Name: Al-Shabab

Type of Organization:

- Insurgent
- non-state actor
- religious
- terrorist
- transnational
- violent

Ideologies and Affiliations:

- Al-Qaeda affiliated group
- Islamist
- jihadist
- Qutbist
- Salafist
- Sunni
- takfiri
- Wahhabi

Place of Origin:
Somalia

Year of Origin:
1996-1997

Founder(s):
Ibrahim Haji Jaama' Al-Afghani

Places of Operation:
Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti

Overview

Also known as:[1]

- Al Shabab
- Al-Shabaab
- Al-Shabaab al-Islaam
- Al-Shabaab al-Islamiya
- Al-Shabaab al-Jihaad al Shabaab
- As-Saḥāb
- Ash-Shabaab
- Hizbul Shabaab
- Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen (HSM)
- Harakat Shabaab Al Mujahidin
- Mujahideen Youth Movement (MYM)
- Hezb al-Shabaab

- Hisb'ul Shabaab
- Hizbul Shabaab
- Movement of Warrior Youth
- Mujahidin Al-Shabaab Movement
- Shabaab
- The Party of Youth
- The Popular Resistance Movement in the Land of the Two Migrations (PRM)
- The Youth
- Unity of Islamic Youth
- Youth Wing
- Muhajiroon brigade (division made up of foreign fighters)

Executive Summary:

Al-Shabab, or "the Youth," is al-Qaeda's formal affiliate in East Africa. Established in the late 1990s, the Somali-based terror group seeks to establish a fundamentalist Islamic state in the country that it hopes will ultimately expand to

encompass the whole Horn of Africa. Al-Shabab controls much of the southern Somalia region and small pockets in Kenya and Ethiopia along the Somali border. In areas under the group's control, al-Shabab imposes its strict version of sharia (Islamic law), prohibiting activities like listening to music or shaving one's beard. The group predominately conducts attacks targeting the Somali government and the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM).

Following the group's pledge of allegiance to al-Qaeda in 2012, al-Shabab began executing a score of violent attacks in Somalia's neighboring countries, including the September 2013 Westgate Mall attacks in Nairobi, Kenya, which left 68 people dead and 175 wounded. The group is also responsible for the April 2015 Garissa University attacks, wherein five al-Shabab fighters stormed the Kenyan university, killing nearly 150 people. Since then, the group has continued to attempt and conduct terrorist attacks outside of its stronghold in Somalia. In al-Shabab's first attempt to attack Western targets, an assailant detonated a concealed laptop bomb on a Daallo Airlines flight leaving Mogadishu for Djibouti City on February 2, 2016. The explosion, which killed only the attacker, was not strong enough to down the plane. Al-Shabab reportedly killed more than 4,200 people in 2016, making it the deadliest Islamic terror group in Africa. In October 2017, al-Shabab was credited with the worst terror attack in Somalia to date––a truck bomb that killed over 300 people in Mogadishu.[2]

Doctrine:

Al-Shabab's ideology is typically described as a brand of Salafism and Wahhabism that supports takfir, the excommunication of apostates or unbelievers. Though it has stated many goals in the past, the group fights first and foremost to create a fundamentalist Islamic state in the Horn of Africa[3] that would include not only Somalia but also Djibouti, Kenya, and Ethiopia.[4]

Under al-Shabab's strict brand of sharia, stonings, amputations, and beheadings are regular punishment for criminals and apostates. The group violently persecutes non-Muslims and clashes frequently with humanitarian and international aid workers.[5] Out of an estimated 6,000-12,000 fighters as of March 2016, only a small handful are believed to be ethnically non-Somali.[6]

The precursor to al-Shabab is Somali rebel group al-Itihad al-Islami (AIAI), which targeted the Siad Barre military regime during the Somali Civil War in the 1990s. After the Barre regime fell, a younger, more hardline group split from the AIAI, seeking to extend AIAI's mission and establish a "Greater Somalia" ruled under sharia. This group of youths—in Arabic, "al-Shabab"—joined forces with the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in an attempt to enforce sharia throughout Mogadishu. In December 2006, U.S.-backed Ethiopian forces invaded Somalia and drove the ICU out of the capital. Though the majority of the ICU fled to neighboring countries, al-Shabab retreated southward and began organizing attacks against the Ethiopian forces. In this way, al-Shabab transitioned from a rebel group into a guerrilla movement and began seizing territory in central and southern Somalia.[7] Al-Shabab grew from a few hundred fighters in the 2006 to thousands by 2008, as Islamist-nationalist fighters sought to drive out the Ethiopian occupation.[8] Since the end of the Ethiopian occupation in 2008, al-Shabab has continued to its efforts to establish sharia domestically and attack government representatives and African Mission forces, while also adapting its foreign targets from Ethiopia to Kenya following a brief Kenyan invasion in 2011. Al-Shabab views the AMISOM, as well as the Somalia Federal Government, as its primary enemies since they are purportedly influenced by Western countries.[9]

Al-Shabab formally pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda in 2012, though ties between them existed since 2008, when the American-born al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula [1] (AQAP) cleric Anwar al-Awlaki [2] released a statement praising al-Shabab for fighting against the U.S.-backed Ethiopian invasion. In 2010, AQAP deputy leader Said al-Shihri [3] also released a statement encouraging al-Shabab to work with his group in its fight against the United States.[10] Following the pledge of allegiance, some al-Qaeda fighters who trained at camps in Afghanistan moved to Somalia to train members of al-Shabab. The two groups continue to cooperate closely, on everything from indoctrination and basic infantry skills to advanced explosives and assassination training. Al-Shabab and AQAP partake in the transfer of fighters and weapons between Yemen and Somalia. Al-Shabab fighters have been able to obtain new weapons and develop new tactics from AQAP, including the use of laptop explosives and more destructive car bombs.[11] Al-Qaeda reportedly plays an important role in al-Shabab's leadership, with one count reporting that foreigners comprise over half of al-Shabab's executive council

and that the group has embraced globalized rhetoric and propaganda.

Analysts cite the early militant Salafi extremist group al-Itihad al-Islami (AIAI, a.k.a. Unity of Islam) as the precursor to al-Shabab and the incubator for many of its leaders. AIAI peaked in the 1990s after the Siad Barre military regime fell and civil war broke out.[12] A younger, hardline group split from the elder AIAI, seeking to establish a "Greater Somalia" ruled under sharia. This group of youths joined forces with the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), a group of sharia courts, to serve as a governance alternative once they overtook Mogadishu. The combined group was eventually pushed out by Ethiopia. Much of the ICU fled to the south of Somalia and al-Shabab emerged and continued asymmetrical attacks on Ethiopian targets.

This context is important in understanding a key characteristic of the group—it is not monolithic and is prone to internal fissures over strategy and tactics. These conflicts became particularly significant when whole clans broke from al-Shabab in 2008. Reports highlighted increased leadership conflicts over tactics, clan interests, affiliations with al-Qaeda, and policies toward international aid agencies.[13]

Ahmed Abdi Godane [4] eventually triumphed over internal opposition with a series of purges in 2011 and a particularly bloody internal battle in June 2013. One of the implications of Godane's victory is that the core group's doctrine and affiliation seem to have been settled. Though al-Shabab has always had a Salafist jihadist orientation, the group's leadership was once heterogeneous, including nationalist and politically pragmatic figures like Hassan Dahir Aweys and Mukhtar Robow. The al-Shabab that triumphed arose from the extreme fringe, steeped in the takfiri ethos that legitimizes the killing of other Muslims and a recommitment to global jihad and restoration of the Caliphate.[14]

Godane, no longer faced with internal opposition to aligning with al-Qaeda, officially pledged al-Shabab's allegiance to that group in 2012. Afterward, some al-Qaeda fighters who trained at camps in Afghanistan [5] moved to Somalia to train members of al-Shabab. The two groups continue to cooperate closely on everything from indoctrination and basic infantry skills to advanced explosives and assassination training. Al-Qaeda reportedly plays an important role in al-Shabab's leadership, with one count reporting that foreigners comprise over half of al-Shabab's executive council and that the group has embraced globalized rhetoric and propaganda.[15] Out of an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 fighters, 200 to 300 are non-Somali, with a number coming from the Somali diaspora.[16]

Organizational Structure:

Al-Shabab is a hierarchical organization led by its emir ("prince" or "commander") Ahmed Umar Abu Ubaidah [6]. Answering to Abu Ubaidah are a set of regional commanders who manage the group's presence in southern Somalia and Mogadishu, Bay and Bokool, Puntland and Somaliland, and Juba Valley.[17]

Abu Ubaidah has also appointed a Shura council of 10 members who oversee al-Shabab's regional commanders. The council establishes al-Shabab's policy, which is expected to be followed by local administrations within the group's territory.[18] Aiding the Shura council are junior leaders who are in charge of al-Shabab's media branch, law enforcement, and military operations. The group's media branch, al-Kataib (The Brigade), is responsible for producing video recruitment and propaganda content which is then disseminated for international audiences.[19]

The leader of al-Shabab's military operations, previously Abdullahi Haji Da'ud [7],[20] oversees two separate branches, the Jaysh Al-'Usr (army of hardship) and the Jaysh Al-Hisbah (army of morality). Led by regional military leaders, the Jaysh Al-'Usr serves as the group's major external military apparatus. The Jaysh Al-Hisbah functions as the group's religious police force, enforcing sharia in areas of al-Shabab's control.[21]

Financing:

Al-Shabab has had several sources of income throughout its history, including varying degrees of support from the Somali

diaspora, locals, sponsors, and sustained dawa (proselytizing).

Domestically, al-Shabab drew significant revenue from racketeering after seizing the southern port city of Kismayo in 2008. The charcoal trade was essential to the city's economy and the group was able to receive proceeds from exporting charcoal, totaling an estimated $35-50 million annually.[22] Although AMISOM was able to take back Kismayo in October 2012, the United Nations has reported that al-Shabab's illicit charcoal trade has continued in areas under the group's control, such as Barawe, and estimates that profits from this city alone amount to millions of dollars monthly.[23] The United Nations banned charcoal exports from Somalia in 2012. In October 2014, as part of an effort to target al-Shabab's funding, the U.N. Security Council authorized the inspection of ships suspected of carrying Somali charcoal.[24]

According to the U.N., sugar imports grew in late 2012, in connection with the increased production of charcoal, and thereafter increased for transport over the Kenyan border.[25] This cyclical trade, with charcoal exports in return for sugar imports that are eventually sold in Kenya for a lower price, is one way the group has sustained itself, despite losing control of the Kismayo port. Al-Shabab is also able to facilitate cash flows within Somalia through the rise of mobile money transfer companies subject to less scrutiny.[26] The International Crisis Group also reported in 2014 that al-Shabab copes with a volatile financial environment and intermittent cash flow by investing in gold.[27]

After the June 2013 purge of Godane's opposition within the leadership, al-Shabab shifted its attention toward "taxation"—specifically, collecting funds through voluntary support, extortion, and partnership with businesses, humanitarian agencies, and other non-governmental organizations that operate in south-central Somalia.[28] According to the United Nations, al-Shabab has generated up to $100 million per year, from fees levied at ports of entry, taxes on goods, taxes on domestic produce, "jihad contributions," checkpoint fees, and extortion for payments of religious obligation.[29]

Central to al-Shabab's taxation and extortion practices is the use of roadblocks between Baidoa and Mogadishu as well as between Mogadishu and the Lower Shabelle region. Each roadblock along these paths earns al-Shabab $5,000 a day extorting merchants. This money largely comes from money distributed to internally displaced persons (IDPs) by the United Nations and associated aid agencies. The United Nations issues IDPs living in refugee camps in Baidoa cash cards of $80 to $90 a month, which allows them to purchase necessities from merchants traveling from Mogadishu. On their way to and from Baidoa, these merchants are stopped and taxed at al-Shabab roadblocks, thereby unwillingly transferring U.N. funds to the terror group. While the regional Somali government and the United Nations have confirmed these practices, the U.N.'s head of country, Michael Keating, has insisted that most of the aid still reaches IDPs.[30]

Al-Shabab has also reportedly received funding from the governments of Eritrea, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Qatar, and Yemen, the majority of which have denied these claims.[31] Al-Shabab agents have also raised funds internationally. For example, in September 2014, prosecutors in Finland charged four people who allegedly collected "thousands of euros" for al-Shabab between 2008 and 2011.[32] In October 2016, two women in the United States were convicted for organizing a group of women from eight different countries that funded al-Shabab.[33]

Recruitment:

Al-Shabab's recruitment efforts take place primarily within Somalia and Kenya, though its online recruitment strategy has targeted the United States as well.[34]

Staying true to its name, which means "The Youth," al-Shabab seeks to recruit Somali adolescents and young adults.[35] Boys as young as 9 years old have been forced into al-Shabab's ranks.[36] In January 2017, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres estimated that more than half of al-Shabab's fighters may be children. A Somali taskforce recorded the recruitment of 4,213 children—almost all boys—into al-Shabab between April 1, 2010, and July 31, 2016. According to a 2017 U.N. report, children "recruited and used by al-Shabab were victims of or were exposed to other grave violations including killing and maiming during military operations and air strikes targeting al-Shabab, and subjected to arrest and

detention by Somalia security forces."[37]

According to Somali officials, al-Shabab needs younger recruits to replace aging fighters. The group has kidnapped children from schools, forcing others to flee al-Shabab-controlled areas to avoid conscription. In early August 2017 alone, more than 100 children fled from al-Shabab-controlled areas of Somalia for the safety of government-controlled areas of the country. Officials have estimated that more than 500 children have fled their homes to escape conscription into al-Shabab.[38]

Al-Shabab uses children in combat and reconnaissance roles, according to the U.N.[39] A 14-year-old Somali recruit, interviewed by the Institute for Security Studies in September 2014, said, "[W]hen you join, they give you a mobile phone and every month you get $50. This is what pushes a lot of my friends to join." Another member recalled how during his recruitment experience "[P]reachers delivered sermons for hours about destiny and the sweetness of the holy war. They distributed leaflets on Islam [and] showed video recording from other jihadist [sic] in the world."[40]

While al-Shabab recruits males, it has also kidnapped Muslim and Christian women in Somalia and Kenya as sex slaves. The group has forced some girls and women to work in brothels while forcing others into marriages with al-Shabab fighters.[41] Al-Shabab has regularly killed women and girls who refuse forced marriages to al-Shabab fighters.[42]

Al-Shabab has attempted to influence Somali families toward Islamism. The group's Education and Youth Engagement released its own curriculum in early 2017, focusing only on Quran, math, history, and geography.[43] That April, the group released a statement instructing Somali parents to shun public schooling and send their children to Islamic schools. The group warned of "consequences" for parents and teachers who embrace secular education.[44]

Al-Shabab has a sophisticated public relations arm that "includes a Twitter account and video production abilities."[45] The group's use of social media for propaganda has attracted recruits from around the world. Al-Shabab also disseminates recruitment videos dubbed in English and Somali. A video released in 2010 depicts a combatant attempting to recruit young fighters: "So what are you waiting for my brothers, why don't you leap forth for this act of worship? Join us so that we can together fight the forces of kufr [unbelief]…"[46]

Another video includes an English-language rap: "[M]ortar by mortar, shell by shell, only going to stop when they go to hell."[47]

Within Somalia, recruiters infiltrate remote, rural areas and approach potential recruits. There have been accounts of recruiters threatening the lives of Somali Muslim men who initially resist joining the group.[48]

In 2013, Kenyan human rights lawyer Al Amin Kimathi described al-Shabab's recruitment process based on information gathered from interviews with detainees:

"They are given quotations from the Koran, the Hadiths, but they do not have the benefit of a critical mind to look at it in any other context and they trust the people driving them to this. Advantage is taken of the person's feeling of desperation and that is dangerous enough to drive them over the top. They are given the feeling that they are a very important person and that martyrdom is something to aspire to - the anger over their deprivation is lowered to a feeling of comfort, to a point where the only thing they aspire to is a collective action. Whether that action leads to their survival or death that doesn't really matter any more [sic]."[49]

Recruitment in Somalia

Al-Shabab provides social services to increase its support among Somalis, partaking in infrastructure construction and collecting money to be redistributed to the poor.[50] Somali youths are also offered salaries of up to $700 a month for joining the militant group, and promised additional payments if they bring a wife and children. Since 2009, al-Shabab recruiter Sheikh Ahmad Iman Ali has recruited children between the ages of 12 and 16 living in Somalia's impoverished regions.

