

In Somalia, Kenya Risks Death by a Thousand Cuts

BY LESLEY ANNE WARNER

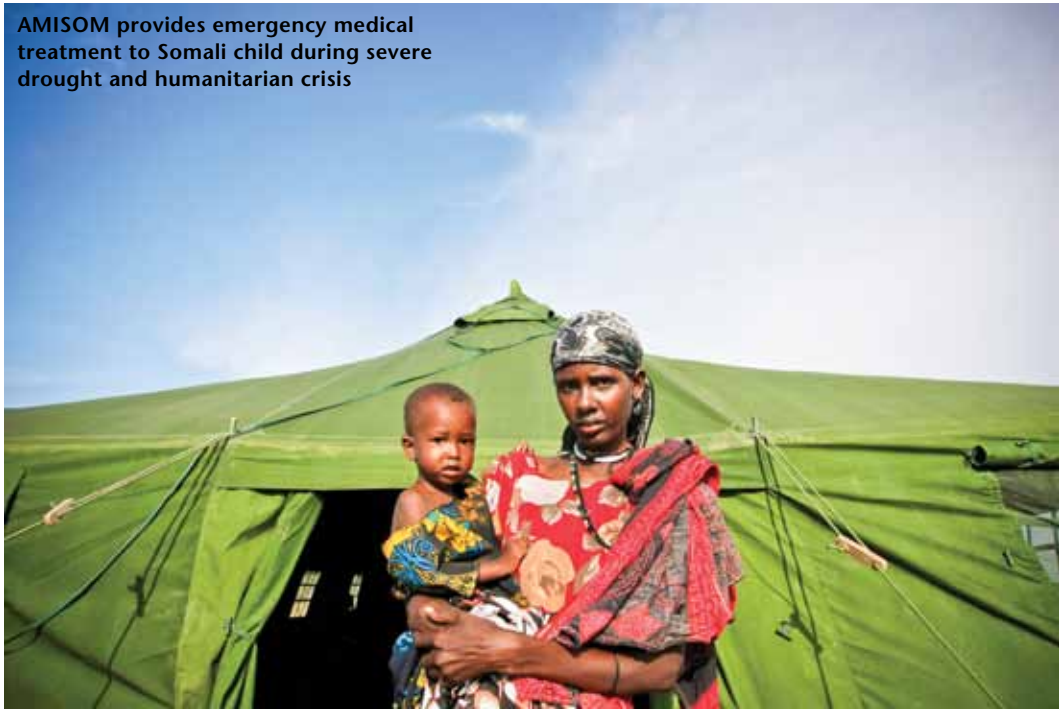
For two decades, Somalia has been a failed state, devoid of an effective central government, and the source of multiple threats to the international community. Over the years, Kenya has borne the brunt of Somalia's instability but has historically pursued a multilateral and primarily diplomatic approach to the Somalia problem. Yet in October 2011, with no clear end in sight to the threats spilling over its northern border, Kenya launched Operation *Linda Nchi*, Swahili for "protect the nation." At the outset of the operation, Kenya's objective, according to a government spokesman, was to dismantle the al Qaeda–affiliated Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen,¹ but not to maintain a prolonged presence in Somalia.² There has since been speculation that Kenya also seeks to disrupt al-Shabaab's finances by expelling it from the city of Kismayo, whose port is currently the group's largest source of revenue.

While Kenya ultimately seeks to mitigate the threats that Somalia poses to its own national security, there is a notable disconnect between its stated objectives for Operation *Linda Nchi* and the level of effort required to achieve its desired endstate. Al-Shabaab was but one symptom of Somalia's enduring security, political, and humanitarian challenges; thus, it is doubtful that dismantling al-Shabaab alone would usher in an era of stability in Somalia that would, in turn, make Kenya more secure. Rather, the reality of the situation indicates that Kenya will have to expand both the scope

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AMISOM provides emergency medical treatment to Somali child during severe drought and humanitarian crisis

UN Photo (Stuart Price)



and duration of its mission in order to mitigate the range of threats emanating from Somalia. This article provides a context for Kenya's invasion and highlights key challenges that may preclude Kenya's military operations from stabilizing the country.

