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Khalifa has been close to bin Laden from their days as students in Jeddah in the 1970s, and through their involvement in the jihad against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s. He claimed he had spent most of that time in Pakistan, setting up an Islamic relief charity, building schools and mosques for refugees displaced by the Afghan war. In 2004, in an interview with CNN, Khalifa said that he and bin Laden had parted a company in the late 1980s in disagreement over the worldwide jihad being planned by the future leader of al-Qaeda and his advisers. Still, they remained in touch after Khalifa left Afghanistan. He claimed he last saw bin Laden on a family visit to Sudan in 1992. But in recent years he had become more outspoken in his criticism of bin Laden. In 2003, he published an open letter in a Saudi newspaper, asking bin Laden to renounce the terrorism being committed in his name. Khalifa wrote in that open letter: "Please come out, tell those people to stop". You are the one who can say that, and you are the one who can stop it".³

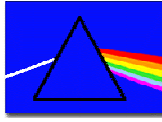
Nevertheless, Khalifa was allegedly a key financier of several Southeast Asian Islamist militant groups, particularly in the Philippines, although he had always denied involvement in supporting terrorist and insurgent groups. The Philippine government sought him for allegedly financing the Abu Sayyaf Group—a Filipino Islamist terrorist and criminal gang made up of fighters returning from the Afghan jihad against the Soviet Union—through a charity organization Khalifa established in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The charity was Benevolence International Foundation, which funded terrorist activities in the Philippines, Chechnya, and Bosnia. Benevolence International Foundation was designated by the US as a financier of terrorism under Executive Order 13224. He was also the head of the Philippines chapter of the International Islamic Relief Organization, which has extensive ties to al-Qaeda and international terrorism, and which was designated on August 3, 2006 by the US Treasury Department as a terrorist financier. Khalifa also participated in 1995, in the planning and financing of Operation Bojinka airline plot, which was conceived in the Philippines, but was foiled. The plot included bombings in the Philippines, the assassination of Pope John Paul II, ramming airplanes into each other over the Indian Ocean, and slamming airplanes into the CIA headquarters, the Pentagon, an unidentified nuclear power plant, the Transamerica Tower in San Francisco, the Sears Tower in Chicago, and the World Trade Center in NYC.

He also contacted Hambali, the former Southeast Asian commander of al-Qaeda who is now in US custody. Hambali attended planning sessions in the Philippines for the September 11 strikes. The US named Khalifa as an "unindicted co-conspirator" in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, and arrested him the following year on a visa violation in San Francisco. But, he was deported to Jordan without standing trial. In Jordan, Khalifa was sentenced to death for a string of bombings in the country. The

<http://www.douglasfarah.com/article/157/what-is-going-on-in-madagascar.com>;

<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2370277>

³ See on-line at: <http://edition.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/meast/01/31/khalifa.death/index.html>



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conviction was overturned after a witness recanted. Khalifa was also arrested after the September 11 attacks in Saudi Arabia, and again was eventually released.⁴

The question is what makes Madagascar so attractive to al-Qaeda's activists? It seems that there has been a strong al-Qaeda connection to rubies and sapphires in Madagascar, which might have begun at about the same time as al-Qaeda's interest in diamonds in West Africa and tanzanite in Tanzania. This fits with the timeframe of al-Qaeda making a concerted move to put their assets into commodities. The move came after the 1998 US Embassies bombings in East Africa, and the subsequent freezing of some \$220 million of Taliban and al-Qaeda gold in the Federal Reserve System by the US Clinton administration. Sapphires led to a mining boom in Madagascar, beginning in 1998, drawing a large influx of foreigners, including a large contingent of Islamists from Pakistan and the Arabian Peninsula eager to cash in.⁵

The Dockrat Cousins' Case and the Rejection of AFRICOM

Due to its location off the coast of East Africa and relatively close to the Comoro Islands, Madagascar might serve as an excellent safe haven for Islamists or al-Qaeda activists to find shelter in or to draw back into just in order to resurface again in other places in East Africa, Somalia, or South Africa, where, also in January 2007, the US Treasury named two South African cousins – Junaid and Farhad Dockrat – Specially Designated Global Terrorists for their support for al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

