

Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report

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[Article 1](#) **“Examining the Jakarta Attacks: Trends and Challenges,”** by **Scott Stewart and Fred Burton, Stratfor, 22 July 2009.** *The twin suicide bombings in Jakarta on 17 July underscore two tactical trends: the targeting of hotels in terrorist attacks and the use of smaller suicide devices to circumvent physical security measures. During the 1970s the iconic terrorist target became the international airliner. But as airline security increased in response to terrorist incidents, it became more difficult to hijack or bomb aircraft, and this difficulty resulted in a shift in targeting. By the mid-1980s, while there were still some incidents involving aircraft, the iconic terrorist target had become the embassy. However, as embassy security increased hotels have become the iconic terrorist target of the post-9/11 era. Meanwhile, smaller bombs are proving to be effective at killing people because such attacks are easily sustainable, and the only real limiter on a terrorist group’s ability to conduct similar attacks in the future is finding attackers willing to kill themselves in the process.*

[Article 2](#) **“Pakistani Jihadis Deny Osama bin Laden’s Son Killed,”** by **Bill Roggio, Long War Journal, 24 July 2009.** *Taliban and Punjabi militant commanders, who are in close association with Arabs and Al-Qaeda, said that while the U.S. air campaign has hit the terror network hard, Osama bin Laden’s son, Sa’ad bin Laden, was neither killed nor wounded during strikes this year. Speculation regarding the possibility that Sa’ad is dead appears to be driven by communications intercepts and rumors from Pakistan’s tribal areas. Despite reports to the contrary, Sa’ad is considered a senior leader in Al-Qaeda. He is the heir to Osama, has been involved in major terrorist attacks, has helped in managing the terrorist organization from Iran, and is a military commander in Al-Qaeda’s paramilitary Shadow Army.*

[Article 3](#) **“Somalia’s Shabaab, Hizbul Islam Seek Merger,”** by **Bill Roggio, Long War Journal, 25 July 2009.** *The two main Islamist terror groups battling the weak Somali government may merge into a single outfit. Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, the leader of Hizbul Islam or the Party of Islam, said he is working to unite his faction with Shabaab, an Al-Qaeda-backed Islamic terror group that has lobbied to join the international terrorist organization. Hizbul Islam was created in January of this year with the merger of four separate Islamic groups. Outside of Mogadishu, the central government wields little control. Shabaab and Hizbul Islam currently control all of the southern and many of Somalia’s central provinces, as well as much of Mogadishu. A merger between Shabaab and Hizbul Islam would smooth over any command and control problems between the two groups and expand Al-Qaeda’s influence in the Somali jihad.*

[Article 4](#) **“Radical Islamists Slip Easily Into Kenya,”** by **Jeffrey Gettleman, New York Times, 22 July 2009.** *A thin, dusty line is about the only thing separating Kenya from the Shabaab, a radical Islamist militia that has taken over much of southern Somalia. Kenya is widely seen as a frontline state against the Islamist extremism smoldering across the Horn of Africa. The creeping fear is that the Shabaab or its foreign jihadist allies will infiltrate Kenya and attack some of the tens of thousands of Westerners living in the country, possibly in a major strike like Al-Qaeda did in 1998. American and British advisers are working closely with Kenyan counterterrorism teams, but the area along the Somali border is known to be a gaping hole.*

[Article 5](#) “Global Trend: The U.S.-Jihadist War,” in “Third Quarter Forecast 2009 (Part 1),” **Stratfor**, 21 July 2009. *The United States is steadily shifting focus away from the dwindling war in Iraq to the next phase of the war in Afghanistan. The extent to which the United States is able to shift gears from the Middle East to South Asia will depend in large part on how the Iraqis manage their own security over the next several months. In Afghanistan, signs of a revised strategy will come to light in the coming quarter as U.S. forces move away from offensive combat operations to traditional counterinsurgency doctrine. In essence, this is the long-haul “hearts and minds” campaign that (thus far) has prevailed in the Washington debate over how to best manage the war in Afghanistan. The strategy has gone into effect, but definitive results will not be seen in the third quarter. Meanwhile, while struggling to hold ground in Swat, Pakistani forces will begin focusing on an ongoing offensive in South Waziristan, but it will do very little to aid the American war effort in Afghanistan.*

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1. “Examining the Jakarta Attacks: Trends and Challenges,” by Scott Stewart and Fred Burton, **Stratfor**, 22 July 2009 (<http://www.stratfor.com>). [KBTSIndonesia, KBTMJI, KBTTBombs, KBTTSecurity] *We quote:*

On the morning of 17 July, a guest at the JW Marriott hotel in Jakarta came down to the lobby and began walking toward the lounge with his roll-aboard suitcase in tow and a backpack slung across his chest. Sensing something odd about the fellow, alert security officers approached him and asked him if he required assistance. The guest responded that he needed to deliver the backpack to his boss and proceeded to the lounge, accompanied by one of the security guards.

Shortly after entering the lounge, the guest activated the improvised explosive device (IED) contained in the backpack, killing himself and five others. Minutes later, an accomplice detonated a second IED in a restaurant at the adjacent Ritz-Carlton hotel, killing himself and two other victims, bringing the death toll from the operation to nine—including six foreigners.