Context of Invasion

In many ways, Kenya's invasion of Somalia appeared to fulfill a domestic and regional demand signal for firm and decisive action against a long-festering threat. Instability in Somalia has contributed to piracy in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean, terrorist activity in East Africa and the Great Lakes Region, and most recently the kidnappings of tourists and aid workers and a massive influx of refugees to Ethiopia and Kenya to escape drought-induced famine. In addition to a genuine need to defend the country's territorial sovereignty, Kenya's decision to invade Somalia may have been a means by which the government could rally support in the lead-up to politically transformative elections in the spring of 2013, demonstrating that key government leaders could take the necessary measures to defend the country. Moreover, considering recent Ethiopian and Ugandan attempts to stabilize Somalia, Kenya may have wanted to prove to its neighbors and to the international community that it was willing and capable of projecting military power to address a major regional security threat.³

The United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), the United States, and Ethiopia have largely failed to stabilize Somalia over the years, yet the specter of defeat did not dissuade Kenya from pursuing a similar course of military action. True or not, Kenya believed that it

came with a legitimacy that has been lacking in past interventions, as it was a friendly neighboring country with an intimate understanding of Somalia's clan dynamics. In addition to having its own ethnic Somali population, Kenya has hosted nearly half a million Somali refugees along its border with Somalia and in the suburbs of Nairobi. Furthermore, Kenya lacked the historical antagonism that has plagued Somalia's relationship with Ethiopia, which may make the local population less hostile to Kenya efforts to stabilize southern Somalia.

At the time of the invasion, the security, political, and humanitarian situation in Somalia was fluid. On the security front, al-Shabaab's power was waning, and the group had executed a "tactical retreat" from Mogadishu in early August.⁴ With the help of the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), the country's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was slowly gaining control of the capital city. Regardless, al-Shabaab still maintained control over most of south and central Somalia, and was believed to have a core military strength of between 5,000 and 10,000 fighters.⁵ In September and October, unidentified assailants entered Kenya via land and sea, kidnapping tourists from resorts near Lamu and aid workers from the Dadaab refugee complex. Meanwhile, Kenya had allegedly been training local militia groups to act as proxies in southern Somalia, mirroring Ethiopia's strategy along its own border with Somalia.⁶ Yet, prior to actually sending its troops across the border in October, Kenya exhibited few overt indications that its military would become directly involved in operations in Somalia.

On the political front, the TFG was increasingly unpopular, ineffective, and bureaucratically deadlocked. In order to

alleviate political infighting, the president of Uganda and the UN special representative for Somalia brokered the Kampala Accord in June 2011, which, among other things, deferred the elections for the president, speaker of parliament, and his deputies until August 2012. In early September, various stakeholders were brought together for the Consultative Meeting on Ending the Transition in Somalia, during which they articulated a detailed roadmap including four benchmarks (security, constitution, political outreach and reconciliation, and good governance) and key tasks and timelines necessary to achieve those benchmarks.⁷ Concurrently, there had been speculation for several months that Kenya supported the establishment of a buffer zone in southern Somalia, in a region referred to as Jubaland or Azania. Kenya's subsequent invasion of southern Somalia seemed to confirm fears that the country would continue to break apart, as previously evidenced by Somaliland, which declared independence in 1991, and Puntland and Galmudug, which declared autonomy in 1998 and 2006, respectively.

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On the humanitarian front, East Africa was experiencing its worst drought in 60 years. In parts of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia, 13 million people were affected by food insecurity due to the failed short rains (*deyr*) in the fall of 2010 and the erratic long rains (*gu*) in the spring of 2011, which reduced agricultural production and contributed to a spike in food prices. Due to years of conflict, south and central Somalia were particularly hard hit, with

4 million people in dire need of assistance. Compounding this crisis was the fact that al-Shabaab denied Western aid organizations access to drought-affected areas under its control, and in some cases, prevented civilians from fleeing these areas. At the height of the famine, an average of 1,300 Somalis per day were crossing into Kenya, where refugee camps that had been accepting mainly Somali refugees for the past two decades swelled even further past capacity.⁸ The Dadaab refugee complex, which by the numbers was technically Kenya's third largest city, now held over

