

ROBOW's entrance into Cabinet



BY LAILA MOHAMED

On August 2, Somalia's prime minister, Hamza Barre, made an extraordinary announcement: the nomination of Robow as a minister. Mukhtar Robow, a former deputy commander of the insurgent organization al-Shabaab, was named Minister for Endowment, Religious Affairs, and Counterterrorism Ideology. The public's response to his appointment

has been mixed.

The decision was made to show that those who have left al-Shabaab

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and rejected its ideology are welcome. Robow is anticipated to play a significant role in the fight against terror ideas and would be in charge of preventing youth recruitment to extremism.

Security experts see his appointment as a strategy to fight the Al-Shabaab insurgency. "It is a declaration of war against Al-Shabaab because Robow has been appointed minister, a positive deed. We need to use regionalized tactics to prevail in the intellectual battle. The rest is noise." Security analyst Hodan Ali said:

Robow was about to take office as the president of the south west region in 2018, however the Somali government blocked him from running for the position in December 2018.

Robow gave up violent extremism in 2013, joined politics in 2018, and was seen as a possible Southwest presidential contender. Security troops from the federal governments of Somalia and Ethiopia detained him and put him under house arrest a few days before the polls, sparking unrest in Baidoa, the regional administrative hub of Southwest.

His appointment also heralds efforts to reintegrate former terrorists into society, something that has already taken place in other parts of the globe and is not unusual.

12 individuals were murdered in the rioting that broke out in Baidoa after Robow's arrests. A member of the local parliament was one among those who was slain. AMISOM Ethiopian troops and Somali Special Forces flown in from Mogadishu shot the victims.

At the time, Concerned about the behavior of AMISOM, Somali parliamentarians have penned a letter of complaint that they want to send to the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian government, and the United Nations.