

Global Jihad: Summary of Information from Arabic Media Sources

The First Half of May 2011

This report summarizes the most prominent articles on the subject of global Jihad published in the Arabic media in the first half of May 2011. Following are the main issues raised in this report:

- Protests in the Muslim world over the killing of Bin Laden. Retaliation is promised in an opinion paper from the organization's affiliates in Somalia, Iraq, the Maghreb and the Arabian Peninsula.
- The Taliban in Afghanistan executes a wave of terrorist attacks as part of the "spring offensive", and promises escalation. According to the organization, the attack was planned even before Bin Laden's death.
- Three suspects arrested for planning a terrorist attack in Germany.
- The New York security forces arrested two suspects who planned to carry out a terrorist attack against synagogues in the city and against the Empire State Building.

Afghanistan – Pakistan

The Al-Qaeda Leadership

- On May 6th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper published an interview with the American journalist Laurence Wright, who is an expert on Al-Qaeda. Wright told the newspaper that he does not expect Ayman Al-Zawahiri to do much in the future as he lacks the ability to control the organization, and he is not charismatic and cannot influence the youth in the same way as Bin Laden. He also said that a lot of the organization's funds come from the Gulf and that the remaining leaders of the organization do not have ties with the Gulf countries, a fact that will result in a financial crisis for the organization.¹
- On May 7th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper quoted the "Sight" website, saying that Al-Qaeda has published a manifesto confirming Osama bin Laden's death. The manifesto promised that the organization will continue attacking the West and that Bin Laden's death will be "a curse that will haunt the Americans and their agents". The manifesto praised Bin Laden and his path and stated that the organization will continue in the path of Jihad.²
- On May 12th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper reported that the leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, Nasir Al-Wahishi, promised the Americans that they will regret killing Bin Laden. He further said that although they succeeded in killing Bin Laden, they did not succeed in killing his path and the nation's fighting spirit.³
- On May 2nd 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network published the reactions to the death of Bin Laden from specialists on terrorism in the Arab world. Yasir Al-Zaatra, an Al-Qaeda expert, told "Al-Jazeera" that Bin Laden has a lot of presence in Islamic awareness, and that his death at the hands of the

¹ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 6th 2011: www.aawsat.com

² Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 7th 2011: www.aawsat.com

³ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 12th 2011: www.aawsat.com

Americans is not a simple piece of news for the Islamic nation, "as he was the one waging his main battles against the nation's greatest enemy – the U.S.". Al-Zaatra estimated that Al-Qaeda cannot carry out quality terrorist attacks within the U.S., but that "it is possible we will witness revenge attacks of a private nature for Bin Laden's death, or executed by organizations belonging to Al-Qaeda in the Arab countries". The website also quoted Hasan Abu Hanyya, a researcher on Al-Qaeda and Salafi Jihad movements, who said that the Salafi movements and Al-Qaeda can adapt to the changes, and estimated that in the near future Al-Qaeda will focus on Jihad in Palestine and on the Iranian danger. He also estimated that Bin Laden's absence will not affect Al-Qaeda as the weakening of the organization in one place does not impact its activity elsewhere. This is due to the lack of a central leadership to the organization.⁴

- On May 3rd 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network quoted Saeed Al-Jamhi, an Al-Qaeda researcher, who said in an interview that revenge for the killing of Bin Laden will be a top priority for Al-Qaeda in Yemen, and raised the possibility that revenge by Al-Qaeda will be on U.S. soil and will be of similar scope to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. He also raised the possibility that Al-Qaeda sleeper cells will be activated and that it is possible that American targets will be attacked in Yemen. He further said that Bin Laden will remain a symbol for his supporters, and that he has achieved victory over the Americans both in his life and in his death.⁵