The twin bombings in Jakarta **underscore two tactical trends that Stratfor has been following for several years now, namely, the targeting of hotels in terrorist attacks and the use of smaller suicide devices to circumvent physical security measures.** The Jakarta attacks also highlight the challenges associated with protecting soft targets such as hotels against such attacks.

[Hotels have improved security since 2004—but they remain vulnerable due to their nature]

During the 1970s the iconic terrorist target became the international airliner. But as airline security increased in response to terrorist incidents, it became more difficult to

hijack or bomb aircraft, and this difficulty resulted in a shift in targeting. **By the mid-1980s, while there were still some incidents involving aircraft, the iconic terrorist target had become the embassy.**

But attacks against embassies have also provoked a security response, resulting in embassy security programs that have produced things like the American “Inman buildings,” which some have labeled “fortress America” buildings due to their foreboding presence and their robust construction designed to withstand rocket and large IED attacks. **Due to these changes, it became far more difficult to attack embassies,** many of which have become, for the most part in our post-9/11 world, hard targets. **(This is certainly not universal, and there are still vulnerable embassies in many places.** In fact, some countries locate their embassies inside commercial office buildings or hotels.)

Overall, however, this trend of making embassies hard targets has caused yet another shift in the terrorist paradigm. As Stratfor has noted since 2004, **hotels have become the iconic terrorist target of the post-9/11 era.** Indeed, **by striking an international hotel in a capital city, militants can make the same type of statement against Western imperialism and decadence that they can make by striking an embassy.** Hotels are often full of Western businessmen, diplomats, and intelligence officers, providing militants with a target-rich environment where they can kill Westerners and gain international media attention without having to penetrate the extreme security of a modern embassy.

Our 2004 observation about the trend toward attacking hotels has been borne out since that time by attacks against hotels in several parts of the world, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Jordan, India, and Egypt. **In addition to attacks against single hotels,** in the attacks in Mumbai, Amman, Sharm el-Sheikh—and now Jakarta—**militants staged coordinated attacks in which they hit more than one hotel.**

Hotels have taken measures to improve security, and hotel security overall is better today than it was in 2004. In fact, security measures in place at several hotels, such as the Marriott in Islamabad, have saved lives on more than one occasion. However, **due to the very nature of hotels, they remain vulnerable to attacks.**

[Extremely expensive to provide a hotel with same level of physical security as an embassy]

Unlike an embassy, a hotel is a commercial venture and is intended to make money. **In order to make money, the hotel needs to maintain a steady flow of customers who stay in its rooms; visitors who eat at its restaurants, drink at its bars, and rent its banquet and conference facilities; and merchants who rent out its shop space.**

On any given day a large five-star hotel **can have hundreds of guests staying there, hundreds of other visitors** attending conferences or dinner events, and scores of other people eating in the restaurants, using the health club, or shopping at the luxury stores commonly found inside such hotels. **Such amenities are often difficult to find outside of such hotels in cities like Peshawar or Kabul, and therefore these hotels also become gathering places** for foreign businessmen, diplomats, and journalists residing in the city, as well as for wealthy natives. **It is fairly easy for a militant operative to conduct surveillance of the inside of a hotel by posing as a restaurant patron or by shopping in its stores.**

Of course, **the staff required to run such a huge facility can also number in the hundreds**, with clerks, cooks, housekeepers, waiters, bellboys, busboys, valets, florists, gardeners, maintenance men, security personnel, etc. **These hotels are like little cities with activities that run 24 hours a day, with people, luggage, food, and goods coming and going at all hours.**

There are emerging reports that one of the suicide bombers in the Jakarta attack was a florist at one of the hotels and it is possible that he used his position to smuggle IED components into the facility among floral supplies. **If true, the long-term placement of militant operatives within the hotel staff will pose daunting challenges to corporate security directors.** Such an inside placement could also explain how the cell responsible for the attack was able to conduct the detailed surveillance required for the operation without being detected.

Quite simply, **it is extremely expensive to provide a hotel with the same level of physical security afforded to an embassy.** Land to provide standoff distance is very expensive in many capital cities and heavy reinforced-concrete construction to withstand attacks is far more expensive than regular commercial construction. **Such costs must be weighed against the corporate bottom line.**

[If attackers were Indonesian it would support theory that Jemaah Islamiyah responsible]

Moreover, **security procedures at an embassy such as screening 100 percent of the visitors and their belongings are deemed far too intrusive by many hotel managers, and there is a constant tension between hotel security managers and hotel guest-relations managers** over how much security is required in a particular hotel in a specific city. In fact, **this debate over security is very similar to the tension that exists between diplomats and security personnel at the U.S. Department of State.**

And the longer the period between successful attacks (there had not been a successful terrorist attack in Jakarta since September 2004 and in Indonesia since October 2005), **the harder it is to justify the added expense—and inconvenience—of security measures at hotels.** (Of course, in very dangerous places such as Baghdad, Islamabad, and Kabul heavy security is far easier to justify, and some hotels in such locations have been heavily fortified following attacks on other hotels in those cities.)

