's neighbours, all of whom are also troop contributing countries (TCCs) to AMISOM. By late 2013, several operations were in advanced stages:

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[43] Undated video message entitled 'Final Message of the Kampala Attack Warrior'.

[44] Unconfirmed media reports state that Dulyadeyn shifted allegiance to ISIS in November 2015. See, for example, http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/garissa-massacre-planner-mohamed-kuno-joins-isis and http://jubbalandnews.net/2015/11/07/war-cusubhogaamiyihii-al-shabaab-gacma-dheereee-jubbaland-oo-dagaal-cusub-food-saaray-kadib-markii-ku-xigeenkiisii/

while Nairobi's Westgate shopping mall was under attack during the last week of September 2013, an Al-Shabaab team in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, was in the final stages of a planned mass casualty attack involving two suicide bombers. A second suicide bombing team was simultaneously preparing for an attack against Djibouti the following year.

59. The evolution of Al-Shabaab from an essentially Somali movement into a regional one is in part a reflection of the growing numbers of non-Somalis within its ranks, who aspire to bring the 'jihad' to their countries of origin. Hundreds of Kenyans are estimated to have crossed the border to join and be trained by Al-Shabaab over the past decade,[45] with Tanzanians constituting the next largest cohort of foreign fighters.[46] Al-Shabaab propaganda videos appear to show entire East African, Swahili-speaking units training and fighting together inside Somalia.

60. These foreign fighters have become an important resource for Al-Shabaab affiliates and networks throughout the region. Since regional jihadist cells and networks typically lack the tradecraft to plan and stage effective operations, returning Al-Shabaab veterans provide much-needed operational experience, expertise, and, in some cases, leadership, potentially transforming aspiration into action. The 2010 Kampala bombings, the May 2014 Nairobi bus bombings, and the 2014 attacks in Lamu county are among the operations in which East African veterans of Al-Shabaab played key roles.

61. As IGAD governments step up their efforts to understand, monitor, and counter these threats, Al-Shabaab's East African affiliates and networks have been forced to evolve and adapt. This has involved a degree of atomisation as networks sub-divide, operatives disperse, and new cells proliferate – some linked to Al-Shabaab, others inspired by the movement and eager to join it. One such group in Mombasa has made efforts to recruit on behalf of both Al-Shabaab and the 'Islamic State' in Iraq and Syria.

62. Patterns of radicalisation and recruitment by Al-Shabaab and its affiliates have also altered. In order to escape scrutiny, the extremists have shifted their focus to 'non-traditional areas,' notably the Rift Valley and Western Kenya (see below for case study on emerging trends), and are placing a growing emphasis of recruitment of girls and young women. Al-Hijra has been active within Kenya's prison system, targeting vulnerable young men for radicalisation.

63. In sum, Al-Shabaab in 2015 presents a very different profile from just five years earlier. An organisation once perceived as exclusively 'Somali' has expanded its presence to at least five countries of the region (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya,

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[45] http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2015/09/killing-kenya-150923092758366.html

[46] Bryden, M., The Decline and Fall of Al-Shabaab? Think Again, Sahan Research, April 2015, p.10.
http://www.sahan.eu/wp-content/uploads/Bryden-Decline-and-Fall-of-Al-Shabaab.pdf

Tanzania, and Uganda). Al-Shabaab has expanded its campaign against AMISOM beyond Somalia's borders, striking the regional capitals of all TCCs except one, in a concerted effort to undermine political support for the mission.[47] With an ever-expanding and adaptive network of sympathisers across the region, the threat of more terrorist actions directed, encouraged, or inspired by Al-Shabaab continues to rise.

B.   Al-Shabaab's new offensive in Kenya: Jaysh Ayman

64.   In 2014, a new and potent threat emerged on the Kenyan scene: a unit of Al-Shabaab's *Jaysh al-Usra* operating across the Kenya-Somalia border and southwards along the Kenyan coast, named *Jaysh Ayman* (a.k.a. *Jeshi la Ayman*). Unlike Al-Hijra, which has struggled to mount effective attacks inside Kenya, *Jaysh Ayman* has proven capable of carrying out raids against Kenyan government and civilian targets causing mass casualties, and characterised by extreme brutality.

65.   Less than two years since its emergence, *Jaysh Ayman* already threatens to eclipse Al-Hijra as the standard-bearer of jihadism in Kenya. In addition to its predominantly East African membership,[48] *Jaysh Ayman's* high profile attacks and its use of combat video-cameramen to document and hype its operations provide an effective platform for its propaganda. The group's strategic messaging, disseminated via Al-Shabaab's *Al-Kata'ib* media wing, is designed to aggravate Kenya's ethnic and religious cleavages, specifically inciting coastal Muslims to violence against their non-Muslim compatriots and their government.

The Evolution of Jaysh Ayman

66.   Foreign fighters from across East Africa began travelling to Somalia in large numbers during the brief rise of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in Mogadishu in 2006. Following the ICU's overthrow in 2007, foreign fighters continued to migrate to Somalia to join the resistance against the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and allied Ethiopian forces. Many, if not most of these fighters were funnelled towards Al-Shabaab's '*Majimmo*' sector in southern Somalia – an area of operations assigned predominantly to East African *mujaahidiin* under the command of Titus Nabsiwa 'Mwalim Khalid' (also known as 'Mwalim Kenya').[49]

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[47] Bujumbura is the only TCC capital to have so far escaped attack. Although Al-Shabaab's 2013 operation in Addis Ababa was unsuccessful, the organisation managed to deliver suicide bombers and explosives to within sight of their target.

[48] Available evidence strongly indicates that Jaysh Ayman largely consists of East Africans, notably from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

[49] Unconfirmed information suggested that the Somali commander 'Ahmed Gurey' previously commanded the 'Majimmo' sector group in Al-Shabaab.

67. A majority of the '*Majimmo*' fighters were Kenyan, including indigenous Kenyans, Kenyan-Somalis, and a few non-Kenyans familiar with the country.[50] Many of these had close ties to Al-Hijra, and would eventually return to Kenya to strengthen Al-Hijra's operational capabilities. But Al-Hijra never progressed to the stage where it was capable of staging large-scale, complex operations, and between October 2011 and early 2013, Nabsiwa's group and its subordinate local affiliates succeeded in conducting only low-level attacks involving grenades in Mombasa, Nairobi, and Garissa in North Eastern Province.[51]

68. Moreover, Nabsiwa's experiment in combining Somalia-trained fighters to work alongside local affiliates in Kenya was proving problematic.[52] Differences arose over operational issues such as attack planning and chain of command, and Nabsiwa returned to Kenya to try to resolve such problems (and possibly also as a result of disagreements between himself and Al-Shabaab's senior leadership).[53] In September 2012, Nabsiwa was killed during an escape attempt in Mombasa and Al-Shabaab's first attempt to create an enduring force in Kenya had begun to dissipate.[54]

Establishment and Composition of Jaysh Ayman

69. By late 2013, Godane had apparently begun to lose confidence in Al-Hijra's operational potential, and gave orders for a new East African combat unit to be formed under the auspices of the *Jaysh al-Usra: Jaysh Ayman*. In addition to a core of Kenyan fighters (some of whom have been closely associated with Al-Hijra), *Jaysh Ayman* includes a composite of fighters from East Africa, consisting of Somalis and Tanzanians as well as a small contingent of foreign fighters from Europe.[55] Despite its profile as an East African unit, *Jaysh Ayman* has so far limited its activities to Lamu county and southwards along the Kenyan coast.

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[50] These included fighters from Eastleigh and South C Estate, and some foreign fighters, including Jermaine Grant 'Salahuddin'.

[51] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency in 2012, monitoring the activities of the members of Mwalim Khalid's group.

[52] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency in 2013 of a number of Mwalim Khalid's fighters describing their operational difference with local affiliates. Related monitoring of communications by Abubakar Shariff Ahmed 'Makaburi' also from 2013 corroborate the operational disputes between Al-Shabaab in Somalia and local affiliates.

[53] Based on direct messages posted by Omar Hammami in 2012.

[54] In September 2012, 'Mwalim Khalid' was killed during an escape attempt. See: http://www.kenyaforum.net/2012/10/29/shoot-out-in-mombasa-a-strange-story-with-more-questions-than-answers/.

[55] In 2015, Al-Shabaab released a series of videos featuring members of its Jaysh Ayman force. In one video, Al-Shabaab claimed that a Somali fighter, Abdifataah Hersi 'Umar Nadheer' had been killed in an attack on the coast of Kenya. Abdifataah Hersi was from the Majerteen clan and born and raised in Bossaso, Puntland. See also: http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/thomas-evans-horrifying-footage-shows-5942555.

70. Video footage received from an Al-Shabaab cameraman's equipment following a battle with the KDF in June 2015 provides valuable insight into *Jaysh Ayman's* composition. Members of the force captured on film include Al-Hijra members 'Ramadan Kioko' and 'Omar Owiti', as well as Luqman Issa Osman[56] and Said Hemed Abdalla, both of whom have been linked to extremist activities in Mombasa.[57] Andreas Martin Muller 'Abu Nusaibah', who had operational ties to Al-Hijra operatives in Mombasa's Shimo la Tewa prison in 2012, also features on the video,[58] which was reportedly filmed by British national Thomas Evans, who was killed during the battle.[59]

Operational Reach

71. In contrast with Al-Hijra, *Jaysh Ayman* has waged a ruthless and sustained cross-border campaign, targeting churches, hotels, and police and military installations, mainly on the coast of Kenya. Between June 2014 and June 215, the following attacks have been attributed to *Jaysh Ayman*:

- On 15 June 2014, *Jaysh Ayman* carried out its reportedly first major attack on the coast of Kenya in Mpeketoni killing between 48 to 60 people;[60]

- On 5 July 2014, a police station in Gamba was attacked killing at least 29 people;[61]

- In July 2014, credible reports linked the Al-Shabaab force to attacking a church in Hindi. Al-Shabaab subsequently posted a video of the attack;[62]

- On 14 June 2015, an armed raid on the village of Mangai in Lamu County in which was reported to have carried out sermons and raided a local dispensary;[63] and

- Again on 14 June 2015, *Jaysh Ayman* conducted an unsuccessful attack against KDF military bases in Bauru resulting in at least 11 KDF personnel killed and over 16 *Jaysh Ayman* militia killed.[64]

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[56] Unconfirmed reports have suggested that Luqman Issa Osman was the 'Amir' of Jaysh Ayman until 14 June 2015.