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400,000 people in sites that had been established to serve 90,000. Under significant pressure, the Kenyan government authorized the opening of the Ifo II site during the summer of 2011 to alleviate the pressure on Dadaab's other refugee camps. Kenya's hesitance to open Ifo II was attributed to concerns that further expanding Dadaab would add an aura of permanence to these camps, encouraging refugees to continue coming to Kenya, and making them reluctant to return to Somalia. The Kenyan government also feared that this could exacerbate the economic and environmental impact of the camps on the country, in addition to stoking tensions with the residents of North Eastern Province, who also suffered from periodic drought, food insecurity, and underdevelopment but were not privy to the humanitarian assistance provided to Somali refugees.⁹ Given the circumstances of this most recent influx of refugees, the Kenyan

government argued that under international law, Somalis fleeing drought rather than conflict should not be considered asylum seekers. Kenya concurrently advocated that humanitarian assistance be provided to drought-affected populations in areas within Somalia's own borders that were cleared of al-Shabaab and controlled by friendly militias.¹⁰

Thus, at the time of Kenya's invasion of Somalia, various security, political, and humanitarian developments were under way, with no clear indications that Kenya's incursion would add to or detract from the melee. Widely believed to be a pretext for Kenya's invasion, al-Shabaab activity was just one of a range of broad, enduring threats that Somalia posed to Kenya's national security. The following section provides an analysis of some of the key challenges the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) has faced and may still face in Somalia in light of the context in which Operation *Linda Nchi* has occurred.

Key Challenges for the KDF in Somalia

Cost and Timing of Operation. After an initially swift invasion, the advance of the KDF in the Gedo, Middle Juba, and Lower Juba regions of southern Somalia came to an abrupt halt as a result of the *deyr* rains, which generally last from October to December. For several weeks, poor road conditions and flooding impeded KDF mobility and sustainment, and these logistical challenges were likely significant cost multipliers. With a declining currency, massive fiscal deficit, and rising commodity prices, it appeared unlikely that, absent substantial financial support from the international community, Kenya could afford to sustain military operations for a prolonged period. Estimates of how much the war was costing Kenya ranged widely—from \$233,000 to \$2.4 million U.S. dollars per month.¹¹

The immediate delay that followed Kenya's original incursion robbed invading forces of the opportunity to catch al-Shabaab off guard, and gave its fighters time to react, regroup, and potentially regain the strategic initiative. At the time of the invasion, al-Shabaab was in serious decline as a result of internal fissures regarding global vs. local Islamist agendas, their high-casualty tactics and draconian methods employed to control the population, and most recently, their mismanagement of the response to the famine.¹² By introducing foreign military forces on Somali soil at this critical time, Kenya risked re-creating similar dynamics that led to al-Shabaab's rise in 2006—uniting factions with disparate interests to fight a common enemy.

Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures. Although it has one of the most professional militaries in Africa, Kenya's only recent combat experience has been its extensive involvement in AU and UN peacekeeping operations. Consequently, the KDF had only limited experience conducting joint expeditionary operations and virtually no experience fighting an unconventional enemy. Faced with a conventional KDF advance, al-Shabaab generally opted not to stand and fight, but rather to draw the invading force further into Somalia. This has the potential advantage of spreading the Kenyan military's force strength and stretching its supply lines, making it more vulnerable to attack by small groups of al-Shabaab fighters.¹³ These fighters may employ asymmetric tactics such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs), suicide bombs, ambushes, and snipers to neutralize the KDF's technological superiority and conventional capabilities. While Kenya has faced minimal resistance thus far in southern Somalia, al-Shabaab is expected to mount a fierce defense of Kismayo, where

the KDF might find itself fighting a guerrilla war in an urban environment. This would require a change in tactics, which may include a shift away from reliance on airstrikes against al-Shabaab strongholds in favor of increased ground operations that could expose the KDF to greater combat casualties—especially if Kenyan forces attempt to minimize civilian casualties by avoiding indiscriminate fire and shelling heavily populated areas.

As the KDF continues its advance into southern Somalia, it will have to determine how best to dismantle al-Shabaab—which was the stated goal of its operations. The option(s) that Kenya pursues to this end may temper the effectiveness of the KDF's campaign and the sustainability of its military gains. Kenya can attempt to counter-radicalize or otherwise co-opt insurgents via political or economic means; pursue, then capture or kill more hardline al-Shabaab members; or being satisfied with clearing al-Shabaab from southern Somalia, simply allow the militants to disperse to the north so they can regroup to fight another day. If Kenya does not counter-radicalize, capture, or kill the majority of al-Shabaab members during the course of its operations in Somalia, there is no guarantee that its northern border will remain secure from attacks by remnants of the militant group.