In many places, hotel guests are subjected to less security scrutiny than visitors to the hotel, as the hotel staff seeks to make them feel welcomed, and it is **not surprising that militants in places like Mumbai (and perhaps Jakarta) have been able to smuggle weapons and IED components into a hotel concealed inside their luggage.**

We have received **a report from a credible source indicating that one of the Jakarta attackers had indeed been checked into the JW Marriott hotel.** The source says the attacker, posing as a guest, was **an Indonesian** but was **likely from a remote area because he did not appear to be familiar with how to use modern conveniences** such as the room's Western-style toilet.

That the attackers were Indonesians supports the theory that the attack was conducted by the Southeast Asian group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) or a JI splinter group. JI has conducted (or is a suspect in) every high-profile terror attack in Indonesia in recent years. Sources advise that significant similarities exist between the

unexploded device discovered in the attacker's hotel room in the JW Marriott and known JI explosive devices used in past attacks and recovered in police raids. This is another strong indication JI was involved.

One other important lesson that travelers should take from this string of hotel attacks is that, while they should pay attention to the level of security provided at hotels, and stay at hotels with better security, **they should not rely exclusively on hotel security to keep them safe. There are some simple personal security measures** that should also be taken to help mitigate the risk of staying at a hotel.

[Militants have changed their tactics to adapt to security measures designed to stop them]

As Stratfor has noted since 2005, **the counterterrorism tactic of erecting barricades around particularly vulnerable targets**—including government buildings such as embassies and softer targets such as hotels—**has forced militants to rethink their attack strategies and adapt.** Instead of building bigger and bigger bombs that could possibly penetrate more secure areas, **operational planners are instead thinking small—and mobile.** In fact it was **the October 2005 triple-bomb attacks against restaurants in Bali, Indonesia, by JI, and the November 2005 triple suicide-bombing attacks against three Western hotels in Amman, Jordan, that really focused our attention** on this trend.

Like the 7 July 2005 London bombings, these two attacks in Jakarta and Amman used smaller-scale explosive devices to bypass security and target areas where people congregate. Such attacks demonstrated an evolution in militant tactics away from large and bulky explosives and toward smaller, more portable devices that can be used in a wider variety of situations.

Flexibility provides many options, and **in the case of the operative who attacked the JW Marriott on 17 July, it appears that he was able to approach a meeting of foreign businessmen** being held in the lobby lounge and attack them as a target of opportunity. **A vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) detonated in front of the hotel would not likely have been able to target such a group so selectively on the fly.**

Of course, **this trend does not mean that large VBIEDs will never again be employed** any more than the trend to attack hotels means aircraft and embassies will never be attacked. Rather, **the intent here is to point out that as security has been increased around targets, militants have adapted to security measures designed to stop them and they have changed their tactics.**

[Smaller explosives, suicide bombers are a cheap, sophisticated form of “smart” munition]

At first glance, **it would seem logical that the shift from large VBIEDs would cause casualty counts to drop, but in the case of JI attacks in Indonesia, the shift to smaller devices has, in fact, caused higher casualty counts.** The August 2003 attack against the JW Marriott in Jakarta used a VBIED and left 12 people dead. Likewise, the September 2004 attack against the Australian embassy in Jakarta used a VBIED and killed ten people. The use of three smaller IEDs in the 2005 Bali attacks killed 23, more than JI's 2003 and 2004 VBIED attacks combined. Additionally, the 2005 attacks killed five foreigners as opposed to only one in the 2003 attack and none in the 2004 attacks.

The operatives behind the 17 July attacks surpassed the 2005 Bali attacks by managing to kill six foreigners.

The reason that smaller is proving to be more effective at killing foreigners is that the rule for explosives is much like real estate—the three most important factors are location, location, and location. Though a larger quantity of explosives will create a larger explosion, **the impact of an explosion is determined solely by placement.** If a bomber can carry a smaller explosive into the center of a heavily packed crowd—such as a wedding reception or hotel lobby—it will cause more damage than a larger device detonated farther away from its intended target. **These smaller devices can also be used to target a specific person, as seen in the December 2007 assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.**

A person carrying explosives in a bag or concealed under clothing is much more fluid and can thus maneuver into the best possible position before detonating. In essence, **a suicide bomber is a very sophisticated form of “smart” munition** that can work its way through gaps in security and successfully seek its target. This type of guidance appears to have worked very effectively in **the 17 July Jakarta attacks.** As noted above, **of the seven victims in this attack** (the nine total deaths included the bombers), **six were foreigners. JI has received criticism from the Islamist community in Indonesia for killing innocent bystanders (and Muslims) and such targeted attacks will help mute such criticism.**

In addition to being more efficient, **smaller IEDs also are cheaper to make.** In an environment where explosive material is difficult to obtain, it is far easier to assemble the material for two or three small devices than the hundreds of pounds required for a large VBIED. **An attack like the 17 July one in Jakarta could have been conducted at a very low cost, probably not more than a few thousand dollars. The three devices employed in that attack** (as noted above, there was a third device left in the hotel room that did not explode) **likely did not require much more than 60 pounds of explosive material.**

[Only real limit on group conducting future attacks is ability to find suicide bombers]

This economical approach to terrorism is a distinct advantage for a militant group like Noordin Mohammad Top’s faction of JI, Tanzim Qaedat al-Jihad. Due to the Indonesian government’s crackdown on JI and its factions, the Indonesian militants simply do not have the external funding and freedom of action they enjoyed prior to the October 2002 Bali attack. This means that, at the present time, it would be very difficult for JI to purchase or otherwise procure the hundreds of pounds of explosive material required for a large VBIED—coming up with 60 pounds is far easier.

