



# AFRICA CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

## WHY AL-SHABAAB PERSISTS IN SOMALIA

December 9, 2021

### BIOGRAPHIES

#### PANELISTS (In alphabetical order)

**Mr. Omar Mahmood** is the Senior Analyst for Somalia at the International Crisis Group. In this capacity, Omar conducts field research, provides written analysis, proposes policy recommendations and engages in advocacy efforts.

Omar has previously worked as a senior researcher focusing on the Horn of Africa for the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in Addis Ababa, and as an international consultant covering Boko Haram and the Lake Chad Basin. Prior to that, he obtained his Master's degree from the Fletcher School at Tufts University and served as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in Burkina Faso.

**Dr Orly Maya Stern** is a researcher, consultant and human rights lawyer from South Africa. She is an authority on international law, gender, human rights and security, particularly in countries affected by conflict and instability. Over the past decade she has worked and conducted research in numerous countries, including Iraq, Somalia, South Sudan, Nigeria, Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, Jordan, Uganda, Kenya and South Africa.

Dr. Stern's expertise spans international law (in particular international humanitarian law and international human rights law), armed conflict, gender and gender-based violence, human rights, and access to justice and security.

Dr. Stern holds a PhD in law from the London School of Economics, for which she conducted a feminist critique of international humanitarian law (the laws of war). She holds an LL.M in international human rights law from Harvard Law School. Orly has taught international criminal law to Masters Students at the University of Cape Town. She has held a senior fellowship with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative at Harvard University, as well as a visiting fellowship at the Blavatnik School of Government, Oxford University. Trained as a lawyer and admitted as an attorney in South Africa, she also earned degrees in law and in psychology from the University of Cape Town.

**Mr. Mohamed Haji Ingiriis** is pursuing a doctoral degree at the Faculty of History, University of Oxford, the UK. He is also a research associate at the African Leadership Centre, King's College London, UK. He is furthermore a book reviews editor for both the Journal of Somali Studies and Journal of Anglo-Somali Society. He is the author of *The Suicidal State in Somalia: The Rise and Fall of the Siad Barre Regime, 1969-1991*, University Press of America, 2016. His most recent article on Al-Shabaab, "The Invention of Al-Shabaab: Between the Dervishes and the Historical Configurations in Somalia?", was published in *African Affairs* (2018).

His research ranges widely and invokes the disciplines of anthropology, history and political science. He has written on cultural, historical, intellectual, legal, maritime, political, and social aspects of Somali society. He locates his work at the intersection of state systems and structures that shape societal changes in Somalia.

## **MODERATOR**

**Dr. Anouar Boukhars** is professor of counterterrorism and countering violent extremism, at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies. Dr. Boukhars works closely with African government and nongovernmental security sector leaders on developing and implementing activities and programs relating to counterterrorism and countering violent extremism. His research focuses on the dynamics of radicalization and violent extremism in Africa.

Prior to joining the Africa Center, Dr. Boukhars was a nonresident fellow in the Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and an associate professor of international relations at McDaniel College. He has served on several advisory boards and committees on the Sahel and North Africa, including at the African Peacebuilding Network at the Social Science Research Council. From August 2015 to July 2017, Dr. Boukhars served at the Institute for Peace and Security Studies in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as lead facilitator of its flagship program, the Executive Masters in Managing Peace and Security in Africa. His research has been published in numerous leading policy publications and academic journals. He routinely conducts fieldwork in Africa and consults frequently for the African Union, World Bank, United Nations, U.S. State Department, and European governments.

Dr. Boukhars holds a Ph.D. in international studies from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia; an M.A. in applied humanities from Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco; and a B.A. in English literature from Ibn Tofail University in Kenitra, Morocco.