



ICT
International Institute
for Counter-Terrorism
With the Support of Keren Daniel

ICT Jihadi Monitoring Group **PERIODIC REVIEW**

Bimonthly Report

Summary of Information on Jihadist Websites

The First Half of January 2015

Highlights

This report summarizes notable events discussed on jihadist Web forums during the first half of January 2015. Following are the main points covered in the report:

- Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) claims responsibility for an attack that was carried out against the French satirical weekly magazine, *Charlie Hebdo*, in Paris. According to the organization, the attack was carried out in revenge for dishonoring the Prophet Muhammad by publishing an insulting caricature of his image. Many jihadist organizations, including Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and the Islamic State, applauded the attack, justified it and called on Muslims in the West, especially in France, to continue a wave of attacks of this kind. The announcement is published following a period of several months in which Ayman al-Zawahiri was not heard from.
- Approximately ten jihadist organizations in Pakistan and Afghanistan swear allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic Caliphate, following talks between the group leaders to appoint Hafiz Sa'id Khan Orkzai as the leader of a new organization to represent al-Baghdadi in Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- 'Ali Abu Muhammad al-Daghistani, Emir of the Islamic Caucasus Emirate, issues a scathing criticism of the Islamic State and its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and accuses them of trying to sow division among the ranks of the mujahideen in the Caucasus. According to him, jihadists in the Caucasus who swore allegiance to al-Baghdadi are doing so due to ignorance of shari'a.
- The Islamic State continues to publish horrific videos. A new video in Russian titled, "Uncovering an Enemy Within" documented the execution of two Russian spies by a child soldier in the organization. Efforts also continue to strengthen the image of the Islamic State as an organization capable of imposing law and order in the areas under its authority, as demonstrated in a video documenting the lives of residents in Mosul, narrated by kidnapped journalist, John Cantlie.
- Jihadist Web forums publish an interview with Majd al-Din al-Misri, the General Manager of Ajnad Misr. According to him, the goal of the organization is to implement shari'a in Egypt through the use of jihad, with the current emphasis on fighting against the Egyptian regime and not against minority groups.

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New Publications

Ideology

- Al-Malahim jihadist media institution, which serves a platform for the official announcements of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), published a series of religious lessons titled, “Dawah Series” by Sheikh Hareth al-Nathari. The series was composed of 22 videos explaining various topics, such as monotheism, the Shura Council, hijra, the Quran, and more.¹
- Al-Malahim jihadist media institution, which serves a platform for the official announcements of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), published video no. 13 in a series titled, “Laws of the Emirate” by Sheikh Harith bin Ghazi al-Nadhari, a senior member of the organization’s Shura Council. The video discussed the tasks to be fulfilled by the emir in the framework of his role.²
- Sheikh Mamun Hatim, a jihadist in Yemen who expressed support for the Islamic State (IS), published an article titled, “Justice and Equality” – the first part in a new series of articles titled, “Trademark Properties of the Winning Team”. In the article, Hatim discussed early Islamic traditions that emphasize the obligation of every Muslim to treat his fellow Muslims with justice and equality.³
- The Media Front for Assistance to the Islamic State and Al-Battar jihadist media institutions, which are involved in PR for the Islamic State (IS), published an article titled, “The Secret Sense of Shari’a” by Abu Mawdud al-’Armasi – part 8 in a series titled, “Unlocking the Secrets”. According to the writer, the goal of the present generation of mujahideen is not to implement shari’a and its punishments, but rather to awaken the Nation to realize that non-Muslim ideologies such as democracy are falsehoods and that the real solution is increased awareness regarding the implementation of shari’a.⁴

The Rift between Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State

A. The Camp Opposed to the Islamic State

- The jihadist media institution of the Islamic Caucasus Emirate, Kavkaz Center, published an

¹ <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

³ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁴ <http://al-battar-media-foundation.blogspot.co.il/2015/01/8.html>

audio clip by ‘Ali Abu Muhammad al-Daghistani, Emir of the Islamic Caucasus Emirate, titled, “A Message to Muslims”. In the clip, al-Daghistani harshly criticized the IS and accused Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the organization, and Abu Muhmmad al-‘Adnani, the spokesman for the organization, of causing a schism and deepening the rift among the ranks of the mujahideen. He noted that jihadists in the Caucasus are weak militarily and are fighting against Russia, one of the strongest nations in the world. Nevertheless, they enjoy unity in their ranks, which provides them with great strength and endurance. However, this strength is being challenged by the Islamic State’s attempts to undermine it.

