

UK/RSA SECRET

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SUBJECT: KIDNAP OF JUDITH CELIA TEBBUTT

BEGINS

On 10 September 2011, British national Judith Celia Tebbutt was kidnapped from the Kiwayu Safari resort in Lamu, Kenya. Judith's husband, David Gordon Tebbutt, was killed in the attack. SIS assess the instigators of the kidnap were members of Al Shabaab

Alongside our international partners, SIS are attempting to locate Judith and identify her captors. We would welcome any assistance that your service could provide. We are especially interested in:

1. exact location of Judith, how is she being held, in what circumstances?
2. how is she being moved, if they are still moving.
3. who is holding her? how many mujahideen? Nationalities?
4. what is the capability and intent of the group holding her?
5. what are the links of the group to Al Shabaab? Senior commanders? Foreign fighters?
6. who planned/orchestrated the abduction?

We have provided below our current intelligence picture:

INTRODUCTION

1. On 10 September 2011, Briton David Gordon Tebbutt and his wife Judith Celia Tebbutt were attacked in their hotel near Lamu, on the Kenyan coast near the Somali border. David Tebbutt was shot and killed in a skirmish with militants and Judith Tebbutt was abducted. Our early assessment is that militants linked to al-Shabaab are responsible for the kidnapping.

2. The couple were staying at Kiwayu Safari Village (KSV), a remote resort near Lamu, 43km from the Somali border. It is thought that Judith Tebbutt has been taken to Ras Kamboni, a small harbour just inside Somalia border. We judge that Judith Tebbutt will have been further transported to Somalia.

3. Shabaab commander Kahale Fama Khale is believed to have been involved in the murder of David Tebbutt and kidnap of Judith Tebbutt. Khale has previously expressed a desire to kidnap westerners from Lamu. On 9 - 10 September, Khale was reportedly located in Ras Kamboni near the Kenya/Somali border.

4. Latest information suggests that on the morning of 11 September, seven individuals and a female were seen boarding a speed boat in Ras Kamboni. We assess the female is likely to be identical with Judith

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Tebbutt. Kenyan National Security and Intelligence Service (NSIS) assessment was that the boat was destined for Kismayo, Somalia. Error! Reference source not found. While unconfirmed, this strengthens our assessment that Judith Tebbutt has been taken to Somalia.

PREVIOUS THREATS TO KIWAYU SAFARI VILLAGE

5. There is a substantial body of reporting dating back to 2008 of Shabaab commander Kahale Famau Khale's desire to kidnap western tourists from hotels in Lamu including the Kiwayu Safari Village.

6. In November 2008 four Shabaab militiamen were arrested near the hotel where they had apparently been observing the hotel. The Kenyan National Security Intelligence Agency (NSIS) at the time assessed that the militiamen were conducting reconnaissance to determine the security presence, and believed that they may have been planning to kidnap westerners or senior Kenyan government officials.

7. Since this incident in 2008, there has been periodic interest from Khale in abducting western tourists from the KSV. In February 2011, Khale had tasked Shabaab associates to monitor tourism cruises around the Lamu archipelago with the intention of abducting western tourists to hold them for ransom in Somalia. Further reporting from March 2011 suggests that Khale had expressed an interest in stealing a dhow that could transport kidnapped western tourists to Ras Kamoni in one and a half hours, rather than taking a whole day.

8. Intelligence from 2010 specifically indicated Khale's desire to kidnap western women from KSV. Khale believed that authorities would make more effort to secure the release of a woman.

9. In February 2010, the Kenyan security services partially disrupted an apparent Shabaab kidnap attempt against westerners at the KSV. A group of Shabaab fighters planned to target females at the KSV, believing that they would grow weak in captivity and thus expedite the payment of a ransom. The group were engaged by Kenyan General Service Unit (GSU) officers and though the guide for the group was arrested the militants fled the scene.

KAHALE FAMAU KHALE - BACKGROUND

10. Kahale Famau Khale (Khale) aka Abdul Ghafur Luqman Ahmed is a Kenyan senior Shabaab commander based in Somalia. He was an associate of deceased Al Qaida operative Saleh Nabhan and more recently has been involved in the facilitation of foreign fighters from Kenya into Somalia. Whilst he has historic links to Al Qaida we assess that here he was acting under the auspices of the Shabaab.