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Force Strength. Conventional wisdom states that a nonpermissive intervention with limited indigenous security capacity may require a troop-to-population ratio of 10 to 20 soldiers per 1,000

people.¹⁴ The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs puts the population of the Gedo, Middle Juba, and Lower Juba regions at just over 1 million people.¹⁵ Accordingly, the KDF may need as few as 10,000 to as many as 20,000 troops to stabilize this part of Somalia.

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The KDF entered Somalia with approximately 2,000 troops and has been working with as many as 4,500 Somali militia members who are, for the moment, aligned with the Somali government.¹⁶ (To be clear, this is a high-end estimate of TFG-aligned militia members.)

As the invasion progresses, the KDF plans to turn conquered territories over to TFG-aligned forces, such as the Ras Kamboni Brigade, Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ), and the Kenya-trained Jubaland militia. However, Kenya's reliance on these forces has potential peaks and pitfalls. On one hand, this could increase the legitimacy of Kenya's operation in the eyes of the local population. On the other hand, such forces in Somalia tend to have transient allegiances based on temporal self-interests and may eventually suffer the high defection rates seen with TFG troops in other parts of the country.¹⁷ Moreover, should TFG-aligned forces commit human rights abuses, as they sometimes have in the past, the population might perceive the KDF as guilty by association. As a result, the Kenyan forces run the risk of losing the goodwill and cooperation of the local population, which are vital in such operations.

Civilian Casualties and Humanitarian Access. Al-Shabaab has routinely restricted

population movements in parts of Somalia, and has used civilians as human shields by attacking enemy forces from heavily populated areas and withdrawing immediately. In many instances, TFG and AMISOM forces have subsequently responded with indiscriminate fire and shelling, causing significant civilian casualties.¹⁸ To prevent the local population from being supportive of KDF or TFG presence in the area, al-Shabaab is likely to resurrect this human shielding tactic as the invading forces advance toward more heavily populated areas. Aware of the fallout that would result from heavy civilian casualties during Operation *Linda Nchi*, the Kenyan military issued a warning to civilians via Twitter that attacks on known al-Shabaab camps near 10 towns, including Kismayo, were imminent.¹⁹ Yet civilians who heed KDF warnings and vacate these areas may face additional hardship in inhospitable rural areas, with limited access to shelter, clean water, and health care. Consequently, as it advances toward more heavily populated areas, the KDF may be unable to minimize civilian casualties without placing local communities at greater risk for the second-order effects of conflict, such as disease and starvation.

The Kenyan military appears to understand the important role that humanitarian assistance could play in stabilizing southern Somalia, but the KDF's operationalization of this understanding has not been evident. While the Kenyan military was anticipating that humanitarian aid organizations would take the initiative and enter areas cleared of al-Shabaab, there has been a notable shortfall of humanitarian assistance delivery in these areas due to a possible lack of prior coordination with the relevant humanitarian stakeholders or a divergence in priorities between the military and these stakeholders.²⁰ Many communities in southern Somalia remain heavily reliant on humanitarian

assistance, but there have been reports that KDF operations have, albeit unintentionally, created operational challenges for humanitarian access.²¹ Military operations in the region have limited the ability of the population to move to areas of greater food security, as they fear being caught in the crossfire. Such operations have also delayed the distribution of seeds and tools so communities can prepare for the planting season and mitigate food insecurity during the months ahead. With these factors in mind, any local support that Kenyan forces are able to gain may wane as communities in southern Somalia continue to experience hardship as a result of KDF operations.

Control of Territory and Local Governance. Although establishing mechanisms of governance in southern Somalia is not within the purview of KDF operations, challenges related to control over local territory have the potential to detract from, or even derail, any military success Kenya may encounter. For example, given the strategic and economic value that Kismayo represents for any faction that holds it, there is no guarantee that the fight over the city would stop if it is conquered and turned over to TFG-aligned militias. According to the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia, al-Shabaab generates between \$35 million and \$50 million per year from port revenues from Kismayo, and to a lesser extent, Marka and Baraawe in Lower Shabelle.²² With the common enemy either vanquished or temporarily dispersed, TFG alliances of convenience may collapse, as armed groups compete for control over these lucrative territories. Therefore, expelling al-Shabaab from southern Somalia carries a risk that stability will not come to this part of Somalia unless some political authority—local or national—develops or is imposed to fill the power vacuum left by

al-Shabaab. Many analysts of Somali affairs are not optimistic that the Kampala Accord and its consequent roadmap to end the transitional period will result in the establishment of an effective central government.²³ Therefore, in the absence of a central authority, local governance may be most likely to have an impact on KDF operations in southern Somalia.

