



FORWARD-LEARNING Global Security Report



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PROPRIETARY CLASSIFICATION: BUSINESS-IN-CONFIDENCE

FLASH: HUMANITARIAN DISASTER CONSUMES SOMALIA

Nine million people in the Horn of Africa are in jeopardy, a full-blown famine has been assessed (although not official declared by the U.N.), and the catastrophe stretches across 208,000 square miles, encompassing four nations. Both Somali pirates and Islamist insurgents contributed substantially to tipping the region into this calamity. **We predict they will wreak more havoc as the international community comes to grips with the fact that aid must be delivered far inland to save millions of lives in a theater of conflict, deceit, clan rivalry and unbridled war.**



The Horn of Africa is suffering from its worst drought in 60 years. Rain has consistently failed for the last two years, putting millions at risk. “Children just die in your hands,” Dr. Christopher Karisa told BBC in the impossibly overcrowded Somali refugee camp in Dadaab in Kenya’s North West Province. “You see life just slipping away through your fingers.” **Built for 90,000, Dadaab is now home to 350,000.** An estimated 1,300 new refugees arrive there each day, most already suffering from malnutrition, Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) or Cholera. Among the worst hit regions are those least accessible from a security standpoint: Central and Southern Somalia – the very areas controlled by AL SHABAAB. **In this full-blown humanitarian crisis, security will play a key role.** Note: BBC reporter Ben Brown is technically correct when he reported that the “United Nations say this is not a famine yet,” but the declaration should be a formality. The FAMINE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM NETWORK associated with the U.N. OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS is already reporting a worst-case “level 5 catastrophe/famine.” **Only politics can kill the formal announcement that Somalia is now engulfed in famine.** (Grab from the BBC.)

In this report, we examine the insurgents’ response to the famine and the crisis itself. **Both have profound impact on the U.S. military and Private Security Companies like OSEN-HUNTER with core competencies in humanitarian issues and the Somali insurgency.**

- **SHABAAB WELCOMES CHRISTIAN HELP ON DROUGHT, BUT ONLY ON “SHABAAB-YWOOD.”** In an unprecedented policy reversal, and one the group presented in the strangest of ways, AL SHABAAB announced Wednesday that it has lifted its ban on humanitarian aid, the one it imposed in August 2009.¹



The “New Humanitarians” of Somalia? **Don’t count on it.** A (Un-marked photo of AL SHABAAB fighters from a Somali source.)

Yesterday, The Lads expressly asked for help from “infidel” agencies, not just “Muslim” ones. Tellingly, they made that announcement to a Somali television outlet they captured a few days ago. Initially at least, they issued no written statement. Instead, AL SHABAAB spokesman Sheikh Cali Maxamuud Raage (*Cali Dheere*) was “interviewed” by the TV station they now control in *Shabeellada Dhexe* (Middle Shabelle administrative region), one we are calling, after “Bollywood” of India, “SHABAAB-ywood.” The Lads posted nothing on their own *Jihadi* sites, at least not initially (although they will soon have to explain themselves to global *Jihadis* at some point). *Cali Dheere’s* brief televised announcement:

Muslimiin iyo Gaaloba qofkasta oo taageero u fidinaaya dadka abaaruhu² saameeyeen waan soo dhaweyneynaa

Paraphrase: “Support of all people, Muslims and infidels, is sought on behalf of drought-stricken people.”

¹ August 2009: In Jubbaland in southern Somalia (*Goboloka Jubbada Hoose*), AL SHABAAB halted the work of four major humanitarian organizations, including MERCY CORPS (U.S.) OXFAM (U.K.) and MUSLIM AID (U.K.) as well as their Somali partner organization, the JUBBA FOUNDATION, accusing them of “illegal acts.” The Lads raided, ransacked and looted a compound operated jointly by the groups in Jamaame, a town about 40 miles north of Kismayo. Among the groups’ “illegal acts:” assisting thousands of children and pregnant and lactating women who required supplemental feeding. At that time in 2009, millions of Somalis were targeted recipients of food aid, and AL SHABAAB ensured they didn’t get it. “AL SHABAAB Diversifies into Dentistry & Fashion.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 09-160 11 August 2009.

