

For Immediate Release

World-Check profiles key al-Shabaab operatives years ahead of OFAC

London, 27 November, 2008. On November 20th, the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated three key leaders of the al-Shabaab terrorist movement in Somalia. The three operatives – Ahmed Abdi aw-Mohammed, Issa Osman Issa and Mukhtar Robow -- have led the movement's rise in Somalia since breaking from the Islamic Courts Union in 2006.

World-Check, the leading provider of highly structured risk-related intelligence, consistently stays years ahead of the four most authoritative sanctions lists – US OFAC, UK HM Treasury, EU and UN. In this latest case World-Check's specialist Terrorism and Insurgency Research Unit (TIRU) had detailed profiles of these individuals up to two years before the recent sanctions were issued.

World-Check's TIRU monitors Jihadist networks in eastern Africa closely; especially al-Shabaab based in Somalia. TIRU has noted the first documented evidence of increased al-Qaeda influence on Shahaab in a video that the group disseminated in October 2008. The video footage captures foreign al-Qaeda operatives training indigenous Somali al-Shabaab fighters. The closer relations could indicate that al-Qaeda aims to use Somalia to train, plan and launch operations, much as it has in the past used safe havens in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"World-Check's TIRU continues to watch the al-Shabaab movement closely, including any links with the piracy scourge," said John Solomon, World-Check's Head of Terrorism Research. "It has added a new threat dimension and possible nexus with terrorism and its financing."

Solomon continued, "World-Check has assembled a remarkable team of analysts that not only have relevant language and regional skills, but also an extremely good grasp of the histories and personalities involved in terrorism and insurgency in volatile regions around the world. TIRU will continue to add relevant intelligence to the unprecedented World-Check database to assist clients in mitigating terrorism-related risk."

About World-Check

World-Check provides its global database of heightened-risk individuals and businesses to more than 3000 institutions in 162 countries, including 47 of the world's 50 largest banks and hundreds of government agencies. World-Check's database of known money launderers, terrorists, narcotics traffickers, shell banks and sanctioned entities among others is unparalleled in its depth, reliability and coverage. The risk-relevance of its Politically Exposed Person (PEP) coverage is also unsurpassed. World-Check's database is relied upon by institutions to enhance their Anti Money Laundering (AML) and Know Your Customer (KYC) screening, Enhanced Due Diligence (EDD), fraud prevention and Counter Terrorist Financing (CFT) systems by efficiently screening customers, transactions and employees for potential risk. World-Check's intelligence also finds direct application in PEP risk screening processes. World-Check offers a downloadable data file for the automated screening of unlimited records, as well as a simple online service for instant entity screening. For more information please visit www.world-check.com

ABOUT TIRU

TIRU is made up of open source intelligence specialists from around the world that monitor global terrorism and insurgency. The unit collects publicly available information from governments, non-governmental organizations, academia and global media including 'grey literature' in multiple languages including: Arabic, Urdu, Pashto, Tajik, Russian, Farsi, Tamil, Turkish, Korean, Chinese and Bahasa, amongst others. Its target and network-centric approach to research highlights risk, identification and funding information. TIRU is strategically placed around the globe to give World-Check clients around the clock terrorism coverage.

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