Al-Daghistani emphasized that important decisions regarding the path of the Islamic Caucasus Emirate are made following consultations with the religious scholars of the Muslim Nation and jihad, including: Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of Al-Qaeda, Abu Qatada al-Filastini, Hani al-Siba’i, Tariq ‘Abd al-Halim, Sulayman al-‘Alwan and ‘Abd al-‘Aziz al-Tarifi.

He added that the recent oaths of allegiance taken by jihadists in the Caucasus to the IS stem from ignorance of shari’a. Moreover, the way of the Islamic State is to label other Muslims who do not fit in with their ideas as heretics, and the caliphate that it declared is not legal since it was established without consultation with the rest of the mujahideen.⁵



The video banner

- Sheikh Hani al-Sib’ai, the head of Al-Maqrizi Center for Historical Studies and an Egyptian Salafist activist exiled in London, invited Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the IS, to hold a debate with him regarding his declaration of the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate under his leadership. According to al-Sib’ai, such a debate would contribute to clarifying the issue of the

⁵ <http://vdagestan.com/ar/> (Arabic).

current caliphate that he established in sin, which lacks any legal basis. He emphasized that debate is an important principle in Islam and that various Muslim religious leaders throughout history have held debates with both domestic and foreign rivals and, therefore, it is advisable for al-Baghdadi to accept this invitation or at least send a representative on his behalf.⁶

- Al-Hussam jihadist media institution, which reviews jihadist activities in Yemen, published an article titled, “Advice for the Mujahideen in General and the Mujahideen in the Caucasus and the Arabian Peninsula in Particular” by Sheikh Khalid bin Umar al-Batarfi (aka Abu al-Miqdad al-Kindi), a senior AQAP commander imprisoned in Al-Mukalla jail in Yemen.

Al-Kindi discussed the implications and the legality of oaths of allegiance taken by jihadists, especially in the Caucasus and the Arabian Peninsula, to the Caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the IS. According to him, these oaths of allegiance only contribute to a rift among the ranks of the mujahideen and constitute a flagrant violation of previous oaths of allegiance to the jihadist organizations to which they belonged. He also emphasized that the declaration of the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate by the IS was not legal and, therefore, serves as another reason for the unlawfulness of oaths of allegiance to the caliphate.⁷



The video banner

B. The Camp Supporting the Islamic State

- Al-Hayat jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the IS, published a video titled, “A Message from our Brother, Abdullah Moldovi”, a member of the IS. In the video, Moldovi noted that since the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate, it has faced criticism from various rivals

⁶ <http://www.almaqreze.net/ar/news.php?readmore=2569> (Arabic).

⁷ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic); https://justpaste.it/al_husamchannel-18

who claim that its establishment has no legal and legitimate basis. According to him, the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate was necessary and that, just as opponents rose up against the first Caliph in Islam, Abu Bakr (ruled: 632-634 AD), so too are opponents rising up against the current caliphate. He noted that, according to one claim, the modern Islamic Caliphate was established under the rule of the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan, a claim he said is invalid since the Islamic Caliphate is not supposed to be reduced to territorial borders as is happening in Afghanistan, but rather should have no borders at all. The IS does not recognize territorial borders and does not delineate the territory of the caliphate. The Islamic Caliphate is also obligated to defend Islam. For this reason, the Caliphate of Abu al-Baghdadi, the leader of the IS, is considered legal and does not belong to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.⁸



The video banner

- The Media Front for Support to the Islamic State published an article harshly criticizing Al-Qaeda, in which it stated that Al-Qaeda had gone too far and was not conducting itself according to the laws of God; it emphasized that neither Al-Qaeda, the IS, nor any other organization has any meaning or value if it does not act according to the laws of God. The article rejected Al-Qaeda's criticism of the IS for its establishment of a caliphate and defiantly wondered where Al-Qaeda's caliphate was prior to the Islamic State's declaration, where was its state, what were its borders and who was its leader.⁹
- Al-Wagha jihadist media institution, which is involved in PR for the Islamic State, published an article titled, "Thoughts of a Mujahid: Despair of the False Rumor-Mongers and Instigators" by Abu Suhayb al-Maqdisi. The article criticized all those involved in goading the IS and accusing it

⁸ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁹ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

of manipulation and sowing division among Muslims, which, at the end of the day, ends up damaging one's faith in God.¹⁰

Oaths of Allegiance to the Islamic State

- During the first half of January 2015, approximately ten jihadist groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan swore allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic Caliphate. A spokesman for the ten groups noted that, following consultations among the group leaders, Hafiz Sa'id Khan Orkzai was appointed emir in Pakistan and Afghanistan by al-Baghdadi.¹¹



The video banner and representatives from jihadist groups that swore allegiance to al-Baghdadi

- Ansar al-Islam in Al-Sham published a statement in which it swore allegiance to the Caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.¹²
- Visitors to the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum reported that Abu Mua'dh, Emir of the Islamic Caucasus Emirate in Tsumadinski region of Dagestan Province, had sworn allegiance to the Caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.¹³

¹⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹³ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).