[57] https://somaliagenda.com/coast-anti-terrorism-police-question-wife-of-said-abdalla-hemed/

[58] http://tuko.co.ke/11049-wanted-german-terror-suspect-behind-lamu-attack-escapes-with-gunshot-wounds.html

[59] http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/thomas-evans-horrifying-footage-shows-5942555

[60] http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27862510

[61] http://www.voanews.com/content/eighteen-killed-in-attacks-in-kenya/1951691.html

[62] http://sitemultimedia.org/video/SITE_Shabaab_Bothai_Hindi_Lamu.mp4

[63] http://www.nation.co.ke/counties/Shabaab-militants-dawn-raid-Lamu/-/1107872/2751412/-/advrhq/-/index.html

[64] http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3137879/British-Muslim-convert-embraces-fellow-terrorists-hours-shot-dead-Video-emerges-Thomas-Evans-alongside-Al-Shabaab-fighters-day-dies-fierce-battle-Kenya.html

72. Al-Shabaab has made no formal announcement that *Jaysh Ayman* is the group's designated force for operations in Kenya and East Africa, but Al-Shabaab's propaganda campaign leaves no doubt as to *Jaysh Ayman's* affiliation and purpose. In a March 2015 episode of the *"No Protection Except by Eeman (Belief) or Aman"* ('Covenant of Security') video series, featuring the attacks at Mpeketoni, Al-Shabaab cast *Jaysh Ayman's* operations as part of a broader regional campaign:

> *The aim of our Jihad is to make the word of Allah the highest, striking the falsehood of disbelief with the invincible sword of Tawhid. It's the birth of a new dawn and a new era is on the horizon. And now, with the Mujahideen making inroads into the occupied Muslim lands in Kenya and beyond, it's time to redraw the East African map.[65]*

73. Similar messages conveyed by other episodes in the same video series are clearly intended to inflame tensions and incite sectarian violence in Kenya:[66]

> *...These are your brothers - the Mujahideen - coming from Nairobi, Mombasa, and other parts of Kenya who are burning the houses of the Kuffar here in the coast. My dear brothers, what are you waiting for? Come join us. Before, Jihad was far away in Somalia, now it has come knocking on your doors. It's time to wake up. Our sheikhs are being killed and we are retaliating for their deaths. It's now time for Jihad.[67]*

74. *Jaysh Ayman* has suffered significant losses at the hands of the Kenyan security forces since June 2015, and Operation Linda Boni, which commenced in September 2015, has placed additional stress on the group.[68] But successful counterterrorism operations by the Government of Kenya may induce elements within *Jaysh Ayman* to begin operating covertly, developing operational contacts with local affiliates and Al-Shabaab-inspired cells in Mombasa and elsewhere in Kenya's coastal regions.[69] And given the direction and support that *Jaysh Ayman* receives from Al-Shabaab proper, together with its demonstrated ability to operate with relative freedom on both sides of the border, the group is likely to remain an important threat to Kenya's security for the foreseeable future.

C. Al-Hijra

75. Despite its operational limitations, Al-Hijra (formerly known as the Muslim

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[65] http://sitemultimedia.org/video/SITE_Shabaab_No_Protection_Mpeketoni.mp4
[66] On 4 June 2015, Al-Shabaab released video of Jaysh Ayman attacks in three attacks in Bothai, Hindi and Lamu County.
[67] http://sitemultimedia.org/video/SITE_Shabaab_Bothai_Hindi_Lamu.mp4
[68] http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/security-chiefs-launch-operation-linda-boni-forest-flush-out-al-shabaab
[69] http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000163638/kenya-police-detain-muslim-cleric-linked-to-terror

Youth Centre, or MYC) remains Al-Shabaab's most important and active affiliate in the region. Officially established in December 2008, as a 'rights forum' associated with Nairobi's Pumwani Riyadha Mosque, claiming to articulate the social, economic and religious grievances of impoverished and disaffected young Muslims, the MYC rapidly evolved into one of the largest support networks for Al-Shabaab in Kenya. In 2009 the group's leader, Ahmed Iman Ali, travelled to Somalia to fight alongside Al-Shabaab, and has remained there to the present day.

Leadership Attrition

76. Since 2012 Al-Hijra has suffered relentless attrition of its leadership, operational cadres, and rank and file in Kenya. Some of the group's most serious losses include Musa Osodo, the group's former Nairobi 'Amir',[70] as well as key operatives Jeremiah Okumu and Steven Mwanzi Osaka, known as 'Duda Black' and 'Duda Brown' respectively – both of whom[71] had been implicated in various plots in Kenya directed from Somalia by Al-Shabaab.[72] Another significant loss included the unsolved killing of Aboud Rogo, who had been designated by the United Nations Security Council in 2012 for his role as Al-Hijra's ideological leader and as a key supporter of Al-Shabaab.

77. Arguably the most damaging operational loss to Al-Hijra was the shooting of Abubakar Shariff Ahmed 'Makaburi' a.k.a. 'Buda' by unidentified gunmen in a Mombasa street in 2014.[73] Makaburi was both an ideologue and an operational leader, whose influence extended beyond Al-Hijra, to members of the 'Ansar movement' in Tanga, Tanzania (Ansar Muslim Youth Centre),[74] and to remnants of Al-Qaida in East Africa (AQEA)[75]. In 2012-2013, Makaburi directed a number of operations in Kenya, including a series of grenade attacks; a plot to assassinate a security agent; and an attempt to disrupt the 2013 elections with explosives. He also acted as the operational focal point for Somalia-based Al-Hijra fighters returning to Kenya with a view to carrying out attacks.

78. The loss of Makaburi in 2014 was damaging for Al-Hijra not only because of his operational direction and ties, but also because he was remarkably adept at appropriating the grievances of Kenyan Muslims. In doing so, Makaburi sought to forge alliances with mainstream Muslim organisations in order to blur the line between legitimate protest and violent extremism, and to dupe reputable individuals and organisations into defending his cause. The respected civil society group, MUHURI (Muslims for Human Rights), was of particular interest to

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[70] MYC referred to Musa Osodo as an 'Amir' in a statement released in 2012 and titled "Inciting and Inspiring Jihad: MYC in 2012" accessible at http://jihadology.net/2012/12/26/new-statement-from-the-muslim-youth-center-inciting-and-inspiring-jihad-myc-in-2012/

[71] Multiple and corroborating reports confirmed that both 'Dudas' had briefly spent time in Somalia, training with Al-Shabaab before returning to Kenya.

[72] In 2011, both 'Dudas' attempted to acquire explosives from the Al-Shabaab figure 'Ibrahim Ogada' in Somalia, and in 2012 they were observed on a surveillance mission taking photos of possible targets in close proximity of the Kenyan Parliament.

[73] http://mobile.nation.co.ke/news/-/1950946/2266174/-/format/xhtml/-/5llyby/-/index.html

[74] AMYC consists of chapters who get funding from the AMYC centre in Tanga, Tanzania.

[75] Correspondence with an Al-Hijra informant, Nairobi 2015.

Makaburi, since its role in providing advice and legal assistance to prisoners could be of potential value to Al-Hijra, and he was eager to cultivate sympathisers in the organisation. In this context, various alleged Al-Hijra members, including Makaburi himself, have sought MUHURI's advice and assistance.[76] Makaburi also sought to leverage the reputations of respected human rights organisations, including MUHURI and Human Rights Watch, by having his supporters provide them with false information, notably in connection with the alleged killings and disappearances of two Al-Hijra members in 2012 and 2013. MUHURI's current leadership denies knowledge of any links with Al-Hijra, asserting that the organisation "was never a part of these schemes by Makaburi, and has never tolerated any of its staff aiding or abetting violent extremism."

Resilience and Adaptation

79. Faced with the challenges of operating under enhanced scrutiny from security services, and the attrition of its leadership, Al-Hijra has adopted new tactics and techniques intended to provide resilience under adverse conditions. The group's residual core leadership is now physically dispersed between Mombasa, Nairobi, and parts of Tanzania, but it continues to plan and prepare terrorist operations, including high profile, complex mass casualty attacks.

80. Nairobi and Mombasa have long featured as the main hubs for jihadist activity in Kenya. But scrutiny from security services has prompted Al-Hijra cells to invest in safe houses elsewhere in Kenya as refuges within which they can securely meet, plan, and execute operations. Al-Hijra also continues to operate, radicalise, and recruit within Kenya's prison system. Despite their incarceration, senior Al-Hijra members have been able to assist in the facilitation of individuals looking to join Al-Shabaab, or more recently seeking to join the Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (ISIS). Imprisoned Al-Hijra members also continue to direct plots against targets in Kenya using a number of cells and networks operating outside of these institutions. These often involve dispatching supporters from Kenya into Tanzania and as far off as Syria, illustrating the transnational nature of the group's operations and aspirations.