² Raage said *Abaaruhu* (“drought”), but this is a *Gasariir* (“severe drought”). It is severe, and the fact they chose the word with lesser impact suggests a few less brain cells in the leadership council of the organization. If you are proposing welcoming “disbelievers” on to Muslim lands controlled by *Salafi/Takfiris*, you want to use the most incendiary language possible. **We expect there will be some back-pedaling soon: “What Sheikh Raage meant to say was ...”**

• **THE TRAJECTORY OF THE TRAGEDY.** The trajectory of this rapidly evolving humanitarian tragedy can be assessed and forecasted with considerable confidence. As the tragedy unfolds, we predict profound impacts for both U.S. and allied naval forces in the Somali basin and Private Security Firms with core competencies in the Horn of Africa insurgency and the protection of humanitarian workers in complex, hostile environments. **As this calamity check-list reveals, there are no known “famine blocks” left un-checked:**

[√] If war ensues and humanitarian aid is denied over a long period of time, rural households will be forced to rely on “own-production” of cereal grains and livestock products both of which are entirely dependent on rainfall. **Check: that has been the history of Somalia since August 2009 when AL SHABAAB banned aid.**

[√] If worst-case assumptions about rainfall made in April (less than 50% of average) are realized, famine will result. **It has proven to be worse than worst-case: rainfall is now less than 30% of average, making 2011 the driest season in Somalia since 1950.**

[√] In a drought-stricken region, an acute emergency is realized when a reputable nutritional analysis finds that (a) malnutrition and (b) Acute Watery Diarrhea are the leading causes of death among children aged 5 and under. **The FOOD SECURITY & NUTRITION ANALYSIS UNIT-SOMALIA assessed that is the case now throughout most of Somalia.**

[√] Regions dip into famine when livestock mortality is high, pastoralists’ livestock can’t be traded for grain in sufficient quantity and grain prices reach impossible heights. **In fact, livestock mortality is as high as 60%, imbalances between livestock-to-cereal grain terms of trade⁵ are severe, and cereal grain prices are at record levels.** In certain regions in Somalia, Maize soared 154% in price from May 2010 to May 2011, Sorghum went up 240% in Baydhabo (or Bay) region⁶ and Sorghum is completely exhausted in Hiraan region.



Leon E. Panetta, the new Secretary of Defense, will have a lot of decisions to make as the administration comes to grips with conditions in Somalia and off-shore. Above, he speaks with CJCS ADM Mike Mullen during his first visit meeting with the Joint Chiefs last week in “The Tank.” The E-ring meeting room won that nickname, because its entranceway is arched, giving the impression you are about to enter a tank. (Public domain photo by MCI Chad McNeeley, U.S.N.)

[√] A malnutrition crisis occurs when the “Global Acute Malnutrition” (GAM) index exceeds 15%, triggering the very highest “stage of alert” for U.N. and humanitarian NGOs. **Malnutrition in Central and Southern Somalia (and Somali-populated refugee centers in**

⁵ Terms of trade (TOT) is a measure of the relative value of one commodity to another. For the Somali pastoralist who tends a flock of goats, the “livestock-to-cereal TOT” will determine if he can buy enough cereal grain to feed his family in exchange for a goat. Nomads see livestock as capital investments, so higher-than-normal livestock sales – precisely what is transpiring in Somalia – are viewed by nutrition analysts as early signs of distress. (Obviously, bringing a poor quality animal to market depresses the Nomads buying power even more.) Because drought kills off animals, their grazing lands and water wells, pastoralists are usually the first to fall in a drought.

⁶ Bay is the home of SHABAAB commander Mukhtar Robow (*Abuu Mansuur*).