According to Kenyan authorities, children in those areas reportedly lack basic housing, clothing, and food, which al-Shabab typically provides in exchange for their recruitment.[51] According to one report from 2012 the primary reason that former al-Shabab fighters claimed they joined the militant group was for a religious identity, the lack of education and employment, influenced by family or friends, and the need for a collective identity and a sense of belonging.[52]

Recruitment in Kenya

Al-Shabab recruiters radicalize young Kenyan Muslims—often converts to Islam— with extremist sermons. Personal accounts reveal that recruiters use psychological manipulation to increase enrollment in the terror group. A disillusioned former recruit said that deceased al-Shabab member and radical Kenyan cleric Aboud Rogo Mohammed "used to tell us: 'Instead of sitting in the slum doing nothing, it's better to go to Somalia and fight for your religion, you'll go straight to heaven.'"[53]

Once the recruits are prepared to join al-Shabab, they travel to remote islands off of Kenya's coast, which are only a couple hours away from Somalia by boat. From these islands, radical preachers guide them to their final destination, Somalia.[54]

Recruitment in the United States

U.S. Representative Edward Royce (R-CA), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, warned in late 2013 that "al-Shabab has demonstrated a unique ability to recruit young members of the Somali diaspora in the United States...."[55]

Americans began traveling to Somalia to join al-Shabab in 2007 when the terror group stepped up its insurgency against Somalia's transitional government. Most American fighters for al-Shabab have been radicalized in Minneapolis, Minnesota, home to the largest Somali diaspora in the U.S.

The FBI contends that al-Shabab has made an "active and deliberate attempt" to recruit American fighters in person and over the Internet. A 2011 U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security investigation found that al-Shabab recruiters have used mosques and cafes as meeting places to radicalize and recruit.[56] Alabama native Omar Hammami appeared in several online videos in which he urged foreigners in English to "live the life of a mujahid." Al-Shabab has released a host of other online recruitment videos depicting American foreign fighters.

Training:

Due to the lack of governance in Somalia, al-Shabab has been able to manage specialized training camps with little domestic interference. In addition to a hand-to-hand combat camp in Ras Kiamboni and suicide bombing camps in Elberde and Mogadishu, al-Shabab has managed a hostage training camp in Eel Arfid.[57] Al-Shabab has also recruited women, although they are reportedly sent to training camps for the sole purpose of being taken as brides.[58]

Core al-Qaeda had an influence on al-Shabab training since before al-Shabab formally pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda in 2012. A 2011 report by the U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security found that American recruits were receiving training from senior al-Qaeda operatives, some with ties to al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.[59] Also as of 2011, Pakistani-born al-Qaeda operative Abu Musa Mombasa was reported to be al-Shabab's head of security and training.[60] Under the auspices of core al-Qaeda, the group has increasingly focused on its explosives and suicide-bomber training program.[61]

Today, al-Shabab recruits undergo a six-month training process.[62] According to the FBI, training includes "reading and interpreting the Koran, physical exercise, and weapons handling." Such weapons include AK-47 assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenades.[63] At one graduation ceremony open to media, 300 trainees became members. The new graduates were able to choose which sector of al-Shabab to join. Graduates can sign up for a combat unit, become bomb-makers, or work for the group's security network, the Amniyat. Standout recruits have the special opportunity to join the years-long waiting list for the Istishhadyin unit, the group's suicide brigade.[64]

In September 2014, the U.S. conducted a drone attack on an al-Shabab training camp south of Mogadishu. The attack killed al-Shabab's leader at the time, Ahmed Abdi Godane.[65] In March 2016, another al-Shabab training camp was targeted in a U.S. drone strike north of Mogadishu, which killed over 150 militants.[66] A U.S. strike in June 2017 reportedly destroyed an al-Shabab training camp near Sakow, Somalia, which also functioned as a "key command supply hub," according to the Somali government.[67]

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Key Leaders

Ahmed Umar Abu Ubaida
Al-Shabab emir (leader)

Ahmed Abdi Godane
Emir (commander) - deceased

Mukhtar Robow
Former deputy emir

Ali Mohamed Rage (a.k.a Ali Dhere)
Official Spokesman

Abdiasis Abu Musab
Military operations spokesman

Fuad Mohamed Qalaf (a.k.a Shongole)
Senior member

Ibrahim Haji Jama Mead (a.k.a. Ibrahim al Afghani)
Senior member

Omar Hammami
Key leader and member - deceased

Omar Hammami
Key leader and member - deceased

Al-Shabab

History:

- **December 3, 2019:** U.S. federal investigators are re-upping a $5 million reward related to the capture of a 37-year-old man on the FBI's Most Wanted Terrorist List whom it calls "the highest-ranking U.S. citizen fighting overseas with a terrorist organization."
  The award for information leading to the arrest of Jehad Serwan Mostafa, formerly of San Diego, came as federal prosecutors announced new charges related to his alleged "critical role" in supporting al-Shabab. Source: Kim Bellware, "California man now 'highest-ranking' American fighting alongside al-Shabab terrorists, FBI says," December 3, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/12/03/fbi-renews-million-reward-american-explosives-expert-fighting-with-terrorists-overseas/ [56].

- **November 19, 2019:** The United States launches a drone strike outside the al-Shabab-held town of Kunya Barow in southern Somalia's Lower Shabelle region.
  The strike kills an unidentified senior officer in al-Shabab who had direct ties with al-Qaeda. Source: Abdi Guled, "US military drone strike kills senior al-Shabab official," Associated Press, November 20, 2019, https://apnews.com/5f6aa01b9f38476e9f51636242a9e0b1 [57].

- **October 1, 2019:** Kenyan police raid a suspected extremist hideout in the suburbs of Mombasa.
  The raid kills three men, suspected of planning attacks throughout the city. shoot dead three men suspected of planning militant attacks in the coastal city of Mombasa. It is suspected that the men were members of al-Shabab. Source: Joseph Akwiri, "Kenya says it kills three militants planning attacks in Mombasa," Reuters, October 1, 2019, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-kenya-security/kenya-says-it-kills-three-militants-planning-attacks-in-mombasa-idUSKBN1WG492 [58].

- **July 27, 2019:** A U.S. airstrike kills a key facilitator for al-Shabab in the Golis Mounain region of Somalia.
  Sources: "U.S. air strike kills suspected IS coordinator in Somalia," Reuters, July 28, 2019, https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-somalia-airstrike/us-air-strike-kills-suspected-is-coordinator-in-somalia-idUKKCN1UN0S5 [59].; "U.S. military kills ISIS terrorist in northern Somalia," Xinhua, July 29, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-07/29/c_138265328.htm [60].

- **July 3, 2019:** A court in Kenya sentences al-Shabab militant Rashid Charles Mberesero to life in prison for his role in the 2015 Garissa University College attack, which killed over 148 people.
  His two other accomplices Mohamed Ali Abikar and Hassan Edin Hassan each receive a 41 year sentence. Source: "Garissa University attack: Tanzanian and Kenyans get long sentences," BBC News, July 3, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-48859937 [61].

- **April 24, 2019:** A Kenyan court finds British national Jermaine Grant guilty of possessing bomb-making materials.
  Grant is believed to be a part of an al-Shabab linked cell that planned multiple attacks in December 2011. Source: "Kenyan court finds UK man guilty of possessing explosives," Associated Press, April 24, 2019, https://apnews.com/e6c6cdd6dd2a4f20bd6d59530bea0bef [62].

- **September 15, 2018:** Ethiopia's air force launches strikes against al-Shabab militants in Somalia.
  More than 70 militants are killed in the strikes. Source: "Ethiopian airstrike kills 70 Al-Shabab militants in Somalia: report," Global News, September 15, 2018, https://globalnews.ca/news/4453469/ethiopia-airstrike-al-shabab-somalia/ [63].

- **May 29, 2018:** Federal prosecutors in New York sentence Maalik Alim Jones to 35 years in prison for joining al-Shabab.
  Jones pled guilty in September 2017 to three charges of conspiring to provide material support to al-Shabab, conspiring to receive military training from the terror group, and carrying and using an AK-47 machine gun, rocket-propelled grenades, and other destructive devices. Prosecutors have said that Jones traveled to Somalia in 2011 to train, work, and fight with al-Shabab. Court documents say that he became a member of al-Shabab's specialized fighting force, known as Jaysh Ayman, and fought against Kenyan government soldiers, and that Jones appeared with other al-Shabab fighters in at least two videos recovered from another al-Shabab fighter. Source: Phil Helsel, "Baltimore man gets 35 years for joining Somali terror group," NBC News, May 29, 2018, https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/baltimore-man-gets-35-years-joining-somali-terror-group-n878386 [64].

- **May 23, 2018:** A Nairobi court charges Francis Macharia Karishu, a suspected member of al-Shabab, with planning to attack the Milimani Law Courts among other government buildings.
  Karishu denies three counts of conspiracy to commit a terrorist act and supporting a terrorist group. Source: "Suspected Al-Shabaab member charged in Nairobi court," Richard Munguti, Nairobi News, May 23, 2018, https://nairobinews.nation.co.ke/news/suspected-al-shabaab-member-charged-nairobi-court [65].

- **March 22, 2018:** Somali National Army troops arrest a Kenyan al-Shabab commander in the Gedo region.
  Source: Goldberg, "Kenyan Al Shabaab Commander Arrested By SNA Troops In Gedo Region, 14 AK7 Rifles Recovered," Intelligence Briefs, March 22, 2018, https://intelligencebriefs.com/kenyan-al-shabaab-commander-arrested-by-sna-troops-in-gedo-region-14-ak7-rifles-recovered/ [66].

- **March 20, 2018:** Two al-Shabab recruiters are arrested in Kenya as they attempt to enter Somalia.
  Authorities believe that both men served as key al-Shabab facilitators in Kenya. Source: Calvin Onsarigo, "Two al-Shabaab recruiters arrested on way to Somalia," *Star* (Nairobi), March 20, 2018, https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018/03/20/two-al-shabaab-recruiters-arrested-on-way-to-somalia_c1733163 [67].

- **November 2017:** On November 8, the African Union begins withdrawing its troops from Somalia as part of the U.N. decision to transition security duties to the Somali government.
  On November 17, Somali authorities in the city of Afgooye finish a week-long security operation resulting in the arrest of 19 al-Shabab members including the Afgooye unit leader, Aweis Kadar Ahmed, his secretary, Aweis, and a bomb maker. Sources: Ismail Akwei, "AU starts troop withdrawal from Somalia amid rising al Shabaab attacks," Africa News, November 8, 2017, http://www.africanews.com/2017/11/08/au-starts-troop-withdrawal-from-somalia-amid-rising-al-shabaab-attacks// [68]; "19 Al-Shabaab suspects arrested in Afgooye- Government," Somali Press Online, November 17, 2017, https://somalipressonline.com/19-al-shabaab-suspects-arrested-afgooye-government/ [69].

- **October 31, 2017:** A U.S. drone strike kills more than 100 al-Shabab militants in the Bay region, approximately 200 kilometers northwest of Mogadishu.
  Source: Carla Bab, "US Military: Drone Strike Kills More Than 100 Al-Shabab in Somalia," VOA News, November 1, 2017, https://www.voanews.com/amp/us-says-100-al-shabab-militants-killed-in-airstrike/4128607.html [70].

- **October 14, 2017:** A truck bomb explodes in the center of Mogadishu, killing at least 320 and injuring even more, in Somalia's worst terror attack to date.
  Authorities attribute the attack to al-Shabab. Source: Jason Burke, "Mogadishu truck bomb: 500 casualties in Somalia's worst terrorist attack," *Guardian* (London), October 16, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/15/truck-bomb-mogadishu-kills-people-somalia [9]; Jason Burke, "Mogadishu bombing: al-Shabaab behind deadly blast, officials say," *Guardian* (London), October 16, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/16/mogadishu-bombing-al-shabaab-behind-deadly-blast-officials-say [10].

- **September 2017:** Al-Shabab attacks Somali army bases on September 3 and 11, allegedly killing more than 36 soldiers.
  On September 27, Al-Shabab militants kill the secretary-general of Somalia's national women's organization and the son of the organization's chairwoman in a drive-by shooting in Mogadishu Source: "Al-Shabab attacks Somalia army base," Al Jazeera, September 3, 2017, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/09/al-shabab-attacks-somalia-army-base-170903072842617.html; "Several dead as al-Shabab storms Somali border town," Al Jazeera, September 11, 2017, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/09/dead-al-shabab-storms-somalia-border-town-170911055926717.html "Al-Shabab attacks Somalia army base," Al Jazeera, September 3, 2017, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/09/al-shabab-attacks-somalia-army-base-170903072842617.html; "Several dead as al-Shabab storms Somali border town," Al Jazeera, September 11, 2017, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/09/dead-al-shabab-storms-somalia-border-town-170911055926717.html; Mohamed Olad Hassan, "At Least 7 Killed in Mogadishu Car Bombing," Voice of America, September 28, 2017, https://www.voanews.com/a/somalia-police-say-car-bomb-blast-kills-five-capital/4048297.html.

- **August 13, 2017:** Al-Shabab's deputy leader, Mukhtar Robow, defects to the Somali regional government in the government-controlled town of Hudur. Robow was one of Al-Shabab's founders and most senior leaders.
  Source: "Al-Shabab's Mukhtar Robow surrenders to government," Al Jazeera, August 13, 2017, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/08/al-shabab-mukhtar-robow-defects-government-side-170813141245475.html.