81. Between August 2014 and March 2015, leading figures within Al-Hijra engaged in a series of discussions regarding a possible attack on foreign military elements and Kenya Defence Force installations in Isiolo and Manda. During the course of these discussions, electronic evidence shows that Al-Hijra leaders consulted 'Ibrahim Ogada' – an Al-Hijra member currently fighting with Al-Shabaab in Somalia.

82. In February 2015, a member of the group was tasked to begin reconnaissance on the presence of military bases in both locations. Due to financial and operational constraints, planning was soon discontinued and the plot abandoned in favour of an alternative operation in Mombasa. Details of this transnational plot strongly suggest that, if executed as planned, the attacks would have almost certainly caused mass casualties of civilians.

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[76] See, for example, http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2013/02/27/anti-terror-police-are-trailing-me-says-rogo-ally_c743665

83. Following the discontinuation of the plot against military bases in Isiolo and Manda in 2014, two key Al-Hijra figures with links to Al-Shabaab began plans to conduct attacks on multiple unknown locations in Kenya. The plot relied on recruits known to them from inside prison who were largely former inmates with a history of Al-Shabaab-related activities.[77] Aspects of the conspiracy not only highlight the operational reach of some senior Al-Hijra figures from behind bars, but also the relative ease of which penal institutions are currently being used for planning and directing transnational operations.[78]

84. The plotters were further assisted by an Al-Hijra facilitator, a network of female extremists operating on the Kenyan coast, and individuals based in Tanzania. The two key planners were able to direct several operational cells from inside prison, some of which were interlinked while others seemed to operate independently.

85. By February 2015, the planners were working to secure a safe house to accommodate a team tasked with travelling to Tanzania to procure explosives. Shortly thereafter, they tasked a recently released inmate to connect with an Al-Hijra facilitator, conduct a number of fundraising meetings, and then relocate to that house.

86. The team tasked to go to Tanzania to procure explosives appeared reluctant to carry out this mission, possibly because they had only previously undertaken Al-Shabaab-related activities within the prison system. When removed from the immediate supervision of senior Al-Hijra leaders inside the prison, their resolve appears to have weakened. Cell members were also unable to carry out directives that they had received from the prison-based planners due to both logistical and financial challenges.

87. Displeased by the poor performance of the original team, the planners decided to enlist the support of a second, existing cell. By May 2015, the second operational cell was seeking to procure weapons for the attack while attempting to conduct surveillance on potential targets. The planners remained in near constant communication with both cells during this period.

88. By July 2015, the two cells had identified a source of explosives in Tanzania. By early August, the prison planners had enlisted two Al-Hijra couriers who were required to pledge an oath of allegiance (*Bay'ah*), after which they were then assigned a variety of operational tasks.

89. In early September 2015, several individuals linked to this operation were arrested by the Kenyan security agencies. However, the key plotters remain committed to conducting attacks within Kenya, and many of the individuals involved in this particular plan remain at large and operationally active.

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[77] A number of the prison recruits were either on remand or carrying out sentences for terrorism-related offences.

[78] Evidence pointing to the increased use of prisons to recruit for Al-Shabaab-related activities has been found.

90. Patterns of radicalisation and recruitment have also altered: in order to escape scrutiny, the extremists have shifted their radicalisation and recruiting efforts away from well-known hubs in Nairobi and Mombasa to new areas, especially the Rift Valley – mainly Eldoret, Naivasha, and Nakuru –, and Western Kenya. They are also placing a growing emphasis of recruitment of girls and young women.

91. One common instrument of radicalisation and recruitment involves the offer of Islamic scholarships to Muslim 'reverts',[79] but these often come with conditions attached, such as an implicit commitment to teach and propagate extremist doctrine once studies are completed. Evidence from several such cases prosecuted by the Kenyan authorities link such activities to the Masjid Majilis in Kikambala and Masjid Musa in Mombasa.

92. In February 2014, Nixon Kipkoech Rutto, from the Rift Valley, 'reverted' to Islam. According to Nixon, his decision to change his faith was in part due to the influence of a local Imam. Nixon was offered a scholarship to study Islam in Mombasa, which he accepted. In June 2014, Nixon and another student from the Rift Valley travelled together to Kikambala to study at Masjid Majilis.

93. In Kikambala, Nixon attended classes together with other newly enrolled students. During Nixon's brief stay at Masjid Majilis, he claims that eight fellow students travelled to Somalia to join Al-Shabaab. Possibly in an attempt to avoid following in their footsteps, Nixon chose instead to return to the Rift Valley where, by his own account, he began radicalising youths in a local madrassa. Nixon was arrested in early 2015 for these activities.

94. In October 2014, two members of the well-known Masjid Musa in Mombasa (an alleged long-time hub for Al-Shabaab recruitment), Said Nyange Salim and Abdulrazak Abdallah Salim, were recruited and instructed to travel to Bardheere, Somalia. Upon arrival in Bardheere, these recruits received training in firearms from Al-Shabaab for a plot timed around the 2014 Christmas holidays. While in Bardheere, both Said and Abdulrazak claimed that they met with Sheikh Ramadan Kufungwa, a radical cleric and former Imam from Masjid Musa in Mombasa.[80]

95. Said and Abdulrazak departed Bardheere in order to return to Kenya, but were apprehended by the Kenyan Defence Forces on or around 26 December 2014 while crossing the border. Under questioning, the two stated that they were en route to Mombasa as part of an alleged Al-Shabaab plot to kidnap foreign tourists. They had also been tasked to collect the weapons for this operation once they had arrived back in Kenya.

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79 Kenyan members of Al-Hijra and Al-Shabaab who have converted to Islam refer to themselves as 'reverts' on the grounds that all people are born Muslim, but may practice other religions before 'reverting' to the one true faith.

80 http://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2015/Aug/101169/ig_unveils_kenya_s_faces_of_terror.aspx

D. Kenyan Extremists 'Seeking Hijra' in Somalia and Syria

96. Since 2006, the conflict in Somalia has left its mark on a generation of young East Africans, propelling growing numbers toward extremism. Al-Hijra and its affiliates in Kenya and Tanzania have sent hundreds – possibly thousands – of extremists to fight alongside Al-Shabaab in Somalia.[81] This exodus to Somalia continues, in part because of that country's geographic proximity, and in part because of the presence of many East Africans already within the ranks of Al-Shabaab. But recent evidence also suggests that extremist migrants to Somalia may now be motivated by the desire to escape the scrutiny of security services in their home countries.[82] In 2015, there have been several publicised arrests of East African nationals attempting to cross into Somalia via the Kenyan border to join Al-Shabaab.[83]

97. More recently, however, potential recruits to extremist causes from East Africa have also begun setting their sights on the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Evidence obtained by the Kenyan authorities since early 2015 has identified two recruiting cells who together enlisted at least thirty potential recruits aspiring to join ISIS.[84] Over half of these individuals were fully committed to travelling and were in the process of obtaining documentation for travel to Syria.[85] Some of the most determined potential jihadists seeking to join ISIS are young East African women.

From Mombasa to Somalia or Syria: Jihadist Social Media Networks

98. Several cells currently being monitored by the Kenyan authorities involve aspiring jihadists who regularly attended Masjid Musa and Masjid Majilis – radical Mombasa mosques raided by the police in late 2014. The raids on these mosques affected the way in which certain elements of the extremist community in Mombasa operate. For example, a number of Masjid Musa's members have since travelled to Somalia to join Al-Shabaab, likely to evade further surveillance. One of the most notable individuals to travel to Somalia since the Mombasa raid is Sheikh Ramadan Kufungwa, a radical cleric from Mombasa who was a rising star in extremist circles.

99. Others have stayed behind, but remain committed to extremist causes, whether aspiring to carry out attacks in Kenya or to join jihadist groups in Somalia and Syria. Some small networks or cells have become diffuse, operating with an increased independence while continuing to associate with Al-Hijra and Al-Shabaab members. One such cell, located in Mombasa, has been exploring all options to remain engaged in violent '"jihad" simultaneously – principally via social media and the Internet.

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[81] See for example, United Nations Security Council reports: S/2011/433 and S/2012/544.
[82] Correspondence with an Al-Hijra informant, 2014.
[83] http://www.nation.co.ke/news/Al-Shabaab-Somalia-Women-Arrested-El-Wak/-/1056/2669868/-/wg6t3bz/-/index.html
[84] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency, August 2015.
[85] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency, August 2015.

100. In the months following the police raids on Masjid Musa and Masjid Majilis in Mombasa, four members of this Mombasa-based cell were notably using jihadist forums to seek contact with Al-Shabaab and Al-Hijra. On 8 September 2014, a week after the U.S. airstrike that killed Al-Shabaab's 'Amir', Ahmed Abdi Godane, one of the cell members posted his condolences on Facebook:

May Allah taqabal Sheikh Ahmed Godana [sic] shahada Amiin

101. Another cell member joined several extremist forums, including a group created for the purpose of assisting potential Al-Shabaab and ISIS recruits, and for promoting discussions about 'jihad'.[86] One of the cell members' posts praises a beheading by the notorious ISIS executioner Mohammed Emwazi a.k.a. 'Jihadi John'.

102. By May 2015, social media analysis indicates that this Mombasa-based cell had made contact with an individual calling himself 'Abu Cabaas', who claimed to have direct links to both Al-Hijra and Al-Shabaab. The cell sought assistance from 'Abu Cabaas' in establishing safe houses for operational purposes and in the procurement of grenades. Their efforts to obtain explosives, however, were unproductive; in a social media exchange on June 2015, a cell member stated that the grenades are needed "for action", but that they were proving hard to find.