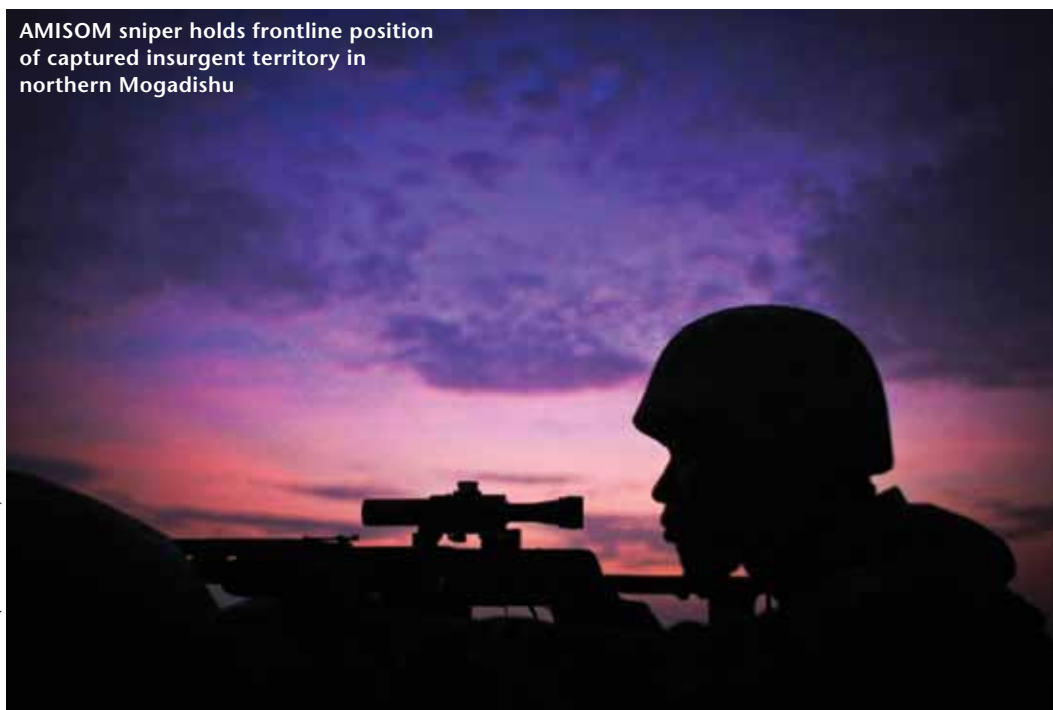
Given the amount of local, national, and international equities in Somalia, local government would need to be palatable, at a minimum, not only to the population, but also to the TFG and the international community. These stakeholders are not monolithic, so the KDF will have to be sensitive to a wide range of equities during the course of its operations.

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Presumably, the population would want a local governing authority to assume several functions, including mediating disputes, providing social services, ensuring the rule of law, and providing protection from interclan violence or future al-Shabaab retribution. Since the TFG is the internationally recognized government of Somalia, local government in southern Somalia may have to avoid the impression that it is going the way of Somaliland or Puntland, which have declared independence and autonomy, respectively. Otherwise, the TFG might perceive this entity as yet another threat to the country's territorial integrity, or to the eroding power of the central government in Mogadishu. To satisfy the international community's desire for stability in Somalia, local government might have to pursue actions such

AMISOM sniper holds frontline position
of captured insurgent territory in
northern Mogadishu

UN Photo (Stuart Price)



as renouncing support for the activities of terrorist organizations and allowing Western humanitarian assistance organizations to operate in the region, for example.²⁴ Regardless of how governance develops within the KDF's operating area, if some sort of political engagement strategy is not part of Kenya's campaign plan, any military gains it might make in southern Somalia may be short lived. That said, a local government that develops while these territories are under KDF occupation runs the risk of being perceived as imposed rather than locally constructed.