On January 26, 2007, the US Treasury Department named the two South African cousins as al-Qaeda financiers and facilitators, ordering to freeze any US assets they may have and banning Americans from doing business with them. The Treasury, invoking an executive order used to combat terrorist financing and money laundering activities, said Farhad Ahmed Dockrat provided funds to a trust used by al-Qaeda, and his cousin, Junaid Isma'il Dockrat, helped facilitate travel of South Africans to Pakistan for training by al-Qaeda. The Dockrats have denied any links to al-Qaeda or any other militant groups. The Treasury said, in a statement published in the same day, that Farhad Dockrat, a 47-year-old cleric, provided in 2001 more than 400,000 rand (\$US62,900 based on exchange rates at that time) to the Taliban ambassador to Pakistan to be forwarded to al-Akhtar Trust, an Afghanistan-based entity that the Treasury designated in 2003 as an al-Qaeda fund-raising arm. In addition, he was detained in Gambia for suspected terrorist activity after

⁴ See on-line at: http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2007/01/mohammed_jamal_khali.php;
http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/01/31/world/main2416206.shtml?source=RSSattr=World_2416206;
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammed_Jamal_Khalifa;
http://counterterrorismblog.org/2007/01/top_al_qaeda_financier_dead_de_1.php;
<http://edition.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/meast/01/31/khalifa.death/index.html>;
<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2370277>

⁵ See on-line at: <http://www.douglasfarah.com/article/157/what-is-going-on-in-madagascar.com>



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visiting Islamic learning institutions there and in Senegal. It said Junaid Dockrat, a 35-year-old Johannesburg dentist, worked in 2004 via phone and e-mail with Abu Hamza Rabia—the late al-Qaeda operations chief killed in Pakistan by the US military in 2005—to coordinate the travel of South Africans to Pakistan for training at al-Qaeda camps. The Treasury said Junaid Dockrat was also responsible for raising \$120,000 that Rabia received in the spring of 2004. In addition to his dental practice, Junaid Dockrat also runs a business selling camouflage clothing called Sniper Africa, which promises buyers they will be comfortable stalking when hunting. The Treasury said the business is 70 percent owned by Junaid Dockrat and is also known as "Sniper Outdoor CC".⁶

The US took this measure after submitting the two cousins' names on January 19, 2007, to the UN for listing with its al-Qaeda and Taliban Sanctions Committee. It also took place after South Africa's Foreign Affairs minister, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, used his country's new seat on the Security Council to ask the UN to delay its decision in that matter given the fact he tried to dialogue with the US government over the issue. Aziz Pahad, deputy minister of foreign affairs, said that South Africa would demand proof from the United States about the two men.⁷

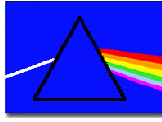
The South African government's request from the UN to delay the listing of its two citizens as having links to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda and the ousted Taliban regime in Afghanistan, is one of the first of its kind, contrasting most European countries. South Africa's decision is unique and a complete departure from those of other countries who were in a hurry to accept the demands of the US on such issues, or simply failed to consider them. Thus, while American sanctions might freeze any of the Dockrats' assets that reach US banks, the terrorist-funding cousins have continued to conduct business in South Africa, and everywhere else in the world except the US, with impunity. South Africa appears to have cast its lot with the two terror suspects, rather than the US. Aziz Pahad voiced concerns about the designation, claiming that the rights of South Africans need to be defended.⁸

It should be noted that this was the first time that South Africans were facing the prospects of being placed on UN terror suspects list. Like all those on the UN list, the Dockrats are Muslims too. Muslims make up only about 600,000 out of a South Africa's

⁶ See on-line at: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N26279102.htm>;
<http://uk.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUKL2240121520070122>;
http://www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/News/0,9294,2-7-1442_2057728,00.html;
<http://www.reuters.com/article/reutersEdge/idUSL2921169820070202>;
<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=36278>; <http://worlddefensereview.com/pham101807.shtml>;
<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2368948>