103. In June 2015, possibly because of the difficulties they faced staging operations inside Kenya, members of this cell also began to discuss leaving Kenya in order to join Al-Shabaab in Somalia or ISIS in Syria. During one exchange on the subject, a cell member attempted to conceal his intentions by referring to "Dubai" as his preferred destination, but subsequently clarified his purpose via Twitter, stating:

> *I don't want a salary. I want a passport to be prepared for me... I was using secret word Dubai. I want to go to Sham [Syria] not Dubai to work.*[87]

104. Two of the cell members also attempted to recruit other aspiring jihadists to travel with them. On 6 July 2015, one of the cell members communicated the personal details of three potential recruits, including their passport photos, real names, and dates of birth to a designated email account on 14 July 2015. Similarly, on 29 July 2015, a separate member of this cell had identified at least one more potential recruit for Syria.

E. Radicalisation and Recruitment among East African Women

Women Still Seeking to go to Somalia

105. Young East African women taking part in violent 'jihad' is not a new phenomenon. Over the years they have played significant operational roles within Al-Shabaab and its affiliates. Female Al-Hijra couriers, for example, routinely travel across

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[86] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency, August 2015.

[87] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency, August 2015.

East Africa on behalf of Al-Shabaab, building and sustaining transnational networks. Some, like the Al-Hijra/Al-Shabaab figure 'Famia'[88], have previously facilitated the movement of IED components and other operational materiel across the region.[89]

106. Despite Al-Shabaab's mounting difficulties, young women continue to undertake travel to Somalia to join the group. In September 2015, for example, three women were apprehended in Mombasa on their way to Somalia. Kenyan prosecutors believe that these women were also transporting material such as satellite phones and electronics meant to aid a possible Al-Shabaab operation in Garissa.[90] One of the females arrested is suspected of operational links to a key member of Al-Hijra's core in Nairobi and is likely to have been tasked to transport these items for Al-Shabaab.[91] In August 2015, the wife of Sheikh Ramadan Kufungwa escaped the detection of the security services and managed to join her husband in Somalia with the assistance and coordination of the Al-Shabaab figure 'Ibrahim Ogada'.[92]

107. Umu Elkhyr Sadri Abdulah, a Tanzanian medical student at the International University of Africa, was not so fortunate. According to the Kenyan authorities, the Khartoum-based 'facilitator' had been using a social media group to recruit young women to join Al-Shabaab. On 23 March 2015, Umu Elkhyr flew from Khartoum to Nairobi on Ethiopian airlines in order to join two of her recruits and escort them to Somalia.[93] On arriving in Nairobi she arranged to meet Khadija Abubakar Abdulkadir and Mariam Said Aboud, two young women from Mombasa, the following day, 24 March 2015. Together they had planned to travel to Somalia via Mandera later that same day, but upon arrival in Mandera all three young women were apprehended by Kenyan security agencies.[94] At the time of writing, their case is before the Kenyan courts awaiting judgement.

F.   The Rising Appeal of the Islamic State

108. Despite the success of regional and international security services in disrupting attempts of young women wanting to travel to join Al-Shabaab, there continues to be a growing cadre of women prepared to consider other jihadi fronts such as Syria. A common feature of such potential 'travellers' is direct communication with someone to offer inspiration and encouragement, and a guaranteed offer of assistance with travel documentation and arrangements.[95]

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[88] See United Nation Security Council report S/2013/413
[89] See United Nation Security Council report S/2013/413
[90] http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000176574/three-suspected-jihadi-brides-arrested-in-mtwapa
[91] Correspondence with an Al-Hijra informant, 2015.
[92] http://www.enca.com/africa/bounty-placed-kenya-terror-suspect partially corroborated by independent confidential information.
[93] Correspondence with an Al-Hijra informant, 2015.
[94] http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/shabaab-brides-expected-heaven-after-somalia-trip
[95] In most cases extremists, in particular those found in Mombasa, were often prepared to travel to Syria but requested assistance with travel documentation.

109. One of Kenya's most active radicalisation and recruitment networks is linked to two extremists currently housed inside a Kenyan prison. From inside the prison, these extremists have sought to establish operational contacts with the Islamic State and have been receiving operational support from a female Mombasa-based cell that they wished to send to Syria. In August 2015, one of these extremists introduced a female contact to a third individual – an ISIS recruiter – for the purposes of assisting her and other members of her cell with travel to Syria. Shortly after this introduction, the ISIS recruiter confirmed that the necessary travel arrangements were being made for the women in this cell.

110. During roughly the same time period, the same ISIS recruiter has been helping Nairobi-based females aspiring to travel to Syria. As with the first group of females, the ISIS recruiter has provided assistance with travel documentation and arrangements.

G. Al-Shabaab and the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC)

111. The Mombasa Republican Council (MRC) is a secessionist organisation seeking independence for Kenya's coastal region. Although the group stands accused of links to Al-Shabaab, it has consistently denied these allegations.[96] No evidence has been found of structural cooperation between the two groups, but there is no question that there has been communication between leaders of the MRC and Al-Hijra and that while both have weighed the pros and cons of an alliance, Al-Hijra has also considered the option of unilaterally penetrating the MRC. The growing numbers of MRC youth who have been trained by Al-Shabaab in Somalia could pave the way for either scenario: infiltration of the MRC by Al-Shabaab/Al-Hijra, or more structured collaboration between the groups.

Previous Contacts

112. Contacts between the MRC and Al-Hijra date from at least 2012, when a number of Somalia-based Al-Hijra fighters had returned to Nairobi under the command of 'Mwalim Khalid'. Among them was a known Al-Hijra figure who later sought sanctuary in Tanzania together with other extremists, including Fuad Abubakar Manswab. During a private meeting in Tanzania in February 2013, one of the Al-Hijra participants floated the possibility of infiltrating the MRC:

> *You know the MRC [Mombasa Republican Council] issue can be of advantage to us since we can just get into their midst and work.*[97]

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96 See, for example, http://allafrica.com/stories/201409161313.html, http://www.irinnews.org/report/96630/briefing-kenya-s-coastal-separatists-menace-or-martyrs, and http://www.nation.co.ke/counties/MRC-deny-working-with-Al-Shabaab/-/1107872/1735686/-/view/printVersion/-/jdxjot/-/index.html

97 Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency, 2013.

113. In response, another Al-Hijra member referred to previous discussions between the late Al-Hijra ideologue, Aboud Rogo, and unidentified members of the MRC:

> *Yeah that's true because when the late Rogo was alive, he had told the MRC guys if they wanted to his assistance then they should stop agitating for secession and instead fight in the name of the religion. If so, they will get his support and eventually they will all succeed.[98]*

114. At the same time, Al-Hijra was planning to disrupt the March 2013 Kenyan elections using light weapons and explosives. The plot largely relied on the direction of Abubakar Shariff Ahmed 'Makaburi' and the Nairobi-based Al-Hijra operative, Ibrahim Ramadan Hamisi 'Ruta'. 'Makaburi' tasked Ruta to procure small arms, especially AK-47 assault rifles.[99] On 23 February 2013, 'Makaburi' met privately with an unnamed MRC individual who offered to provide AK-47s for the election plot, but at a price of US$700 each. 'Makaburi' declined.[100]

Training with Al-Shabaab

115. More recently, an unknown number of MRC youth wing members have travelled to Somalia to train with Al-Shabaab. MRC 'elders' in Mombasa have acknowledged and expressed concern about this trend. There are also unconfirmed reports of MRC youth training in the Kaya Chonyi forest.[101] Once trained, most return to the ranks of the MRC, while some have volunteered to carry out attacks on behalf of Al-Shabaab. One such case involves an alleged member of the MRC youth wing known as 'Muli'. In April 2015, suspected of training in Somalia, he was apprehended en route to Uganda at the Busia border crossing. Following his arrest and subsequent interview, he led Kenyan security officers to a number of other Al-Shabaab returnees.

116. These linkages between individual members of Al-Shabaab, Al-Hijra, and the MRC do not yet appear to constitute organised collaboration between these organisations. However, the jihadists clearly view MRC as a potential resource to be infiltrated or co-opted and exploited. The training of MRC youth wing members may constitute a first step along this path. Moreover, Al-Shabaab propaganda – especially that linked to *Jaysh Ayman* – directly targets the demographic constituency within which much of the MRC membership falls: young disaffected coastal Muslims. The potential for greater convergence, and even collusion, between these organisations cannot be ruled out in future.

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[98] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency, 2013.

[99] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency, 2013.

[100] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency, 2013.

[101] Names of MRC-Al-Shabaab recruiters and trainers, including a well-known charcoal transporter, obtained from an informant in Mombasa. The validity of these claims is currently being assessed.

H. Links to Tanzania

117. In spite of having limited coverage on the Ansar chapters in Tanzania (Ansar Muslim Youth Centres),[102] an emerging network in that country has operational ties to the Kenyan affiliate, Al-Hijra and unconfirmed connections to Mombasa-based cells.[103]

118. Although its motivation remains unclear, an initial assessment of the network suggests a financial rather than an ideological inclination.[104] This is also apparent from the network's criminal background and access to the fishing and mining sectors across Tanzania.[105] Observations of the network over the past year strongly points to it helping and negotiating on behalf of Al-Hijra for explosives and small arms, for a fee.[106] For example, between February and August 2015, credible information confirms the network had at least on three occasions attempted to assist with the facilitation and procurement of weapons for Al-Hijra's attack planning.[107]

119. Preliminary information provided by an Al-Hijra operative suggests that the network has extensive coverage across Tanzania, including some known 'extremist hotspots'.[108] According to the Al-Hijra operative, these locations include Arusha, Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, and Mtwara. Additionally, according to anecdotal reporting, the individuals linked to the network are mainly Tanzanians. However, current checks are being made into a possible Kenyan member allegedly called 'Danmera'. Multiple and corroborating reports have named 'Danmera' as a Kenyan who was previously active in Mombasa before seeking sanctuary in Tanzania.[109]

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[102] Historically, members of the Ansar chapters in Tanzania have been operationally linked to other affiliates like Al-Hijra. While during the currently reporting period, there have been publicised cases of 'Al-Shabaab-linked groups' in Tanzania, the credibility of this information has not yet been fully assessed.