⁴ Al-Jazeera, May 2nd 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

⁵ Al-Jazeera, May 3rd 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

Afghanistan

- On May 8th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper reported that the day previously, the Taliban movement in Afghanistan has issued an opinion paper announcing that Al-Qaeda's leader, Osama bin Laden, had died a martyr's death and that his death was a "huge disaster". The opinion paper noted that Bin Laden's death will spur on hundreds of other people to die a martyr's death and sacrifice their lives.⁶
- On May 7th and 8th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper and the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that a wave of terrorist attacks had swept the city of Kandahar. Ten explosions occurred in the city - six of them were carried out by suicide bombers against government targets, including the Kandahar Governor's office. Yusuf Ahmadi, the Taliban spokesperson, announced that his movement is responsible for the terrorist attacks and that they will continue. It was further reported that the Taliban movement had announced in the week prior to the terrorist attacks that the spring offensive had begun and promised an escalation in the attacks against the foreign forces and government entities. Ahmadi declared to the Reuters news agency that these attacks are not in retaliation to Bin Laden's elimination, but rather a part of the spring offensive that was planned several months in advance.⁷ The "Al-Jazeera" network reported on May 10th 2011 that as part of the Taliban's spring offensive, about 400 Taliban fighters launched an attack against police centers in the city of Baron, capital of the Nuristan Province. One of the Taliban commanders announced that the objective of the attack was to take over the city.⁸

⁶ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 8th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

⁷ Al-Jazeera, May 7th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>; Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 8th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

⁸ Al-Jazeera, May 5th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

Pakistan

- On May 4th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper reported that following Bin Laden's death, the Taliban–Pakistan movement distributed an audio tape in which it declared that the Pakistan government and its leaders will be the primary targets of the Taliban movement's terrorist attacks, and that the movement's secondary target is the United States. The article further reported that the Lashkar-e-Taiba movement has asked its operatives to pray for Bin Laden, and that the movement's spokesperson said that "Bin Laden was a good man who helped revived the Islamic world". He further said that "a martyr's death is a source of pride for the Muslims". The article also noted that the party of the religious clerics of Islam held a protest parade demonstrating their support of Bin Laden. The party's leader said that Bin Laden's death has increased the hatred against the U.S. amongst the Muslims in the country.⁹ On May 7th 2011, the newspaper reported that demonstrations were held protesting Bin Laden's death in various cities around Pakistan, and that the Islamic parties and the operatives in the country have stated that they will continue with the Jihad against the United States.¹⁰
- The "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper and the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that over 80 people were killed at a training camp of the Pakistani quasi-military security forces, 20 kilometers from Peshawar. The terrorist attack was carried out when the trainees were on buses leaving for home. A suicide bomber approached the buses on a motorcycle and detonated explosives whilst shouting "Allah-Akbar". A few minutes later, upon the arrival of the emergency forces, the second detonation occurred which was also

⁹ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 4th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

¹⁰ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 7th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

perpetrated by a suicide bomber riding a motorcycle. It was further stated that this was the most severe terrorist attack in Pakistan this year. Ihsan Allah Ihsan, the Taliban spokesperson, told the Reuters news agency that this was the first attack carried out in revenge for Bin Laden's death, and promised more severe attacks.¹¹

Iraq

- On May 1st 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper reported that for the first time in Iraq, it is expected that there will be a reconciliation plan that will also include former Al-Qaeda operatives who agreed to disarm themselves.¹²
- On May 4th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper reported that the Iraqi security forces are on heightened alert for fear that Al-Qaeda will carry out terrorist attacks against civilians, oil installations and power stations around the country, as revenge for Bin Laden's death.¹³ During the first half of May 2011 the Arab media reported on a wave of terror besieging the country involving a great number of attacks, most of them using explosive devices. The most prominent of these was the attack in the city of Hilla, capital of the Babil Region, which is located 100 km south of Baghdad. The attack was carried out at the police center on May 5th at 07:00 am, during the morning roll call when the changing of guards also took place. The suicide bomber used this time when the policemen gather in the main quad, to break through the main gate with a car bomb, killing 21 policemen.¹⁴ Another prominent attack took place in the Al-Dura neighborhood in Baghdad, where

¹¹ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 14th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>; Al-Jazeera, May 13th 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.net>

¹² Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 1st 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

¹³ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 4th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

¹⁴ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 6th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

a car bomb was detonated in front of a café, killing 10 people.¹⁵ The press further reported that the many terrorist attacks around the country are mostly against security personnel in Baghdad,¹⁶ Tikrit, Ninawa,¹⁷ Mosul¹⁸ and Karbalaa.¹⁹

