Treasury Designates Terror Operatives and Illicit Charcoal Smugglers in Somalia

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WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) targeted 26 individuals and entities connected with the terrorist group al-Shabaab, including 15 financial facilitators and operatives, four charcoal smugglers, and seven of their associated companies. This action targets key regional leaders, affiliates, and members of the terrorist group in Somalia who are involved in a wide range of activities in support of al-Shabaab, including financial facilitation, business activities, collection of funds on behalf of the terrorist group, proliferation of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), and illegal charcoal smuggling from Somalia, all of which have exacerbated local conflicts and suffering.

"Today's designations highlight al-Shabaab's reliance on networks of regional and international actors and entities, who provide funds, direct attacks, and enable the group's malign activities, including the manufacturing and planting of explosives in local communities and fostering corruption," said Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian E. Nelson. "The United States remains committed to leveraging our authorities in support of our partners, such as the Federal Government of Somalia, in their efforts to counter terrorist threats, which undermine both national and regional stability and security."

These OFAC actions are taken pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, as amended, which targets terrorist groups and their supporters, and E.O. 13536, as amended, which targets actors who directly or indirectly threaten the peace, security, or stability of Somalia. Concurrent with Treasury's designations, the U.S. Department of State designated five al-Shabaab leaders pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for their leadership roles within al-Shabaab.

AL-SHABAAB FUNDRAISING AND OPERATIONAL NETWORKS IN SOMALIA

The al-Shabaab-associated individuals designated today have served as key regional leaders and members of the terrorist group in the Lower Shabelle, Lower Juba, and Middle Juba regions of

Somalia. They have been involved in extensive revenue generation and other activities in support of al-Shabaab through the illegal fee collections from local Somalis, coercing local residents to follow al-Shabaab's directions through its illegitimate "police force," known as the Hisbah, kidnappings, and facilitating the manufacture and placement of IEDs. The illicit activities of the al-Shabaab members designated today have generated the equivalent of hundreds of thousands of U.S. dollars to support al-Shabaab operations and weapons procurement in southern Somalia. Amid ongoing drought, food insecurity, and violent instability, money that is being collected by al-Shabaab could instead be used to help local Somalis sustain themselves through these challenges.

The following are 15 Somalia-based al-Shabaab regional leaders and financial facilitators who are being designated pursuant to Treasury's counterterrorism authority:

Hasaan Abshir Xuuroow (**Xuuroow**) is an al-Shabaab intelligence and finance officer who has led a group of other al-Shabaab associates to collect mandatory "donations" from civilians in Kismayo, Somalia. Xuuroow has taken livestock from owners as donations for al-Shabaab, later auctioning them off to make a profit for personal financial gain.

Aadan Yusuf Saciid Ibrahim (**Ibrahim**) is an al-Shabaab mandatory donations collector in Lower Shabelle, Somalia. Specifically, Ibrahim has been responsible for enforcing the collection of fees associated with livestock and market sales. Ibrahim has levied heavy charges on behalf of al-Shabaab but retains at least some of those profits for his own personal enrichment

As of early 2022, **Mumin Dheere** (**Dheere**) was the deputy emir of Wayanta, Lower Juba, Somalia. Dheere has coordinated retaliatory attacks for al-Shabaab by targeting Somali and African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) security forces, and has planned to use vehicle borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs) and mortars in the attacks. Separately, Dheere has also planned to attack Kismayo International Airport.

Macalin Burhan (**Burhan**) was appointed as the al-Shabaab Hisbah Commander of the Wayanta area in Lower Juba, Somalia, in late 2021. As recently as mid-2022, al-Shabaab had imprisoned more than 80 civilians in the Wayanta area. Burhan, in his position as the al-Shabaab regional Hisbah Commander, has refused to release the civilians.

Ali Ahmed Hussein (**Hussein**) is an al-Shabaab emir in the Lower Shabelle region of Somalia. Hussein has demanded payment from local clans, assisted in the movement of al-Shabaab fighters who kidnapped citizens in Lower Shabelle, and purchased and stored weapons for al-Shabaab militants in the region.

Maxamed Cali (**Cali**) is an al-Shabaab company commander in charge of 100 fighters. Cali reports to Dheere and has regularly associated with Roobow, Burhan, and Xuuroow.

Ahmed Kabadhe (**Kabadhe**) was the al-Shabaab emir in Jubaland, Somalia, and has ordered al-Shabaab fighters under his command to attack and continually harass local security forces. In late 2022, al-Shabaab members Kabadhe, Dheere, Cali, and Burhan, all also designated today, plotted an attack using VBIEDs and suicide bombers.

In mid-2021, **Siyaat Ayuto** (**Ayuto**) was appointed as the al-Shabaab Hisbah commander for the Wiliyat area, Lower Juba, Somalia. Previously, Ayuto served as the Hisbah commander of Beer Xaani, Somalia. Ayuto has also served as the al-Shabaab emir for Kismayo operations.