⁷ See on-line at: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-164195310.html>;
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200701240467.html>; <http://www.afrol.com/articles/23993>;
<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=36278>;
<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2368948>

⁸ See on-line at: <http://www.afrol.com/articles/23993>; <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-164195310.html>; <http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2368948>



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population of 44 million, or 1.5% to 2%, according to official statistics. Many of them have strong views about the US invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq. They have also criticized the invasion of Somalia by Ethiopia. They feel that Muslims are being unjustly targeted by the West. To further prove this point, South African Muslims have complained since September 11, 2001, that they were finding it increasingly difficult to enter the United States. One of them, Adam Habib, the executive director of the Democracy and Governance Programme at the Human Sciences Research Council, had his visa revoked by the US government on his arrival in New York's JFK International Airport on October 21, 2006. Habib, an outspoken commentator, had traveled to the United States on a business trip.⁹

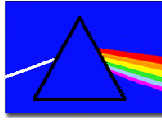
Indeed, the problem is more systemic. South Africa and the US simply do not see eye to eye on virtually any of the critical international security challenges the West faces today. They have clashed over Iranian nuclear weapons (South Africa maintains friendly ties with Iran); the war against global terrorism (South Africa does not agree with the US definition of terrorism); UN reform (South Africa appears to be uninterested); and the Arab-Israeli conflict (South Africa tends to always blame Israel. The ANC maintained in the past close links to the PLO and Yaser Arafat in person, while Israel maintained good relations with the apartheid regime). Some of these policies can be traced to South Africa's identification with the downtrodden. Its population remembers apartheid, and seeks to redress social injustice. There is a deep distrust of the US, in light of the fact that the State Department has labeled the African National Congress (ANC) a terrorist group until the organization was legalized and became a prominent political party in 1990. Given this history, there is a deep distrust of US Middle East policy, particularly its unwavering support for Israel.¹⁰

Moreover, South Africa recently expressed opposition to the proposed US Africa Command (AFRICOM), in a move destined to prevent the US diplomatically from challenging South Africa's dominant position in southern Africa. South Africa sees itself as the natural power in southern Africa. It is thus seeking to re-establish its hegemonic position, which during the apartheid era reached as far north as southern Angola and the Katanga province area in southern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, were also in this sphere of influence. The end of apartheid in 1994 saw the African National Congress (ANC) party come to power in South Africa. Its leaders sought to reassure neighboring countries that South Africa no longer held hegemonic designs. However, South African commercial interests—dominated by its mining sector but also including banking, construction, and telecommunications—not only continued but also expanded their operations in southern Africa.¹¹

⁹ See on-line at: <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=36278>; <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-164195310.html>

¹⁰ See on-line at: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-164195310.html>

¹¹ See on-line at: http://www.stratfor.com/south_africa_u_s_dueling_hegemony_africa



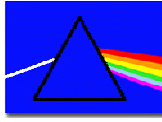
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Thus, South Africa has flatly rejected to cooperate with AFRICOM. It also leads the Southern African Development Community, which has taken a firm stand against a permanent US military presence in the region. South African Defense Minister, Moisoa Lekota, said that AFRICOM—which was officially stood up on October 1, 2007 and which by October 1, 2008 will be a fully independent unified combatant command—should not be based in any African country. Briefing the media on August 30, 2007, Lekota said the Southern African Development Community (SADC) defense ministers had decided, at the summit convened in Lusaka in the same month, that no member states would host AFRICOM and more armed US soldiers. He said this was also the “continental position” of the African Union. Lekota also said that there will be consequences, should any African country allow the US a military presence. He strongly warned that any country that did not abide by the view that US soldiers should not have an enlarged presence in Africa as part of AFRICOM, would have to consider the consequences. These could amount to neighboring African countries refusing to cooperate with them. Mozambique, Botswana, and Zambia, have also followed South Africa's example. All of them complain of not being consulted by the US before the launch of AFRICOM.¹²

