Al-Qaida

after Ten Years of War

A Global Perspective of Successes, Failures, and Prospects

Edited by
Norman Cigar and Stephanie E. Kramer

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The Minerva Initiative is a Department of Defense program that supports university-based social science research in areas of strategic interest to the U.S. government. Marine Corps University has been selected to continue research on terrorist organizations and ideologies. For more information about the Minerva program, go to http://minerva.dtic.mil/.

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Preface

The papers that follow are the proceedings of the Marine Corps University conference "Al-Qaida after Ten Years of War: A Global Perspective of Successes, Failures, and Prospects." Our intent in holding this conference was to comprehend the multidimensional aspects of Al-Qaida's threat in various theaters where it has operated over the past decade since the events of 11 September 2001, or where it may still do so in the future. We sought a net assessment of what Al-Qaida has done successfully and where it has failed in different parts of the world in order to develop a better understanding of how to deal more effectively with the challenge that Al-Qaida still poses for international security.

We were fortunate to be able to host a broad spectrum of leading authorities on Al-Qaida from both the United States and the regions under discussion who represented academia, the government, the military, think tanks, and the media. The intent was to use a comparative regional approach to benefit from the expertise of the participants on each geographic/cultural theater in order to bring into focus Al-Qaida's objectives, strategy, and policy over the past decade and to provide guideposts for Al-Qaida's future activity in those regions. Understanding the particular dynamics of each theater and how each theater contributes to Al-Qaida's overall strategy can help clarify the needs for continuing security efforts, as well as help define the roles that the Marine Corps, other agencies in the U.S. government, and our friends and allies must continue to play.

General Michael V. Hayden, USAF (Ret.), who has held posts as director, Central Intelligence Agency; director, National Security Agency; and principal deputy director of National Intelligence, delivered an insightful keynote address, synthesizing the progress made against Al-Qaida over the past decade and providing insights into future prospects in the continuing war. Two presentations addressed the basic ideological and geopolitical framework

underlying the strategic culture of central Al-Qaida's leadership, focusing in particular on Al-Qaida's military strategy and its hostility toward the international system.

The succeeding panels each had a regional focus, and speakers were asked to address a common framework of issues for their geographic areas of expertise. The key issues–Al-Qaida's objectives; organizational structure; strategy; targeting; reasons for successes and failures against U.S., international, and local interests; and likely future prospects–provided a common approach aimed at the formation of a comprehensive assessment as well as a vehicle to highlight the distinctive elements of each region.

One key factor that emerged from the various presentations was the sheer variety of issues, leaderships, local security environments, and prospects for the local groups that are affiliated with Al-Qaida in some way. The complexity of the challenge underlines the need for a complex response, modulated to respond to the particular shape and activity of central Al-Qaida and affiliated groups in different theaters.

Other key judgments were that Al-Qaida continues to harbor implacable hostility toward the international system, the United States, Israel, and many local governments; that the central Al-Qaida leadership operates according to concrete long-range plans, although the effectiveness of such plans is often undermined by flawed assumptions and an inability to implement on the ground; that the nature of the relationship between the central Al-Qaida leadership and individual regional branches, affiliates, and allies varies considerably in terms of levels of ideological and financial dependence, command and control architecture, and unity of purpose; that Al-Qaida's response to the ongoing Arab Spring has been unsure and ineffective; that local grievances and issues are likely to favor the continuation of the existence of groups adhering to or cooperating with Al-Qaida; that Al-Qaida, although considerably weakened over the past decade by successful countermeasures by the United States and regional states, remains a threat that is far from negligible; that Al-Qaida's strikes will likely be small, diffuse, and hard to detect, rather than large 9/11-style attacks; that fragile states, in particular, continue to be vulnerable to potential inroads by Al-Qaida and of concern for local and international security and stability; and that U.S. policies affecting the shape of the end-state in theaters such as Iraq and Afghanistan raise uncertainties as to the potential for exploitation by Al-Qaida.

The conference was held at the Gaylord National Convention Center, National Harbor, Maryland, on 26 April 2011, just days before the death of Usama Bin Ladin. The texts of the presentations were maintained as originally given, although the authors were afforded the opportunity to add a postscript to address the impact of Bin Ladin's death.

The conference was made possible through the generosity of the Minerva Initiative, the Marine Corps University, and the Marine Corps University Foundation. Special thanks are extended to Dr. Amin Tarzi and Dr. Christopher C. Harmon of the Marine Corps University for their valuable professional input in the planning of this conference; to Lieutenant Colonel Salvatore Viscuso, USMC, for his unstinting administrative involvement in its execution; and to Major General Thomas M. Murray, USMC, president of Marine Corps University, and Dr. Jerre W. Wilson, vice president for academic affairs, Marine Corps University, for their support and encouragement at every stage of the process. Finally, the Marine Corps University Press provided indispensible assistance in publishing these proceedings. Thanks are extended to Andrea L. Connell and James M. Caiella for their editorial contributions, to Rob Kocher for his work on the book's design, and especially to Shawn H. Vreeland for his expert editorial work and overall management of the process from beginning to end.

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Keynote Address:
The Deep Fight

General Michael V. Hayden, USAF (Ret.)

Introductory Remarks by
Major General Thomas M. Murray, USMC
President, Marine Corps University

MAJOR GENERAL THOMAS MURRAY: Now it's my honor and truly a pleasure to introduce our keynote speaker for today, General Michael V. Hayden. General Hayden's one of those individuals, rare as it may be at this point, who has really dedicated his entire adult life to the service of our country. He spent more than 40 years in the United States Air Force and reached the pinnacle of command and leadership in the Air Force, holding positions such as commander of the Air Intelligence Agency and the Joint Command and Control Warfare Center.

Following his time in the Air Force, he was named as a director of the National Security Agency, holding that position longer than anyone else, and turning what used to be referred to as "no such agency" into an entity that was much more open and well understood. Following that, [from] 2005 to 2006, [he] was named as the deputy director of national intelligence and had oversight of all of our nation's intelligence assets. And then finally, at least for the time being, from 2006 to 2009, was named the director of the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency].

Basically, if it has anything to do with intelligence, General Hayden was not only involved, but was at the forefront of it.

GENERAL MICHAEL HAYDEN: Well, good morning, and thanks for the opportunity to be with you here this morning. I look out and see so many familiar faces and I must admit I'm somewhat intimidated that I've come up

here [to] be the keynote speaker and set the table for what are bound to be some really fascinating panels this afternoon.

I've been tasked to do what my friends in the State Department call the "Chapeau" presentation. Not being from the State Department, I'll use what my Army friends call it: I get to do "big hand, little map," in terms of Al-Qaida after 10 years. You're going to drill down on specific areas, with very well organized panels through the course of the day. And so much of what I have said will be unsaid or implied, but I hope I succeed in at least setting the table for the deeper discussions that follow.

Well, let me begin with a conversation I had several years [ago] now; it was August of 2008. I was still director and I was speaking with Joby Warrick of the *Washington Post.* Joby, frankly, I believe is a very good journalist; he covered the intelligence beat for the *Post* at the time. And I was doing, as I have been warned I am doing this morning, an on-the-record presentation to Joby about Al-Qaida and other things with regard to the agency–and he just point blank said, "On this war on terror, how are we doing?"

And [he] caught me off guard just a second, and I kind of double clutched and simply responded, "Well, frankly, Joby, not too badly." And I rattled off three or four things that I'll repeat for you now, and then maybe perhaps bring those data points forward into the future to the current day.

First thing I said was "not too badly"; Al-Qaida has suffered near strategic defeat in Iraq. Most importantly, knowing full well what the [Marine] Corps had done in Al-Anbar Province, what the agency had worked very hard with the Marines to do in Anbar–one of the finest, most heartfelt notes I ever got as director was from–was one handwritten from [Lieutenant] General [John F.] Sattler at the end of his tour there. Nonetheless, Al-Qaida was fundamentally defeated in Anbar and in Iraq by Sunni Arab arms, who have rejected both the vision and the tactics of Al-Qaida.

I went on to say they had suffered, what to my eyes was strategic defeat in Saudi Arabia. They had made a great tactical error, breaking what [seemed] to have been an implied cease-fire in the kingdom: [a tacit agreement] that there will be a certain presence perhaps permitted, but there will be no violence within the kingdom.

When they broke that compact and began violence, if you recall, against Western housing areas and so on, Mohammad Bin Nayef, the head of Saudi

Mabahith (Saudi Intelligence)–whom I have the highest regard for–created a list. I think it was [a] pretty long list, about a hundred names of folks that had to be, as we euphemistically say, "taken off the battlefield." And Prince Mohammad [Bin Nayef], over the next several months, took them all–all–off the battlefield. And then he created another list and did the same thing.

I pointed out to Joby in this conversation in August 2008 that we had begun to put great pressure on Al-Qaida main in Pakistan and that an awful lot of the Al-Qaida senior leadership were spending more of their waking moments worried about their own survival than they were thinking about threatening your or my survival.

And finally I said, "And Joby, globally there are now authentic voices within Islam who are challenging both the vision–caliphate–and the tactics–terror–of Al-Qaida. So, all in all, not bad."

Now if you ask me that today–and I know there may be points of disagreement and I'm not, please, I'm not trying to be Pollyannaish; I'm going to bring up some very dark clouds here in a few minutes–but if you ask me the question again today, I think I'd say "not bad."

And I think it's not bad–and here's a point I'd like to dwell on just for a moment because it has to do with Al-Qaida, but it has more to do with us–it's not bad because there has been amazing continuity in this conflict between the 43rd and the 44th presidents of the United States. I'm going to mention some discontinuities here in a few minutes, but let me just rattle off the continuities: indefinite detention, military commissions, the opposition to the extension of the writ of habeas corpus to prisoners that we keep in Bagram in Afghanistan, [and] state secrets.

The [Barack H.] Obama administration, although there've been some differences in style, has been as aggressive in invoking the states secrets documents–or doctrine–in a variety of court cases as was the [George W.] Bush administration. Frankly, since I'm personally named in several of those court cases, I'm really delighted they're still invoking state secrets.

Secondly, Congressional notification. [With] this administration, it had to do with covert action. This administration was as prepared as the last administration to veto an intelligence authorization bill that actually put the power of who in Congress would be notified about a covert action into the hands of the Congress as opposed to the hands of the president. The language

that the administration used in publicizing its veto threat . . . could have been written four, five, eight years ago.

We continue targeted killings. And most importantly, the most fundamental continuity is that this president, like his predecessor, has simply said, "We are a nation at war. We are at war with Al-Qaida and its affiliates."

Now, there've been discontinuities. Some of you may have read an op-ed or two that I may have penned about discontinuities. There was the effort to close[the] Guantanamo [Bay detention facility], which of course is not going [to] happen any time soon. There was the whole question of civilian trials in Manhattan, which of course are not going to happen any time soon.

And then there's the question of interrogations. Two days after he was inaugurated, President Obama published an executive order ending the CIA interrogation program. It actually had been a successful program. We learned a great deal about Al-Qaida from that very limited, very targeted, very focused effort that had gone on since 2002. At the time that President Obama issued that executive order, I actually wrote a letter to the CIA workforce–and it's still available on the CIA website, cia.gov; just go back to "Director Letters" and click on January 2009 and go to January 22nd or January 23rd and it's still there–and there you have me saying we have gotten precisely what it is we expect and deserve to get from the chief executive. We have gotten clear instructions.

The president has given us the new box. It's a little different from the old box, but he has given us the box. And we will now be as aggressive inside the new box–as those of you who are looking up here can see, the new box is a little smaller than the old box–we will be as aggressive inside the new box as we were inside the old box to defend the republic. That's how I felt then, that's how I feel now. The most important thing we needed from the president was clarity.

But I actually thought we were going to get a new interrogation program too. And frankly–some of you may disagree, and I'd be happy to hear your disagreements in the Q&A–we don't have one. I do not know of an Al-Qaida terrorist captured outside of Iraq or Afghanistan who is or has been in American custody since January of 2009. We have been, as our default option, killing terrorists rather than capturing them. Not that I mind killing them; it's useful in the war, and frankly, satisfying. But tactically, in all instances, it may not be the most optimal solution.

But that said–now, I apologize for having dwelled on the discontinuities, because my main point is the powerful continuities between the two presidents.

I gave a talk at the German embassy–I was director for about a year, so it would've been the spring of 2007. The Germans were in the chair of the European Union at the time. Ambassador [Klaus] Scharioth, the German ambassador, would have–I have to say this carefully to be precise–all the ambassadors to the United States from the states of the European Union over for lunch every other week, and the ambassador, Ambassador Scharioth, would have an American government official come in to talk, and it was my turn. He'd invited me to come as director of CIA, and I decided, all right, well, this is pretty interesting; it's going to be a very fine meal, so let me earn my keep here. Let's talk about renditions, detentions, and interrogations to the gathered ambassadors of the European Union.

Now, I had a wonderful staff at CIA. They did great speeches. It was rare that I didn't pull out a pen and change an adverb or two and suggest a point or something, but this is a speech that I actually spent a fair amount of time on personally. And I still recall–I actually reread it a week or two ago–I still recall a paragraph, about page two or three:

> Let me tell you, so that there's no misunderstanding, what I believe, what my agency believes, and what I believe my country believes. We are a nation at war. We are at war with Al-Qaida and its affiliates. This war is global in scope and I can only fulfill my responsibilities to the citizens of my republic by taking this fight to this enemy wherever he may be.

Two points: one, no other country represented in that room agreed with any of these four sentences. Second point: President Obama clearly does. After that paragraph that I just kind of air quoted for you, I still recall the next line I gave: "So please, do not be confused, this is not about Texas, this is about America." And frankly, I think that's true.

So, going back to Joby's question to me several years ago and that he repeated to me today: how we are doing. I said not so bad–not too badly. And we're not doing too badly because I think we've got an American solution to this. There has been continuity between two presidents, [but] you know as well as I–and you're probably going to fill up the rest of the day with this part of the discussion–you know as well as I, this has not been an unqualified success. We've got issues. It's been really quite interesting.

[So], as director and in my second life, which cloud is most dark? I can assure you, when I became director in May 2006, it was all Iraq, all the time. And I used to love going to Afghanistan because everything there seemed to be so much more clear, and things were going so well. And of course, over time, Iraq seemed to get on a fairly even course, and it was all about Afghanistan. Frankly–and this has somewhat happened since I've left government, although you can see it in my last 12 months there–frankly, now the dark cloud really is Pakistan and what's going on there, or what's not going on there.

The Pakistani state–and I have good friends there, [and] many of you do as well–the Pakistani state is under tremendous stress. I mean, down to the core of the essence, what constitutes Pakistan? That kind of existential stress.

Husain Haqqani is the Pakistani ambassador to the United States. Before he was ambassador, Ambassador Haqqani was a journalist. He actually wrote a history of Pakistan, entitled *Between Mosque and Military*. I think it's a wonderful title and it's a wonderful book, and it points out what Pakistan does when it is under stress, as it is now. And when it's under stress, it turns to two solution sets: one is the military–and they've tried that course of action several times in its history, and they are not going there at the moment–the other is [the] mosque. And I think you can see from even the press accounts of what's going on in Pakistan, there has seemed to have been a lurch in the direction of the mosque, and there are elements of that–I'm choosing my words precisely here–and there are elements of that that make this overall problem we have mutually with them more difficult to solve.

So I said, not unqualified success, and it's not an unqualified success because Al-Qaida is a learning, adaptive enemy. You're all going to talk about, I know, the growth in importance of franchises. You're going to talk about Al-Qaida in the Horn of Africa, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, and I know you're going to talk about Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula.

You know, when I was director, I could say without qualification, "Every known threat to the United States has threads, multiple threads that take it back to the tribal region of Pakistan." And that was true, even in retrospect, looking at the time when I was director. That's an absolute truth.

And then on Christmas Day 2009, we were attacked; the homeland was attacked. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, Schiphol-Detroit, Northwest flight,

Christmas Day. We were attacked with no threads to Al-Qaida main. No threads back to the tribal region of Pakistan. We were attacked from a franchise.

I talked to Mike [E.] Leiter and other folks at the National Counterterrorism Center. There is an echo–this is me talking now, not Mike, OK, so please don't impute this to him–remember back in 2001, why didn't you guys warn us? And if you were in government at that time, if you were in the intel community, I mean, [then–CIA Director] George [J.] Tenet was right. The system was blinking red. I don't know how many imminent warnings we issued from NSA [National Security Agency] during the summer of 2001. But we failed in our imagination. I don't think it was failure of intellect, it was a failure of imagination to believe that, although the dashboard was blinking red, that the attack was coming here.

Same thing in 2009. We knew Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula was up to something. Dashboard kind of blinking red. But as in 2001, [we had] a failure of imagination that a franchise would actually be conducting an attack on the homeland.

So that's an adaptation. Again, Al-Qaida: a learning, adaptive enemy.

There's another adaptation which I know you're going to talk about in the Western panel. And this has to do with the self-radicalized conducting what you and I would call low-level attacks. If I can just beg your indulgence–by the way, you should note that although with close to 40 years in an American military uniform, I am up here without PowerPoint slides. I just want you to know that.

But if I did have a slide, this is the moment when I would say, "slide, please." And since I don't, I'm going to do hand puppets up here, so you need to pay attention. Now–no, really.

All right. [Gen Hayden holds out his left arm to the side, parallel to the floor] If you imagine that this is what we've been doing–which I've said has been not bad; "Joby, we're doing OK"–this is the level of effort in its totality. This is what's happening at Dulles and [Reagan] National [airports], this is what's happening in the FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas], this–I mean, just the totality of the American effort.

If you look at the preferred Al-Qaida means of attack, the preferred Al-Qaida attack, this spectacular, mass-casualty assault against the iconic target–they're up here [Gen Hayden gestures to the space above his outstretched arm]: 9/11, World Trade Center 1, East Africa embassies, Bojinka, the multiple airliners over the Pacific, the 2006 liquid explosive plot coming out of Great Britain[1]–you know, the reason we can't take liquids through the lines anymore–OK, they're all up here.

And believe me–an intelligence officer never says never, and so I'm not saying this could never happen–but this is really hard for them to do this now. These [plots] are complicated, they're complex, they're relatively slow moving, and they have multiple threads. And we're good enough now, we grab this thread, that thread, this thread over here–we start rolling that thing up, and pretty soon we've got a fur ball right there in the middle of our desk, and we have a pretty good idea of what's going on, and we disrupt the plot.

I mentioned I became director in 2006; that was just as the airliner plot–the hydrogen peroxide plot–was blossoming in Great Britain. I became director, they sat me down, and we spent a couple hours, and they were telling me everything we knew about this. Again, I don't want to sound arrogant, but in a sense, we kind of owned the plot. The only argument we had with our British counterparts was, "When are you guys going [to] arrest these people"? With the British wanting it to run a bit further for the ultimate court case, and we're kind of wringing our hands on this side of the Atlantic saying, "But they bought the hydrogen peroxide."

Hard to do. We've been successful. As a measure of our success, now look below Hayden's arm [General Hayden gestures to the area below his outstretched arm]: Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the Detroit guy; Najibullah Zazi, [the] guy driving from Denver to the New York metro station; [U.S. Army] Major [Nidal]

1 "9/11" refers to the 11 September 2001 attacks; "World Trade Center 1" is a reference to the 26 February 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center. The "East African embassies" of the United States in Tanzania and Kenya were bombed on 7 August 1998. The "Bojinka" plot was a large-scale plan to blow up multiple airliners as they transited from Asia to the United States, and the "2006 liquid explosive plot" relates to a plan to detonate liquid explosives on board several airliners departing the United Kingdom.

Hasan; Faisal Shahzad, Times Square–all down here.[2] This little hand puppet, instead of a viewgraph, actually contains some really important fundamental questions for Americans, for our policy on the War on Terror.

What do you want me to do with my left arm? You want to live with this? Or do you want me to go down? How much more of your commerce, your convenience, your privacy do you want me to squeeze in order to be more capable against this flavor of plot? Put quite another way, both metaphorically and actually, how much more do you want to take off at [Reagan]National or at Dulles?

Second fundamental question coming out of this–look, I know that this is a stew, all right? But the flavor in this stew is largely foreign, and largely intelligence derived. The flavor in this stew is more domestic, and more law enforcement derived. Are we *capable* of shifting our weight to be more suitable to this flavor of threat? [Emphasis added]

Let me give you an example. The National Counterterrorism Center is actually an American success story; I really believe that. It has improved the sharing of information this way, up here. Left to right, between the big national three-letters: FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation], CIA, NSA. [We are] much less good at sharing it this way [from the bottom up]: federal, state and local, tribal. Are we able to make this shift?

Finally–my left arm's getting tired–you realize the stuff down here [area under the "threat level arm"], that's like penalty kicks in soccer. It doesn't matter how good our goalie is–and we do want a really good goalie–this ball is going in the back of the net. This is going to happen. We need to be prepared as a people, and our political leadership needs to be informing our people, that this indeed will happen.

2 Often referred to as the "Underwear Bomber," Abdulmutallab, a Nigerian, is awaiting trial for allegedly attempting to detonate plastic explosives while on a flight from Amsterdam to Detroit in 2009. Zazi, an Afghan American, was arrested as part of a 2009 Al-Qaida plot to conduct suicide bombings on New York City subway trains. Major Hasan is the only suspect in the November 2009 shootings at Ford Hood, Texas, which resulted in the death of 13 people. Shahzad is a Pakistani American who was convicted of attempting to detonate a car bomb in Times Square in 2010.

If you watch Michael Leiter's testimony out of the NCTC [National Counterterrorism Center]; if you watch Secretary [of Homeland Security Janet] Napolitano's testimony, secretary for homeland security–Mike especially, and Secretary Napolitano a little less, directly are trying to tell folks about this, for this reason: when this happens, we need to be careful that in our reaction, dare I say, in our overreaction, we don't turn what should have been a tactical defeat for us into some sort of strategic accomplishment for our enemy, Al-Qaida.

All right, everything I've said in the last–looks like 17 minutes–has to do with what we military folks in the audience would call "the close battle." You know, what is it we do with the guy who's already committed to kill us coming in over the perimeter wire? And I think all of us–certainly those of us who grew up, matured in the '70s and '80s with the concept of Air-Land Battle–certainly appreciate the deep fight.

Recall that? When Air-Land Battle was developed, it had to do with echelon tank armies. It was, I've got to defend at the FLOT [forward line of own troops], [I've] got to defend at the FEBA [forward edge of battle area], but I want to affect tomorrow's battle and the battle the day after by turning the second and third and fourth echelons into digestible doses by the time they get to the forward line of troops.

Well, in this war, the close battle is about people who are already committed to killing us, and we have to deal with them–that's the close fight. The deep fight is about the production rate of those people who tomorrow or the next day will be committed to killing us. And again, as somewhat successful as I think we have been with regard to the [close] fight, we have almost not been on the battlefield when it comes to the deep fight. This has been really hard for us. Now, I've had this discussion with folks who have much deeper knowledge about this than I, and I'm trying to choose my words carefully here to reflect their concerns and if I get it imperfectly, I apologize.

But fundamentally, discussions about the deep battle, that production rate of people who ultimately want to come kill us, rotate around the question of Islam. And the meaning of Islam–or what people, some people, impute is the meaning of Islam–or Islam at least provides the context within which people are radicalized.

And that's a really hard discussion for Americans to join, or to join with a sense of being an authentic voice. Look, I know we're a multicultural society, I know we're a society of immigrants, I know that Islam is one of the great religions represented inside American culture, but I also know fundamentally, we're a Judeo-Christian culture. That fundamentally the broad contours of our culture have been formed by Western European and black African heritage.

This isn't like communism; remember the deep fight for communism? Hold them at Fulda,[3] make sure they don't attack, and we'll take them in the ideological fight? We were a pretty authentic voice when it came to the ideological fight with communism. For whatever else communism may have been, it was indeed a Western philosophy, written by a German in a library in London. We had an authentic voice there. It's harder for us to be a legitimate participant in the deep battle as it's been previously defined.

But something happened. Something happened in the last three to four months. We are all spending our evenings watching whatever newscast we watch looking at the daily report on the events of the Arab Spring.[4]

It is a very difficult challenge for all of us. I actually talked to someone still in government who's an analyst with regard to this, and he said this [in] quite [an] elegant way. He says, in addition to the factual uncertainty–what's going on–there is a values uncertainty. We're not sure what . . . to think about what is going on. And so as much as the Middle East is grappling with these new phenomena, we, and our understanding, are attempting to grapple with these new phenomena. And you know as well as I, there are multiple narratives playing out here.

There's oppressed/oppressor, there's East/West, there's Sunni/Shia, there's have/have nots. We are comfortable with the oppressed-oppressor, we kind of understand that, but this is a real mélange here. Well, whatever it ultimately becomes, however it is we figure it out, whatever it is we finally decide is the main narrative here, some things are already clear. It's a narrative that Al-Qaida must reject, because Al-Qaida rejects the nation-state; Al-Qaida rejects the

3 Fulda Gap, the area between the East German border and Frankfurt, West Germany, during the Cold War.

4 The Arab Spring, or Arab Awakening, is a series of demonstrations and revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa that began in December 2010

political process; Al-Qaida thinks the current world order is illegitimate; Al-Qaida rejects the state monopoly on power, which is kind of–since the Treaty of Westphalia–how we've viewed the use of power in civilized societies.

This is a narrative with some great promise. It's also a narrative we know something about. It's a narrative in which we actually can be an authentic voice. We know a little bit about pluralism. We know a little bit about fundamental rights. We know a little bit about individual freedoms. We know a little bit about government transparency. We know a little bit about government accountability.

If this moves in the direction it seems to be moving, as turbulent as it is, it seems to be redefining at least a portion of the deep fight, one which has some hopeful ray of light in it, for the purposes of our discussion here this morning.

This is not without problems. In terms of the immediate future–and this is measured in months, not weeks–we've got a bunch of really good counterterrorism partners who, at the very best, are distracted. In addition, if you believe a little bit of what I suggested earlier about Al-Qaida and what we've done–if I were British, I'd say, "you know, they're a bit on their back foot"; since I'm an American, I'd probably say, in smaller groups, that "they're back on another part of their body."

This gives them a chance, like little prairie dogs, they kind of look out from the hole, and–to badly mix my metaphors here–catch a second wind to get a little space within which to operate. So this is not an unqualified blessing for us, but over the longer term, much of what is happening now in the Middle East has to be a fundamental threat to Al-Qaida at its existential base.

Look, there are a lot more things we could cover. I'm going to toss out just some lingering questions. I mean, frankly, these are questions I'd like to have the answer to. After all this time in government, [as] director of the CIA, I can ask any number of analysts to come on by and sit with me and tell me about this and that. I still have some fundamental questions. Let me give you one. Some people have written that fundamentally, this is about the Middle East and its clash with modernity, and how it accommodates it. Others write this is Islam and its clash with modernity.

I'm a Christian. Christianity went through this cycle, middle of the seventeenth century. Thirty Years' War, followed by Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment. The question I have to ask is, that arc that Christianity seemed

to follow, moving a bit from a more to a less transcendental kind of religion–is that the arc all monotheisms will follow? Or is that a peculiarly Western European phenomenon and one which we have no right to expect should be followed by any other great monotheism? I don't know, but the answer's kind of important.

You know, there's another whole way of looking at the problem, and I actually began to get some briefings on this before I left government, and I'd love to follow up. Put aside where we are and what we're doing. Focus like a laser on Al-Qaida and compare Al-Qaida to the expected life cycle of any revolutionary movement. In other words, Al-Qaida as an idea, Al-Qaida as a discontinuity–we've seen these before. There's a pattern. Let me give you the shorthand: where's Al-Qaida in its life cycle? I'd like to see some scholarship on that.

Remember the left hand, and down here, and Najibullah Zazi, and Faisal Shahzad, and so on, when you kind of turn the page back, and say, why are these guys doing this? What's motivating them? I'm beginning to think this has a lot more to do with the Crips and the Bloods than it does with the holy Quran, that this may be about the same kind of motivation that animates kids to join gangs, and has very little to do with any kind of theology. It's about youthful alienation and the longing to belong to something, anything.

So how does that play into the deep fight and the production rate of people who want to come kill us? Mike Leiter–I keep quoting Mike, so you must get the impression I think very highly of him–Michael was asked a question in a recent hearing: where is the most serious threat to the American homeland coming from these days? And he said, unqualifiedly, it's coming from Yemen. It's AQAP [Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula].

OK. So what's going on with Al-Qaida main? What's their role in all of this?

I was up at West Point for their counterterrorism center there that works only on unclassified documents. About a year or so ago, they gave me a hypothesis. Al-Qaida main is like IBM Solutions. They're now a consulting service. What they give to the franchises are the name, legitimacy, some financing, some expert advice–they're the after-action report guys, the keepers of doctrine, and I don't mean doctrine just in religious doctrine, but in operational art kind of doctrine–"we don't do the terror, we make the terror better."

I don't know. But I will tell you this: when pressure was increased on Al-Qaida main, beginning, oh, pick a date, July 7, 2008, and much of their senior leadership had been taken off the battlefield, we expected them to move. We were all prepared for Al-Qaida main going for a safer haven than the tribal region we projected would become. They haven't. They've stayed. We actually thought: standing by, get them on the move, they're vulnerable when they're moving, this is the time for us to really begin to sweep up. Maybe that's why they didn't move. I don't know, but they haven't. Even under great pressure.

So what's the role of Al-Qaida main? One or two other [points], and I'll stop. I've been suggesting some pretty fundamental questions here, questions that deserve very candid discussions, very honest dialogue.

I am troubled sometimes by the care or, dare I say, the over-care by which we sometimes try to describe these events. I don't know whether I'm allowed to say "Islamic extremism" anymore. I don't know if I can use the word "jihad," I don't know if I can say "jihadist"–they use it, but I've said it a couple of times. I know we need to be careful with our language, but we need not be so careful that we confuse ourselves. And so, as we get to these fundamental questions, I think that basic honesty about what constitutes language and how we express it is needed.

And finally, back to the theme I started, you know, "Turning to the Deep Fight" was actually the title of this. I know how we fight the close fight does affect how the deep fight goes, that we can take actions here in the close battle that make it easier or harder to win the deeper battle. Now personally, with my own life experience, I'm willing to be quite tough here in the close fight. And others have argued that some of the things we've done, being what I call tough in the close fight, have made the deep fight tougher. I understand the arguments. I'm not willing to judge who's right or who's wrong.

But I do know this fight [the close fight] does have a bit of a shaping function for that one [the deep fight]. The question I leave with you–what is the relationship and how much freedom of action do we think we have here, with, after all, folks who are already committed to kill us, in order to make this part of the conflict more easy for us to achieve success?

Well, as I promised, not many answers and fairly personal experience here. But I hope I have set the table for what I know will be far more detailed, far more scholarly addresses of these kinds of questions. And with that I will stop.

2
Al-Qaida's War with the United Nations and the State System

Christopher C. Harmon

Aren't our tragedies actually a result of the United Nations' actions?
–Usama Bin Ladin, 3 November 2001

Political scientists often term countries working within the international system–and at ease with it–as "status quo powers." Their opposites–looking for expansion or a greater share of power–are termed "revisionist" or even "revolutionary" powers. Al-Qaida may be a substate actor, but it is confident enough, ideologically cohesive, active through members and affiliates in dozens of countries, and strong enough to be considered a "revisionist power."

This proposition may deserve attention. For all the bales of writing–much of it quite good–about Al-Qaida and its affiliates, there are scarcely a few words in the English-language materials[1] about the intense distaste Al-Qaida harbors for the United Nations (UN) and for the international system of states. Some of what follows will not surprise academic experts on Islam or Islamism, but for most readers, this essay may help fill a gap in our understanding of the enemy

Any author finds it easy to give away his books once they are written. It is harder to elicit sound critical commentary on rough drafts. Thus, my eagerness to thank four friends with good critical eyes for their assistance with this chapter: Douglas Streusand, Carl Shelton, Sebastian Gorka, and Norman Cigar. As well, I am obliged to Marine Corps Research Center librarian Lindsay Kleinow for some press clippings on past Al-Qaida attacks on the UN.

1 General texts on terrorism (including the different editions of my *Terrorism Today* [New York and London: Routledge, 2000, 2007]) unfortunately omit serious study of the Al-Qaida attacks against UN principles and personnel. Books that focus on Al-Qaida rarely do better, do not treat the terrorists' views of the UN, and usually omit a listing for "United Nations" in their indices.

with whom we have had 10 years of war. The present paper draws attention to the words of the terrorists themselves, to their doctrine, and to their deeds. And once one begins to look closely, a long pattern emerges, a pattern of references by Al-Qaida leaders decrying the UN and the system of states more generally.

Usama Bin Ladin's 1996 "Declaration of Jihad against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Sacred Sanctuaries" bares its teeth at the UN for being "immoral" (or "unjust") and for helping the United States in "preventing the dispossessed from arming themselves."[2] Typical is the following 2002 passage penned by Dr. Ayman Al-Zawahiri, the leader of Egypt's Al-Jihad terrorist group who merged his organization with Al-Qaida:

> The United Nations are, from the Muslim point of view, an impious international institution. We should not be members, and we should not rely on its arbitration, because its ability to judge is based on the refusal of revealed law and docile submission to the will of the world's top five criminals, who dominate the leadership body known as the Security Council.[3]

The doctrine of Al-Qaida can be described in many ways; one of the best would be "revolutionary internationalism." This is war against the status quo, and against the system of states–not merely a quarrel with certain named countries. As with anarchists, communists, and some strains of ecological terrorists, the Al-Qaida creed is inherently international, and the successes and failures of comrades in one place are meaningful and affective for all others elsewhere. As befits ideology of any kind, the political program at the grandest and most global level is linked closely to the individual acts of fighters in action around the world.

2 This lengthy Al-Qaida document of 1996 is reprinted in *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden*, ed. Bruce B. Lawrence, trans. James Howarth (London and New York: Verso, 2005). Page 25 uses "immoral," but a different volume of Bin Ladin speeches translates the word as "unjust."

3 An excerpt from "Loyalty and Separation: Changing an Article of Faith and Losing Sight of Reality," Ayman Al-Zawahiri, in *Al Qaeda in Its Own Words*, ed. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli, trans. Pascale Ghazaleh (Cambridge MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2008), 226. Scholars can do much better than this collection, which is very small and marred by its disinterest in chronology and in the sources for the speeches and videos cited.

An example is the dual American-Yemeni national Anwar Al-Awlaki,[4] who is believed to be in Yemen. He is at the helm of the important new Islamist terrorist magazine *Inspire*, and what he publishes provides further examples of this revolutionary internationalism. Its second edition, published in fall 2010, reprints pages of "The Global Islamic Resistance Call" by Abu Musab Al-Suri, the theorist captured in Pakistan in 2005. Not officially a member of Al-Qaida,[5] this prominent teacher of self-declared jihadis puts his lessons under the rubric of "The School of Open Fronts," speaks to all "mujahidin" everywhere, and sees himself as helping to "mobiliz[e] the Islamic nation, with its hundreds of millions. . . ."[6] He devotes himself to strategy, to the organization and actions that are necessary, and to promoting "Individual Terrorism Jihad."[7] In this piece, Al-Suri underscores the "global" character of everything he argues for, declaring his military theory "dependent upon moving on a global horizon."

Such references to revolutionary internationalism by Al-Qaida principals open up at least five separable facets of the doctrine for our examination: Al-Qaida's exaltation of the *Umma*; its disdain for established geopolitical boundaries; its hatred of the United States' status as a "global hegemon"; its resentment towards the UN; and finally, its advocacy for terrorist acts as a way to right the moral wrongs of the international community.

The All-Important Umma

The first of these facets is the promotion of the Umma–the worldwide Islamic community–and Al-Qaida's related campaign against nationalism. On principle, Muslims do not recognize individual "nations." Even Islamists watch their words when writing about supporting any "struggle to free a captive Muslim people";

4 Al-Awlaki was killed in a U.S. drone strike on 30 September 2011, while this book was in production.

5 While Al-Suri's writing and character are clearly admired by *Inspire's* editors, I am told by Dr. Norman L. Cigar of Marine Corps University that the newest edition of Al-Zawahiri's *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner* (in Arabic, 2011) declares that Al-Suri is not an Al-Qaida member.

6 Abu Musab Al-Suri, "The Jihadi Experience: The Open Fronts and The Individual Initiative," in *The Global Islamic Resistance Call*, reprinted in *Inspire* 2 (Fall 2010): 17. I am grateful to Michael V. Samarov for drawing my attention to Al-Suri's importance in 2006. Now a lieutenant colonel, Samarov commands the Instructor Battalion of The Basic School for the U.S. Marine Corps in Quantico, VA.

7 Al-Suri's invocations to "Individual Terrorism Jihad and activity by small units" are numerous. Unlike some Western commentators, many terrorists *do* know just what terrorism is and are not embarrassed to advocate for it. Many examples appear in the preface to my second edition of *Terrorism Today*, 1–5.

they naturally judge nationalism to be constrictive and limiting to Islam. A very concrete indicator of their views is in how their recruiters welcome men from *any and all countries* who meet the high standards of the terrorist organization. The ideal recruit is well-described in the "Second Lesson" of the manual *Military Studies in the Jihad Against The Tyrants: The Al-Qaeda Training Manual*, found in Manchester in May 2000: qualifications are "Islam . . . Commitment to the Organization's ideology . . . Maturity . . . Sacrifice . . . Listening and Obedience . . . ," and on and on through nine more qualifications.[8] There is no requirement whatsoever to grow up as a Muslim, be Arab, be a certain color, or hold citizenship in a predominantly Muslim state.

Like Vladimir Lenin, or Joseph Stalin, both of whom wrote against nationalism, our enemy today must find nationalist fervor to be dangerous to the cohesion of this new movement. Whatever gaps do exist in Al-Qaida are potential critical vulnerabilities; American public diplomacy does little or nothing to exploit them, but we may hope covert psychological operations seek out and exploit national and regional differences within the Al-Qaida membership.

What is important to the ideologues? Of course, it is the Umma. The Muslim population, very much transnational, multicultural and multilingual, is deemed the source of current and future strengths. If nothing is more artificial than a state's boundaries, nothing is more real and worthy than the Umma. *There* are the people to be served by the fighting men; they represent the truth of religion; these faithful people are the collective foundation of the future Caliphate. Terrorists fight for, and ideologists write for, the Muslim nation, which means a great people spread over dozens of different countries. If India may be studied as a country of many nations, the Umma is a nation that reaches through innumerable countries.

Usama Bin Ladin reminds the faithful that "uniting the nation under Islam" cannot be achieved solely through political reforms or via lectures and books; it can only be attained "through a practical plan involving the entire [Islamic] nation, each according to his own capabilities, beginning with prayer to God and ending with fighting in the cause of God, for fighting in the cause of God is an indivisible part of our religion. In fact, it is the pinnacle of religion."[9]

8 *Military Studies in the Jihad Against the Tyrants: The Al-Qaeda Training Manual*, ed. Jerrold M. Post (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: U.S. Air Force Counterproliferation Center, August 2004).

9 "Resist the New Rome," is a 47-minute audiotape by Usama Bin Ladin, a part of which was broadcast by Al Jazeera on 4 January 2004. Reprinted in Lawrence, *Messages*, 230.

In a very real sense, no country matters; the transboundary "nation of the faithful" is the only entity worthy of the future political order, according to today's Islamist terrorists.

The Fallacy of Borders

A second and related way that Al-Qaida's revolutionary internationalism is displayed is in the rhetorical assault on present and old borders. The fall 2010 issue of *Inspire*, so fresh and trendy and aimed at youth in many ways, rages against the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 as though it were signed yesterday. And why not? That British-French accord still governs where borders lie between Syria and Iraq. It affected Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, and it would become important to the future state called Israel.[10] We return to Islamist strategic thinker Al-Suri for his comments on culture and geographical affiliation.

> If we go to any Muslim now, and ask him: "where are you from?" Indeed, he will mention his country: from Egypt . . . from Syria . . . from Tunisia . . . from Saudi Arabia . . . etc. He will not mention his city first, and tell you that he is from Damascus, Beirut, Cairo, or Tashkent . . . because he is committed to the borders of Sykes-Picot, drawn in his mind by colonialism.[11] [Instead] [w]hat we now need to establish in the minds of the mujahidin . . . is the true sense of belonging and commitment to . . . this brotherhood.

Then Al-Suri quotes a Koranic passage on "brotherhood"–which is the furthest thing from country affiliation as a ground for self-identity. Usama Bin Ladin contributes on the same topic in the same magazine: "I also reassure our people in Palestine in particular that we will expand our jihad–Allah permitting–and will neither recognize the borders of Sykes Picot nor the rulers whom colonialism put in place." As of 11 September 2001, Bin Ladin continues, Al-Qaida is fighting "the biggest ally of the Zionist enemy, America," especially in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Islamic Maghreb, and Somalia, and will never recognize any state for the Jews. He attacks all Arabs who have accepted any Jewish state presence, including Hamas and "some leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood" for

10 Lawrence follows a Bin Ladin declamation on Sykes-Picot (on 14 February 2003) with a footnote in his *Messages*, 187.

11 The ellipses are in the quotation, not added. This text, and the line following, are from page 21 of the second issue of *Inspire*, cited above.

failing to employ jihad to liberate *all* of Palestine: "[W]e shall not respect the international charters which recognize the Zionist entity . . . blood for blood and destruction for destruction."[12]

Ayman Al-Zawahiri, Al-Qaida's number two leader, also makes stirring reading on international affairs. Unlike Abdulah Azzam, the Al-Qaida co-founder of the late 1980s who resisted a tangle with the United States in preference for warring against the "close enemies,"[13] this Egyptian doctor believes in and works for Bin Ladin's fully internationalist strategy.[14] Al-Zawahiri's innumerable broadcasts, as well as his book *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*, attack the world system, the UN, and the U.S. role in upholding both. His text *Loyalty and Separation*, published in 2002, warns Muslims against being misled by foreign intellectual and moral campaigns that parallel the "crusading military campaign, whose aim is to maintain the unjust status quo."[15]

The Unjust Hegemon

Third, the Al-Qaida global terrorist organization is targeted against the "new hegemon," the United States. Support of Israel is one of many reasons Washington is so labeled. Bin Ladin is correct in arguing that America is Israel's biggest ally, and he does not need to study Carl von Clausewitz to see that, for certain smaller countries, a large partner may be their strategic center of gravity.

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12 "Until We Taste What Hamza Bin Abd Al-Muttalib Tasted," a 2008 Bin Ladin excerpt reprinted beneath a picture of the wreckage in New York City on 11 Sept. 2001, *Inspire* 2 (Fall 2010), 10. The Muslim Brotherhood, referenced in the above quotation, is not a terrorist organization and is criticized by some Islamists for alleged accomodationism. The difference is in means, not ends. A typical passage from Muslim Brotherhood writing presents Islam as a distinctive and alternative civilization, hopes for its triumph, and "supports the global Islamic state, wherever it is." That quotation is from the 18-page "Explanatory Memorandum on the Strategic Goals for the Group in North America," by Mohammed Akram, member of the Shura Council of the U.S Brotherhood; quoted by Lorenzo G. Vidino, *The New Moslem Brotherhood in the West* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 171.

13 The sentence relies mainly on standard books about the early years of Al-Qaida. My colleague Sebastian Gorka has kindly provided a copy of Abdullah Azzam's self-described "fatwa" on *Defense of the Muslim Lands*; it hopes for fighting in the Philippines, Lebanon, Chad, etc., and the founding of a Caliphate, but the treatise emphasizes the need for winning in Afghanistan, to start, and then in Palestine.

14 Al-Zawahiri's earlier militant activism targeted the Egyptian government. Being captured (and, he alleges, tortured in jail) and perhaps time and other factors, including strategic reconsideration, altered his view and made him seek out alliance with Bin Ladin's Al-Qaida. His Al-Jihad organization formally accomplished this in June 2001.

15 Al-Zawahiri's words are quoted by Fawaz A. Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 230.

Economics is another way the United States is deemed hegemonic: America is said to be the grandest of modern thieves, and rhetoric about the "theft of Arab oil" has long had a place in Bin Ladin's news releases. Then there is the martial sector: America is allegedly the great occupier–encircling the world with a belt of military bases and intelligence posts, while suffocating all that is healthy with its cultural and economic influences. Furious that the collective states of the "Islamic World…cannot say no to the United States," Bin Ladin bodyguard Abu Jandal thus sees a strategic role for the kind of attack conducted by a tiny party on the destroyer USS *Cole* (DDG 67): it was done "to break U.S. prestige and hegemony over Muslim shores and sea. This was the main reason."[16]

Therefore, "The New Rome" makes an apt title for the wide-ranging, somewhat disorganized, yet trenchant anti-U.S. audiotape of a 2004 Bin Ladin lecture. When Bin Ladin delivered it to news agency Al Jazeera, the Gulf region was roiling in war–a war that had originated with impetus from Washington. This was an opportunity to talk about the present, the near-past (the 1990–91 Gulf War), and "crusades" into the region for more than the past two millennia. As is well-known, the first Gulf War (to liberate Kuwait from Iraq) outraged Bin Ladin and made him beseech high Saudi authorities to attempt a national defense of Arabia that would not include a U.S. military presence in the Saudi kingdom. The authorities disagreed; the Americans came. Liberating Kuwait, the Coalition left the kingdom–but those two facts have not been reflected in current Al-Qaida rhetoric. Bin Ladin's "New Rome" lecture abhorred the 2003 occupation of Iraq, which "desecrated" the house of the Caliphate.[17] "The raid of the [new] Romans started in Iraq; no one knows where it will end," declared Bin Ladin. Discussion of occupied Afghanistan adds to this speech of 2004. And yet, in another passage, he does assert how it will end–with Muslim victories and, everywhere, expulsion of the new "Crusaders." Bin Ladin claims that, ultimately, history always shows that nobody "could stand in the way of the battalions of faith. The Persians, Tartars, Turks, Romans, and Berbers collapsed in front of the shouts of 'God is great.' So will these new Romans."[18]

16 Abu Jandal is quoted at length by Peter L. Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 251.

17 Dr. Douglas E. Streusand, author and a Marine Corps University expert on Islamic thought, explains that this line refers to the Abbasid Caliphate's end in 1258. That would mean (1) that the true "desecration" was seven and a half centuries prior, and (2) the damage done was by the Mongols. Yet Bin Ladin sees this as an evocative backdrop to new U.S. actions.

18 Bin Ladin, "Resist the New Rome," 230.

U.S. power is loathed not only because the chief terrorist sees Washington as "imperial." The U.S. specifically is the orchestrator of a worldwide coalition. Any thoughtful revisionist of the world system attends to that U.S. role, and not only to the size of U.S. armies or air forces. The United States is the Coalition leader *and* a Crusader. So, the long lecture against America in early 2004 was followed by an appeal "To the Peoples of Europe." This approach to, and criticism of, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Coalition starts with reference to the 11 March 2004 destruction of Spanish trains by terrorism, and then Bin Ladin offers a bargain. Here is the terrorist as negotiator. Quit fighting, he essentially says, and specifically, quit the Spanish partnership with "the American conspiracy against the great Islamic world," and peace will come to your land. Now, this pledge should not be believed, coming from a spokesman who refers often[19] to reliberating Iberia and restoring the land called "Al Andalus," which was formerly Muslim-ruled for seven centuries. Spain did withdraw its troops from Iraq–although the work of Fernando Reinares attributes that to internal decisions reached just *before* the Madrid train massacre.

When Spain or Germany are discussed and denounced by Al-Qaida, it is usually for their roles fighting in Iraq or Afghanistan, and they may be pilloried as parts of grander U.S. plans for controlling the world. When the Arab regimes are attacked–as they are so sharply in the introductory pages of the jihadi training manual *Military Studies in the Jihad Against the Tyrants*–it can be for apostasy, or for giving in to American designs for the region. Washington may be the "far enemy" for Islamists, but it is the guarantor of nearby Israel's persistence on the map. American-run coalitions are central to America's global project, which, according to American citizen turned Al-Qaida propagandist Samir Khan, is the "containment" of Islam. The United States arranges this containment with allies, a network of military bases and espionage posts, and economic influences, according to the angry men. To return to Bin Ladin's lectures, this threat, this presence, is not uniquely American, or new. Rather, it was "over 2500 years ago that the West invaded"; the fight with the West is one between right and

19 Bin Ladin and Al-Zawahiri have "routinely called for the recapture of the former Muslim-controlled region in Spain they still call 'al-Andalus,'" according to the U.S. Department of State's *Country Reports on Terrorism: 2007* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2008); see the "Spain" section.

falsehood, one that will continue "until Judgment Day."[20] They see a "war of civilizations" with America leading the enemy.

A Group of Pawns: The United Nations

The many ways the U.S. allegedly orchestrates the containment of Islam include a fourth extension of argument, which concerns a global entity that is anathema to Al-Qaida: the UN. The UN's culture, system and structure, sanctions, and armed intervention forces are all deeply resented. This fourth topic, and its linkage back to our third (U.S. hegemony), are captured in a recent major address by Mullah Muhammad Omar, who for a decade and a half has led the Taliban and been a close ally of Bin Ladin.

> The colonialist countries led by America, want to turn our historical and independent country [Afghanistan] into a military base under various pretexts. It has persuaded some other countries to align with them and even have compelled the World Body of the United Nations to issue resolutions palatable to the USA. It has turned the World Body, de facto, into [a] personal entity of America.[21]

In *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*, Al-Zawahiri listed six international entities that the Western powers allegedly use to fight Islam; the first of these "tools" is the UN.[22] Four years later, in his October 2005 letter to the Iraqi affiliate leader Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, the number two Al-Qaida leader pointed to this supposedly unified enemy–the UN and the United States–when referring to need for readiness against "the conspiracies of the Americans and the United Nations and their plans."[23] Bin Ladin, in an audiotape for a mass Muslim

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20 Samir Khan, "I Am Proud to be a Traitor to America," *Inspire* 2 (Fall 2010). In pages 45-49 he has much to say about the "containment" of Islam by U.S. power and the many other governments "not particularly happy about a shari'ah based state that would have jihad as part of its foreign policy." Usama Bin Ladin's own references to continuous war with the West "until Judgment Day" are frequent enough to need no citation.

21 "Message of Felicitation of the Esteemed Amir-ul-Momineen on the Occasion of Eid-ul-Odha," *Taliban's Voice of Jihad Online*, in English, (15 November 2010), repr. by Open Source Center, accessed 18 November 2010. This seven-page message offers little of Al-Qaida's internationalism; it is devoted closely to Afghan affairs.

22 Laura Mansfield , ed. and trans., *His Own Words: A Translation of the Writings of Dr. Ayman al Zawahiri*, (n.p.: TLG Publications, 2006), 203. This useful collection is dominated by the full text in English of the first edition of *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner* (2001).

23 Mansfield, *His Own Words*, 261.

audience in early 2001, decried violations of Islam "under the supervision of the new world order and under the auspices of the United Nations, which has clearly become a tool with which the plans of global unbelief against Muslims are implemented."[24]

The savagery towards the UN, and the deprecatory linkage of it and America, are visible on the surface in an Al-Qaida message that came with the truck bombing of UN headquarters and relief agencies in Baghdad on 19 August 2003. In a six-page polemic, Al-Qaida's Abu Hafs al Masri Brigades laid out the case against the UN–for all the Muslims it has neglected worldwide, and all the Muslim gains it has opposed. From the geopolitical level, the tirade descends to the ad hominem, fixating upon one UN diplomat killed in the company of two dozen others when the truck bomb exploded. The UN Secretary General's special representative to Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello, was a celebrated humanitarian and peacemaker, but Al-Qaida hated him on two grounds. First, he was then-President George W. Bush's nominee to succeed Kofi Annan at the UN–deemed "a branch of the US State Department"–and second, de Mello's diplomatic work included the case of East Timor, a small and largely Roman Catholic region he helped to regain independence from Indonesia in 2002. This, according to Al-Qaida, was a "criminal" act for political reasons, and de Mello was thus derided as "the Crusader who carved up part of the land of Islam."[25]

Bin Ladin personally had used very strong words about East Timor before, in November 2001, words again targeting the UN:

> Look at the position of the West and the United Nations with regard to events in Indonesia. They moved to partition the most populous nation in the Islamic world. That criminal Kofi Annan publicly put pressure on the

24 "Under Mullah Omar," a 9 April 2001 audiotape that Bin Ladin made for delegates to the International Conference of Deobandis, held at Taro Jaba Pakistan; see Lawrence, *Messages*, 96.

