

# **Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report (TOSIR) No. 413 10 December 2009**

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[Article 1](#) **“Suicide Bombers Assault Mosque in Rawalpindi, Kill 40,”** by **Bill Roggio**, **Long War Journal**, **4 December 2009**. *The Taliban have struck again in the heart of Pakistan’s military garrison city of Rawalpindi. A Taliban suicide assault team estimated at between three to five men entered a mosque in the city and opened fire on the worshippers and detonated their vests, killing 40 and wounding 83 more. The attack killed a senior general and wounded another. The Rawalpindi attack is the latest in a wave of Taliban violence that emerged in the beginning of October. The Taliban have repeatedly attacked their enemies in mosques and other places of worship with suicide bombers having struck in Islamabad, Peshawar, Shangla, Kohat, and Charsadda, and assault teams having targeted police in Lahore and Peshawar as well as the Army General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.*

[Article 2](#) **“A Year after Attacks, Mumbai Is Still Vulnerable: Poor Training, Facilities for Police Considered a Key Security Concern,”** by **Emily Wax**, **Washington Post**, **24 November 2009**. *With militants ascendant in next-door Pakistan and an insurgency worsening in nearby Afghanistan, India’s ability to prevent attacks through intelligence gathering and better policing has never been more vital, security experts and diplomats say. But security experts say Mumbai, India’s largest city and its financial and entertainment capital, remains vulnerable. Officers from dozens of security teams in Mumbai, including paramilitary and newly formed anti-terrorist squads, have been living outdoors, and sleeping on blankets near sensitive posts across this megacity of 20 million. Their meager accommodations have highlighted the gap between what Indian politicians have promised to do to improve security since last year’s attacks and what they have delivered.*

[Article 3](#) **“Al-Qaeda: An Idea, Not a Cult,”** by **Audrey Kurth Cronin**, **Guardian** (**United Kingdom**), **30 November 2009**. *Capturing or killing Osama bin Laden will not end Al-Qaeda’s terrorist campaign. “Decapitation” might have worked in the late-1990s, and it might have worked in the months immediately following the attacks of 11 September 2001, when the speed and symbolism of their deaths would have been extremely powerful. But much has changed since then. Yes, there have been vital tactical and operational gains as a result of taking out Al-Qaeda operatives, but this is not a promising pathway for Al-Qaeda’s demise. If the goal is to end this movement, it would be far more strategically effective to discredit bin Laden and al-Zawahiri publicly, to divide their followers, and to work with the backlash that is already underway.*

[Article 4](#) **“New Jihad Code Threatens Al-Qaeda,”** by **Nic Robertson and Paul Cruickshank**, **CNN**, **10 November 2009**. *From within Libya’s most secure jail a new challenge to Al-Qaeda is emerging. Leaders of one of the world’s most effective jihadist organizations, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), have written a new “code” for jihad which is the result of more than two years of intense and secret talks between the leaders of the LIFG and Libyan security officials. In essence the new code for jihad is exactly what the West has been waiting for: a credible challenge from within jihadist ranks to Al-Qaeda’s ideology. In their new code LIFG’s leaders made it clear that battling extremism will be challenging. But given its credibility and the fact that several other prominent jihadists in the Middle East have turned against Al-Qaeda, the LIFG’s about face may be an important step toward staunching Al-Qaeda’s recruitment.*

[Article 5](#) **“In the Quicksands of Somalia: Where Doing Less Helps More,”** by Bronwyn Bruton, **Foreign Affairs**, November-December 2009. *For the better part of two decades, instability and violence have confounded U.S. and international efforts to bring peace to Somalia. The United States’ efforts since 9/11 to prevent Somalia from becoming a safe haven for Al-Qaeda have alienated large parts of the Somali population, polarized the country’s diverse Islamist reform movement into moderate and extremist camps, and propelled indigenous Salafi jihadist groups to power. The tenuous nature of the various alliances in Somalia means there is no clear horse on which the United States can bet. But the weakness of all the parties is also something of a blessing: it means that the jihadist group, Al-Shabab, is less powerful than is often feared. With no side capable of keeping the peace if it wins the war, the U.S. government, as well as the rest of the international community, should not focus its efforts on backing any one group. It should also forget about grand political projects to create a central government authority. It is time for the United States to adopt a policy of constructive disengagement toward Somalia.*

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1. **“Suicide Bombers Assault Mosque in Rawalpindi, Kill 40,”** by Bill Roggio, **Long War Journal**, 4 December 2009. [KBTSPakWT, KBTQStrategy, KBTZTactics] We *quote* from this article available at [http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2009/12/suicide\\_bombers\\_assa.php](http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2009/12/suicide_bombers_assa.php):

**The Taliban have struck again in the heart of Pakistan’s military garrison city of Rawalpindi.** A Taliban suicide assault team estimated at between **three to five men** entered a mosque in the city and opened fire on the worshippers and detonated their vests, **killing 40 and wounding 83 more.** **The attack killed a senior general and wounded another.**

[Taliban attacking security forces in Pakistani cities in response to military operations]

**Two of the members of the suicide assault team have been killed.** The assault team was not interested in taking hostages or negotiations, according to the Pakistani military. **“They exploded bombs inside the mosque,”** Major General Athar Abbas, the top military spokesman, told AFP. **“They opened fire on the worshippers. . . . There is no hostage situation. Two terrorists have been killed.”** The blasts caused parts of the roof of the mosque to collapse.