- **August 4, 2017:** Al-Shabab seizes the Somali town of Leego after the Somali military and AMISOM peacekeepers withdraw from the town. Al-Shabab military spokesman Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab tells Reuters, "The town is now under our control."
  Source:

- **July 2017:** On July 13, Al-Shabab fighters attack a government convoy in southeastern Kenya, killing two police officers and a civilian while kidnapping public works official Maryam Elmaawy.
  It is al-Shabab's highest-profile kidnapping in the country to date. Kenyan forces rescue Elmaawy later in the day. On July 30, al-Shabab fighters ambush an African Union convoy on a joint patrol with Somalia forces in Somalia, killing at least 23 AMISOM soldiers and one Somali soldier. The same day, Somali military and allied troops claim to kill senior al-Shabab commander Ali Mohamed Hussein, a.k.a. Ali Jabal. Sources: Tom Odula, "Kenya: 3 dead as extremists kidnap top government official," Associated Press, July 13, 2017, https://apnews.com/5d78cf07e419492a80743a7efc61da7b/Kenya:-3-dead-as-extremists-kidnap-top-government-official [71]; Rodney Muhumuza, "Uganda says al-Shabab kills 12 soldiers in Somalia ambush," Associated Press," July 31, 2017, https://apnews.com/37e02a7fdbea4d4eb070237d951bca83/Uganda-says-al-Shabab-kills-12-soldiers-in-Somalia-ambush [72]; "Twenty-four killed in fighting between Somali, AU troops and al Shabaab, official says," Reuters, July 30, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-attacks-official/twenty-four-killed-in-fighting-between-somali-au-troops-and-al-shabaab-official-says-id USKBN1AF0QG [73]; Aaron Maasho, "Somalia says kills senior al Shabaab commander in raid," Reuters, July 31, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-security-idUSKBN1AG284 [74].

- **June 2017:** A series of al-Shabab bombings across Somalia killing at least 112 people.
  On June 8, al-Shabab gunmen and suicide bombers attack a military base in Af Urur in Somalia's Puntland state, killing 59 people and wounding 38 others. On June 11, U.S. and Somali forces destroy an al-Shabab training base near Sakow, Somalia. According to the Somali government, the base was a "key command and supply hub." On June 14, a car bomb explodes at the gates of the Pizza House restaurant in Mogadishu. Five al-Shabab gunmen storm the restaurant and take customers hostage, ultimately killing 31 and wounding 40. On June 20, an al-Shabab suicide car bomb disguised as a milk delivery van explodes at Wadajir district headquarters in Mogadishu, killing 15 people and wounding 18. Another al-Shabab suicide car bomb explodes at a police station in Mogadishu two days later, killing seven and wounding 12. Sources: Abdi Guled, "Nearly 70 dead in al-Shabab attack on Somalia military base," Associated Press, June 8, 2017, https://apnews.com/463c87ff4f3e436c80bcb9c85867b207/Nearly-70-dead-in-al-Shabab-attack-on-Somalia-military-base [75]; Abdiqani Hassan and George Obulutsa, "umber of dead in al Shabaab attack in Somalia's Puntland rises to 59: officer," Reuters, June 10, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-attack-idUSKBN1910IR [76]; Abdiqani Hassan and George Obulutsa, "Number of dead in al Shabaab attack in Somalia's Puntland rises to 59: officer," Reuters, June 10, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-attack-idUSKBN1910IR [76]; Abdi Guled, "Nearly 70 dead in al-Shabab attack on Somalia military base," Associated Press, June 8, 2017, https://apnews.com/463c87ff4f3e436c80bcb9c85867b207/Nearly-70-dead-in-al-Shabab-attack-on-Somalia-military-base [75]; "U.S. air strike hits al Shabaab, Somalia says base destroyed," Reuters, June 11, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-attack/u-s-air-strike-hits-al-shabaab-somalia-says-base-destroyed-idUSKBN1920RR?il=0 [55]; Abdi Guled, "Car bomb in Somalia capital kills at least 15, police say," Associated Press, June 20, 2017, https://apnews.com/56bf173bcfed45cb89a6936cd34d2d87/Car-bomb-in-Somalia-capital-kills-at-least-15,-police-say [77]; Abdi Guled, "Somali survivors tell of restaurant siege by rebels; 31 dead," Associated Press, June 15, 2017, https://apnews.com/66ab79a75a624fa79e7170cc2901dded/Somali-survivors-tell-of-restaurant-siege-by-rebels;-31-dead [78]; "7 dead in suicide blast at police station in Somalia capital," Associated Press, June 22, 2017, https://apnews.com/a9fd90fc0431409e834e9f976772fd73/7-dead-in-suicide-blast-at-police-station-in-Somalia-capital [79].

- **May 2017:** Al-Shabab claims multiple deadly attacks in Somalia and Kenya against civilian and government targets. On May 8, al-Shabab claims responsibility after a car bomb kills at least five people in Mogadishu. On May 9, al-Shabab fighters attack a military base in Goofgaduud, killing at least seven soldiers. Al-Shabab claims it killed 16 soldiers and captured the entire town of Goofgaduud, which the Somali government does not immediately confirm.
  On May 16, four Al-Shabab gunmen break into the house of Kenyan government official Dekow Abbey Sirat and shoot him dead. The group claims it also killed several of Sirat's bodyguards and took their weapons. On May 24, a car bomb in Mogadishu kills five people and wounds six. Eight Kenyan soldiers are killed in two separate roadside bombings on the Kenyan side of the border. Al-Shabab claims responsibility for all three attacks. On May 31, a Kenyan police armored personnel vehicle runs over an improvised bomb, killing seven officers and one civilian. Al-Shabab claims responsibility. Source:"Somali militant group al Shabaab claims Mogadishu car bomb attack," Reuters, May 8, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somali-blast-al-shabaab-idUSKBN1841YE; Aaron Maasho, "Al Shabaab militants attack Somali army base, killing several soldiers," Reuters, May 9, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-security-idUSKBN185132; Humphrey Malalo, "Al Shabaab gunmen kill official in northern Kenya: police, group," Reuters, May 16, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-kenya-security-idUSKCN18C11V; Feisal Omar, "Al Shabaab bombing in Somali capital kills five, injures six,"

Reuters, May 24, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-blast-idUSKBN18K2AJ; Tom Odula, "Police: 7 officers, 1 civilian killed in bombing," Associated Press, May 31, 2017, https://apnews.com/18b9b0435eb84ddb9d2e7939e343307f/Police:-7-Kenyan-officers,-1-civilian-killed-in-bombing. "Al Shabaab claims bomb attack on Somali police station," Reuters, June 5, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-blast-idUSKBN18W1NL"

- **April 2017:**On April 6, new Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo declares war on al-Shabab. He also offers al-Shabab fighters a 60-day amnesty period. The government offers to provide employment and education to fighters who surrender during this period.
  The group formally rejects the offer and the declaration of war the following day. On April 9, an al-Shabab suicide bomber kills at least 15 people in an attack near a military base in Mogadishu. On April 27, al-Shabab gunmen kill national intelligence officer Mohamud Haji Ali while is his sitting in front of his home in Mogadishu.Source: "Al-Shabab fighters offered amnesty as new Somali president declares war," BBC News, April 6, 2017, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-39513909; Hussein Mohamed, "Somalia's President Declares War on Shabab Militants," New York Times, April 6, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/06/world/africa/somalia-shabab.html?mcubz=0&_r=0; "Al-Shabab dismisses Somali president war declaration," BBC News, April 7, 2017, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-39527226; Connor Gaffey, "Somalia's Al-Shabab Militants Ramp Up Attacks After Rejecting President's Amnesty Offer," Newsweek, April 10, 2017, http://www.newsweek.com/somalia-al-shabaab-farmaajo-581365; "Somalia's al Shabaab kills senior national security officer: police," Reuters, April 27, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-security-idUSKBN17T19Y.

- **January 27, 2017:**Al-Shabab fighters attack a Kenyan military base in the southern Somali town of Kulbiyow near the Kenyan border, killing nine soldiers. The Kenyan military claims to kill 70 militants in repelling the attack.
  Al-Shabab claims it killed dozens of Kenyan troopsSource: Abdi Sheikh and Feisal Omar, "Somalia's al Shabaab says kills dozens of Kenyan troops in raid on base," Reuters, January 27, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-attacks-idUSKBN15B0C9.

- **December 2016:**Al-Shabab militants kill several government officials in Bosasso in Somalia's semi-autonomous Puntland region. On December 15, gunmen shoot Colonel Jama Sahardiid, second deputy commander of Puntland Police forces, outside a restaurant in Bosasso. Sahardiid dies from his wounds the following day.
  On December 20, militants shoot and kill Aden Huruse, an aide in Puntland's presidential palace, at a restaurant in Bosasso. On December 25, gunmen kill military prosecutor Abdikarim Hassan Firdiye as he is getting out of his car outside a restaurant in Bosasso. Source: Abdiqani Hassan and Feisal Omar, "Al Shabaab militants shoot prosecutor dead in Somalia's Puntland," Reuters, December 25, 2016, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-attacks-idUSKBN14E0BJ.

- **August 2016:**Al-Shabab targets Somali government officials in several attacks in Mogadishu, including the Presidential Palace, and several hotels and a restaurant reportedly frequented by Somali officials. At least 22 people are killed.
  Source: "At least seven dead in al-Shabaab attack on Mogadishu restaurant," Telegraph (London), August 26, 2016, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/08/26/at-least-seven-dead-in-gunmen-attack-on-mogadishu-restaurant-cla/;Abdi Sheikh and Feisal Omar, "Car bomb outside Somali President's Palace kills at least 10," Reuters, August 30, 2016, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-blast-idUSKCN1150TV;Feisal Omar, "Death toll from Shabaab attack on Mogadishu hotels rises to 22 – police," MSN, August 31, 2016, http://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/death-toll-from-shabaab-attack-on-mogadishu-hotels-rises-to-22-police/ar-AAii7zd?li=AA4Zpp&ocid=spartandhp.

- **April 2016:**A U.S. drone strike kills senior al-Shabab intelligence official Hassan Ali Dhoore on April 2.
  Al-Shabab conducts multiple attacks against government officials including members of parliament and the Mogadishu mayor's office in separate attacks later in the month.Sources: "Al-Shabab fighters offered amnesty as new Somali president declares war," BBC News, April 6, 2017, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-39513909 [80]; Hussein Mohamed, "Somalia's President Declares War on Shabab Militants," New York Times, April 6, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/06/world/africa/somalia-shabab.html?mcubz=0&_r=0 [81]; "Al-Shabab dismisses Somali president war declaration," BBC News, April 7, 2017, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-39527226 [82]; Connor Gaffey, "Somalia's Al-Shabab Militants Ramp Up Attacks After Rejecting President's Amnesty Offer," Newsweek, April 10, 2017, http://www.newsweek.com/somalia-al-shabaab-farmaajo-581365 [83]; "Somalia's al Shabaab kills senior national security officer: police," Reuters, April 27, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-security-idUSKBN17T19Y [84].

- **March 5, 2016:**A U.S. airstrike hits the al-Shabab training facility of Camp Raso, 120 miles north of Mogadishu, killing approximately 150 fighters.
  U.S. officials believed the fighters completed "training for a large-scale attack" against American and African Union forces.Source: Helene Cooper, "U.S. Strikes in Somalia Kill 150 Shabab Fighters," New York Times, March 7, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/08/world/africa/us-airstrikes-somalia.html [85].

- **February 2016:**Al-Shabab conducts its first attack against Western intelligence agents.
  An al-Shabab militant attempts to bring down a Daallo airbus flight from Mogadishu to Djibouti on February 2, attempting to kill Western and NATO intelligence officials on board. Purported al-Shabab gunmen and a suicide car bomber attack Mogadishu's SYL hotel on February 26, leaving at least 14 dead and others wounded.Sources: "Foreign Travel Advice: Somalia," U.K. Government, accessed September 8, 2016, https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/somalia/terrorism;Robyn Kriel and Susanna Capelouto, "Al-Shabaab claims responsibility for Somalia in-flight jet blast," CNN, February 13, 2016, http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/13/africa/somalia-plane-bomb-al-shabaab/;"Terror attack at Somali hotel leaves at least 14 daed, including 9 civilians," Fox News, February 26, 2016, http://www.foxnews.com/world/2016/02/26/terrorists-storm-hotel-in-somali-capital-extent-damage-unclear.html.

- **January 21, 2016:**Al-Shabab claims responsibility for an attack on a beachfront restaurant in Mogadishu, killing at least 26.
  The terrorist attack—involving suicide bombers and gunmen—lasts for eight hours before Somali security forces are able to restore security.Source: Morgan Winsor, "Somalia Lido Beach Attack: Mogadishu Resident Loses Close Friends In Al-Shabab Violence," International Business Times, January 25, 2016, http://www.ibtimes.com/somalia-lido-beach-attack-mogadishu-resident-loses-close-friends-al-shabab-violence-2276408.

- **December 7, 2015:**The prolific jihadi propagandist and recruiter Mohamed Abdullahi Hassan, a.k.a. "Mujahid Miski," surrenders himself to Somali authorities.
  Miski is a Minnesota man of Somali descent who was wanted by the FBI for providing material support to al-Shabab. Source: Susan Elizabeth Littlefield, "Minn. Man Who Urged Jihad Surrenders In Somalia," CBS Minnesota, December 7, 2015, http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2015/12/07/minn-man-who-urged-jihad-surrenders-in-somalia/.

- **December 2, 2015:** A U.S. airstrike kills senior al-Shabab leader Abdirahman Sandhere along with two other militants in Somalia.
  Source: "US killed al-Shabaab senior leader in Somalia airstrike, Pentagon says," Guardian (London), December 7, 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/dec/07/al-shabaab-leader-killed-airstrike-isis.

- **September 3, 2015:** Al-Shabab launches an attack in southern Somalia against a remote African Union outpost that kills 37 in total, including 25 Somali and 12 Ugandan soldiers.
  Source: Robyn Kriel and Briana Duggan, "Al-Shabaab attack in Somalia kills dozens of AU troops," CNN, September 3, 2015, http://www.cnn.com/2015/09/03/africa/somalia-al-shabaab-attack/.

- **July 15, 2015:** Al-Shabab militants launch coordinated attacks on a stadium housing peacekeepers, as well as two hotels, in Mogadishu. According to police, six civilians and five militants are killed in the attacks.
  Source: "Robyn Kriel, "Al-Shabaab says it is responsible for three Somalia attacks," CNN, July 15, 2015, http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/10/africa/somalia-al-shabaab-attacks/.