Mohamed Abdullah Hirey is the al-Shabaab Governor of the Juba Region and has participated in pro-al-Shabaab propaganda.

As of early 2022, **Cabdi Roobow** (**Roobow**) was a mid-level al-Shabaab commander in charge of the Wayanta area in Lower Juba, Somalia. Roobow, with Dheere and another al-Shabaab official, has planned attacks against Abdi Biroole, Lower Juba, Somalia.

Hassan Yariisow Aadan is an al-Shabaab commander who has collected fees from locals in the Lower Shabelle area to support al-Shabaab.

Siciid Abdullahi Aadan (**Aadan**) is an al-Shabaab member who has operated as an IED expert and facilitator. Separately, Aadan has also extracted fees from the local population on behalf of al-Shabaab.

Shiek Aadan Abuukar Malayle is an al-Shabaab leader who oversees the collection of fees from the local population in Lower Shabelle, Somalia. The money collected by al-Shabaab is then used to purchase weapons, ammunition, and supplies for the group.

Aadan Jiss (**Jiss**) serves as a Hisbah commander for al-Shabaab. Jiss has also managed a detention center and handled detainments for al-Shabaab's so-called "courts."

Cumar Guhaad is an al-Shabaab commander in the Lower Shabelle, Somalia, who has used his leadership position in al-Shabaab to order clans in the region to pay large sums of money to support the terrorist group.

Hasaan Abshir Xuuroow, Aadan Yusuf Saciid Ibrahim, Mumin Dheere, Macalin Burhan, Ali Ahmed Hussein, Maxamed Cali, Ahmed Kabadhe, Siyaat Ayuto, Hassan Yariisow Aadan, and Siciid Abdullahi Aadan are being designated pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, al-Shabaab.

Mohamed Abdullah Hirey, Cabdi Roobow, Shiek Aadan Abuukar Malayle, Aadan Jiss, and Cumar Guhaad are being designated pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for having materially assisted,

sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, al-Shabaab.

SOMALI CHARCOAL SMUGGLING NETWORK

The four charcoal smugglers designated today have operated primarily between Somalia and the Persian Gulf, engaging in the illegal export of charcoal from Somalia. Charcoal smuggling has contributed to local conflicts and revenue generation for groups like al-Shabaab, as well as causing deforestation and other environmental damage. The illicit charcoal trade has previously generated the equivalent of more than $20 million in revenue per year for its associated smugglers, traffickers, and al-Shabaab. Due to its role in fueling instability in Somalia and serving as a source of revenue for criminal and terrorist organizations, the export and import of Somali charcoal after 2012 was banned pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2036.

Ali Ahmed Naaji

Ali Ahmed Naaji (**Naaji**) has been a supplier and coordinator for the illicit Somali charcoal trade since at least 2013. Naaji has facilitated the export of charcoal from Somalia to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), involving up to 90,000 bags of charcoal in 2016 alone. As part of Naaji's role as a smuggler, he has coordinated between charcoal suppliers, traffickers, and al-Shabaab, to include facilitating payments for moving the charcoal to al-Shabaab. Naaji has also brokered a revenue sharing agreement between the charcoal producers and al-Shabaab, as well as traffickers, and has facilitated revenue payments to al-Shabaab.

Additionally, Naaji is an al-Shabaab financial facilitator and has maintained a relationship with the terrorist group since at least 2011, when he stored and distributed al-Shabaab's petroleum supplies in Somalia. Naaji has also been identified as a former al-Shabaab revenue collector for mandatory donations.

Naaji is the owner and Chief Executive Officer of **Jamame Brothers Company**, a Somalia-based company that has business ties to the UAE, Kenya, Djibouti, China, India, and Pakistan. As recently as mid-2022, Naaji transferred nearly $1.2 million to Jamame Brothers Company to finance al-Shabaab. Naaji has additionally purchased nearly 2,500 metric tons of gasoline and 2,000 metric tons of gas oil for a business linked to the Jamame Brothers Company.

Naaji is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13536, as amended, for having engaged, directly or indirectly, in the import or export of charcoal from Somalia on or after February 22, 2012. Jamame Brothers Company is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13536, as amended, for being owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by Naaji.

Bashir Khalif Musse and his UAE- and Djibouti-based Companies

Since at least 2013, **Bashir Khalif Musse** (**Musse**), a businessman based in Dubai, UAE, has been involved in the illicit charcoal trade out of Somalia. Musse has facilitated the transshipment of charcoal through Iraq and Iran ultimately to the UAE. In addition, Musse has used fraudulent charcoal shipping paperwork, such as certificates of origin and bills of lading, to facilitate his charcoal smuggling operations. As recently as 2022, Musse has continued to engage in the illicit charcoal trade, having illicitly shipped approximately 4,400 metric tons of charcoal from Somalia to the UAE.