[103] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency of members of an Al-Hijra cell between February and August 2015.

[104] Attempts to ascertain if there are any cross-over links between this network and elements of the Ansar chapters in Tanzania such Tanga are underway.

[105] Interview with a former an Al-Hijra operative with direct links to the organisation describing a criminal network.

[106] Previous attempts to use Tanzania as based for procuring explosives due to its unregulated accessibility have come to the attention of regional security services.

[107] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency of members of an Al-Hijra cell between February and August 2015.

[108] Electronic surveillance conducted by a government agency of members of an Al-Hijra cell between February and August 2015.

[109] In April 2015, 'Danmera' was described in an interview by two of his associates.

IV. AL-SHABAAB AS A TRANSNATIONAL THREAT: ETHIOPIA

120. Al-Shabaab has long sought to strike Ethiopia – so far without success. It came closest to its goal in 2013, when a team of suicide bombers succeeding in deploying to Addis Ababa, but accidentally blew themselves up in an abortive attempt to bomb a football World Cup qualifying match at a major stadium.

121. In March 2014, just months before his death in a U.S. drone strike, Al-Shabaab 'Amir' Ahmed Abdi Godane renewed his call for 'jihad' against Ethiopia, foreshadowing a number of operations targeting Somalia's much larger western neighbour.[110] As so often with Al-Shabaab strategic communications, Godane's message expressed less an aspiration than a plan of action already underway, with the full expectation that it would eventually bear fruit.

A. Jaysh al-Usra's Ethiopian Wing

122. In parallel with the establishment of *Jaysh Ayman*, Godane took steps toward the establishment of an Ethiopian Al-Shabaab military unit, comprising ethnic Somalis and non-Somalis, initially headed by a veteran jihadist commander named Ali 'Diyaar' (a.k.a. 'Warsame').[111] A member of the Ogaden/Reer Isaaq/ Reer Haaruun clan, Diyaar had previously served with *Al-Itihaad Al-Islaami* and its Ethiopian chapter, the United Western Somali Liberation Front (UWSLF), as well as *Hisb'ul Islaam*, before joining Al-Shabaab. Between 2010 and 2013, he was assigned as Deputy Commander for Middle and Lower Jubba, first under Bashir Mohamed Mohamud 'Qoorgaab' and then under Mohamed Mohamud Kunow 'Dulyadeyn' (a.k.a. 'Ga'amadheere'). Nevertheless, Diyaar reportedly remained focused on exporting 'jihad' to Ethiopia, and in late 2013, he was tasked by Godane and *Jaysh* Commander Aboker Adan to establish an Ethiopian unit of Al-Shabaab.

123. According to an Ethiopian fighter who served alongside Diyaar before being reassigned to the Amniyaad, the new *Jaysh* unit was based at Diinsoor and by late 2014 had approximately 500 fighters under command: mainly Ethiopian Somalis, but also a significant Oromo contingent as well as smaller numbers from other Ethiopian ethnic groups. In early 2015, Diyaar's forces were reportedly also deployed in border areas of the Lower Juba, Bay, Bakool, and Hiiraan regions, training in basic military skills, intelligence collection and explosives, but had yet to stage any significant military operation inside Ethiopia.[112] In late 2015, Ahmed Diiriye reportedly re-assigned Diyaar because of his inability to build an effective fighting force, and other leadership shortcomings. No information is yet available about his replacement.

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[110] http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/africa/2014/03/11/Al-Shabaab-leader-urges-Somalis-to-battle-old-enemy-Ethiopia.html

[111] A member of the Darood / Ogaden / Reer Isaaq / Reer Haarun clan.

[112] According to a former Ethiopian fighter with Diyaar's forces.

124. In parallel with Diyaar's *Jaysh* unit, the Amniyaad was actively developing new external operations in Ethiopia, recruiting and deploying members of attack cells, mobilising networks of activists and sympathisers, and collecting information on possible targets, both inside Ethiopia and against Ethiopian interests abroad.

B.   The Amniyaad's 'Bole Wedding' Plot

125. On 14 October 2014, the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia, issued a warning of a "potential imminent" terrorist attack by Al-Shabaab against "restaurants, hotels, bars, places of worship, supermarkets, and shopping malls in the Bole Area" of the capital city, Addis Ababa.[113] Three days later, the Ethiopian Federal Police Force arrested several Somali nationals for suspected involvement in planning an attack.

126. The two principal suspects were Mustafa Abdillahi Kulmiye (a.k.a. Mustafa 'Yare'), a recent arrival in Addis Ababa from Mogadishu, and Hussein Abdinur Ibrahim – a 24-year-old university student, also from Mogadishu. Hussein had been living in Addis Ababa since 2010 under the assumed name of 'Abdimalik', supporting himself and paying for his studies by working as a part-time English teacher.

127. Both Mustafa and Hussein initially claimed to be migrants planning to travel to the West seeking opportunities for a better life, but intelligence reporting, supported by monitoring of telephone calls and electronic communications as well as interviews with the two suspects, linked them to an Al-Shabaab network responsible for external operations against Somalia's neighbours. The leaders of this particular network had been implicated in the 2013 Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi, the 2014 suicide bombing of La Chaumière restaurant in Djibouti, and the massacre of over sixty Kenyan civilians near Mandera in two separate attacks in late 2014. Since May 2014, the same figures had been planning suicide attacks against the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa.

The Plan

128. In May 2014, regional security services reported that one of Al-Shabaab's senior *Amniyaad* planners and commanders of external operations, Ahmed Nuur Sheikh Mohamed Muhumed (a.k.a. 'Sandheere' a.k.a. 'Ukaash') was in the process of planning a large scale operation against Ethiopia from his base in Baraawe. A member of the Isaaq / Arab clan, Ukaash had come to the attention of intelligence services through his involvement in the multiple, simultaneous 2008 suicide bombings of the Somaliland presidency, the Ethiopian liaison office, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) office in Hargeysa.

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[113]   http://ethiopia.usembassy.gov/em_101414a.html

129. Ukaash assigned another mid-level *Amniyaad* officer, Yusuf Deeq (a.k.a. Ismaa'il) to run the operation. According to a source involved in the early planning stages, Deeq planned to deploy three teams totalling some twenty operatives: one from Somaliland via Tog Wajaale, one from Somaliland via Dhegahbur, and one from Kismayo and Bardheere via Dolow. On 20 May 2014, two of the team leaders, known as Abdirashid 'Dheere' and 'Abbas', arrived in Hargeysa from Mogadishu, where security services continued monitoring their activities and communications.

130. Although little was known about Abbas, Abdirashid was a member of the Ogaden / Awlyahan clan, who had served in Kismayo with Al-Shabaab, until they were ousted by a combined offensive by the Kenyan Defence Forces and Ras Kamboni militia in late 2012. Abdirashid was wounded and surrendered, eventually ending up in the custody of the Interim Jubaland Administration (IJA). Following his release, he joined the IJA's intelligence service, working under commander Harun 'Ma'alim Jamal'. In February 2014, Jamal was killed and Abdirashid was promoted, but allegations of his involvement in several IED attacks against senior Jubaland officials and assassinations of members of the Marehan clan reportedly led to his dismissal. Abdirashid then relocated to Mogadishu where he re-joined Al-Shabaab and became a recruiter and trainer for the *Amniyaad*.

131. Abdirashid's purpose in coming to Hargeysa was to prepare the ground for members of the Tog Wajaale team, including the preparation of fraudulent identity documents for entering Ethiopia. For this purpose, Abdirashid sought the assistance of Ahmed Awale, Ukaash's brother-in-law and owner of a local travel agency. Awale's phone records indicated that he had also been in contact with a phone number in Baraawe known to be used by Ukaash.

132. After several days in Hargeysa, Abdirashid travelled to Jigjiga (Ethiopia) via Tog Wajaale, where he met with a senior Al-Shabaab figure named 'Mukhtar'. 'Mukhtar' conveyed to him instructions to continue onwards to Moyale, on the Ethiopia-Kenya border, to meet another Al-Shabaab facilitator.

133. Abdirashid's activities had attracted the attention of at least three governments, one of which reported that, in August 2014, he was engaged in a conspiracy to stage an attack in Addis Ababa involving two other named Al-Shabaab operatives, but no further details of the plan were available.

Mustafa 'Yare'

134. On 24 August 2014, Mustafa 'Yare' arrived in Hargeysa by air from Mogadishu, following the instructions of Abdirashid. Although Mustafa claimed to have relatives in Hargeysa, he stayed instead with a contact named 'Salim', with whom he had been in contact prior to his departure from Mogadishu. His original plan had been to travel onward to Ethiopia with a fake Ethiopian identity card, but while in Hargeysa he learned that the document was a poor forgery that stated his age as 40, rather than 22: a detail that would almost certainly raise suspicions if checked. Mustafa requested that Abdirashid arrange for him a new ID.

135. Abdirashid passed the request to a contact in Mogadishu known as 'Daadir', who in turn reached out to 'Abdimalik' in Addis Ababa. Abdirashid and Daadir arranged for Mustafa and Hussein to meet on Facebook. On the afternoon of 5 September, Mustafa made direct contact with Hussein for the first time.