**The attack took place in a mosque that is used by Army officers on a day when the mosque is sure to be filled;** Friday is the Muslim day of prayer. **“There were about 200 or 300 worshippers in the hall,”** an eyewitness told AFP. **“Army officials mostly offer their Friday prayers in this mosque.”**

**Major General Bilal Omar Khan, who had served as the commander of the Pakistani Rangers, and the son of the Peshawar Corps commander, were both killed in the attack, according to Samaa [TV]. General Mohammad Yousuf, the retired former Vice Chief of Army Staff, was wounded.**

**The Taliban and allied terror groups have struck at the military and police forces in Pakistan's major cities to counter the ongoing military operations in South Waziristan, Khyber, Arakzai, Kurram, and Swat.**

**[The Taliban have conducted targeted assassinations of senior Pakistani military officers]**

Today's Rawalpindi attack is **the latest in a wave of Taliban violence that emerged in the beginning of October. Suicide bombers have struck in Islamabad, Peshawar, Shangla, Kohat, and Charsadda, and assault teams have targeted police in Lahore and Peshawar as well as the Army General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.** Just two days ago, a suicide bomber detonated outside the gate of the naval headquarters in Islamabad.

**The 10 October assault on Army General Headquarters shut down Pakistan's military command for nearly a day, as hostages were held. The Taliban are reported to have obtained sensitive data from computers and files during that assault. The Taliban have also conducted targeted assassinations of senior military officers.** Two brigadiers have been killed and two more wounded in four separate assassination attempts in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

The Taliban have repeatedly attacked their enemies in mosques and other places of worship. **There have been 19 such attacks in mosques and other Islamic institutions in Pakistan since December 2007, according to information compiled by the Long War Journal.**

**[Attacks at mosques and Islamic institutions in Pakistan since December 2007]**

1. 4 December 2009: **A suicide assault team stormed a mosque in Rawalpindi that is frequented by Army officers, killing 40.**
2. 20 October 2009: **A pair of suicide bombers detonated their vests at Islamabad's International Islamic University, killing five.**
3. 12 June 2009: **A suicide bomber killed five Pakistanis, including anti-Taliban cleric Dr. Sarfraz Naeemi, in an attack on a mosque in Lahore during Friday prayers.**
4. 12 June 2009: **A suicide bomber killed six worshipers and wounded more than 90 in an attack inside a mosque in Nowshera.** The attack collapsed the dome of the mosque.
5. 5 June 2009: **A suicide bomber killed 49 worshipers in an attack on a mosque in a remote village in Dir.**
6. 5 April 2009: **A suicide bomber killed 24 worshipers and wounded more than 100 in an attack outside a Shia religious center in the Chakwal district in Punjab province.**

7. 27 March 2009: **A Taliban suicide bomber killed more than 70 worshipers and wounded more than 125 in an attack at a mosque in the Khyber tribal agency.**
8. 5 March 2009: **An attacker threw a hand grenade into the middle of a mosque in Dera Ismail Khan, wounding 25 worshipers.**
9. 2 March 2009: **A suicide bomber killed six people during an attack at a gathering in a mosque in the Pishin district in Baluchistan.**
10. 20 February 2008: **A suicide bomber killed 32 Pakistanis and wounded more than 85 in an attack on a funeral procession for a Shia elder who was murdered in Dera Ismail Khan.**
11. 5 February 2009: **A suicide attack outside a mosque killed more than 30 Shia worshipers and wounded more than 50.**
12. 22 November 2008: **A bombing at a mosque in Hangu killed five civilians and wounded seven.**
13. 21 November 2008: **A suicide attack on a funeral procession in Dera Ismail Khan killed ten mourners and wounded more than 25.**
14. 10 September 2008: **The Taliban attacked a mosque filled with Ramadan worshipers in the district of Dir in northwestern Pakistan. More than 25 worshipers were killed and more than 50 were wounded.**
15. 19 August 2008: **A suicide bomber killed 29 Shia mourners and wounded 35 after detonating in the emergency ward of a hospital.**
16. 17 June 2008: **Four Pakistanis were killed and three wounded in a bombing at a Shia mosque in Dera Ismail Khan.**
17. 19 May 2008: **Four Pakistanis were killed in a bombing outside a mosque in Bajaur.**
18. 17 January 2008: **A suicide bomber killed ten and wounded 25 in an attack on a Shia mosque in Peshawar.**
19. 28 December 2007: **A suicide bomber detonated in the middle of a mosque in Charsadda in an attempt to kill former Interior Minister Aftab Sherpao as he conducted Eid prayers. More than 50 were killed and more than 200 were wounded.**

The foregoing is Article No. 1 (TR413A01) in the [Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report](#) (TOSIR), No. 413, 10 December 2009, prepared by Interaction Systems Incorporated (isinreports@mindspring.com).