- On May 9th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper reported that a prisoners' mutiny occurred at a facility belonging to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior. The prison houses individuals convicted of terrorism and Al-Qaeda commanders, as well as the organization's Baghdad Governor, Hudhayfa Al-Battawi. The mutiny began when Al-Battawi was sent for interrogation regarding a series of assassinations that had recently occurred, and the possibility that Al-Qaeda will execute retaliatory terrorist attacks over the death of Bin Laden. When the interrogating officer opened the door to the cell, Al-Battawi managed to take possession of his weapon and held him hostage while other prisoners escaped from the cell to the prison yard. The group of prisoners that succeeded in reaching a senior officer in the anti-terrorism unit, shot him in the head and later killed another officer. Afterwards the group commandeered weapons and hand grenades stored in the prison and confronted the prison guards. Before the arrival of the anti-terrorist unit and other forces, the officer taken hostage and another officer were killed in the attack. A senior officer at the Iraqi Ministry of Defense told the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper that the terrorist attack was planned by the organization's operatives in retaliation to Bin Laden's death and the manner in which the officer's weapon was commandeered was planned. He

¹⁵ Al-Jazeera, May 4th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

¹⁶ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 5th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

¹⁷ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 6th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

¹⁸ Al-Jazeera, May 4th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

¹⁹ Al-Jazeera, May 4th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

did not exclude the possibility that elements outside the prison helped plan the attack.²⁰

- On May 10th 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that Al-Qaeda in Iraq had published an opinion paper on the internet declaring its support for Ayman Al-Zawahiri and promising revenge for the killing of Bin Laden. The paper called on the Mujahideen and the nation's zealous youth to follow Bin Laden's path.²¹

The Arabian Peninsula

Yemen

- On May 11th 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that the leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, Nasir Al-Wahishi, published a message promising to take revenge for Bin Laden's death, stating the Americans should "expect the worse" and promising they "will bite their fingers with remorse" over Bin Laden's elimination. He further added that "the ember of Jihad was stoked even further in comparison to when Bin Laden was alive". He also added that Bin Laden's death gave his organization the determination "to fight the Jews and the Americans so as to avenge the killing of the nation's shahids".²²
- On May 1st 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that armed men, probably from Al-Qaeda, continued to carry out terrorist attacks against the security forces in Yemen's southern provinces – Abyan and Hadhramaut.²³
- On May 8th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper reported that Anwar Al-Awlaqi survived an attempt on his life carried out by an American drone in

²⁰ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 9th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

²¹ Al-Jazeera, May 10th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

²² Al-Jazeera, May 11th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

²³ Al-Jazeera, May 1st 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

the Shabwah Province in southern Yemen. According to the reports, two other Al-Qaeda activists were killed in the attack.²⁴

The Maghreb

The Maghreb – General

- On May 9th 2011, the “Al-Jazeera” network quoted a French news agency, who in turn reported that the American “Sight” website reported that Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb published a message on the internet stating that “The events we are witnessing in the Arab world are none other than the fruit of Jihad where the Sheikh [Bin Laden] had a central role”. The organization also condemned Bin Laden's death, and called for the bringing down of the governments in the Arab countries.²⁵ On May 11th 2011, the “Al-Jazeera” network reported that Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb had issued a manifesto stating that the American people will pay the price for Bin Laden's elimination – the manifesto referred to it as “a grave mistake”. The organization called on its supporters to take revenge for Bin Laden's elimination.²⁶

Mauritania

- The “Al-Jazeera” network published an article on the city of Nema in the east of Mauritania, about 1,200 km east of the capital, Nouakchott. The city lies between mountains and high plains which almost completely surround it, and the city can only be exited from the west. The climate there is a warm desert climate. The city's residents make their living from agriculture, and their proximity to the border with Mali makes it a commercial center and a main

²⁴ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 8th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

²⁵ Al-Jazeera, May 9th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

²⁶ Al-Jazeera, May 11th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

artery for the passage of cars and trucks making their way to Mali. Since the construction of the port in Nouakchott, the city between Nouakchott and Mali that has no exit to the sea has become an even more important center, as it is located on the route between those two places. These conditions of isolation on the one hand, and as a center serving for the passage of goods on the other, have made the city an important center for Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb, and the organization uses it in its struggle against Mauritania and against other forces. The organization uses the city to supply its needs, and the organization's operatives walk around freely in the city's markets. The Mauritanian army has also constructed a base in the city from where it stages attacks against the organization. In retaliation for the first time, the organization carried out a suicide attack against the military base in the city in the middle of last year, and the city has turned from being a center for equipment and supplies for the organization, into a target in its war against the Mauritanian government.²⁷