Exit Strategy? From the outset of Operation *Linda Nchi*, many have questioned the nature, or even the existence of Kenya's exit strategy. Several weeks into its operations in Somalia, the Kenyan government accepted requests by the African Union and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for it to consider integrating its forces into the next phase of AMISOM troop deployment.²⁵ Since AMISOM received its initial mandate in January 2007, AU member states have not been able to muster enough troops to meet its authorized force strength. As of mid-April 2012, there are approximately 10,000 Ugandan, Burundian, and Djiboutian soldiers in Somalia. The UN Security Council has approved the AU request to expand AMISOM force strength to 17,731 soldiers and absorb KDF troops as part of the mission.²⁶ Burundi has pledged to send an additional battalion, which may deploy in mid-2012. Djibouti and Sierra Leone have pledged one battalion each; the former deployed an initial contingent of 200 soldiers in December 2011 and is expected to send another 650 shortly, while the projected deployment date of the latter is unknown. If all deployment commitments are met, an anticipated KDF contingent of 4,660 troops would meet authorized AMISOM force strength. While there had been concerns that Kenya would resist having KDF troops

under the mission's Ugandan force commander, it appears that KDF officers will be integrated into AMISOM leadership as the heads of intelligence and public relations.²⁷

Yet the lack of adequate force strength is just one of the challenges AMISOM faces. Unable to finance the mission on its own, the African Union has had to rely on international assistance. As a result, funding for predeployment training, payment of troop allowances, logistic support, and reimbursement for contingent-owned equipment have been ad hoc, insufficient, and often unreliable. Such financial problems have contributed to the inability of troop-contributing countries to secure the support they need in order to deploy to Somalia in a timely fashion, and they may also delay the arrival of the expected reinforcements until well into 2012.

Despite AMISOM's many challenges, increased cooperation between KDF and AU operations could be mutually beneficial. Kenya and the African Union share a desired endstate in Somalia; both ultimately seek to eliminate the threats that result from continued instability in the country. Similarly, both Kenya and the African Union need something from each other. Likely inundated by unanticipated operational costs, Kenya would like to "re-hat" KDF troops in Somalia under AMISOM in order to alleviate the financial burden of the war. In return, the African Union would like KDF troops to help consolidate the gains that AMISOM has made since al-Shabaab's retreat from Mogadishu and create the space necessary for the effective implementation of the roadmap to end the transitional period. To this end, the African Union is developing a concept of operations that would allow AMISOM to extend the authority of the TFG beyond the capital city. As part of AMISOM, Kenyan troops would continue to operate in

the Middle and Lower Juba regions, where al-Shabaab most directly threatens Kenyan interests.²⁸ Ugandan and Burundian troops would be deployed to the Banadir, Middle and Lower Shabelle, Gedo, Bay, and Bakool regions, while Djiboutian troops would be deployed to the Galgudud, Mudug, and Hiraa regions.²⁹

However, considering the current security environment, it may not be feasible for AMISOM to exert pro-TFG control from Mogadishu down through the aforementioned operating areas—even if it were to reach its authorized force strength. AMISOM has become overextended as a result of al-Shabaab's retreat from the capital.³⁰ Since mid-November 2011, there has been a notable uptick in attacks against TFG and AMISOM forces in Mogadishu. The recent surge in violence in addition to the lack of critical enablers and force multipliers, such as air assets and military engineering capabilities, may complicate AMISOM's intent to pursue operations outside the city.

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As part of its exit strategy, Kenya might also hope that the United Nations would eventually assume the AMISOM mission, providing manpower to relieve battle-weary KDF troops, and a reliable resource stream to alleviate the problems the AU mission has faced. Yet AMISOM itself has suffered from unfulfilled commitments made by the international community. The original understanding was that AMISOM would evolve into a UN peacekeeping mission upon the expiration of its initial mandate in June 2007, but this has not occurred. Efforts by the United Nations to solicit force commitments from member states

to relieve AMISOM have been met with failure in the past, and there are few indications that the willingness of UN member states to volunteer forces has changed.³¹ Furthermore, in the current global financial environment, it may be unlikely that the international community would devote resources to what has long been viewed as a losing battle. That said, if there is a breakthrough on the political side (as a result of the Kampala Accord and the roadmap to end the transition) or the military side (as a result of KDF and/or AMISOM operations), this may increase the willingness of UN member states to contribute forces or funding.