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2. **“A Year after Attacks, Mumbai Is Still Vulnerable: Poor Training, Facilities for Police Considered a Key Security Concern,”** by Emily Wax, [Washington Post](#), 24 November 2009

(<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/23/AR2009112303603.html>).  
[KBTSIndia, KBTSPakWT, KBTZTactics, KBTGStrategies] We *quote*:

**Mumbai, India—When state police reservists from a rural district were summoned to Mumbai to guard two of India’s most prestigious landmarks—the Taj Mahal Palace and Tower and the Gateway of India, a majestic archway that faces the Arabian Sea—they were filled with pride. They would be the protectors of landmarks that were at the epicenter of three days of deadly terrorist attacks last November that killed 165 people.**

**[India’s ability to prevent attacks through intelligence, better policing never more vital]**

**But the young men from Solapaur, located outside Mumbai, never thought they would be homeless, drying their underwear in the humid sea air, and sleeping on blankets rolled out beneath monuments to India’s prosperity. “As police we still have so many problems,” said Manoj, an officer with bloodshot eyes, who asked that his last name not be divulged for fear he would lose his job. “To be frank, we are too scared to speak up.”**

While Manoj, 26, has been living without housing, **officers from dozens of other security teams, including paramilitary and newly formed anti-terrorist squads, have also been living outdoors** near sensitive posts across this megacity of 20 million. Their meager accommodations have **highlighted the gap between what Indian politicians have promised to do to improve security since last year’s attacks and what they have delivered.**

**With militants ascendant in next-door Pakistan and an insurgency worsening in nearby Afghanistan, India’s ability to prevent attacks through intelligence gathering and better policing has never been more vital,** security experts and diplomats say.

This week, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is meeting with President Barack Obama in Washington, where their countries’ partnership on counterterrorism efforts will be atop the agenda. **The Obama administration sees India as a key partner in an unstable region,** said the U.S. ambassador to India, Timothy J. Roemer, **who added that United States would work “shoulder to shoulder” with India to prevent terrorist attacks.**

**[No lack of heroism among India’s police—but there is a lack of training]**

**But security experts say Mumbai, India’s largest city and its financial and entertainment capital, remains vulnerable.** According to the New Delhi Institute of Conflict Management, it has **one of the lowest police-to-people ratios in the world. “In India, the political establishment thinks once you give a speech, the job is done,”** said Kanwar Pal Singh Gill, president of the institute and a former director of police in the northern Punjab state. **“There is no lack of heroism here. But there is a lack of training. Terrorism is a small commander’s war—even training small key groups can help.”**

Police across the country who were interviewed by Human Rights Watch this year repeatedly said they were not trained to combat terrorism, said Meenakshi Ganguly, a

researcher for the organization, which recently released a report detailing India's police deficiencies. That finding, Ganguly suggested, was striking after the attacks last year. **"One year on, even after everyone realized that the attack came from the sea, how do they fix it? By having police sleep out in the open with their underwear drying outside and their guns rusting in the hot air? How is that a country that is taking a threat seriously?"** she said.

**[Indian government has made noticeable efforts to close security gaps over past year]**

**India's home minister, P. Chidambaram, said in an interview in New Delhi that his office is committed to modernizing weapons, improving intelligence gathering and sharing and, most important, focusing on "the bread-and-butter issues of police recruitment and training."**

**The government has made some noticeable efforts to close security gaps. Police from villages have been bused in to help overburdened city police guard shopping malls and government buildings. Luxury hotels have miniature armies of private security guards, extensive baggage screenings, and sandbagged machine-gun bunkers around the premises. India has not suffered an attack since the ones in Mumbai.**

**Officials here also said they are working with the government to find housing for police who have been left homeless; some have already been moved into tents or police stations. "All we can do is try to be better prepared and more alert," said Chidambaram, who has been nicknamed "Mr. Tough" for trying to reform the country's security forces. "On balance, I think we are better prepared today than a year ago. One year down the line, we will be even better prepared."**

**[Indian police lack respect in society as a profession of status and vital importance]**

**Security is especially important at landmarks such as the Taj, where Indian families and tourists flock to take photos and pile into horse-drawn carriages. Crowds also gather to gaze at workers climbing metal scaffolding to repair the Taj Mahal's archways and domes. The hotel, where royalty including the Prince of Wales and rock stars including John Lennon once slept, was set on fire during the attacks. That image became as iconic here as the burning World Trade Center towers were after the 11 September 2001 attacks in New York.**

Critics of India's security efforts say it is shocking that police officers in the area have been forced to sleep outside. Some police officers this week said that although they have been left outdoors, most of their colleagues are in dank housing that typically lacks plumbing. **"There is a deep dehumanization of the police and our workers in general. They are not seen as professions of status, even though we have to realize on some level now how important they could be,"** said Harish Shetty, a psychiatrist who counsels victims of the Mumbai attacks. **"In many ways, we in India expect them to live outside and do their duty, without complaint. But that thinking actually makes their jobs of protecting us impossible."**

Standing near the Gateway of India, Inspector Deepak Dhole, who was injured when he rushed into the Taj during the attacks, said **he wasn't sure what to think of the new forces sleeping outside. "I don't know if it's right,"** said Dhole, looking up at the Taj. **"But at least they are here. That's better than last year."**

The foregoing is Article No. 2 (TR413A02) in the Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report (TOSIR), No. 413, 10 December 2009, prepared by Interaction Systems Incorporated (isincreports@mindspring.com).