- On May 3rd 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that there is great concern in Mauritania about an attack in retaliation for the death of Bin Laden. The head of the Security and Strategic Research at the Mauritania Strategic Research Center (CMERS), Muhammad Al-Amin Ould Sidi Mawlud, said in an interview to the "Al-Jazeera" website that Bin Laden's death will push Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb operatives into carrying out quality terrorist attacks in the Sahara countries, including in Mauritania. He further added that the deep roots and political motivations of terrorism continue to exist even after Bin Laden's death. These are: the occupation, the exploitation, the American aggression and generally the western aggression,

²⁷ Al-Jazeera, May 11th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

and the decline in the standard of living. He further foresees that a terrorist attack which will be carried out under the heading of "a retaliatory attack" over Bin Laden's death, will receive much less criticism and more sympathy on the part of elements identifying with Al-Qaeda, unlike the abductions which are construed as being a result of greed. Islamu Ould Mustafa, another expert who gave an interview to the "Al-Jazeera" website, thinks that Al-Qaeda's response will be severe and swift - not only on the part of the organization's branches in Pakistan and the Arabian Peninsula, but also on the part of the organization's branch in the Maghreb. He added that contrary to the beliefs of many, the organization can still cause damage to western targets, not only in Mauritania but also in the rest of the Sahara countries, and that in the event it does not succeed it will attack the Americans' allies in the region. He also added that despite the political weakening of the organization following the rebellions in the Arab world, in the military sense, the organization has grown stronger due to the security chaos in Libya and also due to the increase in its ability to recruit following Bin Laden's death.²⁸

Morocco

- On May 7th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper reported that the Moroccan Minister of Interior, Al-Tayyib Al-Sharqawi, revealed new details about the identity of the main suspect in the bombing of the café in Marrakech on April 28th 2011, killing 16 people. The suspect, Adel Al-Uthmani, bought various materials used in the manufacturing of explosives six months prior to the terrorist attack, and learnt how to build the explosives on the internet. He placed the materials in his family's home in

²⁸ Al-Jazeera, May 3rd 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

the city of Safi, and succeeded in assembling two explosive devices of 6kg and 9kg. In addition he used a cell phone as a remote mechanism to control the charges. The Moroccan Minister of Interior reported that the suspect sat at the café on April 28th passing himself off as a regular client, and later left the place leaving behind the bag with the two charges, which he detonated remotely using the cell phone. Al-Sharqawi described the suspect as someone imbued with the idea of Jihad and expressing his loyalty to Al-Qaeda, and also said that he had previously attempted on several occasions to leave Morocco to theaters of Jihad, in particular to Chechnya and Iraq. It was further reported that he had previously been arrested in Syria, and returned to Morocco. Together with the main suspect, two further suspects were arrested under suspicion of aiding and abetting the terrorist attack, and they too aspired to join foreign Jihad theaters but were arrested in Libya. It was further mentioned that the investigation was aided by French security forces.²⁹

- The Mauritanian Nouakchott news agency reported on May 6th 2011 that Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb published a manifesto on the internet, a copy of which reached the news agency. In the manifesto the organization denies having any connection to the terrorist attack in Marrakech, and that "attacking Jews and Crusaders and attacking their interests is our top priority [...] we shall choose the time and place that will not interfere with the interests of the nation and its movement towards the desired liberation".³⁰

²⁹ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 7th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

³⁰ NOI, May 6th 2011: <http://www.ani.mr>

Tunisia

- On May 15th 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network quoted the Reuters news agency, stating that Tunisian television announced that the security forces in the country had arrested two Al-Qaeda activists who were carrying an explosives belt and explosives. This is the first time the authorities had announced the arrest of Al-Qaeda operatives since the deposing of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.³¹

