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ISLAMISTS: KENYA & NIGERIA

AL-SHABAAB: MURDER AND MUTILATION AT THE MALL; BOKO HARAM: WAR AGAINST ISLAMIC GHOSTS

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AL-SHABAAB BREAKS NEW GROUND WITH COMPLEX NAIROBI ATTACK

Paul Cruickshank and Tim Lister

[CNN](http://www.cnn.com), Sept. 23, 2013

The Al-Shabaab assault on a mall in Nairobi, Kenya, is alarming for its audacity, its scale and the sophisticated planning that went into it. Both the choice of target and method of attack exactly fit the new al Qaeda playbook. Few counterterrorism experts are surprised that the Somali group launched another attack in the Kenyan capital. It has threatened to take revenge ever since Kenyan forces entered Al-Shabaab's heartland in southern Somalia. Small-scale attacks, frequently with hand grenades, have already brought bloodshed to Nairobi's streets. Back in September of last year, Kenyan authorities said they had disrupted a major plot to attack public spaces in Nairobi in its final stages of planning. Authorities also broke up a plot by the group against Western tourists in the city in late 2007....

But the attack on the Westgate Mall is very different, involving perhaps 10 or more heavily armed assailants, using multiple entrance points to lay siege to a high-profile venue in an upscale neighborhood.

The assault then evolved into a hostage-taking to garner maximum publicity. Al-Shabaab says the attack took months of planning and training....

The operation ticks the boxes that al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri listed in a message published just over a week ago.

1. Ensure the target is Western. The Westgate Mall has several Israeli establishments and is popular with expatriates. Those killed include three British citizens, two French nationals and two Canadians, their governments said. In his September 13 message, al-Zawahiri warned against attacks on non-Western states unless the regime was part of "the American forces." Kenya, with its long tradition of pro-Western governments and close relationships with Western militaries, fits that bill.
2. Take hostages where possible. Al-Zawahiri recommended taking "the citizens of the countries that are participating in the invasion of Muslim countries as hostages so that our prisoners may be freed in exchange."
3. Try to avoid Muslim casualties. Al-Shabaab claimed on its Twitter feed that the gunmen escorted Muslims out of the mall, before turning on the "disbelievers" inside. Witnesses said the gunmen at the Westgate tried to identify Muslims by asking shoppers the name of Mohammed's mother. They shot those who didn't know.

Nairobi is vulnerable to Al-Shabaab attacks not least because of the large Somali community, many of them refugees from the country's long-running clan warfare, that lives in the Eastleigh district. Known as "little Mogadishu," Eastleigh is now home to an estimated 250,000 Somalis. And Al-Shabaab is well established there, raising money, finding recruits and setting up safe houses. Al-Shabaab also has an ally in the militant Kenyan group al Hijra, formerly the Muslim Youth Center, which has a strong presence in Eastleigh and in the coastal city of Mombasa. Investigators will be examining whether al Hijra played a role in the attack on the Westgate mall. Kenyan al Hijra militants are suspected to have been responsible for several of the small-scale terrorist attacks that have hit the country.

This is a worrying trend, analysts say. While Al-Shabaab's Somali fighters are not used to operating abroad, non-Somali East Africans have been training with the group in southern Somalia. Al Hijra is the most potent outgrowth of that training. Founded in an Eastleigh mosque in 2008, al Hijra took advantage of growing radicalization among a minority of Kenya's 4.3 million Muslims to build a significant presence in Nairobi and Mombasa. Investigators established the group had close links to the attacks in Kampala in July 2010. According to the U.N. Monitoring Group on Somalia, most of the operatives who conspired in the attack were Kenyan and close to al Hijra leaders.

A crackdown against al Hijra by Kenyan authorities, helped by the United States, has weakened the group. According to a 2013 United Nations report, "Al Hijra members were plagued by unexplained killings, disappearances, continuous 'catch and release' arrest raids and operational disruptions." But al Hijra is far from defeated. According to the U.N. report, it has established links with Al-Shabaab affiliates elsewhere in East Africa and is enlisting the services of fighters returning from Somalia "to conduct new and more complex operations." Its leadership has become closer to al Qaeda through figures such as Abubakar Shariff Ahmed, known as "Makaburi," who is said to favor large-scale attacks in Kenya in support of Al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab has other valuable alliances in the region, including the government of Eritrea, which sees it as a useful ally against its arch-enemy Ethiopia. A United Nations Monitoring Group reported in 2011 that financial records and shipping movements indicated Eritrea's support for Al-Shabaab went far beyond the humanitarian. In a 400-page report, it concluded that Eritrea's relationship with Al-Shabaab seemed designed to "legitimize and embolden the group rather than to curb its extremist orientation or encourage its participation in a political process."