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3. “Al-Qaeda: An Idea, Not a Cult,” by Audrey Kurth Cronin, Guardian (United Kingdom), 30 November 2009 (<http://www.guardian.co.uk>). [KBTQOverview, KBTGStrategies, KBTSBritain] Audrey Kurth Cronin is senior research associate in the Changing Character of War program at Oxford University, and author of How Terrorism Ends: Understanding the Decline and Demise of Terrorist Campaigns (Princeton University Press, 2009). We quote:

**Capturing or killing Osama bin Laden will not end Al-Qaeda’s terrorist campaign. While there are ample reasons to pursue Al-Qaeda’s leader, hastening the demise of that terrorist organization, which [British Prime Minister] Gordon Brown and Barack Obama have identified as the highest threat to the national security of Britain and America, is not one of them.**

**[Reducing impact of Al-Qaeda, extremism far bigger challenge than eliminating few people]**

**“Decapitation” might have worked in the late-1990s, when bin Laden and his Egyptian sidekick, Ayman al-Zawahiri, were crucial to catalyzing a global movement. They were indispensable then in deciding to shift the violence away from local Arab governments toward the so-called “far enemy.” And it might have worked in the months immediately following the attacks of 11 September 2001, when the speed and symbolism of their deaths would have been extremely powerful. But much has changed since then.**

**Today’s Al-Qaeda movement bears none of the hallmarks of organizations that have been knocked out by killing their leaders—that is, being strictly hierarchically structured, reflecting a cult of personality, and lacking a viable successor. Al-Qaeda has a mutable structure, with elements of both hierarchy and local initiative. Bin Laden has consciously deemphasized his own fate and spoken openly of a succession plan—Al-Qaeda is not the cult of personality that characterized [Peru’s] Sendero Luminoso or [Japan’s] Aum Shinrikyo, for example. To some degree, his succession plan has already taken place, for we are at least three or four generations into this movement and it’s not at all clear that bin Laden still exercises operational control.**

**That is not to say that targeting Al-Qaeda leaders is utter folly. Drone attacks in Afghanistan and Pakistan have had important tactical benefits, killing operatives who can orchestrate attacks: Al-Qaeda’s number three has been replaced repeatedly in the past few years. But that also highlights the problem: these leaders keep being replaced, and the strategic impact upon Al-Qaeda and the broader region remains to be seen.**

**Using a policy of decapitation may carry with it short-term benefits but longer-term risks, especially if it destabilizes the Pakistani government and brings disparate local factions of the Taliban together with Al-Qaeda. One of the reasons that a narrow counterterrorism approach has been rejected in Afghanistan is because reducing the**

**impact of Al-Qaeda and extremism is now a far bigger challenge than eliminating a few people.**

**[Superior strategy: Discrediting bin Laden, Zawahiri publicly and dividing their followers]**

Indeed, the West may be paying more attention to the fates of bin Laden and al-Zawahiri than are Al-Qaeda's potential recruits. **One of the most important elements of this movement has been its exploitation of the Web, but in the chat houses and Internet sites where violent "jihad" is discussed, other thinkers are increasingly having influence.**

**Many now consider bin Laden and al-Zawahiri old-fashioned, even irrelevant. We must dispassionately consider whether martyring bin Laden would actually increase his influence.**

**The Al-Qaeda movement is widespread but also fractionalized, a fact that suggests both opportunity and danger for Western strategy. The opportunity is the vigorous debate and fundamental areas of contention that are increasingly obvious within: most sharp is the divide between those who consider targeting Muslim civilians to be legitimate and those who do not. There is ample potential for driving a wedge between them—they are doing this themselves.**

**The danger is that our focus on killing the Al-Qaeda leadership has led to strategic myopia, over-concentration of intelligence resources, and a failure to think through second- and third-order effects within a broader constellation.** The primary aim of decapitation should be to discredit the popular mobilization that this movement seeks to catalyze, and it is doubtful that bin Laden and al-Zawahiri remain at the forefront.

Yes, there have been vital tactical and operational gains as a result of taking out Al-Qaeda operatives, [but] this is not a promising pathway for Al-Qaeda's demise. **If the goal is to end this movement, it would be far more strategically effective to discredit bin Laden and al-Zawahiri publicly, to divide their followers, and to work with the backlash that is already underway.**

The foregoing is Article No. 3 (TR413A03) in the **Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report (TOSIR)**, No. 413, 10 December 2009, prepared by Interaction Systems Incorporated (isincreports@mindspring.com).

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**4. "New Jihad Code Threatens Al-Qaeda," by Nic Robertson and Paul Cruickshank, CNN, 10 November 2009** (<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/africa/11/09/libya.jihadi.code>). [KBTSLibyaWT, KBTQStrategy, KBTQNetwork, KBTQStatements, KBTZIslam] *We quote:*

Editors' Note: This story is the result of a **two-year CNN investigative report into peace talks held between the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) and the Libyan government which recently culminated in the LIFG, a militant jihadist group once close to Osama bin Laden, repudiating Al-Qaeda.** "The Jihadi Code," a documentary on the breakthrough against Al-Qaeda in Libya, airs November 15 on CNN.