25 For this important document there are mixed attributions and only the shortest quotations in the press, as in the William Shawcross book *Allies: The U.S., Britain, Europe and their War in Iraq* (Cambridge MA: Perseus Books, 2004), 6. London's Arabic-language periodical *Al Hayah* published long excerpts on 25 August 2003, and what is apparently the full text appeared in Arabic in Quds Press on 25 August 2003. The Quds Press version was translated and reprinted as "'Text' of Al-Qaida Statement on Baghdad UN Headquarters Bombing" by the Open Source Center; accessed 10 March 2011. This is the most lengthy single treatment that could be found in English by Al-Qaida concerning its causes against the UN.

> Indonesian government, telling it that it had 24 hours to partition and separate East Timor from Indonesia; otherwise he would have to introduce military forces to do it. The Crusader armies of Australia were on the shores of Indonesia and they did in fact intervene and separate East Timor, which is part of the Islamic world.[26]

The UN seemed revolutionary–even threatening–to some when it was created in the 1940s. Today, to Al-Qaida, it is an archetypal and forceful defender of an evil world status quo. To them, the UN is seen as conservative–which is ironic, or even comical, to American political conservatives. The UN is deemed a guarantor of "secularism," a crushing word. Its occasional deployments of troops and enforceable resolutions reflect the will of the "anti-Muslim" and "atheistic" powers China, Russia, France, United Kingdom, and United States. Those very deployments allegedly harm Muslims in large numbers in such places as the Sudan, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

According to Anwar Al-Awlaki, a preacher and propagandist who has inspired terrorist attacks against Americans, the UN Security Council architecture keeps Muslim powers out–a half truth that ignores the 10 rotating positions that are sometimes filled by countries with Muslim populations. He claims, "We only have a presence in the crammed hall of the general assembly of the United Nations, but not at the Security Council which is still off limits to the 50 plus Muslim states." Al-Awlaki adds a revealing footnote: he is merely "describing the current state of affairs," not lobbying for Muslim inclusion. Al-Awlaki "by no means" approves of Muslim states being part of the organization.[27] Why should he, when his ideology demands rule by the unified Umma under the sharia?

In this line of argument, Al-Awlaki follows in footsteps of the ideological masters who are his contemporaries and inspiration. Usama Bin Ladin's frequent criticisms of the UN and its policies might be thought to begin with its role in creation of the State of Israel, but he usually avoids 1948. His most common critique–often made as well by Al-Zawahiri–is of the global body's sanctions. These were imposed upon his state hosts and sponsors: the Sudan in 1996 and then Taliban-ruled Afghanistan in 1999. In the latter case, sanctions

26 Usama Bin Ladin, "Crusader Wars," a message of 3 November 2003 delivered to Al Jazeera television; Lawrence, *Messages*, 137.

27 Shaykh Anwar Al-Awlaki, "The New Mardin Declaration: An Attempt at Justifying the New World Order," *Inspire* 2 (Fall 2010), 34.

explicitly included the Al-Qaida leader and some top associates, which could have impacted their travels, banking, and operations. These sanctions do appear to have had useful effects, and they represent a revolutionary departure from decades of UN inaction on terrorism. The Security Council actions were also prompted by U.S. unilateral efforts just prior to them–another reason for Al-Qaida to see the U.S. and UN as "the same thing." Bin Ladin's messages and speeches also stressed the UN role in anti-Saddam sanctions that supposedly starved hundreds of thousands of Iraqi babies and children, allegedly depriving them of milk, other foodstuffs, and medicines. When Bin Ladin gave a 1996 interview to the Australian journal *Nida'ul Islam*, he put that death figure at over 600,000.[28] Later, a million or more was his common numerical reference.

Al-Qaida is angered by the world body's *in*actions, not only its actions, as illustrated by the following two examples. Bin Ladin alleges that in 1996 Israeli pilots bombed the UN building in Qana, Lebanon, killing dozens of children and women sheltered there. According to him, instead of responding to this tragedy, the UN submitted to American will and did nothing. At that time, Bin Ladin continues, Gerry Adams (of the Irish Republican Army "Provos" and Sinn Fein) was received as a political leader at the White House–one more indication that the United States is "the leader of terrorism and crime in the world." The second example has a more regular Bin Ladin theme: in 1995 Muslims were slaughtered in Srebenica, Bosnia, on the UN's watch. Nothing was done to stop the massacre. Again he pokes his knife at the U.S. connection: several American officials did resign in protest, Bin Ladin asserts, but most did nothing because "the pro-Jewish lobby has taken the United States and the West hostage."[29]

In truth, most UN interventions have been intended to save lives, and often these have been the lives of people who are Muslim. Yet, Bin Ladin's stream of tapes and messages never include a whisper of acknowledgement of such intentions, let alone assistance, to Muslims. When mass starvation afflicted

28 "The New Powder Keg in the Middle East," an interview with Usama Bin Ladin published in *Nida'ul Islam* 15 (October–November 1996), repr. in Lawrence, *Messages*, 40. Lawrence does not defend so high a number but offers objective evidence for lower death figures under the embargos.

29 The sources are, respectively, a March 1997 interview with CNN, and an interview published in Urdu and Arabic in newspapers in early November 2001; see Lawrence, *Messages*, 51 and 142. The message of 2001 on "Crusader Wars" (*Messages*, 133–38) is also replete with references to Muslim populations that allegedly have been victimized.

Somalia in the early 1990s, action–much of it effective–was taken by international relief agencies protected under the UN Charter's Chapter VII, with the UN concerting action with the United States and two dozen other coalition partners. Did Al-Qaida notice? Yes: the organization responded by rushing in trusted combatants[30] to fight the UN interventionists (and most Somalis) by takings sides with General M. Farah Aideed. Al-Qaida's intervention cell included Muhammad Sadiq Odeh, a Palestinian who joined the terrorist organization in part, he says, because "it did not matter what nationality you were." His orders to fight in Somalia came in March 1993 from Sayf Al-Adl, the very Egyptian whom *Der Spiegel* now reports to be the new number three man in Al-Qaida, its lead military commander.[31]

Perhaps this yielded the first Al-Qaida bomb plot against that worldwide enemy, the UN. According to the transcript of court testimony of a Moroccan member of Al-Qaida, L'Houssaine Kherchtou:

> I was helping other people of al-Qaida in Nairobi. Some people of al-Qaida they were in Somalia, and if somebody needs help while he's transiting Nairobi to travel to Sudan, if he needs a translator or any assistance, I was there to do that. I met many people there. They were going to Somalia to train people there. They were against the presence of the United Nations in Somalia. They [the members of al-Qaida] helped some Somalis they wanted to put some explosives in a car and to put it inside a compound of United Nations, and they didn't succeed to do that.[32]

This Al-Qaida interest in attacking the main sponsor of a humanitarian relief mission has many echoes in contemporary times. One might hope that nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) not controlled by the UN might escape terrorist brutalities. In fact, gunmen of many revolutionary stripes, such as the Maoists of Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) in Peru, have directed

30 While there has been doubt about how many Al-Qaida members joined the Somali fights during the mass starvation, Bin Ladin himself is clear that some were there, sent to oppose international armed forces marshaled by the UN and Security Council acting under the charter in Operations Provide Relief, Restore Hope, and Continue Hope.

31 From a report of FBI agents who interviewed M. Sadiq Odeh in Nairobi in August 1998, included in Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know*, 138–39.

32 Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know*, 141. The plotters' safe house in Mogadishu was next to one that came under fire from a U.S. helicopter, causing the Al-Qaida conspirators to flee the next day for fear they would be caught by the Americans, according to Kherchtou.

violence at aid givers.[33] Taliban terrorists systematically attack and destroy schools in Afghanistan, including schools that foreigners have built as aid projects. The Taliban hate the outsiders; they hate the idea that girls will get an education; they hate the fact that Afghans could be encouraged by schooling to think in ways outside the deep and narrow rut in which they currently think. The 1993 plot against the UN building in Mogadishu is of interest for a related second reason: it was a precedent for many other such plots and attacks with bombs or small arms against the personnel and facilities of the UN (see the appendix listing some of the attacks on the UN at the end of this paper). This animus against the UN is part of an ineradicable, unquenchable thirst for power by Al-Qaida and affiliates; their views of a new world order do not comport with the new world order created in 1945. We thus approach our final category of discussion.

What's Wrong with the World and How to Fix It

Al-Qaida's internationalist ideology dictates direct attacks on the principles, values, and modes of what we loosely call the "international community." These attacks are expressed by terrorism and religious war; by the campaign against democracy; by the endless critiques of both secularism and low public morals, east and west; by the overt approval of Taliban's destruction of ancient stone statues of Buddha in Bamiyan; and so on. These efforts are preludes to something higher and very significant: creation of a new Caliphate. The same publications that call for terrorism link its results to much higher aims. Terrorist attacks are intended to shred their enemies, in an ongoing and protracted war of attrition. The "holy" results of this contest are to eventually be a new Caliphate, embracing as many as possible of the beloved Umma. The terrorists eventually want to build, and not only be known for destroying.

This effort demands much at multiple levels; we begin here with the low. The decade-old manual *Military Studies in the Jihad Against The Tyrants* offered 18 chapters of practical and often brutal advice. Now the manual gets a sort of update every few months in the new magazine *Inspire*. The former ranking Republican member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence,

33 The interested reader may wish to see my essay "The Assault on Aid Workers: A New Pattern in Terrorism," inaugurating the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies' published paper series *Security Insights* (January 2008) and available on the center's website (http://www.marshallcenter.org/mcpublicweb/en/nav-security-insights.html).

Peter Hoekstra, said after the first issue, "It was an unfortunately well-done magazine and a virtual how-to guide for becoming a terrorist." *Inspire* soon reprinted his quote as an endorsement. "An individual god-given duty to make jihad even apart from any group" is ceaselessly advocated in the serial's five editions. "Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom" has pictures and instructions on turning a lamp and a piece of pipe into a shrapnel bomb. "Destroying Buildings" details the mechanics of timed firebombs–perfect for burning down the apartment complex one was renting. "The Ultimate Mowing Machine" displays that weapon in every American's garage, a pickup truck, and explains how to weld blades to the front bumper with the promise of driving this personal tank into a thick American crowd. The special issue called simply "$4,200" boasts of the low price for preparing the ink printer bombs dispatched via UPS air freight last year. The descriptions of how to replicate such work comes with a repackaged quotation from Bin Ladin: "If our messages can reach you by words, then we wouldn't have traveled by planes." Thus we are reminded not only of 9-11 but of the nineteenth-century anarchist notion of "propaganda of the deed." Al-Qaida, too, openly exhorts readers to commit individual terrorist attacks.[34] *Inspire*, as Al-Qaida's latest media organ, is working hard to make the wish actionable for the average man who is, according to the propagandists, trapped in life in a Western country. It is a recipe for anarchy behind enemy lines. Terrorism tries to make war on Western civilization.

Reminded of the low mechanics of terrorism, by individual or cell or larger group, *Inspire* and other Al-Qaida propaganda and political works instruct and challenge the reader at a far higher level–that most vital political problem of refounding a Caliphate. This is to be done because, these works claim, truth requires the joining of religion with politics. This is to be done, they note, because at present the world's rulers of countries are nearly all secular, or atheist, or the wrong religion, or worst of all, apostates to Islam. Terror will cleanse. And finally, this is to be done because, according to them, only with creation of a new state can one be assured of a socially and morally pure Muslim land, the idyllic polity from which base things have been purged.

Bin Ladin called in 2002 for "the removal of these governments" as "an obligation upon us and a necessary step to free the *umma*, to make the sharia

34 In many respects, Al-Qaida is a kind of "vanguard" on the Bolshevik model. But Lenin was far more controlling, even speaking out at times against individual terrorism; when terrorism was needed, he preferred to have his party in charge of it.

the supreme law."[35] This recalled a longer and more inflammatory oration made the year before elaborating why Muslims could never be free of "mischief, inequality, irresponsibility [and] the man-made laws that America has forced on its collaborators in the region [until] our *umma* can be ruled by the Book that has been sent down by its Creator. . . .This nation should establish the religious caliphate of our *umma* . . . the righteous caliph will return with the permission of God."[36] Al-Zawahiri not only agrees with this; his writings and messages outnumber those of Bin Ladin, and Al-Zawahiri invokes the new Caliphate perhaps more often than Bin Ladin does.

Al-Awlaki's recent long article for *Inspire* is the kind of fresh material that students of terrorism must study to see how the individual act is linked to larger war with the global status quo. The fall 2010 essay is an exegesis of, and a response to, something called the "New Mardin Declaration" that was issued by an international and credible group of Muslim scholars in Turkey on 30 March 2010. In that piece, these scholars criticized terrorism, *and* ideologists who try to justify terrorism by Muslims, *and* the promiscuous issuance of fatwas by unqualified and violent leaders. (Americans say often that "moderate Muslims need to stand up to their own extremists"; yet they often do, and here was a good case.) Al-Awlaki the terrorist thus attacks the gentle Mardin Declaration and gives us the counter case in eight pages. He is honest enough to cite at length the Muslim clerics who oppose him. Then he openly argues for "terror"–the word appears repeatedly–as part of a fundamental struggle against other religions. The rhetorical attacks include harsh words for those who, he says, worship cows. There is concern over Iran and its building Shia powers; this potential Sunni-Shia war is a fascinating subtext of some Al-Qaida literature.

Al-Awlaki has mocking words for any who dare to consider nonviolence–Martin Luther King and Gandhi are specifically deprecated by name. The metaphor of the dove of peace is skewered: instead of "pigeons and live branches," he says one needs "bullets and bombs." And throughout come vigorous repudiations of the international status quo. Believers, bravely standing on the battleground, need no scholarly or clerical counsel about living in "a

35 Usama Bin Ladin, "To the Americans," (6 October 2002), in Lawrence, *Messages*, 163.

36 Taysir Alluni, "Terror for Terror," an interview with Bin Ladin conducted in late October 2001 near Kabul, and broadcast by Al Jazeera 31 January 2002; repr. in Lawrence, *Messages*, 121.

civilized world under the protection of international treaties," he asserts. He then goes on to say that

> we stand firmly by the giant classical Imams of the *umma* and we will not be deterred by the dwarfs of today, and we refuse all attempts of rewriting the Islamic shariah to kowtow to a New World Order that doesn't belong to us and must be challenged and changed.[37]

Conclusion

While the terrorists' words against the state system are plain, they have often been lost or not passed along to the thinking public, and so have had little part in public discourse. The extremists' policy declarations have been all but veiled in commentaries by some area studies experts and scholars of Islam, who not only decline to comment on the topic of a new Caliphate but counsel auditors in the West against discussing it seriously. Unfortunately their judgment–or prejudice–may be less important than the views of the ideologists and terrorists now killing for the dream of a new Caliphate. To date it may be reporter-turned-author Peter Bergen who has taken the most appropriate public posture: in his first book *Holy War, Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama Bin Laden*, he reported the Islamists' aspirations, but added that their strategic success is not more likely than the sudden reemergence of the Holy Roman Empire within Europe.[38]

How has the Arab Spring affected Al-Qaida? No one yet knows, but we should be optimistic. Most of these dramatic revolutions and popular changes sweeping through the region seem to leave the terrorists behind. In the well-chosen and forward-looking words of *New York Times* reporter Scott Shane in late February 2011:

> Opposition movements that have appeared so suddenly and proved so powerful have shunned the two central tenets of the Qaeda credo:

37 Lawrence, *Messages*, 40. This final page of text appears alongside a bold black silhouette of a gunman "firing" into the face of the reader. The fierceness of the article's critique of reconciliation or nonviolence as a form of conflict resolution echoes the opening pages of the jihad manual found in Manchester, which mockingly repudiate "Socratic dialogues . . . Platonic ideals . . . Aristotelian diplomacy" while underscoring need for "the dialogue of bullets, the ideals of assassination, bombing, and destruction, and the diplomacy of the cannon and machine-gun."

38 Peter Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama Bin Laden* (New York: Free Press, 2001), 21.

> murderous violence and religious fanaticism. The demonstrators have used force defensively, treated Islam as an afterthought and embraced democracy, which is anathema to Osama bin Ladin and his followers.[39]

Al-Qaida is not making progress. It is weaker than it was in mid-2001.[40] But the core organization appears tireless, and its plain words remain deadly and serious. Status as a narrow minority is no shock–they are accustomed to it. This is why considering Al-Qaida an international terrorist organization has always been more appropriate than calling them "global insurgency." While good at propaganda, they do not do the hard work of political mobilization of insurgents. They do not have deep popular support. Their command and control functions are too weak to orchestrate "global insurgency." They cannot hold on to any geographical gains of world significance–and the few Islamist organizations that actually do hold territory (Hamas, Hizbollah) do not seem to concert major actions with Al-Qaida in the way a "grand strategy" would demand. Making occasional limited gains in limited rubrics, but not perceptibly closer to their larger goals of policy, Al-Qaida marches on. Thousands of trained recruits are still at liberty. There is a most disturbing absence of defectors from the core. Al-Qaida's top leaders are ever in the field. The organization seems to enrich itself with new ideas and concepts. Al-Qaida deserves, and retains, its informal title as the "most powerful international terror organization in history." And it is far more patient than most.

39 Scott Shane , "As Regimes Fall in Arab World, Al-Qaida Sees History Fly By," *New York Times*, 28 February 2011.

40 A contrary view–that Al-Qaida is stronger than it was–may be found in Leah Farrall, "How Al-Qaida Works," *Foreign Affairs* (March–April, 2011), 128–38.

Some Attacks on the United Nations by Al-Qaida and Affiliates

1993: Responding to U.S. and UN aid missions in starving Somalia, Al-Qaida sends in a few fighters to join President Aideed's side in the civil war and oppose the UN presence. Unsuccessful vehicle bomb plot against a UN compound.

1993: The UN headquarters building in Manhattan is among the targets of Islamist plotters organized by Egypt's Omar Abdel Rahman, who is now jailed in the United States.

2003: On 19 August, the Canal Hotel in Baghdad, long home to the UN headquarters and relief agencies, is truck bombed by Al-Zarqawi's Al-Qaida in Iraq. Twenty-three people died in this attack, including the Secretary General's Special Representative Sergio Vieira de Mello. The UN decides to send a third of its work force home as a result.

2003: On 22 September, the UN's Canal Hotel offices are bombed again, wounding 19 people from a dozen different countries. After this bombing, the UN orders all of its 600 employees out of Iraq.

2004: In early May in Afghanistan, Taliban apparently kills two Britons as part of "a string of assaults on UN staff preparing the country for crucial polls," according to the *Belfast News Letter*.

2007: On December 11, UN offices in Algiers are hit with a vehicle bomb, while another bomber strikes simultaneously an Algerian government building. Dozens of casualties occur in these attacks, which were claimed by Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb.

2008: On 14 December, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb kidnaps Canadian UN envoy to Niger Robert Fowler and diplomat Louis G. Fuay, also of the UN (Fowler is freed in 2009).

2009: In July, Al-Qaida's ally Al-Shabaab loots equipment and vehicles from UN compounds in Wajid and Baidoa, Somalia, prompting the UN to suspend many humanitarian operations.

2009: In September, Al-Shabaab suicide bombers use stolen UN vehicles to attack a peacekeepers' base in Mogadishu, Somalia, killing 21.

2009: In late October, Taliban suicide attackers storm the Bakhtar guest house in Kabul, Afghanistan, used by UN employees, killing five of them in addition to several Afghans.

2010: The U.S. Department of State's annual report on terrorism notes the continuing pattern of insurgents in Afghanistan targeting the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan, NGOs, and recipients of NGO aid.

3
Al-Qaida's Theater Strategy: Waging a World War

Norman Cigar

Understanding how Al-Qaida has planned to fight the war it has been engaged in can provide insights into how to better anticipate and respond to the challenge that the organization poses. A key element of that perspective is how Mother Al-Qaida's (Al-Qaida Al-Umm's)[1] leadership thinks conceptually in terms of its theater strategy. The intent here is to analyze Al-Qaida's decision making on two levels of this issue: functionally, how it has planned and conducted its operations; and spatially, how it has tried to select the theaters in which to apply its military strategy.[2]

Translating strategic political objectives into actionable military strategies, of course, involves making decisions and choices. When it works as intended, Al-Qaida's decision-making process relies on analysis that is often as hardheaded and unsentimental as any done anywhere else. Although its ultimate objectives are shaped by idealism, Al-Qaida does think in geostrategic terms, and the theater strategy it has developed to achieve those objectives has been based to a significant degree on realpolitik.

My thanks to my colleague Dr. Christopher C. Harmon for his valuable insights on a draft of this paper.

1 "Mother al-Qaida" is used here in the sense of Al-Qaida's central leadership and staff, in contrast to the local affiliates, allies, offshoots, branches, or task-forces, whose relationship to the center can vary from case to case.

2 "Theater" here is used to mean simply a self-contained geographical area for the conduct of armed conflict. Al-Qaida policy makers and analysts use various synonymous terms to designate such operational zones (*jabha, thaghr, saha, masrah, midan*), but here all such terms will be translated as "theater."

In one sense, the analytical and operational framework that Mother Al-Qaida developed is a model with different degrees of applicability in the real world. First, it relies on paradigms or assumptions that are frequently questionable. Second, its application is often difficult, in light of the web of sundry affiliates, allies, offshoots, and individuals around the world that constitute Al-Qaida's "army." These actors often have their own parochial interests and specific operational requirements, a situation that obliges Al-Qaida to manage with varying forms of command relationships, ranging from close coordination with the central leadership (such as with Al-Qaida in Saudi Arabia and, later, with its follow-on in Yemen) to, at best, general unity of purpose with other organizations or even freelancers. Third, Al-Qaida does not operate in a vacuum against a passive adversary, and Al-Qaida's strategy and execution have of necessity been affected and often neutralized by what the United States and other adversaries have done to counter the organization.[3]

Nevertheless, Al-Qaida's analytical process and strategic design–however imperfect as tools in guiding such a disparate collection of players–have provided some recognizable structure and direction to its overall war effort.

Strategic Objectives

Of course, ideology does provide guideposts and legitimacy for Mother Al-Qaida's ultimate strategic objectives. Its religiously based goals consist of reversing a secularizing wave in the Muslim world, and its geopolitical goals are to liberate Palestine (which has been an enduring touchstone in Bin Ladin's thinking) and unite the Muslim lands into a single state–a Caliphate based on religious law.[4] Al-Qaida also dates the start of the war from 9/11 and has viewed

3 At play is an interactive process of wills or, as Carl von Clausewitz aptly characterized it in his classic work, something similar to a wrestling match where opponents' behavior is to be understood by how they interact, thereby shaping each others' options, actions, and reactions. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed. Michael E. Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 75, 77, 81.

4 As Ayman Al-Zawahiri expressed it, "The solution is to establish an Islamic state that can stand up to the Crusader-Jewish alliance in order to expel the latter's forces from the lands of Islam and to depose the puppet rulers and to set up and defend an Islamic government." *Izaz rayat al-islam [Making the Banner of Islam More Powerful]*, August 2003, http://www.tawhed.ws/dl?i=vfvfbgnh.

it as a total war, pitting Islam against all its enemies, led by the Western "Crusaders" and Israel, with the very existence of Islam at stake.[5]

The greatest obstacle to achieving these objectives–and therefore the main enemy, as Bin Ladin has said repeatedly–is the United States. It is America that occupies the Muslim world, props up local rulers and Israel, and refuses to accept an Islamic state.[6] Not surprisingly, as the late Mustafa Abu Al-Yazid (aka Said al-Masri, eventually Al-Qaida's number-three man) confirmed, the thrust of Al-Qaida's strategy was to "strike at the head, the head of the snake, the greatest tyrant, the Americans."[7] In order to overcome this obstacle, intermediate military operational objectives had to be developed in harmony with, and supporting, the political strategy, which would open the way for the achievement of Al-Qaida's strategic political goals.

It is the senior leadership of Bin Ladin and his main staff of advisers and close associates who sets strategic objectives and provides overall guidance. As Mustafa Abu Al-Yazid corroborated, it was Bin Ladin who had "specified . . . the practical steps we intend to take" with respect to Al-Qaida's theater strategy.[8] Al-Qaida–like any rational actor–operates, to the greatest extent possible, according to plans it has developed. As Sayf Al-Adl (at one time Al-Qaida's military leader) stressed repeatedly, it is vital to have "a clear plan, which

5 As Ayman Al-Zawahiri saw it, the 9/11 raids were "the first big battle in the Muslim Umma's jihad in response to the modern-day Crusader aggression," *Fursan taht rayat al-nabi [Knights under the Prophet's Banner]*, 2nd ed., part 1 (Al-Sahab, 2010), 253. Also according to Al-Zawahiri, "If we do not resist, we [i.e., the *Umma*] will be finished." "Haqa'iq al-sira bayn al-islam wa'l-kufr" ["The Truth about the Struggle between Islam and Unbelief"], 27 Dhu al-qada 1427/18 December 2006, http://www.tawhed.ws/pr?i=6664.

6 As Al-Zawahiri attributed to Bin Ladin, "If America retreats in defeat from the Islamic lands . . . the battles against its supporters will be easier and simpler." Al-Zawahiri, *Fursan*, 2nd ed., 184. As one Al-Qaida political-military thinker put it, defeating the United States would lead to "total paralysis" and "national frustration" in the United States, whereupon "it will have no choice but to accept Bin Ladin's demands . . . and stop its support for Israel, lift the blockade of Iraq, withdraw its forces from the Land of the Two Holy Places, and abandon the Arab dictators." Luways Atiyat Allah, "Al-Munazara al-kubra: Al-Qaida wa'l-harakiyyun wajhan li-wajhin" ["The Great Confrontation: Al-Qaida and the Old-Style Movement Members Face Off"], in Abu Jandal al-Azdi, *Usama Bin Ladin mujaddid al-zaman wa-qahir al-amrikan* [*Usama Bin Ladin the Renewer of the Age and the Conqueror of the Americans*], 2003, 320–21.

7 Mustafa Abu Al-Yazid, interview by Ahmad Zaydan, "Liqa' al-yawm" ["Today's Interview"], *Al-Jazira TV*, 23 June 2009, http://www.aljazeera.net.

8 Ibid.

determines the necessary ways and means, and the time needed for execution and a successful completion. Any action not based on a plan can be considered [only] a random act, and unlikely to be productive."[9]

We know that a general plan was discussed and developed during a series of far-ranging discussions among top Al-Qaida and affiliated leaders in Afghanistan during the summer of 2000.[10] Moreover, a Saudi newspaper claimed to have in its possession a copy of a long-range strategy document that Al-Qaida allegedly had drafted, consisting of a highly optimistic phased plan extending over 16 years, confirming much of the operational thinking behind Al-Qaida's moves.[11] The time horizon for Al-Qaida's theater plans can extend even decades into the future.[12] Ultimately, victory would come in terms of a "political victory," with the achievement of Al-Qaida's political objectives.[13]

9 According to Sayf Al-Adl's handwritten memoirs, reproduced in Fu'ad Husayn, *Al-Zarqawi: Al-Jil al-thani li'l-Qaida [Al-Zarqawi: Al-Qaida's Second Generation]* (Beirut: Dar al-Khayyal, 2005), 140.

10 Numan Bin Uthman, the head of Al-Qaida's Libyan component at the time, who had access to the Al-Qaida leadership and was one of the participants in these sessions, provides an account in his interview by Kamil Al-Tawil, "Al-Wajh al-akhar li'l-Qaida" ["Al-Qaida's Other Face"], part 1, *Al-Hayat* (London), 25 September 2010, http://international.daralhayat.com/print/184524.

11 Yasir Ba Amir, "Dawlat Al-Qaida am 2016; Al-Marahil tashmil istifzaz Amrika li-irtikab afal irtijaliya didd al-muslimin"["An Al-Qaida State in 2016; The Phases Include Provoking America into Taking Rash Actions against the Muslims"], *Al-Watan* (Abha, Saudi Arabia), 4 May 2010, http://www.alwatan.com.sa/news/newsPrinting.asp?issueno=3294&id=120233.

12 For example, one Al-Qaida official noted that the plan for Iraq extended 20 years into the future. Asad Al-Jihad 2, "Istiratijiyat tanzim Al-Qaida fi 11/9/2008 wa-bad' mukhattatih al-azim" ["Al-Qaida's Strategy on 11/9/2008 and the Great Beginning of Its Plan"], 11 September 2008, http://althoghor.com/forum/index.php?showtopic=3004. Asad Al-Jihad 2 most likely was Muhammad Al-Hakayima (died in 2008), an Egyptian who reportedly was Al-Qaida's media coordinator. For his part, Abd Al-Aziz Al-Muqrin–a Saudi military thinker and for a time leader of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula–envisaged a protracted insurgency in Saudi Arabia that would last 20–30 years. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Muqrin, speaking on video number 28, dealing with the Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula attack at Al-Khobar: http://www.al-qa3eedon.com. For Ayman Al-Zawahiri, the establishment of an Islamic government in Egypt could take "several generations" to achieve. *Fursan taht rayat al-nabi [Knights under the Prophet's Banner]*, 1st ed., 2001, 112.

13 Al-Zawahiri, *Fursan*, 2nd ed., 138. As a Saudi Al-Qaida theorist underlined, victory would not be based on the number of enemy killed or the amount of weapons used, but "in achieving the big strategic objectives." Luways Atiyat Allah, "Al-Nizam al-duwali al-jadid bi-qalam Usama Bin Ladin" ["The New World Order As Usama Bin Ladin Sees It"], 15 April 2007, http://www.alsaha.com/users/415647119/entries/35460.

Military Strategy and Assumptions

However, in order to achieve success, Al-Qaida had to overcome military obstacles to its strategic objectives and translate its political objectives into attainable operational objectives and a workable strategic military plan for use at the theater level, which it did with input by Al-Qaida's military thinkers early in the process. At the operational level, Al-Qaida developed an interrelated package of objectives, whose main points included forcing the United States to leave the Arabian Peninsula, to end its support for Israel, and to stop intervening in the Muslim world in general.[14]

The envisioned military strategy that Al-Qaida crystallized over time to achieve these objectives was centered on trying to break the will of the United States.[15] According to Bin Ladin, the United States is clearly the key because, with its defeat, resistance to achieving Al-Qaida's objectives will collapse.[16] Given the evident overmatch presented by its stronger and more technologically advanced adversaries, Al-Qaida's focus has been on fighting an asymmetric war and, moreover, as Al-Zawahiri stressed, a "people's war," requiring the mobilization of the masses.[17]

Basic assumptions underlay Al-Qaida's strategy–many of which were flawed. Significantly, Al-Qaida's leadership had become convinced that the United

14 Usama Bin Ladin, interview by Taysir Alluni, "Al-Nass al-kamil li-liqa' al-suhufi ma Usama Bin Ladin" ["The Complete Text of the Press Interview with Usama Bin Ladin"], 21 October 2001, http://www.alarabnews.com/alshaab/GIF/29-03-2002/Usama.htm.

15 For Ayman al-Zawahiri, "breaking the will" (*tahtim manawiyat*) is a key objective for defeating an adversary, *Fursan*, 1st ed., 111. One of Al-Qaida's most prominent military thinkers and eventually head of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, Yusuf Al-Ayyari, emphasizes forcefully the point about targeting and defeating the enemy's will, defining defeat as "the destruction of the will to fight." Videotape *Harb al-asabat [Guerrilla War]*, n.d., http://www.qa3edoon.com. Al-Qaida's local branches also accepted that perspective, as in Iraq, where an analysis concluded that "the nature of the struggle against the Crusader coalition has been a struggle of wills and endurance." The Islamic State of Iraq, "Bayn al-inhirafat al-manhajiya wa'l-thawabit al-jihadiya ["Between Doctrinal Deviations and Jihadi Steadfastness"], 27 August 2007, http://m3-f.com/forum/showthread.php?t=548.

16 "Focus on striking the head of unbelief [i.e., the United States] until it collapses; when the latter collapses, the rest of the periphery will join it in defeat, collapse, and oblivion." Usama Bin Ladin, "Bayan min Usama Bin Ladin wa-tanzim Al-Qaida ila al-umma al-islamiya" ["Communique from Usama Bin Ladin and Al-Qaida to the Islamic Umma"], 12 December 2002, http://www.tawhed.ws/pr?i=0504094h.

17 Al-Zawahiri, *Fursan*, 2nd ed., 110–11, 137–38. Al-Zawahiri, indeed, explicitly refers to Western military thinkers for inspiration.

States would be fairly easy to defeat.[18] Al-Qaida recognized that the United States had a large military and extensive economic advantages but, at the same time, believed that American power was vulnerable. Bin Ladin was confident that "we can target that fragile base [of U.S. power] and concentrate on the critical vulnerabilities (*abraz nuqat al-daf*)" so that the United States could be made to "reel, to shrink back, and abandon its leadership and oppression of the world."[19] Specifically, at the theater level, Al-Qaida planners identified such critical vulnerabilities as casualties, economic cost, and time that could be used to undermine U.S. will and lead to its defeat.

The perception within Al-Qaida was that the United States was not willing to take casualties, limiting its military effectiveness and staying power.[20] Al-Qaida also accepted as true that the U.S. military lacked courage and was afraid to engage the enemy face-to-face, relying instead on airpower.[21] Early in the war, one Al-Qaida military thinker had concluded that in Afghanistan "the American people will see the unprecedented number of unjustifiable casualties and will conclude that it is best to put a stop to [the war] sooner rather than later."[22]

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18 As Al-Zawahiri told an interviewer in 1998, "Defeating America is not difficult. America was defeated in Vietnam and was forced to leave Lebanon and Somalia. If we stand up to it resolutely, it may end up the same way as the Soviet Union; everything depends on our focusing all our efforts on resisting." Interview by Jamal Ismail, "Ibn Ladin wa'l-*Jazira* wa-ana" ["Bin Ladin, *Al-Jazira*, and I"], http://www.4shared.com/file/46536954/f1ad06d9/_.html?dirPwdverified=e58bbdb3. Bin Ladin also believed that "America's defeat, by the grace of God . . . will be easier for us . . . than was the earlier defeat of the Soviet Union." Interview with Bin Ladin, "Al-Nass al-kamil." As Bin Ladin also told his followers, "We tested them [i.e., the Americans] in Somalia and saw that they are a paper tiger." Reported in Bin Uthman, "Al-Wajh al-akhar," part 1.

19 Usama Bin Ladin, *Tawjihat manhajiya (2) [Programmatic Guidance (2)]*, 1423/2002–3, http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=yiqgogik.

20 Thus, "America has not been able to carry through many of its plans because of its leaders' hesitation about bearing the responsibility of casualties; this reveals a weakness of our enemy." Al-Zawahiri, *Fursan*, 2nd ed., 210.

21 As Ayman Al-Zawahiri saw it, U.S. soldiers "are the greatest of cowards, and the weakest of the weak, relying only on reconnaissance and then stand-off strikes, and by renting gangs of mercenaries and bandits. Otherwise, they have no courage, initiative, patience, or staying-power." Ayman Al-Zawahiri, *Taht rayat al-qur'an [Under the Banner of the Qur'an]* (Al-Sahab li'l-intaj al-ilami, 19 Dhu al-hijja 1425/30 January 2005), 8–9. Al-Zawahiri claimed that Bin Ladin had subscribed to the same views already in the early days, and that the latter allegedly had said that "the Crusaders, in reality, are cowards, having no principles or morals, but only money and equipment," and that they would "run away after any real confrontation with the armies of Islam." Al-Zawahiri, *Fursan*, 2nd ed., 183.

22 Abu Ubayd Al-Qurayshi, "Awham Amrika" ["America's Delusions"], *Al-Ansar*, no. 15 (Jumada II 1423/10 February 2002): 11.

Al-Qaida also recognized the importance of the U.S. economy as a critical requirement–one which the United States needed in order to be able to fight wars–and the necessity of targeting it as a potential critical vulnerability.[23] In particular, according to Al-Zawahiri, oil is vital to the U.S. economy and, in his view, "you [the United States] will be expelled from the Gulf, God willing . . . whereupon your economic collapse will ensue."[24] According to Mustafa Abu Al-Yazid, when opening the Arabian Peninsula (Saudi Arabia) theater "our plan was focused on hitting U.S. targets," and especially the oil assets, which the Americans "steal and feed upon."[25]

The assumption of America's lack of staying power, fueled by problems with the economy and casualties, also made time a disadvantage for the United States. Therefore, the war was to be protracted, with no time deadline, but instead be event driven, with the attainment of objectives to be the only measure of success for Al-Qaida.[26] As Bin Ladin warned, although the war had already lasted seven years, Al-Qaida was prepared to go on with the war "for seven more years, and then another seven years, and still another seven years after that," and he asked rhetorically: "Can America continue the war against us for several more decades?"[27]

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23 As one Al-Qaida analysis noted of the U.S. economy, "It is the main pillar of overwhelming American military power . . . as well as an important element which America uses to implement its foreign policy." And, "It was the strength of the American economy which made it the backbone of this superpower." Nevertheless, the analysis saw the possibility that "the collapse of the economy means the collapse of the state . . . it is very possible that the [U. S.] economy will collapse." *Nazif al-khasa'ir al-amrikiya [The Attrition from American Losses]* (Markaz al-dirasat wa-l-buhuth al-islamiya, October 2003), http://taw7ed.110mb.com/Nazeef.htm. This establishment is an Al-Qaida think tank.

24 Ayman Al-Zawahiri, "Nass liqa' Al-Sahab ma Al-Shaykh Ayman Al-Zawahiri, hafizahu Allah" ["Text of Al-Sahab's Interview with Shaykh Ayman Al-Zawahiri, May God Preserve Him"], September 2006, http://majdah.maktoob.com/vb/showthread.php?t=33162. Al-Qaida's leadership, not unexpectedly, has instructed the mujahidin repeatedly to focus on targeting the oil sector. For example, see the interview with Al-Zawahiri, "Arba sanawat ala ghazwatay Nyuyurk wa-Washintun" ["Four Years after the Two Raids on New York and Washington"], Shaban 1426/August–September 2005, http://213.42.28.59/forum/showthread.php?t=46637.

25 Interview with Abu Al-Yazid, "Liqa' al-yawm."

26 Al-Zawahiri, *Fursan*, 2nd ed., 112.

27 Usama Bin Ladin, "Dawa ila al-jihad li-waqf al-udwan ala Ghazza" ["Call for a Jihad to Stop the Aggression against Gaza"], January 2009, http://alboraq.info/showthread.php?p=267452.

These vulnerabilities could be targeted by both an indirect and direct approach. That is, there would be a combination of direct raids against enemy homelands–such as 9/11 or those in London in 2005 or in Madrid in 2004, which one can view as the equivalent of World War II–type strategic bombing–alongside within-theater raids and sustained engagement on the ground aimed at an indirect overextension and attrition of the United States and its allies in a protracted war.[28] All engagements, ideally, should be designed to support the broader operational and strategic objectives. As Yusuf Al-Ayyari–then head of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula–characterized the strike he had engineered in Riyadh, this was "a link in the chain of the long war against the Crusaders."[29] In addition, Al-Qaida encourages spontaneous harassing attacks, although it cannot control, but only inspire, such strikes.[30]

Selecting Where to Fight

Deciding where to engage its adversaries–i.e., translating military strategy onto a geographic space as part of its indirect approach to fighting the United States–is an important but complex process for Al-Qaida. From Bin Ladin's perspective, there is a "world war against Islam," and Al-Qaida has been seen

28 For example, to deal with the West and Israel, Al-Zawahiri confirmed the need for a combination of blows such as 9/11 and battles in local theaters "to expel the Crusader-Zionist enemy from the Islamic lands, especially from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Palestine. The forces of aggression against the Islamic world must pay a heavy price for this aggression." Ayman al-Zawahiri, "Al-Badil huwa al-dawa wa'l-jihad" ["The Alternative Is Outreach and Jihad"], Muharram 1427/February 2006, http://www.tawhed.ws/pr?i=5238. Likewise, as an Al-Qaida think tank concluded, a combination of spectacular raids and attrition insurgency warfare could bring about victory against the United States: "The current operations in Afghanistan and Iraq represent tactical attrition which accelerate the process resulting from the Blessed Raid [i.e., 9/11]," *Nazif al-khasa'ir*.

29 Yusuf Al-Ayyari, *Ghazwat al-hadi ashar min rabi al-awwal, amaliyat Sharq Al-Riyad wa-harbuna ma Amrika wa-umala'iha [The Raid of Eleven Rabi I, the East Riyadh Operation and Our War against America and Its Stooges]*, (Markaz al-dirasat wa'l-buhuth al-islamiya, 2003), 35.

30 Al-Zawahiri encouraged Muslims to attack U.S. interests in a harassing effort on a global scale: "The Muslim youth must extend the battle against the Jews and Crusaders over the largest possible area of the globe, and to threaten their interests everywhere." Al-Zawahiri, *Taht rayat al-qur'an*, 17. One Al-Qaida theorist noted that "even operations of a small size or impact, and even if they are only clubbing a Crusader on the head" will have a cumulative effect over the long term, Abu Bakr Naji, *Tariq al-tamkin [Paving the Way]*, 2008, 9.

as a necessary global response to meet the global challenge.[31] Since the main enemy is the United States, theaters ought to be vehicles that target the latter's critical vulnerabilities and be a factor in the United States' defeat by engaging U.S. forces and interests–or those of U.S. partners–in order to undermine the alliances on which America relies to conduct its own regional strategies.

A key component of Al-Qaida's attritional strategy has been to overextend U.S. forces by seeking to compel the latter to engage in multiple theaters around the globe. According to Sayf Al-Adl, then a senior figure in Al-Qaida, following the latter's precipitous withdrawal from Afghanistan, "Our plan . . . was to try to open numerous new battlefields for the Americans in order to disperse their forces and prevent them from massing in any one area."[32] In fact, as one leading Al-Qaida military thinker assessed, one of the major achievements of 9/11 was that "this raid caused [i.e., as a result of the U.S. reaction] an enormous overextension of America's capabilities, since the latter was compelled to spread its forces to numerous theaters without being able to achieve victory in any one of them."[33] In effect, following 9/11, new theaters were opened in Saudi Arabia and in Iraq, and according to Numan Bin Uthman, the head of Al-Qaida's former Libyan branch of Al-Qaida, there was a renewed push about 2007 to further "globalize the jihad" by establishing additional theaters.[34]

Based on its priorities, Al-Qaida's leadership viewed both Afghanistan and Iraq as ideal theaters for attriting the United States, and both were said to prove that "the blow which it [i.e., the United States] wanted to deliver against terrorism

31 Usama Bin Ladin, "Al-Sabil li-ihbat al-mu'amarat" ["The Way to Frustrate Plots"], July 2007, http://www.iraqipa.net/12_2007/26_31/News/a12_30des07.html. Ayman Al-Zawahiri notes that he had seen Al-Qaida could not be successful in isolated situations, facing what it interpreted as a global challenge to Islam. "Haqa'iq al-sira bayn al-islam wa'l-kufr" ["Realities of the Conflict between Islam and Unbelief"], 27 Dhu al-qada 1427/18 December 2006, http://alqimmah.net/showthread.php?t=1921.

32 According to Sayf Al-Adl, *Al-Zarqawi*, 135.

33 Abu Ubayd Al-Qurayshi, "Ghazwat 11 sibtimbir aw al-mustahil idh sar mumkinan" ["The 11 September Raid Or When the Impossible Became Possible'], [2002 or 2003], http://www.geocities.com/aloswa/adab/11sep_mostahol.html?200820. Likewise, a leading figure in Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula was clearly satisfied that, since 9/11, "a number of jihadi fronts have sprung up in various parts of the world." Saud Bin Hamud Al-Utaybi, "Fatihat al-majalla" ["Lead Editorial"], *Sawt Al-Jihad*, no. 28, Ramadan 1425/October–November 2004, 3.

34 As confirmed by Numan Bin Uthman, interview by Kamil Al-Tawil with Numan Bin Uthman, "Al-Wajh al-akhar li'l-Qaida" [Al-Qaida's Other Face], part 5, *Al-Hayat*, 29 September 2010, http://international .darlhayat.com/print/185877.

rebounded against the latter instead with major attrition in terms of American blood and the economy."[35] In fact, a policy assessment completed by an Al-Qaida think tank at the beginning of the U.S. campaign in Iraq offered guidance to that effect for the impending resistance movement. Promoting a guerrilla war, the study predicted that Iraq could be turned into "a second Vietnam" and insisted that "it is imperative that Iraq be made into a theater of attrition for the Crusaders, and indeed a grave for them."[36] So important was the attrition function for this theater that the study suggested that even if half of the thousands of expected mujahidin who were expected to fight died in the process, it was still worth it for the *Umma* overall.[37] Ayman Al-Zawahiri himself was to note that "because of the overriding importance of the two jihadi fronts of Afghanistan and Iraq, all Muslims must support them so that the American forces exit from the two theaters paralyzed and incapacitated . . . and pay the price for their aggression against the Muslims and for helping Israel."[38]

One can categorize the theaters according to how Al-Qaida came to engage there. First, are the *theaters of choice*, which Al-Qaida has assessed as being of value and advantageous to engaging and has taken the initiative to do so; these include Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and the Horn of Africa. Second, there are the *theaters of opportunity*, those which presented themselves largely not at Al-Qaida's initiative–whether in Iraq through the collapse of the Saddam Hussein regime in the wake of the U.S. invasion, or in North Africa with the adherence to Al-Qaida of an existing jihadist organization. These theaters could elicit, respectively, either significant or very limited involvement by Mother Al-Qaida.

Third, there are the *theaters of necessity*, those theaters in which Al-Qaida had little choice but to engage even at a distinct disadvantage, whether because of

35 Al-Zawahiri, *Taht rayat al-qur'an*, 6.

36 *Nasa'ih wa-tawjihat askariya li'l-mujahidin fi Ard Al-Rafidayn [Advice and Military Guidance for the Mujahidin in Mesopotamia]*, (Markaz al-dirasat wa-l-buhuth al-islamiya, 1424/2003), 12, 21. In fact, Iraq was portrayed for the United Sates in terms of "the beginning of the collapse and the loss of its status as an empire and a great power," *Nazif al-khasa'ir*.

37 *Nasa'ih*, 23.

38 Ayman al-Zawahiri, "Kalima hawl al-udwan al-sahyu/salibi ala Ghazza wa-Lubnan" ["Speech about the Zionist/Crusader Aggression against Gaza and Lebanon"], Jumada II 1427/June–July 2006, http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=3zmcpovn. Even after U.S. casualties had declined in Iraq, Al-Zawahiri continued to view attrition in that theater–in terms of economic cost–as a significant factor, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, "Haqa'iq al-jihad wa-abatil al-nifaq" ["The Truth About the Jihad and the Idle Talk of Hypocrisy"], 27 November 2009, http://www.majahden.com/vb/showthread.php?t=27360.

a direct security challenge, as in Afghanistan (which I believe was the result of a major Al-Qaida miscalculation about the probable U.S. reaction to the 9/11 attack), or for political reasons, as in Palestine (where political pressure from criticism of Al-Qaida's passivity may have forced premature and doomed involvement in Gaza and Lebanon).

Finally, there are the *theaters of refusal*, those theaters such as Libya, Central Asia, Egypt, or China where Al-Qaida has refused battle or exerted only minimal or sporadic effort because it lacks the assets, the operational environment is unfavorable, or the area is of secondary immediate importance. In these cases, its involvement may at any one time be limited to media and moral support or some training.[39]

Al-Qaida's evaluation of theaters can be understood primarily in functional terms, that is the extent to which theaters were likely to contribute to what Al-Qaida seeks to accomplish operationally in support of its larger strategic objectives. The evaluation of a theater usually occurs within a global framework, and the theaters are considered as interdependent and ought to be part of a cohesive joint effort. As Ayman Al-Zawahiri has observed, "We are fighting a single war on multiple fronts" or theaters.[40] A study by a think tank serving as an outlet for Al-Qaida analyses stressed that calculations should not be based on what is good or bad for any one individual theater. Rather, taking the case of Iraq as an example, "As an Umma, we have to ask what is good for the Umma as a whole when deploying the youth, rather than asking what is good for Iraq and the Iraqi people?"[41]

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39 As a former instructor of insurgency courses in Al-Qaida's professional military educational system noted, "I used to often reiterate to my brothers in some of the courses on the organization and management of insurgencies that there were some states . . . in which it was difficult to mount a successful insurgency, due to numerous geographic, social, and economic factors." For that source, such states included Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, and some of the Gulf states. Abu Ubayda Abd Allah Al-Adam, *Thawrat al-shuub wa-nihayat al-mulk al-jabri?* [*The Popular Revolts and an End to Authoritarian Rule?*], (Markaz al-fajr li'l-ilam, 1432/2011), 3.

40 Al-Zawahiri, "Nass liqa' Al-Sahab." One of the lessons he took from previous failure in Egypt was that "the battle between Islam and Unbelief could not be limited to a single region or area," since Islam's enemies were everywhere. Al-Zawahiri, *Fursan*, 2nd ed., 108.

41 *Nasa'ih wa-tawjihat askariya li'l-mujahidin fi Ard Al-Rafidayn [Advice and Military Guidance for the Mujahidin in Mesopotamia]*, (Markaz al-dirasat wa-l-buhuth al-islamiya, 1424/2003), 21.

Writing in one of the journals published by Mother Al-Qaida, an analyst likewise noted that "the jihad is interconnected in the world, with no fragmentation between fronts, [even] the ones the furthest apart."[42] And as Bin Ladin explained his intent in late 2001, "All [the blows] are mutually supportive of each other. When we strike the Americans in the cause of Palestine that also serves as a blow in the cause for the Land of the Two Holy sites [i.e., Saudi Arabia], and vice-versa."[43] Perhaps this relationship is most graphically illustrated by Abu Dujana Al-Khurasani (the Jordanian best known for his suicide attack on a Central Intelligence Agency station in Afghanistan in 2009), who remarked that "if one [of Al-Qaida's members] sneezes in Kandahar [Afghanistan], another who is in Al-Anbar [Iraq] will say 'God bless you.'"[44]

Case Studies of Theater Selection

In evaluating potential theaters where it could apply its military strategy, Al-Qaida relied predominantly on realpolitik criteria and methodology, although ideological considerations were never distant. This infusion of realpolitik is important in the decision-making calculus even for someone as ideologically committed as Bin Ladin. Thus, when he proclaimed a jihad in 1996 in Saudi Arabia (although years before actually opening a theater there), he highlighted its religious importance by stating that "the Land of the Two Holy Places [i.e., Saudi Arabia] represents a symbol of the unity of the Islamic world, [with] the holy Kaba, which is the qibla [i.e., focal point of prayer] for all Muslims," and he noted that its population were direct descendants of Muhammad's companions. Concurrently, however, he also argued in geopolitical terms that "the Land of the Two Holy Places represents an important economic force in the Islamic world, since the largest oil reserves in the world are located there," and because in neighboring Yemen Al-Qaida has "strategic depth and a reservoir of a significant population base of fighters for God's cause."[45]

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42 Hadi Al-Ruh, "Dawlat Al-Iraq Al-Islamiya wa-dawrha al-qadim fi al-jihad al-alami" ["The Islamic State of Iraq and Its Coming Role in the International Jihad"], *Al-Mushtaqun Ila Al-Janna*, no. 3, Dhu al-hijja 1430/November–December 2009, 60.