- **July 7, 2015:** Al-Shabab kills more than a dozen in an attack on the village of Soko Mbuz near the Kenyan-Somali border weeks before U.S. President Barack Obama's visit to Kenya.
  Source: "Al-Shabaab kills more than a dozen in Kenya attack weeks before Obama visit," Guardian (London), July 7, 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/07/al-shabaab-kills-more-than-a-dozen-in-kenya-attack-weeks-before-obama-visit.

- **April 2, 2015:** Al-Shabab gunmen storm Garissa University in Kenya, killing 148 people. The gunmen specifically target Christian students.
  It is al-Shabab's deadliest attack in Kenya to date. The university reopens nine months later. Source: "Who are Somalia's al-Shabab?" BBC News, December 9, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-15336689; "Kenya's Garissa university reopens after deadly al-Shabab attack," BBC News, January 4, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35221137.

- **January 27, 2015:** Former senior al-Shabab intelligence chief Zakariya Ismail Hersi claims that he has renounced his membership of the extremist group.
  Source: Abdi Guled, "Somalia: Al-Shabab leader says he has quit terror group," Associated Press, January 27, 2015, http://www.bigstory.ap.org/article/f519f587d9ea44b4b596683543e570d1/somalia-al-shabab-leader-says-he-has-quit-terror-group [86].

- **December 30, 2014:** U.S. air strikes kill an al-Shabab leader known as Abdishakur (a.k.a. Tahliil), reportedly head of the group's group's security network, the Amniyat.
  Source: Abdi Sheikh, "UPDATE 2- Al Shabaab leader killed in U.S. air strike in Mogadishu," Reuters, December 30, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/30/usa-somalia-airstrike-idUSL6N0UE2BV20141230 [87].

- **December 25, 2014:** Eight al-Shabab militants storm an African Union (AU) building and kill three Ugandan peacekeepers and a civilian contractor.
  Al-Shabab claims that it killed 14 peacekeepers, explaining that it "targeted the enemies at a time they were celebrating Christmas…." Al-Shabab claims the attack is in retaliation for a U.S. strike that killed Godane. Sources: Abdi Sheikh and Feisal Omar, "Islamist gunmen attack African Union base in Somalia," Reuters, December 25, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/27/us-somalia-security-idUSKBN0K503C20141227 [88]; Omar Nor, Mohammed Tawfeeq, and Susanna Capelouto, "Al-Shabaab: Attack on base was revenge for U.S. airstrike," CNN, December 26, 2014, http://www.cnn.com/2014/12/26/world/africa/somalia-violence/ [89].

- **December 15, 2014:** Al-Shabab attacks a military base in southern Somalia, killing at least 10 soldiers.
  Source: Abdi Sheikh, Feisal Omar, et al, "Islamist rebels kill 10 Somali soldiers in attack on base," Reuters, December 15, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/15/somalia-attacks-idUSL1N0TZ09520141215 [90].

- **December 12, 2014:** Al-Shabab kidnaps Quran teacher Mohamed Hussein near the central Somali city of Bulo Berde.
  Al-Shabab beheads Hussein after he reportedly refuses to obey al-Shabab's order to leave his village. His headless corpse is later found dumped close to his home. Source: Omar Nor, "Al-Shabaab blamed for five beheadings," CNN, December 15, 2014, http://www.cnn.com/2014/12/15/world/africa/somalia-violence/ [91].

- **December 2, 2014:** After identifying non-Muslim workers at a quarry in Kenya, Al Shabab massacres 36 people, most of whom are reportedly "lined up, and shot in the head, at close range" while others are beheaded.
  Source: "Al-Shabab massacres non-Muslims at Kenya quarry," BBC News, last modified December 2, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-30288137 [92].

- **November 22, 2014:** After hijacking a bus heading to Nairobi, Kenya, al-Shabab massacres 28 civilians.
  Al-Shabab reportedly separates "Muslims from non-Muslims by challenging the non-Somali passengers to recite the *shahada*, the Islamic declaration of faith." Nineteen men and nine women are murdered, shot at close range. Source: Tom Odula, "Somalia's al-Shabab kills 28 non-Muslims in Kenya," *Washington Post*, November 22, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/somalias-al-shabab-kills-28-non-muslims-in-kenya/2014/11/22/d7571d5c-7272-11e4-ad12-3734c461eab6_story.html [93].

- **October 19, 2014:** Kenyan and Somali soldiers kill five suspected al-Shabab members.
  The suspects were attempting to cross into Kenya from Ethiopia in a car filled with 220 pounds of explosives and six suicide vests. Source: Tom Odula, "Kenya: 5 suspected bombers killed," Associated Press, October 19, 2014, http://bigstory.ap.org/article/ac07e34b824c485e86e799f998d387c4/kenya-5-terrorists-killed-car-bomb-recovered [94].

- **October 5, 2014:** African Union and Somali troops capture Barawe, a key coastal town 135 miles southwest of Mogadishu and the last of al-Shabab's major strongholds.
  According to the Somali military, al-Shabab militants flee by land and sea. Al-Shabab has used the port to import troops and weapons while exporting millions of dollars' worth of Somali charcoal. Source: Abdi Guled, "Pro-Somali troops secure last al-Shabab bastion," Associated Press, October 5, 2014, http://bigstory.ap.org/article/ff42269eb581420db323295647940620/pro-somalia-troops-secure-last-al-shabab-bastion [95].

- **September 24, 2014:**An Egyptian court sentences telecommunications engineer Mahmoud Abdel Aziz to life in prison for working as a bomb-maker and communications specialist for al-Shabab.
  According to the prosecutor, Abdel Aziz, also known as Hakeem al-Masry, helped al-Shabab communicate with al-Qaeda's affiliate in Yemen, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.Source: "Egypt sentences al-Qaeda member to life," Associated Press, September 25, 2014, http://bigstory.ap.org/article/3b34d0f830b542a388ef3946210c57f0/egypt-sentences-alleged-al-qaida-member-life [96].

- **September 8, 2014:**Al-Shabab pledges allegiance to a new leader, Sheikh Ahmed Umar Abu Ubaida, stating that their enemies would reap the "bitter fruits" of revenge.
  Abu Ubaida comes from a branch of Somalia's Dir clan, originating in the south. Godane was also a member of the clan but from a northern branch. It is suggested that the new leader is related to Godane maternally. Just hours after the pledge, the group claims responsibility for two car bomb attacks that targeted African peacekeepers and a TFG convoy, killing 12 civilians.Sources: Paul Crompton, "Somalia's Islamist al-Shabaab at risk of splintering," Al Arabiya News, September 9, 2014, http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/analysis/2014/09/09/Somalia-s-Islamist-al-Shabaab-at-risk-of-splintering.html [97]; "Al-Shabaab pledge allegiance to new leader," Al Arabiya News, September 8, 2014, http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/2014/09/08/Somalia-s-al-Shabaab-pledge-allegiance-to-new-leader.html [98].

- **September 5, 2014:**The U.S. confirms al-Shabab leader Ahmed Abdi Godane was killed in the September 1, 2014 airstrike.
  Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud calls on al-Shabab to renounce violence and embrace peace.Source: Robert Burns and Lolita C. Baldor, "US confirms death of Somalia terror group leader," Associated Press, September 5, 2014, http://bigstory.ap.org/article/pentagon-confirms-death-somalia-terror-leader [99].

- **September 1, 2014 - September 6, 2014:**On September 1, U.S. airstrikes kill al-Shabab leader Ahmed Abdi Godan in southern Somalia.
  On September 6, al-Shabab reaffirms its allegiance to al-Qaeda and promises revenge for Godane's death. The Somali government braces itself for an undoubtedly violent backlash. Government intelligence reveals that al-Shabab is planning retaliatory attacks. Source: Farouk Chothia, "Ahmed Abdi Godane: Somalia's killed al-Shabab leader," BBC News, September 9, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-29034409; Abdi Sheikh, "Somali Islamist rebels pledge allegiance to new leader," Reuters, September 8, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/08/us-somalia-islamist-idUSKBN0H30CH20140908

- **February 21, 2014:**Following a series of suicide bombings over a few weeks, al-Shabab attacks Somalia's presidential palace with a combination of car bombs and engages in a gun battle with palace guards.
  Fourteen people are killed, including five Somali officials and soldiers and nine attackers. The interior minister confirms that two government officials are among the dead.Source: "Al-Shabab attacks Somali presidential palace," Al Jazeera, February 22, 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/02/somali-presidential-hq-attacked-al-shabab-201422112586270319.html [100].

- **January 1, 2014:**Al-Shabab claims responsibility for a suicide car bombing that kills at least 12 people and injures several others at the Jazeera Hotel in Mogadishu.
  Source: "Al-Shabab claims Somali hotel bombings," Al Jazeera, January 2, 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/01/al-shabab-claim-somali-hotel-bombing-20141292311985982.html [101].

- **November 19, 2013:**Al-Shabab insurgents launch a complex attack against the central police station in Beledweyne, killing 24 Somali police officers and one Djiboutian AMISOM soldier, and injuring several others.
  Source: United Nations Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia," S/2014/140, March 3, 2014, http://unsom.unmissions.org/Portals/UNSOM/SG%20Report%20March%202014.pdf [102].

- **November 8, 2013:**The group attempts to detonate a sophisticated IED embedded in a laptop at Maka al Mukarama, a popular hotel in Mogadishu frequented by high-level government and security officials.
  The attack kills six and injures 15. A secondary VBIED detonates in the parking lot.Source: "Chapter 2. Country Reports: Africa Overview," *Country Reports on Terrorism 2013*, U.S. Department of State, April 30, 2014, http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224820.htm [103].

- **September 21, 2013 - September 24, 2013:**Al-Shabab militants, including a Norwegian citizen of Somali origin and three Somali nationals, raid Westgate Shopping Centre in Nairobi, Kenya.
  In the deadliest attack in Kenya in 15 years, the attackers kill 67 people over four days and wound more than 200 people.Source: Matt Bryden, "The Reinvention of Al-Shabaab: A Strategy of Choice or Necessity," Center for Strategic & International Studies, February 2014, http://csis.org/files/publication/140221_Bryden_ReinventionOfAlShabaab_Web.pdf. [16].

- **September 12, 2013 - November 5, 2013:**Al-Shabab twice targets the convoy of Interim Juba Administration President Ahmed Madobe with a car bomb outside of Kismayo's airport.
  Madobe is slightly injured in the first attack. Civilians are killed in both attacks.Source: "Chapter 2. Country Reports: Africa Overview," *Country Reports on Terrorism 2013*, U.S. Department of State, April 30, 2014, http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224820.htm [103].

- **July 27, 2013:**The group attacks the Turkish embassy housing complex in Mogadishu using a car bomb and small weapons, killing eight and injuring 13.
  Source: "Chapter 2. Country Reports: Africa Overview," *Country Reports on Terrorism 2013*, U.S. Department of State, April 30, 2014, http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224820.htm [103].

- **June 2013:**Al-Shabab's bloodiest internal battle ever destabilizes the group, leading to a major purge.
  The purge is thought to have removed 200 members. Top leaders who opposed Godane meet varying fates, with Ibrahim al-Afghani and Maa'lim Hashi executed, Mukhtar Robow escaping, and Hasan Dahir Aweys fleeing but being captured by government militias and handed over to Somalia's Transitional Federal Government. Godane consolidates control over the weakened, smaller group and implements a hardline strategy and tactics.Source: Ken Menkhaus, "Al-Shabab's Capabilities Post-Westgate," *CTC Sentinel* 7, no. 2 (February 2014): 4-9, https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CTCSentinel-Vol7Iss2.pdf [15].

- **June 19, 2013:**Al-Shabab attacks the U.N. compound in Mogadishu.
  The attack follows a similar pattern as the Supreme Court plans, with a VBIED exploding at the main entrance, allowing a small team of gunmen to enter. A total of 22 people are killed, including four U.N. personnel, four local security guards, and all attackers.Source: Matt

Bryden, "The Reinvention of Al-Shabaab: A Strategy of Choice or Necessity," Center for Strategic & International Studies, February 2014, http://csis.org/files/publication/140221_Bryden_ReinventionOfAlShabaab_Web.pdf. [16].

- **April 14, 2013:** Al-Shabab attacks the Supreme Court in Mogadishu using a VBIED to breach the main entrance.
  Gunmen, some wearing explosive vests, then enter the building to carry out a killing spree. All of the attackers are reportedly killed and more than 35 people perish in the attack. Source: Matt Bryden, "The Reinvention of Al-Shabaab: A Strategy of Choice or Necessity," Center for Strategic & International Studies, February 2014, http://csis.org/files/publication/140221_Bryden_ReinventionOfAlShabaab_Web.pdf. [16]

- **March 28, 2013:** Al-Shabab detonates a car bomb aimed at Somali intelligence chief Kahlif Ahmed Ereg near the National Theater in Mogadishu.
  The bomb kills 10 civilians and injures 15. Source: "Chapter 2. Country Reports: Africa Overview," *Country Reports on Terrorism 2013*, U.S. Department of State, April 30, 2014, http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224820.htm [103].

- **August 24, 2012:** Al-Shabab attempts a complex attack, targeting the Muna Hotel in Mogadishu.
  Al-Shabab gunmen, disguised as government security personnel, lay siege to the building and a two-hour gun battle ensues before one of the assailants detonates an explosive vest. The attack kills 32 people, including several members of parliament. Although the attack was deemed successful by al-Shabab, the group did not attempt another operation of such complexity until two years later, when they attempted to kill Somalia's newly elected president at Mogadishu's Jazeera Hotel. Source: Matt Bryden, "The Reinvention of Al-Shabaab: A Strategy of Choice or Necessity," Center for Strategic & International Studies, February 2014, http://csis.org/files/publication/140221_Bryden_ReinventionOfAlShabaab_Web.pdf. [16]

- **February 1, 2012:** Ayman Al-Zawahri, Osama bin Laden's successor as al-Qaeda leader, formally announces al-Shabab's alignment with al-Qaeda.
  Godane's request to unite with al-Qaeda was originally opposed by bin Laden, who told Godane that it would not be in al-Shabab's best interests. However, al-Zawahri, in an apparent bid to assert his power over the strong al-Qaeda chapters in Syria and Yemen, moved quickly to grant Godane's request. Sources: Jonathan Masters, "Al-Shabab," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified September 5, 2014, http://www.cfr.org/somalia/al-shabab/p18650 [11]; Fred Dews, "Al Shabaab: Background on the Somalia-based Terrorist Group that Attacked a Nairobi Mall," Brookings Institution, September 23, 2013, http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/brookings-now/posts/2013/09/al-shabaab-somalia-terrorist-nairobi-mall-attack [17].

