

# Secret Intelligence Service

## Relevant Reports XIX

### Al-Shabaab. Mogadishu

October 14 2017

The Al-Shabaab terror group exploded two truck bombs in the Somali capital of Mogadishu, killing at least 358 people and injuring over half a thousand in the country's deadliest attack, if not one of the most deadliest attacks ever.





Al-Shabaab's latest act of terror is a very important event. It suggests that one of the world's most notorious terrorist groups is ready to go back on the offensive in East Africa, precisely at the moment that the Islamic State is on the brink of defeat.

There would be far-reaching implications if the War on Terror suddenly spread to the wider region which has become the focal point of China and India's engagement with the continent. There is also the possibility that a sudden spike in instability in Somalia could well lead to a renewed outbreak of piracy in the crucial Gulf of Aden, through which almost all European-Asian maritime trade navigates, further crowding this irreplaceable transit space which has already experienced much military activity due to the War on Yemen.



The core of the issue points to a serious security void in Somalia, the country's inexperienced government is not prepared to assume full military responsibility. Concurrent, the African Union mission has been largely ineffective and is scheduled to depart by 2020. Military contributors such as Ethiopia have already left, while others; Burundi and Uganda, are thought to only be participating for economic reasons. The region's most stable and prosperous state, Kenya, has been harassed by several high-profile terrorist attacks due to involvement in Somalia and is reluctant to become drawn into a possible quagmire when it has already caught up in its own unresolved political crisis. These factors have led to the world largely forgetting about Somalia, though Al-Shaabab seems hell-bent on reminding all why this is one of the most important fronts in the War on Terror.









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'Al-Shabaab. al-Qaeda-linked jihadist Terror Group

Truck Bombing. Mogadishu. October 14 2017'

Counter-Terrorism Library

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