136. Although the two men denied having any contacts in common back in Somalia, Mustafa initiated their first conversation by informing Hussein that "3 weeks ago I was with your friend at the coast [Mogadishu]". They then discussed how Mustafa should cross the border from Somaliland and travel onward to Adama (formerly Nazret), near Addis Ababa, where he had relatives. Hussein hinted that the purpose of Mustafa's travel was to get 'married':

> Hussein: *Maybe you're in a hurry because of the brides you are looking for.*

> Mustafa: *My friend, I am coming for something much more precious and better than those brides you are talking about.*

137. Mustafa's pending 'wedding' was a theme to which the two would return to more than once, although it would eventually become clear that both knew that no such event was actually planned: the term "wedding" is a common Al-Shabaab code for a suicide operation. Before signing off, Hussein told Mustafa to delete the conversation.

Abdifatah 'Suldaan'

138. Meanwhile, Abdirashid prepared the ground for a new identity card to be issued for Mustafa Yare, conveying the need to Daadir. Daadir sent Hussein two photos of two individuals through Viber, together with US$100, and instructed him to prepare false documents for each. One was a picture of Mustafa. The other was an image of Abdifatah 'Suldaan', a former driver of Al-Shabaab spokesman Ali Mohamud Raghe (a.k.a. Ali 'Dheere') and known associate of Yusuf Deeq.

139. Since leaving Somalia in August 2013, Suldaan had mainly been based in his birthplace, Jigjiga (Ethiopia), where his activities had been closely monitored. Together with other Al-Shabaab operatives named 'Agaweyne' and Abdi, he had been involved in developing a support network between Jigjiga, Harar, and Dire Dawa, and conducting surveillance of potential targets. Phone records also indicate that during his stay in Somaliland, Suldaan was in contact with known associates of Ukaash, including his brother in Hargeysa, and Mustafa's housemate, Salim. On 24 September 2014, Suldaan arrived in Hargeysa, apparently expecting to pick up his newly forged identity document.

140. Hussein kept US$20 of Daadir's US$100 for himself and passed the remaining cash to a facilitator in Hargeysa named Mustafa Ahmed Mohamed Elmi, who was himself under surveillance for suspected links to Deeq. Elmi proposed to obtain a false university identity card and graduation certificate from Hargeysa. But he was slow to deliver on the documents and Daadir began pressuring Hussein to move faster. By 10 September, Hussein finally received the IDs from a broker in Addis Ababa and sent them to Hargeysa in the care of a woman named Nuura.[114]

141. Hussein subsequently asserted that he had met Nuura, together with her mother Amiina, by chance on a bus from Hargeysa to Addis Ababa, and that he entrusted her with the identity documents because she was returning home to Somaliland. Yet Nuura had long been a person of interest for the security services of several governments: her long-time business partner, Bariira Hassan Abdillahi,[115] was alleged to be a leading figure in Al-Shabaab's women's network in Somaliland. She had been linked by UN investigators to the May 2014 suicide bombing of La Chaumière restaurant in Djibouti – an operation they attributed to Ukaash and Deeq,[116] and the United States Department of Justice had issued a warrant for Bariira's arrest (together with four other individuals) in July 2014, on charges of providing material support to a foreign terrorist organisation.[117] In addition, Nuura's husband, Ahmed, had reportedly been arrested months earlier by the Djiboutian authorities on suspicion of his own involvement in the Chaumière attack. Finally, financial transaction records linked Nuura's mother to phone numbers associated with Deeq and Mustafa 'Yare', apparently as an intermediary in cash transfers.

142. At this stage, Hussein and Mustafa were in nearly daily contact on Facebook, engaging in long chats about Mustafa's planned travel to Ethiopia. Hussein took care, however, never to share Nuura's name and number with Mustafa online. Instead he passed them to 'Daadir' in Mogadishu, who coordinated with Abdirashid in Hargeysa to arrange for delivery of the IDs.

Mustafa's Wedding Plans

143. While waiting for the identity documents to reach Mustafa, Hussein coached him on how to cross the border via Borama and Aw Barre – not through the principle crossing point at Tog Wajaale – and how to deal with any immigration queries. During the second week of September, with his new ID in hand, Mustafa set off for Ethiopia, but disregarded Hussein's advice and proceeded directly to

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[114] Last name withheld for privacy purposes.
[115] Last name withheld for privacy purposes.
[116] SEMG report 2014, Annex 2.3.
[117] http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/three-defendants-arrested-charges-providing-material-support-foreign-terrorist-organization

Tog Wajaale, where he was stopped and questioned by immigration, and his ID confiscated. He returned to Hargeysa discouraged and on 19 September resumed contact with Hussein on Facebook to explain his difficulties.

144. Now without an ID, Mustafa decided not to risk passing immigration a second time: on 23 September he bought a seat on a truck to Hartasheikh, which crossed the Ethiopian border via an unmonitored route. After a night sleeping in the truck near Jigjiga, he proceeded to Harar on 24 September, where he took a room at the Kulmiye Hotel and bought an Ethiopian SIM card (number 0941805291). He then called Abdirashid to say that he'd arrived in Ethiopia and needed a proper Ethiopian ID card in order to travel safely to Addis Ababa. Abdirashid assured him that Hussein would provide one, and passed on the message through Daadir. The following day, 25 September, Mustafa proceeded to Adama and contacted Hussein again by Facebook. Instead of being relieved at having reached Adama and being settled with his relatives, Mustafa was anxious to continue his journey.

145. Mustafa's unease stemmed from his relatives poking holes in his cover story. Ostensibly, he was travelling to Addis Ababa to get married. Yet he never contacted his supposed 'fiancée' and was always vague about her personal details, thus his relatives became suspicious. On 28 September, just three days after his arrival in Adama, Mustafa pleaded with Hussein to arrange for a new Ethiopian ID in order for him to enter Addis Ababa:

> *The boy here is keeping an eye on me [...] Whenever I'm online he's with me, and keeps asking me why I'm not talking with the girl. When I told him that I'll be talking with her, he said I should try using Viber because it's free. So the situation is like that my friend, and I want to get away from them all. I want from you my ID, my friend. Is it ready?[118]*

146. Hussein's response revealed a growing preoccupation with secrecy, given that Mustafa's arrival in Addis Ababa was now imminent:

> *My dear brother, I love you and you can come to me any time, but we must be careful of many things. You and I must not be seen to be working together [...] Now we have to work hard, but just like when we chew tough [food], we have to protect our teeth.*

147. What Hussein did not tell Mustafa is that he had received instructions from Daadir to travel to Moyale, on the Kenyan border. Instead, citing school and work commitments in Addis Ababa, Hussein appeared to be procrastinating. During the course of the following week, Hussein rarely appeared online and failed to respond to Mustafa's messages. On 5 October, he re-emerged to offer an explanation for his absence:

> *Bro, today there were questions asked in the neighbourhood, but thank God it was someone else they were after [...] I am preparing your small document so come into town and we will be able to meet.*

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[118] Mustafa Facebook post under the name 'Gulled Yare', 28 September 2015, 5:40pm.

148. Hussein was not alone in facing a crisis of nerves. The repeated delays and extended gaps in their communication were also taking their toll on Mustafa, who began to allow the facade of a 'wedding' to fall away:

> *There is no problem: it is the way of this world, and we are hoping for something greater. Whatever happens to us, we hope that Allah will lighten our difficulties so, my friend, God willing everything will be blessed. The road I stand upon is the straight path and I will not run from it. As long as I am sure of my goal, I will have patience for everything that befalls me because the road is the faith, and the man who is patient and fights for his faith will be successful, just as the Prophet and his companions met with hardship and were victorious, so I will be patient.*

149. On 9 October 2015, with Mustafa still stuck in Adama and increasingly agitated, the two returned to their awkward code about the wedding:

> Mustafa*: Another thing, tell me about the girl and her issues.*

> Hussein*: My friend, the girl is ready. All that remains is your arrival [...] The whole family is going to be happy about this.*

150. Mustafa was clearly unsatisfied with Hussein's reply, warning him the following day that 'time is running out':

> *... I want to come tomorrow, insh'allah, I want a room where I can finish everything, and find one solution for the girl to come to me and then consult with you about where we would hold the wedding, do you understand? Call me [...] I can't just come, I need to see you and that you give me my things first, then take me to the hotel, you understand? [...] I need you to show me the town because I don't know it [...] and I need a room where I finish everything that needs to be finalised. [...] I need to understand the environment so it will be easier for me later. The I will be able to understand everything, settle myself and behave just like one of the kids from the neighbourhood [...] I'll become the toughest.*

151. On 12 October, Mustafa again appealed to Hussein to take forward "the work that is wanted from us." Hussein responded the same evening, emphasising the need for security:

> Hussein*: My dear brother, I need you to be stronger and show less weakness. You have to manage, and to show me full confidence, so come with a bus to Bole Mikeil and get off at the bus park. We will meet in the evening and I will give you your things. Remember, there will be no meeting between us except at night. Be stronger and self sufficient as in any city, and for what is wanted from you, you will get the help and support you need. But stop being so soft.*

> Mustafa: *[...] Once we understand each other I'll come to you, once I know the environment, insh'allah, with Allah at my side you will see the real me.*

152. On 13 October, after another day of silence from Hussein, Mustafa lost patience:

> *All I need from you is the ID and that one time you take me to Bole Mikael, then I will do the rest. I've decided to leave my bag here in order to look like a normal person [...] I want to come tomorrow afternoon.*

153. The following day, 14 October, Hussein called Mustafa to tell him that his ID was ready and that they should meet at Kaliti, on the outskirts of Addis Ababa. From there, he took Mustafa to the Bole Mikael area of Addis Ababa to familiarise him with potential targets, notably the Edna Mall, the Mali Mall, and the Friendship Building. They also visited a possible room for Mustafa to rent, but he was dissatisfied and returned to Adama the following morning.