Even though JI is fragmented and its abilities have been degraded since the 2002 Bali attack, a cell like the one headed by Top certainly maintains the ability and the expertise to conduct low-cost, carefully targeted attacks like the 17 July Jakarta bombings. Such attacks are easily sustainable, and the only real limiter on the group’s ability to conduct similar attacks in the future is finding attackers willing to kill themselves in the process.

Perhaps a more significant limiter on their operational tempo will be the law enforcement response to the attack, which could force the cell to go underground

until the heat is off. **It might also be difficult to move operatives and IEDs from safe houses to targets** when there is more scrutiny of potential JI militants.

Increased security at potential targets could also cause the cell to wait until complacency sets in before attacking a less wary—and softer—target. Of course, **the group’s operational ability will also be affected should the Indonesian government capture or kill key operatives like Top and his lieutenants.**

[Hotel staff members, traveling public both have security responsibilities]

From the standpoint of security, **the challenges of balancing security with guest comfort and customer service at large hotels will continue to be a vexing problem, though certainly it would not be surprising to see an increase in the use of magnetometers and X-ray machines** to screen guests and visitors at vulnerable facilities. **This may also include such measures as random bomb-dog searches and sweeps** in areas where dogs are not a cultural taboo.

Additionally, in light of the threat of suicide bombers using smaller devices or posing as guests, or even placing operatives on the hotel staff, **much more effort will be made to implement proactive security measures such as protective intelligence and countersurveillance**, which focus more on identifying potential attackers than on his or her weapons.

Hotel staff members also need to be taught that security is not just the role of the designated security department. Security officers are not omnipresent; **they require other people on the hotel staff who have interactions with the guests and visitors to be their eyes and ears** and to alert them to individuals who have made it through security and into the hotel and appear to be potential threats.

Of course, **the traveling public also has a responsibility not only to look out for their own personal security but to maintain a heightened state of situational awareness** and notify hotel security of any unusual activity.

The foregoing is Article No. 1 (TR394A01) in the **Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report** (TOSIR), No. 394, 30 July 2009, prepared by Interaction Systems Incorporated (isinreports@mindspring.com).

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2. **“Pakistani Jihadis Deny Osama bin Laden’s Son Killed,”** by Bill Roggio, **Long War Journal**, 24 July 2009. [KBTQOverview, KBTQLadenFamily, KBTSPakWT] We quote from http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2009/07/pakistani_jihadis_de.php:

Pakistani terrorists with close links to Al-Qaeda denied that Osama bin Laden’s son was killed in a U.S. airstrike earlier this year. “Taliban and Punjabi militant commanders” who are in “close association with Arabs” told [The News](#) that **while the U.S. air campaign has hit the terror network hard, Osama’s son Sa’ad bin Laden was neither killed nor wounded** during strikes this year.

The commanders did not disclose their names. **“There is no doubt that we lost some of our well-trained and senior people in the U.S. drone attacks in tribal areas, but I can say for sure that Sheikh Osama and his family members were never hurt in any of these strikes,”** one Pakistani Taliban commander said.

[Al-Qaeda typically issues a martyrdom statement for senior leaders killed in battle]

“Had Sa’ad or anybody else of his family been injured or killed anywhere in Pakistan and Afghanistan, at least we would have been aware of that,” a Punjabi extremist leader told the news agency. The Punjabi commander said he is responsible for looking after wounded Arab fighters, and said his friends had recently met with Sa’ad.

“If they [the U.S.] were true in their claim, they should provide accurate information when and where they killed Sa’ad,” the Punjabi commander continued. **The jihadi commanders said Sa’ad was not a senior leader in Al-Qaeda, but then went on to say he is leading Al-Qaeda fighters in battle in Afghanistan.**

U.S. intelligence officials told the Long War Journal on 22 July that it was highly likely that Sa’ad was killed in a strike in Pakistan’s tribal areas earlier this year. The officials would not disclose the location or the date of Sa’ad’s death, nor did they indicate they were in possession of his remains.