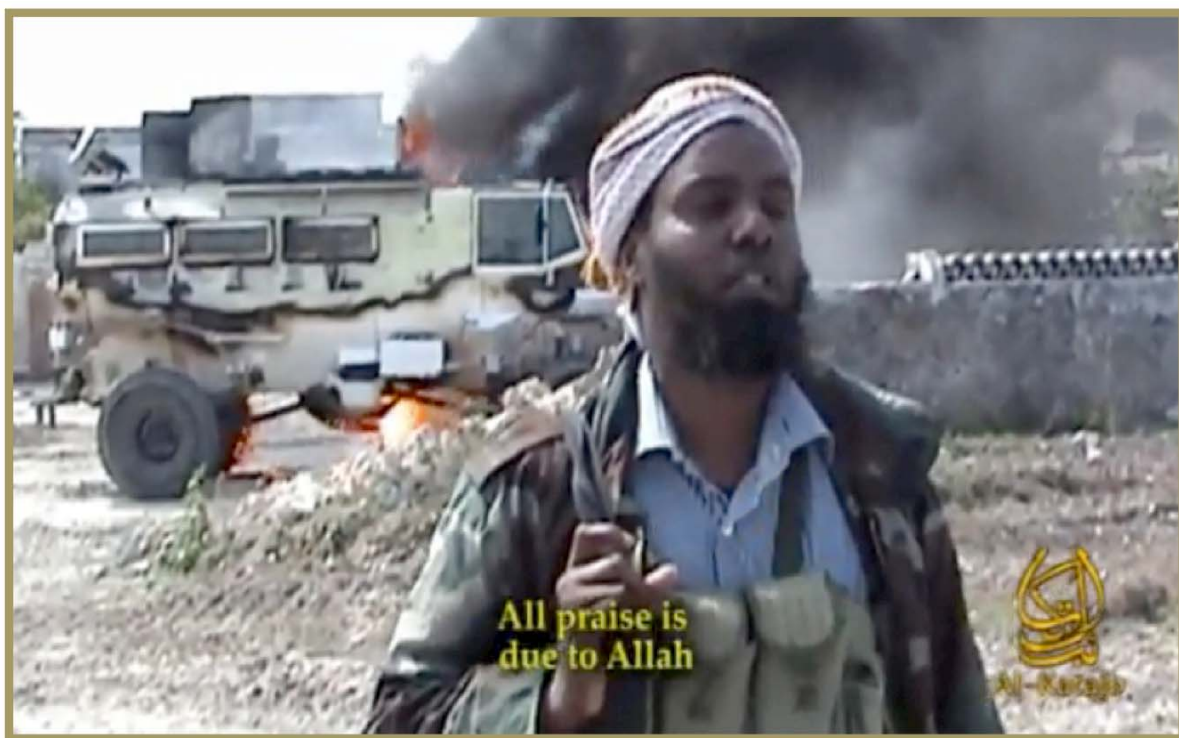
Ethiopia and Kenya) far exceeds the threshold. GAM ranges from a “low” of 22.8 in Kenya’s North West Province (home to the Dadaab refugee camp) to over 30% in Juba.

[√] The numbers of people in need are unfathomable. **Though residing in 4 nations, the impacted population, almost entirely ethnic Somali, numbers 9 million people in need of humanitarian assistance now.**

In 2009, when GAM was inching close to 29% in *one or two regions*, we assessed that unless the food shortage was addressed then, malnutrition alone would ensure Somalia’s instability “from within and for perpetuity.” Two years later, GAM now exceeds 30% *in many regions*, and the nation has been thrown into grinding famine.