154. Having monitored the pair's activities for almost five months, the Ethiopian security services noted their actions with growing concern. On 14 October, the American embassy in Addis Ababa issued its warning of "potential imminent terrorist attack" by Al-Shabaab in the Bole area. But the alert appears to have been premature: Hussein and Mustafa had indeed linked up for the operation that Ukaash had planned, but on 14 October they were in possession of no weapon. The explosives to be used in the attack – the "girl" Mustafa had supposedly come to Addis Ababa to "marry" – had not yet arrived.

The 'Wedding'

155. Three weeks earlier, Ethiopian intelligence had received an apparently unrelated report that Adan 'Garaar', an Al-Shabaab commander based in Somalia's Gedo region, had arrived in the border town of Beled Hawo, driving a black four-wheel drive and carrying explosives for an operation against an unidentified target. Garaar was believed to have been involved in the 2013 Westgate shopping mall attack (and would subsequently be implicated in the massacre of 64 Kenyan civilians in separate incidents near Mandera in late 2014). His team was also known to have formidable expertise in manufacturing explosives and IEDs.

156. In early October, various security services picked up more 'chatter', this time about a possible terrorist operation in Ethiopia coordinated by 'Habiil' and executed by Garaar. Persistent monitoring eventually revealed that Garaar had assembled a team to transport 'equipment' into Ethiopia in connection with some form of suicide attack involving explosives.

157. On 14 October, a Western intelligence service reported that a vehicle carrying Garaar's operatives had crossed the border from Kenya into Ethiopia near Moyale – the same day that Hussein, ignoring Daadir's instructions to travel to Moyale, was on his way to meet Mustafa at Kaliti and familiarise him with possible targets in the Bole Mikael area. It was also the day that the U.S. embassy in Addis Ababa issued its terrorism alert.

158. Garaar's team waited for four days in the Moyale area before aborting their plan. On 18 October they doubled back across the border to Kenya, where later the same evening they were intercepted by a unit of the Kenyan Defence Forces. The KDF troops opened fire on the vehicle, destroying it and killing all five occupants. One hundred kilograms of explosives and six suicide vests were recovered from the wreckage.

Aftermath

159. On 17 October 2015, Hussein and Mustafa were apprehended and taken into custody in Addis Ababa, where they were tried and convicted on terrorism charges. Abdifatah 'Suldaan' was arrested and imprisoned in Jigjiga. In Somaliland, a number of individuals associated with the plot, including Nuura, Amiina, and Bariira, were also detained.

160. On 29 December 2014, Abdishakur 'Tahliil', believed to be the head of the Amniyaad at the time, was killed in an American drone strike.[119] Just over a month later, on 3 February 2015, Yusuf Deeq was also killed by a UAV,[120] followed by Adan Garaar in March 2015.[121]

161. In November 2015, Abdirashid 'Dheere', Mustafa's trainer and handler, was finally tracked down and arrested in Ethiopia.

162. On 2 December 2015, Ukaash was reportedly killed in an airstrike claimed by the U.S. Department of Defence.[122]

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[119] http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/31/us-usa-somalia-airstrike-idUSKBN0K90YA20141231#si431HhbVrBjZIEE.97

[120] http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/31/us-usa-somalia-airstrike-idUSKBN0K90YA20141231#si431HhbVrBjZIEE.97

[121] http://www.voanews.com/content/twelve-killed-in-somalia-attack-al-shabab-claims-responsibility/2677200.html

[122] The Pentagon press secretary who made the announcement referred to Ukaash by the name 'Abdirahman'. http://www.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/News-Release-View/Article/633220/statement-from-pentagon-press-secretary-peter-cook-on-dec-2-airstrike-in-somalia

V. ACTIONS TAKEN BY IGAD AND MEMBER STATES

163. IGAD Member States are fully cognisant of the threat posed by Al-Shabaab and most are actively engaged in trying to degrade and defeat the organisation. AMISOM's fighting forces are drawn almost exclusively from IGAD countries, with the exception of Burundi. IGAD member states, notably Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda also host foreign military capabilities that are engaged in combating Al-Shabaab.

164. IGAD and its Member States are also actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to politically stabilise Somalia and to support the Somali Federal Government's efforts to advance the country's political transition as envisaged in the Vision 2016 'Framework for Action'. To this end, the IGAD Office of the Facilitator for Somalia has continued to promote the federal framework as laid out in the Somali Constitution and to engage in political facilitation and mediation on a range of political and security issues involving the SFG and the emerging federal member states.

A. Ethiopia

165. Ethiopia first committed military forces to AMISOM on 22 January 2014, fulfilling a request of the UN Security Council under resolution 2124 (2014) that AMISOM's force strength be increased from 17,731 to a maximum of 22,126 uniformed personnel. The Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) contingent of AMISOM is responsible for Sector 3, which includes the Bay, Bakool, and Gedo regions.

166. On 19 July 2015 AMISOM launched a new offensive, named Operation Juba Corridor, to remove Al Shabaab forces from Bay and Gedo, thereby denying the group of its remaining strongholds.[123] Since the launch of this operation, the ENDF have played a leading role in the ground offensive, working with SNA and AMISOM counterparts to push Al-Shabaab out of several major towns that the group has controlled for the past seven years, including the key jihadist bases of Bardheere and Diinsoor, as well as numerous smaller villages throughout the area.[124]

167. As part of the ground offensive against Al-Shabaab, Ethiopian soldiers have been supporting their Somali counterparts by helping to open roads previously blocked by the terrorist group, so as to clear supply routes needed by AMISOM and the SNA. The ENDF has also provided technical expertise to the SNA when necessary, including deployment of Ethiopian engineers to identify and disarm explosives planted by Al-Shabaab in the Bay region.[125]

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[123] http://amisom-au.org/2015/07/amisom-and-somali-national-army-launch-military-offensive-against-al-shabaab-in-bay-and-gedo-regions/

[124] http://www.coastweek.com/3834-AMISOM-and-Somali-troops-welcomed-after-liberating-Diinsoor.htm

[125] NSP NGO Safety Programme, Daily Security Report 21 July 2015.

168. The Ethiopian authorities actively monitor Al-Shabaab attempts to stage operations inside Ethiopia proper and have disrupted several planned attacks. In addition to the attempted attack in the Bole Mikael area of Addis Ababa described above, the Ethiopian Federal Police arrested 25 people in the southern town of Jimma on charges of having trained with Al-Shabaab and of planning terrorist attacks inside Ethiopia.

B. Kenya

Actions taken by Kenya to counter Al-Shabaab inside Somalia

169. The Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) entered Southern Somalia in October 2011 in response to the Al-Shabaab threat in the border area and to "pursue insurgent groups", following a series of kidnappings of tourists along the porous border.[126] The Kenyan military joined AMISOM in 2012 and over 4,600 troops were formally integrated into AMISOM in July of that year.[127]

170. The KDF contingent of AMISOM holds responsibility for Sector 2, which encompasses the Lower and Middle Juba regions.[128] Throughout 2015, the KDF have faced threats from Al-Shabaab both within Somalia and along the Somali-Kenyan border. However, the Kenyan military has undertaken a number of initiatives, particularly in the vicinity of Kismayo, to counter this threat.[129]

Joint Operations

171. The KDF AMISOM contingent also engages operationally with its Somali counterparts in Kismayo, running joint patrols of the area, convening security coordination meetings, and engaging in intelligence sharing. The KDF have set up patrols along the main military supply route leading into the city and have increased security at the main check-point at Yoontoy, assessed as one of the most vulnerable areas for convoys along that route.

172. As a result of these joint security initiatives, Kismayo has suffered a relatively low number of IED attacks in 2015, in comparison with other sectors of the country. The most significant of these attacks occurred on 22 August 2015, when a Vehicle-Borne IED (VBIED) was detonated at a Somali National Army (SNA) training facility near Kismayo University, causing eleven fatalities and six injuries.[130]

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[126] http://amisom-au.org/kenya-kdf/

[127] http://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2012/July/24886/kdf_troops_formally_join_amisom.aspx

[128] http://amisom-au.org/mission-profile/military-component/

[129] The findings in this section are based largely on observations made during a field mission to this area.

[130] http://goobjoog.com/english/?p=18439

173. On 16 October 2015, KDF and SNA soldiers conducted a joint operation to rescue a teacher who had been abducted by Al-Shabaab from the Hagadera refugee camp in northern Kenya. The teacher, Judy Mutua, was rescued at Shaba-Difu, 15 kilometres inside Somalia.

Capacity Building

174. The KDF AMISOM contingent has emphasised a strong partnership with the Jubaland authorities, engaging in significant capacity-building of the regional security forces. This has involved mentoring and training of local paramilitary units engaged in counter-insurgency operations, as well as 1500 SNA recruits drawn from former militias who underwent training in late 2015 at the old airport next to Kismayo University.

175. The KDF's training programme is expected to continue in 2016, and is considered by Kenyan military officers to be an essential contribution to ensuring that Somali security forces will eventually be able to assume full responsibility for their domestic security.

Cooperation from the Local Community

176. Kenyan and Jubaland security officials are convinced that their efforts to work with the local community have produced concrete results. In particular, the interception rate of potential IEDs has increased within Kismayo due to the vigilance and cooperation of the local population. KDF officials have noted that in several instances, Kismayo residents identified IEDs at either the point of assembly or while being placed at the point of attack, then notified local authorities. As a result, Al-Shabaab operatives and sympathisers engaged in the placement of IEDs generally refrain from using aiming markers, rendering attacks less accurate and effective.[131]

Actions to Counter Al-Shabaab inside Kenya

177. In addition to its contribution to AMISOM, the Kenyan government has worked to counter the threat from Al-Shabaab within its own national territory. Kenyan security forces have increased their footprint in northern Kenya, particularly in Garissa and Lamu counties where a number of deadly Al-Shabaab attacks have occurred. On 11 September 2015, the Kenyan Interior Minister announced via a statement on Twitter the launch of a multi-agency offensive called Operation Linda Boni, with the aim of removing Al-Shabaab (*Jaysh Ayman*) operatives from the Boni forest.[132]

178. During the course of these operations, security officials have recovered numerous weapons allegedly belonging to Al-Shabaab, including handguns, automatic

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[131] Interview with KFD officials, October 2015.