Speculation regarding the possibility that Sa’ad is dead appears to be driven by communications intercepts and rumors from Pakistan’s tribal areas. CBS News reported that Sa’ad has not been heard from in months. “Intelligence information suggests Sa’ad bin Laden has not been in communication with anyone for a few months now,” a Western diplomat told CBS News. **But the Pakistani jihadi commanders claimed that bin Laden and his inner circle do not use communications equipment and are careful to mask where they are staying.**

Al-Qaeda has neither confirmed nor denied Sa’ad’s death. **Al-Qaeda typically issues a martyrdom statement for senior leaders and commanders who have been killed in battle.**

[Sa’ad believed to have made key decisions for Al-Qaeda, helped manage group from Iran]

Despite reports to the contrary, Sa’ad is considered a senior leader in Al-Qaeda. Sa’ad is **considered to be the heir to Osama**, has been involved in major terrorist attacks, and is a military commander in Al-Qaeda’s paramilitary Shadow Army.

He is an operational commander who was involved in the 2003 bombings in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, as well as other attacks. He is known to shelter in Iran and move back and forth across the border with Pakistan. **He is reported to have facilitated communications between [Al-Qaeda number two] Ayman al-Zawahiri and Qods Force, the notorious special operations branch of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps,** in September 2008, after the deadly attack on the U.S. embassy in Yemen.

Sa’ad made **“key decisions for Al-Qaeda and was part of a small group of Al-Qaeda members that was involved in managing the terrorist organization from Iran,”** according to the U.S. Treasury report that designated him as a terrorist on 16 January

2009. “As of September 2008, it was possible that Sa’ad bin Laden was no longer in Iranian custody,” the Treasury reported.

Sa’ad is believed to have entered Pakistan’s northwest to meet with Zawahiri in Pakistan sometime in August or early September 2008, according to Mike McConnell, the [former] Director of National Intelligence.

The foregoing is Article No. 2 (TR394A02) in the **Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report (TOSIR)**, No. 394, 30 July 2009, prepared by Interaction Systems Incorporated (isinreports@mindspring.com).

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3. “Somalia’s Shabaab, Hizbul Islam Seek Merger,” by Bill Roggio, Long War Journal, 25 July 2009. [KBTSSomalia, KBTRAfrica, KBTQNetwork] We *quote* from this article from http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2009/07/somalias_shabaab_hiz.php:

The two main Islamist terror groups battling the weak Somali government may merge into a single outfit.

[Hizbul Islam and Shabaab together attacking Somali government, African Union soldiers]

Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, the leader of Hizbul Islam or the Party of Islam, said he is working to unite his faction with Shabaab, an Al-Qaeda-backed Islamic terror group that has lobbied to join the international terrorist organization. Aweys said talks were proceeding and urged followers to continue to fight until they achieve “victory over enemies” of Islam.

Aweys, who is an Al-Qaeda ally and a designated terrorist, made the announcement in front of a large crowd of worshipers in front of the Aba Hureyra Mosque in the Bakaraha market in Mogadishu, according to a report in Maareg. Shabaab, or the Somali Youth Movement, is led by Ahmed Abdi Aw Mohamed, the reclusive spiritual leader who was seriously wounded in an explosion at a Mogadishu safehouse on 17 May.

Hizbul Islam was created in January of this year with the merger of four separate Islamic groups: Aweys’ Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia-Eritrea; Mu’askar Ras Kamboni (the Ras Kamboni Brigade); Jabhatul Islamiya (the Islamic Front); and Anole. Hizbul Islam was formerly led by Sheik Omar Iman Abu Bakar but he was ousted by Aweys earlier this year for being too moderate.

The Ras Kamboni Brigade is a radical Islamist group that was founded by Sheikh Hassan Turki, a former senior leader in the Islamic Courts and its predecessor, al Itihaad al Islamiyah. Turki operates terrorist training camps in southern Somalia and was likely the target of a U.S. airstrike in March 2008.

In late-February Hizbul Islam joined forces with Shahaab in the battle with the African Union peacekeepers that left nearly 50 dead and 300 wounded. The two groups have been relentless in attacking Somali government forces and the African Union peacekeepers stations in the capital.

[Union of Shabaab, Hizbul Islam would give latter better access to Al-Qaeda resources]

Outside of Mogadishu, the central government wields little control. Shabaab and Hizbul Islam currently control all of the southern and many of the central provinces of Lower Jubba, Middle Jubba, Lower Shabelle, Gedo, Bay, and Bakool, as well as much of Mogadishu, while the government only controls a few enclaves. Aweys' very public speech in the Bakaraha market indicates government forces cannot project power beyond the few bases and the presidential palace in the capital. The central Somali districts of Middle Shabelle, Hiran, and Galgadud are considered contested, with the government and allied Islamist groups in nominal control of some areas.

Not only do Shabaab and Hizbul Islam reject the African Union presence in Somalia, the groups also reject President Sharif and his faction of the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia-Djibouti for reconciling with the Somali government. Sharif was the co-leader of the now-defunct Islamic Courts Union with Aweys in 2006 until the Ethiopian invasion ousted the movement in early 2007.

A merger between Shabaab and Hizbul Islam would smooth over any command and control problems between the two groups and expand Al-Qaeda's influence in the Somali jihad.

One recent point of contention between the two groups occurred immediately after the capture of two French security officials by Hizbul Islam fighters at a hotel in Mogadishu. Shabaab and Hizbul Islam almost came to blows after Shabaab demanded the prisoners be handed to them. Aweys eventually relented, saying he handed the French officials to Somalia to avoid a "war" between the groups.