Al-Shabaab has also established a relationship with al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen, from which it obtains weapons and training, according to counterterrorism officials and former members of both

AQAP and Al-Shabaab. One former jihadist tells CNN the relationship began in 2008 when he linked up a senior figure in Al-Shabaab, Ahmed Warsame, with the Yemeni cleric Anwar al-Awlaki.

In September 2011, the U.S. Africa Command warned that Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram in Nigeria and al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb were trying to synchronize their efforts to launch attacks on U.S and Western interests. The Kenyan capital became much more vulnerable to retaliation when Kenyan troops and tanks, supported by airstrikes, moved into Somalia in October 2011 in response to growing cross-border violence. Al-Shabaab immediately warned that the incursion would have "cataclysmic consequences." (*For the remainder of this article please go to: [CNN](#) – Ed.*)

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AL-SHABAAB BACKED BY MONEY FROM U.S.

Peter Bergen and David Sterman

[CNN](#), September 29, 2013

After the attack on the Westgate mall in Nairobi, Kenya, substantial attention was given to the some 40 Americans who have traveled to fight for Al-Shabaab in Somalia during the past several years. But much less attention has focused on Al-Shabaab's supporters in the United States who have helped to fund the terrorist group. Those supporters have funneled tens of thousands of dollars via money transfer businesses to the terrorist organization and have often maintained direct contact with Al-Shabaab leaders and fighters in Somalia.

After the 9/11 attacks, when it became clear to investigators that al Qaeda's deadly assaults on New York and Washington had cost as much as \$500,000 to mount, the U.S. government became far more aggressive about trying to block funds going to terrorist organizations. Part of that process involved a determined effort to sort through which groups were terrorist organizations. On 9/11 there were only 26 terrorist groups on the State Department's list of designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Today there are 51, among them Al-Shabaab, which was designated in March 2008.

The result of that designation was that it was now illegal for a person in the United States to knowingly provide Al-Shabaab with money, training, expertise, false documentation, communications equipment, weapons or explosives, or to join the group. On that basis, a number of cases have emerged:

- In Rochester, Minnesota, two women from Somalia who had become naturalized U.S. citizens helped organize funding for Al-Shabaab. Hawo Hassan, a 64-year-old adult day care worker, and Amina Farah Ali, 35, set up a dedicated teleconference line to raise funds for Al-Shabaab. Hundreds of interested individuals called in to these teleconferences, and after each one Hassan and Ali recorded pledges of funds from the callers. After a teleconference on October 26, 2008, the two women received pledges from 21 individuals totaling \$2,100 in funds for Al-Shabaab.

These teleconferences often featured Al-Shabaab figures. In one teleconference, an Al-Shabaab female leader exhorted the listening audience to send funds. In another, Mahad Karate, the head of Al-Shabaab's intelligence wing, told the members of the listening audience that jihad "is waged financially" and that their help was needed. The two female Al-Shabaab fund-raisers also went door to door in Minnesota to raise contributions, often under false pretenses claiming contributions were for war orphans in Somalia. During a phone call with her Al-Shabaab financial contact, Ali stated, "I tell the people to collect money in the name of the poor. Nobody is aware of the money I send to you."

Prosecutors said it was clear from the phone conversations that they monitored that the two women knew that they were raising money for Al-Shabaab, a group that had been designated a terrorist organization by the U.S. State Department. Both women were convicted of providing funds to Al-Shabaab and were sentenced to lengthy prison terms this year.

- Similarly, Ahmed Hussein Mahamud, a 27-year-old man, raised money from the Minnesota Somali community under the pretense that the money was going to a local mosque or to help orphans in Somalia. Instead he transferred the funds to fellow conspirators who had traveled from Minnesota to fight in Somalia to help them buy weapons. He and his co-conspirators transferred \$1,500 to help Al-Shabaab. Mahamud pleaded guilty last year.
- Nima Ali Yusuf, a 25-year-old San Diego woman, who pleaded guilty in December 2011 to sending \$1,450 to help fund Al-Shabaab, was in telephone contact with some of the Somali-American men fighting in Somalia for Al-Shabaab.
- In 2007, Aden Hashi Ayrow, a Al-Shabaab leader, contacted Basaaly Saeed Moalin, a cabdriver in San Diego, asking him to fund his group. In January 2008, Ayrow told Moalin that he needed to know how much money was being sent monthly to his group, even if it was only \$100, because even relatively small amounts of money could make a big difference in Somalia, which is one of the poorest countries in the world. To keep an Al-Shabaab foot soldier in the field only cost a dollar a day. At Ayrow's request, Moalin organized other members of the Somali-American community to help provide funding. Moalin recruited three others members of the Somali-American community and together they sent \$8,500 to Al-Shabaab between 2007 and 2008. All four were later convicted of providing support to Al-Shabaab.
- Another Al-Shabaab supporter in St Louis, cabdriver Mohamud Abdi Yusuf, was part of a group of men that sent \$21,000 to Kenya and Somalia for Al-Shabaab. Yusuf pleaded guilty to giving support to the terrorist group. Since Al-Shabaab was designated as a terrorist organization, the U.S. Justice Department has mounted "Operation Rhino" to combat Al-Shabaab's support network in the States and has convicted 12 individuals for providing funds to Al-Shabaab, according to a count by the New America Foundation.