South Africa – A Base for International Terrorism

Despite the abovementioned disagreements and hostility existing between South Africa and the US, it seems like both sides agree that al-Qaeda and other Islamic extremists have used South Africa as a base from where they can regroup, raise and launder money, and plan more terror attacks. The US and other Western authorities remain concerned about the prospect of terrorists using South Africa as a base of operations. The country has a world-class banking system and stock market, a fairly modern telecommunication system, good road and rail network system, and broad civil liberties, all of which makes it easy to move people and money. South Africa has also syndicates dealing in everything from counterfeit goods and credit card fraud to trafficking of guns, gems and narcotics, all potential revenue sources now that traditional avenues of terror funding are being shut down. Furthermore, long stretches of un-patrolled borders and government corruption provide opportunities to bypass immigration controls, launder money and illegally get

¹² See on-line at: <http://engagedspectator.wordpress.com/2007/08/31/south-africa-says-no-to-africom/>;
<http://www.afrika.no/Detailed/15399.html>;
http://www.int.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=3016&art_id=vn20070715084547855C635785;
http://www.bdafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4274&Itemid=5821;
http://groups.msn.com/crimebustersofsouthafrica/africaandislam.msnw?action=get_message&mview=0&ID_Message=3853; <http://www.blackstarnews.com/?c=122&a=3651>

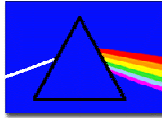


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materials. For example, in April 2001, a Durban businessman and his wife were arrested at South Africa's border with Swaziland with \$130,000 in South African currency strapped to their bodies. It transpired that they were on their way on Maputo in Mozambique to an exchange bureau with alleged links to gold dealers in Dubai, run by a businessman linked to Islamists in Africa and the Middle East. Maputo alone has 36 exchange bureaus and is regarded as a money-laundering haven. Indeed, US and Mozambique officials have also looked into whether al-Qaeda is laundering money through the Indian Ocean nation. The police are still investigating this case despite the suspect's denial that he has any links with al-Qaeda.¹³

Some examples of terrorists using South Africa as a base are in order. In 1999, Khalfan Khamis Mohamed, jailed for life for his role in the 1998 bombings of the US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, was arrested in Cape Town and deported to the United States. The Tanzanian had entered South Africa under an alias, got a temporary residency permit, and worked at a hamburger place for months until he tried to renew his permit and got caught. In 2004, South Africa arrested and apparently deported five suspected members of al-Qaeda days before national elections in April, a move that led to the arrest of terrorist suspects in Jordan and Syria. The suspects were deported on April 9, shortly before South Africa held the third elections in its post-Apartheid era. Also in 2004, two South Africans, one from Johannesburg and the other from Pretoria, were arrested in Pakistan in a gun battle that netted Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, a Tanzanian al-Qaeda suspect in the 1998 embassy bombings in East Africa. According to reports, the pair was plotting attacks against a number of targets in South Africa, including the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, the National Parliament in Cape Town, the Sheraton Hotel, the US Embassy in Pretoria, the national Parliament complex in Pretoria, various waterfront attractions and restaurants popular with overseas visitors in Cape Town, the port of Durban, allegedly to coincide with the visit of the Queen Elizabeth II cruise ship. Both men were released without charges, and their link to Ghailani never explained. In July 2005, authorities in Zambia captured and deported to the UK Haroon Rashid Aswat, who was accused of plotting to set up a camp in Bly, Oregon in 1999 to train militants to fight in Afghanistan. Investigators said the Briton of Indian descent also spent time in South Africa and made trips to Botswana and Mozambique before his arrest. Aswat denies he is a terrorist, but Zambian investigators said he told them he was a bodyguard for al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden. Investigators also questioned him about the July 7 bombings in London, but London Metropolitan police has discounted any connection. Aswat, who has family in Johannesburg, supported himself there by selling Islamic CDs and DVDs at flea

¹³ See on-line at: <http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2007/Aug/burgessAug07.asp>;
<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2368948>;
http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/standinggroups/crime/members_files/wannenberg.pdf
http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/standinggroups/crime/members_files/wannenberg.pdf



