



## The World's Most Dangerous Place: Inside the Outlaw State of Somalia

*By James Fergusson*

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Although the war in Afghanistan is now in its endgame, the West's struggle to eliminate the threat from Al Qaeda is far from over. A decade after 9/11, the war on terror has entered a new phase and, it would seem, a new territory. In early 2010, Al Qaeda operatives were reportedly "streaming" out of central Asia toward Somalia and the surrounding region.

Somalia, now home to some of the world's most dangerous terrorists, was already the world's most failed state. Two decades of anarchy have spawned not just Islamic extremism but piracy, famine, and a seemingly endless clan-based civil war that has killed an estimated 500,000, turned millions into refugees, and caused hundreds of thousands more to flee and settle in Europe and North America.

What is now happening in Somalia directly threatens the security of the world, possibly more than any other region on earth. James Fergusson's book is the first accessible account of how Somalia became the world's most dangerous place and what we can—and should—do about it.

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### **Bibliography**

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**Editorial Review**

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Pundits, diplomats, and geopolitical strategists often speculate that Pakistan could become a failed state. If one wishes to see what such a state might look like, read this shocking and disturbing survey of the ravaged nation of Somalia located on the strategically important Horn of Africa. Fergusson, a freelance journalist and television commentator, has seen the carnage in Afghanistan, but he found the shattering of Somali civil society to be far worse. In a functional sense, Somalia has no national government. The Somali cabinet often has to meet in neighboring Kenya. Instead, power is exercised at the local level by competing clans and subclans, who rule by force of arms and terror. Often, the law is what the particular strongman in a locality says it is. One group, the al-Qaeda-affiliated al-Shabaab, tried enforcing Islamic fundamentalism through brutal methods often carried out by teenage boys. The result of this chaos has been mass emigration of the most talented and productive Somalis along with near total breakdown of health-care, educational, and law-enforcement institutions. This is a sobering but necessary examination of the process of national disintegration. --Jay Freeman

Review

***Kirkus Reviews*, 5/1/13**

“An intrepid journalist investigates the civil war, foreign interventions and mass starvation of Somalia...A compelling example of investigative reporting.”

***TrulyArts.com*, 4/25/13**

“Fergusson deftly supplies some history and leads us on a tour of this hotbed of strife and turmoil.”

***Booklist*, 5/15/13**

“[A] shocking and disturbing survey of the ravaged nation of Somalia...This is a sobering but necessary examination of the process of national disintegration.”

***The Economist*, 6/8/13**

“Essential reading for those who seek to counter the menace...readable work. With ingenuity and no little courage he has travelled far and wide, within Somalia and among the Somali diaspora in Britain and America, delving into the soul of a ravaged community.”

***PublishersWeekly.com*, 6/24/13, starred review**

“[A] riveting narrative about strife-riddled Somalia...[An] invaluable work”

***Foreign Affairs*, Sept/Oct 2013**

“Exceptional...Fergusson vividly recounts the grotesque horrors of the endless war in Somalia.”

About the Author

James Fergusson is a freelance journalist and foreign correspondent who has written for many publications, including *The Times of London* and *The Economist*. He is the author of *Taliban: The Unknown Enemy* and the award-winning *A Million Bullets*. He lives in Edinburgh.

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