Al-Qaeda has consistently backed the jihad front in Somalia through funding, personnel, and weapons. The union of Shabaab and Hizbul Islam would give the latter better access to resources from the global terror network.

[Shabaab formally reached out, warmly received by Al-Qaeda's leaders in September 2008]

Al-Qaeda has increasingly focused on Somalia as being a major theater in their efforts to drive the West from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, Al-Qaeda's second in command, have included Somalia in their propaganda tapes. Both leaders have urged Somali terrorists to continue the fight. In February of this year, Zawahiri released a videotape congratulating Shabaab for the capture of southern Somalia. He also stated the importance of capturing particular regions in the country, specifically Baidoa.

In September 2008, Shabaab formally reached out to Al-Qaeda senior leadership in an effort to better integrate with the network and its strategic nodes across Africa and the Middle East. The effort came in the form of a 24-minute video that features Kenyan Al-Qaeda operative Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan, who is wanted by the U.S. government for his involvement in the 1998 African embassy attacks and the 2002 Mombasa attacks. Shabaab is formally seeking to join Al-Qaeda. Shabaab's offer to officially join Al-Qaeda was warmly received by bin Laden and Zawahiri. The two groups have yet to merge but maintain close operational and financial ties.

The foregoing is Article No. 3 (TR394A03) in the Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report (TOSIR), No. 394, 30 July 2009, prepared by Interaction Systems Incorporated (isincreports@mindspring.com).

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4. “**Radical Islamists Slip Easily Into Kenya**,” by Jeffrey Gettleman, New York Times, 22 July 2009. [KBTSKenya, KBTSSomalia, KBTRAfrica, KBTQNetwork] We quote from this article from <http://www.nytimes.com>:

Hulugho, Kenya—**A thin, dusty line is about the only thing separating Kenya**, one of the Western world’s closest allies in Africa, **from the Shabaab, a radical Islamist militia that has taken over much of southern Somalia**, beheading detractors, stoning adulterers, and threatening to kill any Americans or Europeans who get in their way.

In most places this line, the official international border, is not even marked, let alone protected. In the village of Hulugho, there is simply a tattered Kenyan flag and a cinderblock schoolhouse with chicken-wire windows. Then a meadow of thorn trees and donkey dung. Then Shabaab country.

[Shabaab penetrating refugee camps and carrying out cross-border attacks in Kenya]

Kenya is widely seen as a frontline state against the Islamist extremism smoldering across the Horn of Africa. Few expect the Shabaab to make good on its threats to march en masse across the border.

But the creeping fear, the one that keeps the security staffs at Western embassies awake at night, **is that the Shabaab or its foreign jihadist allies will infiltrate Kenya and attack some of the tens of thousands of Westerners living in the country, possibly in a major strike like Al-Qaeda did in 1998.**

Last month, Western counterterrorism experts in Kenya sent out text messages warning expatriates to stay away from malls in Nairobi, Kenya’s usually laid-back capital, **because of possible suicide attacks by the Shabaab.** A few weeks later, the group threatened to destroy Nairobi’s “tall, glass buildings.”

The Shabaab has already penetrated refugee camps inside Kenya, according to camp elders, **luring away dozens of young men with promises of paradise—and \$300 each.** **It has carried out cross-border attacks**, kidnapping an outspoken cleric in May from a refugee camp 50 miles inside Kenya.

Last Wednesday, in one of its boldest cross-border moves yet, **a squad of uniformed, heavily armed Shabaab fighters stormed into a Kenyan school in a remote town, rounding up all the children and telling them to quit their classes and join the jihad.** “If these guys can come in with their guns and uniforms in broad daylight,” said one of the teachers at the school, “they must be among us.”

Then on Saturday it happened again: Somali gunmen, widely believed to be with the Shabaab, **stormed the offices of an aid organization and kidnapped three aid workers from a Kenyan border town** before melting back into Somalia.

[Virtually no security along the four hundred-mile Kenyan-Somali border]

American and British advisers are working closely with Kenyan counterterrorism teams, but the area along the Somali border is known to be a gaping hole. “The Kenyans don’t have the skills to close the border, even if they wanted to,” said one Western diplomat, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, citing diplomatic protocol. **“People are very concerned. But on some level, we can’t defend Kenya’s border for them.”** When asked to assess the level of security at the Somali border, the diplomat flatly stated, **“There is no security.”**

The raging war in the country next door, between Somalia’s weak transitional government and the Shabaab, is rapidly becoming a proxy war—with Western arms and money keeping the transitional government alive, while Arab and Pakistani jihadists with links to Al-Qaeda fight for the Shabaab. Late last month, American officials acknowledged that they had shipped 40 tons of weapons to Somalia’s transitional government, a disclosure that has only sharpened the Shabaab’s anti-American sentiments.