SHABAAB KIDNAP MODUS OPERANDI

11. The coastline between Mombasa and the Somali border is used as a facilitation route for Shabaab with local boat captains being paid to transport people and materiel from coastal towns in Kenya to the Somali border. Within Somalia we judge that there is a high risk to westerners of kidnap/attack by various Somali militia groups. This risk extends to westerners in the Shabaab's operating area in Kenya near the Somali border.

KIDNAPPINGS OF WESTERNERS BY SOMALI GROUPS

12. There is often ambiguity around the sponsors of kidnap operations involving western hostages and whether they are as a result of the actions of Somali pirates, or masterminded by the Shabaab. There have been a handful of recent kidnappings of westerners: a South African couple were kidnapped in November 2010, and a British couple in October 2009, off the coast of Somalia which we assess to be the work of Somali pirates; two French officials were kidnapped in July 2009, which we assess to be the actions of the

Shabaab. In 2008, a Briton and a Kenyan, a Canadian and Australian, and two Italians were also kidnapped from Somalia in separate incidents; the perpetrators of these attacks remain unclear.

Shabaab modus operandi

13. There is limited and conflicting reporting regarding the modus operandi of the Shabaab for its kidnap operations. Demands for release, and the security arrangements in which hostages are kept, vary between hostages. This suggests that the Shabaab has not yet developed a strategy for hostage negotiation.

14. **Demands:** There are conflicting reports regarding the demands made by the Shabaab for previous hostages: intelligence indicates that these have ranged from large ransom payments to demands for the release of extremist prisoners. In the case of Briton Robert Murray-Watson, kidnapped in April 2008 in south-central Somalia, the demands were financial. Intelligence at the time indicated that if no substantial ransom payment was received Murray-Watson would be killed. It is not clear whether Murray-Watson was killed, or died of natural causes or is still alive. If he were killed by the Shabaab, it is likely that the group would have used this for propaganda purposes. However, it remains unclear as to whether this was a Shabaab kidnap operation.

15. The Shabaab was responsible for the kidnap of two French officials in July 2009, one of whom escaped and the other remains captive. Intelligence indicates that there were conflicting demands for their release between the Shabaab and Hizb Al-Islam: the Shabaab reportedly favoured the release of imprisoned extremists in exchange for the official's safe release, whereas the latter favoured a large ransom payment.

16. There have been some indications that the Shabaab has been under financial strain. Reporting from mid August suggested that lack of funds contributed to the Shabaab's withdrawal from Mogadishu. Shabaab leaders ascribed this shortfall in funding to the death of Usama bin Ladin in May 2011 and the current instability in Yemen. There was also widespread opinion in the Shabaab that foreign financial support for the Shabaab had decreased over the last year.

17. This financial pressure is likely to have been a driving factor behind any kidnap plans. We judge that the Shabaab are likely to seek ransom payments for Judith Tebbutt.

18. **Timespans:** Given the conflicting and inconsistent reporting around the kidnappings of westerners and their associated demands, there is very little information regarding the timespan between a hostage being taken and demands being made.

19. **Security:** Reporting on previous kidnaps indicates that hostages are frequently moved around and sometimes held in separate locations: in the case of the two French officials taken in July 2009, both were held in separate locations and were reportedly moved to a different location every night. However, there are also discrepancies in the Shabaab's reported modus operandi: reporting from 2008 indicated that Murray-Watson and his fellow Kenyan hostage were kept together with two Italian hostages. However, the kidnappers did reportedly move camp on a regular basis around the Merca, Jilib, Barawe, Xaranka area. Furthermore, there were reportedly between 10 and 15 men guarding the hostages who were armed and had two vehicles.

20. **Threat to life:** We assess it to be likely that the Shabaab would consider killing a hostage if negotiations are not concluded to their satisfaction.

CONCLUSIONS

21. This is a relatively audacious attack for the Shabaab and would confirm their willingness to conduct

22. The Shabaab do not have a cohesive plan for dealing with hostages. This makes it difficult to predict how the Shabaab will deal with Judith Tebbutt. We assess that she is likely to be in Somalia and the Shabaab are likely to seek ransom payments.

23. We assess that the Shabaab is under financial pressure and this may increase the attractiveness of abducting westerners for financial gain. Kidnap attempts on westerners are likely to be in remote areas and in locations with easy access to either land transport or boats for rapid transfer back to Somalia, particularly in areas where the Shabaab may perceive security to be reduced compared to major resorts.

24. The country threat level for Kenya remains unchanged at SEVERE, reflecting our assessment that attacks are highly likely. Sector threat levels remain unchanged.