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Implications for Domestic Security

Aside from the challenges that Operation *Linda Nchi* may encounter, the invasion of Somalia may have made Kenya more vulnerable on the domestic front. Since al Qaeda's 1998 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya has feared similar high-casualty acts of terrorism. Although al-Shabaab has threatened to attack Kenya for several years, the group has never executed a substantial terrorist attack on Kenyan soil. By invading Somalia, Kenya provided ample justification for al-Shabaab to finally make good on its threats, and it is all but certain that the group will do its best to bring the war home to the Kenyan population. Due to the fact that al-Shabaab was reeling prior to the invasion, large-scale reprisals similar to the 2010 bombings in Kampala, Uganda, are unlikely. More likely are more small-scale "lone wolf"

attacks by al-Shabaab sympathizers in urban areas and along the border in Wajir, Mandera, and Garissa of the kind that have been occurring since late October 2011.

Kenya's recent approach to Somalia has also risked exacerbating tensions with its ethnic Somali community. Days into Operation *Linda Nchi*, the government announced a parallel operation to root out al-Shabaab sympathizers in Kenya, asserting that al-Shabaab "was like a big animal with a tail in Somalia and a head in Eastleigh [a suburb of Nairobi that is home to many Somali-owned businesses and a large refugee community]." There have already been reports documenting serious human rights violations, including cases of ethnic Somalis being profiled and discriminated against due to their ethnicity, and in the worst cases being beaten and mistreated, arbitrarily detained, and even deported unless they have appropriate documentation of their legal status in Kenya or can afford to bribe local security forces.³² The manner in which Kenya is handling its Kenyan Somali and Somali refugee communities risks alienating these communities and could create an attractive recruitment pool for al-Shabaab's plans to attack Kenya.

Conclusion

In spite of Kenya's articulation of a limited vision for Operation *Linda Nchi*, it has signed on for a mission that has the potential to be much broader in scope and duration. Al-Shabaab was just one symptom of Somalia's instability; therefore, dismantling the group will not necessarily eliminate the many threats flowing over the Kenya-Somalia border. Considering the range of threats that have continued to emanate from Somalia over the past two decades, it is actually stability that is Kenya's desired endstate in Somalia—not simply the demise of al-Shabaab.

If KDF operations are intended to be a means by which Kenya can realize its desired endstate, the country will ultimately have to address Somalia's other sources of instability that are not directly related to al-Shabaab.

Yet even Kenya's al-Shabaab-centric military operations in Somalia are fraught with challenges. The timing of Operation *Linda Nchi* was suboptimal, starting at the outset of rainy season, at a time when al-Shabaab's ability to mobilize support was withering, and at a time of great humanitarian crisis within the KDF operating area. In addition to having limited combat experience for such complex operations, the KDF did not enter Somalia with sufficient force strength to stabilize even the regions adjacent to Kenyan territory. To spearhead its advance, the KDF worked with local proxies that tended to be unreliable and have shifting interests and allegiances. Although many Somalia analysts were not optimistic about a political breakthrough at the national level, Kenya's invasion did not give developments such as the Kampala Accord and the roadmap to end the transition sufficient time to fail or succeed. At the local level, it was unclear what structure of local or national governance would fill the vacuum left by al-Shabaab, allowing military gains to lead to a sustained increase in security and stability in the region. Finally, Kenya's exit strategy, if it may be called such, was predicated on the willingness, capability, and reliability of actors such as the African Union and United Nations, which have proved to be quite the contrary in the past.

Certainly, Kenya has the right to defend its territorial sovereignty from external threats, yet by invading Somalia with such limited objectives and military capabilities, it may have also made itself more vulnerable to al-Shabaab on the domestic front. With the

situation as it was at the time of the invasion, Kenya should have considered keeping its military involvement light, under the radar, and restricted to an advisory role. Given the extent and complexity of the situation in Somalia, the bulk of the war chest might have been better allocated toward better protecting the Kenyan homeland to make the country less of a soft target for terrorist attacks. On land, Kenya should have considered focusing on securing its border with Somalia, rooting out corruption related to cross-border smuggling and forged travel documents, and increasing domestic intelligence and surveillance capabilities to better detect external and possibly homegrown threats. Internal security forces should have sought to resist profiling ethnic Somalis and perpetrating human rights abuses in order to avoid alienating these populations. At sea, Kenya might have prioritized expanding its coast guard so that it not only has sufficient assets to patrol territorial waters, but is also capable of conducting maritime interdiction operations that target illicit activity in the maritime domain that potentially fuels the war machine in Somalia and facilitates terrorist access to Kenyan territory.

