



(U//FOUO) Potential Threat to Inauguration

19 January 2009

(U//FOUO) Prepared by DHS/I&A Intelligence Watch and Warning Division and the FBI Counter Terrorism Division. ITACG reviewed this product.

(U) Scope

(U//FOUO) DHS and the FBI are concerned about the threat individuals affiliated with al-Shabaab—a radical Islamic extremist group active in Somalia—may pose to the Homeland, including locations and events of political significance, such as the upcoming Presidential Inauguration. DHS and FBI continue to monitor all reporting to establish the credibility of this threat; however, information concerning the threat is limited.

(U) Recent Threat Reporting Synopsis

(U//FOUO) Recent information obtained from an individual overseas whose credibility has not been established, indicated individuals associated with East Africa-based al-Shabaab may attempt to travel to the United States with the intention to conduct an attack during the Presidential Inauguration.

- (U//FOUO) DHS and the FBI remain cognizant that a threat to the Inauguration does not necessarily mean that the target would be the Washington D.C. area, but could be elsewhere within the United States.

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(U) Potential Threat from al-Shabaab to the United States

(U//FOUO) Though past attacks perpetrated by al-Shabaab have focused on targets in Somalia—to include Somali Government officials, Ethiopian military forces and international peace keepers—the organization possesses an international support network it may be able to leverage for international operations. Al-Shabaab operates a number of militant training camps where it trains foreign fighters, and, as multiple media sources have reported, it may be able to attract recruits from within certain Somali communities inside the United States.

- (U//FOUO) According to open source reporting, several Somali men from around the United States, including Minneapolis, may have traveled to Somalia to fight alongside Islamic insurgents, including al-Shabaab.
- (U//FOUO) Shirwa Ahmed, a naturalized US citizen, was reported in the press to have blown himself up in a suicide bombing in northern Somalia on 29 October 2008.

(U) Outlook

(U//FOUO) Al-Shabaab has demonstrated violence in furtherance of its radical ideology, resulting in its designation as a foreign terrorist organization by the US Department of State in 2008. With the Presidential Inauguration imminent, DHS and the FBI are providing state and local partners with this advisory information in an effort to raise awareness and develop further information on any possible threat.

(U) Reporting Notice

(U) DHS encourages recipients of this document to report information concerning suspicious or criminal activity to DHS and the FBI. The DHS National Operations Center (NOC) can be reached by telephone at 202-282-9685 or by e-mail at NOC.Fusion@dhs.gov. For information affecting the private sector and critical infrastructure, contact the National Infrastructure Coordinating Center (NICC), a sub-element of the NOC. The NICC can be reached by telephone at 202-282-9201 or by e-mail at NICC@dhs.gov. The FBI regional phone numbers can be found online at <http://www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/fo.htm>. When available, each report submitted should include the date, time, location, type of activity, number of people and type of equipment used for the activity, the name of the submitting company or organization, and a designated point of contact.

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