43 Interview with Bin Ladin, "Al-Nass al-kamil."

44 Abu Dujana Al-Khurasani, "Ahbab Usama" ["Usama's Fans"], 9 February 2008, http://majahden.com/vb/showthread.php?t=12499.

45 Usama Bin Ladin, "Risala min Usama Bin Muhammad Bin Ladin ila ikhwanih al-muslimin fi al-alam kaffatan wa-Jazirat Al-Arab khassatan" ["Message from Usama Bin Muhammad Bin Ladin to His Muslim Brethren around the World in General and in the Arabian Peninsula Specifically"], 9 Rabi II 1417/23 August 1996, http://www.tawhed.ws/pr?i=Z531.

At the operational level, according to Bin Ladin, there must also be a careful determination, informed by military expertise, as to whether conditions are ripe for jihad in any specific country: "If the conditions are not ripe, they must then refrain and desist."[46] Important analytical criteria in Al-Qaida's decision on whether to open a new theater have included the need for a certain level of local support, a favorable operating environment, and reasonable prospects for success. For example, in explaining Al-Qaida's cautious approach to opening a theater in Palestine, an Al-Qaida spokesman stressed that the Palestinians themselves first needed to play a more vigorous part in preparing the way for foreign mujahidin by training local fighters, organizing cells, obtaining arms and establishing arms caches, drawing maps, and absorbing Al-Qaida's policy statements. This suggests that at the time the appropriate factors for a new theater were not yet present.[47]

A subsequent evaluation of why Al-Qaida chose to develop the Yemeni theater gives a fair picture of the factors at all levels that are considered in making such decisions. In that vein, the deputy leader of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula and Yemen,[48] Abu Sufyan Al-Azdi Al-Shihri, of course highlighted the region's ideological/religious importance by calling it "Muhammad's Peninsula" and "Islam's Peninsula." Al-Shihri, however, paid even greater attention to the impact his theater could have on Al-Qaida's overall strategy, citing that "the infidel nations" had shown "the geographical significance of this region, especially the maritime aspect, and the importance of the Bab Al-Mandab [Strait] which, if we control–God willing–and return it to Islamic control, would be a great victory with a global impact. The Bab [Al-Mandab] would thereby be closed off and the Jews would be throttled because it is through [it] that America provides them with support, by way of the Red Sea."[49] Al-Shihri underlines that the mujahidin in the two adjoining theaters of Arabia and the Horn of Africa can also threaten the sea lanes used for the world's oil supply.[50]

46 Interview with Bin Ladin, "Ibn Ladin wa'l-*Jazira*."

47 Asad Al-Jihad 2 [Muhammad Al-Hakayima], "Tawqit dukhul tanzim Al-Qaida ila Falastin" ["The Timing of Al-Qaida's Entry into Palestine"], 2008, www.ye1.org/vb/showthread.php?t=225245.

48 Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula eventually merged with the Yemeni branch to become Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula and Yemen.

49 Abu Sufyan Al-Azdi (Said Al-Shihri), "Radd al-udwan al-salibi" ["Repelling the Crusader Aggression"], early 2010, http://202.71.102.68/~alfaloj/vb/showthread.php?p=725409.

50 Ibid.

Further, at an operational level, an assessment in the journal of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula and Yemen notes that Yemen had been selected as "the springboard to liberate the Arabian Peninsula," and stresses that this was based on Bin Ladin's own guidance. The analytical components at an operational level supporting that decision identified the favorable tribal nature of Yemen's society–marked by religiosity and a love of independence; its rugged terrain; long mountain, desert, and maritime borders; a weak and corrupt government; a population suffering from poverty, unemployment, and high prices; as well as the presence of weak and discredited potentially rival Islamic organizations. And, the mujahidin would be able to organize and mass in areas outside government control. These concrete conditions made Yemen "appropriate to adopt the idea of the jihad . . . and the ideal location for the mujahidin at present."[51]

Managing the Theaters

Prioritizing the effort among theaters often competing for attention and guiding operations can also be complicated. Bin Ladin has the authority to set the broad strategic goals, as he had done for Saudi Arabia.[52] Nevertheless, there is a whole spectrum of the extent to which he has actual control over the many Al-Qaida branches, offshoots, and allies, ranging from significant to minimal.

In practical terms, Al-Qaida's leadership can influence the relative importance of specific theaters at any stage by encouraging the deployment of personnel and cadres; sending money; and providing analytical attention, media publicity,

51 Hamil Al-Misk, "Min huna nabda" ["This Is Where We Begin"] *Sada Al-Malahim*, no. 8, Rabi I 1430/February–March 2009, 27, 29. A spokesman with ties to the senior Al-Qaida leadership echoed pretty much these same considerations, Asad Al-Jihad 2, "Istiratijiyat tanzim Al-Qaida fi 11/9/2008 wa-bad' mukhattatih al-azim" ["Al-Qaida's Strategy on 11/9/2008 and the Great Beginning of Its Plan"], 11 September 2008, http://althoghor.com/forum/index.php?showtopic=3004.

52 Interview with Abu Al-Yazid, "Liqa' al-yawm." In fact, following the setbacks in the wake of 9/11, Al-Qaida decided to open a theater in Saudi Arabia, most probably as a means to relieve the unexpected pressure on Mother Al-Qaida. According to Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula's official defense of this controversial policy choice, following 9/11 "orders came to the mujahidin to initiate activity in the Peninsula and to prepare for that." *Tasa'ulat hawl jihad al-salibiyyin fi Jazirat Al-Arab [Second-guessing the Jihad against the Crusaders in the Arabian Peninsula], appendix in Abd al-Aziz Al-Anazi, Azhar al-riyadh, [Flowers in the Garden]*, (Majmuat al-ansar al-baridiya, 1430/2009), 53. The actual text was written circa 2004.

and public encouragement[53]–all elements that also serve as guidance to the organization's membership and sympathizers.

In order to be able to wage a war over such far-flung theaters, Mother Al-Qaida has innovated a command and control philosophy. It has fused traditional regional patrimonialism (stressing personal loyalty and cohesion) with elements of mission-type orders, or delegated authority. The central leaders provide general goals and guidance, while allowing subordinates substantial freedom of action and initiative in fulfilling the commander's intent. Al-Qaida relies for control on its educational system, personnel selection, provision of programmatic guidance, and control of the media to promote the necessary common understanding and unity of purpose for its theater commanders.

Local leaders naturally tend to highlight their own importance and view their own theater as the main effort, and theater commanders can be sensitive about their own area of operations, especially when theaters abut. Thus, Al-Qaida in Saudi Arabia saw itself at the main theater; according to an official Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula publication, "The wise person realizes that fighting by many infidel armies against the Muslims outside the [Arabian] Peninsula is nothing more than a long-term prelude to turning to this Peninsula, since they understand that this Peninsula is the head and everything else are [only] the wings."[54]

Conversely, for Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, his own theater of Iraq was "in the Arab heartland. And the distance between it and the Land of the Two Holy Shrines [Saudi Arabia] and Al-Aqsa [Mosque] is [only] a stone's throw. We know from God's religion that the real and decisive battle between unbelief and

53 Thus, according to Ayman Al-Zawahiri, "The Islamic Umma everywhere is responsible for supporting the jihadi work in the active jihad theaters against the Crusaders and the Jews. Muslims must outdo one another in supporting [the theaters] with manpower, money, equipment, and expertise, and one should not even consider the Muslims' *zakat* [alms tax] and charity before the needs of these theaters are met. The *mujahidin* in the Iraq and Afghanistan theaters are the first line of defense for Islam and the Muslims." "Al-Badil." Priority among theaters can vary over time; as Bin Ladin noted with respect to Palestine and Saudi Arabia, "sometimes conditions in one or the other of these two cases will propel one or the other more, and we will move in that direction, but without ignoring the other one." Interview with Bin Ladin, "Al-Nass al-kamil."

54 *Tasa'ulat wa-shubuhat hawl al-mujahidin wa-amaliyathim [Second-guessing and Doubts about the Mujahidin and Their Operations]*, (Al-Qaidun, Rabi II 1425/May–June 2004), http://www.qa3edoon.com/TasaolatWEB/an-037.htm.

Islam is in this land, that is in Sham [Greater Syria] and the area around it. Therefore, we must make whatever effort is necessary and do the utmost to establish a foothold in this land."[55]

Local Al-Qaida leaders ideally should recognize the importance of theater synergy and stay within their own areas of responsibility, while deferring broader decisions related to general strategy to Bin Ladin. As he cautioned, "Let each one of us take care of his own theater," and, by doing so, he reassured his followers that the theaters would be supporting each other in a common effort.[56]

When the system works as intended, as in the case of Al-Qaida's branch then operating in Saudi Arabia, Bin Ladin would set the broad strategic goals for the local branch.[57] As Yusuf Al-Ayyari, then leader of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula and a faithful disciple of Bin Ladin stressed (evidently in response to debates within his local branch on priorities among theaters), elements who pushed local concerns "are blind to the Muslims' broader interests . . . and ought to shut up if those who bear responsibility for the Umma [i.e., Al-Qaida's main leaders] speak."[58] As another Al-Qaida branch that had close ties to the center, Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula and Yemen noted in its official journal, operations in various theaters depended on both "God's favor and by *careful centralized planning*"[59] (emphasis added).

In many cases, however, such control is limited. The leadership, of course, could still focus its attention, or turn the commander's telescope, to specific areas, particularly if there are setbacks.[60] Thus, as Mother Al-Qaida became

55 Captured letter from Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi to an unknown recipient, released by the Coalition Provisional Authority in February 2004, http://www.cpa-iraq.org/arabic/transcripts/20040212_zarqawi_full-arabic.html.

56 Usama Bin Ladin, "Al-Nizal al-nizal ya abtal Al-Sumal" ["Battle, Battle, Oh Heroes of Somalia"], March 2009, http://www.as-ansar.com/vb/showthread.php?p=18752.

57 Interview with Abu Al-Yazid, "Liqa' al-yawm."

58 Al-Ayyari, *Ghazwat al-hadi ashar*, 33.

59 Hamil Al-Misk, "Fi Al-Aqsa naltaqi; Sinariyu inhiyar al-nizam al-hakim" ["We Will Meet in Al-Aqsa; A Scenario for the Collapse of the Ruling Regime"], *Sada Al-Malahim*, no. 9, Jumada I 1430/April–May 2009, 27, 31.

60 For example, according to Numan Bin Uthman, Bin Ladin himself had ordered Al-Qaida to cease its campaign in Saudi Arabia in the wake of its defeat there by Saudi security, interview by Kamil Al-Tawil, "Al-Wajh al-akhar li'l-Qaida," part 4, *Al-Hayat*, 28 September 2010, http://international.daralhayat.com/print/185506.

increasingly displeased with Al-Zarqawi's blunders in Iraq–such as becoming embroiled in a civil war with the Shia, mismanaging the tribes, engaging in set-piece battles, broadcasting gruesome videos of executions, and so forth–it had tried to force him to modify his policies by providing private and public rebukes and guidance, although clearly with limited effect since the system relied heavily on voluntary submission to authority.[61] Highlighting the limitations of Al-Qaida's system of command and control, Al-Zarqawi had not been educated by Al-Qaida, had not advanced within its system, and had been only a default candidate to lead operations in Iraq in the absence of others.

Conclusions and Future Prospects

Clearly, the military results that Al-Qaida intended to lead to the organization's strategic goals have been less successful than promised when the war began. Basic assumptions as to the weakness of U.S. will, the staying power of its military, and the fragility of its economy; the brittleness of U.S. alliances; the weakness of local regimes; and Al-Qaida's ability to withstand heavy battle losses have proved completely wrong or at least overly optimistic. In particular, arrests and high battlefield losses have eliminated cadres who cannot be replaced easily, especially as countermeasures and the inability to establish substantial safe areas have crippled Al-Qaida's ability to educate new cadres.

Realistically, the ensuing war has proven very painful for Al-Qaida, so much so that Bin Ladin was induced to offer a truce to the new U.S. administration in 2009, accompanied by a somewhat hollow warning that otherwise "we will have no option but to continue the war of attrition against you along all possible lines of operation, as we attrited the Soviet Union for a decade until it fell apart."[62] Al-Qaida leaders and spokesmen have felt it necessary from the first to remind followers that "war is a see-saw . . . one day we have the advantage,

61 As confirmed by Numan Bin Uthman. Interview by Kamil Al-Tawil with Numan bin Uthman, "Al-Wajh al-akhar li'l-Qaida" ["Al-Qaida's Other Face"], part 3, *Al-Hayat*, 27 September 2010, http://international .darlhayat.com/print/185480. Even in his eulogy of Al-Zarqawi, Bin Ladin was critical, reminding his audience that "Abu Musab . . . had had clear instructions to focus his combat on the occupying aggressors, and most especially on the Americans, and to treat as neutrals all those wishing to be neutral." "Ritha' al-shaykh Abi Musab Al-Zarqawi" ["Eulogy for Shaykh Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi"], Jumada II 1427/June–July 2006, www.tawhed.ws/pr?i=5811.

62 Usama Bin Ladin, "Bayan li'l-shab al-amriki" ["Communiqué to the American People"], 13 September 2009, http://www.archive.org/details/ASD-BenLaden.

another day the enemy does, and fortunes alternate . . . neither side will always be victorious."[63] However, ideological factors have provided reassurance of final victory for, as Al-Qaida's then-spokesman posited, relying for his assurance on the Quran, "we believe that in the end the Believers will win."[64]

Several conclusions and implications can be drawn from the preceding analysis. *First*, Al-Qaida plans for and fights war in a rational and methodical way, with realpolitik considerations key to decision making. *Second*, Al-Qaida's ideologically inspired strategic objectives may be unrealistic and overambitious, and they simply cannot be supported at the operational level, given the existing balance of power in the world. *Third*, any operational plans can only be as good as the assumptions on which they are based and the ability to execute them. One can question many of Al-Qaida's key assumptions, based on doubtful analysis, as well as the policy choices which have often been beyond Al-Qaida's capability to implement. Of course, one can point to numerous resulting blunders on the ground for Al-Qaida. *Fourth*, Al-Qaida's military strategy is likely to continue to support enduring long-range goals along the same lines, with a dual emphasis on insurgencies and out-of-area strikes (spectacular ones if possible, but more feasible, small-scale ones are more likely), with adaptations as necessary based on lessons learned or emerging threats. As part of that same strategy, Al-Qaida, however unrealistically, would no doubt like to extend its operational area further by expanding existing theaters and opening new ones to further extend U.S. forces.

Given its history of objectives, plans, and theater criteria, where might Al-Qaida hope to open new theaters in the future? Clearly, with the ongoing turmoil in the Middle East, Al-Qaida may be looking for opportunities in the region, although adapting and forecasting there have become even more difficult than usual, including for Al-Qaida. Al-Qaida is likely to probe but can be expected to conduct hardheaded analysis before committing to more doomed ventures such as Gaza or Lebanon. A lack of assets, a prevalence of local competitors, and an intact security apparatus will limit prospects in Egypt and Tunisia. Likewise, in the more chaotic Libya, Al-Qaida's assets are limited (and mostly clustered in the group that broke away from Mother Al-Qaida in 2009). Syria, on the other hand, with its sectarian divisions and long-standing, pent-up

63 Interview with Sulayman Abu Ghayth, 2002, http://www.hdrmut.net/vb/t174274.html.

64 Ibid.

grievances that will likely to lead to major turmoil if the present ruling system were to disintegrate, may hold better prospects for Al-Qaida activity and would be attractive because of its proximity to Iraq and Israel. In addition, the unsettled situation in Yemen, Iraq, and Pakistan will continue to draw Al-Qaida's attention in search for expanded opportunities. Failing states in Africa may also provide suitable conditions for expansion in the future. In particular, Darfur has been an area where Al-Qaida expected and hoped for a U.S. intervention. Al-Qaida would like to wage jihad in Darfur because of the country's isolation and the related operational difficulties for the West, because of its nature as a gateway to other fragile African countries, and because of Al-Qaida's long-standing familiarity with the region.

Ultimately, Al-Qaida is likely to continue to try to decide on new theaters based on such long-standing criteria as suitability of the operational environment (both in terms of local and broader Islamic support) and the value of such a theater in attriting adversaries or in contributing to influence Al-Qaida's goals of affecting key areas, such as Palestine. However, as a result of the increasingly effective countermeasures by the United States and other actors over the past few years, Al-Qaida will continue to find its wartime strategy and plans difficult to implement and will be increasingly unable to achieve the military objectives necessary to achieve its strategic goals.

Postscript

The elimination of Usama Bin Ladin in May 2011 is likely to result in a period of disarray within Mother Al-Qaida as new leaderships are sorted out. This juncture could provide Al-Qaida with the opportunity for a strategic reassessment and the crafting of more realistic objectives and political and military strategies. However, a basic reassessment will be difficult for a new leadership, as such a process would entail abandoning long-held paradigms and an admission of Bin Ladin's own basic errors. Moreover, given the imbalance in military potential, Al-Qaida's options may be limited, and it is likely to continue to focus on a protracted war of attrition, although one cannot exclude a resort to weapons of mass destruction should they become available. Nevertheless, in light of very real operational difficulties, Al-Qaida will find it increasingly difficult to plan for and wage a global war, and especially so if it were to fragment as an organization into completely uncoordinated local affiliates.

HORN OF AFRICA

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4
East Africa and the Horn

David H. Shinn

The countries of East Africa and the Horn of Africa offer an attractive environment for Al-Qaida and extremist organizations to exploit. Poverty is widespread. Social and economic inequality is common. Political marginalization of minority groups exists throughout the region. Most of the countries have leaders who tend to be autocratic and have been in power for many years. Corruption is a serious problem. Land and sea borders are porous and poorly controlled. Weapons are easily available, especially in Somalia, which has been a failed state since 1991. Ethnic tension or outright conflict has long plagued the region. The population of each country is either predominantly Muslim or has an important Muslim minority. All of the countries are relatively close geographically to Al-Qaida's operations in the Maghreb, Arabian Peninsula, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. It should not be a surprise that Al-Qaida focused early on this region; it is perhaps surprising, however, that Al-Qaida has not been even more effective given the local conditions and effort that it has invested here.[1]

In the Beginning, Sudan

An evaluation of Al-Qaida in East Africa and the Horn requires stepping back more than 20 years in order to capture its evolution. An Islamist government seized power in Sudan in 1989. It had the support of Hassan Al-Turabi's National Islamic Front (NIF), which sent a delegation to meet with Usama Bin Ladin and invite him to establish a presence in Sudan. Bin Ladin sent a team to Khartoum, and he moved most of Al-Qaida's best trained and experienced

1 For an earlier analysis of this subject, see David Shinn, "Al-Qaeda in East Africa and the Horn," *Journal of Conflict Studies* 27, no. 1 (Summer 2007): 47–75.

fighters–numbering 1,000 to 1,500–to Sudan between late 1989 and late 1991. Bin Ladin retained a training and operational infrastructure in Afghanistan and Pakistan; he joined his colleagues in Sudan in December 1991.[2]

Bin Ladin established some 30 businesses in Sudan, mostly in the construction and agricultural sectors. He invested some $200 million and employed many of the Afghan Arabs who had fought with him against the Soviet Union. Many others were Egyptian members of the radical Islamic Jihad and Jama'at Islamiyah. Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir provided a letter to Wadi Al-Aqiq, Bin Ladin's main Sudanese holding company, which exempted Al-Qaida from some financial requirements while operating in the country. Al-Qaida used one of its farms for refresher training in weapons and explosives. One of the groups that used the facility was the Egyptian Islamic Jihad. Bin Ladin cultivated senior officials in the government and military and reportedly invested $50 million in a bank closely linked to Sudanese leaders. The Sudanese intelligence service was the intermediary between Al-Qaida and the government.[3]

The time when the United States learned about the threat posed globally by Al-Qaida and its activities in East Africa and the Horn is significant in terms of the U.S. policy response. In the early years as Al-Qaida built its organization in Sudan, it was not on the U.S. counterterrorism radar screen. Bin Ladin and Al-Qaida never came up, for example, in the initial investigation of the 1993 New York World Trade Center bombing. The United States only subsequently established the link. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) did learn in 1993 that Bin Ladin was channeling funds to Egyptian extremists, but a 1995 National Intelligence Estimate on terrorism did not mention Bin Ladin as a key player in terrorism. He was known only as a financier of Islamist terrorist groups and not as someone directly involved in the organization and planning of operations.[4] In fact, the United States only learned that Bin Ladin's empire went

2 Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: Berkley Books, 2002), 39–41; Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 164–65.

3 Abdel Bari Atwan, *The Secret History of al Qaeda* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 47–48; Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, 41–45, 209; Donald Petterson, *Inside Sudan: Political Islam, Conflict, and Catastrophe* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999), 95–96. *The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004), 57–58.

4 Richard A. Clarke, Against All Enemies: *Inside America's War on Terror* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 78–79, 134; *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 108–9.

by the name Al-Qaida in 1996, when one of his associates in Sudan, Jamal Al-Fadl, provided the United States with details of the organization.[5]

According to one of Bin Ladin's close associates, by 1994 the Sudanese were becoming increasingly unhappy with his presence in the country.[6] Following an assassination attempt against Bin Ladin, which he attributed to Saudi Arabia, Bin Ladin decided to step up his political activism, especially against the Saudis, but followed a practice of not taking credit for terrorist attacks.[7] This resulted in growing pressure by Saudi Arabia and the United States on Sudan to expel Bin Ladin.

In March 1996, U.S. intelligence officials presented a visiting Sudanese major general, Al-Fatih Erwa, with a two page "non-paper" that contained a list of actions that Sudan should take if it wanted to improve relations with the United States. Among the items, the United States asked Sudan to provide the names, dates of arrival, departure and destination, and passport data for the mujahidin that Bin Ladin brought to Sudan. In its response, Sudan went further than the request in the "non-paper" and in mid-May 1996 expelled Bin Ladin, who left with two of his sons and some bodyguards for Jalalabad, Afghanistan. Dozens of other Al-Qaida members followed on later flights. Sudan increasingly saw Bin Ladin as a liability but insisted publicly that he departed of his own volition and had not been forced out. Bin Ladin acknowledged in 1998, however, that he had left Sudan because Khartoum could no longer bear the pressure from the U.S. government.[8]

Being forced out of Sudan in 1996 was one of Al-Qaida's first major setbacks. A combination of Sudanese unhappiness with the Al-Qaida operation and concern that its presence in the country prevented improved relations with the United States largely accounted for the decision. Saudi pressure also contributed to the expulsion, which resulted in significant financial losses for Bin Ladin's

5 Clarke, *Against All Enemies*, 148.

6 Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, 45.

7 Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, 45–47; Atwan, *The Secret History*, 49.

8 Atwan, *The Secret History*, 51; *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 63; Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, 51–52, 208; Anonymous [Michael Scheuer], *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 2002), 143–47; and George Tenet, *At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 103.

extensive business interests in Sudan.[9] Unfortunately, neither the United States nor Saudi Arabia took advantage of his ill fortune. Although Sudan was probably not willing to turn him over to the United States, there is no indication that Washington even asked. In all fairness, there was probably inadequate evidence against him in the spring of 1996 to charge him and produce a conviction in an American court. Saudi Arabia appeared to be uninterested in receiving such a controversial member of a prominent Saudi family. Hence, he returned to Afghanistan and the rest is history.

Somalia Becomes an Early Target

Somalia's status as a failed state beginning early in 1991 and efforts by the United States military beginning in 1992 to provide emergency food aid to starving Somalis provided an opportunity for Bin Ladin to attack the "far enemy" closer to home. The massive U.S.-led United Task Force that arrived in Somalia in December 1992 to open corridors for the delivery of food to famine victims led to a decision by Bin Ladin to take advantage of the situation. He gave responsibility for this operation to Abu Hafs Al-Masri, also known as Mohammed Atef. Abu Hafs, who was born in Egypt, was one of Bin Ladin's most talented, trusted and militant lieutenants. Before Abu Hafs' death in November 2001 in Afghanistan during a coalition bomb attack, Bin Ladin had nominated him as his replacement.[10]

In the early 1990s, Abu Hafs was Al-Qaida's Africa regional leader, and made multiple trips to Somalia from Khartoum beginning in 1992. He met with militants, assessed capabilities, and made arrangements to provide training and arms for fighters. In late January 1993, he designated a team of Al-Qaida veterans to conduct operations in Somalia. Al-Qaida believed that Somalia would offer a safe haven for its operations and allow it to target the United States in Somalia and the Arabian Peninsula. The first Al-Qaida operatives left Peshawar, Pakistan, transited Kenya, and arrived in Somalia in early February 1993. The group operated as a traditional special forces group, working closely

9 Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 222–23; Atwan, *The Secret History*, 51–53.

10 Harmony Project, *Al-Qaida's (Mis)adventures in the Horn of Africa*, 107, see www.ctc.usma.edu/aq/aqII.asp. The Harmony Project by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point is the most comprehensive research effort so far on the role of Al-Qaida in the region. It includes original, mostly early, Al-Qaida documents. It has a heavy focus on Kenya and Somalia, and offers relatively little information on the rest of the region.

with a Somali extremist organization known as Al-Ittihad Al-Islami (AIAI). Together with AIAI, the Al-Qaida operatives established three training camps in Somalia and took orders from Al-Qaida headquarters in Khartoum.[11]

In December 1992, there was an attack on a hotel in Yemen in the belief that U.S. Air Force personnel supporting the U.S.-led operation in Somalia were staying there. Thanks to a tip from Yemeni security, the Americans had left the hotel before the bombing. At the time of the attack in Yemen and throughout the U.S. involvement in Somalia from 1992 until 1994, the William J. Clinton administration was not aware of any Al-Qaida role.[12] It was only several years later that evidence began to surface positively implicating Al-Qaida in events in Somalia and East Africa and the Horn more generally.[13]

Al-Qaida's chief instructor, Ali Muhammad, began training AIAI personnel in early 1993. Rohan Gunaratna argues that these personnel were responsible for shooting down two U.S. Black Hawk helicopters and killing 18 U.S. military personnel during the 3-4 October 1993 battle in Mogadishu that led ultimately to the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Somalia. Gunaratna, who has held a series of counterterrorism positions and is now at Nanying Technological University in Singapore, asserted that Al-Qaida-trained Somalis also killed Belgian and Pakistani peacekeepers in Somalia.[14] *The 9/11 Commission Report* tends to support this account but acknowledged it may reflect Al-Qaida boasting.[15] Michael Scheuer, then-chief of the Bin Ladin Unit at CIA, although withholding final judgment on Al-Qaida's role in aiding the Somalis, seemed inclined to concur with the argument for robust Al-Qaida involvement.[16] In a conversation well after the event with the editor in chief of *Al Quds Al-Arabi*, Bin Ladin told

11 Harmony Project, *Al-Qaida's (Mis)adventures*, 5–6, 79. For a good analysis of AIAI, see Andre Le Sage, "Prospects for Al Itihad & Islamist Radicalism in Somalia," *Review of African Political Economy* 28, no. 89 (September 2001): 472–77 and Matt Bryden, "No Quick Fixes: Coming to Terms with Terrorism, Islam, and Statelessness in Somalia," *Journal of Conflict Studies* 13, no. 2 (Fall 2003): 24–56.

12 Clarke, *Against All Enemies*, 88.

13 *The 9/11 Commission Report* stated that U.S. intelligence did not learn of Al-Qaida's involvement in Somalia until 1996; 468 n45.

14 Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, 206–7.

15 *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 60.

16 Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes*, 136–37.

Abdel Bari Atwan that Al-Qaida's Afghan Arabs were behind the October 1993 attack on the Americans.[17]

Pulitzer Prize–winning author Lawrence Wright holds a different view. He pointed out that although Bin Ladin claimed he sent 250 fighters to Somalia to attack U.S. troops, Sudanese intelligence reports said the number was only a handful. According to Wright, Al-Qaida operatives concluded that Somalis were not appreciative of their assistance and relations were strained. Wright believed that Bin Ladin simply took credit for victories in which Al-Qaida had little involvement. He also observed that the United States dropped charges of Al-Qaida responsibility for the killing of Americans in Somalia in a case against Bin Ladin in a New York court. No testimony in any court case against Al-Qaida operatives proved that Bin Ladin or Al-Qaida operatives were responsible for the deaths of Americans in Somalia.[18]

The Combating Terrorism Center's Harmony Project provides an excellent analysis of early Al-Qaida involvement in Somalia and the problems the organization faced. It clearly intended to establish a franchise in Somalia and leaders such as Abu Hafs expected that the country would be a low-cost recruiting ground where disaffected Somalis in a failed state would flock to its ranks to expel the international peacekeeping force. Somalia seemed to be another Afghanistan in the eyes of Al-Qaida. The Harmony Project concluded that the reality of the situation was very different. Al-Qaida underestimated the cost of operating in Somalia. Getting in and out of the country was costly, and expenses resulting from corruption in neighboring states were high, while poor security in Somalia further increased costs. Al-Qaida experienced extortion from Somali clans and unanticipated losses when bandits attacked their convoys. And it overestimated the degree to which Somalis would become jihadis, especially if there was no financial incentive. While many Somali clan leaders and warlords wanted the U.S. and UN forces to leave Somalia, their first goal was the security of their clan against others. Abu Hafs spent considerable time and scarce resources building consensus among Somali leaders to keep the focus on expelling foreign occupiers instead of fighting with other Somalis.[19]

17 Atwan, *The Secret History*, 36, 166.

18 Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 188–89, 266.

19 Harmony Project, *Al-Qaida's (Mis)adventures*, 14, 19–21.

In addition, Al-Qaida failed to understand the importance of traditional Sufi doctrine in Somali Islam. It tried to convince Somalis to accept Salafi beliefs without offering financial incentives. In some cases, Al-Qaida operatives appeared stunned at the depth of resistance they encountered from Sufi clerics and did not appreciate the Somali attachment to clans and sub-clans. The Harmony Project said Al-Qaida's efforts were largely ineffective for many of the same reasons that Western interventions failed in the past. It simply did not understand the political, economic, and social dynamics of the country. Unlike the tribal areas of Pakistan, it found a lawless land of shifting alliances that lacked Sunni unity. Al-Qaida largely failed to overcome local loyalties, although it did penetrate a few sub-clans. The Somali practice of inclusive, consensus decision-making collided with Al-Qaida's need for rapid top-down decisions, and Al-Qaida complained about the lack of secrecy. The primacy of clan ultimately frustrated Al-Qaida's efforts to recruit and develop a unified coalition.[20]

Nonetheless, Al-Qaida did have some early success in Somalia. It managed to recruit a number of young Somalis who found the call to jihad compatible with their need for employment and desire for adventure. A few may have been attracted by the extremist ideology. Al-Qaida also found increasing acceptance in those areas where it was possible to establish relative security and order. It accomplished this at Ras Kamboni, a small Indian Ocean port town near the Kenya border. Since the early 1990s, the port has remained a hotbed of extremist Islam and was a stronghold of the subsequent Islamic Courts movement. There were persistent reports that the town served as a terrorist training camp where jihadis from outside the country were frequent visitors. In spite of these limited early successes, which became important during the later rise of Al-Shabaab, the Harmony Project concluded that foreign jihadis encountered more adversity than success during Al-Qaida's first 18 months in Somalia.[21]

Other Early Al-Qaida Activity in the Horn

The Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement (EIJM) originated at a conference in Khartoum in 1988 when the Eritrean Muslim Pioneers Organization and the Eritrean National Islamic Liberation Front merged with several smaller

20 Ibid., 22, 42–43.

21 Ibid., 6, 23.

organizations. The first EIJM militants entered Eritrea from Sudan in 1988, but did not begin offensive military operations until a year later. When Al-Qaida was based in Khartoum, it trained several hundred movement fighters in its Sudanese and Afghan camps and provided funding to improve their military capability. By the mid-1990s, EIJM had an estimated 500 fighters, and even held a seat on Al-Qaida's international network's coordinating council, the Majlis Al-Fatwa. By 1993, EIJM was carrying out occasional raids and ambushes inside Eritrea. Following its second general conference in Khartoum in 1994, EIJM expanded its attacks. This underscored its link to Al-Qaida and in early 1995 led to a break in relations between Eritrea and Sudan. Asmara then began calling for the overthrow of the government in Khartoum.[22]

Djibouti, which has been the location of a French military base for many years and became in December 2002 the site for the only U.S. military base in Africa–Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa–has managed to avoid any significant Al-Qaida activity.[23] This did not happen, however, for lack of trying. Abu Hafs complained in an internal Al-Qaida memo dating from the early 1990s that its operative in Djibouti had to be removed immediately "because he is susceptible to Djibouti's corruption as a single male, and replaced with Abu Ahmed Al-Radji, who is married."[24] The Iraqi intelligence service in Djibouti reported in 2001 that Al-Qaida delivered messages in Arabic and French, allegedly signed by Bin Ladin, threatening to blow up certain foreign companies in Djibouti unless they ceased cooperating with the United States. This threat resulted in no Al-Qaida attack.[25]

Although Ethiopia has experienced a number of terrorist attacks since the early 1990s, most of them can be attributed to locally-based dissident groups. Abu Hafs did send a team of Al-Qaida operatives to Ethiopia's Somali-inhabited Ogaden region in January 1993 where they worked with AIAI. He appointed Sayf Al-Islam as Al-Qaida's representative to the organization, and also detailed in an internal Al-Qaida document some of the financial assistance provided to

22 Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, 202. Dan Connell, "Eritrea: On a Slow Fuse," in *Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2005), 78–79.

23 For a description of the U.S. and French military presence in Djibouti, see Berouk Mesfin, "Elections, Politics and External Involvement in Djibouti," Institute for Security Studies Situation Report (14 April 2011), 8–10.

24 Harmony Project, *Al-Qaida's (Mis)adventures*, 210–11.

25 Ibid., 221.

AIAI in 1993. AIAI conducted a number of attacks in Ethiopia and severely injured the ethnic Somali minister of transportation in a 1996 assassination attempt in Addis Ababa. The same year, Ethiopian cross-border raids against AIAI's strongholds at Luuq and Buulo Haawa in Somalia severely weakened it. AIAI attacks inside Ethiopia ended by the late 1990s, and it disappeared as a meaningful organization, although some of its leaders, especially Hassan Dahir Aweys, subsequently emerged as key figures in Somali extremist groups.[26]

There was an unsuccessful assassination attempt against Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in June 1995 in Addis Ababa as he went from the airport to an Organization of African Unity meeting in the city center. Egypt's Gama'at Al-Islamiya (The Islamic Group) carried out the attack with help from persons in Sudan. Mustafa Hamza, Gama'at's operations chief and manager of Bin Ladin's business interests in Khartoum, planned the attack.[27] Radios purchased by Al-Qaida in Japan were used in the plot and the United States believes the person responsible for the purchase of the radios was in charge of finance for Al-Qaida and close to Bin Ladin.[28] Sudan's NIF leader, Hassan Al-Turabi, acknowledged the involvement of unnamed Sudanese officials in the failed assassination attempt, but insisted President Al-Bashir did not know of the plot and that Bin Ladin had nothing to do with it.[29] The evidence is convincing that Al-Qaida played a role in nearly ending Mubarak's life.

Al-Qaida Shifts Its Focus to East Africa

Al-Qaida began building cells in Kenya in the early 1990s, but kept a low profile. Wadih El-Hage went to Nairobi in 1994 to run the Al-Qaida operation and remained until September 1997. Born in Lebanon and a U.S. citizen by marriage, he had served as Bin Ladin's personal secretary. He returned to the United States under pressure from Kenyan and U.S. authorities, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) arrested him in October 1998 following the bombing of U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in August 1998. He was convicted

26 Ibid., 107–10, 189–92, 208–10. Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, 204–5.

27 Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes*, 140; Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, 50; and Atwan, *The Secret History*, 77. Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 213–15.

28 "Al-Qaeda Bought Radio Sets in Japan for Mubarak Assassination Bid," *Agence France Presse*, 17 June 2003.

29 "Sudan Islamist Leader Denies Links to Bin Laden, Mubarak Assassination Plot," *BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, 24 March 2006, text of report by Dubai-based *Al-Arabiya* TV on 17 March 2006.

of terrorism charges in 2001.[30] The CIA knew there had been an Al-Qaida cell in Kenya but thought that, working with the Kenyan police, they had broken it up when Kenyan authorities arrested five individuals in Nairobi in 1997 suspected of connections with Bin Ladin.[31] Writing in 2005, former U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Johnnie Carson said that although Kenya had not produced any indigenous terrorist organization, at least one and probably two Al-Qaida cells had operated there for more than a decade. He added that more than a half dozen Kenyan nationals and their family members have been implicated in significant Al-Qaida attacks and three of Al-Qaida's senior leaders in East Africa traveled routinely in and out of Kenya.[32]

In 1994, Al-Qaida began planning the August 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. Abu Ubayda Al-Banshiri and, following his death, his deputy and successor, Abu Hafs, did the planning together with Ali Muhammad, who took pictures and made sketches of the Nairobi embassy. Bin Ladin, then in Khartoum, applied his engineering knowledge to identify the best entry for the explosive-laden vehicle. Originally planned for 1996, Al-Qaida delayed the operation due to difficulties in Sudan that followed the failed 1995 assassination of President Mubarak, the death of Al-Banshiri, and the expulsion of Bin Ladin. In the operation against the embassy, which was planned as a suicide mission, two Saudis entered its perimeter in an explosive-laden truck. One died in the blast; the other, Rashed Daoud Al-Owali, jumped out of the vehicle before the explosion occurred and escaped. The attack killed 213 people and wounded about 4,500, the vast majority Kenyan. Authorities in Kenya arrested Al-Owali and sent him to the United States, where a court in New York convicted him in 2001; he is serving a life sentence.[33]

The bombing of the embassy in Dar es Salaam resulted in 11 deaths and 85 injuries, most of them Tanzanians. Al-Qaida operatives involved in the attack

30 Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes*, 94, 214.

31 Clarke, *Against All Enemies*, 183; Georgetown University, "The 1998 Terrorist Bombings of U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania: Failures of Intelligence or of Policy Priorities?" Working Group Report no. 11 (14 March 2005), 8–10.

32 Johnnie Carson, "Kenya: the Struggle against Terrorism," in *Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa*, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2005), 174, 185.

33 Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, 212–14; Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 270–72; Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes*, 218; Tenet, *At the Center of the Storm*, 114–15; Harmony Project, *Al-Qaida's (Mis)adventures*, 94; Atwan, *The Secret History*, 15, 25, 93.

included two Tanzanians from Zanzibar–Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani and Khalfan Khamis Mohamed. South African authorities captured Mohamed and a U.S. court convicted him in 2001. He is serving a life term in Florence, Colorado. A joint U.S.-Pakistani raid in Gurjat, Pakistan, captured Ghailani in 2004. Ghailani told military officers at Guantanamo Bay that he had not knowingly participated in any terrorist act but admitted joining Al-Qaida operatives after the bombing and undergoing training in Afghanistan.[34] During his trial, it became apparent that he had contact with jihadis dating back to 1996.[35] In 2011, a jury in New York convicted him of conspiracy to destroy government buildings and property, and he was sentenced to life in prison without parole.[36]

An extensive study by Global Witness concluded that Nairobi-based Al-Qaida operatives Wadih El-Hage and Abu Ubadiah Al-Banshiri began in 1993 to use diamonds, tanzanite, and rubies as a resource to fund Al-Qaida cells. Al-Qaida purchased property in Tanzania to mine diamonds and gold and established trading companies to launder illicit diamonds that probably came from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. For this purpose, they established Taheer Ltd. and Tanzanite King in Tanzania. Evidence presented at the trial of Wadih El-Hage seemed to confirm this conclusion.[37] The government of Tanzania has denied the allegations, and at one point the U.S. Department of State also said there is no connection to Tanzania. A cottage industry has developed around these charges that continue to insist there is a link.

Turning to Uganda, in 1994 Al-Qaida supported the obscure Salafi Foundation of Uganda, which led to the Ugandan Mujahedin Freedom Fighters. It eventually evolved into an anti-Uganda government group known as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). Al-Qaida helped set up training camps for the ADF, which operated out of the eastern Congo. The group launched its first attack against Uganda in 1996 and has been shrouded in mystery ever since. It

34 Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, 214-15; Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes*, 215; Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 272; Josh White and Julie Tate, "Detainee Says He Didn't Know About Bombing Plot," *Washington Post*, 24 March 2007.

35 Benjamin Weiser, "Conspirator's Path from Poverty as a Boy in Zanzibar to Bin Ladin's Side," *New York Times*, 23 January 2011.

36 Clyde Haberman, "A Verdict Replies to Terrorists, and to Critics," *New York Times*, 27 January 2011.

37 Global Witness, "For a Few Dollars More: How Al-Qaeda Moved into the Diamond Trade," April 2003, 28–38.

periodically disappears and resurfaces. There were several reports that its leader, Jamil Mukulu, received training from Al-Qaida in Sudan before the departure of Bin Ladin for Afghanistan.[38] Uganda's minister of internal affairs told parliament in 2002 that ADF had ties with Al-Qaida. The Ugandan government said in the same year that Al-Qaida trained senior ADF leaders in Afghanistan.[39]

In 1998, Ugandan authorities detained 20 suspects linked to Al-Qaida who were thought to be planning an attack against the U.S. embassy in Kampala, the Ugandan capital. The Egyptian intelligence service informed the United States that a senior operative from Jemaah Islamiya, a Southeast Asian terrorist organization allied with Al-Qaida, was planning attacks on U.S. and Israeli interests in the capital. Four trucks filled with C-4 explosives had reportedly been brought there and operatives had begun casing the U.S. embassy, which closed down after learning of the threat.[40]

Post-9/11 Al-Qaida Developments in Sudan, Eritrea, and Kenya

With the departure of Al-Qaida from Sudan in 1996 and the political marginalization of Al-Turabi's NIF, counterterrorism cooperation between Khartoum and Washington began near the end of the Clinton administration. It picked up in the George W. Bush administration after 9/11. The State Department even acknowledged in the 2006 Country Reports on Terrorism that "the Sudanese government was a strong partner in the War on Terror and aggressively pursued terrorist operations directly involving threats to U.S. interests and personnel in Sudan."[41] Relations between Khartoum and Al-Qaida became strained, and Al-Qaida began calling for mujahidin to join the struggle in Darfur. These calls apparently went unheeded.

In July 2006, Al-Qaida claimed to have established a covert organization in Sudan. Months later a group calling itself Al-Qaida in Sudan and Africa claimed

38 Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, 218. Andrew McGregor, "Oil and Jihad in Central Africa: The Rise and Fall of Uganda's ADF," *Terrorism Monitor* 5, no. 24 (27 December 2007).

39 "Government Troops Capture Allied Forces Top Aide," *New Vision* [Kampala], 8 January 2002; "Kampala Blacklists Al-Qaeda Terrorists," *New Vision*, 20 March 2002.

40 Tenet, *At the Center of the Storm*, 155; Clarke, *Against All Enemies*, 183.

41 U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2006*, www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2006/82736.htm. See also Angel Rabasa, "Radical Islam in East Africa," Rand Project Air Force (2009), 51.

responsibility for kidnapping and beheading the chief editor of *Al-Wifaq*, a Sudanese independent daily. The organization said it murdered the journalist because he defamed Muhammad. It was not clear if this group had ties to Bin Ladin's organization or simply borrowed the name. The U.S. government concluded in 2006 that there was no proof Al-Qaida–affiliated extremists were active in Sudan,[42] which has continued to cooperate with the United States in countering terrorism. In 2008, terrorists killed a U.S. Agency for International Development officer, John Granville, in Khartoum. Two previously unknown groups, Ansar Al-Tawhid (Supporters of Monotheism) and Al-Qaida in the Land of the Two Niles, separately claimed responsibility for the assassination. The Sudanese government disputed the existence of both organizations, and the assassins, who were captured, were not charged with belonging to either group.[43]

War broke out unexpectedly in 1998 between Eritrea and Ethiopia. At the time, Eritrea had no diplomatic relations with Sudan, and Ethiopia had frosty relations. Both countries decided, however, it was necessary to repair relations with Sudan in order to focus on the conflict between the two of them. It took Eritrea longer to improve ties with Sudan in part because EIJM continued to operate out of Sudan against Eritrea. In 2003, Eritrea charged the movement with killing a British geologist in the country; EIJM denied the allegation. On the other hand, it claimed responsibility for a hotel bombing and ambush that killed 46 Eritrean military personnel. EIJM changed its name in 2003 to the Eritrean Islamic Reform Movement (EIRM). Although some analysts believe it remains linked to Al-Qaida, the evidence is thin. EIRM's goal is the overthrow of the Eritrean government, where Al-Qaida does not appear in recent years to have been seriously involved.[44]

In 2002, Al-Qaida bombed the Israeli-owned Paradise Hotel in Kikambala along the beach north of Mombasa, Kenya, killing 15 persons and injuring another 35. In a coordinated attack, an Al-Qaida team fired two SA-7 missiles at an Israeli

42 Reuven Paz, "Special Issue: Al-Qaeda in Africa." *Islam in Africa Newsletter* 2, no. 1 (January 2007): 8–9; U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2006.*

43 Andrew McGregor, "Alleged Assassins of U.S. Diplomat Claim Khartoum Regime Incites People to Jihad," *Terrorism Focus* 6, no. 4 (6 February 2009). "U.S. Diplomat's Assassins Escape from Notorious Sudanese Prison," *Terrorism Monitor* 8, no. 25 (24 June 2010).

44 Angel Rabasa et al., *Beyond al-Qaeda: The Outer Rings of the Terrorist Universe*, Rand project for the U.S. Air Force, 44–49, www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs /2006/RAND_MG430.pdf. "The Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement (EIJM)", www.ctc.usma.edu/aq/pdf/EIJM.pdf.

passenger plane, Arkia flight 582, which departed from Moi International Airport in Mombasa. The attack failed and investigators found two missile launchers and two additional SA-7 missiles at the launch site. They were from the same series and production line as missiles fired by Al-Qaida at an American military plane in Saudi Arabia earlier in the year. The mastermind behind the attacks was Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, who took part in organizing the 1998 attack on the U.S. embassy in Nairobi and is today the Al-Qaida representative in East Africa. An Al-Qaida spokesman took credit for the attacks in an audio tape broadcast by Al-Jazeera television.[45]

The United States warned its citizens early in 2003 to avoid unessential travel to Kenya, while the United Kingdom suspended international flights to Kenya for about a month, and President George W. Bush rescheduled a trip to Africa and ultimately replaced a stop in Nairobi for one in Kampala. There was a fear that Al-Qaida terrorists might try to attack the president's plane with a shoulder-launched surface-to-air missile. U.S. and British intelligence did foil an Al-Qaida plot in June 2003 designed to crash an airplane and drive a truck full of explosives into the new American embassy in Nairobi. The plan was developed in Somalia and involved participation of Somalis and Somali-Kenyans associated with Al-Qaida.[46]

The U.S. has not been satisfied with Kenyan efforts to prosecute alleged Al-Qaida operatives captured in the country. In June 2005, a Kenyan court acquitted seven suspects arrested on charges related to one or more of the following events: the 2002 Kikambala hotel bombing and attempted downing of Israeli Arkia flight 582, the 1998 attack on the U.S. embassy in Nairobi, and the 2003 plot to attack the new U.S. embassy. While Kenya subsequently took a more proactive approach to countering Al-Qaida, the organization almost certainly continues to maintain cells in the country.[47]

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45 Shaul Shay, *The Red Sea Terror Triangle* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2005), 148–52. Harmony Project, *Al-Qaida's (Mis)adventures*, 48, 98–99; "Kenya: Al-Qaeda Claims Role in Hotel Blast; Other Developments," *Facts on File World News Digest*, 8 December 2002; "Kenya Hotel Bombing Suspects Linked to Alleged Al-Qaeda Operative," *Agence France Presse*, 20 January 2005; and Carson, "Kenya," 180–83.

46 Carson, "Kenya," 188–89; Reuben Kyama, "The Threat of Terrorism to Kenya," *Terrorism Monitor* 4, no. 19 (5 October 2006); Shay, Terror Triangle, 152–53. Kenneth J. Menkhaus, "Somalia and Somaliland: Terrorism, Political Islam and State Collapse" in *Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa*, 42.

47 U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2006*; Harmony Project, *Al-Qaida's (Mis)adventures*, 49.

Al-Qaida Refocuses on Somalia

The United States has long believed that extremist elements in Somalia, especially AIAI, protected three Al-Qaida operatives–Fazul Abdullah Mohammed from the Comoro Islands, Abu Talha Al-Sudani from Sudan, and Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan from Kenya–who took part in the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings.[48] The United States also concluded that AIAI received some of its funding from the Saudi Islamic charity, Al-Haramain, which had ties to Al-Qaida and offices throughout the region. Washington pressured Saudi Arabia to shut down Al-Haramain globally.[49]

Islamic courts first appeared in Somalia in the early 1990s and actually helped establish a degree of security in an anarchic situation. They also attracted an extremist element and some Somalis who had training in Afghanistan and followed a jihadist agenda. This element included Ibrahim Al-Afghani, Muktar Robow, and Aden Hashi Ayro. The courts eventually developed their own militia, which tended to be the most radical component and is believed to have provided protection to the three Al-Qaida operatives sought by the United States.[50] The United States became increasingly concerned with the perceived radicalization of the Islamic courts and in February 2006 funded the creation of the Alliance for Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT), a coalition of discredited warlords opposed to the courts. The U.S. goal in funding the alliance appears to have had the narrow purpose of capturing Al-Qaida operatives who had taken refuge in Somalia. The ARPCT used the opportunity to wage war on the courts; however, the effort failed miserably and the courts emerged stronger than ever.[51]

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48 Al-Sudani was killed in 2007 during an Ethiopian airstrike along the Kenya-Somali border. See "Somali Mujahideen Confirm Al-Qaeda Suspect Abu Talha Al-Sudani Killed Last Year," *Terrorism Focus* 5, no. 32 (10 September 2008). U.S. special operations forces killed Nabhan in 2009 during a helicopter raid from a ship in the Indian Ocean as he was travelling with a small group of militants south of Mogadishu. See Jeffrey Gettleman and Eric Schmitt, "U.S. Kills Top Qaeda Militant in Southern Somalia," *New York Times*, 15 September 2009.

49 Menkhaus, "Somalia and Somaliland," 38–44; Bryden, "No Quick Fixes," 33–35; Shay, *Terror Triangle*, 94; and Harmony Project, *Al-Qaida's (Mis)adventures*, 42. For a listing of the Al-Haramain offices and their links to Al-Qaida, see www.treasury.gov/resource-center/terrorist-illicit-finance/Pages/protecting-charities_execorder_13224-a.aspx.

50 International Crisis Group, "Can the Somali Crisis Be Contained?" Africa Report no. 116 (10 August 2006), 9–10.

51 Ibid., 11–13.

By the end of 2006, the Islamic courts controlled about 50 percent of former Italian Somalia. The internationally-recognized Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was confined to Baidoa in south-central Somalia, where Ethiopian troops protected it, and a few other areas. Al-Qaida's role during this period was generally passive; it gave verbal support to the Islamic courts and warned the West not to interfere.[52] Ethiopia, which has a large Somali minority in the Ogaden region neighboring Somalia, became increasingly concerned. The United States argued that the courts had become hijacked by extremists, especially by an organization known as Al-Shabaab (The Youth).[53]

A steady influx of jihadi volunteers from across the Muslim world strengthened the Al-Qaida presence in Somalia in late 2006. Most were not battle-hardened veterans but inexperienced fighters who required considerable supervision by the courts.[54] The courts sent their poorly trained and largely conscripted militia to Baidoa late in 2006 to confront the TFG and professional Ethiopian military forces. The Ethiopians quickly crushed the militia and then entered Mogadishu unopposed. The leadership of the Islamic courts and its Al-Qaida supporters dispersed to southern Somalia, pursued by Ethiopian forces and small numbers of U.S. Special Forces from Kenya. While Ethiopia scored a quick victory, historical animosity between Ethiopians and Somalis gave Al-Shabaab a new and important theme for recruitment.