- **August 1, 2010:** AMISOM and TFG forces take control of Mogadishu and other major urban centers, taking significant territory from al-Shabab.
  Less than two weeks later, Godane replaces two influential and independently minded deputies, Mukhtar Robow and Ibrahim Haji Jaama' al-Afghani, with staunch loyalists Mahad Warsame and Qaley Karatey. Sources: Jonathan Masters and Mohammed Aly Sergie, "Al-Shabab," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified March 13, 2015, http://www.cfr.org/somalia/al-shabab/p18650 [11]; Matt Bryden, "The Reinvention of Al-Shabaab: A Strategy of Choice or Necessity," Center for Strategic & International Studies, February 2014, http://csis.org/files/publication/140221_Bryden_ReinventionOfAlShabaab_Web.pdf [16].

- **July 11, 2010:** Al-Shabab claims responsibility for several near-simultaneous bombings that kill dozens of people in sports bars in Uganda.
  The three coordinated blasts, which detonate just seven minutes apart, kill 76 people watching the World Cup in Kampala. A fourth bomb left at a discotheque failed to go off. This is the group's first attack on foreign soil. The group's spokesman proclaims, "We are sending a message to every country who is willing to send troops to Somalia that they will face attacks on their territory." This attack brought together several of the elements from the 2009 bombings—near simultaneous attacks, employing PBIEDs, VBIEDs, and mobile-phone trigger. Sources: In prison with al-Shabab: What drives Somali militants?" BBC News, last modified October 4, 2013, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24379013 [43]; Jonathan Masters, "Al-Shabab," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified September 5, 2014, http://www.cfr.org/somalia/al-shabab/p18650 [11].

- **September 17, 2009:** Two VBIEDs penetrate the security perimeter of an AMISOM Force Headquarters, killing 17 peacekeepers, including the deputy force commander.
  Source: Matt Bryden, "The Reinvention of Al-Shabaab: A Strategy of Choice or Necessity," Center for Strategic & International Studies, February 2014, http://csis.org/files/publication/140221_Bryden_ReinventionOfAlShabaab_Web.pdf. [16]

- **June 19, 2009:** Somalia National Security Minister Omar Hashi Aden is killed in a large-scale suicide car bomb attack in Beletwyne.
  Over 30 people are killed in the attack. The group seeks to intensify its strategy to strong-arm the Somali-population, focusing on high-target assassinations and clan elders. Source: United Nations Security Council, "List of Individuals and Entities Subject to the Measures Imposed by Paragraphs 1, 3, and 7 of Security Council Resolution 1844," March 11, 2014, http://www.un.org/sc/committees/751/pdf/1844_cons_list.pdf [104].

- **February 2009:** The group successfully launches the use of explosive vests in a sophisticated attack against African Union (AU) military bases in Mogadishu.
  They employ a mix of person-borne improvised explosive devices (PBIEDs) and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs), followed by indirect fire. Similar tactics were used in a September bombing at an AU military base. Source: Matt Bryden, "The Reinvention of Al-Shabaab: A Strategy of Choice or Necessity," Center for Strategic & International Studies, February 2014, http://csis.org/files/publication/140221_Bryden_ReinventionOfAlShabaab_Web.pdf. [16].

- **January 13, 2009:** Ethiopia pulls out of Somalia after a series of setbacks and AMISOM forces, comprised mostly of troops from Uganda and Burundi, move in.
  Source: Jonathan Masters and Mohammed Aly Sergie, "Al-Shabab," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified March 13, 2015, http://www.cfr.org/somalia/al-shabab/p18650 [11].

- **October 29, 2008:** The first known U.S. suicide bomber for al-Shabab, Shirwa Ahmed, is part of an attack in Hargeisa that kills 24 people.
  Ahmed was a Somali-American from Minnesota who trained with al-Shabab. Source: Jonathan Masters and Mohammed Aly Sergie, "Al-Shabab," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified March 13, 2015, http://www.cfr.org/somalia/al-shabab/p18650 [11].

- **February 26, 2008:** The U.S. State Department designates al-Shabab a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

Source: Department of State, Public Notice, "In the Matter of the Designation of al-Shabaab, aka al-Shabab, aka Shabaab, aka the Youth, aka Mujahidin Al-Shabaab Movement, aka Mujahideen Youth Movement, aka Mujahidin Youth Movement, aka MYM, aka Harakat Shabab al-Mujahidin, aka Hizbul Shabaab, aka Hisb'ul Shabaab, aka al-Shabaab al-Islamiya, aka Youth Wing, aka al-Shabaab al-Islaam, aka al-Shabaab al-Jihaad, aka the Unity of Islamic Youth, as a Foreign Terrorist Organization pursuant to Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as Amended, Public Notice 6136," *Federal Register* 73, no. 53 (March 18, 2008): 14550, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2008-03-18/pdf/E8-5444.pdf [105].

- **January 2007 - January 2008:**Al-Shabab is able to garner support from local Somalis and the Somali diaspora.
  Galvanized by the Ethiopian invasion, al-Shabab becomes the most powerful Somali guerilla group, receiving funding and recruits.Source: Jonathan Masters and Mohammed Aly Sergie, "Al-Shabab," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified March 13, 2015, http://www.cfr.org/somalia/al-shabab/p18650.

- **December 6, 2006:**Somalia's transitional government requests an intervention from neighboring countries to quell tension caused by the ICU in Mogadishu. Ethiopia, a majority Christian country, invades Somalia and takes Mogadishu with little opposition from the ICU.
  Much of the ICU flees to neighboring countries and al-Shabab retreats to the south, where it begins organizing asymmetric attacks on conventional Ethiopian forces.Source: Jonathan Masters and Mohammed Aly Sergie, "Al-Shabab," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified March 13, 2015, http://www.cfr.org/somalia/al-shabab/p18650 [11].

- **June 2006:**The Islamic Courts Union (ICU), supported by al-Shabab militants, grabs control of Mogadishu after a battle against a coalition of warlords.
  Source: Jonathan Masters, "Al-Shabab," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified September 5, 2014, http://www.cfr.org/somalia/al-shabab/p18650 [11].

- **2003:**Al-Itihad al-Islami (AIAI) splits over goals and strategy, with the old guard creating a new political front and the youth members seeking to establish a "Greater Somalia" ruled by sharia.
  These latter hardliners join the ICU.Source: Jonathan Masters and Mohammed Aly Sergie, "Al-Shabab," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified September 5, 2014, http://www.cfr.org/somalia/al-shabab/p18650 [11].

- **2000 - 2003:**A coalition of 11 sharia courts forms the Islamic Courts Union (ICU).
  Sharif Sheikh Ahmed is named leader.Source: Jonathan Masters and Mohammed Aly Sergie, "Al-Shabab," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified September 5, 2014, http://www.cfr.org/somalia/al-shabab/p18650 [11].

Violent history:

As al-Shabab lost control of urban centers, its tactics shifted to asymmetrical attacks, with greater reliance on suicide bombs, IEDs, hit-and-runs, political threats, assassinations, and grenade attacks.[68] The group's new tactics emphasized collaboration with its historical enemies in Somalia, resulting in alliances and deals that make it difficult for external actors to dismantle the group.[69] Godane's suppression of internal opposition allowed him to drive al-Shabab towards more indiscriminate modes of violence similar to al-Qaeda's.

Al-Shabab was reportedly responsible for more than 4,000 fatalities in 2016, according to the U.S. Department of Defense-affiliated Africa Center for Strategic Studies, based on data collected from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). As a result, al-Shabab reportedly overtook Boko Haram as Africa's deadliest terror group. ACLED attributed 3,499 fatalities to Boko Haram in 2016, while ISIS killed 2,350 people.[70] A *Washington Post* analysis disputed the findings, however, claiming that al-Shabab actually killed 432 people in 2016, while Boko Haram killed 790. The *Washington Post* explained the discrepancy because ACLED included all acts of violence without specifically labeling which were acts of terrorism. The *Post* also counted only incidents where al-Shabab was the primary actor involved.[71]

The majority of the group's attacks are retaliatory against perceived injustices against Muslims and against al-Shabab's mission in Somalia. Targets includes the U.S. and other Western countries, as well as those states, such as Uganda and Kenya, who have contributed to troops to AMISOM.

In April 2017, new Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo declared war on al-Shabab while offering al-Shabab fighters a 60-day amnesty period. The government offered to provide employment and education to fighters who surrendered during this period. The group formally rejected the offer and the declaration of war the following day. On April 9, an al-Shabab suicide bomber killed at least 15 people in an attack near a military base in Mogadishu.[72]

As outlined below, al-Shabab has engaged in both guerrilla and terror tactics since its inception. A key differentiator and contributor to its sustainability as an organization is al-Shabab's adaptability. This military and political flexibility is assisted by the leadership's lack of direct accountability to a constituency,[73] enabling them to carry out any number of attacks on whatever targets they choose. One of the major developments within the organization has been its tactical shifts and hybridization of violent attacks, combining both suicide bombers and suicide infantry.[74] According to Matt Bryden at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Westgate Mall attack was the culmination of successfully tried and tested tactics, techniques and procedures honed back home in Somalia.[75] Specifically, al-Shabab understood from past experience that breaching the perimeter of the mall would be necessary to overtake it, so their typical suicide-bombing tactic would not work there. Consequently, the group used hand grenades to penetrate the structure.

Timeline of Violent Activities:

- **October 29, 2008:** The first known American suicide bomber for al-Shabab, Shirwa Ahmed, is part of attack in Hargeisa that kills 24 people. Ahmed was a Somali-American from Minnesota who trained with al-Shabab.[76]

- **February 2009:** Al-Shabab successfully uses explosive vests in a sophisticated attack against African Union (AU) military bases in Mogadishu. They employ a mix of person-borne improvised explosive devices (PBIEDs) and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs), followed by indirect fire. Similar tactics were used in a September bombing at an AU military base.[77]

- **June 19, 2009:** Somalia National Security Minister Omar Hashi Aden is killed in a large-scale suicide car bomb attack in Beletwyne. Over 30 people are killed in the attack. The group seeks to intensify its strategy to strong-arm the Somali-population, focusing on high-target assassinations and clan elders.[78]

- **September 17, 2009:** Two VBIEDs penetrate the security perimeter of an AMISOM Force Headquarters, killing 17 peacekeepers, including the deputy force commander.[79]

- **July 11, 2010:** Al-Shabab claims responsibility for several near-simultaneous bombings that kill dozens of people in sports bars in Uganda. The three coordinated blasts, which detonate just seven minutes apart, kill 76 people watching

the World Cup in Kampala.[80] A fourth bomb left at a discotheque fails to go off. This is the group's first attack on foreign soil. The group's spokesman proclaims, "We are sending a message to every country who is willing to send troops to Somalia that they will face attacks on their territory."[81] This attack brought together several of the elements from the 2009 bombings—near simultaneous attacks, employing PBIEDs, VBIEDs, and mobile-phone trigger.

- **August 24, 2012:** Al-Shabab attempts a complex attack, targeting the Muna Hotel in Mogadishu. Al-Shabab gunmen, disguised as government security personnel, lay siege to the building and a two-hour gun battle ensues before one of the assailants detonates an explosive vest. The attack kills 32 people, including several members of parliament. Although the attack was deemed successful by al-Shabab, the group does not attempt another operation of such complexity until two years later, when they attempted to kill Somalia's newly elected president at Mogadishu's Jazeera Hotel.[82]

- **March 28, 2013:** Al-Shabab detonates a car bomb aimed at Somali intelligence chief Kahlif Ahmed Ereg near the National Theater in Mogadishu. The bomb kills 10 civilians and injures 15.[83]

- **April 14, 2013:** Al-Shabab attacks the Supreme Court using a VBIED to breach the main entrance. Gunmen, some wearing explosive vests, then enter the building to carry out a killing spree. All of the attackers are reportedly killed and more than 35 people are killed in the attack.[84]

- **June 19, 2013:** Al-Shabab attacks the U.N. compound in Mogadishu. The attack follows a similar pattern as the Supreme Court plans, with a VBIED exploding at the main entrance, allowing a small team of gunmen to enter. A total of 22 people are killed, including four U.N. international personnel, four local security guards, and all attackers.[85]

- **June 2013:** Al-Shabab's bloodiest internal battle ever destabilizes the group, leading to a major purge. The purge is thought to have removed 200 members. Top leaders who opposed Godane meet varying fates, with Ibrahim al-Afghani and Maa'lim Hashi executed, Mukhtar Robow escaping, and Hasan Dahir Aweys fleeing but being captured by government militias and handed over to Somalia's Transitional Federal Government.[86] Godane consolidates control over the weakened, smaller group and implements a hardline strategy and tactics.

- **July 12, 2013**: Al-Shabab attacks an AMISOM convoy en route to Mogadishu International Airport. The group publicly admits they had tried to target U.S. intelligence officers.[87]

- **July 27, 2013:** Al-Shabab attacks the Turkish embassy housing complex in Mogadishu using a car bomb and small weapons, killing eight and injuring 13.[88]

- **September 3 and 4, 2013:** Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's convoy strikes a roadside bomb as he travels to Merka, Lower Shabelle. No casualties are reported, though one Somali soldier is injured.[89]

- **September 7, 2013:** Eighteen civilians are killed at the popular Villa Restaurant in Mogadishu. Al-Shabab employs a two-part VBIED and suicide attack.[90]

- **September 12 and November 5, 2013:** Al-Shabab twice targets the convoy of Interim Juba Administration President Ahmed Madobe with a car bomb outside of Kismayo's airport. Madobe is slightly injured in the first attack. Civilians are killed in both attacks.[91]

- **September 21 - 24, 2013:** Al-Shabab militants, including a Norwegian citizen of Somali origin and three Somali nationals, raid Westgate Shopping Centre in Nairobi, Kenya. In the deadliest attack in Kenya in 15 years, the attackers kill 67 people and wound more than 200 over four days. The victims include six Kenyan security personnel.[92]

- **November 8, 2013:** The group attempts to detonate a sophisticated IED embedded in a laptop at Maka al Mukarama, a popular hotel in Mogadishu frequented by high-level government and security officials. The attack kills six and injures 15. A secondary VBIED detonates in the parking lot.[93]

- **November 19, 2013:** Al-Shabab insurgents launch a complex attack against the central police station in Beledweyne, killing 24 Somali police officers and one Djiboutian AMISOM soldier, and injuring several others.[94]

- **December 5, 2013:** A suicide car bomber hits a convoy of the Puntland security forces in central Boosaaso, killing three police officers and four civilians, while injuring several others.[95]

- **January 1, 2014:** Al-Shabab claims responsibility for a suicide car bombing that kills at least 12 people and injures several others at the Jazeera Hotel in Mogadishu.[96]

- **January 15, 2014:** Al-Shabab attempts to launch an attack on Somali National Army positions, but proves unsuccessful.[97]

- **January 21, 2014:** Two roadside explosions kill three civilians and injure 13.[98]

- **February 13, 2014:** A U.N. convoy is hit by a suicide car bomber en route to the Mogadishu International Airport, killing several Somali bystanders.[99]