Al-Sham region

Jordan

- On May 3rd 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network published an article briefly examining the history and trends in the Salafi-Jihadi movement in Jordan since it came to be known in 1994, with the trial of the Bai'at Al-Imam organization's activists, headed by the organization's ideologists, Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi and Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi. The article notes that an ideological rift developed between the two during their incarceration in the Jordanian prison. Since his release in 1999, Al-Zarqawi turned to Jihad, while Al-Maqdisi focused on Da'awa and renounced the millennium terrorist attacks, a year after he was arrested again at the end of 1999. It is further noted that the rift between the two deepened when Al-Zarqawi moved to Iraq and began leading Al-Qaeda there, joined by hundreds of members of the Salafi-Jihadi movement from Jordan, while others joined Al-Qaeda in Chechnya and Afghanistan. In 2005, after he was again released from prison, Al-Maqdisi condemned Al-Qaeda's actions, particularly the attacks on the Shiites and the Christians. According to the article, the movement remained

³¹ Al-Jazeera, May 15th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

without a leader until Al-Maqdisi was again released in 2008, and united the movement's ranks based on three declared foundations: 1) return to non-militant but radical Da'awa, detached from the political, cultural and social reality; 2) an end to extremism and to takfir, and an aspiration to unite the sources of religious and ideological authority; 3) carrying out Da'awa in the West Bank of the River Jordan (in Palestine), and building a movement that declares Jihad in the Salafi Jihadi way. The article further notes that despite Al-Maqdisi's success in uniting most of the movement's proponents, there still remains a group that insists on taking Al-Qaeda's path. It is also stated that Al-Maqdisi is the movement's prominent ideologist, but he is under pressure from the security services and is repeatedly incarcerated. Following this, other leaders of the movement in Jordan sprung up, including the ideologist operating in northern Jordan, Abu Muhammad Al-Tahawi. Also, Jarah Al-Rahahla and Luqman Al-Rialat, (the leaders from the city of Al-Salt), Dr. Saad Al-Hunaiti and Jawad Al-Faqih (from Amman), and more. It is further reported that the cities where the movement is most prevalent are, in descending order: Zarqa'a, Amman, Irbid, Ma'an, Al-Salt and the Baqa'a Refugee Camp. The movement advocates the idea of *Hakimiyya*, according to which the constitutions, the regimes and the political and security institutions are heretics. Furthermore, the movement contends that democracy is heresy, as well as its institutions, and like them it adheres to dividing the world into Dar Al-Islam (House of Islam) and Dar Al-Kufr (House of disbelief), to the idea of "Loyalty and Disavowal" (Al-Wala' wal-Bara') [requiring them to be loyal to other Muslims and not to join non-Muslims], deeming Jihad as the organization's ideological pillar and that of its activities. It is also reported that the organization increased its activity at the beginning

of 2011 during the riots in the Arab countries, demanding the implementation of Islamic Sharia and the release of the movement's activists.³²

Egypt

- On May 4th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper published an article by Adel Al-Toraifi on the subject of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt under the heading: "Everyone is Hawkish in the Brothers' Nest". Al-Toraifi notes that some contend that the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is divided into a hawkish camp and a dovish camp. He believes that the claim that the Muslim Brotherhood opposes violence in any form is only partially true. Although the movement does not have a military branch it acknowledges that it does have a fundamentalist culture that clashes with civilization. According to him it is rare to find someone whose name is connected with religious extremism that has not read the Muslim Brotherhood's essays, been educated within its fold, or was exposed to its ideas and dialogue. According to Al-Toraifi there is a clear line dividing the Muslim Brotherhood and the Jihad organizations, including Al-Qaeda, and that line is the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood does not bear arms "or to be more accurate, does not squeeze the trigger". According to him, the movement's deterministic solution is the Islamic solution, meaning a totalitarian government by the movement. The movement preaches religious extremism, but eventually says that it does not believe in bearing arms, meaning that bearing arms is a private interpretation. Al-Toraifi reminds that the Muslim Brotherhood's manifesto opposes the shedding of "Sheikh" Osama bin Laden's blood and notes that