In January 2007, the United States launched two Lockheed AC-130 Spectre gunship attacks against the Islamic court and Al-Shabaab leaders who fled to

52 Paz, "Special Issue," 16.

53 U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2006*. Al-Shabaab formally incorporated in 2003 at an AIAI alumni conference in Las Anod, Somaliland. About a dozen, young battle-hardened, Afghan-trained Somali men stormed out of the AIAI conference in opposition to a proposed agenda that stressed creation of a Salafi political organization that seemed too willing to accommodate the status quo. Days later, the radical dissidents organized a parallel conference in Las Anod and launched Al-Shabaab as a Salafi-jihadist movement. The principal leaders of the breakaway faction were Aden Hashi Ayro, killed in 2008 during an American missile strike on his home in Dusamareb, Somalia, and Ahmed Abdi Aw-Mohamed "Godane." Ayro trained in Afghanistan with Al-Qaida during the late 1990s. Godane fought with Al-Qaida in Afghanistan until the end of 2001 and patterned Al-Shabaab's chain of command after the one used by Al-Qaida. See Abdirahman "Aynte" Ali, "The Anatomy of Al- Shabaab," June 2010 unpublished paper, 11–16.

54 International Crisis Group, "Somalia: The Tough Part Is Ahead," Africa Briefing no. 45 (26 January 2007), 4–5.

southern Somalia. The first strike near Ras Kamboni killed eight militants while the second strike targeted Sheikh Ahmed Madobe, a senior Islamic court leader. Madobe survived the attack but apparently was later captured by the Ethiopians. The AC-130 operated out of a small airfield in eastern Ethiopia, a fact denied by Ethiopia.[55] Members of U.S. Task Force 88 were on the ground in southern Somalia searching for key Al-Qaida operatives, especially Fazul Abdullah Mohammed. One of the persons captured–a U.S. citizen from New Jersey, Amir Mohamed Meshal–told investigators that he had been at an Al-Qaida camp west of Mogadishu but denied being a fighter or undergoing military training.[56] In June 2007, a U.S. warship attacked a small group of Al-Qaida suspects in a mountainous region near the coast in the semi-autonomous region of Puntland in northeastern Somalia. There was no public confirmation that the persons killed in the attack were linked to Al-Qaida.[57]

U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Michael E. Ranneberger commented in 2007 that Al-Shabaab harbored Al-Qaida members responsible for the attacks on the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. He added that Saudi Arabia believed that Somalia had become an important training ground for Saudis affiliated with Al-Qaida. The State Department announced that 10 Al-Qaida operatives remained in Somalia who were at least partially responsible for the growing violence in Mogadishu. It noted that six of them are well known Somali leaders in the Islamic courts, while four are international Al-Qaida members with years of experience in Africa.[58] Ambassador Ranneberger added that Al-Qaida has for many years been using Somalia as a safe haven and base of operations.[59]

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55 Michael R. Gordon and Mark Mazzetti, "Ethiopia Denies U.S. Troops Staged Somalia Attacks from Its Territory," Associated Press, 23 February 2007; Gordon and Mazzetti, "U.S. Used Base in Ethiopia to Hunt Al-Qaeda in Africa," *New York Times*, 23 February 2007; Comments by Theresa Whelan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs, Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC, on 17 January 2007; Guled Mohamed, "'Many Dead' in U.S. Strike at al Qaeda in Somalia," Reuters, 9 January 2007.

56 "Kenya: Computer May Hold Clue on Terror Suspect," *The Nation* [Nairobi], 24 January 2007; Harmony Project, *Al-Qaida's (Mis)adventures* , 99–100; Jonathan Landay, "Imprisoned U.S. Citizen Says He Was in an Al-Qaeda Camp in Somalia, But Was Never a Fighter," *McClatchy Newspapers*, 24 March 2007.

57 "U.S. Attacks Somali Militant Base," *BBC News*, 2 June 2007. Abdiqani Hassan, "Somali Region Says U.S. Planes Hunting Islamists," Reuters, 12 June 2007.

58 Chris Tomlinson, "Islamic Militants Rebound in Somalia," Associated Press, 27 April 2007.

59 U.S. Department of State, USINFO Web chat transcript, 23 May 2007.

The Pentagon announced in June 2007 the capture and transfer to Guantanamo of a suspected Al-Qaida terrorist, a Somali national identified as Abdullahi Sudi Arale. A Defense Department spokesperson described him as "an extremely dangerous member of the al-Qaida network," adding that he was suspected of acting as a courier between Al-Qaida in East Africa and the network in Pakistan.[60] The Pentagon also alleged that Arale had held a leadership role in Somalia's Islamic courts structure and stated that his capture underscored the threat that the United States faces from dangerous extremists.[61] At the time of his arrest, most Somalia watchers had never heard of Arale, who is also known as Ismail Mahmoud Muhammad. After two-and-a-half years at Guantanamo, Arale was among those released without charges and, in his case, sent to Somaliland.[62] This case serves as a cautionary tale that alleged early connections with Al-Qaida do not always hold up.

Al-Shabaab Replaces Al-Qaida as the Key Regional Jihadist Organization

During the latter part of the first decade of the twenty-first century, Al-Shabaab became the predominant jihadi organization in the region, although it focuses almost all of its effort on Somalia. Al-Qaida's role has diminished. This is consistent with global changes in its approach, although there is not complete agreement among the experts on Al-Qaida's current standing. Rohan Gunaratna and Aviv Oreg, with Israel's Civil Effort in Fighting International Terrorism, emphasize that Al-Qaida still exists as a formal organization with a solid structure and the ability to survive the difficulties it is facing.[63] They argue that within the global jihad movement, it remains by far the most prominent element. At the same time, they acknowledge there is a question about its functional role as an umbrella organization that has loose ties with its internal branches. They fully expect Al-Shabaab to join the Al-Qaida organization.[64]

60 "Terrorism Suspect Captured in Somalia," Associated Press, 6 June 2007.

61 Josh White, "Pentagon Says Terror Suspect Has Been Moved to Guantanamo," *Washington Post*, 7 June 2007; Carol Rosenberg, "Terror Suspect Sent from Africa to Guantanamo," *Miami Herald*, 7 June 2007.

62 Andy Worthington, "The Stories of the Two Somalis Freed from Guantanamo," 21 December 2009, http://pubrecord.org/law/6346/stories-somalis-freed-guantanamo/print/.

63 Rohan Gunaratna and Aviv Oreg, "Al Qaeda's Organizational Structure and Its Evolution," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 33, no. 12 (December 2010): 1044.

64 Ibid., 1051, 1053–54.

Leah Farrall, former senior counterterrorism intelligence analyst with the Australian Federal Police, explains that Al-Qaida today does not exercise full command and control over its branches and franchises. Levels of command authority are not always clear, and personal ties among militants sometimes transcend the command structure between the core, branches, and franchises.[65] Farrall adds that Al-Qaida approaches mergers warily. Al-Shabaab declared allegiance to Bin Ladin in an effort to join Al-Qaida as a franchise. But infighting between Al-Shabaab and a competing organization, Hizb Al-Islam, kept Al-Qaida from fully accepting Al-Shabaab. With the possible exception of Al-Shabaab, Farrall argues that Al-Qaida is unlikely to acquire any new subsidiaries in the immediate future.[66]

Alex Gallo, an associate at the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, writes that Al-Qaida has fundamentally shifted its organizational approach and goals. It now operates within a highly competitive environment vis-à-vis other jihadist groups and engages almost exclusively in professional consulting or advisory entrepreneurial activity. It serves as a financial adviser and facilitator and provides the ideological coherence within the global jihadist movement. Al-Qaida's representative in East Africa, Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, sees himself as a consultant to Al-Shabaab on issues such as advanced training courses for the elite forces, specialized programs to train snipers, courses in information technology, and establishing a budget. This approach allows Al-Qaida to claim that it is actively engaged in waging violence against the "far enemy" while remaining unburdened by the actual cost of waging violence. Local groups such as Al-Shabaab have the freedom to operate in the manner that they choose.[67]

Another group of analysts recently argued that Al-Qaida's most significant contribution to global terrorism today comes in the form of ideological direction and inspiration. As the initiator of global Islamist terrorism against Western interests, Bin Ladin maintained his symbolic value as a figurehead.

65 Leah Farrall, "How al Qaeda Works," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 2 (March/April 2011): 133–34.

66 Ibid., 136–37.

67 Alex Gallo, "Understanding Al-Qa'ida's Business Model," *CTC Sentinel* 4, no.1 (January 2011), 15–18.

Consequently, his statements and those issued by his deputies still carry significant weight in militant circles.[68]

Since 2007, public statements by both Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaida have moved the two organizations closer to each other. In 2008, the U.S. Department of State designated Al-Shabaab a terrorist organization. In June of that year, Al-Shabaab leader Abdi Aw-Mohamed "Godane" praised Bin Ladin and his deputy, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, and the larger global jihad movement. He also explicitly declared Al-Shabaab's intention to attack the United States and implied that the organization had become part of the Al-Qaida movement. Soon thereafter, Al-Shabaab released a video that pledged loyalty to Al-Qaida and urged young Muslims to join the cause. In July 2009, Godane made a speech that referred to senior figures in Al-Qaida as the leaders of global jihad and linked the war in Somalia to those in Afghanistan and Iraq. In September 2009, Al-Shabaab released another video that pledged allegiance to Bin Ladin, and in 2010, it issued a statement that compared jihad in the Horn of Africa to the one led by Al-Qaida and Bin Ladin.[69]

Al-Qaida reciprocated by regularly voicing support for jihad in Somalia beginning in 2006. In June 2008, one of Al-Qaida's most senior commanders, Abu Yahya Al-Libi, recognized Al-Shabaab for the first time and said Somalis should accept nothing less than an independent Islamic state. The three top leaders of Al-Qaida made statements in 2009 supporting Al-Shabaab's campaign in Somalia. Bin Ladin released only five statements in 2009, but devoted one of them to Somalia, calling the conflict a war between Islam and the international Crusade. By recognizing Somalia's significant role in global jihad, Al-Qaida gave credibility to Al-Shabaab.[70]

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68 Rick "Ozzie" Nelson and Thomas M. Sanderson, "A Threat Transformed: Al Qaeda and Associated Movements in 2011," Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 2011, 15.

69 For a good summary of Al-Shabaab messages linking it to Al-Qaida, see Christopher Harnisch, "The Terror Threat from Somalia: The Internationalization of al Shabaab," American Enterprise Institute Report, 12 February 2010, 24–27. See also Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, "The Strategic Challenge of Somalia's Al-Shabaab: Dimensions of Jihad," *Middle East Quarterly* (Fall 2009): 25–36; and Sarah Childress, "Somalia's Al-Shabaab to Ally with Al-Qaeda," *Wall Street Journal*, 2 February 2010. For a more detailed account of Al-Shabaab, see David Shinn, "Al-Shabaab's Foreign Threat to Somalia," *Orbis* 55, no. 2 (March–June 2011): 203–15.

70 Harnisch, "The Terror Threat, 27–28.

In spite of their common cause and the mutual statements of support voiced by Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaida, most analysts do not believe that the organization is a branch or under the operational control of Al-Qaida. The 2009 State Department annual report on terrorism stated explicitly that Al-Qaida and Al-Shabaab are not formally merged, but acknowledged there are many links between the two. The United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia concluded that extremists within Al-Shabaab are seeking, with limited success, to align the organization more closely with Al-Qaida. In 2009, Al-Shabaab formally renamed itself Harakat al Shabaab Al-Mujahidin (Mujahideen Youth Movement) to underscore its jihadist identity and the global nature of its agenda.[71]

Al-Shabaab has borrowed heavily from the Taliban and Al-Qaida playbooks. Suicide bombings, which were unknown in Somalia prior to 2006 and are even alien to Somali culture, have become commonplace under Al-Shabaab. Its leaders accept death worship, which includes practices such as suicide bombings, the use of human shields, and beheading as a punishment. Al-Shabaab's rhetoric increasingly resembles that of Al-Qaida. It avoids Somali nationalist slogans and refuses to use the traditional Somali flag, which it replaced with a black flag emblazoned with the Shahaada (declaration of the faith) in white text. It often holds press conferences in Arabic rather than the more common Somali language. As in the case of Al-Qaida, it has developed an effective communications and media effort to get its message out and for recruitment purposes. Al-Shabaab is looking more and more like the Taliban of the 1990s.[72]

Current estimates of Al-Shabaab's armed strength range between 3,000 and 7,000 fighters, mostly native-born Somalis. The largest foreign component, perhaps numbering a thousand or more, consists of Somalis born in neighboring countries or those from the diaspora. There are probably between 200 and 300 non-Somali foreign jihadis fighting alongside Al-Shabaab. These come primarily

71 Ibid., 19. U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2009*, www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2009/140883.htm. "Somalia's Divided Islamists," International Crisis Group Africa Briefing no. 74 (18 May 2010), 7.

72 Stig Jarle Hansen, "Revenge or Reward? The Case of Somalia's Suicide Bombers," *Journal of Terrorism Research*, Issue 1 (2010): 21–24; Abdirahman "Aynte" Ali, *Anatomy*, 22–23; Jason Straziuso and Mohamed Olad Hassan, "Somali Rebels Looking Increasingly Like Taliban," Associated Press, 22 August 2010; and Tom Pippard, "Al-Shabaab's Agenda in the Wake of the Kampala Suicide Attacks," *CTC Sentinel* 3, no. 7 (July 2010): 5.

from the Swahili coast of Kenya and Tanzania, Eritrea, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Afghanistan, Yemen, Sudan, Uganda, and Saudi Arabia.[73] Anonymous sources in the U.S. military and intelligence community put the number of foreigners in Somalia affiliated with Al-Qaida at up to 200.[74] The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which has about 9,000 troops from Uganda and Burundi in Mogadishu to assist the internationally recognized Somali TFG, announced that during fighting early in 2011, its forces killed at least six foreign "Al-Qaida-connected commanders." AMISOM provided the names of the commanders and said there was one each from Yemen, Pakistan, India, Kenya, Syria, and one nationality not known.[75]

Al-Shabaab had a success of sorts in December 2010 when it forced its primary competitor, Hassan Dahir Aweys' Hizb Al-Islam to merge with it. Differences between the two groups apparently were one of the major reasons why Al-Qaida has been reluctant to give Al-Shabaab the kind of formal association that it has with Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). This shotgun marriage has not, however, resolved their problems. Some observers believe that no more than one-third of Hizb Al-Islam's followers joined Al-Shabaab. Those who did sign on reportedly abstained from taking part in the fighting in Mogadishu early in 2011 against the AMISOM and TFG forces.[76]

Al-Shabaab Looks Beyond Somalia

There is a long history of contact between Somalia and Yemen. Over the years as many as 700,000 Somalis have made their way to Yemen. The vast majority sought improved security or better economic livelihood. Al-Shabaab has almost certainly made occasional use of this human conveyer belt to send followers to and from Yemen. There is growing evidence that small numbers of the organization make their way to Yemen, and Yemenis previously aligned with Al-Qaida in Yemen and now AQAP go to Somalia. Some analysts who follow

73 Shinn, "Al-Shabaab's Foreign Threat to Somalia," 209–10.

74 Barbara Starr, "Up to 200 Foreign Fighters in Somalia, U.S. Officials Say," CNN, 4 June 2010.

75 AMISOM press release dated 20 February 2011.

76 Muhyadin Ahmed Roble, "Merger of Islamist Groups Challenges Somali Government's Pledge to Retake Mogadishu," *Terrorism Monitor* 9, no. 6 (10 February 2011): 5–6; "Former Hisb Al-Islam Forces Abstain from Fighting in Somali Capital," *Shabeelle Media Network*, 14 March 2011.

Yemen and Somalia believe that Al-Shabaab and AQAP have developed a collaborative relationship which, at a minimum, involves the sharing of personnel, weapons, and training. The relationship may not yet involve strategic cooperation, but it has that potential. In recent months, Al-Shabaab has strengthened its ties with AQAP, which is in keeping with the tendency of Al-Qaida central to delegate responsibility to affiliates and be available to serve as a consultant.[77]

Al-Shabaab's first known attack outside Somalia occurred in July 2010, when it perpetrated three coordinated bombings in Kampala, Uganda, killing 79 people, mostly Ugandans. Four Ugandans admitted involvement in the attacks; two had previous ties to Al-Shabaab while the others were apparently recruited in Kampala. One confessed that he escorted a Kenyan suicide bomber to the location of one of the attacks. Al-Shabaab had threatened the Ugandan government on numerous occasions and said that it targeted Uganda because it was sending troops to the AMISOM force in Mogadishu.[78] Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attacks and Al-Qaida said nothing about them. While there has been some speculation that Al-Qaida was actually behind the bombings, the preponderance of evidence suggests Al-Shabaab was responsible.[79] The organization has also stepped up its threats to carry out attacks against Burundi because it too provides troops for AMISOM.[80]

In 2011, Kenya increased its support for the TFG and began to put additional pressure on Al-Shabaab from its side of the Somali border. Al-Shabaab responded that it would take stern action against Kenya and called on Kenyan Muslims to rise up against the government. Kenya then arrested a number of people it claimed were planning to carry out terrorist attacks in the country at

77 Conversation on 25 March 2011 in Washington, DC, between author and AMISOM official; Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, "Al Qaeda in Yemen and Somalia: A Ticking Time Bomb," 21 January 2010, 13–14; Alistair Harris, "Yemen: On the Brink," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, no. 111 (May 2010), 9; "Al-Qaida, Affiliates Showing Greater Coordination," NPR's *All Things Considered*, 11 November 2010; and Sara A. Carter, "Al Qaeda Reaps Recruits from Somali Refugees in Yemen," *Examiner* (Washington, DC), 25 May 2010.

78 "We Are Sorry, Say 7/11 Suicide Bombers," *New Vision*, 12 August 2010; "Suspect Says Rage at US Led Him to Plot Ugandan Bombs," Reuters, 12 August 2010.

79 "No Evidence of Al-Shabaab Role in Kampala Bombings–FBI," *Uganda Record* [Kampala], 28 July 2010.

80 Abdulkadir Khalif, "Al-Shabaab Warns Burundi of Revenge Attack," *Africa Review* [Nairobi], 2 March 2011.

the behest of Al-Shabaab. The police commissioner charged Al-Shabaab with recruiting dozens of Kenyan youth. The government also charged that a Kenyan Islamic preacher has been associated with Al-Shabaab since 2009 when he received military training in Somalia and has subsequently recruited Kenyans for Al-Shabaab.[81]

This analysis earlier cited a possible link between the anti-Uganda government ADF and Al-Qaida. Ugandan officials now charge there are links between the ADF and Al-Shabaab. The ADF still lacks a coherent ideology and some analysts do not believe that it has any interest in a jihadi agenda.[82] According to a Ugandan intelligence report, however, remnants of the ADF helped train those involved in the July 2010 Kampala bombings.[83] A spokesperson for the Ugandan armed forces subsequently stated that "we believe the Al-Shabaab movement and ADF have both been trained by Al-Qaida and they jointly carried out the attacks on the 11th of July in Kampala."[84] Uganda's inspector general of police commented in February 2011 that Al-Shabaab and the ADF were planning a terrorist attack in Uganda on Valentine's Day.[85] Although there was no attack, Ugandan officials continue to insist, in spite of skepticism by outside analysts, that there is a link between Al-Shabaab, Al-Qaida, and the ADF.

There has been much speculation concerning Al-Shabaab's connection with Somali piracy, but also agreement that it has not directly involved itself. In fact, most of the operational pirate bases are located along the Puntland coast, which is largely outside Al-Shabaab's area of control. On the other hand, there are

81 Abdulkadir Khalif, "Al-Shabaab Calls for Revolts in Ethiopia and Kenya," *Africa Review*, 7 March 2011; "Suspected Al Shabaab Terror Squad Named," *Nairobi Star*, 8 March 2011; "Two Kenyans Arrested over Alleged Links to Somali Rebel Group," *Standard* [Nairobi], 30 March 2011; "Police Chief Says Somali Rebels Recruiting Kenyan Youth," *Daily Nation* [Nairobi], 11 April 2011; and "Government Accuses Islam Preacher of Recruiting Young Men to Al Shabaab," *Nairobi Star*, 14 April 2011.

82 Duncan Woodside, "Rebel Alliance: Foreign Policy among Uganda's Islamist Forces," *Jane's Intelligence Review* 22, no. 11 (November 2010): 14–17.

83 Chris Obore and Richard Wanambwa, "Museveni Meets Spy Chiefs over Somalia," *Daily Monitor* [Kampala], 25 July 2010.

84 "Uganda Says ADF Rebel Group Has Links with Somalia's Al-Shabaab," *Puntlandpost,* web site monitored by BBC, 4 August 2010.

85 Andrew Bagala, "Police Warn on Valentine Day Bomb Threat," *Daily Monitor* [Kampala], 6 February 2011.

persistent reports that the organization has extracted fees or taxes from those pirates who do operate from territory they control, and there have been a few accounts that it has trained pirates for a fee or perhaps to cover the cost of moving personnel and arms between Somalia and the Arabian Peninsula.[86] In February 2011, pirate sources in Hobyo claimed that Al-Shabaab fighters in Harardhere demanded 20 percent of the ransom payments for nine ships being held offshore of the village. The pirates reportedly refused and moved the ships to Hobyo, which is controlled by Somali clans hostile to Al-Shabaab. In apparent retribution, Al-Shabaab then arrested 50 pirates in Harardhere.[87] At a Congressional hearing in April 2011, General Carter F. Ham, commander of U.S. Africa Command, said he believes Al-Shabaab receives at least some economic support from pirate activity and, given its links to Al-Qaida, it is "only a matter of time before Al-Qaida becomes associated with pirates as well."[88]

The only known Al-Shabaab connection to an attack outside the East Africa region occurred in Australia in 2009. An Australian court convicted two naturalized Lebanese Australians and one naturalized Somali Australian of a plot to carry out a suicide-style attack against the Holsworthy Barracks army base outside Sydney. The case uncovered a network that was apparently responsible for funneling fighters and funding to Al-Shabaab. While there were links between the Australians and Al-Shabaab, it does not appear that the organization was directly responsible for tasking the men to carry out the attack.[89] Al-Shabaab has attracted a significant number of Somalis from the global diaspora, including at least two dozen from the United States, and a small number of non-Somalis.[90] So far, they do not appear to have returned to their adopted country for the purpose of carrying out terrorist attacks. The possibility remains, however, that this may become part of Al-Shabaab's agenda and the organization is better positioned than most Al-Qaida affiliates to conduct

86 "Analysis: Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," *CTTA: Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis* 2, no. 4 (April 2010): 8.

87 "Somali Islamists, Pirates Dispute Ransom Cuts," *Agence France Presse*, 19 February 2011; "Islamists Arrest Suspected Pirates in Central Somali Town," *Shabeelle Media Network*, 29 March 2011.

88 Pauline Jelinek, "Commander Predicts al-Qaida Will One Day Have Links with Somali Pirates," Associated Press, 7 April 2011.

89 Raffaello Pantucci, "Operation Neath: Is Somalia's al-Shabaab Movement Active in Australia?" *Terrorism Monitor* 9, no. 3 (20 January 2011): 5–6.

90 Shinn, "Al Shabaab's Foreign Threat to Somalia," 211–13

terrorist attacks in countries where there is a large Somali diaspora, including the United States.[91]

The Impact of Bin Ladin's Death

The death of Usama Bin Ladin on 2 May 2011 (Pakistan time) will probably not have a significant impact on Al-Shabaab's operations in Somalia.[92] Although it had links with and drew inspiration from Al-Qaida, guidance and material support from Bin Ladin's organization seems to be limited. The most famous Al-Shabaab recruit from the United States, Omar Hammami, aka Abu Mansur Al-Amriki, commented in an English-language video on Al-Shabaab's Web site the day after Bin Ladin's death that the Somali terrorist organization is in a long war with the United States.[93] Senior Al-Shabaab official Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys praised Bin Ladin and urged his organization to "step up attacks against the West."[94] Al-Shabaab's spokesperson, Sheikh Ali Mohamud Rage, subsequently told reporters in Mogadishu that Al-Shabaab would avenge the killing of Bin Ladin.[95]

A more important Al-Qaida-related development for Al-Shabaab was the death in Mogadishu on 7 June 2011 of Fazul Abdullah Muhammad, Al-Qaida's head in East Africa. In a vehicle filled with medicine, laptops, and mobile phones, Fazul apparently made a wrong turn in Mogadishu and drove into a roadblock manned by TFG soldiers. He died in the ensuing firefight.[96] Fazul has a long history of collaboration with Al-Shabaab and had been Al-Qaida's most effective operative in East Africa since he helped plan the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania.

91 Nelson and Sanderson, "A Threat Transformed," 16–17.

92 Richard Lough, "Bin Laden Death Will Not Dampen Somali Insurgency," Reuters, 5 May 2011; and Solomon A. Dersso and Berouk Mesfin, Institute for Security Studies, Addis Ababa, 19 May 2011.

93 CNN report on 12 May 2011.

94 Comments made over Radio Gaalkacyo on 3 May 2011.

95 Hamsa Omar, "Somali Militants Vow Revenge for Bin Laden Amid Security Alert," *Bloomberg*, 9 May 2011.

96 "Al-Qaeda's East Africa Chief 'Killed in Somalia'." *Radio Netherlands Worldwide*, 11 June 2011; and "Al Qaeda's East Africa Chief Killed in Mogadishu: Kenya Police," *NDTV*, 11 June 2011.

Conclusion

Al-Qaida's position in East Africa and the Horn has gone from one of relative strength–especially when Bin Ladin had his headquarters in Sudan from 1991 until 1996, and when it was able to attack U.S. embassies in 1998 and Israeli interests in Kenya in 2002–to one of relative weakness. To some extent, Al-Shabaab, which maintains close ties to Al-Qaida, has compensated for the Bin Ladin organization's decreased capacity and engagement in the region. While Al-Shabaab remains in a strong position in Somalia, it has serious internal problems and has never attracted widespread Somali support. It remains in power through intimidation and a weak and divided opponent, the TFG. However, growing Al-Shabaab alienation of Somalis and even a modicum of improvement by the TFG or a replacement regime could tip the scales and put both Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaida in a much weaker position in Somalia and throughout East Africa and the Horn.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

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5
The State of Al-Qaida in Southeast Asia Ten Years since 9/11

Adam Dolnik

This paper focuses on the activities and prospects of Al-Qaida in Southeast Asia, one of its key operational theatres. The first part is a brief overview of Al-Qaida's activities in the region and analyzes some of the factors that made Southeast Asia an attractive operational theater for the group. The second part focuses on the Al-Qaida-linked operations in the region and also discusses the trajectory of the organizational and operational evolution of these attacks. The third part assesses the current state of the Al-Qaida threat in the region, analyzing the reasons behind successes and failures of counterterrorism efforts in Southeast Asia. The prospects for the future are assessed in the conclusion.

Attractiveness of Southeast Asia to Al-Qaida

According to some sources, Al-Qaida invested up to one-fifth of its operational strength into Southeast Asia (SEA),[1] mainly through its predominantly Indonesian regional affiliate, Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). While JI has sometimes been described as Al-Qaida's operational arm in the region, other sources claim that this label overestimates the formality of the relationship.[2] Nevertheless, between 1993 and at least 2002, every major Al-Qaida attack had some identifiable links

1 See Tuli Sinha, "Mapping the al-Qaeda Linkages in South-East Asia: How Real is the Threat? *Mainstream*, November 2009; and *Report to the UN Security Council by the Security Council Monitoring Group, '1267' Committee*, Security Council Report S/2003/669, 7 July 2003, 15, cited in Bruce Vaughn and others, *Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, (Congressional Research Service: Washington, DC, 2009), 3, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/RL34194.pdf.

2 Peter Chalk, Angel Rabasa, William Rosenau, and Leanne Piggott, *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment* (Rand Corporation: Arlington, VA, 2009), 92.

to SEA.[3] As with theaters in other parts of the world, the keys to Al-Qaida's influence in the region were funding and training.

A number of key factors made SEA attractive for Al-Qaida. First, it is a region with populous Muslim communities, with Indonesia, of course, being the largest Muslim country in the world, and Malaysia and Brunei also being predominantly Muslim. Even more importantly, the region has Muslim minorities who feel disenfranchised in the southern Philippines and southern Thailand, and to a lesser extent in Singapore, Myanmar, and Cambodia. And while Islamic militants actively involved in terrorist activities operate on the fringes of any society, even a tiny percentage from the 259 million Muslims living in the region still accounts for a considerable number of potential recruits.[4] Another associated issue is the presence of a wide network of Islamic charities, as well as the *hawala* informal banking system, both of which had been used by Al-Qaida to channel money to militant groups in the region.[5]

Closely related to this issue is the presence of local conflicts that Al-Qaida has tried to incorporate into its global narrative of a Judeo-Christian conspiracy to subdue and defeat Islam, most notably in the southern Philippines and to a lesser extent in southern Thailand. Particularly important was the Christian-Muslim conflict in Ambon, on the island of Maluku, and Poso, on Sulawesi Island in Indonesia, which started in 1999 and 2000. These conflicts were key in providing great opportunities for the Indonesian jihadi groups such as JI, Laskar Jundullah, Laskar Jihad, and KOMPAK (translates as Action Committee for Crisis Response) to not only boost their recruitment efforts, but also to provide opportunities for their recruits to gain experience on the battlefield, enhancing the capacity to conduct terrorist operations in the future.

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3 Maria Ressa, *Seeds* (New York: Free Press, 2003), 10.

4 Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, *The Future of Global Muslim Population: Projections for 2010–2030* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center Publications, 2011).

5 According to Interpol, the *hawala* system is an informal, global money transfer system–or "alternative remittance system"–that does not physically move money. The system relies heavily on trust and personal ties between correspondents, or *hawaladers*, in various countries. For instance, if Person A needs to send money to Person B in another location, Person A will approach his/her local *hawalader*, who will then tell a fellow *hawalader* in Person B's location to give money to Person B. The understanding is that at some point, the first *hawalader* will settle the debt to the second *hawalader* through a similar transaction. For more information, see Interpol's site "The *Hawala* Alternative Remittance System and Its Role in Money Laundering," at http://www.interpol.int/Public/FinancialCrime/MoneyLaundering/hawala.

The third key factor is the endemic level of corruption present in the region, with countries like Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam consistently ranking at the bottom of Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.[6] Corruption, of course, assists terrorists in multiple ways, such as avoiding arrest, setting up bank accounts, obtaining fraudulent identification, and overcoming border restrictions. For instance, in October 2002, Riduan Isamuddin (aka Hambali), the highest-ranking non-Arab member of Al-Qaida, bypassed Cambodian immigration formalities and rented a guesthouse in Phnom Pehn.[7] Similarly, in 2010 it was discovered that a key JI operational lead, Dulmatin, who had a 10 million dollar bounty on his head, was not hiding in the southern Philippines as previously thought, but was present in Indonesia in possession of a legal passport and a fake identification card. Fourth, many SEA countries are dependent on tourism for income, which results in relatively lax visa requirements. This, in combination with porous borders between many of the countries in the region, most importantly Indonesia and the Philippines, results in an ease of movement of people and illicit material.

Fifth, the withdrawal of state sponsors from the region–in particular, Libya, which sponsored the Moro National Liberation Front for many years–provided a vacuum in sponsorship that Al-Qaida was able to use to its advantage.[8] Sixth, the Asian economic crisis of 1997 not only created an economic turmoil that generally tends to favor radicals, it also led to the fall of the Suharto regime in Indonesia, a change that had widespread implications for the growth of the long-repressed Islamist militancy in the country. In the immediate aftermath, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Bashir returned from exile and founded JI, with the openly declared goal of bringing about the rule of sharia in the country. The weakened central control following the fall of Suharto also contributed to the escalation of bottled-up tensions between Muslim and Christian communities on the islands of Maluku and Sulawesi in 1999 and 2000, the aforementioned escalation of which provided JI with the opportunity to recruit and battle train hundreds of jihadists in the communal violence.[9]

6 While the list of countries in the index has expanded in the last decade, Indonesia in particular has been consistently ranked among the most corrupt countries in the world.

7 Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat*, 200.

8 Vaughn et al., *Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, 3.

9 Ibid., 5.

And, finally, past relationships from Afghanistan–up to a thousand Southeast Asians had fought against the Soviets–were important in providing Al-Qaida with the personal relationships needed to establish a foothold in the region. Similarly, marriages were strategically significant in forging regional alliances between not just Arab Al-Qaida fighters and members of local groups, but among and within members of these local groups as well.[10]

Early Al-Qaida Involvement in Southeast Asia

The history of Al-Qaida's involvement in the region, while fascinating, is generally well known, so this chapter will recapitulate only some of the key points. In 1991 Usama Bin Ladin sent his brother-in-law, Mohammed Jamal Khalifa, to the Philippines, to try to set up a network of charities that would later be used for funding terrorist operations. Khalifa was responsible for making the key link between Aburajak Janjalani and Bin Ladin, which later led to the founding of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). On December 23, 1991, Khalifa handed over 30,000 pesos to Janjalani's men in a mosque in Basilan, bankrolling the first terrorist operation of the ASG: the bombing of a church in Jolo. Khalifa also worked with an Islamic charity called Konsojaya, which had Riduan Isamuddin (aka Hambali), on its board of directors.[11] An Afghan war veteran, Hambali would later become the key contact for Khalid Sheikh Mohammed in the region, and it was Hambali who, until his 2004 arrest in Thailand, sat atop Al-Qaida operations in Southeast Asia.

The regional activities of the 1993 World Trade Center bomber Ramzi Ahmed Yousef and his uncle and 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who spent a considerable amount of time preparing operations in the Philippines, are generally well known. Here, Yousef plotted assassinations of President Bill Clinton and the Pope, a 9/11 style attack on the Central Intelligence Agency headquarters in Langley, Virginia, as well as the infamous Oplan Bojinka, an elaborate plot to blow up 12 airliners in midcourse flight. In a dry run for the Bojinka plot, Yousef boarded Philippines Airlines flight 434 on 11 December 1994 and assembled a liquid nitroglycerin-based explosive device in the lavatory, placing it in the life vest compartment under seat 26K prior to disembarking in Cebu City. The airplane took on more passengers and continued toward Narita

10 Zachary Abuza, "Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia: Exploring the Linkages" (presentation at Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Singapore, 7 March 2003).

11 Ressa, *Seeds*, 73.

Airport in Tokyo, with the bomb exploding en route, killing one passenger and injuring 10 others. Yousef was unable to complete the Bojinka plot after his laptop was confiscated and a close colleague was arrested in the aftermath of an accidental fire, which occurred while Yousef was mixing explosives in his Manila apartment.[12]

Following the breakup of the Ramzi Yousef cell, Al-Qaida shifted its strategy in the region by relying less on its own operatives to conduct entire plots, and instead on outsourcing much of the groundwork to local affiliate groups. This strategy made sense, as local operatives had good knowledge of the area, spoke the local language, and already had an infrastructure and the manpower in place that could be used to mount operations. Al-Qaida's core operatives such as Mohammad Mansour Jabbarah, Omar Al-Farouq, or Fathur Roman Al-Ghozi were then sent into the region to oversee and guide these local efforts.

As mentioned earlier, the most important partner of Al-Qaida in the region was JI, whose first terrorist operation was the controversial Istiqlal Mosque bombing of April 1999, in which supposed JI operatives detonated a bomb in Southeast Asia's largest mosque, allegedly as part of an attempt to spark a Muslim-Christian confrontation.[13] In July of the same year, JI, in concert with its Malaysian affiliate Kumpulan Mujahedeen Malaysia (KMM), bombed the Atrium Mall in Jakarta, and followed that with the August 2000 JI bombing of the Philippine ambassador's residence in the same city. The latter act was an alleged expression of gratitude to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF in the Philippines) for the training it provided to JI members. The first notable operation that caught Al-Qaida's attention, however, was the Christmas 2000 synchronized bombing of 38 churches in 11 Indonesian cities, which killed 19 people and injured 120 others, followed by five nearly simultaneous explosions in Manila, in which 22 people died. At this point, significant operational mistakes occurred, with many of the bombs failing to detonate, and one of the key operatives getting killed by an accidental explosion after he forgot to change the SIM card in the phone that was rigged as the switch to the explosive device he was carrying on a motorbike. Nevertheless, there would be a dramatic shift in terms of the capability of JI to mount very lethal operations in the future.

12 Yousef was able to flee to Pakistan where he was arrested a month later.

13 Ressa, *Seeds*, 101.

By this time, Al-Qaida had been fully involved in planning multiple plots and activities in the region. Firstly, following the increased difficulty faced by Al-Qaida recruits in accessing the training camps in Afghanistan, Bin Ladin allegedly made a phone call to Hashim Salamat, the leader of the MILF, asking for new Al-Qaida camps to be set up in the southern Philippines.[14] In June 2000, Al-Qaida's key leaders Ayman Al-Zawahiri and Muhammad Atef visited Indonesia, traveling to Ambon, West Papua, and Aceh, where they were allegedly guided by Omar Al-Farouq and Agus Dwikarna, the leader of another JI affiliate, Lashkar Jundullah.[15] Another key event in the region was the infamous January 2000 meeting at the Evergreen Park condominium in Kuala Lumpur, where top Al-Qaida operatives prepared for the September 11 attacks, reviewed the failed USS *The Sullivans* (DDG 68) operation in Yemen, and planned the attack on the USS *Cole* (DDG 67). At the time, the main planner, Khallad Bin Attash, allegedly suggested launching a similar attack using suicide terrorists to crash a small boat into U.S. naval vessels at Port Klang, Malaysia. In addition, according to the interrogation of Omar Al-Farouq, a senior Al-Qaeda operative, a Somali member active in Indonesia was plotting to attack U.S. naval vessels in the crowded Indonesian port of Surabaya, but was allegedly unable to recruit the necessary suicide volunteers.[16] The idea of suicide boats attacking ships in port was revived on two more occasions but never materialized.

Post-9/11 Involvement of Al-Qaida in Southeast Asia

Following the successful execution of the 9/11 attacks, top Al-Qaida operatives again turned their focus toward Southeast Asia, the region they now called the "second front" of the struggle. To commemorate the first anniversary of 9/11, Al-Qaida planned to blow up Western embassies and banks in the region. The plan was again to use local allied groups to select the targets, conduct reconnaissance, prepare the staging ground, and then hand the attack over to experienced Al-Qaida operatives and imported Arab suicide bombers. The original attack was first planned to take place in the Philippines, but following

14 Ibid., 133.

15 Ibid., 96.

16 Zachary Abuza, "Terrorism in Southeast Asia: Keeping Al-Qaeda at Bay," *Terrorism Monitor* 2, no. 9, 19 May 2005.

the discovery that the preferred targets were too difficult to attack, the plot was moved to Singapore instead. However, the Internal Security Department of the city-state arrested the plotters before they could launch their operation. The narrated videotape featuring surveillance footage of key targets in Singapore was later found in the rubble of Abu Hafs Al-Masri's (aka Muhammad Atef) house in Afghanistan, after he was killed in an airstrike in November 2001.

The dismantling of the Singapore JI cell along with the arrests of key Al-Qaida operatives in the region, such as Fathur Rohman Al-Ghozi and Omar Al-Farouq, was a considerable setback to Al-Qaida and its sympathetic wing within the JI. Eager to finally succeed in a major attack in Southeast Asia, Al-Qaida made the decision to deviate from its preferred modus operandi in two important aspects. First, the idea of importing suicide bombers from abroad was abandoned, and from this moment on, suicide bombings in the region would be carried out by locals. Further, after realizing the tactical advantages of using non-Arab suicide attackers, who would not be subject to as much scrutiny at American airports as Arabs, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed allegedly even planned to use Southeast Asians for his plot to hijack an airplane and fly it into the Library Tower in Los Angeles.[17] Another similar plot was then devised around the same time by the remnants of the Singapore cell of JI, whose leader, Mas Salamat Kastari, allegedly plotted both to bomb Singapore's Changi Airport and to hijack an Aeroflot jetliner from Bangkok's Don Muang Airport and crash it into Changi, in a show of Islamic solidarity with the Chechens.

The second important aspect in which Al-Qaida changed its operational protocol in the region was to modify its targeting preferences. In order to deliver a strike that would finally succeed, a decision was taken by Hambali to switch from attacking hard targets such as embassies and military installations to soft targets such as hotels, bars, and clubs frequented by Western tourists. Otherwise Al-Qaida's modus operandi remained constant: multiple synchronized suicide bombings designed to maximize civilian casualties.

Bali would be the first success. On 12 October 2002, a man detonated a suicide belt in Patty's Bar in Kuta. As people fled out onto the street in panic, another suicide bomber detonated a van loaded with nearly 1,000 kilograms of explosives in the middle of the quickly forming crowd. According to one of the

17 Tabassum Zakaria, "Bush Details Al-Qaeda Plot to Hit LA," Reuters, 10 February 2006, http://today.reuters.com/.

terrorists, the bomb weighed 1,000 kilograms as a symbolic payback for the one-ton bombs America dropped on Muslims in the Middle East.[18] The bomb, although only 30 percent efficient, produced a large enough explosion and subsequent fire to kill 202 people, marking the deadliest attack since 9/11, and at the time the ninth deadliest terrorist attack since World War II. According to interrogation reports, the Bali terrorists originally planned for even greater carnage by incorporating a third suicide bomber who was supposed to ride a motorcycle through the doors of the packed Sari Club and detonate himself. The plan was abandoned only after it was discovered the man chosen for the suicide task could not ride a motorcycle.[19]

The Bali bombings were a groundbreaking event in the region, adhering to typical Al-Qaida modus operandi: the tactic of synchronized suicide bombers, the choice of a Western target, and unprecedented lethality. Also noteworthy is the fact that the majority of the key JI personalities that were later involved in pro-Al-Qaida terrorist activities can be linked to this original operation. Among them were Azhari Bin Husin–the chief bomb maker with a Ph.D. in applied mathematics from the University of Reading in the U.K., who was brought in at the last minute to assist with building the explosive device–and Noordin Muhammad Top–a peripheral player with knowledge of the operation but little direct involvement.[20] Following a wave of arrests of multiple Bali perpetrators, (i.e., Mukhlas, Amrozi, Ali Imron, Imam Samudra, and Hambali), and the escape of others to the southern Philippines (i.e., Dulmatin and Umar Patek), these two men would fill the vacuum that was created and would form a splinter group that would be responsible for some of the most important terrorist attacks in the region. Top appears to have been in charge, having some alleged communications with JI but not an endorsement to conduct operations.[21] By 2005, Top's splinter group was calling itself "Al-Qaida in the Malay Archipelago."[22]

18 Wayne Miller, "Bali Attack Delayed a Day, Mastermind Reveals," *Age* (Australia), 5 July 2003.

19 Cindy Wockner, "Third Suicide Bomber Planned," *Advertiser* (Australia), 23 July 2003.

20 International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: The Hotel Bombings*, Asia Briefing 94, (Jakarta/Brussels, 2009), 2, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia/b94-indonesia-the-hotel-bombings.aspx.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

Only nine months after the Bali attack, suicide terror would reach the Indonesian capital. On 5 August 2003, a car bomb exploded outside the J.W. Marriott Hotel in Jakarta, killing 12 people and wounding 150 others. The link between the two attacks was immediately obvious. As in the Bali bombing, the perpetrators in Jakarta used the same kind of explosives, as well as mobile phones for the purposes of remote detonation. In addition, in both attacks the perpetrators tried to scrape off the identification numbers on the vehicles used so they would not be easily traceable to the original owner.[23] The explosive device in Jakarta was smaller, consisting of six plastic boxes containing "black powder" weighing 19 kilograms each,[24] but it was still clear the attack was aimed to create as many casualties as possible. In order to increase lethality, the terrorists attached dozens of bars of laundry soap to containers of inflammable liquid that were placed next to the bomb. The mixture of sodium and fatty acids in the soap helped create fireballs that engulfed some of the victims. According to investigators, the bomb was personally detonated via a mobile phone by Dr. Azhari Bin Husin, JI's top bomb maker, who escaped from the scene on the back of a motorcycle. The explosion produced a two-meter-wide crater, penetrating through 32-centimeter-thick concrete into the basement, and the suicide bomber's head was catapulted all the way to the hotel's fifth floor.[25]

Thirteen months later, on 9 September 2004, a nearly identical suicide truck bombing took place at the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, killing 10 people and injuring more than 180 others. The pattern was a familiar one: Azhari driving a suicide truck bomb within several hundred meters from the target, then handing over the wheel to the suicide bomber and remotely detonating the device and escaping on the back of a motorcycle.[26] The attack was a clear demonstration that, despite the apprehension of Hambali in 2004 in Thailand, the pro-Al-Qaida wing in the JI was still a potent force. In addition, the timing of the attack was also striking; as in previous cases, the attack took place during the three months between August and October, a time period that was already becoming known in Southeast Asia as "JI bombing season."

23 "Jakarta Bomber: Qaeda Group Link," CBS News, 8 August 2003.

24 Damar Harsanto, "Reenactment Traces Bomb Assembly," *Jakarta Post*, 10 December 2003.

25 "Police Complete Preliminary Reconstruction of Marriott Blast," *Jakarta Post*, 14 August 2003.

26 "Militant Admits Surveying Australian Embassy Ahead of Bombing," AFP, 2 August 2005.

This timing pattern was again confirmed a year later in Bali when, on 1 October 2005, three suicide bombers detonated explosive backpacks at the seaside area of Jimbaran Bay and the bar and shopping hub of Kuta, killing 23 people and wounding 102 more. A 34-page document, which was later discovered on Azhari's computer, revealed many fascinating details about the reconnaissance and planning of the attack.[27] One of the observations that Azhari noted was the tightening of the security environment in Bali, which would require significant changes from the plan used in the first Bali bombing. Since it would now be more difficult to rent a safe house and prepare a large explosive device that could be put into a truck, the devices were designed to fit into small daypacks to be less suspicious and were assembled in Java and only then brought on a bus and ferry to Bali. The bombers were instructed to conduct the reconnaissance for the attack themselves, and it was up to them to propose targets and agree on suitable attire. This is a trend observable in other parts of the world as well–self-sustaining suicide bombers who are supposed to do the reconnaissance themselves, select their own method of infiltration, and all die in the attack. The bombers in Bali initially decided to attack discos, but later chose several restaurants as substitute targets.[28] They were instructed to take motorbike taxis to the respective locations, since this mode of transportation does not provide an opportunity for the driver to handle the luggage, and also prevents too much communication between the driver and the passenger.

Dynamics of Suicide Terrorism in Southeast Asia

It is important to note that all the suicide bombings in Indonesia were carried out by a pro-Al-Qaida splinter group centered around Dr. Azhari and Noordin Mohammed Top, and not mainstream JI. According to Nasir Abbas, who was a key JI operative until his arrest in 2003, members of this faction "see themselves as fighting a new world battle. . . . They say, we can attack civilians anywhere, just as Americans attack Muslim civilians all over the world."[29] This was in sharp contrast with the JI core, whose actions and objectives were very much local in nature, and the idea of killing civilians met with considerable opposition on both ideological and strategic grounds. The exact nature and

27 Raymond Bonner, "A Terror Strike, Choreographed on a Computer," *New York Times*, 3 July 2006.

28 The reason for this substitution followed the observation that it would be difficult to bring in backpacks because no one carries backpacks into a disco at 9 p.m. in Bali.

29 Robin McDowell, "Indonesians Ask Why Fellow Muslims are Turning to Suicide Bombings," Associated Press, 4 December 2005.

strength of this pro-Al-Qaida faction has been difficult to assess, as the group's membership frequently changes and its members tend to use different names over time. On the one hand, as far back as the J.W. Marriott bombing, reports emerged that the suicide bomber may have been a member of a new 15-member suicide strike brigade called "Laskar Khos" (Special Force), allegedly led by a man called Mustofa (also known as Pranata Yuda, Abu Tholut, Yono, and Imron)[30]–the former head of the JI Mantiqi Thalid (III).[31] Then, following the second Bali bombing, another new group name surfaced, with the allegation that the suicide bombers came from a group called "Thoifah Muqatilah" (Combat Unit). And, while according to Nassir Abbas, the name Thoifah Muqatilah had been around since the first Bali bombing,[32] some analysts believed that the group was in essence a continuation of the Laskar Khos, in the sense that Thoifah Muqatilah's role was to reestablish Laskar Khos after the latter had been crippled by a number of arrests.[33] Either way, this "suicide battalion" did not appear to be a permanent body of suicide fighters always prepared to strike, but rather a group of planners and indoctrinators that tapped into the resources of other groups, such as Ring Banten, to recruit suicide bombers for specific operations.

Regarding the actual suicide bombers, several patterns were apparent. First, the bombers did not share a clear common sociological profile, as they came from various locations in Indonesia and from various educational and economic backgrounds.[34] Contrary to popular myth, only one of them was a graduate of the infamous "terrorist school," the Pondok Pesantren Al-Mukmin in Ngruki.[35] Secondly, most of the bombers were not members of JI itself, but were rather recruited and indoctrinated specifically for suicide operations by father–like figures within the fringe JI around Noordin Mohammed Top and Azahari Bin Husin. Thirdly, it has been common practice for suicide bombers to leave some traces of their intent. Iqbal and Heri Golun from the first Bali and Australian

30 Damar Harsanto, "Police Confirm Asmar's JI Ties," *Jakarta Post*, 18–24 October 2005.

31 Maria Ressa, "Fears of New Suicide Terror Squad," CNN, 26 February 2004.

32 Interview with Sidney Jones, "The Hardliners Are Called Thoifah Muqatilah," *Tempo Magazine*, 18–24 October 2005.

33 John Aglionby, "The Price of Democracy," *Guardian* (United Kingdom), 4 October 2005.

34 Noor Huda Ismail, "Quest for the Meaning of Life Drives Educated Men to Death," *Australian*, 12 December 2005.

35 Sidney Jones, "Terrorism's Toxic Strains," *Age*, 5 October 2005.

Embassy attacks left behind written suicide notes, while Asmar Latin Sani, the J.W. Marriott bomber, left behind e-mails in which he expressed a desire "to marry as soon as possible," or to carry out a martyrdom operation.[36] Salik M. Firdaus, Misno, and Aip Hidayat,[37] the second Bali suicide bombers, all left behind statements on video,[38] possibly signaling intent by the group to use these statements as a recruiting tool for future suicide bombers. Fourthly, all of these suicide notes and videos reveal that while the outlook of the organizers was international, the bombers themselves were inspired by local factors, such as a living legacy of rebellion in West Java or the grievances from recent communal conflicts such as Ambon and Poso.[39]

Jemaah Islamiyah's Decline

In November 2005, after the second Bali bombing attack, Azhari Bin Husin was killed in a shootout, and this effort seemed to have paid immediate dividends when the "JI bombing season" did not materialize over the next four years. There are several possible reasons why this was the case. Azhari was absolutely key as a bomb maker, and although he did have a few disciples, it is unquestionable that his demise created a considerable capability gap. That being said, other possible explanations include the fact that Noordin Mohammad Top apparently had a deal with some members of the JI leadership structures, which stipulated that he could use the JI infrastructure to hide from Indonesian authorities but only under the condition that he would refrain from these types of operations.[40]

Either way, beginning in 2005, there was a noticeable decline in terrorist activities in Indonesia, which did not go unnoticed. In November 2008 CIA Director Michael V. Hayden presented an optimistic assessment of the JI threat, stating that "while JI still exists today, its once robust relationship with Al-Qaida

36 John Aglionby, "Jakarta Bomber in Terror Network," *Guardian*, 9 August 2003.

37 Eva C. Komandjaja, "Police Identify Third Bali Suicide Bomber," *Jakarta Post*, 20 November 2005.

38 Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), United States Department of State Bureau of Diplomatic Security, OSAC Newsletter, November 2005, https://www.osac.gov/pages/NewsLetter.aspx.