- **February 21, 2014:** Following a series of suicide bombings over a few weeks, al-Shabab attacks Somalia's presidential palace with a combination of car bombs and engages in a gun battle with palace guards. Fourteen people are left dead, including five Somali officials and soldiers and nine attackers. The interior minister confirms that two government officials are among the dead.[100]

- **September 8, 2014:** A suicide bomber attacks Somalia's Lower Shabelle region, killing 12 civilians and wounding two soldiers. Later, a second suicide attacker rams his car into the convoy escorting Somalian intelligence commander Abdifatah Shaweye to the scene of the first attack. Shaweye is lightly wounded. No further casualties are reported.[101]

- **October 12, 2014:** A car bomb explodes outside a café in Mogadishu, killing 11 and wounding eight. Al-Shabab is suspected.[102]

- **October 15, 2014:** A car bomb explodes near the presidential palace in Mogadishu, Somalia, killing five and wounding seven, mostly children. Al-Shabab is suspected.[103]

- **November 17, 2014:** Al-Shabab militants open fire on the car of a 60-year old Somali-American in Mogadishu. Separately, militants shoot and kill a freelance journalist in central Somalia.[104]

- **November 22, 2014:** Al-Shabab hijacks a bus heading to Nairobi, Kenya, and separates Muslims from non-Muslims by challenging the non-Somali passengers to recite the shahada, the Islamic declaration of faith. The hijackers kill 28.[105]

- **December 2, 2014:** After identifying non-Muslim workers at a quarry in Kenya, al-Shabab massacres 36 people, most of whom are reportedly "lined up, and shot in the head, at close range" while others are beheaded.[106]

- **December 3, 2014:** Al-Shabab carries out a car bomb attack on a U.N. convoy near Mogadishu airport, killing four Somalis, including a policeman and a contractor, and wounding 13 others.[107]

- **December 5, 2014:** Al-Shabab suicide bombers kill up to seven people and wound dozens more in a restaurant in the northwest town of Baidoa in Somalia.[108]

- **December 12, 2014:** Al-Shabab kidnaps and beheads Quran teacher Mohamed Hussein near the central Somali city of Bulo Berde because Hussein reportedly refused to obey al-Shabab's order to leave his village. His headless corpse is later found dumped close to his home.[109]

- **December 15, 2014:** Al-Shabab attacks a military base in southern Somalia, killing at least 10 soldiers.[110]

- **December 25, 2014:** Eight al-Shabab militants storm an African Union (AU) building and kill three Ugandan peacekeepers and a civilian contractor. Al-Shabab claims that it killed 14 peacekeepers, explaining that it "targeted the enemies at a time they were celebrating Christmas…"[111]

- **December 26, 2014:** In claiming responsibility for the African Union attack on December 25, al-Shabab state that it is in retaliation for a U.S. strike that killed its leader, Ahmed Godane.[112]

- **January 2, 2015:** Al-Shabab confirms it was responsible for killing at least seven Somali soldiers in an attack on a military base outside Baidoa.[113]

- **January 4, 2015:** Al-Shabab detonates a car bomb that kills four civilians and injures seven more in the Somali capital of Mogadishu.[114]

- **March 12, 2015:** Al-Shabab militants attack government administration offices in Baidoa, Somalia. At least nine people, including four gunmen, die in the attack.[115]

- **April 2, 2015:** Al-Shabab gunmen storm Garissa University in Kenya, killing 148 people. The gunmen specifically target Christian students. It is al-Shabab's deadliest attack in Kenya to date. The university reopens nine months later.[116]

- **April 20, 2015:** Al-Shabab bombs U.N. workers in Garowe, Somalia, killing nine.[117]

- **May 22, 2015:** Al-Shabab fighters attack the village of Yumbis in Kenya until security forces drive them out.[118]

- **July 7, 2015:** Al-Shabab kills more than a dozen in an attack on the village of Soko Mbuzi near the Kenyan-Somali border weeks before U.S. President Barack Obama's visit to Kenya.[119]

- **July 15, 2015:** Al-Shabab militants launch coordinated attacks on a stadium housing peacekeepers, as well as two hotels, in Mogadishu. According to police, six civilians and five militants are killed in the attacks.[120]

- **September 3, 2015:** Al-Shabab launches an attack in southern Somalia against a remote African Union outpost that kills 37 in total, including 25 Somali and 12 Ugandan soldiers.[121]

- **November 1, 2015:** Al-Shabab attacks the Sahafi Hotel in Mogadishu, killing at least six and injuring 10. The siege ends when Somali security forces kill the five perpetrators.[122]

- **January 15, 2016:** Al-Shabab launches attack against an African Union military base, killing dozens of Kenyan soldiers. Kenyan soldiers abandon the camp 11 days later.[123]

- **January 21, 2016:** Al-Shabab claims responsibility for an attack on a beachfront restaurant in Mogadishu, killing at least 26. The terrorist attack—involving suicide bombers and gunmen—lasts for eight hours before Somali security forces are able to restore security.[124]

- **January 31, 2016:** Al-Shabab militants kill three men in a village in Kenya's coastal Lamu county.[125]

- **February 2, 2016:** A suicide bomber detonates an improvised explosive device on a Daallo airbus flight from Mogadishu to Djibouti. There are no fatalities except the bomber, who is sucked out through a hole in the plane created by the bomb. Al-Shabab claims responsibility for the attack.[126]

- **February 26, 2016:** Purported al-Shabab gunmen and a suicide car bomber attack Mogadishu's SYL hotel, leaving at least 14 people dead and others wounded.[127]

- **April 11, 2016:** A car bomb detonates outside the Mogadishu mayor's office, killing five people and wounding five more. Al-Shabab claims responsibility.[128]

- **April 12, 2016:** Suspected al-Shabab fighters attempt and fail to assassinate the District Commissioner of Beled Hawo in Somalia's southern Gedo region, wounding three of his guards.[129]

- **April 14, 2016:** Suspected al-Shabab militants attempt to assassinate a Somali member of parliament in the town of Balad Hawo near the Kenyan border using explosive devices, injuring four people.[130]

- **April 17, 2016:** Suspected al-Shabab militants conduct a drive-by shooting in Mogadishu, killing a woman working for the U.N. High Commission on Refugees office and wounding at least one more.[131]

- **April 19, 2016:** Al-Shabab abducts between 10 and 12 children from a school in central Somalia's Harardheere district.[132]

- **April 21: 2016:** Al-Shabab militants attack an AMISOM convoy in Somalia's Baay region, killing six Ethiopian soldiers.[133]

- **April 27, 2016:** Suspected Al-Shabab fighters seize the town of Janale in Lower Shabelle region from Somali and African Union troops. According to residents, Somali and African Union troops allegedly withdraw from the town for an

"unknown reason," allowing al-Shabab to take control without resistance.[134]

- **June 25, 2016:** Militants detonate a car bomb outside of a hotel in central Mogadishu and storm the building, killing at least 15 people, including a Somali cabinet minister, and wounding at least 34 more. Al-Shabab claims responsibility.[135]

- **July 26, 2016:** Two suicide bombers detonate car bombs near AMISOM's headquarters at an airport in Mogadishu, killing 13 people. Al-Shabab claims responsibility.[136]

- **August 25, 2016:** Two militants detonate a car bomb and open fire at the Banadir Beach Restaurant near Lido beach in Mogadishu, killing 10 people. Al-Shabab claims responsibility.[137]

- **August 29, 2016:** Suspected al-Shabab fighters attack AMISOM military housing outside Mogadishu, killing at least one soldier.[138]

- **August 30, 2016:** A car bomb is detonated outside the presidential palace and two hotels reportedly frequented by government officials in Mogadishu, killing 22 people and wounding 50 others. Al-Shabab claims responsibility.[139]

- **December 2016:** Al-Shabab militants kill several government officials in Bosasso in Somalia's semi-autonomous Puntland region. On December 15, gunmen shoot Colonel Jama Sahardiid, second deputy commander of Puntland Police forces, outside a restaurant in Bosasso. Sahardiid dies from his wounds the following day. On December 20, militants shoot and kill Aden Huruse, an aide in Puntland's presidential palace, at a restaurant in Bosasso. On December 25, gunmen kill military prosecutor Abdikarim Hassan Firdiye as he is getting out of his car outside a restaurant in Bosasso.[140]

- **January 25, 2017:** Al-Shabab fighters attack a hotel in Mogadishu. A policeman dies of his wounds the following day.[141]

- **January 27, 2017:** Al-Shabab fighters attack a Kenyan military base in the southern Somali town of Kulbiyow near the Kenyan border, killing nine soldiers. The Kenyan military claims to kill 70 militants in repelling the attack. Al-Shabab claims it killed dozens of Kenyan troops.[142]

- **April 27, 2017:** Al-Shabab gunmen kill national intelligence officer Mohamud Haji Ali while is his sitting in front of his home in Mogadishu.[143]

- **May 8, 2017:** A car bomb in Mogadishu kills at least five people. Al-Shabab claims responsibility.[144]

- **May 9, 2017:** Al-Shabab fighters attack a military base in Goofgaduud, killing at least seven soldiers. Al-Shabab claims it killed 16 soldiers and captured the entire town of Goofgaduud, which the Somali government does not immediately confirm.[145]

- **May 16, 2017:** Four Al-Shabab gunmen break into the house of Kenyan government official Dekow Abbey Sirat and shoot him dead. The group claims it also killed several of Sirat's bodyguards and took their weapons.[146]

- **May 24, 2017:** A car bomb in Mogadishu kills five people and wounds six. Eight Kenyan soldiers are killed in two separate roadside bombings on the Kenyan side of the border. Al-Shabab claims responsibility for all three attacks.[147]

- **May 31, 2017:** A Kenyan police armored personnel vehicle runs over an improvised bomb, killing seven officers and one civilian. Al-Shabab claims responsibility.[148]

- **June 5, 2017:** A bomb planted at a police station in the southern Somalia city of Kismayu kills one policeman and wounds several others. Al-Shabab claims responsibility and alleges the bomb killed four policemen and wounded 27.[149]

- **June 8, 2017:** Al-Shabab gunmen and suicide bombers attack a military base in Af Urur in Somalia's Puntland state, killing 59 people and wounding 38 others. The attackers shoot and behead victims, including civilians. Authorities does not immediately release exact casualty numbers.[150]

- **June 14-15, 2017:** A car bomb explodes at the gates of the Pizza House restaurant in Mogadishu. Five gunmen storm the restaurant and take customers hostage. The gunmen kill 31 and wound 40. Security forces kill the gunmen after an overnight standoff. Al-Shabab claims responsibility.[151]

- **June 20, 2017:** A suicide car bomb disguised as a milk delivery van explodes at Wadajir district headquarters in Mogadishu, killing 15 people and wounding 18. Al-Shabab claims responsibility.[152]

- **June 22, 2017:** A suicide car bomb explodes at a police station in Mogadishu, killing seven and wounding 12. Al-Shabab claims responsibility.[153]

- **June 27, 2017:** A roadside bomb in Kiunga town in Kenya's Lamu County kills four policemen and four children. Police suspect al-Shabab of planting the bomb.[154]

- **July 5, 2017:** Gunmen attack a village in Kenya's Lamu County, killing three police officers and wounding seven others during a seven-hour gun battle with police. Authorities suspect al-Shabab.[155]

- **July 8, 2017:** About 15 al-Shabab militants attack Jima village in Kenya's southeastern Lamu County. The attackers behead nine men from the village.[156]

- **July 13, 2017:** Al-Shabab fighters attack a government convoy in southeastern Kenya, killing two police officers and a civilian while kidnapping public works official Maryam Elmaawy. It is al-Shabab's highest-profile kidnapping in the country to date. Kenyan forces rescue Elmaawy later in the day.[157]

- **July 23, 2017:** A roadside blast targeting a security convoy kills four soldiers near the town of Baidoa in southwestern Somalia. Al-Shabab claims responsibility.[158]

- **July 30, 2017:** Al-Shabab fighters ambush an African Union convoy on a joint patrol with Somalia forces in Somalia, killing 23 AMISOM soldiers and one Somali soldier. Al-Shabab claims it kills 39 soldiers, though there is no official verification of the claim.[159]

- **August 2, 2017:** Militants open fire on a bus in Kenya's Kamu county, killing three people. Police suspect al-Shabab of responsibility.[160]

- **August 3, 2017:** Al-Shabab militants attack the Lafey police station in Kenya near the border with Somalia. One officer is killed and two vehicles are burned.[161]

- **August 4, 2017:** Al-Shabab seizes the Somalia town of Leego after the Somali military and AMISOM peacekeepers withdraw from the town. Al-Shabab military spokesman Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab tells Reuters, "The town is now under our control."[162]

- **August 18, 2017:** Three men are beheaded in an attack in the Maleli village in Kenya. Authorities suspect that Al-Shabab is responsible.[163]

- **September 1, 2017:** A bomb planted in a market in Af-Urur, near the Galgala hills area controlled by al-Shabab, kills at least 12 people. Al-Shabab claims responsibility, alleging it killed five soldiers and wounded 10 others.[164]

- **September 2, 2017:** Al-Shabab attacks a Somali army base in Bula Gudud near the southern port town of Kismayu. The group claims to kill 26 soldiers, though the Somali government does not immediately offer casualty figures. On November 13, 2017, al-Shabab releases a video of the attack alleging that at least 20 Somali soldiers were killed.[165]

- **September 11, 2017:** Al-Shabab detonates a suicide car bomb and storms a military base in the town of Balad Hawo on the Somali border with Kenya. Authorities report at least 10 soldiers killed.[166]

- **September 27, 2017:** Al-Shabab militants kill the secretary general of Somalia's national women's organization and the son of the organization's chairwoman in a drive-by shooting in Mogadishu.[167]

- **October 14, 2017:** A truck bomb explodes in the center of Mogadishu, killing at least 320 and injuring even more, in Somalia's worst terror attack to date. Authorities attribute responsibility to al-Shabab.[168]

- **November 16, 2017:** Al-Shabab attacks a Somali military base near Mogadishu with no reported civilian or military deaths.[169]

- **December 30, 2017:** Al-Shabab militants set fire to two police camps in the Kenyan town of Ijara, near Somalia's

southernmost border with Kenya. No casualties are reported.[170]

- **January 3, 2018:** Al-Shabab militants kill five Kenyan policemen on patrol around the Kenyan border town of Mandera.[171]

- **January 13, 2017:** Al-Shabab militants ambush a Kenyan police convoy in Lamu, eastern Kenya, killing one and wounding several other police officers.[172]

- **February 6, 2018:** Al-Shabab militants injure four policemen in a nighttime attack on a police station in Bosaso, Somalia.[173]

- **February 8, 2018:** At least three al-Shabab militants are killed in an attempted attack on a police camp in Kutulo, Kenya.[174]

- **February 16, 2018:** Suspected al-Shabab militants kill three teachers and one of their wives and injure dozens in an attack on a primary school in Kenya. One suspect is later arrested on February 20.[175]

