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Author: Abu Hafess

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Title: Status of an AQ camp in southern Somalia

Full Text: English & Arabic

SYNOPSIS

This twelve-page text describes the status of a camp in southern Somalia, "The Luuq Camp". Without going into detail, the letter also discusses the status of neighboring operatives, domestically and internationally. HF radios are explained as the method of communication, with a standard frequency rotation schedule (based on odd/even days and time-of-day).

The letter begins with a description of the camp's location, regional information, and security. It discusses available resources (weapons, personnel), specific needs (money, uniforms), and training. It references financing for operations in Djibouti, Nairobi, and Ethiopia.

THEMES

The author's description of the camp's location exhibits a thorough understanding of not only the geography and climate, but also how they affect the security and operations at the camp. He points out seasonal weaknesses, suggesting the intent is to have the camp operational long-term.

The document indicates that AQ sought to reduce the travel cost of its members who attended its training programs.

The author discusses the status of training in the camp, saying the first group of forty will be done soon. He says they were in poor physical shape due to malnutrition. Additionally, he expresses urgent need for uniforms and shoes (among other things). This suggests the recruits are of extremely poor backgrounds. The author regards them with severe disdain and contempt. As far as recruiting others, though, he suggests they might attract others "from various regions" should they invite non-Muslims the opportunity to convert.

According to the author, recruits are funneled through the Nairobi office, which functions as an administrative hub as well. They go on to either Ogaden (in Ethiopia) or the Luuq camp in Somalia. A possible alternative base in Kenya is dismissed because of corruption, crime, and the high cost-of-living (although it is interesting to note that the author incorrectly identifies Boosasso as being in Kenya, when it is a city on Somalia's north coast). The operation in Djibouti is managed by a single person who functions as a place-holder in a location the author considers to be of strategic importance. Finally, he mentions a meeting in

Sudan. References to these activities underline the fluidity with which members move between regions and countries. It also reveals some of the organizational complexity including methods of communication and financing.