Kenyan security forces are now flooding into their borderlands, marching along the shimmering roads and across the unforgiving landscape, their assault rifles slung over their shoulders. **But the 400-mile border is inevitably porous, and Somali-speaking nomads from both countries flow seamlessly back and forth** in diaphanous shawls and worn-out wooden carts. **And the biggest proverbial holes may be in the police officers’ pockets.** Just this month, Transparency International listed Kenya as the most corrupt nation in East Africa. The region’s most corrupt public institution? The Kenyan police.

[Somali businessmen pay off Kenyan police to allow consumer goods, arms across border]

Even though the border is officially closed, Hassan Mohamed, a refugee who used to build houses in Somalia but got driven out by war, explained how **thousands of Somali refugees find their way into Kenya each month.** “It’s easy,” he said, rubbing his thumb and index finger together in the universal sign of a bribe. **“If you pay, you can come in.”**

The cracked wooden shelves in **the border town markets are heaped with the telltale signs of a flourishing smuggling business:** sacks of Pakistani sugar, foreign brands of sodas and soaps, cigarettes with Somali labels—**all illegal imports from Somalia that somehow made it past the dozen police checkpoints on the Kenyan side.**

Abdi Dimbil Alan, an elder who lives in Alin Jugul, a town near the Somali border, says that **nearly every night he witnesses the same Somali businessmen paying off the Kenyan police to allow consumer goods and even assault rifles to slip through the border.** “These guys are so corrupt,” Mr. Abdi said, referring to the border police, “that if 100 Shabaab pulled up with a truckload of weapons and said they were coming to Kenya to kill the president, the police would let them through—for the right price.”

Erick Kipkorir, **a district officer in Alin Jugul, said Kenyan forces were hard-working and honest.** “We can’t say that nothing is coming in because, as you see, the border is very expansive,” he said. **“But as for bribes, that has never happened.”**

[Somali-speaking areas of Kenya always uneasy fit—Kenya has often responded brutally]

Ever since Al-Qaeda blew up the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, killing more than 200 people and wounding thousands, American counterterrorism officials have been watching East Africa warily. **But in the areas along the Kenya-Somalia border, it seems that anti-Americanism is still spreading, despite the millions of dollars the American government has spent on a hearts-and-minds campaign.**

Take an American-built well in the village of Raya. No one is using it, though Raya is desperately poor and dry. “The Americans wanted to finish us,” said one villager, Ibrahim Alin, **convinced that the American water engineers who built the well had poisoned it to sterilize him.**

The Somali-speaking areas of Kenya have always been an uneasy fit, and Kenya has often responded brutally. This area tried to secede in the 1960s and join Somalia, leading to a guerrilla war. In 1984, Kenyan security forces imprisoned and then killed thousands of ethnic Somali men at a remote airstrip, according to Kenyan human rights groups. **In recent weeks, Human Rights Watch accused Kenyan security services of raping women and smashing the testicles of men during a crackdown in northeastern Kenya in October.** “We’re trying to find a way that when they do deploy,” the Western diplomat said, “they do more helping than hurting.”

The foregoing is Article No. 4 (TR394A04) in the **Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report** (TOSIR), No. 394, 30 July 2009, prepared by Interaction Systems Incorporated (isincreports@mindspring.com).

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5. “Global Trend: The U.S.-Jihadist War,” in “Third Quarter Forecast 2009 (Part 1),” **Stratfor**, 21 July 2009 (<http://www.stratfor.com>). [KBTZIslam, KBTWSummary, KBTKForecasts, KBTSAfghanGW, KBTSPakWT, KBTSIndia] *We quote:*

The United States is steadily shifting focus away from the dwindling war in Iraq to the next phase of the war in Afghanistan. **The extent to which the United States is able to shift gears from the Middle East to South Asia will depend in large part on how the Iraqis manage their own security over the next several months.**

Sectarian tensions in Iraq are already rising as political and energy battles are heating up ahead of the January 2010 parliamentary elections. At the same time, U.S. forces are withdrawing from Iraqi cities and are thus removing a crucial buffer between Iraq’s feuding sects. **Though the United States still has sufficient forces in Iraq to put out sectarian fires that Iraqi security forces may prove incapable of handling on their own, any flare-ups will directly affect the U.S. timetable to pare the 130,000 troops that remain in the country and free up forces for Afghanistan.** Iraq will hold itself together in the coming months, but **the withdrawal process will be difficult and slow.**

In Afghanistan, signs of a revised strategy will come to light in the coming quarter as U.S. forces move away from offensive combat operations to traditional counterinsurgency doctrine, where success is not measured strictly by territory

reclaimed or the number of Taliban militants killed, but rather by the ability of U.S. and NATO forces to protect the local population, build institutions from scratch, and provide enough local governance to deprive the enemy of a viable support base. In essence, **this is the long-haul “hearts and minds” campaign that (thus far) has prevailed in the Washington debate over how to best manage the war in Afghanistan.** The strategy has gone into effect, but **definitive results will not be seen in the third quarter.**

[Tempo of attacks by Afghani Taliban suggest it’s an insurgent force that can mature]

As Stratfor said in our previous quarterly forecast, **there are vast tactical differences between Iraq and Afghanistan**, and a divide-and-conquer approach holds low prospects for success while the Taliban feel little inclination to negotiate with an occupying force that has a limited attention span for such resource- and time-intensive wars. **One of the most critical flaws in the counterinsurgency plan is that it assumes the enemy will provide the space and time for the strategy to yield results.** The Taliban may live in caves, but **they understand the U.S. political sensitivities to war casualties.**

As a surge of 17,000 troops and some 4,000 police trainers into Afghanistan wraps up this quarter to boost security for the August national elections, the media’s attention will focus on U.S.-led military offensives in southwestern Taliban strongholds. The flight of Taliban militants from these areas is not a clear measure of success, however.