Musse owns or controls the following UAE-based companies also designated today: **Sitti General Trading LLC**, **Kismayo General Trading LLC**, and **Bushra Bachir Shipping and Logistics Services L.L.C.** Musse additionally owns or controls Djibouti-based companies **Red Sea Transit & Transport Service** and **Royal Shipping Agency**.

Sitti General Trading LLC was the consignee and Bushra Bachir Shipping and Logistics Services L.L.C. was the charter party of the 2022 charcoal shipment from Somalia to the UAE, in which Musse was involved.

Since at least 2013, Kismayo General Trading LLC has been involved in the production of fraudulent paperwork and repackaging of charcoal cargoes to disguise their origin to facilitate its import to Persian Gulf countries.

Musse has similarly used Red Sea Transit & Transport Service to obtain false bills of lading. Naaji was also responsible for a shipment that used both Red Sea Transit & Transport Service and Kismayo General Trading LLC.

Musse is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13536, as amended, for having engaged, directly or indirectly, in the import or export of charcoal from Somalia on or after February 22, 2012. Sitti General Trading LLC, Kismayo General Trading LLC, Red Sea Transit & Transport Service, Royal Shipping Agency, and Bushra Bachir Shipping and Logistics Services L.L.C. are being designated pursuant to E.O. 13536, as amended, for being owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by Musse.

Mariam Barreh

Mariam Barreh (**Barreh**) is the director of Bushra Bachir Shipping and Logistics Services L.L.C., which was implicated in the 2022 shipment of Somali charcoal in which Musse had an interest. Barreh is a partner and investor in Bushra Bachir Shipping and Logistics Services L.L.C., however the business is ultimately controlled by her spouse, Musse.

Barreh is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13536, as amended, for having engaged, directly or indirectly, in the import or export of charcoal from Somalia on or after February 22, 2012.

Abdulwahab Noor Abdi

As of 2014, **Abdulwahab Noor Abdi** (**Abdi**), also known as "Tomato," had brokered the charter for a charcoal delivery to Oman from al-Shabaab-controlled territory in Somalia. Abdi's operations have been referred to by locals as "Iskaashatada Yaanyo," or the "Tomato Association."

Naaji, Abdi's business partner, has sent funds to Abdi totaling approximately $200,000. Both Abdi and Naaji have also previously collected funds for al-Shabaab.

Abdi is a five percent shareholder in and has been the General Manager of **Al Nezam Al Asasy General Trading L.L.C** since 2017. Abdi was also previously the Director of Al Nezam Al Asasy General Trading L.L.C since 2012.

Al Nezam Al Asasy General Trading L.L.C has separately received nearly $200,000 from Naaji. Between 2020 and 2022, Al Nezam Al Asasy General Trading L.L.C and Jamame Brothers Company have been involved in receiving at least ten Somali charcoal shipments in the UAE.

Abdi is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13536, as amended, for having engaged, directly or indirectly, in the import or export of charcoal from Somalia on or after February 22, 2012. Al Nezam Al Asasy General Trading L.L.C is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13536, as amended, for being owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by Abdi.

SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the designated persons described above that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. In addition, any entities that are owned, directly or

indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, 50 percent or more by one or more blocked persons are also blocked. Unless authorized by a general or specific license issued by OFAC, or exempt, OFAC's regulations generally prohibit all transactions by U.S. persons or within (or transiting) the United States that involve any property or interests in property of designated or otherwise blocked persons.

In addition, financial institutions and other persons that engage in certain transactions or activities with the sanctioned entities and individuals may expose themselves to sanctions or be subject to an enforcement action. The prohibitions include the making of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services by, to, or for the benefit of any designated person, or the receipt of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services from any such person.

Furthermore, engaging in certain transactions with a number of the individuals and entities designated today entails risk of secondary sanctions pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended. Pursuant to this authority, OFAC can prohibit or impose strict conditions on the opening or maintaining in the United States of a correspondent account or a payable-through account of a foreign financial institution that knowingly conducted or facilitated any significant transaction on behalf of a Specially Designated Global Terrorist.

The power and integrity of OFAC sanctions derive not only from OFAC's ability to designate and add persons to the SDN List, but also from its willingness to remove persons from the SDN List consistent with the law. The ultimate goal of sanctions is not to punish, but to bring about a positive change in behavior. For information concerning the process for seeking removal from an OFAC list, including the SDN List, please refer to OFAC's Frequently Asked Question 897 here. For detailed information on the process to submit a request for removal from an OFAC sanctions list, please click here.

Click here for more information on the individuals and entities designated today.

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