For most of Somalia (less Somaliland), the situation has deteriorated from a level 3 “crisis,” sailed passed the level 4 “emergency” to the worst possible humanitarian nightmare: a level 5 “catastrophe/famine.” The impacted region stretches from well inside Kenya and southern Somalia and arches northwest to Ethiopia and Djibouti and northeast through Somalia into the Sanaag, Sool and Bari regions of Puntland. That real estate measures 208,000 square miles. The suffering is continuous and contiguous. **There are no pockets of water, sustenance or health anywhere in that expanse.**

• **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.** In the coming days, at the urging of the INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY FOR DEVELOPMENT, the AFRICAN UNION and the TRANSITIONAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, the U.N. will declare a famine in Somalia. An international coalition led by Italy, the U.K., France and the U.S. will prepare a plan to alleviate suffering by delivering assistance. Aid to refugee camps in Kenya and Ethiopia will be delivered first. **Transport Note: The PORT OF BERBERA in Somaliland will be critical in the effort to deliver aid to refugee camps in land-locked Ethiopia and will be a genuine test of recent efforts to renovate the port by the French firm BALLORE AFRICA LOGISTICS.** BALLORE has the rolling stock (and African expertise) to tie Berbera to Addis Ababa by road, but that \$200 million corridor has faced funding challenges.⁷



The STATE DEPARTMENT and NGOs should get to know the man they will be working with hand-in-glove. SHABAAB spokesman Raage said that The Lads’ NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR DROUGHT will coordinate with all would-be aid providers. The director of that committee is **Sheikh Xuseen Cali Fidow (Xuseen Dayniile), AL SHABAAB political officer.** Fidow is shown above with an AFRICAN UNION APC ablaze behind him in a video produced by AL KATA’IB (“BRIGADES”), The Lads’ media arm. No longer available on YOUTUBE, the July 2010 video featured close-ups of the charred remains of Ugandan soldiers. The narrator explains to the people of Burundi and Uganda that they should “prepare to receive the remains of your sons in coffins.” In the video, Sheikh Fidow encourages Muslims to join AL SHABAAB: “We encourage all Muslims to take part in Jihad. Every day these crusaders face similar defeats....” (Grab from the Jihadi video.)

⁷ “The National Port of Ethiopia’ in Berbera, Somaliland: Progress & Pitfalls.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 11-018 28 January 2011.

The second stage will be trickier, as **elaborate protective security details must be established and fielded to protect aid and safeguard medical teams and workers who must be transported deep inside the Somali interior.** The coalition must mount a considerable narrative campaign to convince Somalis, particularly clan elders, that the effort is aimed solely at alleviating suffering.



Food aid is not delivered in nice, neat MRE-style packages of processed meat and vegetables and passed out to families. Most food aid in liquid form is Corn Soy Blend (CSB) oil and vegetable oil, and the oil is not for frying chicken or sautéing mushrooms but for direct, down-the-hatch consumption. WFP nutritionists recommend CSB, because it is one of the only foods in the food aid package that has high vitamin and mineral content and can be readily digested by the severely malnourished. Vegetable oil is targeted specifically to very young children (small stomachs) who require high-energy-per-volume foods. **The 17,000-ton, 110-TEU⁸ MAERSK ALABAMA was carrying about 4,000 tons of food aid when pirates seized her in 2009. The tank shown above, framed to the proper TEU dimensions, would be off-loaded in Mombasa or Mogadishu, then trucked to a distribution location.** (*Hat Tip to Cap'n Willie Wittich of SEA WOLF MARINE.*)

- **THE INLAND THREAT: AL SHABAAB can be expected to ~~change its policy~~ drop its façade, hijack supplies and kidnap medical teams and security personnel, holding them for ransom.** They will find some reason to “crack down” on the *Gaaloba* (“infidels”). **They need cash.** They must also preserve “face.” It must be AL SHABAAB who, acting as the *Mas’nuulyiinta Wilaayada* (authority for the mini-Caliphates of various regions), provide service to the people, not the dreaded *Saliibiyyinta* (Crusaders).
- **THE THREAT OFF-SHORE.** The Southwest Monsoon⁹ dominates the Somali Basin now, but it will begin to slow in August and more substantially in September. For years, pirates have contributed substantially to starving their countrymen while lining their own pockets by attacking ships involved in the humanitarian effort. **We can predict with complete confidence that pirates will attack aid-bearing ships in this humanitarian effort. History teaches no other lesson: each and every ship on the Mombasa-Somalia leg of the WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME has either been attacked or seized by Somali pirates or is operated by mariners who have been seized and kidnapped by pirates delivering food aid on that transit leg. Every single one.¹⁰ There are no exceptions.¹¹**