39 Jones, "Terrorism's Toxic Strains." Ambon and Poso were regional conflicts in the late 1990s and early 2000s marked by severe sectarian violence between Christians and Muslims.

40 International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: The Hotel Bombings*, 4.

is gone, its plots are increasingly detected and disrupted, and hundreds of its leaders and operatives have been captured or killed by the Indonesian national police."[41] Around the same time, a senior U.S. intelligence official was quoted as saying, "There's a possibility of the end of the JI threat."[42]

But despite this general and well-founded optimism, on June 17, 2009, Jakarta again witnessed the return of terror, with twin suicide bombings at the J.W. Marriott and the Ritz-Carlton hotels. Nine people were killed and 50 injured in the first JI attack in Indonesia in four years. In this case, the bombers knew that it would be difficult to bring ready-made devices through the security at the hotels, which led them to rent a room in one of the hotels and assemble the devices there. The terrorists also had a man on the inside–a florist in the Ritz-Carlton–who started working there three years before the attack and actually gave up a well-paid job in another hotel to take on the florist position, suggesting a deliberate infiltration quite far in advance. There are again multiple explanations for the timing of these attacks. As mentioned earlier, part of the reason why there had been no suicide bombings for four years in Indonesia was the apparent deal Top had with JI leadership about refraining from such operations in exchange for protection. According to the International Crisis Group, which produces some of the most informed analyses of terrorism in Southeast Asia, the agreement may have broken down after the June 2007 arrest of Abu Dujana, Top's key contact in JI. Another possible explanation might have been a sudden influx of overseas funds to bankroll the operation, but this hypothesis has yet to be confirmed.[43] Top himself was killed shortly after the attack in August 2009, after a 17-hour siege of one of his hideouts in Central Java, creating a widespread perception that the most urgent terrorist threat to Indonesia had finally been eliminated.

Recent Trends

This optimism, however, receded somewhat following the surprising discovery

41 Alex Kingsbury, "CIA Director Says al Qaeda Much Weaker in Southeast Asia," USNews.com, 13 November 2008, http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2008/11/13/ cia-director-says-al-qaeda-much-weaker-in-southeast-asia.

42 Alex Kingsbury, "Lessons from the Near-Defeat of a Once-Feared al Qaeda Affiliate in Indonesia," USNews.com, 28 October 2008, http://www.usnews.com/news/world /articles/2008/10/28/lessons-from-the-near-defeat-of-a-once-feared-al-qaeda-affiliate-in-indonesia.

43 International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: The Hotel Bombings*, 4.

of a terrorist training camp in Aceh, Sumatra, in February 2010.[44] The camp was run by a group that called itself "Al-Qaida in Aceh"–also known as "Al-Qaida in the Veranda of Mecca," which was basically a cross section of different militant groups from Indonesia, including former associates of the late Noordin Mohammed Top, dissatisfied elements of the mainstream JI, and members of the KOMPAK Mujahidin and Rang Banten (splinter elements of Darul Islam). The discovery of the camp came as a surprise because the Acehnese are not known for supporting radical Islam–and it would not be the most logical place to set up this camp in terms of being able to rely on a sympathetic support base. Nevertheless, the mountainous terrain was seen as beneficial, and its suitability for guerilla warfare had previously been demonstrated by the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), which was able to resist the Indonesian army in this region for over 30 years.

Besides terrain, the group chose Aceh as its base because of the established presence of Islamic charities with militant links that had been set up during the tsunami relief effort in 2004. Simultaneously, as part of negotiations for greater autonomy, Aceh had been granted the right to implement sharia law, a step that attracted many radical clerics to set up base in the region. But despite these seemingly favorable conditions, it was precisely the lack of support among the local Acehnese that led to the reporting of the camp to the Indonesian authorities, resulting in the raid that disrupted terrorist operations in Aceh. Another surprise was the discovery that the head of operations at the camp was none other than Joko Pitono (aka Dulmatin), one of the top JI bomb makers, who was widely believed to be hiding in the southern Philippines. There was a huge manhunt following the unearthing of the camp, in which Dulmatin and several other key leaders of the group were killed in March 2010.

The discovery of the camp demonstrated important shifts in the Indonesian militant movement. The presence of a cross section of the multiple jihadi groups showed considerable discontent and disagreement within the wider JI movement about overall strategy and tactics. The mainstream JI group was seen as too passive, putting too much emphasis on *dakwah* (the preaching of Islam) and building up the Islamic community, holding off on armed operations until a critical mass had been established. Simultaneously, there was strong critique of the Noordin Mohammad Top splinter cell, which tended to focus on

44 Zachary Abuza, "New Directions for Indonesian Militants after Successful Counterterrorist Operations," *Terrorism Monitor* 8, no. 41, 11 November 2010.

operations for the sake of the operations themselves and martyrdom-seeking, without much consideration for the implications of these suicide attacks on the survival of the jihad movement and its goal of implementing sharia law across Indonesia. The newly formed Al-Qaida in Aceh in this sense formed a third pole, which upheld JI's ambition of establishing Islamic law in Indonesia but, simultaneously, took a much more proactive approach in the use of terrorist operations as a means toward that end. The key difference with Top's approach in this regard, besides the more long-term vision and strategy behind terrorist operations, was a redefinition of targeting preferences. Unlike Top, who focused mainly on foreign targets, this new group chose to attack primarily local officials and members of the law enforcement community who were perceived as standing in the way of implementation of sharia in Indonesia.[45] Another difference vis à vis Top's strategy was to focus on smaller tactical operations and assassinations of key figures, while taking active precautions to limit Muslim casualties–something that Top was widely criticized for in the past. Among the plans of Al-Qaida in Aceh was to assassinate President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and other top officials during the Independence Day ceremony. The attackers also allegedly planned to launch a Mumbai-style attack against hotels in Jakarta, focusing on foreign nationals.[46]

On a final note to this chronology, it is important to mention the latest terrorist attack in Indonesia to date, which seems to confirm the latest trend of focused assassinations of local officials. On 15 April 2011, a suicide bomber walked into the police mosque in Cirebon City and detonated himself in the front section of the mosque during prayers in an apparent attempt to kill the local police chief. The target survived the attack with injuries while the bomber remained the sole fatality, and photographs from the scene demonstrate the weakness of the explosive device used. It is tempting to conclude that the bomb-making capability gap that started with the death of Azhari Bin Husin continues, but any such conclusion would be premature.

Conclusion

Overall, the effort to fight Al-Qaida's influence in Southeast Asia appears to be

45 International Crisis Group: *Indonesia: Jihadi Surprise in Aceh*, Asia Report no. 189 (Jakarta/Brussels, 20 April 2010), 2, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia/189-indonesia-jihadi-surprise-in-aceh.aspx.

46 "Indonesia: Plot to Kill President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono," Newsofap.com, 14 May 2010, http://www.newsofap.com/newsofap-15293-26-indonesia-plot-to-kill-president-susilo-bambang-yudhoyono-newsofap.html.

a success story. At present, there are at least two degrees of separation between Al-Qaida and the local groups. First of all, the 2003 arrest of Hambali, who was a key link to Al-Qaida, appears to have seriously disrupted JI's connection to the group, creating a gap that was never adequately filled.[47] Even more importantly, the local militant movements ranging from the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front) in the Philippines, through JI in Indonesia to BRN-COORDINATE[48] in southern Thailand, have demonstrated a strong preference to adhering to their own local objectives, either rejecting outright or gradually shying away from Al-Qaida and its global terrorist ambitions. Even JI, which at one point served as a key link between Al-Qaida and local groups, and which used to have its own wider regional ambition in Southeast Asia, has essentially scaled back to focus on Indonesia only.

Other important successes include the reduction of JI members though arrests from several thousand in 2000 to only a few hundred; a semisuccessful program of rehabilitating and co-opting former militants; de-escalation of the communal conflicts in Maluku and Sulawesi; and a fairly transparent judicial process for trying terrorism suspects, which contributed to changing views on JI within Indonesian society.[49] Just as important are factors inside the JI itself, such as its vulnerable hierarchical organizational structure, disagreements about ideology and the strategic and religious justifications for the use of terrorism, the existence of competing factions, and the reorientation of the mainstream JI base to grassroots recruitment and indoctrination with the long-term goal of implementing the sharia in Indonesia.[50] And, while the discovery of the terrorist training camp in Aceh is a cause of concern, the assumption that the organization's name, "Al-Qaida in Aceh," signals a closer allegiance to Al-Qaida is essentially mistaken, as the group adopted the name primarily because of its

47 Vaughn et al., *Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, 6.

48 Barisan Revolusi Nasional Patani-Melayu-Koordinasi, or the Patani Malay National Revolutionary Front-Coordinate.

49 Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat*, 83; Kingsbury, "Lessons."

50 The group's structure is generally well-known, having originally consisted of a hierarchical structure headed by a five-member advisory council that sat on top of four functional committees and four *mantiqis* (regional brigades), which also had functional specializations (fundraising, religious indoctrination, training, and weapons procurement). Beneath each *mantiqi* there were at least three additional layers. But despite the highly hierarchical structure, regional leaders operated with a considerable level of autonomy, and the group further adapted its structure to a less vulnerable setup following the wave of arrests after the Bali bombings of 2002.

recognizable "brand" nature.[51] Furthermore, the group's modus operandi and targeting preferences represented a clear departure from, as opposed to adherence to, Al-Qaida's tactical and targeting preferences.

On a final note, some of the more recent trends suggest a level of decentralization of the threat, where small groups of individuals decide to act on their own in support of an ideology or cause, in a way that is not dissimilar to the threat of homegrown terrorism in the West. This phenomenon of local bottom-up radicalization and self-radicalization for purposes of attack was demonstrated by the unsuccessful plots planned by a number of groups in Indonesia: the Medan, Bandung, Palembang, and Klaten groups.[52] Similarly to their counterparts in the West, these groups have limited links to established terrorist groups and thus lack appropriate training, which results in a comparative lack of operational skill and a limited level of destructive power. By the same token, these groups are notoriously more difficult to detect and disrupt, signaling the likelihood that small-scale operations in the region will continue. It also cannot be ruled out that some of these homegrown groups and other JI splinter elements will try to make contact with Al-Qaida central, as was the case of the long-time fugitive Umar Patek, who was arrested on 25 January 2011 in the now infamous Pakistani town of Abbottabad,[53] allegedly on his way to meet senior Al-Qaida leaders in North Waziristan.[54] That being said, the fact remains that the level of threat posed by Al-Qaida-linked groups in Southeast Asia has diminished significantly.

51 International Crisis Group, *Jihadi Surprise*.

52 International Crisis Group, *Indonesian Jihadism: Small Groups, Big Plans*, Asia Report no. 204 (19 April 2011), http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia/204%20Indonesian%20Jihadism%20%20Small%20Groups%20Big%20Plans.pdf.

53 Abbottabad is now infamous as the city where U.S. forces killed Bin Ladin on 2 May 2011 (local time).

54 Niniek Karmini, "How Umar Patek's Road Came to An End in Pakistan," *Jakarta Globe*, 15 April 2011, http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/how-umar-pateks-road-came-to-an-end-in-pakistan/435584.

MIDDLE EAST

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6
Al-Qaida and Terrorism in the Arab East:
Rise, Decline, and the Effects of Doctrine Revisions and the Arab Revolutions

Amr Abdalla and Arezou Hassanzadeh

This paper assesses the presence and influence of Al-Qaida and like-minded groups in the Arab East (Mashriq) in the last 10 years, with particular focus on that presence and influence in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Palestine, and Egypt. Using a framework based on the degree of links between Al-Qaida and operatives in those countries, we examine the changes that may have occurred within the groups and the resultant effects on security. We follow our country analyses with an argument that two major processes–Doctrine Revisions (*Muragaat Fikriya*, or *Muragaat Fiqhiya*)[1] among the jihadist activists and the 2011 Arab Awakening–are making significant contributions to the eradication of the root religious, cultural, and political underpinnings of terrorism in the name of Islam, as well as attenuating the influence of Al-Qaida and similar groups in the Arab East. The recent Arab revolutions, along with the Doctrine Revisions that have been implemented widely in Egypt and elsewhere, constitute the most effective preventive measures for reducing the recruiting pool for radical terrorist groups at all levels.

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1 The term "Doctrine Revisions" refers to the process that leaders of militant Egyptian groups, especially Islamic Jihad and Al-Jamaa Al-Islamiya, embarked on in the 1990s to reflect upon the religious interpretations that had justified committing acts of violence against governments and civilians threatening their efforts to establish their version of an Islamic state and society. The process succeeded in transforming the beliefs and approaches of several of the leaders of those organizations who later, with the support of the Egyptian government, produced literature proving the fallacy of their violent interpretations and invited militants to repent and resort instead to peaceful means to achieve their objectives. The process was later replicated in other countries such as Libya, Yemen, and Indonesia.

A major assumption in this paper is that militant Muslim movements worldwide, including in the Arab East, are more often than not loosely connected organizationally, while members of such groups usually share similar ideologies and opt for similar militant approaches against their enemies. They do not always develop direct organizational links, but occasionally link with each other to conduct specific militant acts. One important implication for security and legal counterterrorism efforts is that attempts to establish direct organizational links among those groups–which is usually needed to prosecute those who had committed acts of terror–fail to bring about convictions in courts of law because such linkage is easily contested. Security counterterrorism efforts also run the risk of failing to detect large numbers of such groups when the search is focused on groups that are organizationally tied to Al-Qaida or other known organizations.

Accordingly, we apply a framework that proposes that militant Muslim movements in the Arab East vary in their degree of relation and connection to Al-Qaida. We suggest that there are four levels of such relation and connection. The first level includes groups that are directly related to Al-Qaida organizationally. These are groups that operate with direct instructions, and with organizational support, from known Al-Qaida leaders. The organization that operated in Iraq under Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi was an example of a level one group. A second level includes groups that are relatively large and organized yet not directly connected to Al-Qaida organizationally. Instead, such groups adhere to a great extent to the same beliefs, ideologies, and modes of operation as Al-Qaida. Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula and Yemen is an example of such a group. Level three includes groups that share the same ideologies and beliefs but that are hardly large or organized. These are usually gatherings of youths who attend neighborhood mosques and eventually become radical and militant in their interpretations of their religious duties towards society, which they define as an enemy of Islam. Such groups are usually made up of a small number of individuals and may suddenly launch an act of terror. As these bands become more radical, they may connect or coordinate their efforts with like-minded organizations or other groups of youths. These groups have been responsible for repeated acts of terror in Egypt and elsewhere over the past two decades. Finally, level four groups are primarily composed of outlaws who, for example, deal in illegal drugs or arm smuggling. They take on a religious disguise that gives them legitimacy in their communities, and at times they may collaborate with level one and level two groups to trade protection in return for financial support.

Depending on several factors, especially the degree of damage inflicted on organized level one and two groups by security and legal agencies, groups may move along the continuum of connectedness to Al-Qaida. For example, Al-Qaida in Iraq is moving away from level one towards a level two connection after sustaining severe blows to their infrastructure. Level three groups usually remain at that stage and continue to be the ones that elude security efforts to the greatest extent, as they are often homegrown and have little detectable linkage to level one and two groups. Level four groups also usually remain connected to level one and two groups, and the continuity of their connection depends on the stability of the militant groups to which they are tied. It is worth noting that we do not find any level four groups in this specific review; however, the distinction exists in other case studies, and thus we choose to include it.

In the following sections, we will examine the state of militant Muslim movements in the Arab East using the framework of organizational proximity to Al-Qaida.

Yemen

Background

Emerging in Yemen in January 2009, Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) is the best known Al-Qaida-affiliated group in the Arabian Peninsula region, and it is notably active in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. The presence of Al-Qaida in Yemen, however, can be traced back to the 1990s. The presence of Al-Qaida in Yemen is distinguishable in two different phases: the first phase from May 1998 to November 2003 and the second phase from February 2006 to the present.

First Phase (May 1998–November 2003)

During this phase, the presence of Al-Qaida in Yemen can be found either in local Islamic groups' modus operandi or in operations conducted by Al-Qaida members as a part of their global jihad ideology within the territory of Yemen. Among the groups active during this period, the Aden-Abyan Islamic Army (AAIA) was one of the most prominent. Abd Al-Rahim Al-Nashiri, Abu Ali Al-Harthi, and Muhammad Hamdi Al-Ahdal were the three Al-Qaida members planning and conducting terrorist operations in Yemen.

The Aden-Abyan Islamic Army

The AAIA initially was established as an informal group of "Arab Afghan" jihadists who, after their return from fighting against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, gravitated around Zayn Al-Abdin Al-Mihdhar, alias Abu Hassan.[2] AAIA gradually became one of the prominent independent Islamic militant organizations in Yemen in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

In May 1998, AAIA declared as its main objectives deposing the Yemeni regime, establishing an Islamic state under the sharia, and eliminating all Western interests from Yemen. Earlier that month, Yemeni security forces had attacked the AAIA camp in Abyan, claiming that jihadists aimed "to train and resume their halted activities" in Yemen after their return from Afghanistan.[3]

AAIA engaged in some terrorist operations, such as kidnappings and bombings, in pursuit of their objectives. Two of their most significant operations included the kidnapping of 16 foreigners in December 1998, which led to the execution of their leader Abu Hasan Zayn Al-Abdin Al-Mihdhar in October 1999[4] and his subsequent replacement by Shaykh Khalid Abd Al-Nabi (alias Khalid Abd Al-Rabb Al-Nabi Al-Yazidi) as the new AAIA leader, and the attack on the USS *Cole* (DDG 67) in the port of Aden in October 2000.

First Phase Links with the Central Al-Qaida Leadership

The relationship between AAIA and Al-Qaida is ambiguous. AAIA has declared its support to Al-Qaida in some of its statements. In its *Country Terrorism Reports* from 2004 to 2006, the U.S. Department of State reported that AAIA expressed support for Usama Bin Ladin in its early communiqués in 1998. It has also been claimed that "when the Yemeni government tried to close the Islamic Army's training camp, a Bin Ladin representative attempted to mediate."[5] Later that year, AAIA announced its support and praise for Al-

2 Sheila Carapico, "Yemen and the Aden-Abyan Islamic Army," *MERIP Press Information Note 35*, 18 October 2000.

3 Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, "Yemen: Whether al-Jihad or any other terrorist organization had a presence in Yemen between 1994 and August 1995, and whether al-Jihad was active in the country before or after this period," 12 February 2003, accessed 30 May 2011, http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher,IRBC,,YEM,3f7d4e3ce,0.html.

4 "Tourists' kidnapper executed in Yemen," *Guardian* (United Kingdom), 18 October 1999, accessed 4 June 2011, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/1999/oct/18/yemen.

5 Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, "Yemen: Whether al-Jihad."

Qaida's attacks on the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania,[6] expressed its support for Usama Bin Ladin, and encouraged the Yemeni people to attack Americans and destroy their property after an American raid on Bin Ladin's camp in Afghanistan.[7]

Moreover, there are allegations of cooperation between the two groups in some of the operations conducted in Yemen. AAIA is suspected of cooperating with Al-Qaida in a number of small-scale bombings in Aden and Abyan,[8] as well as in the October 2000 attack on the USS *Cole*,[9] the attempted attack on the USS *The Sullivans* (DDG 68) in January 2000, and the suicide boat attack on the oil tanker MV *Limburg* in October 2002.[10] AAIA renounced violence in 2003, and, as stated by its last leader, Shaykh Khalid, it cannot definitively be said "whether [the AAIA] actually exists and is effective or anything else."[11]

While the relationship between AAIA and Al-Qaida is foggy, Al-Qaida had at least three operatives in Yemen at this time: Abd Al Rahim al-Nashiri, Abu Ali Al-Harthi, and Muhammad Hamdi Al-Ahdal (aka Abu Issam Al-Makki).

Abd Al-Rahim al-Nashiri joined Al-Qaida officially in 1998 and functioned as Al-Qaida's commander in the entire Arab peninsula from late 2000 onward.[12]

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6 "Aden-Abyan Islamic Army (AAIA) (Yemen)," *Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism*, 15 October 2010, accessed 13 June 2011, http://articles.janes.com/articles/Janes-World-Insurgency-and-Terrorism/Aden-Abyan-Islamic-Army-AAIA-Yemen.html.

7 National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), "Terrorist Organization Profile: Aden Abyan Islamic Army (AAIA)," University of Maryland, accessed 30 May 2011, http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data_collections/tops/terrorist_organization_profile.asp?id=4.

8 Abdu Zinah, "Qiyadat al-Jihad Dakhil al-Sujun al-Misriya Ta'kuf 'ala I'dad Bayan Mubadarat Waqf al-'Unf" ("The Commanders of al-Jihad inside Egyptian Prisons Are Engaging in Preparing a Communiqué for an Initiative for Halting Violence," *Asharq Al-Awsat*, (London) 19 April 2007a, 1.

9 Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, "Yemen: Whether al-Jihad."

10 "Aden-Abyan Islamic Army," *Global Security*, 7 June 2005, accessed 11 June 2011, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/aden-abyan.htm.

11 Jamestown Foundation, "Al-Qaeda Usurps Yemen's Aden-Abyan Army," *Terrorism Monitor* 8, no. 41 (2010), accessed 16 June 2011, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=37162&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=26&cHash=f6533561fd.

12 "Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri," *Global Jihad*, 7 December 2007, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.globaljihad.net/view_page.asp?id=304.

He had a leading role in the attempted attack on *The Sullivans* in January 2000 and the successful attack on the *Cole* in October 2000. The *Limburg* attack in October 2002 has also been one of his achievements in Yemen. About a month after the *Limburg* attack, al-Nashiri was captured in the United Arab Emirates in November 2002 and handed over to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).[13]

Abu Ali Al-Harthi fought alongside Usama Bin Ladin against Soviet forces in Afghanistan and later became a close associate of his in Sudan in the early 1990s. Abu Ali Al-Harthi was considered Al-Qaida's chief operative in Yemen.[14] He is suspected of being involved in the attack on the *Cole* in 2000 and the *Limburg* attack in 2002. Al-Harthi is believed to have been killed in an attack by a U.S. Predator drone aircraft in November 2002.[15]

Muhammad Hamdi Al-Ahdal was believed to be Al-Qaida's second man in Yemen after Al-Harthi. He fought in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Chechnya and traveled to Afghanistan several times. Al-Ahdal had a significant role in "financing, planning, facilitating, preparing or perpetrating of acts or activities by, in conjunction with, under the name of, on behalf or in support of [Al-Qaida] . . . supplying, selling or transferring arms and related material to [Al-Qaida] . . . [or] otherwise supporting acts or activities of [Al-Qaida]" in Yemen.[16] He also participated in the attacks on the *Cole* and the *Limburg*. Al-Ahdal was arrested in November 2003.[17]

Second Phase (February 2006–Present)

With its most significant members killed or arrested and its supporting groups weakened, Al-Qaida's presence in Yemen became rather insignificant beginning in late 2003. On February 3, 2006, however, a new phase of Al-Qaida in Yemen

13 Peter L. Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know: An Oral History of Al Qaeda's Leader* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 251–53.

14 "Profile: Ali Qaed Senyan al-Harthi," *BBC News*, 5 November 2002, accessed 7 June 2011, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2404443.stm.

15 "CIA 'Killed Al-Qaeda Suspects' in Yemen," *BBC News*, 5 November 2002, accessed 7 June 2011, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/2402479.stm.

16 United Nations Security Council Committee Established Pursuant to Resolution 1267, *United Nations*, 29 November 2006, accessed 4 June 2011, http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1267/1267_guidelines.pdf.

17 "Yemeni 'Al-Qaeda Chief' Captured," *BBC News*, 25 November 2003, accessed 7 June 2011, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3238188.stm.

commenced. Twenty-three of the most wanted prisoners escaped from the Political Security Central Prison in Sanaa, 13 of whom were accused of involvement in the *Cole* and *Limburg* attacks.[18] Among those escapees who proved to be the most problematic were Nassar Al-Wahishi, a former personal assistant to Bin Ladin[19] and Qasim Al-Raimi.

After escaping from the prison, Al-Wahishi and Al-Raimi started to form a new generation of Al-Qaida in Yemen, consisting of both recruits and experienced jihadists returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.[20] Compared to the old generation, this new generation of Al-Qaida in Yemen tends to target the government more directly. This can be linked to the statement released by Bin Ladin in July 2006, addressing President Ali Abdullah Saleh as the "traitor who is submissive to America."[21] According to one analyst:

> The older generation, while passionate about global jihad, was more concerned with local matters, and more willing to play by the time-honored Yemeni rules of bargaining and negotiating in order to keep Saleh from destroying their safe haven. Not so with the new generation–they willingly criticize Saleh harshly, and seem immune to the lure of the negotiation room.[22]

Known as Al-Qaida in Yemen, this new generation of Al-Qaida, with Al-Wahishi as its leader and Al-Raimi as its military commander, conducted several terrorist operations in Yemen before January 2009. A notable example is the attack on the U.S. embassy in Sanaa in September 2008.[23]

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18 "Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," *Yemen Times*, 14 February 2011, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.yementimes.com/defaultdet.aspx?SUB_ID=35571.

19 Sudarsan Raghavan, "Al-Qaeda Group in Yemen Gaining Prominence," *Washington Post*, 28 December 2009, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/27/AR2009122702022.html.

20 "Profile: Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," *BBC News*, 14 June 2011, accessed 15 June 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11483095.

21 "Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," *Yemen Times*.

22 Brian O'Neill, "New Generation of al-Qaeda on Trial in Yemen," *Terrorism Focus* 4 no. 39 (2007).

23 "Profile: Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," *BBC News*.

Then, in January 2009, Yemeni and Saudi Islamist militant groups affiliated with Al-Qaida merged into AQAP, a group formed in early 2003 in Saudi Arabia.[24] On January 23, 2009, Al-Malahim Media Foundation, the media arm of AQAP, released a videotape titled as "From Here We Begin . . . And at Al-Aqsa We Meet," in which the group announced that the Saudi jihadists pledged allegiance to its leaders "to combine the efforts of the Mojahidoon, in defense of the Muslim world, and to liberate the Noble Aqsa Mosque"; they also declared that they would now act under the name of "Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula."[25] In October 2010, AQAP's military commander, Al-Raimi, announced the creation of the "Aden-Abyan Army" to free the country from "crusaders and their apostate agents."[26]

According to the U.S. Congressional Research Service, AQAP's current primary goals include attacking the U.S. homeland, attacking U.S. and Western interests in Yemen, destabilizing the Yemeni government, and assassinating members of the Saudi royal family.[27]

Current Links with the Central Al-Qaida Leadership

The links between AQAP and central Al-Qaida seem to be strong. Nasser Al-Wahishi has been a close aide to Usama Bin Ladin, and his deputy, Said Al-Shihri, is a Saudi national repatriated from the Guantanamo Bay prison camp.[28] Moreover, Al-Shihri's leadership has been confirmed by Al-Qaida's second-in-command, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, "due to his knowledge of the Yemeni tribes and his close ties to youth groups and adolescent mujahideen."[29]

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24 Ibid.

25 "From Here We Begin and At Al-Aqsa We Meet," *Global Islamic Media Front*, accessed 15 June 2011, http://www.archive.org/details/Aqsaaa.

26 "Yemen Qaeda Chief Announces Formation of Army," *Asharq Al-Awsat*, 10 December 2010, 7 June 2011, http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=1&id=22639.

27 Jeremy M. Sharp, *Yemen: Background and U.S. Relations*, CRS Report for Congress RL34170 (8 June 2011), 11–13, accessed 20 June 2011, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL34170.pdf.

28 Jayshree Bajoria and Greg Bruno, "Backgrounder: al-Qaeda," *Council on Foreign Relations Backgrounder*, 17 June 2011, accessed 22 June 2011, http://www.cfr.org/terrorist-organizations/al-qaeda-k-al-qaida-al-qaida/p9126.

29 Jamestown Foundation, "Former AQAP Intelligence Chief Describes Egyptian Role in Al-Qaeda," *Terrorism Monitor* 8 no. 43 (2010): 1, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=37205&cHash=e119e7cbbe.

Significantly, in the famous videotape released by AQAP in January 2009 announcing the merger between the Yemeni and Saudi jihadist cells, Bin Ladin and Al-Zawahiri were referred to as the organization's "leaders and elders" whom AQAP's mujahidin are following to fulfill their "promise and jihad."[30]

There are some allegations that AQAP is receiving "strategic and philosophic guidance" from Bin Ladin and other members of Al-Qaida's central leadership.[31] According to the *Wall Street Journal*, U.S. intelligence officials have observed "increased collaboration and communion" between the AQAP and central Al-Qaida. [32] In addition, AQAP shares strong global jihadist ideologies and objectives with central Al-Qaida.

Despite these links in hierarchical and organizational ties, most analysts believe that AQAP operates independently. According to Glenn Carle, former Deputy National Intelligence Officer for Transnational Threats, "Usama Bin Ladin inspires, but does not order, his brethren in Yemen."[33] In response to the question, "Are they centrally controlled by Usama Bin Ladin, wherever he is?" Carle stated, "I think the answer is, no."[34] And to the question "Do they receive general operation guidance?" he replied, "Probably in some ways they do. . . . There might be some [logistical] support, generally not too much."[35] According to one analyst:

> Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has eclipsed its superiors in terms of recruiting, propaganda, and military operations. Unlike many other Al-Qaida affiliates, these cadres are integrated into the indigenous society.

30 "From Here We Begin and At Al-Aqsa We Meet," *Global Islamic Media Front.*

31 American Enterprise Institute, "Pakistan Security Brief–November 5, 2010," *Critical Threats*, 5 November 2010, accessed 11 June 2011, http://www.criticalthreats.org/pakistan-security-brief/pakistan-security-brief-%E2%80%93-november-5-2010.

32 Adam Entous and Margaret Coker, "Pakistan al-Qaeda Aids Yemen Plots," *Wall Street Journal*, 4 November 2010, accessed 7 June 2011, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704805204575594672841436244.html.

33 Gary Thomas, "Al-Qaida in Arabian Peninsula Comes into Its Own," *VOA News*, 4 November 2010, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.voanews.com/english/news/news-analysis/Al-Qaida-in-Arabian-Peninsula-Comes-Into-Its-Own-106681868.html.

34 Thomas, "Al-Qaida in Arabian Peninsula Comes into Its Own."

35 Ibid.

> This unique mixture of global aspirations and local roots makes AQAP a more adaptive, tenacious adversary than its counterparts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and elsewhere.[36]

Level of Connection with Al-Qaida

Overall, it seems that the presence of Al-Qaida in Yemen during the last 10 years has remained at the second level. Both AAIA and AQAP have adhered to the fundamental ideological orientation and modes of operation of central Al-Qaida, but neither of them has been directly bound by the organizational and hierarchical structure of Al-Qaida. Although during recent years, after the emergence of AQAP, the connections with Al-Qaida became stronger, both AAIA and AQAP have acted independently, and there is no indication that they were operating under the orders and instructions of the central Al-Qaida leadership.

Saudi Arabia

Background

As noted above, AQAP is the best known group affiliated with Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula region. Although revived by a merger of Saudi and Yemeni jihadist cells in January 2009, the emergence of the core of the group goes back to May 2003 in Saudi Arabia.

Different phases of AQAP's presence in Saudi Arabia can be best explained based on the briefings from Saudi Ministry of Interior's counterterrorism advisors in Riyadh and Washington, DC, in 2008. According to Saudi officials, there are three phases of Al-Qaida's campaign in Saudi Arabia; we add the fourth one to cover the current era, from January 2009 to today.[37]

36 Christopher Swift, "Al-Qaeda after Usama bin Laden," *Christopher Swift Blog*, 1 May 2011. accessed 7 June 2011, http://christopher-swift.com/blog/al-qaeda-after-Usama-bin-laden.

37 Christopher M. Blanchard, *Saudi Arabia: Background and U.S. Relations* CRS Report for Congress RL33533 (Congressional Research Service: 16 December 2009), 24, accessed 7 June 2011, http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/135931.pdf.

The "Momentum" Phase (May 2003–June 2004)

Although there are some allegations that AQAP had begun to organize its initial attacks by early 2002,[38] the newborn network of Islamist militants did not begin its large-scale attacks until May 2003. Composed of hundreds of well-trained "Arab Afghan" veterans, AQAP in its primitive stage had "created a network of storage caches and safe houses based on the work of local and foreign operatives trained in document forgery, fund-raising, publishing, weapons and explosives use, and personal security techniques."[39]

The "Regrouping" Phase (June 2004–April 2005)

Following the government's counterterrorism reactions, AQAP began to adapt a new organizational structure, comprised of small cells. While these units had their own leadership, distinct tactics, and conducted separated operations, they considered themselves a part of a whole.[40] During this period, AQAP conducted mostly small-scale attacks.

The "Fragmentation" Phase (April 2005–January 2009)[41]

Following the deaths and arrests of most of its significant members, AQAP became gradually dismantled and fragmented with significant setbacks during this period.[42] Confident of the full success of the government's counterterrorism campaign in confronting AQAP, King Abdullah stated in 2006 that "I can assure you that your country is well and the evil-doers are, thank God, defeated."[43]

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38 International Crisis Group, *Saudi Arabia Backgrounder: Who Are the Islamists?*, Middle East Report No. 31 (2004), 12, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/iran-gulf/saudi-arabia/031-saudi-arabia-backgrounder-who-are-the-islamists.aspx.

39 Blanchard, *Saudi Arabia*, 24.

40 International Crisis Group, *Saudi Arabia Backgrounder*, 12.

41 It must be noted that in the original classification of phases by Saudi counterterrorism officials, this stage ranged from April 2005 to April 2008.

42 John Rollins, *Al-Qaeda and Affiliates: Historical Perspective, Global Presence, and Implications for U.S. Policy*, CRS Report for Congress R41070 (Congressional Research Service: 2011), 14, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/R41070.pdf.

43 "Saudi King Says Al-Qaeda Militants Defeated," Reuters, 7 June 2006, accessed 12 June 2011, http://news.oneindia.in/2006/06/07/saudi-king-says-al-qaeda-militants-defeated-1149673106.html.

The "Revival" Phase (January 2009–Present)

On January 23, 2009, the fragmented remaining AQAP cells in Saudi Arabia pledged allegiance to Yemeni jihadists' leaders "to combine the efforts of the Mojahidoon, in defense of the Muslim world, and to liberate the Noble Aqsa Mosque."[44] Operating under the Yemeni jihadists' dominance and leadership, the organization is continuing to act under the name of AQAP.

Links with Central Al-Qaida Leadership

Concerning the links between AQAP and the central Al-Qaida leadership, it is important to distinguish between the time prior to their merger with the Yemeni jihadists and the subsequent period.

The initial core of AQAP formed in Saudi Arabia following the return of hundreds of jihadists either from anti-Soviet campaigns or training camps in Afghanistan. Therefore, from the very beginning, AQAP had strong shared military expertise and ideological ties with Al-Qaida in Afghanistan. There are even some indications that some of these Islamist militants had orders from Usama Bin Ladin to carry out operations in Saudi Arabia.[45] While AQAP was breaking into small cells and becoming further fragmented, this overarching common ideological perspective played a key role in maintaining the organization's sense of unity–both as a Saudi and as an international jihadist movement under the supreme guidance of Al-Qaida central leaders.[46]

Nevertheless, leaving aside the common ideological aspects, there is no proof that AQAP at this stage had been a subdivision of central Al-Qaida, had been under its hierarchical structure, or was receiving any instruction or even communication from Al-Qaida's central leadership. Yet, after the merger with Yemeni cells, the ties between AQAP and central Al-Qaida increased. The new leaders of the organization have close personal ties with Al-Qaida's central

44 "From Here We Begin and At Al-Aqsa We Meet," *Global Islamic Media Front.*

45 International Crisis Group, *Saudi Arabia Backgrounder*, 12.

46 It must be noted that this does not mean AQAP's ideological orientation was identical with the central Al-Qaida orientation. For instance, contrary to central Al-Qaida leadership, AQAP has always concentrated on domestic matters rather than overseas concerns. See International Crisis Group, *Saudi Arabia Backgrounder*,12.

leadership; moreover, there are some allegations that AQAP is now receiving "strategic and philosophical guidance" from Al-Qaida's central leadership and that the level of "collaboration and communion" has increased.[47]

Level of Connection with Al-Qaida

Regarding the level of connectedness to Al-Qaida, it seems that AQAP has never gotten closer to Al-Qaida than level two. Although the ties between AQAP and central Al-Qaida seem to be stronger after the merger with Yemeni cells, it has never reached the level one threshold.

Iraq

Background

Iraq is of particular importance for Al-Qaida, as it is the organization's second front after Afghanistan.[48] The U.S. Department of State reported in 2006 that Tanzim Qaedat Al-Jihad fi Bilad Al-Rafidayn (Al-Qaida of the Jihad Organization in the Land of Two Rivers), known as Al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI), was the Iraqi group most known for its affiliation with Al-Qaida.[49]

After the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi began to form an insurgent network "composed of foreign fighters, remnants of Ansar al-Islam and indigenous Sunni extremists."[50] By fall 2003, Al-Zarqawi was recognized as the "regional emir of Islamist terrorists in Iraq."[51]

Originally known as Jamaat Al-Tawhid wa'l-Jihad (JTJ), AQI was established officially in October 2004, when Al-Zarqawi pledged allegiance to Usama Bin

47 American Enterprise Institute, "Pakistan Security Brief."

48 "Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," *Yemen Times*.

49 U.S. Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, "Middle East and North Africa Overview," *Country Reports on Terrorism 2005* (2006): 126–47, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/65462.pdf.

50 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "Country of Origin Information on Iraq," 3 October 2005, 68, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/096267160DEB1198802570B700594512/$file/Iraq+COI+October+2005.pdf.

51 "Al-Qaeda in Iraq," *Global Security*, 11 January 2006, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/profiles/al-qaeda_in_iraq.htm.

Ladin as the leader of central Al-Qaida group.[52] Best known for its extreme positions, AQI was responsible for several attacks targeting a wide variety of groups and individuals, mainly by suicide bombing. The group often claims responsibility for its operation under the name of the Islamic State of Iraq, an umbrella organization of Iraqi insurgent groups formed in October 2006.[53]

In terms of structure, it is claimed that the group is composed of 15 brigades.[54] According to the International Crisis Group's report from February 2006, AQI "appears to be surprisingly well-structured; it should neither be blown up into a Leviathan nor ignored as a mirage, but rather considered as one among a handful of particularly powerful groups."[55] In addition, there were several smaller jihadist cells that had sworn allegiance to Al-Zarqawi.[56]

AQI's objectives have evolved over time from part of the global jihad movement that targeted primarily Western interests around the world to a more Iraq-focused militant organization.[57] The organization has been weakened during the last few years, in particular by the loss of Al-Zarqawi in a U.S. airstrike in June 2006[58] and the death of his successor Abu Umar Al-Baghdadi in April 2010.[59] This does not mean, however, that the organization has vanished.

52 "Leaders' deaths a blow to al Qaeda in Iraq," *Washington Times*, 19 April 2010, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/19/iraq-says-2-top-al-qaeda-figures-killed.

53 John Lumpkin, "Islamic State of Iraq," *Global Security*, 22 December 2006, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/profiles/islamic_state_of_iraq.htm.

54 International Crisis Group, "In Their Own Words: Reading the Iraqi Insurgency," Middle East Report No. 50 (2006), 2–8, accessed 11 June 2011, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/iraq-syria-lebanon/iraq/050-in-their-own-words-reading-the-iraqi-insurgency.aspx.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

57 Kenneth Katzman, *Iraq: Post-Saddam Governance and Security*, CRS Report for Congress RL 31339 (United States Congressional Research Service: 2009), 22, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL31339.pdf.

58 Katzman, *Iraq: Post-Saddam*, 22.

59 "Sunni militants in Iraq name new leader," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 16 May 2010, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/Sunni_Militants_In_Iraq_Name_New_Leader/2043599.html.

According to Iraqi officials, the group is still posing "a serious challenge to the country's stability despite recent blows to its command structure."[60]

Links with the Central Al-Qaida Leadership

From the very beginning of its emergence, JTJ (as AQI was initially called) was considered to be Al-Qaida's branch in Iraq. In October 17, 2004, Al-Zarqawi pledged allegiance to Usama Bin Ladin. In his statement, Al-Zarqawi held that

> our respected brothers in Al-Qaida understood the strategy of Jama'at Al-Tawhid wa Al-Jihad in the land of the two rivers [Iraq] and the caliphates and their hearts opened to their approach. . . . We deliver to the nation the news that both Jama'at Al-Tawhid wa Al-Jihad's Amir [Al-Zarqawi] and soldiers have pledged allegiance to the sheikh of the mujahedin, Usama Bin Ladin, and that they will follow his orders in jihad for the sake of God so there will be no more tumult or oppression, and justice and faith in God will prevail.[61]

Shortly thereafter, on 20 October 2004, JTJ announced that it had officially joined Al-Qaida.[62]

The links between AQI and central Al-Qaida were, in particular, highlighted in July 2005, when Al-Zarqawi sent a letter to Al-Qaida's second-in-command, Ayman Al-Zawahiri. In the letter, which is summarized in the U.S. Department of State's *Country Reports on Terrorism* 2005, Al-Zarqawi described his organization's long-term goals as a four-stage plan "to expand the Iraq war to include expelling U.S. forces, establishing an Islamic authority, spreading the conflict to Iraq's secular neighbors, and engaging in battle with Israel."[63]

On the other hand, Al-Qaida's central leadership also declared its support for AQI on different occasions. For instance, Bin Ladin, in December 2004,

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60 Ibid.

61 John Pike, "Jamaat al-Tawhid wa'l-Jihad / Unity and Jihad Group, Tanzim Qa'idat Al-Jihad in Bilad alRafidayn (Organization of Jihad's Base in the Country of the Two Rivers)," *Global Security*, 6 December 2006, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/zarqawi.htm.

62 Pike, "Jamaat al-Tawhid."

63 U.S. Department of State, "Middle East and North Africa," 132.

endorsed Al-Zarqawi as his "official emissary" in Iraq.[64] Another reference can be made to a video statement released in July 2007 by Al-Qaida's second man, Al-Zawahiri, in which he encouraged "Iraqis and Muslims in general to show greater support for the Islamic State of Iraq, an Al-Qaida insurgent front in the country."[65]

After Al-Zarqawi was killed in 2006,[66] his successor Abu Umar Al-Baghdadi also focused on strengthening the organization's links with central Al-Qaida.[67] Al-Baghdadi's successor, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi Al-Husseini Al-Qurayshi, followed the same path. The group is still on the United Nations (UN) 1267 Committee's list for their ties to Al-Qaida.

As stated in the Jamestown Foundation's *Terrorism Monitor*, with the partial withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, the organization has fulfilled one of its main objectives and lost one of its essential reasons for existence. Accordingly, "the additional loss of local support may mean linking the ISI [Islamic State of Iraq] to the global agenda of Al-Qaida central [which] could offer a means of perpetuating the movement."[68]

Level of Connection with Al-Qaida Central

With its leaders having sworn allegiance to Bin Ladin, AQI from the very outset identified itself as Al-Qaida's regional branch in Iraq. This has been confirmed by subsequent communications and connections between two groups, including their communication about the organization's long-term objectives. Therefore, AQI is an example of a level one group affiliated to central Al-Qaida.

64 United Nations Committee Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, "Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 19 of the Convention," 6 May 2005, 50, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/62175.pdf.

65 "New al-Qaida video calls on Muslims to unite in Jihad," Associated Press, 4 July 2007, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.wsvn.com/news/articles/world/MI53736/.

66 Katzman, *Iraq: Post-Saddam*, 22.

67 Murad Batal Al-Shishani, "Is the Islamic State of Iraq Going Global?," *Terrorism Monitor* 9 no.4 (2011)

68 Ibid.

Palestine

From the very outset of the formation of Al-Qaida, Palestine has been an integral part of its ideology, and both central Al-Qaida and its offshoots have considered the liberation of Palestine to be one of their main objectives. However, compared to other Al-Qaida fronts, the presence of Al-Qaida in Palestine has always been rather insignificant. Nevertheless, sometimes there have been allegations that Al-Qaida is present in the region. In December 2002, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon stated that Israel believed that Al-Qaida had established a presence in Gaza.[69] In March 2006, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas confirmed these remarks, stating, "We have signs of the presence of Al-Qaida in Gaza and the West Bank."[70]

Following the electoral victory of Hamas in 2006, the situation in Gaza provided an opportunity for some jihadist groups accused of affiliation with Al-Qaida to commence their own activities there. Among these groups, Jaysh Al-Islam (Army of Islam) was especially notable.

Background

Jaysh Al-Islam was formed by members of the Popular Resistance Committees, one of Gaza's largest militant factions, in late 2005.[71] It is led by Mumtaz Dughmush, a former member of the Palestinian Authority's Preventive Security Organisation, "who for years allegedly had been contracted for militant operations by both Hamas and Fatah."[72]

The group's first operation that attracted public attention was the kidnapping of the Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit. In this operation, which was launched on 25 June 2006, Jaysh Al-Islam joined with two other groups: the Izz Al-Din Al-

69 "Israel says al-Qaeda active in Gaza," *BBC News*, 5 December 2002, accessed 7 June 2011, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2546863.stm.

70 "Abbas: Al-Qaeda infiltrating West Bank, Gaza," Associated Press, 2 March 2006, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11634430/ns/world_news-mideast_n_africa/t/abbas-al-qaida-infiltrating-west-bank-gaza.

71 International Crisis Group, *Radical Islam in Gaza*, Middle East Report no. 104, (29 March 2011), accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Israel%20Palestine/104%20Radical%20Islam%20in%20Gaza.ashx.

72 International Crisis Group, *Radical Islam in Gaza.*

Qassam Brigades (the military wing of Hamas) and the Salah Al-Din Brigades. This operation demonstrated the group's organizational capacities and its capability to cooperate with other armed forces in Gaza, thereby "creating new strategic possibilities in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."[73]

Jaysh Al-Islam was later involved in kidnapping several foreign journalists, including Alan G. Johnston, a BBC reporter, in March 2007. In exchange for Johnston, the group demanded the release of an Al-Qaida-affiliated cleric, Abu Qatada Al-Filastini (Umar Mahmud Uthman), who is believed to be Al-Qaida's spiritual leader in Europe.[74]

Links with the Central Al-Qaida Leadership

Jaysh Al-Islam's success in operating out of Hamas and Fatah areas, on the one hand, and its reference to jihadist elements and ideologies, on the other, have raised allegations among the media and officials about its cooperation with Al-Qaida and its position as an Al-Qaida subsidiary in Palestine.[75] In a videotape attributed to the group, Jaysh Al-Islam stated that "it is not fighting 'for a piece of land' but waging a religious war aimed at restoring a religious caliphate, or government, throughout the Muslim world."[76]

Jaysh Al-Islam, however, states that the group "is not part of Al-Qaida."[77] Israel, Hamas, and some other jihadist groups share this assessment.[78] According to the director of Gaza's Internal Security Service, "Jaysh al-Islam takes on the

73 Rafid Fadhil Ali, "Al-Qaeda's Palestinian Inroads," *Terrorism Monitor* 6 no. 8 (2008), accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=4864&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=167&no_cache=1.

74 Ali, "Al-Qaeda's Palestinian Inroads."

75 LtCol Jonathan Dahoah Halevi, "Al-Qaeda Affiliate–*Jaish al-Islam*–Receives Formal Sanctuary in Hamas-Ruled Gaza," *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs* 8 no. 7 (August 2008), accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=111&FID=442&PID=0&IID=2408.

76 Michael Slackman and Souad Mekhennet, "A New Group that Seems to Share Al-Qaeda's Agenda," *New York Times*, 8 July 2006, accessed 21 June 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/08/world/middleeast/08islam.html.

77 International Crisis Group, *Radical Islam in Gaza*.

78 Ibid.

appearance of Salafi groups merely to attract new members."[79] Overall, it seems that the ties between Jaysh Al-Islam and Al-Qaida central leadership are limited to sharing some ideological orientations; there appears to be no hierarchical or operational connection.

The Level of Connection with Al-Qaida

The presence of Al-Qaida in Palestine has been highlighted during the last several years, but it has always been very limited. Adhering to elements of global jihadist ideologies, Jaysh Al-Islam is an example of a level two group affiliated with Al-Qaida.

Egypt

Background

Focusing on the last 10 years, the analysis above regarding Yemen, Iraq, and other parts of the Middle East suggests that Egyptian jihadists seemed to contribute to the buildup of Al-Qaida or Al-Qaida-like groups outside of Egypt. Yet, in their own country, a retreat from violent jihadist doctrine is gaining ground. Egypt's militant Islamists have always had a unique relationship with Al-Qaida. Starting with the war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the late 1980s and 1990s, Egyptian jihadists from the Islamic Jihad Organization flocked to Afghanistan to fight the infidels. Ayman Al-Zawahiri and Mohammed Atif, both charged in the Islamic Jihad court case in the early 1980s, were among those who would later rise to leadership positions within Al-Qaida.

A new trend towards pacifying the main Egyptian jihadist groups is successfully underway. The aforementioned *Muragaat Fikriya*, or *Muragaat Fiqhiya* (Doctrinal Revisions), led by former leaders of the Islamic Jihad and Al-Jamaa Al-Islamiya organizations, resulted in diverting thousands of actual and potential jihadists towards accepting nonviolence as a method of achieving their goals of establishing Islamic states and societies. Their efforts weakened the violent expressions of Islamic Jihad and of Al-Jamaa Al-Islamiya, leaving the jihad scene primarily to a few level two groups from Palestine, as well as to the rare Egyptian level three groups.

79 Ibid. Salafism is a Sunni Islamic movement that views the first three generations of Muslims as models for how Islam should be practiced.

As Amr Elshobki stated, "Terror has shifted in its shape and motivation over the years. Recent attacks tend to have an individualistic touch. The perpetrators are individuals who do not belong to any of the major militant groups, are not interested in cohesive doctrines, hierarchical organizations, or centralized authority."[80] The violent actions of level one and two groups have largely disappeared during the past 10 years, as these organizations have turned their focus on rebuilding themselves as members of a wider civil society.

The Level of Connection with Al-Qaida

Elshobki recently observed that "[t]he political scene of today differs markedly from the one in which well-organized militant groups first took shape. The Muslim Brotherhood is now the dominant force among Islamists in Egypt."[81] The success of Doctrine Revisions, as will be explained in more detail below, leads us to conclude that Egypt has witnessed a sharp decline of level two groups (which were mainly the Islamic Jihad and Al-Jamaa Al-Islamiya) in terms of ideology and propensity towards violence. Individual acts of terror continue to be present, attributable to level three groups, although those too are declining, as the groups are also influenced by the growing trend, especially in the post-2011 revolution era, to join the political scene. According to Elshobki:

> Exactly how many Egyptian jihadi prisoners have repented, and to which movements they belonged, remains unknown. Estimates range from 20,000 to 30,000, the majority of whom (some 12,000) are members of Al-Gama'a Al-Islamiyya [Al-Jamaa Al-Islamiya], the militant organization that perpetrated much of the Islamist violence of the 1980s and 1990s. The remainder are members of smaller groups, mostly Al-Jihad [Islamic Jihad], or are independent jihadists espousing Salafi ideologies.[82]

At the same time, the situation in Iraq, Yemen, and Afghanistan, coupled with more efficient Internet links to level one and two groups elsewhere,[83] will

80 Amr Elshobki, "The future and limitations of Jihad's revisions," *Al-Ahram* (Cairo), accessed 26 June 2011, http://acpss.ahram.org.eg/eng/ahram/2004/7/5/EGYP117.HTM.