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Operation *Linda Nchi* has many inherent risks and potential points of failure. Given that Somalia's sources of instability have political and humanitarian dimensions, it is unlikely that military operations alone will stabilize the country and ensure Kenya's national security and territorial sovereignty. For Kenya, the best outcome of its operations

would be that the international community quickly assumes some of the burden and Kenya would get some reprieve from Somalia's instability. More likely, however, Kenya will find itself bogged down in Somalia as part of AMISOM, prey to the intransigence of the TFG and the shifting alliances of proxy militias, the victim of al-Shabaab retributions on the home front, and suffering from the perpetual fatigue of the international community to keep throwing money at the Somalia problem. **PRISM**

Notes

¹ As of early December, al-Shabaab was reportedly considering changing its name to the Somali Islamic Emirate (Imaarah Islamiya).

² Peter Wilkinson, "Will Kenya's Battle with Islamists in Somalia succeed?" CNN, November 3, 2011, available at <www.cnn.com/2011/11/02/world/africa/kenya-battle-islamists-somalia/index.html>.

³ Charles Onyango-Obbo, "How War Boosts Kenya's Regional, Global Clout," *The East African*, November 20, 2011, available at <www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/How+war+boosts+Kenyas+regional+global+clout+/-/2558/1276220/-/muxcupz/-/index.html>.

⁴ United Nations (UN) Department of Public Information, press conference by Special Representative of Secretary-General for Somalia, August 10, 2011, available at <www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2011/110810_Somalia.doc.htm>.

⁵ International Crisis Group, *Somalia: The Transitional Government on Life Support*, Crisis Group Africa Report No. 170, February 21, 2011, available at <[www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/somalia/170%20Somalia%20The%20Transitional%20Government%20on%20Life%20Support.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/somalia/170%20Somalia%20The%20Transitional%20Government%20on%20Life%20Support.pdf)>.

⁶ Human Rights Watch, "'You Don't Know Who to Blame': War Crimes in Somalia," August 2011, available at <www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/somalia0811webcover.pdf>.

⁷ UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia," December 9, 2011, available at <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Full_Document_62.pdf>.

⁸ UN High Commissioner for Refugees, "UN High Commissioner for Refugees Applauds Kenya's Decision to Open Ifo II Camp," available at <www.unhcr.org/4e2019869.html>.

⁹ Xan Rice, "Somali refugee settlement in Kenya swells as row grows over empty camp," *The Guardian*, available at <www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/aug/11/somali-refugees-kenya-camp-empty>.

¹⁰ Human Rights Watch.

¹¹ See Fred Oluoch, "Why Kenya is not making any strides in the war against Al Shabaab two months into incursion," *The East African*, December 12, 2011, available at <www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/-/2558/1287200/-/nh8xxyz/-/index.html>, and "How joining Amisom will boost Kenya's campaign in Somalia," *The East African*, December 12, 2011, available at <www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/How+joining+Amisom+will+boost+Kenya+campaign++in+Somalia/-/2558/1287192/-/6aebgb/-/index.html>.

¹² International Crisis Group, *Somalia's Divided Islamists*, Crisis Group Africa Briefing No. 74, May 18, 2010, available at <www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/somalia/B74%20Somalias%20Divided%20Islamists.pdf>.

¹³ "Somalia: Rebels Change Tactics Against Kenya Forces," *AllAfrica.com*, November 12, 2011, available at <<http://allafrica.com/stories/20111120171.html>>.

¹⁴ James Dobbins et al., *The Beginner's Guide to Nation-Building* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2007), xxvi.

IN SOMALIA, KENYA RISKS DEATH BY A THOUSAND CUTS

¹⁵ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Somalia Drought/Famine Maps, Facts and Analysis, available at <<http://ochaonline.un.org/somalia/Clusters/AreaBasedMapsFamineSituationAnalysis/tabid/7633/language/en-US/Default.aspx>>.

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