This seems to have had a real deterrent effect. As a result of the publicity these cases have had in the Somali-American community, indictments for Al-Shabaab fund-raising have slowed considerably. And the last time a Somali-American was indicted for raising money for Al-Shabaab was 2011.

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JIHADIST RITUAL MURDER & MUTILATION AT THE MALL

Dawn Perlmutter

[Front Page Magazine](#), Oct. 1, 2013

During the four-day siege in Kenya's Westgate shopping Mall, al-Shabaab jihadists raped, tortured, beheaded, dismembered, castrated, gouged out eyes, amputated fingers and hung hostages on hooks from the roof. According to a forensic medical doctor, "They [the al-Shabaab attackers] removed eyes, ears, noses. Fingers are cut by pliers, noses ripped by pliers"... "Those are not allegations. Those are f***** truths,"... "They removed balls, eyes, ears, nose. They get your hand and sharpen it like a pencil then they tell you to write your name with the blood. They drive knives inside a child's body. Actually, if you look at all the bodies, unless those ones that were escaping, fingers are cut by pliers, the noses are ripped by pliers." There were also reports that hostages were beheaded and their heads thrown out of the windows.

This inexplicable savage violence is typically attributed to psychological warfare, military tactics or individual acts of brutality but for Jihadists they are justifiable sacred acts against the enemies of Islam. They are ritual murders that are consistent with a growing global Jihadist method of operation [MO]. Similar acts of torture, rape, beheading and mutilation regularly occur in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Egypt, Syria and other countries. The Westgate Mall massacre is comparable to the mass murder of 166 people by members of the Islamist Jihadist group Lashkar-e-Taiba, in ten coordinated shooting and bombing attacks across Mumbai, India on November 26 -29, 2008. During their siege operation the LeT Jihadists also took the time to sexually humiliate, torture and mutilate some of the victims before shooting them dead....

Islamist mutilation entails a specific kind of ritualistic crime; a collective, provocative and incendiary desecration of the enemy. Mujahideen throughout the world expend extra effort brutalizing the enemies of Islam including women and children. To understand the significance of these violent ritualistic acts they have to be analyzed in the context of Islamist honor and shame. The primary motivations of Islamist atrocity is an irrepressible impulse to alleviate shame and a sacred duty to restore honor, serve vengeance, preserve purity, maintain tradition and save face. For Islamists honor is signified by stereotypical male characteristics such as courage, bravery, heroism, power, virility, and strength; dishonor is signified by stereotypical female characteristics such as weakness, vulnerability, helplessness and submissiveness. *(For the remainder of this article please go to : [Front Page Magazine](#) – Ed.)*

Dawn Perlmutter, Director and founder of Symbol & Ritual Intelligence and Associate Fellow at the Middle East Forum, is considered one of the leading subject matter experts (SME) in the areas of symbols, unfamiliar customs, ritual murder and religious violence.

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NIGERIA IS AT WAR WITH ISLAMIST GHOSTS

Peter Dörrie

[Medium](#), Sept. 10, 2013

A war rages in northeastern Nigeria. Three months into a government-declared state of emergency, an army division of 8,000 men and a joint task force of other military and civilian security forces are trying to wrest control of large swathes of land from a fundamentalist insurgent group known as Boko Haram. The government has deployed helicopter gunships, fighter jets and armored vehicles—and battles regularly result in dozens of soldiers, insurgents and civilians being killed. It's one of the most intense conflicts of present times and yet we know practically nothing about the enemy, its organization, goals and real developments on the ground.

For people following the various conflicts in Africa, Boko Haram has been a household word for some time now. The group was founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2001 and 2002 in the Nigerian town of Maiduguri and for at least several years remained a non-violent, if radical, sect of orthodox Muslims opposing the perceived corruption and mismanagement of the Nigerian state. At some point before 2009, members of the group began arming themselves and preparing for a violent uprising against the government, with the goal to introduce their interpretation of Islamic law to the north of Nigeria. The security services sprang into action and confronted members of the sect in a series of engagements that resulted in the deaths of at least 700 people, among them Yusuf, who died almost without a doubt as a result of police brutality while in custody....