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markets, according to Ahmed al-Arine, a Jordanian immigrant who worked for him. But that is unlikely to explain - or finance - the amount of traveling Aswat did.¹⁴

South African officials have acknowledged that al-Qaeda militants and their associates traveling through Europe have obtained South African passports, which allow travel to many African countries and the UK without visas. Crime syndicates operating inside the Department of Home Affairs reportedly have sold or given "boxes and boxes" of South African passports to al-Qaeda members or their associates operating in Europe. Thus on July 28, 2004, British security agencies found boxes of South African passports at the home of a suspected al-Qaeda member in Britain. In July and August 2004 three people—a woman, Farida Goolam Ahmed, and two unnamed men—had been stopped in Mexico or the southern United States with suspicious South African passports, often with pages missing.¹⁵

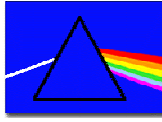
Conclusion

It seems like over the past decade, al-Qaeda and its local affiliates have increased their presence in South Africa. That is why the US and South African authorities have been worried for some time now about the possibility that radical Islamic groups may succeed in efforts to obtain WMD components, materials or expertise from South Africa; that al-Qaeda or affiliated cells will be established and spread in South Africa; and that al-Qaeda or affiliates will increasingly be successful in efforts to recruit new foot soldiers from among the poor and disaffected youths in poor Muslim neighborhoods in several cities in South Africa. Another potential source is the Black population converting in large numbers to Islam through the intensive work of Da'wah and Gulf-based Islamic charities, such as the African Muslim Agency, active in the country and in the rest of the southern African countries as well.

Moreover, it should be noted that there are number of indigenous Islamist networks, such as PAGAD and Qiblah, that have the potential to either engage in serious acts of terrorism on their own or in conjunction with international terrorists. PAGAD, which was

¹⁴ See on-line at: http://www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/News/0,,2-7-1442_1765283,00.html;
<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-164195310.html>; <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-164195310.html>;
<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2368948>;
<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2368948>;
<http://www.inthenationalinterest.com/Articles/Vol3Issue33/Vol3Issue33Lefkowitz.html>;
<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9500E6DB103EF93BA15756C0A9629C8B63>;
<http://www.jihadwatch.org/archives/004416.php>

¹⁵ See on-line at: http://www.stratfor.com/al_qedas_travel_network;
<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-164195310.html>; <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-164195310.html>;
<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2370277>;
<http://www.dailynews.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=500&fArticleId=2166910>



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established on December 8, 1995, with the primary objective of serving as a broad anti-crime front, began since July 1998, targeting personnel and facilities of the state's security and intelligence community. In August 1998, PAGAD attacked businesses linked to the US, after the latter launched missile strikes against targets related to al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Sudan. From then until 2000, PAGAD had targeted many restaurants and places of entertainment.

Thus, the key question revolves around the likelihood of an al-Qaeda attack against Western interests in South Africa. For its part, the South African government hopes that its neutrality in the so-called war against terrorism and its pro-Palestinian stance will spare it from the attacks of radical Islamists. The real threat, however, is directed against US and other Western interests in the country. In this respect, there are major causes for concern. High-value targets, including large embassies and headquarters of multi-national corporations, proliferate in the country.

Another source of concern might be the prospects of a growing deterioration of the personal security and crime in South Africa, which might increase as a result of changes in the coming regime. The old generation of ANC leaders, under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, is going to be replaced by new leaders, some of them more militant and lack the strong authority and charisma of their predecessors. Tribal tensions, which did not serve an issue during the transitional period of new South Africa, might emerge too.

What makes this situation even more worrisome is that in Summer 2010, South Africa will be the first African nation ever to host the Soccer World cup Finals, one of the most widely-viewed sporting events in the world and a target al-Qaeda or any other Jihadi group, may find too tempting to pass up. Should anything happen during the tournament, the consequent drying up of tourism and foreign investments would be devastating not only to South Africa, but also to the entire African continent.

In any case, so far it seems that there is more danger in using South Africa as a safe haven for terrorists from other countries, than the potential recruitment of South Africans.