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

83 It is worth noting that "the availability of sophisticated internet websites to preach hatred and oppression is now seen on a wide scale. We have also seen recently how modern media and the internet have been used to widely show atrocities committed against innocent civilians" See Amr Abdalla and others, *Improving the Quality of Islamic Education in Developing Countries: Innovative*

continue to produce level three terror activities and exhort Egyptian jihadists to join and lead level one and two groups from outside of Egypt.

The Doctrine Revisions and the Deradicalization Process in Egypt

The idea of Doctrine Revisions, or deradicalization in Egypt, was hugely influential and was brought to the fore by the writings of Dr. Sayyid Imam Al-Sharif.[84] Over time, the revisions have had their successes and challenges. Revisions appeared back in the 1980s among those sentenced in connection with President Anwar Sadat's assassination after self-reflection by jihad groups to effect political change by the assassination. These revisions began as the ideas of individuals, but were adopted by larger movements in later decades–namely, by Al-Jamaa Al-Islamiya in 1997 and by Islamic Jihad in 2007.

Since February 2007, after their revision's publication, Al-Sharif and other Islamic Jihad commanders have been touring Egyptian prisons to hold meetings with their followers.[85] The visits initially featured small meetings with the commanders of Islamic Jihad factions in an effort to organize a common stance. This was followed by lectures and question-and-answer periods between the Islamic Jihad leadership and the lower ranks.[86] This type of interaction was modeled after the leadership of the Islamic Groups, which held 10 months of discussions and meetings with their followers in 2002. According to political scientist Omar Ashour, the deradicalization process appeared successful: the group has seen no armed operations since 1999, no significant splits within the movement have occurred, and around 25 volumes have been authored by the Islamic Group leaders supporting their new ideology with both theological and rational arguments.[87]

Approaches (Creative Associates International, 2006), 54, http://www.creativeassociatesinternational.com/caiistaff/dashboard_giroadmincaiistaff/dashboard_caiiadmindatabase/publications/Abdula%20Paper%20FINAL%205-22-06%20_4_.pdf.

84 Dr. Sayyid Imam Al-Sharif was a chief ideologue of the Arab jihadists and jihad groups, as well as Emir of Egypt's Islamic Jihad organization. In 1988, Al-Sharif authored what is regarded as nothing short of a jihadist manifesto for all violent religious movements titled, *Al-Umda fi Idad Al-Idda* [*Preparation for Jihad*]. He published revisions of his previous writings in 2007.

85 Omar Ashour, "De-Radicalization of Jihad? The Impact of Egyptian Islamist Revisionists on Al-Qaeda," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2 no. 5 (2008), http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/36/html.

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid.

Dr. Rafiq Habib,[88] commenting on the Egyptian revisions in 2008, asserted that revisions by Islamic Jihad and Al-Jamaa Al-Islamiya aimed to establish visions based on peaceful change that would bring the Islamic and national powers together as a means of ending or terminating violence.[89] Further, Al-Sharif, theorist of Islamic Jihad in Egypt, says that the revisions of the two jihadist Egyptian groups have nothing to do with the security pressures or torture practiced against the members of the groups while in prisons. He suggests that the revisions are the product of an interpretation that sees the use of armed violence in the process of internal change as ineffective and that sees violence as causing harm to the "Islamic" groups and to Egyptian society as a whole. The two scholars bring to the fore the following notions:

> that previous arguments that understood the Egyptian revisions as the product of torture are invalid, as torture has been a long-term practice within Egyptian prisons for decades;
>
> that the Doctrine Revisions turned into a collective, communal operation (i.e., they became group-based, not individual ideas).
>
> that the foundations of these revisions are a result of self-criticism by groups involved in Sadat's assassination, who eventually came to terms with the reality that their acts had not changed the existing state of affairs in Egypt;
>
> that Egyptian security officials have, over time, changed their attitude towards revisions, especially after the incident of the Luxor terrorist attack on foreign terrorists; and
>
> that revisions were a product of experience itself, as the employment of violence in the process of internal change harmed all parties involved– including the jihad-oriented groups, Egyptian society, and the authorities.

According to author Marwin Shehadeh, the most important impact of the revisions on the violent jihadist Salafist movement is the creation of confusion within the movement, particularly within the mother organization Al-Qaida,

88 Dr. Rafiq Habib is one of the most prominent specialists on Islamic movements. Abdul Rahman Hashim, "Revisions Add to Islamic Moderation," accessed 13 June 2011, http://www.islamonline.net.

89 Hashim, "Revisions Add to Islamic Moderation."

which rejects these revisions.[90] Moreover, with Egyptian revisions owing their roots to persons like Sayyid Imam Al-Sharif, who has held influential positions both inside and outside Egypt, there is the potential for Egyptian revisions playing a role outside Egypt. Habib argues that Al-Jamaa Al-Islamiya's revisions represent an additional support to the moderation of Islam and a peaceful approach toward change.[91] This represents a success for the Islamic school to which the Muslim Brotherhood belonged from the very beginning of its emergence.

Nevertheless, Egypt's security officials did not take such revisions seriously and internal jihadi revisions were not widely known; this can be attributed largely to the refusal of security officials to have any dialogue with the Islamists and the authorities' tendency to regard violent security measures as the only solutions. Habib cautions that such policies, which close the door to peaceful change, can precipitate the recurrence of further violence.

The Prospects for Doctrine Revisions and Deradicalization

The success or failure of the revisions depends on the structural conditions of the countries or regions from which the jihadists hail. In other words, the long-term solution is more political than religious, as the Indonesian approach has demonstrated. In addition to allowing self-evaluation of detained terrorists through rehumanization processes, it might be time that Arabic regimes behaved in a humane manner towards the terrorists and became less oppressive. A lack of such a transformation could explain the reason that, through the Arabic Awakening, the jihadist groups as well as the Arabic regimes have lost so much after years of competing for survival. As the Arab Awakening continues to change the structural conditions of the Arab world, it is worth probing or researching the perceptions that new generations of jihadists have regarding revisions or deradicalization. According to Ashour, the phenomenon of deradicalization is not confined only to Egyptian militants. It has also been adopted by Algerian, Saudi, Yemeni, Jordanian, Tajik, Malaysian, and Indonesian armed Islamist movements, factions, and individuals.[92] It should be noted here

90 Marwin Shehadeh, "Weakening al-Qaeda: Literature Review Challenges its Authority," *Arab Insight*, 2 no. 6 (2009): 25–36, accessed 13 June 2011, http://www.arabinsight.org/pdf/Arabinsight28.pdf.

91 Hashim, "Revisions Add to Islamic Moderation."

92 Ashour, "De-Radicalization of Jihad?"

that the deradicalization process is primarily concerned with changing the attitudes of these movements toward violence–specifically violence against civilians (terrorism). The process also touches on other issues like stances on democracy and women, but there have been no major changes regarding these issues.[93] Khalil Al-Anany says there is a need to tackle the belief that defectors or those who have undergone revisions have either strayed from the "right path" or have been coerced.[94] Clearly, efforts need to be made to understand the factors contributing to the rehumanization process because it is an essential component in combating the extremist subculture that defines others as less than human beings, the spilling of whose blood is *halal* (permissible).[95]

The Impact of the Arab Revolutions on Muslim Militancy and Terrorism

It is perhaps safe to argue that most policy makers and intellectuals assumed and feared that Al-Qaida or its affiliates would succeed in what some of their founding fathers in Egypt failed to do in 1981: to establish autocratic Islamic states. It can also be argued that regimes in the Arab Mashriq (the East) exercised the maximum security measures to fight Al-Qaida and other forms of Islamic militancy. This was seen by many in the world as a somewhat justified approach given: 1) the level of violence inflicted by Al-Qaida and its affiliates on civilians and the economic interests of these countries; and 2) the threat that they posed should they succeed in toppling the ruling regimes of the Arab Mashriq and establishing autocratic Islamic states.

This scenario assumed that Arab countries in general faced two options: to remain under the control of their current regimes or to fall to Taliban-style Islamic militant states. The second option, strongly rejected by most Arabs and the West, seemed to increase the level of tolerance for the Arab regimes' violations of human rights, their use of brute force and torture against opponents, their suppression of democracy, and their corruption. These practices may have succeeded in reducing the threat of Islamic militancy in

93 Ibid.

94 Khalil Al-Anany, "In Focus: Jihad Revisions: It is too Late," *Daily Star* (Cairo), 27 November 2007, accessed 7 June 2011, http://www.dailystaregypt.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=10511.

95 Mark Woodward, Ali Amin, and Inayah Rohmaniyah, "Police Power, Soft Power and Extremist Sub-culture in Indonesia," *COMOPS Journal*, accessed 7 June 2011, http://comops.org/journal/2010/03/28/police-power-soft-power-and-extremist-sub-culture-in-indonesia.

countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan, but almost no one anticipated that the negative economic and political effects of these practices and policies on the wider populations would erupt into revolutions against their regimes.

The revolutions we are witnessing in the Arab world are calling for democratic changes. Religious elements, including the Muslim Brotherhood and some Salafi groups, have joined these revolutions with a clear understanding of their civic democratic nature. Will these changes have an effect on the presence of Al-Qaida, its affiliates, and the recruiting pool of like-minded gatherings of youth? The answer is yes. There is a great potential for reducing the presence and effectiveness of Al-Qaida in the Arab world. While security and military measures are always necessary and needed to prevent and combat real threats, their use should be governed by law and the UN's Declaration of Human Rights. Of course, such measures in the Arab-Islamic context will not effectively destabilize Al-Qaida as an organization or as an ideology. What will destabilize them are efforts at the social, political, and religious levels. These revolutions are paving the way for applying such measures.

This analysis suggests that the revolutions in the Arab world, as the leading Egyptian Islamist lawyer Montasir Al-Zayyat said in April 2011, are creating conditions conducive to renouncing violence among Islamist militant groups such as Islamic Jihad and Al-Jamaa Al-Islamiya (both strongly linked to Al-Qaida ideologically and organizationally).[96] The democratic revolutions are offering a historic opportunity to transform such organizations, and, more importantly, they are providing a foundation upon which like-minded gatherings of militant youth can move towards participation in nonviolent pluralistic modes of politics. For this to be accomplished, newly elected governments in the Arab world must allow space for the nonviolent engagement of those groups. This requires that they abandon the use of state terror and torture and resort to legal methods consistent with principles of human rights.

The United States and its allies must also rise to the historic occasion of the current events by: 1) abandoning support for dictatorial regimes that have for long justified their grip over power by the role they play in the war against terror and ensuring the security of their states; 2) supporting unequivocally (and

96 Mohamed Salah Alzahar, "The Islamic Movement in Egypt after the January Revolution: Where to? (3)" *Al-Akhbar* (Cairo) 19 April 2011, 1st edition: 12+.

without falling into double-standard politics) all the popular revolutions and their democratic transitions; and 3) encouraging the continuation and spread of Doctrine Revisions that, as explained earlier, have been used successfully in Egypt and elsewhere to convert militants' beliefs and attitudes towards renouncing violence and embracing peaceful approaches.

If these measures are carried out, Al-Qaida will lose a wide range of potential supporters and sympathizers who would opt for nonviolent democratic expressions of their values, beliefs, and grievances. Evidence in Egypt and Tunisia already supports the notion that previously militant groups, and ardent militant figures such as Abbud Al-Zumur, have abandoned publicly their militant ways in favor of engagement in the emerging political arena. A concerted effort along these lines, taking into consideration the foundational changes that are shaping countries of the Arab Mashriq, will prove to be most useful in targeting the breeding grounds of extremism and Islamic militancy.

The Way Ahead

The story in the Arab East today is not that of Al-Qaida and militant Muslim groups. Instead, it is the story of the popular uprisings and revolutions to nonviolently establish democracy and justice. The Arab revolutions are sweeping the region; already, Egypt and Tunisia are reaping the benefits of the newly attained freedom and liberties, as evident from fair referendums on constitutions and freedom to form political parties.

However, experience shows that success in toppling a dictatorial regime, introducing democratic reforms, and even building democratic institutions is no guarantee for development and prosperity. Similar experiences in the Philippines in 1986 and Bangladesh in 1991, for example, show that their successful struggles for democracy did not necessarily bring about an improvement in people's lives. Poverty is still rampant; democracy is dysfunctional, to say the least; and development has not progressed to the level of expectations that people had at the time of revolutions. Iran is another example of a popular revolution that led to a more severe autocratic regime.

On the bright side, the example of Korea provides hope to Arab revolutions, as it has seen rather successful development and institutionalization of effective democracy after the 1987 popular movement. Arab people undergoing these revolutions are at a historic crossroads. It is the first time in their histories that

people are taking real charge of their own destinies. At the same time, though, there are many issues that must be addressed, such as the distribution of resources, poverty, and development. The Arab people also continue to be influenced by international dynamics in light of the unsettled conflict with Israel and the strong sense of injustice regarding Palestinian rights.

How will the newly elected governments in the "free" Arab world respond to these challenges? It is anyone's guess. But based on observations of the events of the past few months, especially in Egypt, we are optimistic. The spirit of hope, the amount of determination, and the will to improve the conditions of the country are unprecedented. Youth, not the old guard, holds the key to success. Lastly, an amazing outcome of these revolutions is the revival of Pan-Arabism. Arab people finally see a hope for a true Arab unification–a dream that many feel they can almost touch!

NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

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7
Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb

Ricardo René Larémont

Introduction

This chapter describes the genesis and development of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). It also discusses AQIM's strategic objectives, its leadership, its tactical operations, its financing, and the destabilizing effects of Libya's civil war in the region.

Genesis and Development

The formation of AQIM was formally announced in January 2007. During that month, Abdelmalek Droukdel, the leader of another group that had been called the GSPC or the Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat (Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat), declared that he was changing the name of that organization to AQIM to link formally with Al-Qaida Central (AQC), then led by Usama Bin Ladin and Ayman Al-Zawahiri.[1] Although notice of a possible linkage between the GSPC and Al-Qaida had been leaked to the press in September 2006, the official name change and the formalization of the relationship between the two groups was only announced on 24 January 2007.[2]

This research was made possible in part with funds provided by the Office of Naval Research.

1 The present leadership of Al-Qaida is undetermined because members of the U.S. special operations forces assassinated Usama Bin Ladin in Pakistan on 2 May 2011 (local time). See Peter Baker, Helene Cooper, and Mark Mazzeti, "Bin Ladin is Dead, Obama Says," *New York Times*, 1 May 2011, www.newyorktimes.com/2011/05/02/world/asia/Usama-bin-Ladin-is-killed.html.

2 "Al-Qaeda 'Issues France Threat'," *BBC News,* 14 September 2006; Simon Tisdall, "Fears grow of a radical Islamist Maghreb," *Guardian* (London), 14 February 2007; Roula Khalaf and Stephen Fidler, "Why Algeria Extremists 'Re-branded'," *Financial Times*, 20 April 2007.

What occurred during 2007 and afterwards was essentially a rebranding of the GSPC.

The GSPC had origins within yet another group called the GIA or the Groupe Islamiste Armé (Armed Islamic Group). The GIA had origins among Algerians who went to Pakistan and Afghanistan to wage armed jihad against the Soviet Union in the late 1980s.[3] Upon returning to Algeria from Afghanistan and Pakistan, these returning jihadists–who were being led principally by Qari Saïd, Mansour Meliani, Abdelkader Chibouti, and Abdelhak Layada–formed the GIA to contest Algeria's military establishment, which seized control of the state on 11 January 1992.[4]

On that date, the Algerian military annulled the results of a national parliamentary election that had been held on 26 December 1991. After the initial tally of the election ballots, it soon became clear that an Islamist party, the FIS or the Front Islamique du Salut (Islamic Salvation Front), would be declared the victors of the election because it had won 188 seats in the parliament.[5] When the military realized that the FIS would seize control of the parliament, it initiated its seizure of the government. When faced with this coup d'état by the military, Algerian Islamists formed two armed resistance movements. The first, called the AIS or Armée Islamique du Salut (Islamic Salvation Army), eventually agreed to lay down its arms during September 1997 and accept a general amnesty from the Algerian government.[6] The second, which was the GIA, decided to continue with armed resistance.

From 1992 until 1998, the GIA initiated a brutal military campaign of resistance against the Algerian state that targeted not only soldiers and police officers but also a considerable number of Algerian civilians and foreign workers who resided in Algeria. The GIA's strategy of targeting civilians–especially when it was being led by Djamel Zitouni–severely backfired; it caused profound alienation between the group and the masses of Algerians. Dissident members

3 Camille Tawil, *Brothers in Arms: The Story of Al-Qa'ida and the Arab Jihadists* (London: Saqi, 2010), 44–48.

4 Tawil, *Brothers*, 67–77; Camille Tawil, *Al-Haraka Al-Islamiyya Al-Mussallah fi Al-Jaza'ir: Min Al-Inqadh ila Al-Jama'a* (Beirut: Dar Al-Nahar, 1998), 53–90.

5 Anneli Botha, *Terrorism in the Maghreb: The Transnationalisation of Domestic Terrorism* (Pretoria, South Africa: Institute of Security Studies, 2008), 29.

6 Tawil, *Brothers*, 134.

within the GIA who disagreed with the strategy and tactics of targeting civilians departed from the GIA to create the aforementioned GSPC, which they declared would not target civilians. The GSPC was founded during September 1998.[7]

The GSPC's leaders were Hassan Hattab, Abderrazek Al-Bara, Nabil Sahraoui, Abdelmadjid Dishu, and Ammari Saïfi.[8] Under their leadership, the GSPC enjoyed considerable success in mounting paramilitary attacks within Algeria, which induced the government of Algeria to initiate a program of repression and infiltration of the group. The Algerian government's counterterrorism program was substantially successful, causing dissension within the GIA and leading to Hattab's eventual loss of control of the group. By June 2003, Hattab would be replaced by a trio of successors, including Nabil Sahraoui and two deputies: Abdelmalek Droukdel and Ammari Saïfi.[9] Under the GSPC's new leadership arrangement, Sahraoui assumed principal control of the GSPC and Abdelmalek Droukdel became his primary deputy. During this early phase, the GSPC operated primarily in northern Algeria (most notably in Boumerdès, Tizi-Ouzou, Batna, Djidjel, Skikda, Annaba, and Biskra) while Sahraoui began designing plans for the extension of GSPC operations into southern Algeria.[10] In furtherance of this southern strategy, Sahraoui designated Ammari Saïfi and yet another newcomer named Mokhtar Belmokhtar as leaders of AQIM's southern operations. AQIM's southern theater originally embraced southern Algeria but eventually enlarged itself to include remote regions within Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Chad.

7 Mohammed M. Hafez, "Armed Islamist Movements and Political Violence in Algeria," *Middle East Journal* 54, no. 4 (Autumn 2000): 572–91; Jean-Pierre Filiu, "The Local and Global Jihad in Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb," *Middle East Journal* 63, no. 2 (Spring 2009): 213–26; "The Salafist Group for Call and Combat," *Center for Defense Information*, January 14, 2003, www.cdi.org/program/document.cfm?documentid=386&programID=39&from_page=../friendlyversion/printversion.cfm, accessed 10 February 2003.

8 Tawil, *Brothers*, 134–35.

9 Carlos Echeverria Jesús, "The Recent Activities in the Sahel-Sahara Area," *African Journal for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism* (2010): 25; Liess Boukra, "Du Groupe Salafiste pour le Combat (GSPC) à la Qaida au Maghreb Islamique (AQMI)", *African Journal for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism* (2010): 49–50; Filiu, "The Local and Global Jihad," 220 n34. Sahraoui was officially named emir of the organization in a declaration issued 17 August 2005; he actually started assuming that responsibility during August 2003.

10 Boukra, "Du Groupe Salafiste", 44–46.

Amari Saïfi, one of these two designated leaders in the south, was also known as "Abdelrazek El-Para" because he had formerly been a parachutist in the Algerian army. Saïfi obtained considerable notoriety for planning and executing a spectacular kidnapping of 32 Europeans in southern Algeria during early 2003. Approximately a year later (in March 2004), a Chadian rebel group known as the Mouvement pour la Démocratie et la Justice Tchadien (Chadian Movement for Democracy and Justice) captured Saïfi in northern Chad and turned him over to the custody of Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi, who in turn delivered him to the Algerian government. The Algerian government tried and sentenced him to life imprisonment.[11]

Eventually, in 2004, Nabil Sahraoui, the overall leader of the GSPC, would be killed in the northern Algeria when he became engaged in a shoot-out with Algerian security forces. Upon his death, his primary deputy, Abdelmalek Droukdel, took control of the GSPC.[12] Droukdel's strategic views and philosophy were different and more internationally oriented than Sahraoui's. Droukdel emphasized the GSPC's intention to engage the "far enemy" of Islam, (i.e., United States and European states) and his view of jihad was compatible with those of Usama Bin Ladin and Ayman Al-Zawahiri.[13] Because of their

11 "Algerian Rebel Gets Life Sentence," *BBC News*, 25 June 2005, accessed 27 December 2010, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4622859.stm, or http://english.aljazeera.net/focus/2010/07/201071994556568919.html; Stephen Ulph, "Algerian GSPC Launch Attack in Mauritania," *Terrorism Focus 2*, no.11 (13 June 2005). Some international observers, however, and especially British analyst Jeremy Keenan, have claimed that Ammari Saïfi was actually an Algerian government intelligence operative who participated in a "false flag" operation within the GSPC for the express purpose of infiltrating it on behalf of the Algerian government.

12 Andrew Black, "Mokhtar Belmokhtar: The Algerian Jihad's Southern Amir," *Terrorism Monitor* 7, no. 12, (8 May 2009), accessed 27 December 2010, www.jamestown.org/single?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5D=34964.

13 Andrew Black, "AQIM's Expanding Internationalist Agenda," *CTC Sentinel* 1, no. 5 (April 2008): 12–14; Mathieu Guidère, "Une filiale algérienne pour Al-Qaida, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, November 2006, accessed 27 November 2010, www.le-monde-diplomatique/2006/11/GUIDERE/14167; Filiu, "The Local and Global Jihad," 222; Jonathan Schanzer, "Algeria's GSPC and America's War on Terror," *Policy Watch*, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 15 October 2002, accessed 27 November 2010, www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=1544; Dan Darling, "Social Analysis: Al-Qaeda's African Arm", WindsofChange.net, 1 April 2004, accessed 27 November 2010, www.windsofchange.net/archives/004795.html; Stephen Ulph, "Mauritania and the GSPC Spectre, *Terrorism Focus* 2, no. 9 (18 May 2005), accessed 27 November 2010, www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnew%5Btt_news%5D=476).

convergence of interests, Droukdel decided to merge his group to Al-Qaida Central, with Droukdel swearing his allegiance to Bin Ladin.[14] The preliminary announcement about the formation of AQIM was released on 11 September 2006 (the fifth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks), while the formal announcement of merger was made during January 2007.[15]

AQIM Today: Geography, the Tribes, and Leadership

Geography

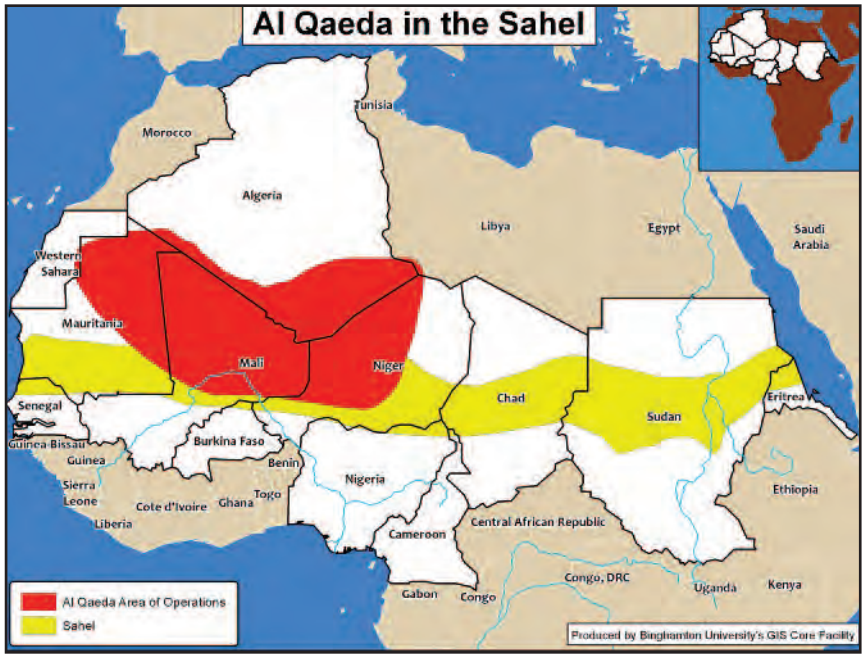
AQIM's northern theater of operations extends from a region east of Algiers and continues eastwards through the Kabylie towards Tunisia.

In its southern theater of operations, AQIM has created a base of operations in northern Mali (principally in the city of Kidal) and from that base it has roamed into southern Algeria, southern Libya, southeastern Mauritania, northern and eastern Mali, and northern and western Niger. It has also publicly declared (and there is some evidence to support this) that it intends to link with Islamic militants in northern Nigeria. Indeed, the leader of northern Nigeria's Boko

14 Souad Mekhennet, Michael Moss, Eric Schmitt, Elaine Sciolino, and Margot Williams, "Ragtag Insurgency Gets a Lifeline from Al Qaeda," *New York Times*, 1 July 2008.

15 Guidère, "Une filiale algérienne pour Al-Qaida"; "Algerian Group joins Al-Qaeda brand," 26 January 2007, accessed 26 October 2010, http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/23E2EB3C-7B4F-4447-80CD-26EDAFEF18E8.htm .

Haram, Muhammed Abu Bakr Bin Muhammad Al-Shakwa, has pledged his allegiance to AQIM leader Abdelmalek Droukdel.[16]



Within the Sahel, AQIM has been able to operate with increasing effectiveness because it has created havens with members of the Tuareg and Bérabiche tribes in the region. With tactics that remind us of Al-Qaida's operations in Pakistan and Afghanistan, AQIM has found remote regions–principally in Mali and secondarily in Algeria, Mauritania, and Niger–where it can operate substantially free of governmental surveillance or interference. By operating in remote regions beyond the purview of state policing and by relying upon revenue obtained from ransoms paid for hostages and trade in contraband, AQIM has been able to create a geographical and economic environment in which it can not only survive but also expand. While AQIM does not pose an existential threat to the central governments in the region

16 International Crisis Group, "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict," *Africa Report* , No. 168, 20 December 2010; Arabic Media Monitor, "Boko Haram Releases Eid Al-Fitr Address Via Al-Qaeda in North Africa's Media Division Calling on Muslims to Wage Jihad," *Jihadist Forum Monitor*, 2 October 2010.

(which may explain the anemic governmental response to AQIM), it nevertheless has begun to expand its geographical region of operations gradually, which constitutes an emerging threat to state sovereignty in the region. Regional political leaders are belatedly recognizing this emerging threat and beginning to devise plans to deal with it.

The Tribes

The relationship between AQIM and the Tuareg is one of both cooperation and conflict. AQIM's pattern of survival in the Sahel is clearly reminiscent of AQC's methods in Afghanistan and Pakistan where it was able to obtain refuge among the Pashtun tribes in that region. In both of these sanctuaries (Afghanistan/Pakistan and the Sahel), the local and central governments have had their effectiveness and capacity as governments diminished as Al-Qaida's and AQIM's effectiveness and capacity have remained constant or have expanded. The threat to central governments in the Sahel now is that AQIM is beginning to function as a government unto itself in some outlying regions. It is able to demand taxes from local tribes; render justice on its own terms; attack representatives of the state, including the police and the military; and kidnap foreign visitors for ransom in the region, either independently or in collaboration with the Tuareg or Bérabiche tribes.

AQIM Leadership

Since the merger, Droukdel has remained as the nominal leader of AQIM. He was born on 20 April 1970 in the town of Meftah, in the province of Blida, which is just south of Algiers. According to Algerian security officials, he roams from residence to residence in the region of the Kabylie mountains, which are east of the capital Algiers.

He has two deputies, Mokhtar Belmokhtar and Yahia Abu Amar Abid Hammadou (aka Abdelhamid Abu Zeid), who direct southern operations. Of this duo, Abu Zeid allegedly is the more ideologically committed Islamist, while Mokhtar Belmokhtar earns substantial income from trade in contraband and seems to operate somewhat independently of Droukdel and Abu Zeid.[17]

17 Dario Cristani and Riccardo Fabiani, "AQIM Funds Terrorist Organizations with Thriving Sahel-Based Kidnapping Industry," *Terrorism Monitor* 8, no. 4 (28 January 2010), accessed 25 November 2010, www.jamestown.orf/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5D=35963); Reuters, "FACTBOX-Al Qaeda's Sahara Wing," 25 July 2010, accessed 25 November 2010, www.reuters.com/article/2010/07/25/idUSLDE66O0DE; *El Watan*, 1 August 2007; Agence France Presse, 11 January 2010.

Abu Zeid's umbrella group is called the Katibat Al-Fatahin and it embraces three subgroups (the Talaia Al-Salafiya, the Nasr Aflou, and the Muhajiroun [the Emigrants]). They circulate in and around Mont Thadak, Aït Moulay, In Abog, and Thessalit.[18]

Belmokhtar's group is called the Katibat Al-Mulathamin (the Masked Brigade) and operates in and around Timbuktu, Arouane, and Boujebha Taoudenni in Mali, while in Algeria it operates principally in Bordj Badji Mokhtar, Omar Driss, Tamanrasset, and Djanet. [19]

Aiding Belmokhtar and Abu Zeid are Yahya Abu Ammar (aka Yahya Jouadi), who operates in the deep south of Algeria and in Mauritania; Abu Anas Al-Shingieti or Al-Shanqiti, who can be found in the southeast; and Abdelkarim "the Touareg," who rules out of Kidal, an important city in northern Mali.[20]

Mokhtar Belmokhtar was born 1 June 1972 in Ghardaïa in central Algeria. He claims to have entered armed Islamist struggle during 1991, when at the age of 19 he traveled to Afghanistan and Pakistan and obtained training from Al-Qaida. Belmokhtar claims to have undertaken training in the Afghanistan/Pakistan region in Khalden, Jihad Wal, and Al-Qaida's Jalalabad camp. In 1993 he returned to Algeria where he formed the Katibat Al-Shuhada (Martyrs' Battalion) in the city of Ghardaïa.[21] From this Algerian city on the northern edge of the Sahara, Belmokhtar then began moving southwards, establishing a network of operations throughout the Sahara and Sahel.

Belmokhtar has become particularly effective in the Sahelian region because he has married four women from prominent Tuareg and Bérabiche families from the area. His wives' families and clans have provided him with refuge and

18 Agence France Presse, 11 January 2010; Reuters, "FACTBOX-Al Qaeda's Sahara Wing"; Boukra, "Du Groupe Salafiste," 54.

19 Boukra, "Du Groupe Salafiste," 54

20 Murad Batal Al-Shishani, "Salafi-Jihadis in Mauritania at the Center of Al-Qaeda's Strategy," *Terrorism Monitor* 8, no. 12 (26 March 2010); "Abdelkrim le Touareg, l'étoile montante du terrorisme," *France Soir*, 10 November 2010, accessed 28 March 2011, www.francesoir.fr/abdelkarim-touareg-l'etoile-montante-du-terrorisme-61122.html; Mathieu Guidère, "The Tribal Alliance within AQIM," *CTC Sentinel* 4, no. 2 (February 2011).

21 *Al-Majallah*, 14 March 1999.

protection, making it more difficult for him to be apprehended.[22] Despite these marriage linkages, however, Belmokhtar remains somewhat vulnerable. His operations and comparative wealth have provoked armed conflict with other fighters and groups in the region, particularly those belonging to Tuareg leader Ibrahim Ag Bahanga, the leader of the Alliance Démocratique du 23 mai pour le Changement (23 May Democratic Alliance for Change), which is based in northern Mali.[23]

Strategic Objectives and Tactical Operations

AQIM has had three strategic objectives: (1) the overthrow of the government of Algeria; (2) the creation of a safe haven among the Tuareg tribes of Mali, Niger, and Mauritania where it can obtain refuge and also encourage Tuareg rebellion against central states; and (3) the targeting of France, Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, and Spain through planned bombings by its affiliated members in Europe.

Paramilitary Attacks

In pursuit of these objectives, AQIM and its predecessor, the GSPC, have launched a series of paramilitary attacks in the region over time. Within its northern theater of operations, AQIM has attacked Algerian military and police forces and killed foreign nationals who work in Algeria. AQIM in the north has also adopted the newer tactic of suicide bombings, which until its introduction by AQIM had not been practiced by Algerian militants. Apparently this tactic was imported by AQIM militants who returned from operations in Iraq.[24] Within the southern theater of operations, AQIM has engaged in attacks on security forces from the governments of Algeria, Mauritania, Mali, and Niger while maintaining lucrative contraband and kidnapping activities. A list of AQIM's paramilitary attacks appears below.

- 12 February 2004: GSPC attacks a police patrol near Tighremt (Blida), Algeria. Seven police officers are killed and three wounded.

22 Boukra, "Du Groupe Salafiste," 53; *L'Aube*, 9 April 2009; *Le Soir d'Algérie*, 14 April 2008.

23 *Le Quotidien d'Oran*, October 2006; Reuters, 2 November 2006.

24 Botha, *Terrorism in the Maghreb*, 20; Guidère, "Une filiale algérienne pour Al-Qaida"; Scott Stewart and Fred Burton, "Algeria: Taking the Pulse of AQIM", STRATFOR, 24 June 2009, accessed 25 November 2010, www.stratfor.com/weekly/20090624_algeria_taking_pulse_aqim; Geoff D. Porter, "AQIM's Objectives in the North Africa," *CTC Sentinel* 4, no. 2 (February 2011): 7.

- June 2005: GSPC attacks the Lemgheiti barracks of the Mauritanian army, which is an isolated military outpost in the extreme northeast of the country. Fifteen Mauritanian soldiers are killed.[25]

- 10 December 2006: AQIM bombs a bus in the Bouchaoui forest on the outskirts of Algiers that is carrying British, Canadian, and American workers for Kellogg Brown & Root, an affiliate of Halliburton, a company based in the United States. One person is killed, and nine wounded.

- 11 April 2007: A triple suicide attack in Algiers kills 33 people and injures hundreds.[26]

- 11 July 2007: A suicide attack on the outskirts of Algiers kills 10 soldiers.

- December 2007: AQIM kills four French tourists in Mauritania, leading to the cancellation of the Paris to Dakar motor rally.

- December 2007: AQIM launches a double suicide bombing in Algiers, targeting offices of the United Nations (UN) and the Constitutional Court. Forty-one people are killed, 170 injured.

- 2007: Morocco suffers bombings in Casablanca. No casualties.

- February 2008: The Israeli Embassy in Nouakchott is attacked with gunfire without any mortalities.

- September 2008: A Mauritanian army patrol is attacked in Tourine. Twelve soldiers are killed.

- June–July 2009: Algerian army is attacked at Tipaza. Eighteen killed.

- June 2009: One American aid worker is killed at Nouakchott.

- July 2009: Malian army is attacked at Al-Wasra in northern Mali. Twenty-eight are killed.

25 Stephen Ulph, "Algerian GSPC Launch Attack in Mauritania," *Terrorism Focus* 2, no.11 (13 June 2005).

26 Fiona Govan, "Bombs Kill 33 as Terror Returns to Algiers," *Telegraph* (London), 13 April 2007.

- July 2010: Algerian army is attacked along Algeria-Mali border. Eleven killed.
- 10 January 2011: AQIM attacks a military vehicle in Tissemsilt Province, Algeria. One soldier is killed.
- 5 February 2011: One Algerian soldier is killed on a road near Si Mustafa.
- 10 February 2011: A gendarme of the Republican Guard is killed near Boumerdes, Algeria.
- 4 March 2011: Algerian army is attacked near Djanet. Two killed.
- 14 March 2011: Algerian army is assaulted near Djidjel. Two killed.
- 15 April 2011: An Algerian army outpost in Azagza, at the edge of the Yakouren forest, is attacked. Ten soldiers are killed.
- April 16, 2011: Five soldiers and two militants are killed in a firefight near Boumerdès, Algeria.
- May 13, 2011: Seven soldiers are killed in an ambush near Djidjel, Algeria.

The number of AQIM-inflicted casualties provides a metric for assessing the threat posed by AQIM. However, paramilitary attacks are only one aspect of the AQIM threat. The activities that AQIM engages in to fund their operations may be as much, or more, of a problem.

Survival in the Sahel: AQIM Involvement in Contraband, Human Trafficking, and Kidnapping

The Sahara and Sahel are part of a climatic region that receives little rainfall; it is an area bereft of substantial rivers, with its inhabitants relying mostly on oases for their water supply. The region, like many others in the world, is also subject to the effects of global climate change. Anomalously and disturbingly–at least from the viewpoint of crop management–climate models recently have predicted both an *increase* in rainfall in the region accompanied by a surge in the *intensity* of the rainfall (leading to the destruction of crops), as well as increased

unpredictability, which further enhances the fragility of the ecosystem and its capacity to sustain life and economic development.[27]

In this region of ecological and economic distress, AQIM within its southern theater has found a means of surviving by linking economically and symbiotically with local Tuareg and Bérabiche tribes in the clandestine trafficking of various products (most often cocaine, cannabis resin or hashish, and counterfeit tobacco). Beyond drugs and tobacco, their trade in contraband goods has also included human beings, as they arrange the transport of undocumented workers. AQIM's third and final basis for obtaining income has involved the tactical kidnappings of Europeans whose governments or employers have paid ransoms for their release.

The Contraband Trade

Because of its agricultural marginality, AQIM's activities in the Sahara and the Sahel have centered upon the clandestine trafficking of cocaine, hashish, and counterfeit cigarettes.[28] When AQIM does not directly participate in the contraband trade, it frequently "taxes" those who do obtain income from or traffic in contraband goods. AQIM's participation in the trafficking or taxation of contraband has ensured income for the organization, particularly as the demand for their goods has risen.

The European market demand for cocaine has doubled between 1998 and 2008, with the estimated number of European users increasing from 2 million in 1998 to 4.1 million in 2008. While cocaine consumption in North America has decreased during the same time period, it has increased in Europe, resulting in a cocaine market that was valued at $34 billion in 2008.[29] The largest European

27 James Owen, "Sahara Desert Greening Due to Climate Change?" *National Geographic News*, 31 July 2009, accessed 28 March 2011, http://news.nationalgeographic.com/new/2009/07/090731-green.sahara.html.

28 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], *Cocaine Trafficking in West Africa*, December 2007, accessed 28 March 2011, www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Cocaine-trafficking-Africa-en.pdf ; International Crisis Group, "Islamist Terrorism in the Sahel: Fact or Fiction?," ICG Middle East Report no. 29, 31 March 2005; Kate Willson, "Terrorism and Tobacco: How Cigarettes Finance Jihad and Insurgency Worldwide," *Cutting Edge*, 29 June 2009, 5–6, accessed 2 April 2011, www.publicintegrity.org/investigations/tobacco/assets/pdf/TobaccoTerrorismIllicitTradeDownload.org.

29 UNODC, *World Drug Report 2010* (New York: United Nations, 2010), 12, 70, 83.

markets for cocaine are the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, Germany, and France (in that order), and the *narcotraficantes'* (drug traffickers') preferred method of transport for cocaine into Europe is by sea using container ships.

Ports of departure in South America include Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Suriname, and Venezuela, and ports of entry in Europe include Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, with ports in Spain and the United Kingdom being the preferred points of entry.[30] According to the European Union, "Three main sea routes to Europe have been identified: the Northern route, leading from the Caribbean via the Azores to Portugal and Spain; the Central route from South America via Cape Verde or Madeira and the Canary Islands to Europe; and, more recently, the African route from South America to West Africa and from there mainly to Spain and Portugal."[31]

Besides maritime trafficking of cocaine, the secondary pathway into Europe involves air transport through West Africa and the Sahel. West Africa and the Sahel became logical choices for the *narcotraficantes* because of the paltry police resources deployed in both regions. Of these two regions, West Africa has played a greater role in the cocaine trafficking trade because of its easier air access from South America. The primary departure points for South American narcotics-laden aircraft to West Africa seem to be Venezuela and Brazil.[32] (Venezuela and Brazil are close to the coca growing regions of Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia, and they are geographically closest in South America to West Africa.) Other Western Hemispheric countries seriously involved in airborne cocaine trafficking seem to include Uruguay, the Netherlands Antilles, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Costa Rica.

30 EMCDDA-Europol, *Cocaine: A European Union Perspective in the Global Context* (Luxembourg: Publications of the European Union, 2010), 20; UNODC, *World Drug Report 2010*, 18; World Customs Organization, *Customs and Drugs Report 2008* (Brussels: World Customs Organization, 2009), accessed 28 March 2011, www.wcoomd.org/files/1.%20Public%20files/PDFandDocuments/ Enforcement/Drug%202008%20EN%20web.pdf .

31 EMCDDA-Europol, *Cocaine*, 20.

32 Ibid.

Data provided by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime indicate that cocaine shipments from South America to West Africa escalated considerably between 2004 and 2007 and then began declining gradually beginning in 2008.[33] In West Africa the key transshipment points were Benin, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Senegal.[34] Beginning in 2007, however, as Interpol and other interested police agencies began intensifying their interdiction efforts in West Africa, cocaine traffickers apparently shifted their patterns of airborne trafficking to a less-policed area: the Sahel.

The possibility of participating in cocaine trafficking and deriving income from that activity led AQIM to collaborate with South American *narcotraficantes*. AQIM's more recent entry into airborne cocaine trafficking has changed the dynamic of the contraband trade within the Sahel. While AQIM had formerly participated in the cannabis resin and cigarette trade, their entry into the cocaine market has substantially raised their potential to raise income for terrorist activity. AQIM's collaboration with South American drug traffickers has also enabled them to learn more professional methods of contraband transport, and it has given them access to light- and medium-weight arms that can easily be packaged along with the cocaine from South America.

While cocaine seizure data figures vary from year to year, they cannot possibly capture the true dimension of cocaine trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel, especially given the paucity of policing resources available in both regions. In other words, seizures may not necessarily reveal the extent of actual narcotics trafficking in the region. Nevertheless, despite these insufficient and even contradictory data, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime does calculate that the volume of the cocaine trade in the region in 2007 was *60 times* the amount of the trade in 2002.[35] Even if there has been a decline in trafficking since 2007, the effects and consequences of cocaine trafficking in the region are formidable.

What has become more evident is that as West African governments and their allies have ramped up interdiction efforts in both West African coastal waters

33 Liana Sun Wyler and Nicolas Cook, "Illegal Drug Trade in Africa: Trends and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, Report R40838, 26 February 2010; UNODC, *World Drug Report 2010*, 12, 19.

34 EMCDDA-Europol, *Cocaine*, 22.

35 UNODC, *Cocaine Trafficking in West Africa*, 7

and on the West African mainland, the South American–based cartels involved in the cocaine trade began diverting some of their flights from coastal West Africa to the Sahel, and especially to the less-populous and less-policed Mali, which enabled the traffickers to evade enhanced police surveillance in West Africa.[36] The crash of a Boeing 727 loaded with approximately 10 tons of cocaine in Mali in November 2009 may provide evidence of these shifting patterns of cocaine transport.[37]

The Movement of Undocumented Workers

AQIM also profits when it assists smugglers who bring undocumented workers from sub-Saharan Africa to Libya and Algeria. AQIM and the Tuareg have been engaged in the movement of undocumented workers from the northern edge of the African savannah (particularly from Nigeria, Ghana, and Burkina Faso) to intermediary cities of the Saharan region (especially Kidal in Mali, Tamanrasset in Algeria, and Agadez in Niger). From these intermediate cities, sub-Saharan workers find transport to the Mediterranean cities of Tripoli and Algiers. From Tripoli and Algiers these workers can purchase entry into Europe, with the principal countries of entry being Italy, France, Spain, or Malta. According to various sources, the numbers of undocumented workers for North African countries are as follows:

- Libya: between 750,000 and 2.5 million[38]
- Algeria: 230,000[39]

36 U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, "Three Al Qaeda Associates Arrested on Drug and Terrorism Charges," press release, 18 December 2009, www.justice.gov/dea/pubs/pressrel/pr121809.html (accessed 2 April 2011); Wyler and Cook, "Illegal Drug Trade in Africa," 3.

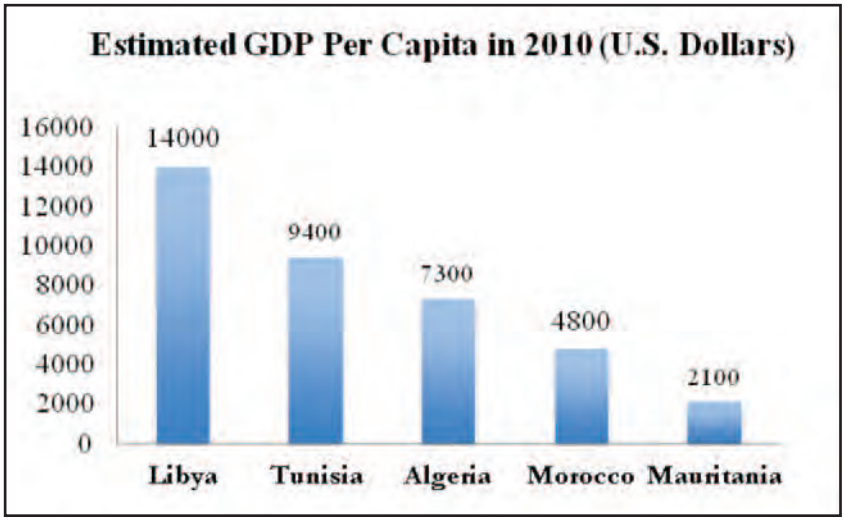
37 Dario Cristiani, "Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and the Africa-to-Europe Narco-Trafficking Connection," *Terrorism Monitor* 8, no. 43 (November 24, 2010): 5–6; *Le Figaro*, 19 March 2010.

38 Claire MacDougall, "How Qaddafi Helped Fuel Fury Towards Africans in Libya," *Christian Science Monitor*, 6 March 2011, 111. www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2011/0306/How-Qaddafi-helped-fuel-fury-towards-Africans-in-Libya (accessed 1 April 2011).

39 Anna di Bartolomeo, Thibaut Jaulin, and Delphine Perrin, *CARIM-Migration Profile: Algeria* (Florence: European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, 2010), 1.

- Morocco: indeterminate number[40]
- Mauritania: 68,000[41]
- Tunisia: 35,000[42]

Of these countries, Libya was the most desired destination because the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita and employment opportunities were the best there. With the recent civil war in Libya, there has been a shift of undocumented workers away from that country. The provision of GDP per capita figures for North African countries in the following chart explains why Libya remained attractive to sub-Saharan African workers.



Source: All GDP Data from the CIA World Factbook, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html.

40 Anna di Bartolomeo, Tamirace Fakhoury, and Delphine Perrin, *CARIM-Migration Profile: Morocco* (Florence: European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, 2009), 1.

41 Anna di Bartolomeo, Tamirace Fakhoury, and Delphine Perrin, *CARIM-Migration Profile: Mauritania* (Florence: European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, 2010), 1.

42 Anna di Bartolomeo, Tamirace Fakhoury, and Delphine Perrin, *CARIM-Migration Profile: Tunisia* (Florence: European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, 2010), 1.

As these GDP data show, Libya simply provided the best opportunity for earning income. As such, it became the preferred destination for sub-Saharan migrants. African workers in Libya most often had origins in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, and Sudan, with Egyptians comprising the largest group.[43]

East Africans usually entered Libya through the province and town of Kufra that lies in the southeastern part of the country. Migrants from West Africa usually have had two principal destinations: Morocco or Libya. Many West Africans who journey to Morocco often hope to reach Spain. To get to Morocco they usually trek along the West African coastal countries. West Africans who sought Libya or perhaps eventually Italy as their ultimate destination travelled across the Sahara with the assistance of informal but regularly organized transportation companies that often had the Tuareg or members of Al-Qaida as partners in the enterprises.[44]

Kidnappings and Ransom

Besides the aforementioned income-generating activities, clearly the most lucrative venture has been the kidnapping and ransom of Europeans.[45] These ransom payments have reportedly garnered $60–175 million in income for AQIM.[46] Kamel Rezzag Bara, advisor to Algerian President Bouteflika, has claimed that European governments have paid 150 million Euros in ransom to

43 Human Rights Watch, *Libya/Stemming the Flow: Abuses against Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees*, 18, no. 5(E) (September 2006): 6.

44 Fabrizio Gatti, "La nuova ondata," *L'Espresso* (Rome), 17 March 2005, accessed 2 April 2011, www.espresso.repubblica.it/la-nuova-ondata/2076172.

45 Alex Thurston, "AQIM Kidnappings and Murders in the Sahel, 2007-Present" [updated], accessed 2 April 2011, sahelblog.wordpress.com/2011/01/18/aqim-kidnappings-and-murders-in-the-sahel-2007-present.

46 Vivienne Walt, "Terror Hostage Situations: Rescue or Ransom?," *Time*, 12 October, 2010, accessed 28 March 2011, http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2024420,00.html; "10mln Ransom for Spanish Hostages-Mediator," *Yahoo/Maktoob News*, 24 August 2010, accessed 28 March 2011, http://en.news.maktoob.com/20090000509404/_10_mln_ransom_for_Spanish_hostages_-mediator/Article.htm; Jean-Charles Brisard, "AQIM Kidnap-for-Ransom practice: A Worrisome Challenge to the War Against Terrorism Financing," accessed 28 March 2011, www.analyst-network.com/article.php?art_id=3592.

AQIM since 2003.[47] The following is a list of kidnappings, ransoms paid, and hostages killed since 2003.

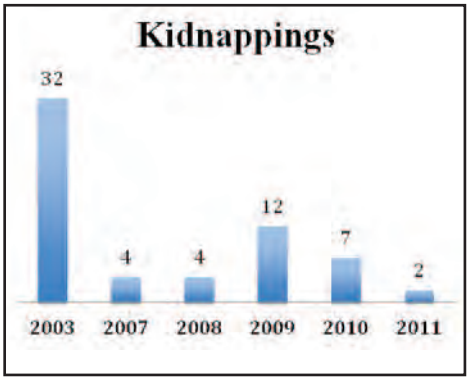
- 11 September 2003: The GSPC kidnaps 32 European tourists in Libya and takes them to Algeria. German government pays $5 million ransom.
- 24 December 2007: Four French tourists are killed in Mauritania.
- 22 February 2008: Two Austrian tourists are kidnapped near the Grand Erg dunes in Tunisia; they are subsequently moved to Mali. Austrian government allegedly pays $4 million ransom. Hostages released.
- 14 December 2008: Two Canadian diplomats are kidnapped on highway north of Niamey, Niger. Hostages are released in exchange for AQIM prisoners in Niger.[48]
- 22 January 2009: Five European tourists are kidnapped in eastern Mali, near Niger border. AQIM says it released two hostages after four of their fellow militants are released from jail. One of the tourists, Edwin Dyer, a Briton, is killed after the government of Great Britain refused to release Abu Qatada, an Islamist militant of Palestinian origin imprisoned in Britain. The fourth tourist, a Swiss, is released after the Swiss government allegedly paid ransom.
- 23 June 2009: An American aid worker is killed in Mauritania during a kidnapping attempt.
- 25 November 2009: A French citizen is kidnapped in Ménaka, Mali. AQIM releases hostage after Mali releases four AQIM fighters in prison.
- 29 November 2009: Three Spanish aid workers are kidnapped near Nouadhibou, Mauritania. Hostages are released after alleged payment of ransom by Spanish government. Ransom amount ranges between $4.8 million and $12.7 million.