- **February 23, 2018:** Al-Shabab militants detonate two car bombs near the presidential palace and a hotel in Mogadishu, killing 18 and wounding dozens.[176]

- **March 2, 2018:** Al-Shabab militants launch three separate attacks across Somalia killing at least 16 AU and Somali soldiers. Militants drive an SVBIED into a military camp near the town of Agooye, killing at least five Somali soldiers. At the same time, an IED kills six more soldiers on the road from Afgooye to Mogadishu. Separately, militants briefly capture the southern town of Bal'ad and kill five Burundi peacekeepers just north of it.[177]

- **March 14, 2018:** Al-Shabab militants unsuccessfully attempt to raid two AMISOM military bases in southern Somalia staffed by Ugandan and Ethiopian troops. No AMISOM fatalities are reported.[178]

- **March 19, 2018:** Al-Shabab attacks a Somali military base in the town of Buurdhuubo with small arms and RPGs. There are no casualties.[179]

- **April 1, 2018:** Al-Shabab attacks a joint Somali and African Union base in the lower Shabelle the morning after Somali and AU forces had attacked al-Shabab in a nearby village. At least four Ugandan soldiers are killed in the attack, which reportedly included two car bombs.[180]

- **April 9, 2018:** Al-Shabab militants attack a Kenyan Defence Force base in southern Gedo region of Somali with an unknown number of casualties on both sides.[181]

- **August 13, 2018:** A construction vehicle heading toward the Kenya-Somalia wall drives over a landmine, killing at least three and wounding two. Al-Shabab claims responsibility through its Radio Onduras station.[182]

- **August 21, 2018:** A vehicle carrying General Service Unit officers runs over an improvised explosive device in Garissa County, killing five and wounding three. Authorities suspect al-Shabab.[183]

- **August 29, 2018:** An explosion in Lamu County kills five Kenyan soldiers and injures 10 others. Al-Shabab is suspected to be responsible for the attack.[184]

- **October 13, 2018:** Al-Shabab carries out two bombings in the town of Baidoa, a financial hub located between Mogadishu and the Ethiopian border. The first blast targets a restaurant and another explosion strikes a nearby hotel, killing 20 people and wounding dozens more.[185]

- **November 9, 2018:** Al-Shabab militants detonate a series of car bombs near Somalia's Criminal Investigations Department in Mogadishu and the Sahafi Hotel, which is frequented by government officials and security forces. The jihadists attempt to storm the hotel and exchange gunfire with police officers. The bombings and gun attacks kill 52 people and injure at least 100 others, according to hospital officials.[186]

- **November 20, 2018:** Six armed men open fire in Kilifi. The gunmen kidnap an Italian charity worker and wound five others. The attack is reportedly the work of al-Shabab.[187]

- **January 15, 2019:** Four gunmen and one suicide bomber storm a complex in Nairobi. The 19-hour siege claims the lives of 26, including the attackers, and injures 28. Al-Shabab claims responsibility for the attack as it was "a response to the witless remarks of U.S. president, Donald Trump, and his declaration of al-Quds [Jerusalem] as the capital of Israel."[188]

- **February 28, 2019:** Al-Shabab militants detonate a bomb that tears the façade from a hotel frequented by government officials on the main street of Mogadishu. Gunmen then charge the hotel, open fire on its occupants, and kidnap hostages to use as human shields. The attack leaves at least 29 people dead and injures 80 others.[189]

- **March 23, 2019:** Al-Shabab gunmen storm a government building in the Somali capital, killing at least five people, including the country's deputy labor minister. An hours-long gun fight ensues between the assailants and security forces. Police officials place the death toll at 15 following the battle.[190]

- **April 13, 2019:** Two Cuban doctors working for the Kenyan government are kidnapped by gunmen reportedly affiliated with al-Shabab. One police officer is shot and killed during the abduction. It is suspected that the gunmen took the doctors to Somalia.[191]

- **May 22, 2019:** Members of al-Shabab detonate a car bomb at a security checkpoint near the presidential palace in Mogadishu, killing at least nine people and injuring 13 others.[192]

- **June 15, 2019:** Al-Shabab carries out a series of attacks in Mogadishu. In one incident, a car bomb explodes near the Somali parliament headquarters, killing at least eight people and injuring 16 others. A separate roadside bomb hits a police vehicle, killing 11 officers inside. Another blast explodes at an intersection leading to the city's airport, but does not cause casualties.[193]

- **June 21, 2019:** Security forces in Kenya kill three suspected al-Shabab militants following an attack on a police outpost in Garissa county. No security personnel were injured in the operation.[194]

- **July 13, 2019:** A suicide car bomber and gunmen attack a hotel in Kismayo, killing 26 and wounding more than 50. Al-Shabab members stormed the hotel after detonating a car bomb in an attack that lasted more than 14 hours.[195]

- **July 15, 2019:** Three suspected al-Shabab extremists detonate an improvised explosive device on the Kenyan-Somali border. The three assailants are killed by border police while two officers are injured in the attack.[196]

- **July 22, 2019:** An al-Shabab militant detonates a vehicle near a busy junction in Mogadishu. The suicide attacks claims the lives of 17 and injures 28. Al-Shabab claims responsibility for the attack which is believed to be in response to the killing of senior al-Shabab intelligence officer Mohamed Nur Ikhlaas in a U.S. airstrike four days earlier.[197]

- **July 24, 2019:** A member of al-Shabab detonates explosives during a high-level security meeting at the mayor's office in Mogadishu. At least six people were killed and another six were seriously injured, including the mayor, Abdirahman Omar Osman—who ultimately dies from his wounds.[198]

- **August 14, 2019:** Al-Shabab ambushes a newly established military camp in Mogadishu. Troops manage to fend off two car bombs and a gun raid, but three people are killed in the attack.[199]

- **September 14, 2019:** Al-Shabab launches a series of attacks in Lower Shabelle region. The first attack, in Qoryoley, saw militants using rocket propelled grenades and heavy machines guns. The attack kills nine. The second attack, in Marka, saw militants fire mortars during a visit by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister escapes unharmed, however two civilians are killed. Also on the 14th, in the neighboring Middle Shabelle region, al-Shabab carries out a roadside explosion. The attack kills five and injures six others. In a separate al-Shabab raid, three district-administration officers are forced out of their homes in Beled Hawo town near Somalia's border with Kenya, shot and killed, according to the region's authorities.[200]

- **September 15, 2019:** Al-Shabab launches a remote-controlled explosion targeting the convoy of Governor of Lower Shabelle. The attack kills two and injures four others.[201]

- **September 22, 2019:** Al-Shabab militants and a suicide bomber storm an army base near Mogadishu. Although unconfirmed by Somali military officials, al-Shabab claims to have killed 23 soldiers.[202]

- **September 30, 2019:** A car bomber and a group of gunmen strike the Bale Dogle airfield in southern Somalia that

American forces use in the fight against al-Shabab. No casualties or injuries are reported. Earlier that day, another car bomb detonates in Mogadishu. The explosion misses its apparent target, a group of Italian peacekeeping troops, but injures an unconfirmed number of Somali civilians.[203]

- **October 12, 2019:** A Kenyan police vehicle strikes a homemade bomb near the border with Somalia. At least ten police officers are killed. Al-Shabab is suspected to have planted the bomb.[204]

- **October 13, 2019:** Several mortar rounds land inside the U.N. and African Union compounds in Mogadishu. The attack injures seven. Al-Shabab claims responsibility for the attack. Also that day, a grenade targets a deputy governor's house in Hirshabele state. The deputy governor and his son are killed in the attack. Al-Shabab is suspected as being responsible for the attack.[205]

- **December 6, 2019:** Suspected al-Shabab militants attack a bus in Kotulo, Kenya near the border with Somalia. The attack kills at least 8.[206]

- **December 7, 2019:** Al-Shabab militants attack a commuter bus between Wargadadud and Kutulo town in Wajir county. At least 10 people are killed and an unconfirmed number are injured.[207]

- **December 10, 2019:** Five heavily armed gunmen overpower security guards and storm the upscale SYL hotel in Mogadishu. The attackers, claimed by terrorist group al-Shabab, began shooting at responding Somali security forces. Fighting ensues for seven hours before the militants are overpowered by security forces. The attack kills all five attackers and injures 11.[208]

- **December 21, 2019:** Al-Shabab suicide bombers detonate a vehicle outside Galkayo, Somalia. The attack targeted military commanders as they were leaving a hotel to attend a meeting. The attack killed at least eight people and wounded another 55.[209]

- **December 24, 2019:** Al-Shabab militants attack the Gofgadud base in southwest Somalia. The attack kills three soldiers before the Somali troops regain control of the base. It is unreported if any soldiers are wounded.[210]

- **December 28, 2019:** A truck bomb explodes at a security checkpoint in Mogadishu. At least 78 people are killed and another 125 are injured in the attack. Al-Shabab is suspected as being responsibility for the explosion. The bombing was the worst attack in Mogadishu since 2017.[211]

- **January 2, 2020**: Suspected al-Shabab militants attack a bus in Lamu County, Kenya. The attack kills at least three and injures three others.[212]

- **January 5, 2020:** Al-Shabab militants launch an attack on the U.S.-Kenyan shared Manda Bay Airfield, near Kenya's border with Somalia. The attack, which involves indirect and small-arms fire, kills three Americans. Among those killed are U.S. service member Henry Mayfield Jr., and two Department of Defense contractors. Two U.S. military contractors are also injured. The assailants destroy six civilian aircraft and three military vehicles before being repelled by Kenyan Defense Forces and U.S. African Command. The ambush is the first al-Shabab attack against U.S. forces inside Kenya.[213]

- **January 7, 2020:** Al-Shabab militants open fire in Garissa County, Kenya, near the border with Somalia. The attackers kill four children and wound three others before security forces repel the assailants. The extremists were targeting a telecommunications mast.[214]

- **January 8, 2020:** Al-Shabab militants detonate a bomb that hits Sayidka junction, a security checkpoint near the presidential palace and other government buildings in Mogadishu, Somalia. The attack kills three and injures 11 others.[215]

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Designations:

Designations by the U.S. Government:

February 26, 2008: The Department of State designates Al-Shabab as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (under section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act).[216]

February 26, 2008: The Department of State designates Al-Shabab as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (under Executive Order 13224).[217]

November 20, 2008: The Department of the Treasury designates Ahmed Abdi Aw-Mohamed (a.k.a. Godane) as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist.[218]

November 20, 2008: The Department of the Treasury designates Mukhtar Robow as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist on November 20, 2008.[219]

July 29, 2011: The Department of the Treasury designates Omar Hammami as a Specially Designated National.[220]

July 29, 2011: The Department of the Treasury designates Hassan Mahat Omar as a Specially Designated National.[221]

July 29, 2011: The Department of the Treasury designates Omar Hammami as a Global Terrorist (under Executive Order 13536).[222]

July 29, 2011: The Department of the Treasury designates Hassan Mahat Omar as a Global Terrorist (under Executive Order 13536).[223]

April 21, 2015: The Department of the Treasury designates Ahmed Diriye as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist on April 21, 2015.[224]

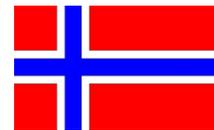## Designations by Foreign Governments and Organizations:

Australia listed Al-Shabab as a Terrorist Organization on August 22, 2009.[225]

Canada listed the Al-Shabab as a Terrorist Entity on March 5, 2010.[226]

The United Kingdom— listed Al-Shabab as a Terrorist in March 2010.[227]

Norway listed Al-Shabab as a Sanctioned Group.[228]
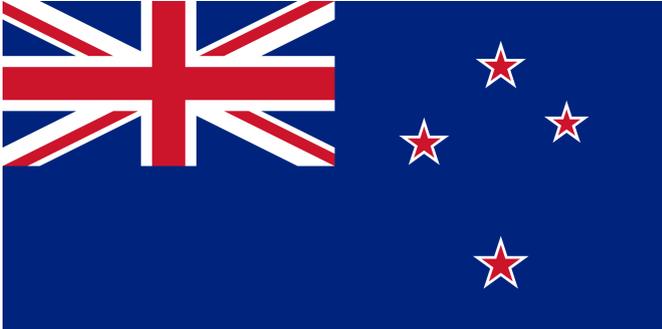
New Zealand listed Al-Shabab as a Terrorist Entity on February 10, 2010.[229]

The United Nations Security Council Committee designated Al-Shabab on April 12, 2010. [230]

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[221] "Hammami Press Release," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 29, 2011, http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/20110729_Somalia.pdf [232]; "OFAC Recent Actions," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 29, 2011, https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Pages/20110729.aspx [233].

[222] "Hammami Press Release," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 29, 2011, http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/20110729_Somalia.pdf [232].

[223] "Hammami Press Release," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 29, 2011, http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/20110729_Somalia.pdf [232].

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228 "Arms Embargo," Norwegian Police Security Service, accessed February 4, 2015, http://www.pst.no/blogg/vapenembargo/ [238].

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Associations:

Ties to Entities Designated by the U.S. or Foreign Governments:

Al-Shabab publicly praised al-Qaeda between 2006 and 2008, condemning U.S. oppression of Muslims worldwide. In 2010, the group announced that it sought to "connect the horn of Africa jihad to the one led by al-Qaeda."[232] Al-Shabab officially announced its union with al-Qaeda in February 2012. Following Godane's death in September 2014, the group and its new leader reaffirmed the alignment.[233]

Ties to Other Entities:

Al-Shabab has an affiliated network, including al-Hijra (formerly known as the Muslim Youth Center) in Kenya.[234] After the Westgate mall attack in September 2013, evidence emerged that al-Hijra assisted al-Shabab militants in executing the attacks. Al-Hijra is a group of primarily Kenyan-Somali and non-Somali Muslim followers of al-Shabab in East Africa.[235]

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Media Coverage:

Arab and African Media

Arab news outlets have reported on the two-decades-long conflict within the failed state of Somalia and the contagion it has caused in east Africa. Al-Shabab confirmed many media reports stating after the Westgate shopping mall attack was in retaliation for Kenyan support of AMISOM's mission in Somalia, and demanded that Kenya pull out. The group's first reprisal mission for Godane's death in Uganda was ultimately foiled by Ugandan security forces. A few years earlier, the group claimed responsibility for killing 76 people in Kampala, citing Uganda's participation in AMISOM as a motive as well.[236]

Militant profiles have emerged in African news media. Al-Shabab defectors are shown as traumatized and pressured victims. One former member told how, at 13 years of age, he joined the group after they took control of his town.[237]

In light of Godane's death, several news sources question the viability of Ahmed Umar Abu Ubaidah as a leader and the stability of the organization, and how it would bode for security in the region.