³² Al-Jazeera, May 3rd 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

resistance is legitimate against anyone occupying Iraq and Afghanistan. According to him, this points to the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood and Al-Qaeda share the same logic, but are in disagreement as to its interpretation. The Muslim Brotherhood advocates the bearing of arms against the occupier and the civilians helping it, while Al-Qaeda permits the killing of all without distinguishing between soldiers and civilians. Al-Toraifi notes that sometimes a Muslim Brotherhood member of the dovish camp makes declarations pertaining to democracy, civil rights, women's rights, freedom of thought and minority rights, but soon afterwards someone from the hawkish camp comes out with contradicting statements. This means that the movement's dovish statements are merely tactical maneuvers, and it is not changing its radical ideology. Al-Toraifi writes that anyone trying to analyze the fundamentalist religious movements encounters a problem, as they contain a contradictory discourse which is construed as duality between the hawkish and the dovish camps but in truth, in the fundamentalist world everyone is hawkish. There is no difference between one member and another, only on the level of personal sympathy, and the rationale basis is one and the same. According to him, there are those demonstrating optimism with respect to the Muslim Brotherhood, hoping that it will become more civilian so that it will be able to operate in the political theater, however the movement's motto has not changed, and it cannot accept the rules of the democratic game which cannot exist without a secular civilian atmosphere.³³

³³ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 4th 2011: www.aawsat.com

Africa

- The "Al-Jazeera" network published an article by Hamdi Abd Al-Rahman, who holds a PhD in Political Science and is an expert on Africa affairs, dealing with the importance of the African continent in Al-Qaeda's activity. Abd Al-Rahman claims that the African continent is of strategic importance to Al-Qaeda for several reasons: it is a passageway for goods between several continents surrounding it; it constitutes convenient ground for activity due to the poverty, the inequality and the marginalization of minorities in most of its countries which causes the rise of protests amongst the people; most of the borders between the African countries are artificial, and it is therefore easy to move between the borders and smuggle people and funds. Abd Al-Rahman notes that Al-Qaeda exploited the situation on the continent for carrying out illegal trade in diamonds used for laundering funds; Africa is a target for recruiting supporters due to the people's rage towards their tyrannical governments and their collaboration with the United States. Abd Al-Rahman notes that the ties between the African movements and Al-Qaeda are ideological and not organizational and therefore Bin Laden's absence will not hurt these movements in terms of organization. He raises the possibility that the African organizations loyal to Al-Qaeda will carry out revenge terrorist attacks against western targets in Africa. Furthermore, he also estimates that these organizations will be able to operate more freely and independently.³⁴

³⁴ Al-Jazeera, May 11th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

Somalia

- On May 1st 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network published a review of the Somali Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen movement. According to the review, the organization was established in 2004 but only began acquiring its notoriety in 2007. The movement started out as the military branch of the Islamic Courts' Union at the time when the Union took over most of the land in the south in the second half of 2006. When the Courts and their leaders surrendered and formed a pact with the Somali opposition, the Al-Shabab movement broke off and accused them of entering into an alliance with the seculars and giving up Jihad. Ideologically, the organization is a Salafi-Jihadi organization whose goal is the founding of an Islamic state, and which defines the Somali government as having recanted the Islamic religion. Furthermore, the movement also has armed men that are not Somali but rather come from other Arab and Islamic countries. The movement is considered to be the strongest armed faction in Somalia, and it numbers between 3,000 and 7,000 fighters. It is believed that they train in Eritrea, where they stay for six months receiving guerilla training and training in the use of explosives. In addition, there are reports that the movement's leaders trained in Afghanistan. The terrorist attacks carried out by the movement are depicted as attacks in the style of the terrorist attacks in Iraq, meaning – the detonation of explosive charges placed on the roads, the use of car bombs and the launching of mortars.³⁵
- On May 4th 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that Sheikh Hasan Tahir Awis told them that the issue of Jihad will not end with Bin Laden's death, as this is "a matter ordered by Allah on the Muslims, and it was carried out

³⁵ Al-Jazeera, May 1st 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

before Him, and shall continue until Judgment Day". He predicted that the terrorist attacks will increase after Bin Laden's death. Furthermore, Awis called on the Muslims all over the world "to increase the Jihad activity so as to gain a martyr's death".³⁶