**[New code for jihad delivers clear rebuke to goals, tactics of bin Laden's terrorist network]**

**Tripoli, Libya—From within Libya's most secure jail a new challenge to Al-Qaeda is emerging. Leaders of one of the world's most effective jihadist organizations, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), have written a new "code" for jihad. The LIFG says it now views the armed struggle it waged against Colonel Moammar Gadhafi's regime for two decades as illegal under Islamic law.**

**The new code, a 417-page religious document entitled "Corrective Studies," is the result of more than two years of intense and secret talks between the leaders of the LIFG and Libyan security officials.**

**The code's most direct challenge to Al-Qaeda is this: "Jihad has ethics and morals because it is for God. That means it is forbidden to kill women, children, elderly people, priests, messengers, traders, and the like. Betrayal is prohibited and it is vital to keep promises and treat prisoners of war in a good way. Standing by those ethics is what distinguishes Muslims' jihad from the wars of other nations."**

**The code has been circulated among some of the most respected religious scholars in the Middle East and has been given widespread backing. It is being debated by politicians in the United States and studied by Western intelligence agencies.**

**In essence the new code for jihad is exactly what the West has been waiting for: a credible challenge from within jihadist ranks to Al-Qaeda's ideology. While the code states that jihad is permissible if Muslim lands are invaded—citing the cases of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine—the guidelines it sets down for when and how jihad should be fought, and its insistence that civilians should not be targeted, are a clear rebuke to the goals and tactics of bin Laden's terrorist network.**

**[LIFG never endorsed bin Laden's global jihad, warned him not to attack United States]**

**CNN was given exclusive access to the Abu Salim jail where the code was written to talk to the LIFG prisoners. The jail has a bloody reputation; in 1996 prison guards put down a revolt by allegedly killing more than 1,200 prisoners in less than 24 hours. We also had exclusive access to the story behind the new code from two of its principle architects.**

**When Saif al-Islam al-Gadhafi, the son of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, decided he wanted to open a dialogue with the LIFG he needed to convince them he was genuine so he sought out a former LIFG commander Noman Benotman, who was living in London. The younger Gadhafi convinced Benotman he would free LIFG members from jail if they renounced their long war with the regime. He promised Benotman immunity from prosecution and in January 2007 flew him back to Libya to meet with the LIFG leaders in the high-security Abu Salim jail.**

**Benotman and the other leaders in the LIFG had fought together in Afghanistan in the early 1990s helping the Afghan mujahedeen overthrow the Soviet-backed government in Kabul. During those years they'd come to know bin Laden and many other Al-Qaeda leaders.**

**Although they'd been brothers in arms with bin Laden, the LIFG never merged its operations with Al-Qaeda due to differences in approach.** In particular the Libyan group never endorsed bin Laden's global jihad, preferring to concentrate their attention on overthrowing the Gadhafi regime and replacing it with an Islamic state. From the mid-1990s the LIFG's Afghan-trained fighters waged a fierce insurgency against the Libyan regime.

In a face-to-face meeting in 2000, **Benotman warned bin Laden not to attack the United States because any gains would be outweighed by the inevitable retribution, and undermine his group's efforts in Libya.** By then Libyan security services had arrested many of the group's fighters in Libya.

**[Peace process took several years and many meetings to reach agreement]**

**Despite their differences bin Laden respected the LIFG's leadership.** Indeed, according to Benotman, in the years before 9/11, **bin Laden wanted to use the LIFG's extensive global network for his own ends** but the group refused to put its assets at Al-Qaeda's disposal.

**When Benotman met with the LIFG leaders in January 2007 it was the first time they'd seen him in years.** Some had been in jail for more than a decade. Others were captured in the international dragnet for jihadists thrown out by security services in the wake of 9/11. **They agreed to consider Saif al-Islam's proposal but had demands of their own.** They wanted greater freedoms in jail, the right to consult with their rank and file membership, access to religious research books, and more. **Over time and many meetings the security officials granted most of their demands.**

**Saif al-Islam al-Gadhafi was motivated not just to bring a formal end to the civil war but to put a stop to Al-Qaeda's growing influence in Libya.** As recently as 2006, Al-Qaeda documents captured by U.S. forces in Iraq showed per capita more Libyans than any other Arab nation were joining Al-Qaeda's fight. **The regime's fear was that they'd bring their fight back to Libya.**

In late-2007 as Benotman, the LIFG leadership, and Libya's security officials debated the way forward Al-Qaeda tried to derail the peace process. **Bin Laden's deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri issued a statement declaring the LIFG had joined Al-Qaeda.**

**Benotman fired back an open letter to Zawahiri questioning his credibility.** "I questioned their idea of jihad . . . directly you know. This is crazy, it is not Islamic, and it's against the Sunni understanding of Islam," Benotman told CNN. Zawahiri chose not to respond. **As late as this August, Zawahiri's video statements included praise of LIFG leaders, in what may have been a desperate attempt to head off the condemnation he could see coming.**

Even so progress in the jail was slow. **In April 2009, the talks were nearly derailed when Ibn Sheikh al-Libi, a prominent jihadist, was found hanged in his prison cell.** According to sources familiar with the talks, Saif al-Islam al-Gadhafi feared his death, which some LIFG members considered suspicious, could put the whole process in jeopardy. **He put pressure on prison officials to meet the LIFG's remaining demands,** giving them greater freedom to consult with the rank-and-file.

**[LIFG's about face may be an important step toward staunching Al-Qaeda's recruitment]**

That led the LIFG to start writing their Revisions. **In July 2009, the peace process received a boost when 30 LIFG members living in the United Kingdom**, some of them senior figures in the group, **signed on**. The group's UK members, some of whom were under British government Control Orders because they potentially posed a danger to UK national security, had previously been openly skeptical of the talks.