47 "AQIM Funds Mother Al-Qaida," *Money Jihad* (blog), 22 November 2010, accessed 2 April 2011, www.moneyjihad.wordpress.com/tag/aqim-funds-mother-Al-qaeda; "Al-Qaida Looks to Sahel for New Funding Sources," 11 October 2010, *Magharebia*, accessed 2 April 2011, www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/aw11/features/2010/11/10/feature-01.

48 *El Khabar* (Algiers), 22 February 2009.

- 18 December 2009: Two Italian citizens are kidnapped in Mauritania. They are released on April 16, 2010. No indication of whether ransom was paid.

- 16 September 2010: Five French, one Togolese, and one Malgache are seized at Arlit uranium mine in Niger. AQIM still holds hostages. One of the French hostages, the Togolese, and the Malgache are released on February 26, 2011. Ninety million Euro ransom demanded on March 22, 2011.



- 7 January 2011. One French aid worker and one French tourist are kidnapped in Niamey. Both are killed by AQIM while French and Nigerien troops pursue their captors.

- 3 February 2011. One Italian tourist is kidnapped near Djanet, Algeria.

The totals reveal that over 60 Westerners were kidnapped between 2003 and 2011, keeping in mind that 32 of that number were seized in 2003. While the number of persons seized is one metric of the threat posed by AQIM, the ransoms paid is a more serious metric because they provide the funds for AQIM's continued operations.

The Destabilizing Effects of Libya's Civil War

The recent civil war in Libya will have a profoundly destabilizing effect upon the Sahel region. As politically and mentally unpredictable as he is, President Gaddafi has served as a source of stability in the region. Gaddafi was firmly opposed to Al-Qaida, and he was increasingly cooperating with the West on security matters.

The civil war that began on 15 February 2011 will unleash forces that will be beyond anyone's control. In the final analysis, the destabilization of the Gaddafi regime will provide a net gain to Al-Qaida. Although Al-Qaida members constitute a minority among the forces that oppose President Gaddafi's regime, the lack of political and military coherence among the rebels will create a vacuum within which Al-Qaida will be able to expand. The extent of its ultimate threat to the region is difficult to gauge at this time.

The principal concern is that ammunition depots near Benghazi and Ajdabiyah have been raided. In those bunkers were thousands of 122mm Grad rockets; handheld SA-7 surface-to-air missiles; various guided antitank missiles; handheld rocket propelled launchers (RPG-70); antitank missiles; 105mm Howitzer high-explosive projectiles; 105mm white phosphorous artillery projectiles; 105mm High-Explosive Anti-Tank (HEAT) recoilless guns; 100mm, 122mm, and 155mm artillery shells; 51mm, 60mm, 81mm, and 120mm high-explosive mortar rounds; 81mm white phosphorous mortar shells; and other munitions.[49] Chadian President Idriss Deby has specifically alleged that members of AQIM have pillaged surface-to-air missiles and other arms from the Adjabiya depot and transferred those weapons to Ténéré, one of their strongholds in northeastern Niger and western Chad.[50]

If the Libyan rebel forces based in Benghazi eventually fail to create a state with an effective security regime that can control access to weapons, both Libya and its neighbors in the Sahel will become more insecure. The armaments from the depots at Benghazi and Ajdabiya will have been delivered to unreliable hands and will proliferate both locally and regionally. Although Al-Qaida members represent a minority among Libyan rebels, if a new and stable Libyan state is not constituted in the eastern region of the country, the ensuing chaos will create a more hospitable environment in which Al-Qaida and other subversives will be able to operate.

The instability in Libya will have collateral effects in Algeria, Mali, Chad, and Niger. Already there have been reports of Malians, Nigeriens, Chadians, and even Nigerians who have been enticed to work for Gaddafi's military forces. Claims are made that they are being paid up to $1,000 a day.[51] Given the de

49 Human Rights Watch, "Libya: Abandoned Weapons, Landmines Endanger Civilians," 5 April 2011, accessed 10 April 2011, www.hrw.org/en/news/2011/04/05/libya-adandoned-weapons-landmines-endanger-civilians-0.

50 Daya Gamage, "Libyan Rebel Commander Admits Link to Al-Qaeda: Chad President Says Al-Qaeda Acquired Weapons in Rebel Zone," *Asia Tribune*, accessed 30 March 2011, www.asiantribune.com/news/2011/03/28/libyan-rebel-commander-admits-link-Al-qaeda-chad-president-says-Al-qaeda-acquired-we.

51 David Smith, "Has Gaddafi Unleashed a Mercenary Force on Libya?," *Guardian*, 22 February 2011, accessed 10 April 2011, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/feb/22/gaddafi-mercenary-force-libya; Martin Vogl, "Tuaregs 'Join Gaddafi's Mercenaries,'" *BBC World News*, accessed 28 March 2011, www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-12647115; M. Oudina, "Libya: Malian Tuareg, Threat to Sahel," accessed 10 April 2011, www.ennaharonline.com/en/international/6142.html.

facto destabilization that has already occurred, a regional plan for restabilization is certainly in order.

Conclusion

The recent assassination of Usama Bin Ladin on 2 May 2011 (Pakistan time) has realistically weakened the hierarchical link between AQC and AQIM, forcing or freeing AQIM to function autonomously in the region. AQIM and Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula had already demonstrated considerable capabilities to operate independently of Usama Bin Ladin's or Ayman Al-Zawahiri's direction. Their linkage to AQC simply reinforced international solidarity among Islamist activists.

From a global perspective, the principal narrative and rationale for Islamist resistance were based upon two factors: the West's support of authoritarian regimes in Muslim world and the failure of the West–and the United States in particular–to be an honest broker in negotiating a peace settlement between Israelis and Palestinians that would lead to the creation of a Palestinian state. The first element of the Islamist resistance narrative has been weakened. The West's political and financial support of more democratic regimes in Tunisia and Egypt helps to create a new narrative in which the West, particularly the United States, demonstrates its hope of liberty for Muslim peoples. The second aspect of the resistance narrative, that the United States can function as an honest broker in the resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli land question, still needs to be addressed.

In North Africa and the Sahel, AQIM continues to exist as the principal Islamist fighting group, and it will continue to operate in Algeria, Mali, Niger, Mauritania, and, to some extent, Chad. It will seek to expand and merge with Islamist groups in Morocco and Libya. The civil war in Libya, if not resolved adequately and swiftly, will provide a new opportunity for Islamists in the region to organize, especially because the political and security order provided by Muammar Gaddafi has been shattered. This region needs focused attention, especially given its proximity to Europe and the effects that it may have on that continent.

THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA

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8
Al-Qaida and Central Asia:
A Slowly Developing and Multipurpose Presence

Michael F. Scheuer

Because Usama Bin Ladin had the ability to keep his eyes on the prize–which for Al-Qaida is bleeding the United States in multiple ways–the main interests of other Islamist groups and their theaters of operation often do not register among Al-Qaida's top priorities. Central Asia is such an interest. Bin Ladin's relative quiet about events and trends in Central Asia before his death, however, should not be taken as a lack of interest, but rather as a reflection of the reality he and his lieutenants saw there.

The History and Current Status of Al-Qaida in Central Asia

Central Asia, which Al-Qaida defines as the region bracketed by Chechnya and China's Xinjiang Province, always was of strong interest to Bin Ladin. His deputy, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, and the now-imprisoned Al-Qaida strategist, Abu Musab Al-Suri, for example, have long argued that the former Soviet Central Asian republics are the indispensable bridge between Islam in Europe and the Middle East and Islam in the Far East. But all three men believed that Al-Qaida needed to devote few resources to the region because the group's indirect and direct allies–states like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and their nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and groups like Hizb Al-Tahrir–were already hard at work reacquainting Central Asian Muslims with conservative Sunni Islam, especially Wahabi and Salafist beliefs.

Indeed, other entities began running Sunni missionary operations in Central Asia at almost the same time that Al-Qaida began its training, weapons procurement, and combat support activities there. The initial motivation for

Islamist activism in the region was, of course, Moscow's 1979 invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. Instead of solidifying the Afghan communists' rule in the country and creating a secular buffer state between the USSR and Arab radicals–as Moscow planned–the Red Army's unsuccessful Afghan campaign promoted the further Islamicization of Afghanistan and Pakistan, and gave Afghan insurgents and their Arab comrades-in-arms and monetary benefactors the chance to make contacts with Central Asian Muslims and to begin spreading their religious message in Soviet Central Asia. Ahmed Shah Masood's Tajik-dominated Jamiat Islami was active in this regard, as were–to a lesser extent–Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hizbi Islami, Abdul Rasul Sayyaf's Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan, and then-Pakistani President Zia's intelligence services.

Some Central Asian Muslims, moreover, gained training and combat experience serving with Masood's forces during the anti-Soviet jihad. At this stage–1979–1989–Al-Qaida's role in Central Asia was negligible and focused on providing some funding and military advisers to Masood, although a few Uzbeks and Tajiks trained with Al-Qaida before the 1992 demise of the Afghan communist regime.

In 1989 and shortly after, three events occurred that created an environment in which the Sunnis' Islamicization of Central Asia accelerated: the 1989 withdrawal of the Red Army from Afghanistan; the 1991 collapse of the USSR's central government and the consequent empowerment of massively corrupt and ruthless anti-Muslim dictators in the former Central Asian republics; and the eradication of the Afghan communist regime in 1992.

These events turned the eyes of many Middle Eastern Islamists–states, individuals, and nonstate actors–toward Central Asia and the opportunities and religious duty emerging there to create Islamic states from the former Soviet republics. First out of the starting box were Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the other Gulf states. Their activities in support of the Afghan mujahidin were not only meant to help the Afghans defeat the Soviets, but also to make Afghanistan and Pakistan a base from which to deploy Salafi and Wahabist proselytizers to Central Asia to bring fallen-away Soviet Muslims back to their Sunni faith. The Gulf States also intended to prevent what they feared would be Iran's efforts to

spread Shiism in the region's overwhelmingly but also nominally Muslim population. To this day, a fear of Iran-backed Shia expansionism in Central Asia is at the core of the Arab Peninsula regimes' policies toward the region–an emphasis that was sharpened by the transfer of power to Shias in Iraq that was presided over by Washington.

With Riyadh in the van, nongovernmental organizations from the Gulf States set up shop in Central Asia–openly and covertly–and began providing their standard retinue of products: health services, cottage-industry skills, kindergarten and grammar school education, and religious indoctrination. In addition, the Arab Peninsula–especially Saudi Arabia–is home to many now-wealthy descendants of Uzbek and other Central Asian Muslims who fled the Bolshevik occupation of the region in the 1920s and 1930s, and it is a sure bet that these men continue to contribute funds to fuel a Sunni renaissance in their former homelands.

For Bin Ladin and Al-Qaida, the 1989 to 1995 period afforded a chance to engage in more than a minor way with Central Asian Muslims. Al-Qaida was founded, in part, to maintain a ready reserve of trained Islamist fighters who could be sent to support oppressed Muslims in other Muslim states, such as Kashmir and Mindanao. With the Soviet and Afghan Communists no longer an obstacle, Al-Qaida began dispatching trained fighters to fulfill that purpose.

The outbreak of an Islamist rebellion in Tajikistan in 1991 (lasting to 1997), therefore, prompted Bin Ladin and other Arab mujahidin leaders to send a limited cadre to support Tajik Islamist forces. Among these men were Bin Ladin's close associate, Wali Khan Amin Shah; the soon-to-be-famous mujahid, Ibn Khattab; and Bin Ladin's longtime bodyguard, the Yemeni, Abu Jandal. In addition, Bin Ladin, even after his 1991 move to Sudan, continued to run training camps in Afghanistan where he welcomed the chance to train Tajik, Uzbek, Uighur, and Chechen volunteers. The former Western intelligence penetrator of Al-Qaida, Omar Nasiri, has documented the training of many Central Asians in Al-Qaida camps in his fine and detailed book, *Inside the Jihad*.[1]

1 Omar Nasiri, *Inside the Jihad: My Life with Al Qaeda* (New York,: Basic Books, 2006).

With this said, however, Bin Ladin in these years deliberately limited Al-Qaida's role in Central Asia to building contacts and quietly training and arming Islamist fighters. He was more than content to have the great bulk of Islamicizing done by the personnel, funds, and NGOs provided by the Saudi government, other Gulf regimes, and wealthy individuals. There were two main reasons for Bin Ladin's decision to limit Al-Qaida's activities in Central Asia to clandestine support for local Islamists–such as training in Afghan camps–and weapons acquisition.

First, there were at this time no U.S. targets in the region whose destruction would further Al-Qaida's goal of bleeding America's economy; indeed, a high level of resources deployed to Central Asia would undercut Al-Qaida's capability to develop infrastructure and carry out operations in regions containing lucrative U.S. targets.

Second, and more important, Bin Ladin and his lieutenants assessed the former Soviet Central Asian republics as prime ground on which to procure Soviet-made conventional weapons–left behind in ample stockpiles by the Red Army–as well as to seek weapons of mass destruction (WMD) components and/or off-the-shelf chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. The high importance to Al-Qaida of this weaponry mandated an effective but minimal on-the-ground presence that would not attract U.S. and Western attention to its acquisition activities. Around 1992, Al-Qaida set up a WMD-acquisition unit–staffed by hard scientists, technicians, and engineers–and its activities have since targeted the former Soviet Union's (FSU) WMD arsenal.

Building on relationships made by the Afghan mujahidin with Red Army, GRU,[2] and KGB officers who were involved in narcotics trafficking, gem smuggling, and other illicit activities during the anti-Soviet jihad, Al-Qaida quietly started WMD shopping in the FSU. Because the organization's leadership attached high priority to these endeavors–and because other entities were effectively spreading Allah's word and wielding the Prophet's sword across the region–Bin Ladin ensured that Al-Qaida's Central Asian operations kept a

2 The GRU or Glavnoye Razvedyvatel'noye Upravleniye was the Soviet Union's foreign military intelligence directorate, and it serves the same function for Russia today.

low profile, thereby avoiding the notoriety that might accelerate the slow pace of U.S.-Russian efforts to secure the FSU's WMD arsenal.

After Bin Ladin moved back to Afghanistan in May 1996, Al-Qaida's activities in Central Asia continued to focus on weapons procurement, sending combat veterans to advise Islamist groups fighting in the region–with a greater emphasis on Uzbekistan–and on training Central Asians in Afghan camps. That Al-Qaida both trained and won the allegiance of a goodly number of Chechen, Tajik, Uzbek, and Uighur Islamists is evident from the prominent part that fighters of those nationalities played in battles against the 2001 U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan.

Chechen and Uzbek fighters, for example, fought in a stubborn and disciplined fashion against Northern Alliance forces in northern Afghanistan, as well as against U.S. forces in the southern and eastern Afghan provinces. More recently, Central Asian mujahidin trained by Al-Qaida or the Afghan or Pakistani Taliban have restarted what were semidormant insurgencies in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and have introduced the tactic of suicide bombing in the former Soviet republics, most recently in Kazakhstan.

In addition, Pakistan's army and intelligence services have endured hard fighting and considerable casualties battling Chechens, Uzbeks, and some Uighurs since 2003 when they began operating against Pashtun tribal fighters, Al-Qaida, and Taliban forces in South Waziristan, Bajaur, Swat, and other agencies in the country's tribal region. Moreover, the prolonged presence in these agencies of significant numbers of mujahidin from the North Caucasus and Central Asia–which would have been virtually unthinkable in cultural and tribal terms during the anti-Soviet jihad in the 1980s–is a clear indication of the rapid growth of an increasingly militant, Middle East-style "orthodox" Islam among Pakistan's Pashtun tribes.

Currently, the strategy of Al-Qaida and the Afghan Taliban toward the Central Asian states displays the consistent themes of assisting Central Asian mujahidin with training and providing combat veterans with support to Islamic movements; seeking conventional and nonconventional weapons in or through the region; and building an organizational infrastructure to give Al-Qaida and

the Afghan Taliban better operational access to Central Asia, Russia, and western China. Al-Qaida's leadership also appears to be planning to have its fighters take a larger role in attacking the expanded, post-2001 U.S. presence in Central Asia, especially in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and along the routes used by the U.S.-NATO Coalition for the overland resupply of its forces in Afghanistan.

Al-Qaida's Regional Assessment: In for the Long Haul

In reviewing the evolution of Al-Qaida's approach to Central Asia, one is reminded of Leo Tolstoy's timeless military axiom in *War and Peace* that "the strongest warriors are these two–time and patience." Al-Qaida's patient strategy focuses on targeted involvement in Central Asia while at the same time maintaining a strategic distance and allowing the region's internal problems to work to its advantage.

Before America's 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, Bin Ladin sparingly applied Al-Qaida resources to train and arm Islamist fighters but focused on keeping the area open for buying conventional arms and for the activities of Al-Qaida's WMD acquisition unit. Bin Ladin and his lieutenants clearly assessed that time was on Islam's side in Central Asia. They judged that the combination of oppression by anti-Islamic governments in the former republics; China's genocide-by-inundation of its Muslim Uighurs; the fast-growing interest in a more conservative Islam among Central Asian Muslims; the development of Gulf State-sponsored NGO and proselytizing networks in the region; the growth in Afghan-controlled narcotics trafficking networks through Central Asia; the increased and well-publicized presence of Israel and Hindu India in the region; and the steady, although often viciously opposed, expansion of the pro-Khalifate Hizb-ut Tahrir organization across the region would surely push Islamic militancy ahead faster than could Al-Qaida and the Afghan Taliban.

In a June 2002 letter to Mullah Omar–posted on the website of West Point's Combating Terrorism Center–Bin Ladin summed up the trajectory of Al

Qaida's actions in Central Asia and described the ongoing importance of the region to the anti-U.S. jihad.[3]

> During the previous period [i.e., before the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan], with the grace of Allah, we were successful in cooperating with our brothers in Tajikistan in various fields including training. We were able to train a good number of them, arm them and deliver them to Tajikistan. Moreover, Allah facilitated to us delivering weapons to them; we pray Allah grants us all victory.
>
> We need to cooperate all together to continue this matter, especially Jihad continuation in the Islamic Republics [of Central Asia which] will keep the enemies busy and divert them from the Afghani issue and ease the pressure off. The enemies of Islam['s] problem will become how to stop the spreading of Islam into the Islamic Republics and not the Afghani issue. Consequently, the efforts of the Russians and their American allies will be scattered.
>
> It is fact that the Islamic Republic's region is rich with significant scientific experiences in conventional and nonconventional military industries, which will have a great role in future Jihad against the enemies of Islam.

Today, Al-Qaida's vision seems to be panning out, as Al-Qaida and its allies are benefiting from the governmental oppression, endemic corruption, deepening political chaos, and ethnic violence in Central Asia without–according to publicly available information–having had to expend substantial man power or financial resources there. In an odd way, the U.S.-led occupation of Afghanistan and the Coalition's use of Central Asian support bases, which Washington and NATO expected to moderate Islamist militancy in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia, seems to have contributed to increased Islamist unrest across the region. Islamic militancy and subversion are now major problems in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and–to a limited extent–in Kyrgyzstan.

3 Document is located in the Harmony Database at the Combating Terrorism Center at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY. Document ID AFGP-2002-600321, http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/AFGP-2002-600321-Trans.pdf.

Six months into 2011, for example, (*a*) there have been numerous engagements between Tajik mujahidin and the Dushanbe regime's forces and their Uzbek allies, and the International Crisis Group has predicted a resumption of the civil war between the Tajik regime and Islamist militants; (*b*) the new leader of the Islamic Union of Uzbekistan (Usmon Odil), a close ally of both Al-Qaida and the Afghan Taliban, has promised a "new program" inside Uzbekistan; (*c*) the Kyrgyz regime has claimed that over 200 young Kyrgyz men have departed the country, bound for insurgent training camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan; and (*d*) two suicide bombings occurred in Kazakhstan in May 2011, the second just days after the Afghan Taliban had warned the Kazakh regime that "negative consequences" would follow its decision to send four Kazakh "specialists" to assist at NATO headquarters in Afghanistan.

A Look Ahead

Most important for Al-Qaida, America and its allies still show little sign that they believe Al-Qaida is a significant threat in Central Asia; Washington, for example, publicly has shown little urgency in completing the program to secure the former USSR's WMD arsenal. This reality leaves Al-Qaida with ongoing acquisition opportunities, although the wording of Bin Ladin's above-quoted letter to Mullah Omar certainly can be read as stating that those opportunities have long since been successfully exploited. Overall, the United States and other NATO governments face a Hobson's choice in Central Asia between two policy options; either choice will benefit Al-Qaida and its Islamist allies. One choice is to maintain the policy status quo: seeking bases, facilitating overland and aerial resupply from Russia and Central Asia to Afghanistan (all with a desperate eagerness to participate in exploiting the region's energy resources), while simultaneously reserving the right to publicly upbraid and sanction Central Asian regimes for human rights abuses.

The other choice is for Washington and the Europeans to refocus and strengthen their insistence on substantive human rights reforms by Central Asian regimes. This choice would please the Western media and the human rights lobby, at the risk of losing key components of the U.S.-NATO Coalition's logistical system, as well as any measure of influence the United States and its allies may now have on the regimes' brutal behavior vis-à-vis their domestic

Islamists. This policy also would give Russia and China an even longer leg up in the competition for regional energy resources.

As in so many other cases in America's war with Al-Qaida and Islamism, Washington and NATO have come face-to-face with a lose-lose situation in Central Asia. Either policy choice will stimulate Islamist militancy in Central Asia. That has long been Al-Qaida's major, non-WMD-related goal in the region, and, for now, Al-Qaida can continue to see it gradually being realized with only a minor expenditure of the group's resources. Al-Qaida can also anticipate a much more exploitable operational environment in Central Asia after the U.S.-NATO Coalition withdraws and thereby eases access to Central Asia from Afghanistan.

PAKISTAN

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9
Power by Proxy:
Al-Qaida in Pakistan

Haider Ali Hussein Mullick

Despite its global reach, Al-Qaida's major base of operations, counterintelligence, propaganda, recruitment, finances, and most lethal allies remain in nuclear-armed Pakistan.[1] No other country is more vital for its survival and growth, and incidentally, none is more critical to American and international security and Afghanistan's stability. This chapter examines the scope and scale of Al-Qaida's emerging strategy in Pakistan after the death of Usama Bin Ladin, and how it impacts U.S. interests and Pakistani stability.[2]

A month after U.S. Navy SEALs killed Al-Qaida's founder and the man responsible for 9/11, Usama Bin Ladin, a drone strike killed another key leader–one perhaps more important to Al-Qaida's operation in Afghanistan and Pakistan–Ilyas Kashmiri.[3] It was clear that Al-Qaida was rupturing after years of successful interdiction by the Pakistani military, U.S. drone strikes, and joint and separate U.S. and Pakistani covert counterterrorism operations.

In the fall of 2010, drone strikes killed Mustafa Abu Al-Yazid, Al-Qaida's operations chief for Afghanistan and Pakistan, in North Waziristan.[4] Twenty-

1 "Germany Says Investigating U.S. Drone Strike Deaths," *Dawn* (Karachi), 5 October 2010.

2 Parts of this chapter incorporate findings from my presentation at the Marine Corps University conference, "Al-Qaida after 10 Years of War: A Global Perspective of Successes, Failures, and Prospects," 26 April 2011, and my Institute for Social Policy and Understanding report on Al-Qaida: *Al Qaeda and Pakistan: Current Role and Future Consideration* (Clinton TWP, Michigan: Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, 2009).

3 Ron Moreau and Sami Yousafzai, "Al Qaeda Commander Ilyas Kashmiri Killed in U.S. Predator Strike," *Daily Beast*, 4 June 2011.

4 Author interview with Pakistani government officials during September 2010; also see "Drone Strike in Pakistan Kills 3," *CNN Wire Staff*, 25 September 2010, and "Pakistan Al-Qaeda Chief Killed by U.S. Drone," *Dawn*, 28 September 2010.

two strikes in September targeted Al-Qaida and key allies suspected of planning multiple terrorist attacks in Europe.[5] The number was the highest in any given month since 9/11 and equal to about two-thirds of all such attacks in 2008.[6] Some of Al-Qaida's key partners are similarly under attack, especially the Pakistani Taliban. In addition to killing Al-Qaida members, the fall attacks eliminated Qari Hussain, Pakistani Taliban's No. 1 suicide-attack recruiter, planner, and financer.[7]

A few months after Usama Bin Ladin was killed, Al-Qaida announced Usama's replacement, his trusted and able deputy, Ayman Al-Zawahiri. However, that did little to revive the terrorist organization's resources, reach, and appeal, which had been constantly weakened by Pakistani and American counterterrorism operations since 2011 near the porous Afghanistan-Pakistan border, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).[8] In fact, U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta and incoming National Counterterrorism Director Matt Olsen believe that due to a decade-long debilitation of Al-Qaida, the stage is set for a decisive victory against the organization if U.S. counterterrorism pressure holds.[9] Finally, some analysts are writing Al-Qaida off as a dysfunctional and incompetent organization that since 9/11 has failed to flip a single Muslim country to its Islamist Caliphate; has failed to back up its strong rhetoric of attacks against, and revolutions in, America or Europe; has failed to initiate or control the Arab Spring revolutions; and has been unable to capture Pakistani nuclear weapons.[10]

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5 "Al-Qaeda Terror Plot Targeting Europe Uncovered," BBC, 29 September 2010.

6 Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies briefing to author, June 2010. Also see *Year of the Drone: An Analysis of U.S. Drone Strikes in Pakistan 2004–2011* (Washington, DC: New American Foundation, 2010); and Bill Roggio and Alexander Mayer, "Charting the Data for U.S. Airstrikes in Pakistan, 2004–2011," *Long War Journal*, 2011.

7 "TTP's Top Gun Qari Hussain Killed," *Dawn*, 16 October 2010.

8 Briefing to the author by senior Pakistani intelligence officials, August 2010. See, for example, "Al Qaeda Network Severely Degraded: Holbrooke," *Dawn*, 19 June 2010, and Joby Warrick and Peter Finn, "CIA Director Says Secret Attacks in Pakistan Have Hobbled Al Qaeda," *Washington Post*, 18 March 2010.

9 Kimberly Dozier, "US Counterterror Official: Al Qaida on the Defense," Associated Press, 26 July 2011; and "New Defense Secretary Panetta: We Have Al Qaeda 'On the Run'," CNN, 9 July 2011.

10 See for example, John Mueller, "The Truth About Al Qaeda: Bin Laden's Files Revealed the Terrorists in Dramatic Decline," *Foreign Affairs*, 2 August 2011; Nancy MacDonald, "The Beginning of the End of Al Qaeda?" *Maclean's Canada*, 11 May 2011; and Rania Abouzeid, "How the Arab Spring Made Bin Laden an Afterthought," *Time*, 2 May 2011.

Al-Qaida's strength, however, is not in its numbers or its attachment to one charismatic leader, as is the case with many transnational terrorist organizations, like Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers. Rather, Al-Qaida's strength is in its ability to diffuse into, and partner with, pan-Islamist movements of various colors and propensities for global operations in South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, and the United States. While its finances, recruits, training grounds, and approval ratings have declined, Al-Qaida is prospering through its heir-apparent organizations, most notably Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the most active militant group in Pakistan today.

These Al-Qaida partnerships remain strongest in nuclear-armed Pakistan, more so than in Yemen or the Horn of Africa, even after the death of Usama Bin Ladin. The failure of Al-Qaida to acquire weapons of mass destruction and ignite an Islamist revolution in Pakistan has weakened the central organization but not its key allies. Dismantlement has done little to hamper Al-Qaida's efforts to merge with Pakistan-based jihadi organizations, or move its base from Pakistan.

Why Pakistan?

Burgeoning U.S.-Pakistan tensions after the death of Usama Bin Ladin, U.S. military aid curtailment,[11] a failure to stabilize the rustic Swat Valley and South Waziristan after the success of the Pakistani surge in 2009,[12] struggles with clearing and holding insurgent sanctuaries in the Mohmand and Kurram tribal agencies, the Pakistani military's reluctance to go after the Haqqani network in North Waziristan,[13] and a fear of a repeat of 2010's devastating floods on a worsening economy[14] collectively make Pakistan Al-Qaida's optimum base of operations. In addition, the rise of improvised explosive device (IED) attacks in Balochistan[15] and a mini ethnic civil war in Karachi has claimed thousands of

11 Jessica Rettig, "United States, Pakistan Navigate New Tensions in Fraught Relationship," *US News & World Report*, 25 July 2011; and Rasool Dawar, "US Aid Cutoff Followed by Drone Strike in Pakistan," Associated Press, 11 July 2011.

12 Haider A. H. Mullick, *The Pakistani Surge: The Way Forward for Counterinsurgency in Pakistan*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2 July 2010.

13 See for example, "Pakistani General Condemns North Waziristan 'Hype,'" *Dawn,* 1 June 2011.

14 See for example, "Oxfam Warns that Pakistan Has Failed to Learn Lessons of Floods," *Telegraph* (United Kingdom), 26 July 2011.

15 "Improvised Explosive Attacks Soar in Pakistan," Reuters, 5 July 2011.

lives.[16] Al-Qaida Central can take little direct credit for the unrest in Balochistan or Karachi, but it is certainly reaping the benefits of overstretched Pakistani security forces with diminishing U.S. aid.

Further, Pakistan is still reeling from the destruction of the July 2010 floods–when the Indus River swelled into a tidal wave rendering millions homeless and taking over one-fifth of the country. Before the inundation, the 2009 "Pakistani Surge" had successfully cleared (and continues to hold) the Swat Valley and South Waziristan,[17] but the flood seriously endangered these gains. Roughly 60,000 troops were moved away from counterinsurgency operations to relief efforts, abruptly ending the surge and leaving the Haqqani Network, the Pakistani Taliban, and Al-Qaida in North Waziristan to regroup and wreak havoc in Afghanistan and Pakistan.[18] Since then, the Pakistani military has struggled to replicate its success to clear and hold in the Mohmand and Khurram agencies. The 2010 floods were a major game changer, and Al-Qaida and associates took full advantage of the opportunity. They provided highly visible (but meager) food and medical support[19] and launched suicide attacks nationwide.[20] Another flood could further destabilize this country on the brink of economic collapse.[21]

Further still, Pakistan-based militant groups sympathetic to Al-Qaida, such as LeT, remain largely unharmed and are expanding operations in southern Punjab, Sindh, and eastern Afghanistan. In August and September of 2010, there were six suicide attacks and 70 terrorist incidents including targeted killings and

16 "Karachi: Report says 1,100 Killed in First Half of 2011," BBC, 5 July 2011.

17 For details see, "The Pakistani Surge: The Way Forward for Counterinsurgency in Pakistan," *Special Report*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, June 2010.

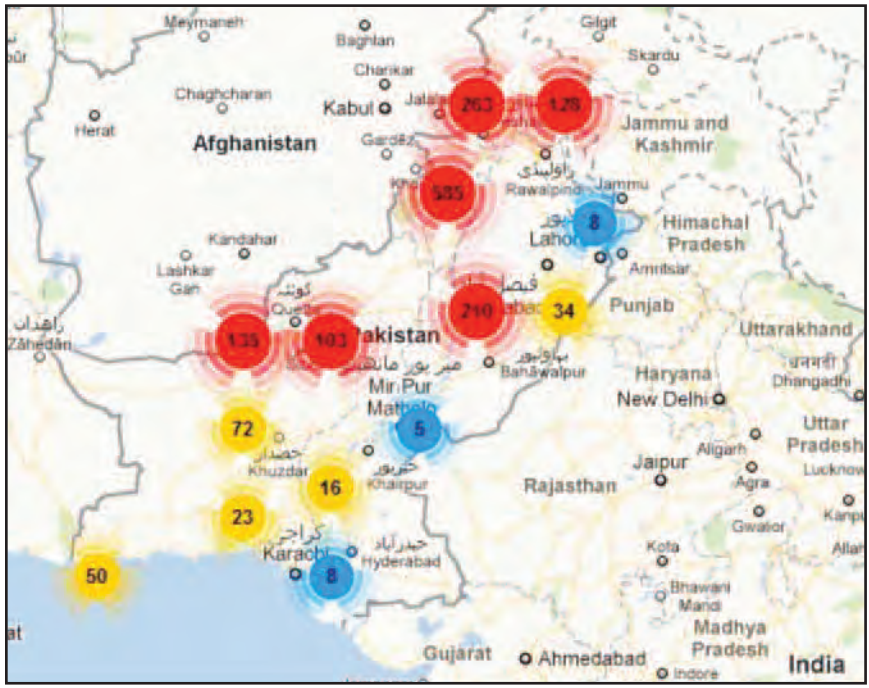
18 Author interviews with senior Inter-Services Public Relations and National Disaster Management Authority officials, August and September 2010. See also, "Pakistan Floods Could Give Taliban Time to Regroup," *Dawn*, 12 August 2010; and Tom Nagorski, "Pakistan Floods Destroy Bridges–World Roundup," ABC News, 13 August 2010.

19 Senior officials, National Disaster Management Authority briefing to author, September 2010. See "Help Flood Victims or Al Qaeda Will Move In," *Sun* (London), 19 August 2010.

20 Unclassified intelligence briefing to author by Pakistani government officials, September 2010; and Rahimullah Yusufzai, "Business as Usual: Floods Have Not Slowed Militant Attacks," *Newline*, 26 September 2010.

21 See for example, Ben Sheppard, "Pakistan Warned After One Year After Worst-Ever Floods," AFP, 25 July 2011.

IED Attacks in Pakistan: August 2008–March 2011



Source: Worldwide Incidents Tracking System (WITS)

IED attacks.[22] In the first six months of 2011, there were 3,100 terrorist attacks,[23] and 24 suicide attacks,[24] and from January to March 2011, there were 217 IED attacks, most of them in FATA, but there were at least 28 attacks near Islamabad, 33 in Balochistan, and 17 in Karachi, indicating a dangerous trend.[25] Since 2001, Al-Qaida-inspired terrorism–acts of extreme violence to achieve political goals–has killed 35,000 civilians and 3,500 security forces in Pakistan; the highest loses for any single country in the U.S.-led Coalition against global

22 Inter-Services Public Relations intelligence briefing to author, September 2010.

23 Pak Institute for Peace Studies, "Pakistan Security Report," 2008, 2009, 2010, and subsequent monthly updates.

24 "Fidayeen (Suicide Squad) Attacks in Pakistan," *South Asia Terrorism Portal*, accessed 1 July 2011, http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/Fidayeenattack.htm.

25 The National Counterterrorism Center, *Worldwide Incidents Tracking System (WITS)*, accessed 8 August 2011, https://wits.nctc.gov.

terrorism.[26] Today more Pakistani soldiers have lost their lives on the altar of Pakistani freedom than in the war against India in 1965. Pakistani security practitioners and analysts believe that most of these attacks were not conducted by Al-Qaida proper, but rather LeT and company.

Leaderless Alliances

Al-Qaida's Network

Al-Qaida works with partners as a conglomerate that exports and imports resources and tactics to survive and grow. Despite considerable degradation over the years, culminating in the killing of Usama Bin Ladin, 21-year-old Al-Qaida still inspires most major Pakistani insurgent groups, including the Quetta Shura (Afghan Taliban in Quetta, Pakistan); the Haqqani Network; the Pakistani Taliban; and LeT & Co., which comprises LeT, Jash-e-Mohammad (JeM), and Sipeh-e-Sahaba (SeS).[27] It also partners with Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), separatist groups like the Baloch Liberation Army, and criminal syndicates.

Without such a coalition of jihadi, national, and ethno-sectarian groups, Al-Qaida cannot achieve its goal of creating a radical Islamist world government–Caliphate–by bankrupting and demoralizing the United States and its allies. Its partners employ terrorism to achieve their goals; and they all shop at Al-Qaida's physical and virtual warehouses.

The Trade Model

Al-Qaida's strength lies in its modus operandi–its ability to inflict harm by strategically employing chaos. It mixes defensive tactics like morphing out of sight,[28] operational, training, and ideological support to affiliates and constantly

26 Author interview with retired LtGen Mahmud Durrani, former National Security Adviser (2008-9), November 2009; and Dr. Mqasudyul Hasan Nuri, senior research fellow, Islamabad Policy Research Institute, May 2010; also see "Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003–2010," *South Asia Terrorism Portal*, September 2010. See also, Najam Sethi, "Problems and Prospects in Afghanistan Endgame," *News International* (Pakistan), 17 July 2011.

27 See Mairam Abou Zahab, "The SSP: Herald of Militant Sunni Islam in Pakistan," in *Armed Militias of South Asia: Fundamentalists, Maoists and Separatists*, ed. Laurent Gayer and Christophe Jaffrelot (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2009), 159–76.

28 "Defense in depth" is defined as an information operations strategy to achieve information assurance by the U.S. National Security Council. See NSC paper "Defense in Depth: A Practical Strategy for Achieving Information Assurance in Today's Highly Networked Environment," Information Assurance Solutions Group.

improves its tactics.[29] It has survived and thrived due to a highly profitable "train the trainer program," which extends franchises to worthy applicants and partners. The trainees of this program, most notably LeT members, have increased Al-Qaida's influence by continuously increasing recruitment and local support.

In this respect, Al-Qaida has succeeded in creating single leaderless alliances built around what can be described as a trade model. It continues to provide advanced training in third-generation IEDs,[30] plastic explosives, counterintelligence, information operations, recruitment, and fundraising campaigns.[31] Al-Qaida and affiliates manage, or have access to, several IED-making factories, which produce most of the materials used in Pakistan and Afghanistan.[32] On balance, Al-Qaida leads several training initiatives, and collaborates with jihadi groups in northern tribal areas and southern cities like Karachi. The table illustrates the goods and services exchanged among Al-Qaida and its partners.

Goods and Services Exchanged Between Al-Qaida and Its Partners

Organization	Goals	Objectives	Strategy	Imports from Al-Qaida	Exports to Al-Qaida
Al-Qaida	Overturn modern world order; replace with Al-Qaida Caliphate	Engage U.S. and Coalition partners in perpetual war; steal Pakistani nuclear weapons	Delegate major operations to partners, especially LeT; retain support of followers through perennial terrorist attacks	–	–
Pakistani Taliban (national insurgency)	Overthrow Pakistan's government, gain nuclear weapons, and conduct limited attacks against Al-Qaida's enemies worldwide	Weaken security, rule of law, social well-being, governance, and the economy in FATA and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa	Retain popular support and outlast Pakistan's security forces	Trainers, explosives, strategic communications, and counterintelligence expertise	Funding, recruits, protection, and liaison with friendly tribes

29 Haider A. H. Mullick, "Al Qaeda's Strategic Chaos," *News International*, 4 June 2008.

30 Author briefed by Pakistani counterinsurgency strategists while visiting an IED research facility in Quetta, Pakistan, in June 2010.

31 Author interview with Frontier Corps, 11th Corps, Military Intelligence, ISI, and Police Special Branch officials during October 2009 and August and September 2010.

32 Thom Shanker, "Suspicions Rise as Pakistan Bomb Labs Empty Before Raids," *New York Times*, 19 June 2011.

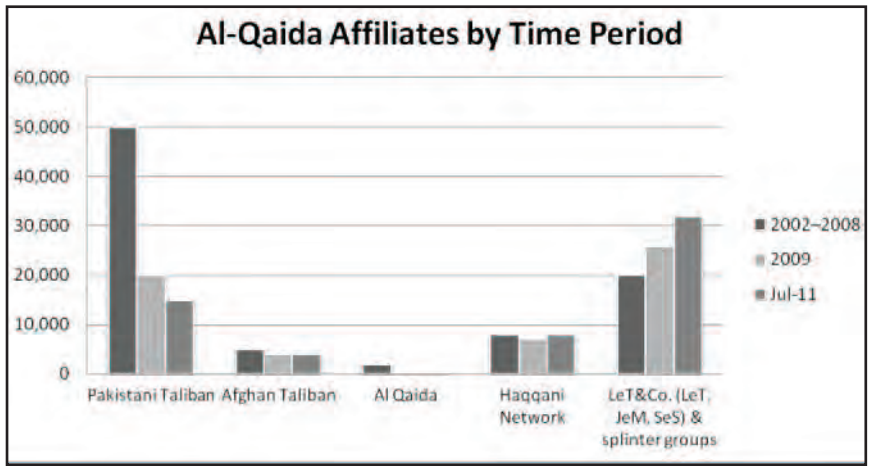
Goods and Services Exchanged Between Al-Qaida and Its Partners (continued)

Organization	Goals	Objectives	Strategy	Imports from Al-Qaida	Exports to Al-Qaida
Haqqani Network (Afghan insurgency)	Overthrow Afghanistan's government (especially in the eastern Paktiya Loya region)	Weaken security, rule of law, social well-being, governance, and the economy in Paktiya Loya region (Regional Command East)	Retain popular support in Afghanistan and FATA, outlast International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) forces, and support TTP and the Quetta Shura when required	Trainers, explosives, strategic communications, and counterintelligence expertise	Funding, recruits, and protection in northeastern Afghanistan
Afghan Taliban insurgency (Quetta Shura)	Overthrow U.S.-supported Afghanistan government	Weaken security, rule of law, social well-being, governance, and the economy in southern Afghanistan	Retain popular support, outlast ISAF forces, support the Haqqani Network when required, and curry favor with Pakistani intelligence	Strategic communications and counterintelligence expertise	Recruits, operational support, and protection in southern Afghanistan
LeT & Co.	Replace Pakistan's government with pro-Islamist, anti-Indian military dictatorship	Infiltrate Pakistani military and replace pro-U.S. Army and intelligence officials; attack India to cause an India-Pakistan war; and weaken rule of law, social well-being, governance, and the economy in FATA, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, and Regional Command East	Incorporate lessons from Pakistani Taliban, expand operations clandestinely, and avoid openly challenging the state; instead, fund political parties and candidates and partner with criminal syndicates	Counterintelligence expertise	Operational support, recruits, and protection in Punjab and Sindh
Sectarian groups	Replace Pakistan's government with a pro-sectarian Islamist military dictatorship	Eliminate opposing sects' representation in intelligentsia, military, and civilian administration	Incorporate lessons from Pakistani Taliban and partner with LeT & Co.	Trainers, explosives, strategic communications, and counterintelligence expertise	Funds and recruits
Separatists	Gain independence from Pakistan (mostly in Balochistan, but there are also low-level irredentists in Sindh and Gilgit-Baltistan)	Weaken Pakistan's security forces in Balochistan, especially the paramilitary Frontier Corps, and replace Balochi pro-Pakistan political, police, and military leaders; attack Punjabis in Balochistan	Outlast the state and seek external support (e.g., Indian intelligence, Iranian Balochi rebels, and Afghan sanctuary)	Limited explosives and communications expertise	Indirectly provide sanctuary (e.g., northern Balochistan is controlled by pro-Taliban Pashtun tribes, and Taliban-separatists have a "live and let live" pact.)
Enablers (criminals)	Expand drug trade and partner with kidnapping and smuggling rings	Weaken governance, rule of law, and police	Take advantage of the state's weakness and offer services to Al-Qaida, LeT, and local political parties for protection	Protection	Money laundering and fundraising

The Importance of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT & Co.)

As Al-Qaida diffuses into Pakistani jihadi groups, while keeping its ideology and goal intact, there are militant groups eager to take Al-Qaida's mantle with aggressive publicity. The most likely heir to Al-Qaida in the region, with increasing international ambitions, is LeT & Co.

LeT, JeM, and SeS–collectively referred to as LeT & Co.–remain largely unharmed and are expanding operations in southern Punjab, Sindh, and eastern Afghanistan. Since 9/11 these groups have grown in size, expertise, reach, and stature in the jihadi world, exemplified by LeT's dramatic Mumbai attacks in 2008. LeT has long-standing ties with Al-Qaida and a common Cold War history. For example, LeT, which is known for its bases in Punjab and operations in India, was founded in Afghanistan's Kunar Province by Hafiz Mohammad Saeed in 1991.[33] It has networks in southern and eastern Afghanistan in partnership with the Haqqani Network and the Quetta Shura, in Indian cities, and in Indian-administered Kashmir.



While Al-Qaida, the Pakistani Taliban, and some Afghan Taliban have suffered from Pakistani military operations and U.S. drone strikes, and declined in numbers, LeT & Co. has had friendly ties with Pakistani intelligence–Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)–and support in southern Punjab and Sindh. This has

33 See Amir Mir, *Talibanization of Pakistan: From 9/11 to 26/11*(New Delhi: Pentagon Security International Press, 2009), 54.

enabled it to grow, and achieve its pan-Islamist dream of a Caliphate through global terrorism.[34] LeT and Co. shares Al-Qaida's goals–to spread religious extremism in Pakistan, promote fascism, and defeat the United States and its allies through attrition–and makes Al-Qaida stronger despite the loss of Usama Bin Ladin, debilitating drone strikes, and aggressive Pakistani counterterrorism operations.

With a robust paper and electronic propaganda campaign, LeT & Co. produces broadcast media products and prints pamphlets, booklets, magazines, and books. It has many members, such as the *Al Badr mujahedeen*, who have mastered strategic communications by introducing jihadi art exhibitions and poetry readings. Similarly, JeM regularly engages with madrassas and public schools to recruit for jihadi training.[35]

In addition to aggressive propaganda, LeT details mid-level operations officers to Al-Qaida and the Pakistani Taliban. Pakistani detention officers say that the most effective insurgent strategists captured from 2008–11 in the tribal areas and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) are affiliated with LeT, SeS, or JeM.[36] Moreover, LeT has formally joined forces with Al-Qaida on several occasions. In 2002, Brigade 313 was created by members of JeM, LeT, LeJ, Harkat-Al-Jehad Al-Islami, and Harkatul Mujahideen Al-Almi.[37] These groups recruit many Punjabis as well as Afghans for operations in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Regional Command East (e.g., Paktika, Paktia, Kunar, and Nuristan) and South (Helmand and Kandahar).[38]

Syed Saleem Shahzad, a Pakistani journalist following Al-Qaida's transformation who was allegedly killed by Pakistani intelligence in May,[39] wrote in his book

34 See Reza Khan, "Pakistan Denies Militant Group is Global Terror Threat," *Washington Times*, 25 August 2010.

35 Muhammad Amir Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan* (Lahore: Mashal Books, 2009), 97.

36 JeM is an offshoot of Harkat ul Mujahideen. Author interview with Pakistan's Army 11th Corps officials, June 2010.

37 Author interview with Pakistani Police Special Branch officials during August 2010. See Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, 10.

38 Author interview with Ashraf Ali, president, FATA Research Center, May 2010.

39 Declan Walsh, "Missing Pakistan Journalist Saleem Shahzaqd Found Dead near Islamabad," *Guardian* (London), 1 June 2011.

Inside Al-Qaeda and the Taliban that Al-Qaida has a cozy relationship with LeT's chief of operations, Zakiur Rahman Lakhvi. In 2005, Al-Qaida created two organizations that helped Afghan Taliban and LeT and JeM pursue the joint-goal of pressuring the United States and Pakistan. Jaishul Al-Qibla Al-Jihadi Al-Siri Al-Alami focused on training young Pakistani insurgents to fight in Afghanistan; and the Pakistani *Jundullah* (not to be confused with the Iranian *Jandullah*) created a cadre of specialized fighters to fight against Pakistani troops in FATA by recruiting Waziris from North and South Waziristan.[40]

Moreover, this syndicate has developed highly dynamic symbiotic partnerships with criminal syndicates and constantly applies lessons learned and findings from after-action reviews of co-insurgents. For example, LeT & Co. learned the lessons from the weaknesses of the Pakistani Taliban's 2009 strategy in the Swat Valley. Instead of overtly challenging the state, LeT has adopted a covert mafia-model of financing political campaigns in southern Punjab.

Structure, Recruitment, and Training

Al-Qaida and the affiliates' structure, recruitment, and training allow them to remain incognito, creating a false picture of dismantlement, when in reality, they are strengthening teamwork.

Structure

While LeT is the likely heir to Al-Qaida, the strength of the network remains in its ability to decentralize operations and work as a team. Most militant groups affiliated with LeT & Co. have several lines of operations run by specific divisions. The "governance division" is responsible for retaining and replenishing leaders. While the third-tier leadership intentionally keeps a low profile to protect their identity and mission-sensitive information, the founding members often run massive public relations campaigns through print, electronic, and online media. For example, LeT's leader, Hafiz Saeed, is under house arrest but continues to give media interviews berating the United States, India, and Israel for all the ills facing the Muslim world.

Moreover, these groups usually have a "rule of law" division that acts as a human resources department and enforces financial and moral austerity in the

40 Syed Saleem Shahzad, *Inside Al-Qaeda and the Taliban: Beyond Bin Laden and 9/11* (London: Pluto Press, 2011), 26–35.

early stages of development of a militant group. At later stages it creates and implements legal strategies in areas under its control; for example, the Pakistani Taliban runs sharia courts in the Swat Valley.[41] Other groups, such as LeT and JeM, have similar divisions such as the Department of Amar Bil Maaruf-o-Nahi annal Munkar-o-Ehtesab (which enforces accountability and virtue, and prevents vice), the Department of Ehtesab (justice), and the Department of Ehya-e-Sunnah (Revival of Sunnat).[42]

Information operations are usually termed "critical for mission success" with the ultimate goal of retaining and expanding local support, before and after an operation. In LeT, the Department of Broadcasting and Publications (media) devises and implements the group's communications strategy. From chat rooms to radio talk shows, Al-Qaida and associates share resources and expertise, often repeating the same messages. Tax collection, fundraising, and recruitment are handled separately; usually, fundraising is required to expand recruitment. The Liaison Division constantly looks for more partners and funders, including drug lords, kidnapping experts, and smugglers.

Additionally, supporting martyrs' families is critical to retaining popular support. Usually there is a "Martyrs' Division" to manage life insurance policies, social security, funeral expenses, timely information to heirs, initial aid, dissemination of the organizations' publications, commemorative plaques, last wills and testaments, and the martyrs' records and estates. The Department of Aseerin (prisoners), which is responsible for detainee operations, is equally important.[43]

Recruitment

Insurgent recruitment is a real concern for Pakistan and the United States. While some groups like the Pakistani Taliban are considered enemies of the Pakistani state, other splinters of groups like LeT that are still focused on Indian-administered Kashmir, and on minimizing Indian influence in Afghanistan by force, remain vital Pakistani proxies, and therefore face less insurgent interdiction. Lesser-known groups with a missionary cover like Hizb ul-Tahrir

41 Author interview with senior intelligence official in May 2010. See "Pakistan's Swat Gets Sharia Courts," Al Jazeera, 17 March 2010.

42 See Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, 229.

43 Author interview with Shabana Fayaz, associate professor, Defense and Strategic Studies Department, Quaid-e-Azam University, May 2010.

(HuT) share Al-Qaida's broad goals but ostensibly promote peaceful ways of achieving them.[44] For example HuT believes in creating a nuclear-armed Caliphate, starting in Pakistan, with the help of Pakistani military officers. After Usama Bin Ladin's death, Brigadier Ali Khan, then working in the Pakistani Army Headquarters, was arrested for HuT links and planning a coup. Such a coup, though unlikely, would result in nuclear-armed terrorists, directly and significantly threatening U.S. interests in the region.