- On May 8th 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that the spokesman of the Somali Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen movement, Ali Mahmud Raghi, announced at a press conference in Mogadishu that the blood of Al-Qaeda's leader Osama bin Laden, "was not spilled in vain, and his death will not go unpunished". He called on the Mujahideen everywhere to prepare for revenge terrorist attacks. He said the Bin Laden's death will not dissuade the Jihad movements from their Jihad activity, and will even increase it. The website reported that it is expected the organization will succeed in carrying out terrorist attacks against several government targets, and it is possible that targets will be attacked in East African countries which support the Somali government.³⁷
- On May 13th 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that the conflicts in Mogadishu between the government forces and the African Union and the Somali Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen movement continue to claim lives on both sides. The movement's spokesman, Sheikh Ali Mahmud Raghi, said to the people of Uganda: "If you celebrate the election of your President Museveni for another term, we will celebrate in our own special way, over the bodies of your soldiers you sent to our country to kill our sons". The website further reported on conflicts between the Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen movement and the Ahl Al-Sunna movement in the center of the country, where six people were killed on both sides. Also, one of Al-Shabab's leaders, Abu Mansur Al-

³⁶ Al-Jazeera, May 4th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

³⁷ Al-Jazeera, May 8th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

Amriki, said that Bin Laden's elimination will bring an increase in the number of volunteers enlisting to the ranks of the Mujahideen.³⁸

The West and the rest of the world

The United States

- On May 14th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper reported that the New York police arrested an Algerian and a Moroccan who planned to blow up a synagogue and the Empire State Building. It was further reported that the police had been following them for over 7 months, during time the detainees purchased a weapon from an undercover policeman posing as an arms dealer. The State Prosecutor denied the two were connected to a terrorist organization such as Al-Qaeda. One of the detainees said that he was sick of the manner in which the Muslims were treated worldwide, and therefore resolved to carry out the crime of terrorism, train in the manufacturing of bombs, kill Jews and blow up synagogues.³⁹

Great Britain

- On May 8th 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper reported that Khalid Al-Fawaz will be extradited to the U.S. in the upcoming months. Al-Fawaz was incarcerated in Britain for the past 12 years for having aided the preparations for the terrorist attack against the American embassies in 1998.⁴⁰

³⁸ Al-Jazeera, May 13th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

³⁹ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 14th 2011: www.aawsat.com

⁴⁰ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 8th 2011: www.aawsat.com

Germany

- The Arab press reported in the first half of May 2011 that German authorities had arrested three Al-Qaeda operatives who planned to plant a bomb on a bus or in a bus station. The arrests took place in Dusseldorf and Bochum. The cell's leader, Abd Al-Adhim K., returned to Germany in May 2010 having trained at a camp in Afghanistan. The Moroccan intelligence services provided the German police with information on his movements and visits to Morocco. An electrician of Moroccan origin and a high school student of Iranian origin were also arrested alongside Abd Al-Adhim. It was further reported, based on German press reports, that the three were close to making a bomb and that they received their orders from an Al-Qaeda leader located on the Pakistani – Afghan border.⁴¹

France

- On May 10th 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that sources with the French police had revealed that the security forces had arrested seven people suspected of involvement in a terrorist attack that took place in Marrakech at the end of April.⁴²

General

- On May 4th 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that a mass prayer was held in Sudan for Bin Laden's soul, and he was named as a Shahid. After the prayer, the worshippers made death calls against the U.S. and Europe, and called for revenge for Bin Laden's death.⁴³ The "Al-Jazeera" website reported

⁴¹ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, May 1st 2011: www.aawsat.com; Al-Jazeera, May 2nd 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

⁴² Al-Jazeera, May 10th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

⁴³ Al-Jazeera, May 4th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

that protests about Bin Laden's death took place around the Muslim world. The website reported on May 7th that many people protested in Pakistan against the killing and a prayer was held in his honor. The same also occurred in Egypt where thousands prayed for Bin Laden in Tahrir Square, calling against the U.S. and Israel. Furthermore, it was reported that in Tripoli in Lebanon, prayers were held for Bin Laden. A prayer for Bin Laden's soul was held also in London, under heavy guard.⁴⁴ In Ankara and Istanbul in Turkey, processions were held where calls against the U.S. and in favor of Bin Laden were heard, as well as a prayer for Bin Laden's soul.⁴⁵ The website also reported that in Algiers several people praying for Bin Laden's soul were arrested.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Al-Jazeera, May 7th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

⁴⁵ Al-Jazeera, May 7th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

⁴⁶ Al-Jazeera, May 11th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>