[132] http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/security-chiefs-launch-operation-linda-boni-forest-flush-out-al-shabaab

weapons, ammunition, grenades, and mobile phones. Authorities believed that these stocks were meant to be used in Al-Shabaab attacks inside Kenya.

179. In addition to the capture and destruction of arms and ammunition, security agencies have been able to identify and disrupt Al-Shabaab networks in northern Kenya, including apprehending individuals operating in this region on the group's behalf. Arrests in Garissa County in late August 2015 reportedly foiled an attack planned by Al-Shabaab in Somalia against undisclosed Kenyan targets.[133] A group of four individuals linked to Al-Shabaab was also arrested in Dadaab in September 2015 with weapons and the types of mobile phone motherboards often employed in the construction of IEDs.[134] Such arrests have helped the authorities to better understand several Al-Shabaab-linked networks and disrupt their operational plans.

180. Increased presence and monitoring in the border regions have allowed the Kenyan authorities to disrupt efforts by potential Al-Shabaab recruits to travel Somalia overland. In March 2015, two young women from Kenya and one from Tanzania were intercepted in Mandera County en route to Somalia, where they reportedly intended to marry and live alongside Al-Shabaab fighters.[135] In early August, two more individuals were arrested attempting to travel through Garissa County to join extremists in Somalia: a female, originally from Mombasa, and her male companion were allegedly heading to Somalia so that she too could marry a fighter from Al-Shabaab.[136] The same month, Kenyan officials prevented a group of six armed Tanzanian extremists from crossing the border and entering Somalia to join Al-Shabaab.[137]

181. The Kenyan security services have also stepped up efforts to identify Al-Shabaab networks and disrupt their activities across the entire country. In October 2015, police in Mombasa arrested two Al-Shabaab operatives accused of carrying out attacks on police officers and informants in that city: Luqman Khatib and Swaleh Mubarak. Khatib is accused of holding a leadership position within Al-Shabaab and is alleged to have close connections to members of *Jaysh Ayman*.[138]

182. In December 2015, Kenyan prosecutors secured the conviction of terror suspect Jermaine Grant on nine counts of fraudulently trying to obtain Kenyan

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[133] http://www.ibtimes.com/possible-al-shabab-attack-foiled-kenya-authorities-arrest-terrorist-suspects-garissa-2064592

[134] http://www.intelligencebriefs.com/kenyan-security-forces-arrest-4-al-shabaab-suspects-in-dadaab-seize-weapons/

[135] http://www.thecitizen.co.tz/News/national/TZ-girl-arrested-en-route-to-join-Shabaab-militants-/-/1840392/2671154/-/n9h7t2z/-/index.html

[136] http://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2015/Aug/101053/mombasa_woman_suspect_is_arrested_trying_to_join_al_shabaab.aspx

[137] http://www.nation.co.ke/counties/Tanzanians-arrested-Garissa/-/1107872/2845738/-/3chhtz/-/index.html

[138] http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/terror-suspects-mombasa-police-killings-held-10-days

citizenship, and persuaded the court to sentence him to a nine-year jail term. Grant is also accused of being in possession of explosives and is awaiting trial on these charges. He was originally detained in 2011 on suspicion of helping British national Samantha Lewthwaite, the infamous "White Widow", plan terrorist attacks in Kenya.[139]

[139] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-34982045

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

183. IGAD Member States have already taken measures to counter the expanding threat from Al-Shabaab, whether within their own borders, through their support to Somali authorities, or through regional and continental security cooperation mechanisms. The Heads of Intelligence and Security Services (HISS) of the member countries of IGAD and the East African Community (EAC) met twice in 2015 to deepen security cooperation and harmonise efforts to fight terrorism and violent extremism.[140] In August 2015, a two-day experts' meeting in Djibouti took the first steps towards the establishment of a Centre of Excellence to Counter Violent Extremism for the IGAD region. Finally, the IGAD Security Sector Program (ISSP) launched a new Transnational Security Threats (TST) Initiative to promote security cooperation between Member States.

184. Yet the importance of further emphasis on cooperation and coordination cannot be overemphasised. As extremists linked to Al-Shabaab exploit weaknesses to operate across the region's borders, states must be capable of working together to ensure that security services throughout the region share a holistic view of the threats that they face. Member States should therefore consider working towards a more robust regional framework for security cooperation, intelligence sharing, and mutual legal assistance.

A. Specific measures to enhance cooperation in countering Al-Shabaab

185. IGAD member states have a variety of instruments at their disposal to enhance cooperation in counter-terrorism, including numerous relevant UN and AU conventions, the IGAD Plan of Action for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, and the 2009 IGAD conventions on Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition. Yet participation in and implementation of the available instruments varies widely and much security cooperation instead takes place on a bilateral and largely ad hoc basis.[141] The case studies presented in this report helped to illustrate both the need for greater cooperation in countering the threat posed by Al-Shabaab and its affiliates, as well as some of the specific challenges Member States face in working together.

186. While awaiting the completion of the broader frameworks for security cooperation, it is proposed that concerned IGAD Member States explore specific measures that could be undertaken in the immediate future to counter the threat of Al-Shabaab and its affiliates. To this end, concerned governments should consider convening a joint review, possibly under ISSP auspices, to identify gaps, challenges, and opportunities in strengthening cooperation to combat Al-Shabaab. Specifically,

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[140] http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/the-heads-of-intelligence-and-security-services-of-the-east-africa-region-conclude-their-second-meeting-in-kampala

[141] Report of the IGAD Security Sector Program (ISSP) Task Force on Establishment of a Regional Centre for Cooperation and Coordination on Existing, Evolving, and Emerging Transnational Security Threats (draft), ISSP & Sahan, August 2014.

the objectives of such a review might include:

- Establishing a clear understanding of all parties on the types of information they can share and the processes for doing so, including necessary levels of authorisation, points of contact, and protocols for handling sensitive information, such as call data and financial records.

- Considering the potential value of engaging systematically in more joint activities to confront Al-Shabaab, such as:

  - Joint analytical teams or expert committees;
  - Formation of joint units to investigate specific Al-Shabaab-related threats;
  - Establishment of enhanced liaison or 'secondment' positions to allow security officials from one country to become familiarised with the procedures and protocols of another.

- In light of Tanzania's importance to both Al-Shabaab and Al-Hijra as a place of refuge, a base for operational planning, and a source of explosives, IGAD Member States should consider inviting Tanzania to participate in any joint efforts to counter this threat.

B. Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and counter-measures

187. Al-Shabaab's use of IEDs has expanded dramatically, and the manner in which they are employed has evolved at an alarming pace. Although Somalia is the epicentre of the regional IED threat, the tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) tested in that country are routinely exported in attacks against other IGAD Member States.

188. IGAD Member States vary widely in their capacity to prevent such attacks, to protect their citizens from them, and to conduct investigations after the fact. Most lack a comprehensive Counter-IED (C-IED) strategy. Information and intelligence sharing between governments has been erratic, and is generally perceived to be inadequate.

189. It is therefore proposed that concerned Member States seek ISSP's support in enhancing their collective understanding of the IED threat, to develop appropriate C-IED strategies, strengthen their technical capabilities for post-blast investigation and analysis, and improve information sharing within the region. Specific measures could include:

- Exchanging information on IED technology and TTPs, including briefings on trends in IED use, both within the IGAD region and elsewhere in the world, such as;

- o Mapping of IED incidents within the IGAD region over a specified period, including specific reference to:
  - Explosives, triggers, and initiators (type, country of origin, manufacture, etc.);
  - IED type, design, characteristics, and 'signature';
  - o Exploring TTPs associated with IED use;
  - o Post-blast investigation/analysis (PBI/A).

- Developing a regional C-IED response/strategy;

- Developing training courses and materials based on current analysis;

- Ensuring regular, systematic information exchange between concerned Member States to guarantee that knowledge and analysis are kept current.

190. Different versions of these outputs could be directed toward different audiences within participating Member States. For example, while detailed technical briefs and training courses could be developed for the members of security services, more strategic and policy oriented products could be directed toward policy makers, legislators, and civil society.

C. Adaptation to evolving patterns of radicalisation and recruitment

191. As Al-Shabaab radicalisation and recruitment shifts away from former hubs – such as Nairobi and Mombasa in Kenya –, to avoid detection, authorities should also maintain a proactive and flexible approach to monitoring these activities in order to quickly identify and counter the ways in which extremist adapt to the investigative measures employed against them. The proposed measures are intended to complement longer-term strategies for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) with shorter-term operational responses. These might include:

- Sensitising and training of public officials, including law enforcement and intelligence agents, in areas previously unaffected by extremism, in order to help them identify and react appropriately to potential threats;

- Anticipating the swift reallocation of dedicated personnel and resources to areas with newly emerging threats so as to identify and disrupt networks as quickly as possible;

- Enhancing surveillance of terrorism suspects and convicts inside prisons so as to identify those individuals attempting to radicalise their peers or remain operationally engaged. Additional measures to curb the growth and effectiveness of extremist networks in the custodial system may include:

  - o Tighter controls to prevent contraband, especially mobile phones, from entering prisons and being distributed amongst prisoners;
  - o Closer vetting of prison personnel and enactment of stiffer penalties

for prison staff that breech contraband protocol;
- o Development of targeted disengagement programmes for extremists in the prison system;

- Undertaking additional research and analysis into current trends of radicalisation and recruitment among young women, in order to formulate appropriate responses.