The Taliban will not launch their counteroffensive where U.S. troops are concentrated. In the face of overwhelming firepower, **insurgents will withdraw, disperse, and target vulnerable supply lines, patrols, and security outposts** that are expected to increase with the new U.S. strategy.

The increasing tempo and spread of attacks by the Taliban and their Al-Qaeda affiliates in Afghanistan suggest that this is an insurgent force that still has room to mature on the battlefield—which would mean that the full extent of the Afghan challenge has yet to be seen.

Elections in Afghanistan could give the Taliban a symbolic opportunity to carry out attacks and for U.S. and NATO forces to demonstrate some level of public intolerance of Taliban rule, but the overall effect of the elections will be minor. Despite his unpopularity, a lack of credible competition is likely to allow Afghan President Hamid Karzai to retain his position, and **the government that emerges from the election will be no less plagued by internecine rivalry among feuding tribes and warlords than the current one.**

[Pakistan’s Waziristan offensive will do very little to aid U.S. war effort in Afghanistan]

On the other side of the Durand Line, **Pakistani forces are going on the offensive against local Taliban militants** in the country’s northwest. **The irony of the situation is that this renewed vigor in Pakistan’s fight against its former militant proxies is more likely to hamper than help the U.S. counterinsurgency efforts in Afghanistan.**

Stratfor **failed to anticipate the Swat offensive** that was launched in the early part of the second quarter, and forecasted instead that Pakistan would stick to ineffectual deal-making and shy away from military combat to cope with its jihadist problem. **But the**

collapse of a peace deal (just a few days after our last quarterly forecast was published), **the rapid Taliban spread in Swat and surrounding areas in the North-West Frontier Province, and a wave of deadly suicide attacks struck a nerve in Islamabad.** Taliban activity in the northwest periphery is one thing, but any sign of Taliban encroachment in the Punjabi heartland is far too close for comfort in Islamabad's view.

Pakistani forces' ability to hold the territory they have reclaimed in Swat remains in doubt, especially as the Taliban have proven their ability to disperse, regroup, and then return to areas where local governance and security remain dangerously weak and vulnerable.

While struggling to hold ground in Swat, Pakistani forces will begin focusing on an ongoing offensive in South Waziristan. This offensive, however, is **vastly different from the operation in Swat and poses far greater challenges.** The Pakistani objective in this offensive is thus extremely narrow in scope: **to neutralize the network of leading Pakistani Taliban commander Baitullah Mehsud,** who has demonstrated a capability to carry out large-scale attacks well beyond Pakistan's northwest tribal regions.

By focusing on Mehsud, the military is drawing a line in the sand and illustrating the consequences of turning against the state. But the challenges in Waziristan are already mounting, as Mehsud is doing an effective job of bribing and intimidating local tribes into cooperating against the military.

The Waziristan offensive will consume Pakistan's attention in the coming quarter but will do very little to aid the American war effort in Afghanistan. In conducting this offensive, **Pakistani military commanders are sticking to their tradition of distinguishing between "good" and "bad" Taliban.**

Mehsud is on the hit list, but there are still scores of other jihadist groups operating on Pakistani soil that Islamabad continues to view as long-term assets to use against India and to retain influence among Pashtuns in Afghanistan. In Pakistan's mind, the only way to avoid turning every Pashtun against the state is to turn a blind eye to, and occasionally facilitate, jihadist movement into neighboring Afghanistan, **thereby further complicating U.S.-NATO operations in the region.**

[India on alert for jihadist spillover from Pakistan—also dealing with Naxalite insurgency]

For the United States, some action by the Pakistani military is better than no action at all. While Pakistan is engaged in this military offensive, it is more capable of fending off U.S. pressure.

This dynamic makes India especially nervous and will lead to friction between Washington and New Delhi, even if only behind closed doors. Pakistan's preservation of militant assets for use against India is naturally New Delhi's main concern. **Although the Indians have preferred to remain on the sidelines of this conflict** and leave it to the Americans to deal with the Pakistanis, **any slackening of U.S. pressure on Islamabad will mean that Washington will have to spend more time trying to assuage Indian concerns.**

While India remains on alert for jihadist spillover from Pakistan, it is also dealing with other distractions at home. A growing Naxalite insurgency along the eastern belt

of the country is gaining traction and exposing just how unequipped the state is to deal with internal security threats. **And while the ruling Congress party is in a stronger political position after its recent election victory, the party's enhanced political clout will do little to improve India's national security infrastructure** or speed up the country's recovery from the global economic crisis.

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