Probably not even most members of Boko Haram have a firm knowledge of who belongs to them and what goals the different parts of the organization, if it can even be called that, pursue. This theory is supported by frequent reports of powerful regional politicians handing cash to people associated with Boko Haram, even though the dead leader Yusuf expressly forbade his followers to cooperate with the secular government of Nigeria. Also, bank robberies are frequently blamed on Boko Haram, even though at least some of these incidents are almost certainly the work of regular criminals.

For the group itself, this apparent disorganization has proved to be quite effective. Repeated attempts by the government to crack down on Boko Haram after 2009 failed, because the security services couldn't identify any vital parts of the organization to take out. The Nigerian army and police resorted to heavy-handed tactics of repression, putting up roadblocks, shutting down markets and on occasion flattening whole town quarters with heavy weaponry, if a Boko Haram cell was suspected to be inside....

These cycles of violence have so far largely served to strengthen Boko Haram. By the beginning of this year, large swathes of Borno, Yowe and Adamawa states in the country's northeast were essentially out of government control. In May, Nigeria's president Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency in these

states and called out the big guns. In a first phase, operations of the joint task force, a cooperation between the military, intelligence services and police, intensified operations in the area and civilians were encouraged to assist the security services, essentially creating vigilante groups in many areas.

In a second phase, which started last week, a regular army division of over 8,000 soldiers took over the responsibility of fighting Boko Haram. A thousand of these soldiers just returned from Mali, where they took part in an operation against other jihadist groups challenging the state's secular government. The newly created 7th Division brings armored vehicles, artillery and air support.

And the army is eager to show its worth: on Thursday, the army claimed to have eradicated a Boko Haram camp with 50 fighters in it. The soldiers followed the insurgents through aerial surveillance after they ambushed a group of pro-government vigilantes, killing at least 24 of them. The camp was surrounded and pounded by helicopter gunships. Apart from making clear the scale and intensity of the conflict, these reports also give an impression of the capabilities of the Nigerian armed forces....

Nigeria's government and its generals hope that the new strategy of recognizing Boko Haram as a formidable fighting force and deploying a massive amount of troops and weaponry will force the most important parts of the group to the negotiation table. The result could be an amnesty for Boko Haram fighters and some form of political compromise, an approach that Nigeria has some experience with from its other insurgency, in the Niger Delta.

But if history is any guide, this hope seems to be unreasonable. Boko Haram is probably too splintered to be engaged in a meaningful dialogue as an organization. It is also unclear what the government could have to offer, apart from an amnesty. Other than the rebellion in the Niger Delta with its focus on economic participation, Boko Haram's fighters are at least partly motivated by a religious, social and anti-government agenda. The Nigerian government can't make any meaningful concessions on these issues.

The optimal way to go would of course be to address the underlying reasons for the insurgent's disenchantment with the state, namely the pervasive poverty and corruption that cripples any economic opportunity for most Nigerians. But realpolitik will probably prevail and the Nigerian government will rely on its armed forces and security services to suppress any armed resistance. For this, Nigeria certainly has the capability and the will. It will just mean a lot more suffering for the people caught between the front lines.

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ON TOPIC

[Psychology: Why Islam Creates Monsters](#) : Nicolai Sennels, *Jihad Watch*, Sept. 27, 2013—Psychopathic people and behaviour are found within all cultures and religions. But one tops them all -- by many lengths. The daily mass killings, terror, persecutions and family executions committed by the followers of Islam are nauseating, and the ingenuity behind the attacks -- always looking for new and more effective ways of killing and terrorising people -- is astonishing.

[Pretending the Problem is not There](#): Douglas Murray, *Gatestone Institute*, Oct. 1, 2013—Is it ever acceptable to tell a lie? If you believe the answer is "no" then this is an area in which you disagree with our political class. The recent terror attack in Kenya -- and the reaction to it -- is only the latest evidence. When it comes to the truth about Islamic violence, our politicians evidently believe the truth is something we, the general public, cannot handle.

[Al-Shabaab Backed by Money from U.S.](#): Peter Bergen and David Sterman, *CNN*, Sept. 29, 2013—After the attack on the Westgate mall in Nairobi, Kenya, substantial attention was given to the some 40 Americans who have traveled to fight for Al-Shabaab in Somalia during the past several years. But much less attention has focused on Al-Shabaab's supporters in the United States who have helped to fund the terrorist group.

[Al-Shabaab and Obama's Family Push For Islamic Kenya](#): Theodore Shoebat, *Front Page Magazine*, Sept. 30, 2013—Both the al-Shabaab terrorists and the Obama family want the nation of Kenya to be under Sharia code. Al-Arab wrote that Obama's cousin, Musa Obama, "studied Sharia in Medina" and has called "upon the Arab and Islamic states to put more effort toward aiding the Kenyan Muslim brethren, especially since there is much support coming from Western nations and Western churches."