**In September the new code, the "Corrective Studies," was completed, resulting in scores of lower and mid-level LIFG members being freed.** Moammar Gadhafi's son says **the group's leaders will be released at some point in the future, and will be encouraged to educate and dissuade Libya's youth from going off to fight with Al-Qaeda.**

According to Libyan sources, the British domestic intelligence agency MI5 passed on the Revisions document, after it was published, to a number of individuals subject to Control Orders in the UK. Those sources say **the peace process led to Control Orders being dropped against 11 members of the group living in the UK**, leaving only one Libyan subject to the restrictions. **The process initiated in Tripoli appears to have directly made the West safer.**

**In their new code for jihadists, the LIFG's leaders made it clear that battling extremism will be challenging.** "We have written this book knowing full well that the old motives and ideas which made us take up the armed struggle in the past are still to be found in the hearts and minds of many young Muslims today," they wrote. **"We know there are many issues that might lead them to take the same path; that's why we are offering our advice and guidance to these brothers."**

Given its credibility and the fact that several other prominent jihadists in the Middle East have turned against Al-Qaeda, **the LIFG's about face may be an important step toward staunching Al-Qaeda's recruitment.**

The foregoing is Article No. 4 (TR413A04) in the **Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report (TOSIR)**, No. 413, 10 December 2009, prepared by Interaction Systems Incorporated (isinreports@mindspring.com).

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**5. "In the Quicksands of Somalia: Where Doing Less Helps More," by Bronwyn Bruton, Foreign Affairs, November-December 2009.** [KBTSSomalia, KBTGStrategies, KBTQNetwork] Bronwyn Bruton is an international affairs fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. *We quote* from <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65462/bronwyn-bruton/in-the-quicksands-of-somalia>:

**. . . For the better part of two decades, instability and violence have confounded U.S. and international efforts to bring peace to Somalia.** The international community's repeated attempts to create a government have failed, even backfired. **The United States' efforts since 9/11 to prevent Somalia from becoming a safe haven for Al-Qaeda have alienated large parts of the Somali population, polarized the country's diverse**

**Islamist reform movement** into moderate and extremist camps, and **propelled indigenous Salafi jihadist groups to power.**

[Almost any international action would likely reinforce Somalis' anti-Western posture]

One of these groups, **a radical youth militia known as Al-Shabab**, now controls most of Somalia's southern half and has established links with Al-Qaeda. **The brutal occupation of Somalia by its historical rival Ethiopia from late-2006 to early 2009**, which Washington openly supported, **only fueled the insurgency and infuriated Somalis across the globe.** One of Washington's concerns today is that **Al-Qaeda may be trying to develop a base somewhere in Somalia from which to launch attacks outside the country.**

Another is that **more and more alienated members of the Somali diaspora might embrace terrorism**, too. **Somali nationals were arrested in Minnesota in early 2009** after returning from fighting alongside Al-Shabab, and **in August 2009 two Somalis were arrested in Melbourne** for planning a major suicide attack on an Australian army installation. **The first American ever to carry out a suicide bombing did so in Somalia in October 2008.**

These isolated incidents have generated more hype than they deserve, but they have nonetheless **put the Obama administration in a tough position.** If only to avoid seeming weak in combating terrorism, **it must prevent these threats from escalating, but it is entering the fray at a time when almost any international action in Somalia is likely to reinforce the Somalis' anti-Western posture.**

Alarmingly, **the State Department seems not to realize this or the failures of past policy.** **Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is clinging to the bankrupt strategy of supporting the Transitional Federal Government (TFG)**, Somalia's notional government but really a dysfunctional institution that has failed to garner much support from the population.

[Somalis weary of war but remain highly suspicious of any centralized government]

Barricaded in a small corner of Mogadishu behind a wall of international peacekeepers, **the TFG is incapable of advancing the United States' primary interests: stopping the expansion of extremist forces throughout Somalia and preventing the formation of Al-Qaeda cells, other radical strongholds, and training camps in the country.**

If anything, the TFG's presence in Somalia hurts U.S. goals. **Resistance to the so-called government has united various radical groups** that would otherwise be competing with one another. **These groups and the TFG are now locked in a violent stalemate that is further battering the population, making it more likely that certain corners of Somalia will eventually become hospitable environments for Al-Qaeda.** With 3.8 million people urgently in need of relief, **Somalia has once again become the site of one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.**

. . . [Washington has the] **mistaken belief that state building is the best response to terrorism.** **Because Washington has lacked both the political will and the resources to launch a large enough state-building program, U.S. efforts in Somalia have been inadequate.** Neither Clinton nor the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice,

appears ready to support the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force in Somalia. **Even if enough resources were available, the conditions on the ground mean the approach would be unlikely to work anyway.**

**Somalis may have grown weary of war, but they remain highly suspicious of centralized government.** And they disagree about questions as fundamental as whether a Somali state should be unitary, federal, or confederal; whether the judicial system should be wholly Islamic or a hybrid of sharia and secular law; and whether the northern territory of Somaliland should be granted its long-sought independence. **Efforts to create a central government under such conditions are a recipe for prolonging conflict.**