⁸ TEU means Twenty-foot Equivalent Units. It is a rough measure of cargo capacity for intermodal transport. One TEU is the carrying capacity of a typical, 20-foot long, 8-foot-wide shipping container of the sort seen aboard trains, trucks and aboard containerhips like MAERSK ALABAMA.

⁹ “Winds, Waves & The Great Whirl.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 11-070 8 June 2011.

¹⁰ “Kenya Begins Anti-Piracy Patrols.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 08-044 14 December 2008. In **this interview on YOUTUBE** from 2008, Juma Myita, Chief Engineer of MV SEMLOW, a WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME ships discusses his experience with pirates. SEMLOW was sea-jacked before EU NAVFOR SOMALIA began routinely escorting each WFP vessel.

¹¹ **Crucial reading:** “Flash: Somali Pirates Attack U.S.-Flagged MAERSK ALABAMA Again.” *FORWARD-LEANING* 09-037 18 November 2009.



In the Gulf of Aden, USS PHILIPPINE SEA (CG 58) responded to a distress call sounded yesterday afternoon (local time) by MV BRILLIANTE VIRTUOSO that the Very Large Crude Carrier was under attack by pirates. The VLCC was about 20 miles southwest of the PORT OF ADEN heading east in the Gulf when pirates attacked. Pirates fired repeated RPG rounds, setting part of the superstructure ablaze. When PHILIPPINE SEA arrived on scene, the crew had abandoned ship and embarked in a life raft.

Assessment: Although not mentioned by the cruiser's operational boss, Commander COMBINED MARITIME FORCES/COMFIFTHFLEET (VADM Mark Fox), the mariners likely locked themselves in a compartment (the "citadel" defense), and PHILIPPINE SEA was fortunately close enough to be on-scene quickly to render assistance. We suspect pirates could not breach the locked compartment's door, so set a fire, hoping to smoke out the mariners or just out of spite. It was not the first time pirates have tried to break into a "citadel,"¹² and it won't be the last. **Counter-Piracy Note: Wind speed off Aden at the time of the attack was only about 10 or 15 knots, not favorable to pirates but not inhospitable either.** That's a big contrast with the wind velocity in the Gulf of Oman (20 knots) and the Somali Basin (30 knots) where the force of the Southwest Monsoon⁹ is strongest. (Public domain photo by Chief Intelligence Specialist Raynald Lenieux, U.S.N.)

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TURN TIGHTER, GO FASTER, LOOK FURTHER™

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¹² The first known failure of the "citadel" defense involved the general cargo ship MV LEOPARD. The Turkish frigate GAZANTIEP (F 490) reached LEOPARD in the Gulf of Oman on 14 January and found the ship abandoned. LEOPARD had radioed its owner, SHIPCRAFT of Denmark, when pirates boarded the ship the previous afternoon. That was the crew's last communication. After securing the main engine, they locked themselves in a compartment. Inexplicably, the ship had disembarked a team of armed guards in the PORT OF SALALAH before venturing into the Gulf of Oman, a sea area that was rapidly becoming a Somali pirate lake. The whereabouts and condition of the crew are still unknown. **"Flash:** Yesterday's Pirate Heist Was Of Another "Mystery Ship" *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 11-010 14 January 2011. The second known failure of the "citadel" defense involved MV BELUGA NOMINATION. Pirates breached the compartment, because naval units were simply not on hand. "Pirates Seize Heavy-Lift Ship After International Navies a No-Show for 2 Days." *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 11-016 25 January 2011. See also: "3rd Ship Thwarts Pirate Attack Thru Safe-Room – When Will Pirates Catch On?" *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 10-151 29 October 2010.