Both Arabic and African news outlets show concern for what a splintered group could mean for the movement and the region. *The East African* notes that the group will most likely tap into its cells across East Africa and make a push for recruitment.[238] Though the group's strategic and tactical directions are uncertain, analysts maintain the group will try to position itself as more global in nature. Such positioning could include strengthening ties with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram, and ISIS.[239] This direction could be indicated by al-Shabab's recommitment to al-Qaeda shortly after Abu Ubaidah's appointment as the new leader. The group could also potentially splinter and morph into a different structure, especially if internal power struggles recur.[240]

To a lesser but significant degree, news outlets have highlighted the 45-day amnesty that the Somali government has extended to al-Shabab fighters who renounce the group.[241] Horn of Africa news website *Sabahi*, sponsored by U.S. Africa Command, highlighted President Mohamud's 60-day extension of the amnesty on October 27, 2014, claiming that after the initial edict, approximately 30 militants surrendered daily. The national amnesty offered, in lieu of punishment, a nine-month rehabilitation program and a subsequent return to normal life.[242]

In contrast, Western media coverage put less emphasis on the amnesty program, preferring to focus on al-Shabab's ties to al-Qaeda and now potentially to ISIS. Godane, for example, is believed to have established ties with ISIS militias during their expansion into Syria and Iraq and offered al-Shabab fighters in support.[243]

Western Media

Western news outlets focus on U.S. military efforts to stop the group due to its ties to al-Qaeda, including the U.S.'s role in striking al-Shabab militants[244] and in launching the drone strike that killed Godane.[245] Connections to al-Qaeda have also raised concerns about al-Shabaab planning attacks overseas.[246]

[236] "Uganda foils 'terrorist' attack," Al Jazeera English, September 13, 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/09/uganda-foils-terrorist-attack-201491312302715418.html [242].

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[239] Paul Crompton, "Somalia's Islamist al-Shabaab at risk of splintering," Al Arabiya News, September 9, 2014, http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/analysis/2014/09/09/Somalia-s-Islamist-al-Shabaab-at-risk-of-splintering.html [97].

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[246]

Rhetoric:

[249]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, April 28, 2015 *[249]*

"Don't buy into the Martin story. This man never gave u freedom. Just mental slavery. #BaltimoreRiots #YouNeedShariah." (Tweet)[247]

[250]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, April 28, 2015 *[250]*

"One individual is able to put a whole nation onto it's [sic] knees." (Tweet)[248]

[251]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, April 23, 2015 *[251]*

"If only we had men like these brothers in the #States, our beloved Muhammad would not have been drawn." (Tweet)[249]

[252]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, April 23, 2015 *[252]*

"The brothers from the Charlie Hebdo attack did their part. It's time for brothers in the #US to do their part." (Tweet)[250]

[253]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, April 2015 *[253]*

"Where are the warriors of this Ummah [community]?" (Tweet)[251]

[254]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, April 2015 *[254]*

"Ask yourselves what caused the riots. Its [sic] because of the oppression of Democracy. Its time u accept #Shariah #BaltimoreRiots#YouNeedShariah." (Tweet)[252]

[255]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, April 2015 *[255]*

"Some people consider broken windows more valuable than broken necks. Fight for your rights. Accept #Shariah #BaltimoreRiots#YouNeedShariah" (Tweet)[253]

[256]

Al-Shabab statement on Charlie Hebdo and Kosher deli attacks, January 21, 2015 *[256]*

"We encourage all Muslims, specifically the sons of Tawheed living in Europe, to follow in the footsteps of their brothers… We…thank our brothers, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, who have been—and continue to be—the pioneers of external operations that

target the heart of the Crusader enemies…"[254]

[257]

Abdiasis Abu Musab, al-Shabab spokesman for military operations, December 5, 2014 [257]

The al-Shabab car bomb attack on a U.N. truck had "targeted a convoy of foreign mercenaries and their apostate allies."[255]

[258]

Al-Shabab statement following the death of leader Ahmed Abdi Godane, September 2014 [258]

"Avenging the death of our scholars and leaders is a binding obligation on our shoulders that we will never relinquish nor forget no matter how long it takes. By the permission of Allah, you will surely taste the bitter consequences of your actions."[256]

[259]

Abulaziz Abu Muscab, military operations Spokesman, 2014 [259]

"[Answering the question "Why Target Nairobi's Westgate Mall?"] It is a place where tourists from around the world come to shop, where diplomats gather,… where Kenya's decision-makers go to relax and enjoy themselves… a place where there are Jewish and American shops."[257]

[260]

Al-Shabab Press Office, 2014 [260]

"Kenyans will not appreciate the gravity of the situation without seeing, feeling and experiencing death in all its ghoulish detail."[258]

[261]

Sheikh Ali Mohamud Rage, July 13, 2013 [261]

"We thank the mujahideens that carried out the attack. We are sending a message to Uganda and Burundi, if they do not take out their AMISOM troops from Somalia, blasts will continue and it will happen in Bujumbra too."[259]

[262]

Omar Hammami, key leader, May 16, 2012 [262]

"([S]ome… acted as if they would not fix my car unless I denounced bin Laden and praised George Bush, and so forth). I didn't really have a clear position about the whole thing at the time. I was mixed between the "hatred of terrorism" instilled by the ['neo-Salafis'] and between my real hatred for America…"[260]

[263]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, December 25, 2014 [263]

"You are being enslaved once more with badges & guns. You will never be able to free yourselves with protests. #AntonioMartin #Ferguson." (Tweet)[261]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Twitter Direct Message, December 2014 [264]

[264]

"The caliphate will reach everywhere insha'Allah. Even the house of filth [the white house]." (Twitter Direct Message)[262]

[265]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, November 2014 [265]

"If only every Muslims could kill 1 Jew, everything would change." (Tweet)[263]

[266]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, October 2014 [266]

"The necks of your citizens will be cut, so long as you participate in the Crusade against Islam and the Muslims. #UK #US #AlanHennig." (Tweet)[264]

[267]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, September 11, 2014 [267]

On 9/11 commemorations: "God willing you'll have more of them to remember soon." (Tweet)[265]

[268]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, September 11, 2014 [268]

Responding to a photo of the twin towers exploding: "What a beautiful sight to look at. This is heart cooling for the Believers." (Tweet)[266]

[269]

Ahmed Abdi Godane, then-leader, 2014 [269]

"There is no way that you, the Kenyan public could possibly endure a prolonged war in Somalia and you cannot also withstand a war of attrition inside your own country. So make your choice today and withdraw all your forces from the Islamic Wilāyāt, otherwise be prepared for an abundance of blood that will be spilt on your country, economic downfall and displacement. (Audio message regarding Westgate Mall attack)[267]

[270]

Ahmed Abdi Godane, Audio Message regarding AMISOM mission, March 2014 [270]

"The first priority [of the military campaign] is to divide what is left of the country between Ethiopia and Kenya under the guise of regional administrations. The second objective is to loot the natural resources of the country both directly and indirectly through the apostate government," Godane said. "The third objective is to fight against the implementation of sharia under al-Shabaab rule and prevent the people from finding peace and a good life under their religion."

"The fourth one is to once again incite in the country into violence based on communities and tribes after they have become united under the law of God," he said. "Their fifth objective is how Ethiopia can realise its dream of once and for all getting its hands on the

coastal areas of Somalia." (Audio Message regarding AMISOM mission)[268]

[271]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, February 14, 2014 [271]

"I fight for Allah and yea [I am in] Al Qaeda…" (Tweet)[269]

[272]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Tweet, January 29, 2014 [272]

"My Heart is in Sham, my eyes are in Aqsa and My Soul is in Somalia." (Tweet)[270]

[273]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, Ask.fm, 2014 [273]

"There is a big difference, The Muslim women have right[s] and the disbelieving women of today have none. I say that because today the disbelievers are all MUHARIBEEN as in they are in combat. If not with the Gun then with the financial and the Ideas. The brothers in Nigeria did a great job if they Abducted only Disbelieving women. There is one time that the disbelievers have rights and that's when they live under the Islamic Rule and they pay the Taxes to the Islamic Administration and we don't see that today."[271]

[274]

Muhammed Abdullahi Hassan a.k.a. Mujahid Miski, 2014 [274]

"Being connected in Jihad make you stronger and you can all help each other by fulfilling the duties that Allah swt put over you…Like us in Somalia the brothers from mpls are well connected so try to do the same….It is something we have learned after six years in Jihad."[272]

[275]

Ahmed Abdi Godane, Audio message regarding Westgate Mall attack, September 2013 [275]

"There is no way that you, the Kenyan public could possibly endure a prolonged war in Somalia and you cannot withstand a war of attrition inside your own country. So make your choice today and withdraw your forces or be prepared for an abundance of blood that will be spilt in your country, economic downfall and displacement. (Audio message regarding Westgate Mall attack)[273]

[276]

Ahmed Abdi Godane, Audio message regarding the Federal Government of Somalia, May 2013 [276]

"In conclusion I also say the Ummah should be prepared for the betrayals of the enemy and not believe the promises that we hear from the Kuffar and their agents, and take lessons from the previous experiments, do not be stung from the same hole several times, Allah Almighty says: (He gives them promises and excites vain desires in them; and the Shaitan does not promise them but to deceive) 120 Surah An-Nisa, and know that the country is occupied and divided, Ethiopia rules you and Kenya and Uganda, and the people whom you deal with their images and names but their beliefs and customs are imported from the invading Kuffar." (Audio message regarding the Federal Government of Somalia)[274]

[277]

Ahmed Abdi Godane, Audio message regarding international intervention in Somalia, December 2012 [277]

"We hereby inform our Muslim Ummah and its Mujahideen leaders, foremost among them Amiirul Mu'mineen Al-Mullah Muhammad Omar Mujahid and Sheikh Ayman Al-Zawahiri the following:

1-That no matter the Strength of the crusader's offensive, it will eventually result in abysmal failure as the phase of gaining territory and defeating the Mujahideen has irreversibly come to an end.

2-That the apostate militia supporting the kuffar invaders are helplessly impotent, compelling the African Crusaders to personally move to the battlefronts and thus greatly increasing their fatality rates.

3-The military strength of the Mujahideen is still the same; still strong and resilient, denying the kuffar enemies the chance to rejoice in the territories they have occupied as the Mujahideen continue to torment them with constant ambushes and assaults." (Audio message regarding international intervention in Somalia)[275]

[278]

Mukhtar Robow, Audio message, March 2011 [278]

"If the so called Kenyan government thinks that we are easy we are telling them that we are not, the world is witness that we were behind the deadly explosions which have taken place in the Ugandan capital Kampala during the final match of the of the so called World Cup."[276]

[279]

Mukhtar Robow, Al-Shabab rally in Mogadishu, July 2010 [279]

"We tell the Muslim youths and Mujahideen, wherever they are in the Muslim world, to attack, explode, and burn the embassies of Burundi and Uganda."[277]

[280]

Ahmed Abdi Godane, Audio message, June 24, 2010 [280]

"The reality is that democracy is something Allah made unlawful, and someone else cannot make it lawful...If people who are Muslims, who declare the name of Allah, argue that they are real Muslims but forget Allah's message, hang or arrest them, kill them by using ammunition...If people fight ... till everyone is killed, that is much easier than legalising the devil's principles such as constitutions or making a ruler who governs against Allah's laws." (Audio message)[278]

[281]

Mukhtar Robow, Addressing al-Shabab fighters, January 2010 [281]

"We will cross the water between us and fight alongside with you against the enemy of Allah, be patient until we reach you brothers... These young fighters successfully completed several months of tough training and they are now ready to join their brothers in the holy war against the enemy of Allah worldwide."[279]

Mukhtar Robow, Addressing a rally in Baidoa after al-Shabab seized the city, January 2009 [282]

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[282]

"We are informing all Somalis we want to rule with justice, and the almighty Allah's sharia law...We are informing Somalis we will not accept any man-made constitution. We will not accept it. We shall fight with anyone who opposes it."[280]

[283]

[Mukhtar Robow, BBC Interview regarding al-Shabab's listing as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, March 2008](#) *[283]*

"Al-Shabab feels honoured to be included on the list. We are good Muslims and the Americans are infidels...We are fighting a jihad to rid Somalia of the Ethiopians and its allies, the secular Somali stooges...We will continue to attack peacekeepers in Somalia, regardless of their nationality."[281]

[284]

[Mukhtar Robow, Reuters interview, December 2007](#) *[284]*

"We are now planning to launch the most enormous attacks on the government and Ethiopian main positions. We will allow no foreign forces in our land... In the past days the infidel troops of Ethiopians along with their puppets and al-Shabab al-Mujahideen have fought heavily in Mogadishu. We have raided the enemies' military bases showering them with mortar shells...When we force Ethiopia to withdraw its troops from our country, its traitors will follow and the people will be able to embrace an Islamic government. Democracy is not right. They call it democracy when a man marries another man and a woman marries another woman. How can such things be allowed to happen?"[282]

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[247] "ISIS Fighters, Supporters Hijack #BaltimoreRiots Twitter Hashtag, Discuss Race Issues, Urge Attacks On Policemen," Middle East Media Research Institute, April 28, 2015, http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/8541.htm#_edn13 [285].

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[249] Tim Lister, "The cheerleaders and the freelancers: the new actors in international terrorism," CNN, May 7, 2015, http://www.cnn.com/2015/05/07/world/cheerleader-freelancer-terror/ [287].

[250] Brian Ross, Rhonda Schwartz, Randy Kreider, and James Gordon Meek, "The American Terror Recruiter's Link to Texas Shooting," ABC News, May 5, 2015, http://abcnews.go.com/US/american-terror-recruiters-link-texas-shooting/story?id=30827653 [286].

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[255] Feisal Omar, "Al-Shabaab car bomb kills four Somalis in U.N. convoy," Reuters, December 3, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/03/somalia-blast-idUSL6N0TN0L220141203 [113].

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[257] A Shabāb Mujahid Bro, "End of Safari," *Inspire Magazine*, no. 12 (Spring 2014): 30, https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2014/04/inspire-magazine-issue-12.pdf [291]. See Aaron Y. Zelin, "al-Qā'idah in the Arabian Peninsula's al-Malāḥim Media releases Inspire Magazine Issue #12," Jihadology, March 14, 2014, http://jihadology.net/2014/03/14/al-qaidah-in-the-arabian-peninsulas-al-mala%E1%B8%A5im-media-releases-inspire-magazine-issue-12/ [292].

[258] A Shabāb Mujahid Bro, "End of Safari," *Inspire Magazine*, no. 12 (Spring 2014): 30,

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https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2014/04/inspire-magazine-issue-12.pdf [291]. See Aaron Y. Zelin, "al-Qā'idah in the Arabian Peninsula's al-Malāḥim Media releases Inspire Magazine Issue #12," Jihadology, March 14, 2014, http://jihadology.net/2014/03/14/al-qaidah-in-the-arabian-peninsulas-al-mala%E1%B8%A5im-media-releases-inspire-magazine-issue-12/ [292].

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