**[Piracy is a problem of organized crime—not terrorism]**

**Another major problem with Washington’s Somalia policy is that it has not kept pace with important shifts in U.S. thinking about how to confront terrorism. In Afghanistan and Iraq,** for example, General David Petraeus, former U.S. commander in Iraq; General David McKiernan, former U.S. commander in Afghanistan; and David Kilcullen, a counterinsurgency expert, among others—**have successfully steered U.S. counterterrorism strategies away from militarized tactics focused on killing the enemy. They have promoted more integrated, population-centric approaches** that engage traditional local political authorities, civil society, and a wide range of religious actors—**strategies that stand a better chance of reducing the tensions between the United States’ counterterrorism, humanitarian, and stabilization goals.**

**John Brennan,** the president’s assistant for homeland security and counterterrorism, **has said that efforts are under way to develop a new Somalia policy along these lines, but they seem to have been hampered by the lack of an intelligence infrastructure and reliable partners on the ground.**

Both to protect its interests in Somalia and to help the country, **Washington must abandon its hope of building a viable state there and explore new counterterrorism strategies.** Perhaps even more important, **it needs to better understand the exact nature of the threat that Somalia poses to U.S. national security.**

For example, **piracy has flourished not in the country’s anarchic south but in the weakly governed northern regions. And it is a problem of organized crime, not terrorism.** Any links between the pirates and Al-Shabab are profit-motivated, which suggests that even for Al-Shabab, ideology can yield to pragmatism. **The emergence of yet another indigenous jihadist movement in a faraway corner of the world does not merit a militarized response from the United States or its allies,** especially when the absence of reliable intelligence on the ground means that even discrete attacks on terrorist suspects could do more harm than good.

**[United States should adopt a policy of constructive disengagement toward Somalia]**

**The presence of Al-Qaeda operatives in Somalia is alarming,** of course, **but it does not mean that transnational terrorism will necessarily spread. In its previous inroads into Somalia, Al-Qaeda bumped up against Somalia’s xenophobia and its pragmatic, clannish political culture.** In the midst of the United Nations’ invasive state-reconstruction effort **in the 1990s, much of the country fell under the control of Al-Itihaad al-Islamiya, a radical movement with links to Al-Qaeda.** But the Al-Qaeda

**operatives** in the country soon conflicted with recalcitrant nationalist leaders (they considered the locals cowardly for refusing to subscribe to jihad) and **were frustrated by the fractious local Islamists and the harsh living conditions**, according to a West Point study based on intercepted correspondence.

**By the mid-1990s, Al-Itihaad al-Islamiya was essentially defunct. Since then, U.S. intelligence analysts have argued that Somalia is fundamentally inhospitable to foreign jihadist groups.** Al-Qaeda is now a more sophisticated and dangerous creature, but its current foothold in Somalia appears to be largely the product of the West's latest interference. In fact, **the terrorist threat posed by Somalia has grown in proportion to the intrusiveness of international policies toward the country.**

Al-Shabab metamorphosed from a fringe movement opposed to the foreign-backed TFG into a full-blown political insurgency only after the U.S.-supported Ethiopian invasion. **It is time for the United States to adopt a policy of constructive disengagement toward Somalia.** Giving up on a bad strategy is not admitting defeat. It is simply the wise, if counterintuitive, response to **the realization that sometimes, as in Somalia, doing less is better.** . . .

[TFG's real value is providing legitimate facade for international opposition to Al-Shabab]

**There are now two dominant camps in Somalia, the vocally pro-Western Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the vocally radical Al-Shabab.** Although they seem diametrically opposed, **both are alliances of fortune, and the line between them is thinner than is often believed. Both are mostly driven by clannish and economic interests** that often trump ideology in determining allegiances.

**Yet many experts and diplomats, including Secretary of State Clinton, make much of the groups' differences and argue that the TFG is Somalia's "best chance" for peace, a label that has been attached to every Somali government since 2000.**

**The current optimism centers on the designation of a new president, Sheik Sharif Sheik Ahmed,** a Muslim cleric who had been vilified by the State Department when he chaired the [Islamic Courts Union] but was conveniently resurrected as a peacemaker in late-2008, in the run-up to Ethiopia's withdrawal from Somalia. **Sheik Sharif has attempted to position the revamped TFG as a moderate Islamist government,** primarily by promising to implement sharia law. But **his willingness to engage with Ethiopia and the West has hampered his efforts.**

**The TFG has been categorically rejected as a proxy of the West by the bulk of Somalia's armed political opposition, and although it has won some hearts and minds, it has failed to generate much grass roots support.**

**The TFG'S paramilitary forces**—a ragtag cluster of groups beholden to various warlords with posts in the government—**are a shambles.** Even though the United States and its allies have tried to prop up these underpaid forces with ammunition and training, **they, as well as members of the TFG and foreign peacekeepers, have been accused of selling munitions to Al-Shabab for profit—a claim that seems to be substantiated by the precipitous drop in munitions prices on Mogadishu's black market.** Except among hard-liners in Al-Shabab, loyalty is in short supply.

**Even if the TFG were able to control more territory, this would serve little good: the government is simply incapable of governing. The parliament has swollen to an unwieldy 550 members. Most of its members reside safely outside the country, and the remainder are paralyzed by factionalism and infighting;** just getting a parliamentary quorum in Mogadishu requires Herculean support from the United Nations.