There are similarly dangerous trends in Pakistani Army recruitment patterns. Many young recruits now come from areas that have high representation of jihadi organizations.[45] Moreover, there are reports of Al-Qaida infiltrating the Pakistani Navy.[46] The recent attack on a Pakistani Navy Base in Karachi is a stark example of Al-Qaida and affiliates working together with critical support from inside the Pakistani military.[47] Eerily reminiscent of the Mumbai attack, a small group of terrorists besieged the base for 17 hours and damaged three newly delivered U.S. P3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft valued at $36 million each. Al-Qaida and the Pakistani Taliban both took responsibility.[48]

In addition to making inroads into the Pakistani military, Al-Qaida and associates also have an external structure that relies on madrassas and religious parties to help create "social" wings that ostensibly provide charity to mask terrorist activities and build support for the networks.[49] Certain political parties like the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan and the Jamiat-ul-Islam, as well as proselytizing groups such as the Tablighi Jamaat (TJ), act as enablers for Al-Qaida and associates by supporting recruitment in radical madrassas and fundraising at mosques all over Pakistan.[50] TJ is a "gateway drug" that develops–at the very

44 For more on HuT, read for example, Ayesha Umar, "Hizb ut-Tahrir in Pakistan," *Newsline*, 5 August 2011.

45 C. Christine Fair and Shuja Nawaz, "The Changing Pakistan Army Officer Corps," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 34 (2011): 63-94

46 Syed Saleem Shahzad, "Al Qaeda had warned of Pakistan Strike," *Asia Times*, 27 May 2011.

47 See for example, Tufail Ahmed, "Pakistani Military Officers' Links with Jihadist Organizations," Middle East Media Research Institute, 21 August 2011.

48 Shahzad, "Al-Qaeda had warned of Pakistan Strike."

49 For example, Jamaat-ud-Dawa is a front for LeT. See "Jamaat-ud-Dawa Easily Evades Ban," *Dawn*, 24 February 2010.

50 See "Tablighi Jamaat: Discourse and Challenges," *Conflict and Peace Studies*, Pak Institute for Peace Studies 2 (April–June 2009); and Iftikhar Malik, *Pakistan: Democracy, Terrorism and the Building of a Nation*, (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2010), 133–40.

least–sympathy for jihadi groups. On the ideological and sectarian spectrum, Al-Qaida's supporters are mostly Sunni Deobandis.[51] However, not all Sunni militant groups work with Al-Qaida. For example, Barelvi groups such as Sunni Tehreek have recently clashed with SeS in Karachi.[52]

Al-Qaida and Affiliates' General Training Schedule[53]

Course	Prerequisites	Brief Description	Time
Jihad 101: *Tasis*–Foundation Course	Applicant must be single and in good health	No military training. Indoctrination of jihad. (Note: sectarian organizations conduct an additional 21-day course, such as Ahle Hadis)	30 days
Jihad 201: *Al Raad*–Thunder Training	Jihad 101. Applicant must remain single, have no chronic illness, be able to read and write (5th grade education), and must pass a "true believer test"[54]	Indoctrination plus preliminary military training. (Note: Some organizations conduct mental and physical entrance tests)	90 days
Jihad 301: Guerilla Training	Jihad 101 and 201. Must pass true believer test and write "will" and give to *ameer* (religious leader) of the camp	Setting up basic ambushes, basic explosives and weapons training (small arms, hand-to-hand combat, etc.)	180 days
Jihad 401: *Jandla*–Ambush Tactics	Jihad 101, 201, and 301	How to set up second- and third-generation ambushes using modern IED creation, placement, and detonation; automatic weapons and high-grade explosives; and heavy weapons (e.g. Stinger missiles, and rocket propelled grenades). Exclusively taught by trainers from large jihadi groups like LeT, HM, Harkat-ul-Islami, Tehreekul Mujahideen	270 days
Jihad 402: *Doshka* Advanced Small Arms Training (elective)	Jihad 101 and 201	Small arms training as part of quick reaction units	10 days
Jihad 403: *Domela* Medium Arms Training (advanced elective)	Jihad 101, 201, and 402	Shoulder-held arms advanced training	30 days
Jihad 404: *Zakzak* (discontinued elective)	Jihad 101, 201, 402, and 403	Taught how to use small tanks (was available in Afghanistan before 9/11); currently not offered	30 days
Jihad 405: Launching–Senior Synthesis	Jihad 101, 201, 402, and 403	Senior instructors ask students to pick three areas of operations and then receive objectives and deployments based on specific mission demands and priorities	5 days

51 Alhe Hadis, Wahhabis, and Salafis are closely related to the Deobandis in that they all reject the heterodox view of Barelvis and the Sufis.

52 See, "Sunni Tehreek, SSP Clash Leaves Two Dead," *Daily Times*, 19 August 2011.

53 Author interview with senior Pakistani intelligence officials during August 2010, and Khurram Iqbal, fellow, Pak Institute for Peace Studies, June 2010.

54 Author interviews with senior intelligence officials during August 2010.

Training

After recruitment, new members from madrassas, public schools, or elsewhere usually follow the training curriculum and schedule listed in the table on the previous page.

How Al-Qaida and Associates Measure Effectiveness

Multiple field research trips to Pakistan and numerous engagements with security analysts and intelligence officials reveal a dynamic Al-Qaida that survives not because of its core membership, but because it continues to inspire, abet, and train partners like LeT. For this purpose, Al-Qaida and associates have developed manifestos, standard operating procedures, training and combat manuals, after-action review procedures, small quick-action teams, and metrics to measure success. Recently, Al-Qaida posted an ISI-inspired espionage manual.[55] The metrics' focus on the Al-Qaida syndicate's appeal, reach, strength, and coherence greatly benefits the group as members increase partnerships and operations. Among the more important metrics for Al-Qaida are those found in the table below.

Al-Qaida's Metrics

Metric	Examples of Indicators
Al-Qaida and affiliates' mobility	Number and quality of roads and bridges Number of Pakistani forward operating bases Pakistani or foreign air surveillance and ability to strike (e.g., the number of helicopter or drone strikes) Frontier Corps/Frontier Constabulary/Army/police checkpoints Speed of movement in relation to terrain
Members	How many were killed and injured, and where? How were they killed or injured? Rate of attrition Rate of recruitment and retention

55 Greg Miller, "Al-Qaeda's Terrorist Tool Kit Now Includes Training Manuals from Pakistani Spy Agency," *Washington Post*, 15 July 2011.

Al-Qaida's Metrics (continued)	
Metric	**Examples of Indicators**
Lessons learned	Which tactics work and which do not? Types of IEDs and rate of success Types of ambushes and rate of success
Popular support	Number of spy beheadings Rate of successfully resolving inter- and intra-tribal disputes How many local services provided increase recruitment and fundraising (e.g., Taliban sharia courts and LeT flood relief)?
Resolving inter- and intra-group rivalries	Who and how often do groups within clusters (e.g., LeT & Co., separatists, and sectarian groups) fight? What works and what does not work in resolving such disputes?
Exploiting socioeconomic and ethnic disharmony in Pakistan	Number of retaliatory attacks between Pashtuns and Muhajirs in Karachi Number of Sindhi and Balochi separatists willing to partner with Al-Qaida in exchange for training in IEDs
Al-Qaida and associates' willingness to intervene	Number of likely partners Potential partners' capabilities Number of likely sympathizers Number of counterintelligence assets Type of communications infrastructure available Type of medical services available
Al-Qaida and associates' membership: Testing eligibility	Group's strength (members, resources, etc.) Group's past success and failures (quantity and quality of attacks) Types of tribal and ethno-sectarian links Propensity to splinter (how often have group members disagreed, how many splinter groups, etc.)

How Pakistan Has Countered Al-Qaida and Affiliates

Pakistan's security forces are under great stress. The army is struggling to hold the Swat Valley and southern and northern FATA as it juggles political instability and rising violence in Balochistan and Sindh.[56] The gains made in 2009[57] in post-conflict stabilization, such as district reconstruction teams and temporary population resettlement, are in great danger. While the American-Pakistani

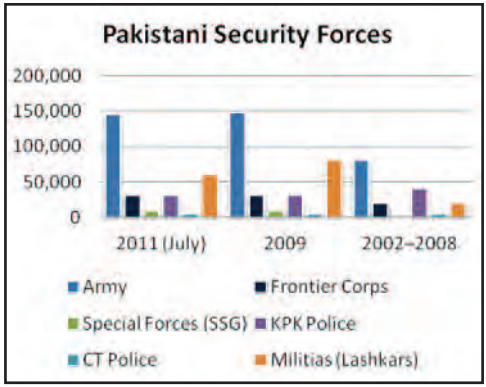
56 See "Legal Action: Court Asked to Disqualify Gilani," *Express Tribune*, 10 August 2011; and "Musharraf Warns of New Military Coup in Pakistan," AFP, 30 September 2010.

57 See Haider Ali Hussein Mullick, "Holding Pakistan: The Second Phase of Pakistan's Counterinsurgency Operations," *Foreign Affairs*, 24 March 2010.

intelligence-sharing cracks, military and development partnerships have suffered tremendously after the killing of Usama Bin Ladin and its fallout in Pakistan. In a recent Pew Research poll, 63 percent of Pakistanis disapproved of the killing of Usama Bin Ladin by U.S. Navy SEALs, and 55 percent said it was a bad idea regardless of who killed him or how.

Approximately 69 percent of Pakistanis believe the United States is an enemy, yet it is insignificant when they are asked to name the greatest threat to Pakistan. India, at 57 percent, is viewed as the greatest threat, while 19 percent believe it to be the Taliban. Al-Qaida only registers at 5 percent. Pro-American President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan has an 11 percent approval rating, while the Army Chief General Ashfaq Kayani is rated at 52 percent.[58]

In the midst of such high anti-Americanism, the under-resourced Pakistani police and paramilitary forces (Rangers and Frontier Corps) are struggling to calm the port city of Karachi and the rustic tribal areas. Plans to attack North Waziristan, the hub of Al-Qaida, the Haqqani Network, and run-away Pakistani Taliban leaders is on indefinite hold given the uncertainty of Pakistan's role in the final reconciliation in Afghanistan, the operations in Mohmand and Khurram, and the rising insecurity in the south. LeT & Co. are, however, expanding operations, recruitment, and finances, while Pakistani intelligence is ambivalent about what proxies it should continue to support and how it should deal with those who are at war with Pakistan.[59]



Since 9/11, Pakistan's ISI, military intelligence, Intelligence Bureau, and police Special Branch have undergone reforms that created new divisions focused on counterterrorism. While more groups are added to

58 "U.S. Image in Pakistan Falls No Further Following bin Laden Killing," Pew Research Center Publications, 21 June 2011.

59 For a detailed look at Pakistan's historic national security doctrine to foment insurgencies in India and Pakistan, see Haider Ali Hussein Mullick's *Pakistan's Security Paradox: Countering and Fomenting Insurgencies* (Hulburt Field, FL: U.S. Joint Special Operations University Press, 2009), 11–61.

the list of enemies, such as the Pakistani Taliban and some Afghan Taliban, along with Al-Qaida, others such as LeT & Co. remain unscathed. In fact, the Haqqani Network is still considered Pakistan's "government in a box" for the International Security Assistance Force Regional Command East area. The Pakistani army pushes for regional reconciliation between the Quetta Shura and Kabul in exchange for a limited role for the Haqqani Network, and ostensibly the elimination of Al-Qaida's sanctuaries.

Conclusion

The United States and Pakistan must act together and act fast against Al-Qaida and its associates that are taking full advantage of Pakistan's instability. If Pakistan sees Afghanistan through the optics of perceived or real Indian encirclement, then Washington must support the ongoing India-Pakistan dialogue and focus it toward an Afghan-led resolution. Pakistan must team up with ISAF as it moves forces to Regional Command East (the eastern provinces bordering FATA) and launch a North Waziristan operation to create a true hammer and anvil effect.

The Pakistani army and Frontier Corps have come a long way from the days of conducting "out-terrorize the terrorist" campaigns, cutting deals with all of the United States' enemies, and failing to deter the Pakistani and Afghan Taliban's expansion. Today, they have better counterinsurgency training and tools. But Pakistan still needs helicopters and support in building up its intelligence and police forces. Despite Washington's budgetary constraints, the recently announced military aid terminations hurt U.S.-Pakistan relations and endanger U.S.-supported Pakistani efforts at training and equipping paramilitary forces like the Rangers and Frontier Corps. Moreover, public and clear cooperation on U.S. drone strikes is important to revive trust on both sides and to help ordinary Pakistanis understand the fact that most insurgents targeted have killed thousands of Pakistanis, many of them women and children. Without additional equipment now or centers of training in the long haul, the Pakistani military will most likely cut deals with its proxies to provide ephemeral stability at the cost of grave instability in Afghanistan.

In the end, Pakistan must realize that it must fight all of Al-Qaida's affiliates for its own safety, security, and prosperity. Without a clear policy to target Al-Qaida and its affiliates, especially LeT, and without adequate pressure on Islamabad to reorient its national security calculus, Washington may find that Al-Qaida is dismantled, but that more dangerous transnational terrorists are on the horizon–Al-Qaida's power by proxy.

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Toward a Differential Analysis of Al-Qaida and the Jihadist Terrorist Threat to Western European Nations

Fernando Reinares

Western Europe is not the main theater of global terrorism, that is, of terrorism related directly or indirectly to Al-Qaida. The number of Al-Qaida–based jihadist attacks committed in Western Europe starting in the 1990s, shortly after the emergence of this terrorist structure, through the present, is very small compared with that in other regions. Indeed, the main theaters of jihadist terrorist violence are currently South Asia and the Middle East, where attacks inspired by ideological orientation are frequent. These sorts of attacks are also considerable in the Maghreb and in East Africa. Moreover, the extremist Neosalafist terrorist threat that hovers over Western European nations can largely be traced to collective actors located in countries of these other areas of the world, such as Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, Algeria, and Somalia.

More than 15 years have elapsed since the 1995 attacks in Paris, the first incident linked to contemporary jihadist terrorism in Western Europe.[1] And already 10 years have passed since the catastrophic attacks that took place in New York and Washington in 2001. Today, the actors of global jihadist terrorism constitute a polymorphous phenomenon, of which at least four major components can be distinguished. First is Al-Qaida Central, the core and template for global jihadism as a whole. Second are the territorial extensions that Al-Qaida has

1 In 1995, members of the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA) bombed the Paris public transit system, reportedly to punish France for supporting the Algerian government's crackdown on Islamic rebels.

progressively established since 2003, namely Al-Qaida in Iraq, Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, and Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb. The third contingent is the heterogeneous array of groups and organizations associated with the Al-Qaida terrorist structure, including Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, Al-Shabaab, the Islamic Jihad Union, and Abu Sayyaf. Fourth are the individuals and independent cells that adhere to the same fundamentalist conception of Islam but have no ties to entities corresponding to any of the previous three components.

These four components of global jihadist terrorism, either separately or intermingled in varying forms, have proven to be a source of threat to Western Europe. This has been shown in the various incidents that can be attributed to this phenomenon, including attacks that were actually perpetrated or attack plans and preparations that were thwarted by the intelligence services and police agencies, particularly over the past decade. Sometimes only a single jihadist actor was behind them, either from Al-Qaida, one of its territorial extensions, some of its related groups or organizations, or independent cells or isolated individuals acting on their own. On other occasions, events have brought attention to the often composite nature of the global terrorism threat in Western Europe–the attacks are from a varying, sometimes unique, combination of the actors from different components of this phenomenon. Whatever the case, when the preparation, planning, or implementation of an attack has involved connections with a terrorist entity based abroad, the incidents have tended to be greater in scale and consequences.

Regardless of the different forms that global terrorism may eventually adopt in Western Europe and the modalities, procedures, and selection of targets for the attacks, a question arises. Is this global terrorism threat uniformly distributed across Europe in general, and across Western Europe in particular? Or, on the contrary, does it affect some European countries more than others? And if the threat of global terrorism is found to not affect the different Western European nations evenly, what factors would explain these disparities?

A Homogenous or Differential Theater?

In principle, all European countries are threatened by global terrorism; however, such a threat has not and does not affect the various European countries equally. A quick glance at two public documents of reference on the successful and failed attacks and the data and assessments of this phenomenon–the annual reports

by Europol within the European Union and by the Department of State in the United States–show that the challenges posed by this phenomenon do not appear to impinge homogenously on the European countries.[2] All data indicate that the scope of this problem seems comparatively greater in the countries of Western Europe than in Eastern Europe, and there are also significant variations within the western geopolitical zone.

For instance, since 2002, the main and most lethal acts of jihadist terrorism in Western Europe have taken place in Spain and the United Kingdom. Other minor incidents have occurred in the Netherlands, Italy, Sweden, and Germany. The planning and preparations for new attacks have been thwarted in these and other countries, such as Denmark, France, and Belgium, as well as in Norway, which is outside the European Union. According to Europol's *EU Terrorism and Situation Trend Report*, hundreds of individuals suspected of Islamist terrorist activities were arrested in both Spain and France between 2007 and 2009.[3] The UK could not provide data for the Europol report, but a UK government statistical report of aggregate arrests related to terrorism suggests similar numbers.[4] In contrast, the number of arrests made in connection with this type of conduct in Italy, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, and the Netherlands amount to less than three figures, fluctuating between 10 and 90 incidents per country over the same period. In other Western European countries, the figures were considerably smaller; the number of arrests made was fewer than five in Austria or Sweden.

It may thus be possible to deduce from these indicators and assessments that the challenge posed by global terrorism has been, and is, far more serious for some European countries than for others. Therefore, a differential analysis, rather than one that considers Europe as a homogenous bloc, is required to explain

2 Europol, TESAT 2010: *EU Terrorism and Situation Trend Report*, https://www.europol.europa.eu/latest_publications/2, hereafter Europol, *TESAT 2010*; Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, U.S. Department of State, "Chapter 2: Europe and Eurasia Overview," in *Country Reports on Terrorism*, updated annually, http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2010/170256.htm.

3 Europol, *TESAT 2010*, 51.

4 The Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, Home Office Statistics, "Statistics on Terrorism: Arrests and Outcomes: Great Britain" *Home Office Statistical Bulletin*: *11 September 2001 to 31 March 2008*, (13 May 2009), http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110220105210/rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs09/hosb0409.pdf.

these apparently significant variations. A differential analysis aims at identifying, even if tentatively, the possible structural differences between Western European countries that are relevant to understanding the disparities in how the countries are affected by the current threat of terrorism directly or indirectly related to Al-Qaida. These structural factors are above all–but not exclusively–historical, geographical, social, economic, and political. Each factor will be briefly examined separately.

Relevant Historical Antecedents

When assessing the potential for a jihadist attack, a particularly relevant difference between the countries of Western Europe relates to their historical relationship with the Islamic world, as the Islamic world is where parent jihadist entities are based and where most Muslims live. In this sense, two such historical indicators are particularly meaningful. First, there are European countries with a colonialist past in territories with majority Muslim populations in North Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. Second, a portion of what we now refer to as Western Europe was under Muslim control during the Middle Ages.

Even though generations have elapsed since the colonial era, resentment and animosity toward former European colonial powers remain entrenched in the political culture of the Muslim societies that became independent states, many only in the 1950s or 1960s. The jihadist narrative recurrently appeals to these persistent attitudes, blaming the colonial countries for fragmenting the nation of Islam by introducing arbitrarily imposed borders. Both the United Kingdom and France are particularly salient among the European nations which, as past colonial powers, ruled vast areas of the world that were inhabited by people who in one way or another considered themselves followers of religious confessions based on the postulates of Islam. Other European countries like Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands also had a colonial presence, albeit more limited, in certain areas within these same regions of the world.

But for some Western European countries, these colonial ties to the Islamic world are not the only historical factor that should to be taken into account when making a differential analysis of the threat that jihadist terrorism currently poses to the region. Indeed, as noted earlier, a portion of Western Europe itself was under Islamic control for centuries during the Middle Ages. Between the eighth and fifteenth centuries, Islam ruled over a good part of the Iberian

Peninsula–what is now Spain and Portugal–which was penetrated by North African Arabs and Berbers in 711 as part of the westward expansion of Islam from its place of origin. To the leaders of Al-Qaida and its territorial extensions, especially Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Al-Andalus (the name given to the Muslim social and political entity established in the Iberian Peninsula) is not only an expression of the size and splendor once attained by a civilization based on Islam. To them, it denotes a territory ascribed perpetually to Islam, and one that has been occupied by infidels now for more than 500 years.

Distance from the Foci of Threat

The geographical factor that needs to be considered when attempting to explain why some Western European countries are more affected by the threat of jihadist terrorism than others is the proximity of each country to the areas that are the foci of this violence. This is fundamentally a question of the distance between the West European countries and the zones where the groups and organizations involved in the global network of jihadism have their main base or develop their terrorist campaigns. It is from those adjacent or nearby areas that jihadist entities can spread terrorist elements into Western Europe with a variety of purposes, ranging from the mobilization of human and material resources –that is to say, recruitment and fund-raising–to the preparation and execution of attacks, often based on the aforementioned tasks.

According to this geographical approach, while taking into consideration that Western Europe as a whole is far from the epicenter of global terrorism (the tribal areas of Pakistan), three countries located at its southern frontier–France, Spain, and Italy–would be relatively more exposed to the threat of jihadist terrorism than others in Western Europe. This is because Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, a territorial extension of Al-Qaida established in September 2006, is based in Algeria and has spread across other North African countries and south of the Sahara, particularly toward the Sahel.[5] While France, Italy, and Spain are most at risk, a certain proximity to the North African terrorism hub should be taken into account with respect to other European countries that border on the three countries already mentioned.

5 Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb was formed on the basis of a mutually convenient agreement between the main jihadist organization active in North Africa at the time, the so-called Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, and the terrorist structure led in these years by Usama Bin Ladin.

Another focal point of terrorism is the Balkans in general and Bosnia in particular. While this area is less salient nowadays, it was very important to the development of Islamist terrorism networks in Western Europe during the 1990s and should therefore not be ignored. This threat base would be of particular concern to Austria, Italy, and Greece, which also borders on Turkey, a country of transit for jihadists traveling between Western Europe and the Middle East or South Asia over the past two decades. However, the recent attack record in countries like the UK have shown that this threat is no less considerable in Western European countries that are geographically distant from the foci of global jihadism. This is due to sociological factors that act as intervening variables and are capable of mitigating the relative importance of the historical and geographical factors.

Sociodemographic Factors

Among the aforementioned sociological factors, the size and composition of the Muslim communities living in each country are particularly significant, as it is within these communities that violent radicalization processes occur and terrorists attempt to operate. In this respect, the number and proportion of European Muslims, or Muslims residing in Western Europe, varies markedly from one country to another. In absolute numbers, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain, and Italy have the largest Muslim populations.[6] The numbers for these countries fluctuate between one and five million inhabitants, aggregate figures that are much higher than those in other Western European nations.

Below these numbers but well above the 100,000 mark, seven other Western European countries should be listed: the Netherlands, Greece, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, and Sweden. Moreover, in relative terms, the countries with the highest proportions of Muslims with respect to the population as a whole include not only France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, and Italy–albeit with notable variations among them–but also those other seven, all with a population of more than two percent Muslims or natives of predominantly Muslim societies. Even in some of the latter cases, this percentage is more than double, or considerably higher, than that of some of the five Western European nations that have, in absolute terms, the largest number of Muslim inhabitants.

6 All Muslim population statistics from the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life, "Regional Distribution of Muslims: Europe," *The Future of the Global Muslim Population*, http://pewforum.org/future-of-the-global-muslim-population-regional-europe.aspx#1.

Nevertheless, some data suggest significant differences in the degrees of jihadist radicalization observed within the different Muslim communities established in Western Europe, depending on their origin.[7] For example, the level of radicalization tends to be greater among individuals originally from Pakistan than among those from Turkey, owing to the particular traits of the prevailing Islamic character in the societies of origin. These variations can be interpreted as the effect of the specific cultural contents of those countries with majority Muslim societies that instill in their inhabitants different ways of understanding and experiencing Islam. However, there is a plausible hypothesis that these levels tend to even out in the case of second- and third-generation descendants of Muslim immigrants. Even so, insufficient comparative evidence exists to assert that the second and third generations are any more or less prone to violent radicalization than the first generations.

The Economy and Global Presence

Al-Qaida and the rest of the actors belonging to the current web of global terrorism repeatedly proclaim that one of their purposes in inflicting harm on what they call the "far enemy" is to seriously undermine the economies of the countries in question and to ensure that their attacks (or the credible threat of such attacks) have negative repercussions on the international economy. In a message broadcast in 2009, Usama Bin Ladin boasted that the attacks of 11 September 2001 had caused not only destruction and deaths on American soil but also the international financial crisis and the economic difficulties that the West has been experiencing in general. It is not unusual for the leaders of jihadist terrorist groups and organizations to bear in mind such considerations and even publicly announce their intentions when choosing targets for their acts of violence.

In this sense, it should be borne in mind that not all Western European countries have the same economic importance or hold the same weight in the international economy. Thus, the interests to be undermined are not in principle equally attractive as targets of global terrorism. On the basis of the projection of national economies (i.e., the foreign exposure of the different European nations through trade in goods and services, energy and investments), Germany,

7 King's College London, *Recruitment and Mobilisation for the Islamist Militant Movement in Europe* (Kings College: London, 2007), 15, http://icsr.info/publications/papers/1234516791ICSREUResearchReport_Proof1.pdf.

the United Kingdom, and France rank particularly high. The Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden, and Ireland can be classified in a second bloc, while the remaining countries fall into a third.

Closely linked to the externally projected economic weight of the various Western European countries, but with greater scope and an intrinsic significance of its own, is the global presence of the various nations, or their geopolitical clout. This variable takes into account the countries' international positioning in different areas–such as their military strength and political influence–that enables them to exercise power on the world stage. It is assumed that the countries that enjoy a more prominent position in this respect will be particularly attractive as targets for Al-Qaida and the groups and organizations belonging to the global terrorist network. Accordingly, three Western European countries stand out considerably above the rest: once again, these are Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. Behind them are Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, and Belgium, followed by the rest of the nations, though there are considerable differences among them as to their global presence.

Dimensions of the Political Variable

In order to be able to assess what factors make some Western European countries more likely to be affected by Al-Qaida and jihadist terrorism than others, it is important to pay attention to the political variable and to focus on foreign policies that are particularly relevant to the phenomenon of terrorism. Above all, the political variable that matters is whether or not these nations have troops deployed in areas of the world with predominantly Muslim populations, whatever their mission is. It is known that Al-Qaida, its territorial extensions, or its associated groups and organizations routinely issue communiqués hostile to European countries with a military presence in Afghanistan and also in Lebanon. These are very similar in content to those previously issued with respect to the deployment of European soldiers in Iraq.

Although all the European Union member states contribute in some way or another to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) that performs its mission in Afghanistan, the contingents sent by the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, and Spain are particularly significant. Those of other European countries such as Denmark, Belgium, and Sweden are also considerable and those of the Netherlands, Finland, Greece, and Portugal are not insignificant. As for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), nine countries in

Western Europe have been contributing to it since 2006, to different degrees. These are Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, and Portugal.

There is also a domestic dimension to the political variable that is more circumstantial, but complementary and closely linked to the previous one. This is the holding of national elections, which appears to influence annual variations in the threat of jihadist terrorism to Western European countries and should therefore be considered. Elections are perceived by the actors of global jihadism as opportunities to influence citizens' attitudes and behavior, and to bring about changes in the foreign policy of their respective governments.

For instance, on 11 March 2004, terrorists bombed trains in Madrid only three days before the elections that replaced the governing party and led to the withdrawal of the Spanish troops who had been stationed in Iraq since the previous year. The terrorist actors present the 2004 attacks as influential and as a success to be repeated in other countries. In 2009, Al-Qaida repeatedly threatened German citizens with a similar attack in their country if, in the elections scheduled for November of that year, they did not vote in such a way that their government representatives would then decide to withdraw Germany's troops from Afghanistan.

Additional Circumstances and Issues

In addition to the varying historical, geographical, sociodemographic, economic, and political factors that help to better clarify why jihadist terrorism appears to be more of a problem for some Western European countries than it does for others, it is necessary to take into account additional circumstances and issues significant from the perspective of a differential analysis. These are, in particular, circumstances and issues that inspire a special animosity toward certain countries on the part of Al-Qaida and other actors belonging to the global terrorist network. This special animosity is often expressed by aggressive targeting by jihadist propaganda efforts in messages that are disseminated widely through numerous existing jihadist websites.

For instance, from the terrorists' viewpoint, countries where more counterterrorism operations have been conducted may well be branded as particularly hostile far enemies. Actions aimed at preventing and combating global terrorism in Western Europe through recent years, with police operations

resulting in the dismantling of numerous jihadist networks and the arrest of hundreds of individuals accused of involvement in activities related to this form of crime, have a probable paradoxical effect.

Such is the case in the United Kingdom, France, and Spain, followed by Italy, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, and the Netherlands. Even if the potential threat is contained or reduced by the response of the national security agencies, the propaganda of global jihadism stimulates motivation for terrorist acts against those countries based on resentment or a desire for vengeance.

Moreover, other specific issues concerning one or some Western European countries can increase their potential for being targeted by the groups and organizations involved in current global terrorism. Particularly worth mentioning are the caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad published in a Danish newspaper a few years ago and later reproduced by a Swedish newspaper. These actions continue to enrage jihadists and stimulate the perpetration of attacks on the country's citizens and interests. Likewise, the French ban on certain veils worn by women, which jihadist terrorist groups and organizations regard as Islamic symbols and imperatives, has sparked a virulent reaction in the form of hostile proclamations and communications from their leaders. A similar case is the Swiss referendum limiting the maximum height of the minarets of mosques built in the country.

Conclusions

If, for each of the factors considered, we could award points on a scale of values in accordance with the low, medium, or high relevance of these variables for each nation–and then add them together and find the corresponding ratio–it would become evident that, irrespective of fluctuations in the level and nature of the threat of global terrorism at any particular moment, a series of structural or persistent conditions make four Western European countries more likely to be affected by this phenomenon to a significant degree in the short and medium term: the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Spain. Next would come Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, followed by Greece and Switzerland. The remaining Western European countries might be expected to be less affected by jihadist terrorism than others within the same geopolitical region in the near future, although by no means are they free from the possibility of an attack.

Interestingly, public perceptions of the terrorist threat do not exactly coincide with this tentative classification, although there is a rough correlation. According to the Eurobarometer data recorded between 2006 and 2010–that is, for the five-year period immediately after the attacks in Madrid in March 2004 and in London in July 2005–the average percentage of European citizens who regarded terrorism as one of the two most important problems faced by their respective countries was more than 10 percent in Spain (where this concern is not limited to the threat of international terrorism), Denmark, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands.[8] Figures below 10 percent but above 3 percent were recorded in Italy, Germany, France, and Belgium, as well as in Austria. Public opinion in other Western European nations expressed relatively less concern about the threat of terrorism compared to other pressing economic, social, and political problems. Among the latter was Sweden, although the last of the surveys considered was conducted in the country only months before a jihadist suicide bomber died on 11 December 2010 while trying to execute a series of potentially lethal attacks in a busy pedestrian area of downtown Stockholm.

8 The Standard Eurobarometer surveys are published twice per year, surveying the citizens in each European Union country about a wide range of issues. The 2006–10 averages are those of the author. The original reports from each year can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch_en.htm. It is noteworthy that spring 2011 saw an increase in perceived threat from terrorism among Western European nations, even with ongoing economic concerns. Twelve percent of the German population named terrorism as one of the two largest concerns for the EU; France registered 16 percent; Italy, 14 percent; and the United Kingdom, 15 percent.

11
Al-Qaida and the United States:
A Panel Presentation

Peter Bergen

My comments are about the United States and the threat to the United States. And I think I have a fair amount of good news and some elements of bad news. It's easy to deliver bad news because nobody remembers when the sky didn't fall when you say the sky was going to fall. But my view is that the Al-Qaida threat is very much attenuated. A 9/11-style attack on the United States is basically almost impossible.

There is a school of thought–in fact, Michael [F.] Scheuer, who is a friend and a colleague in this area of study–Mike has said in the past, the reason that there hasn't been a 9/11-style event is because they're just waiting to do something bigger. Now, to quote kind of a philosopher of science, this is a non-falsifiable statement, in a sense–in the sense that if it doesn't happen, it's more proof that they're just waiting to do something bigger.

I don't believe in non-falsifiable statements. I don't think that [Al-Qaida is] waiting to do something bigger. I mean, they would if they could, but they [can't]. In fact, there's a lot of countervailing evidence to show that they're willing to get anything through.

Look at Najibullah Zazi, the Afghan-American who tried to blow up the hydrogen peroxide bomb in the subway in Manhattan in September of 2009. You know, he was willing to kill a few dozen people in Manhattan. He was trained by Al-Qaida. So they're looking to get anything through. At this point they haven't been very successful, obviously.

In fact, it's pretty striking to me that only 17 Americans have been killed by jihadist terrorists in this country since 9/11, something that we would not have predicted a year or two after 9/11: 13 at Fort Hood in Texas; one at the Little

Rock Army recruiting center; and two at Los Angeles International Airport by an Egyptian guy who attacked the El Al counter, killing two people. I guess that makes 16.

So, more people die in their bathtubs every year in the United States than have died in jihadi terrorist attacks over the last decade. And we at the New America Foundation have looked at every jihadi terrorist case where anybody has been charged or convicted of a crime since 9/11, and there are some interesting takeaways from that.

There are about 177 cases as of today. There's very little ethnic profile. I just will give you the numbers: 26 percent were of Arab or Middle Eastern descent, 10 percent were African American, 13 percent were Caucasian, 18 percent were South Asian, 20 percent were Somali, and 12 percent were mixed or other ethnic backgrounds. So there's no ethic profile of these jihadi terrorists in the United States.

It is interesting that in 2009 there were more jihadi terrorism cases than in any year we've had previously–43 cases. Now, the question is, was that an outlier or was that part of a larger pattern? And to what extent was that larger number affected by quite a large number of Somali American cases that were charged or people who were convicted in that year? My guess is it might be an outlier, but we will see.

Certainly, Fernando Reinares has ably demonstrated in his presentation [that] obviously [within] the European Muslim population there has been a fair amount of radicalization that's gone on. And I think in the United States we thought that we would be exempt from that because American Muslims are better educated than most Americans. On average, they have higher incomes, they don't live in ghettos–all the things not true in Europe. And I think that we thought we would be somewhat insulated from these kinds of ideas domestically here. And I think to a large degree that is true, but in 2009, that trend came into some question. Let's hope that 2009 was an outlier.

Another sort of interesting factor in these [cases] is [that] there are more American leaders in these groups than we've seen in the past, which I think is interesting. For instance, Shukri Jumah, who grew up in Brooklyn and then moved to Florida, is apparently now Al-Qaida's sort of external operations director.

Omar Hammami, who grew up in Alabama [and] was a Baptist who converted to Islam, is a leader of Al-Shabaab in Somalia right now; [Anwar] Al-Awlaki–I don't need to detain you with that–is the cleric from New Mexico who is playing such a prominent role in Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula; and then of course, David Headley, who actually was instrumental in scoping out the sites for the attacks in Mumbai in 2008. [H]e played a lead role in the planning of that attack. And this is sort of a new phenomenon . . . [w]e used to worry about terrorists coming to the United States; now we're in the business of exporting terrorists.

Look at not just Headley, who planned the Mumbai attacks and was also planning to attack the Danish newspaper that published the cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, but also look at "Jihad Jane" [Colleen R. LaRose], who traveled to Europe planning to attack a Swedish cartoonist, a woman from Pennsylvania. And look, of course, at the at least 20, 24 cases of Somali Americans volunteering for the jihad in Somalia. There's sort of a diversification.

Also, the kinds of people attracted to these ideas–and my hypothesis here is obviously unprovable–is that 30 years ago, if you wanted to act against the U.S. government, you would have joined the Black Panthers or the Weather Underground, and now if you want to [do that], jihadism is kind of one of the only outlets that's really left.

And so [for] somebody like "Jihad Jane," the woman from Pennsylvania–47, a high school dropout, several failed marriages under her belt–joining the jihad gave her life some meaning that she probably didn't really have at the time. Bryant Neal Vinas from Long Island, who actually trained in an Al-Qaida training camp in [20]08, is also a high school dropout who flunked out of the U.S. military after three weeks.

But then you have Major Nidal Hasan, who is a medical doctor earning $90,000 a year, or Faisal Shahzad, the guy who tried to blow up an SUV in Times Square in May of 2010, who is a financial analyst, of all unlikely places, at the Elizabeth Arden Cosmetics Company in Connecticut before he decided to go on his career of jihadism.

So there's very little way to profile people economically, ethnically. And then of course they're joining lots of different groups. The conference is about Al-Qaida, but one of the points about Al-Qaida is it has infected, ideologically,

other groups, including the Pakistani Taliban, Al-Shabaab, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and others.

So, given that sort of brief sketch of the kinds of cases we've seen in the United States since 9/11, what can we expect in the future? I think small-scale attacks. Faisal Shahzad represents the kind of attack we might expect in the future–in a sense, on the same scale of Oklahoma City. I think that's the outer kind of limits of the kinds of attacks we could see in this country.

Oklahoma City, remember, killed 168 people. It was essentially two people with some help from a third. But there's a natural ceiling to which the kinds of disorganized groups–or even somebody, a lone wolf trained by Al-Qaida–there's a natural ceiling to the kind of damage they can do.

Fernando [Reinares, European terrorism analyst] talked about the debate between those who talk about a leaderless jihad and those who talk about a leader-led jihad. In my view, if the jihad is leaderless, you don't need to have another conference on Al-Qaida because there's a natural ceiling of what leaderless groups can do.

Major Nidal Hasan, in a sense, was a classic lone wolf. He killed 13 people. But he didn't kill 3,000 people. He wasn't part of a group that killed 3,000 people. I think about the invasion of Normandy. It wasn't a sort of group of like-minded guys who got together and sort of did the invasion of Normandy. It was the most organized group in history: the U.S. military.

And so, to get a large-scale attack, you need an organization, and Al-Qaida, the organization, has been put under tremendous pressure. If you think about what it took to do 9/11, it was money transfers in Dubai, training in Afghanistan, command and control in Germany, and flight lessons in the United States. [Y]ou know the story. It was a very complex thing. Each one of those activities now would be discovered and interrupted by European law enforcement, American law enforcement, and others. So, smaller-scale attacks [instead].

I [also] think it's not impossible that we will see American suicide attackers. The reason I say that is Major Nidal Hasan planned a sort of jihad. He was planning sort of a death by cop almost. When he went into Fort Hood, he was expecting to die, and of course he didn't. But when you've seen people like Major Nidal Hasan and when you've seen American citizens–as you know,

there have been two American citizens who conducted suicide operations in Somalia–once it's happened elsewhere, it can happen here.

The British were very naïve about this. They assumed that because there have been British suicide attackers overseas in Kashmir and in Tel Aviv in 2003, they didn't think it would happen domestically. And then of course 7/7 [the 2005 London subway bombings] happened. There were four suicide attackers simultaneously.

U.S. military targets of course for these kinds of groups are very, very attractive–American soldiers fighting wars in two, and now arguably in three, Muslim countries make them a very attractive target. I don't need to tell this audience that Daniel [P.] Boyd from North Carolina was planning to attack [Marine Corps Base] Quantico. We've had the Fort Dix case. We've had Major Nidal Hasan. We've had the Little Rock case. And there are others.

I think it's not implausible that assassinations of officials might be something [to look out for]. We haven't seen it in this country, but Al-Qaida has actually had a very long record of assassinating people; that's not, I think, mostly well understood.

Al-Qaida and Al-Qaida–like groups [have attempted many assassinations]–starting with [Anwar] Sadat in 1981; going on to kill [Ahmad Shah] Massoud two days before 9/11; killing Benazir Bhutto in 2007; launching two attempts against General [Pervez] Musharraf in the 2003 time period; [attempting multiple times] to kill Kurt Westergaard, the Danish cartoonist who painted the first pictures of the Prophet Muhammad; and others. So, for instance, if I was a jihadi, who I would be very interested in killing is Terry Jones, the pastor in Florida who burned the Quran. I think that he has really set himself up for that kind of thing.

Fedayeen-style attacks,[1] I think not in this country but perhaps in Europe. Mumbai had such a success. Part of the success was that the story was alive for 60 hours. It was designed for television, and of course it worked. And so, we've had the alert, which was really directed I think mostly toward Germany, based on the Germans who were training with the Islamic Jihad Union and Islamic

1 Literally "ones who sacrifice themselves," the fedayeen are paramilitary commandos or guerillas, especially Arab commandos operating against Israel.

Movement Uzbekistan. We had the Europe-wide alert. The [U.S.] State Department issued a very stern warning in the fall of [2010] about fedayeen-style attacks with multiple attackers. I don't think that's necessarily plausible here, but you could imagine an attack on a U.S. military base in Europe with a sort of fedayeen-style attack.

And, finally, will these attackers attack in some sort of anonymous American town, sort of "Anywhereville, USA"? And I think the short answer is Al-Qaida is not interested in attacking in Des Moines because the people that it's trying to influence and impress have never heard of Des Moines. They've heard of New York, they've heard of Washington, and they've heard of American commercial aviation. And so they keep coming back to the same target sets.

Look at Najibullah Zazi [the suspect in the 2009 New York City subway bomb plot]. He was living in Denver, Colorado, when he planned his attack in Manhattan. He actually drove across the country, having originally lived in New York. He moved to Denver and then he came back. So, for Al-Qaida itself, and these bigger groups, I think New York and Washington, and commercial aviation have remained a kind of obsession.

I want to pull back a little bit beyond the United States [and talk] about factors that I think are influencing Al-Qaida both negatively and positively, because it affects their ability to do these kinds of operations. I think there are four things that are operating positively for them and four things that are acting negatively.

The positive [for Al-Qaida] is that they've infected, ideologically, other groups in South Asia that don't call themselves Al-Qaida. Look at the Pakistani Taliban. I'm glad Fernando mentioned in passing Barcelona, in January of 2008, because this was the huge canary in the mine that was not noticed. The Pakistani Taliban sent multiple suicide bombers to Barcelona in January of 2008, and it's gotten very little attention in this country, but it served to completely undercut the idea, "Hey, the Pakistani Taliban are just a bunch of people who only care about what's going on in Pakistan." And then of course we had Faisal Shahzad being sent to Times Square in May of 2010. So, these groups that were kind of provincial in outlook, who don't call themselves Al-Qaida, are now adopting an Al-Qaida–like agenda.

Then of course there's the affiliates. I think it was extremely predictable that Al-Qaida in Iraq was not out of business as an insurgent organization that

controlled Anbar Province, according to the [U.S.] Marines' assessment in 2006. Of course they are no longer that kind of organization. But just as you don't invite the hit man to dinner if you're a Mafia family, I think Al-Qaida in Iraq has a similar role for Sunni insurgent groups interested in the status of Kirkuk, interested in fomenting attacks against the central government. They don't like Al-Qaida in Iraq particularly, but they're willing to do business for them, because Al-Qaida in Iraq will do the kinds of things that will interrupt the Kurdish takeover of Kirkuk or interrupt the central–what the Sunni militant groups regard as a Shia–government.

Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb is, I think, pretty quiescent right now. Al-Shabaab has shown, very interestingly, an ability to do out-of-area operations, not only in Uganda but also in Denmark. They sent an assassin to kill the Danish cartoonist. Luckily he had a safe room and managed to escape being killed. So, these groups, the affiliates, they're up, they're down, but they remain, they have some capacity.

Another factor operating in these groups' favor is of course [that] Usama Bin Ladin and Ayman Al-Zawahiri are still out there. And I think it's not insignificant that a leader, particularly Bin Ladin, who is the author ultimately of 9/11, is still out there.[2] He celebrated his 54th birthday on February 15th. He's not an old guy. It's very strange to me that he has said nothing about the events in the Middle East, suggesting maybe that the drone attacks are kind of making him worried about security, or maybe he doesn't know what to say. The events in the Middle East are very, very difficult, I think, for Bin Ladin to process.

And then, another thing that might work in their favor–and this is sort of new–is the real nadir that U.S.-Pakistani relations have arrived at. I can't think of a time where relations have been worse. And obviously we need the Pakistanis. As Mike Scheuer correctly said, it was always very naïve to think that our interests and Pakistani interests were going to align. But they have been more aligned recently than perhaps in the past.

If you look at the operations in Swat and South Waziristan, these were serious operations, particularly the ones in South Waziristan, where the Pakistani

2 Bin Ladin was killed by a U.S. special operations forces team in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on 2 May 2011 (local time), less than a week after this conference was held.

military had gone in 2005 and 2006 and had done sort of performance art operations basically to say, "Hey, we're getting this money and look what we're doing." In fact, one of the operations actually coincided to the day with a visit to Islamabad of Secretary [of State Colin L.] Powell. So basically, those initial operations were just done to say, "Hey, we're doing something."

The 2009 operation in South Waziristan was a real operation involving substantial military planning, a lot of attacks from the air against Taliban hideouts for months, blocking positions, and 30,000 men. That is not something we could have predicted would have happened four years ago, and it did happen. So, the fact that we're in this real nadir of relationships with the Pakistanis is a problem, particularly since they've been doing more things that we wanted them to do–recently–perhaps [more] than could have been expected.

Now, what are the negatives for Al-Qaida? I think the drones are a very double-edged sword for [them]. We at the New America Foundation have done a very transparent Web site looking at every drone attack, and we calculate that the number of leaders that have been killed by these drones is basically two percent. Most of the victims of the attacks are lower-level militants, while six percent, as we calculate now, are civilians. [This number] is very close to what U.S. officials of course say off the record, which is about a two percent or less civilian casualty rate.

But I think, you know, as you probably all well know, President [Barack H.] Obama has authorized quadruple the number of drone strikes in Pakistan than President [George W.] Bush did in the eight years he was in office. So this program has really accelerated, and I think it's reached the point of being counterproductive. The day after the Raymond Davis case[3]–you may recall, when he was released, that we did drone strikes, killing at least 40 people in the tribal regions–General [Ashfaq Parvez] Kayani, who very rarely makes these kinds of public statements, came out with a very strongly worded statement essentially saying this was outrageous, civilians were killed.

3 Raymond A. Davis, a Central Intelligence Agency contractor living in Lahore, Pakistan, was accused of killing two Pakistani civilians, but was released after the U.S. government paid the families *diya* (blood money).

And they are our ally. We do have to sort of respect their sovereign country. And I think that a more transparent drone program and fewer of them, [one] that was more well-calibrated to really going after the high-value targets, [would be more prudent]. I think there's a great bureaucratic impulse to just do things because you can do them. And I think the drone program is no longer being very [effective]–we can do it so we're just doing it and we're doing it and we're doing it. But I think there are larger strategic questions that we need to think about.

So the drone program has certainly had some impact on Al-Qaida. I don't want to take that away. One–this is a hypothesis on my part–Faisal Shahzad was in Waziristan for 40 days getting training for the attack in Times Square, but he only got 5 days training. And my hypothesis is that was because the drone program was putting quite a lot of pressure on his ability to get the training.

And then there are three final points in terms of negatives for Al-Qaida. One is the kind of sharply declining support for these kind of [groups], Al-Qaida, and particularly the Taliban in Pakistan. Support for suicide bombing, Al-Qaida, and Usama Bin Ladin has just cratered in Pakistan.

And then, zooming out a little bit further, that's true around the Muslim world [in] countries like Indonesia, Jordan, Morocco, [and] Saudi Arabia. Al-Qaida is losing the war of ideas in the Muslim world, not because the United States is winning them, certainly, but because Al-Qaida is losing them. And it was always a very naïve idea to think somehow we were going to win the war of ideas. It's about other people losing them, and Al-Qaida is losing them, for three or four very obvious reasons.

These groups have killed mostly Muslim civilians. For groups that position themselves as the defenders of Islam, this is not impressive. Also, they're not offering anything positive. We know what they're against. If Bin Ladin was here and you're saying, "What are you trying to do?" he would say, "The restoration of the Caliphate." By that he doesn't mean the restoration of the Ottoman Empire, a relatively rational group of people; he means Taliban-style theocracies from Indonesia to Morocco. And most Muslims don't want that.

I mean, the one thing people are not demanding right now in the Middle East is a Taliban-style theocracy. Very few people want that. There's nothing quite like living under the Taliban as a prophylactic to have a very hostile view of

them. Only seven percent of Afghans, for instance, have a favorable view of the Taliban. So, Muslims have seen what the Taliban did in Afghanistan. They know what Al-Qaida is offering–very little, just violence. And so Al-Qaida is losing the war of ideas in the Muslim world.

And that takes me into my final point, which is what's going on in the Middle East now. It's very striking to me that we haven't seen a single picture of Usama Bin Ladin, in any demonstration in Cairo, in Benghazi, in Bahrain–anywhere–Jordan, Syria. Bin Ladin is not part of this conversation. No one is spouting Al-Qaida's venomous anti-Western rhetoric. I haven't seen a single American flag burning, or a single Israeli flag burning. I mean, this is so pro forma in that part of the world and it just isn't happening, suggesting to me that Al-Qaida is, as President Obama very eloquently put it, a "small man on the wrong side of history." And history just got a lot faster for them.

Contributors

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Christopher C. Harmon came to Marine Corps University (MCU) as a professor of international relations after four years on the faculty of the Naval War College, and he remained with the Marines for the next 14 years. In 2005, Harmon inaugurated the Kim T. Adamson Chair of Insurgency and Terrorism at MCU, and he began writing the second edition of his graduate-level textbook *Terrorism Today* (2007). Between 2007 and 2010, he was an executive in the Germany-based Program on Terrorism and Security Studies of the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies. While there he completed another book project, *Toward A Grand Strategy Against Terrorism* (2010),

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General Michael V. Hayden, USAF (Ret.), became director of the CIA in May 2006, capping a long career of service to the United States. Appointed director of the National Security Agency (NSA) by President William J. Clinton in 1999, he served in that capacity until 2005. From April 2005 to May 2006, Hayden was the number one military intelligence officer in the country, serving as Deputy Director of National Intelligence. In this role, he helped oversee the entire intelligence community, including the CIA, NSA, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, and National Reconnaissance Office. General Hayden entered active duty in the U.S. Air Force in 1969, after earning a bachelor's degree in history and a master's degree in modern American history, both from Duquesne University. In his military career, he served as commander of the Air Intelligence Agency and director of the Joint Command and Control Warfare Center. He has also served in senior staff positions at the Pentagon, the headquarters of the U.S. European Command, the National Security Council, and the U.S. Embassy in Bulgaria. General Hayden is now a principal at the Chertoff Group in Washington, DC, and a distinguished visiting professor at George Mason University.

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SINCE THE SEPTEMBER 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the United States has been at war with Al-Qaida. Over the past 10 years, counterterrorism efforts have disrupted its main training facilities and eliminated much of the core leadership structure, including the mastermind Usama Bin Ladin. Despite this, Al-Qaida has proved resilient. While the core leadership has been compromised, regional Al-Qaida offshoots and affiliated Islamist terrorist groups have formed, developed, and become prominent in their own right.

To aid in examining and explaining Al-Qaida's trajectory, the Minerva Initiative at Marine Corps University hosted a conference in the spring of 2011, just days before Bin Ladin's demise. The panels at this conference addressed diverse issues such as Al-Qaida's overarching strategy; the degree of control that central Al-Qaida leadership maintains over regional franchises; and the strategies, tactics, successes, and failures in each theater of operation. The resulting papers in ***Al-Qaida after Ten Years of War*** contribute to the ongoing and ever-evolving net assessment of Al-Qaida and its future prospects, and they help inform the crafting of a war termination phase with Al-Qaida.

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