The ad hoc addition of Sheik Sharif's Islamist faction to the TFG's clan-based structure, and the parliament's promise to implement some still unspecified form of sharia law, has turned the TFG into a muddle of Islamist and democratic ideologies. **The government's only real value is to provide a legitimating facade for the international community's opposition to Al-Shabab.**

**[Boosting AMISOM's troops won't enable decisive advance against Al-Shabab insurgency]**

**This opposition largely takes the form of the African Union's mission to Somalia, known as AMISOM.** But so far, this effort has been as ineffective as previous international interventions in Somalia. With support from Washington and the United Nations, **the African Union is desperately trying to increase AMISOM'S contingent from 5,000 troops to 8,000 and is arguing that these forces should be free to launch preemptive attacks on Al-Shabab.** In August, Secretary of State Clinton promised to help the African Union increase its supplies of munitions to the TFG forces.

**Like the Ethiopian forces that came before it, AMISOM is widely viewed as a combatant in the conflict and has been accused by the local press and some clan leaders of firing indiscriminately on civilians.** Both Al-Shabab and legitimate authorities among the clans and Mogadishu's local clerics council have called for ousting the troops.

Under these circumstances, **bolstering the AMISOM contingent is a fool's errand. At the height of its occupation of Mogadishu in 2008, the 15,000 forces led by the Ethiopian army made no headway against the Al-Shabab-led insurgency.** A decisive military response against today's more powerful and better-organized radical camp would require far more troops than AMISOM or the TFG could ever muster.

**[Al-Shabab has fractured along both ideological, clan lines as it has gained ground]**

That said, **the radical camp is in no better shape than the TFG. Based in the port city of Kismaayo, it is an awkward coalition of opportunistic clan factions, fundamentalist nationalists, and a few vocal Al-Qaeda supporters** who are committed to the Salafi strand of Islam, control substantial resources sent from the Middle East, and have capitalized on the international hysteria surrounding terrorism.

**Al-Shabab's hold on power, especially its purported control over territory, is weak.** Although it holds sway over much of the country's southern half (except for the central districts of Galgaduud and Hiiraan), **it does not govern so much as occupy territory through a mixture of public relations, manipulation of local clan conflicts, and outright intimidation.**

At the approach of a hostile militia, Al-Shabab often melts into the bush and keeps away until reinforcements arrive. **Its blunt efforts to impose sharia law have irritated clans**

across the country, as have its attempts to ignite local conflicts. Its meddling in Galgaduud, for example, prompted warring Hawiye sub-clans there to form a counterforce of local clans and business factions. **This alliance is often described as a moderate Islamist movement because it has adopted the banner of Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama, an apolitical, nonmilitary organization that represents the practice of Sufi mysticism.** Thanks to the group's heavy reliance on financial and logistic support from the Ethiopian army, **Al-Shabab has already managed to depict it as another proxy of the West.**

**As Al-Shabab has gained ground, it has attracted opportunists and consequently has fractured along both ideological and clan lines.** The inclusion of more pragmatic, nationalist factions, such as **Hizbul Islam**, itself an alliance of convenience, **led by Sheik Hassan Dahir Aweys**, has challenged the dominance of the radical leaders. **Sheik Aweys is a wanted terrorist suspect, but he is distinctly less radical than his counterparts in Kismaayo.** He has periodically appeared open to negotiation with the TFG.

[Al-Qaeda operatives in Al-Shabab as much tactical arrangement as ideological alignment]

**Al-Shabab may be a brutal local political movement, in other words, but it is not a transnational terrorist organization that might one day pose a serious threat to U.S. national security.** It has stirred **only a few hundred true fanatics**—not thousands—and attracted many more thugs, mostly teenage boys. **The disturbing acts of violence that have dominated media reports, including beheadings and amputations and the pulling of gold fillings from the teeth of ordinary Somalis, are often committed by illiterate children** rather than radical leaders.

**There has been little reporting in the West of the fact that a wide majority of Al-Shabab factions have actively cooperated with international humanitarian relief efforts—if only for a fee—and that many of them have publicly condemned terrorist activities and banditry.**

**The presence of Al-Qaeda operatives in Al-Shabab's ranks is indeed alarming, but it is as much a tactical arrangement as an ideological alignment. And the utility for Al-Shabab of having foreign jihadists fighting by its side will decrease as doing so begins to impede the group's hopes of governing Somalia:** many Somalis condemn the presence of foreign fighters in the country on the grounds that they are bound to promote non-Somali values or act like brutal colonizers.

Unless the outsiders learn to adopt nonviolent Sufi Islamic practices, their involvement will not last. **Sheik Muktar Robow, the former spokesperson of Al-Shabab and once a backer of Al-Qaeda, has publicly argued this point.** And in fact, differences of opinion have developed between the radicals in Kismaayo and their Hizbul Islam hosts.

**The tenuous nature of these alliances means there is no clear horse on which the U.S. government can bet.** Both the TFG and Al-Shabab have backers among Somalis, but neither can count on a critical mass. The ostensibly moderate Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama has local supporters, but its factionalism and its dependence on Ethiopia are likely to undermine its capacity to generate a national constituency. No doubt this is a problem for the advocates of state building, who were counting on the TFG to be the solution to anarchy. **But the weakness of all the parties is also something of a blessing: it means that Al-Shabab is less powerful than is often feared.** The implications of this are clear.

With no side capable of keeping the peace if it wins the war, **the U.S. government, as well as the rest of the international community, should not focus its efforts on backing any one group. It should also forget about grand political projects to create a central government authority, which are likely to be futile. . . .**

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