The banner with Arabic captions announcing the oath of allegiance taken by a jihadist in the Caucasus

- Ansar al-Islam, a Salafi-jihadist group in Iraq, published an announcement (no. 451) titled, “A Message to the People”, in which it denied reports that its members had sworn allegiance to the IS. According to the announcement, the organization has so far avoided announcing its official position on this issue out of a desire to prevent friction and separation among the ranks of the mujahideen, but as a result of various pressures it was finally inclined to publish this statement.¹⁴

Anti-Semitism

- The Media Front for Support to the Islamic State and Al-Battar jihadist media institutions, which are involved in PR for the Islamic State, published several articles during the first half of January 2015 that were replete with anti-Semitic motifs and conspiracy theories regarding global Zionism and Judaism, in the framework of a series of publications titled, “Unlocking the Secrets”. The articles included:
 - An article titled, “The Secret to Recent Oil Price Fluctuations: Down and Up” by Abu Mawdud al-‘Armasi, part six in the series. In the article, the author accused global Zionism and world Jewry of being responsible for the fluctuations in oil and gold prices around the world in an effort to gain financial profit as part of their plan to take over the world and weaken regional players. Among other things, the author blamed the Jews of offering indirect assistance to Iran in order to help it fight against the IS.¹⁵

¹⁴ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

¹⁵ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).



The article banner

- An article titled, “The Secret about the Connection between the Jews and the Global Financial System” by Abu Mawdud al-‘Armasi, part seven in the series. The author made several accusations against the Jews, including accusing them of controlling global economic institutions out of a desire to direct and control the world, and of conspiring with the devil.¹⁶



The article banner

Strategy

- Al-Jihad Al-Alami jihadist Web forum, which has long been identified with Al-Nusra Front, changed to identify with the IS in mid-January 2015. The section dedicated to Al-Nusra Front publications was closed and, in its place, a section was opened under the heading, “The Publicity Department for the Islamic State” in which the organization’s statements are published. In addition, expressions of support for the IS began to be published on the forum and those expressing support for Al-Nusra Front stopped completely.¹⁷
- A visitor identified with the IS posted information and photos on social networks about three Air Force bases in Saudi Arabia where, according to him, American operations take place and which

¹⁶ <http://minbar-alansar.blogspot.co.il/2015/01/7.html> (Arabic).

¹⁷ <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

he noted as a target for potential terrorist attacks. For example, he mentioned the Air Force base in Riyadh: “The base is considered the most important American Crusader base on the land of the two holy places (meaning Saudi Arabia) due to its strategic location. It provides Crusader forces with an appropriate option for any Crusader raid in the region. The base provides an Internet connection. American soldiers live there with their families. In addition, they receive portions of food, cake, wine and all other things necessary on top of an open budget. On the base, there is also an American Crusader delegation for military training and a USMTM Crusader unit”.¹⁸



From left to right: a photo of the King Khalid Air Base in Riyadh; an American soldier on the base in Riyadh

Promoting the Myth of the Martyr

- The Salafist Army of the Nation in Jerusalem published a eulogy for Abu Anas al-Libi and praised his memory. At the end of the announcement, the organization called on Islamic, and especially jihadist, groups in Libya - as well as al-Libi’s allies and supporters – to follow his example and sacrifice their lives.¹⁹

Al-Libi, a senior Al-Qaeda operative, was involved in the bombing of the American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998. In October 2014, he was captured in a raid by American forces in Libya and brought to trial in the United States. In January 2015, he died in a US hospital as he awaited trial.

¹⁸ <http://justpaste.it/itmX> (Arabic).

¹⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

- The Mujahideen Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem, a Salafi-jihadist organization in the Sinai Peninsula, published a video titled, “The Journey of Martyrs – Part 4”. The video was dedicated to the memory of Abdallah Hasan al-Makkawi, a member of the organization who was killed by Israeli Air Force fire in October 2012. In one of the clips, al-Makkawi read his last will and testament in which he vowed to carry out attacks against Jews in Israel.²⁰



Abdallah Hasan al-Makkawi

Magazines

- The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan published issue no. 105 (44 pp.) of the magazine, *Al-Somood*, for the month of January 2015. The magazine article covered various topics, including: an interview with a mujahideen commander in Faryab Province, an article about increased attacks on Western targets in Kabul, and a report about attacks that were carried out in November-December 2014.²¹ In addition, the January 2015 issue of the Urdu-language magazine, *Nawai Afghan Jihad*, was published.²²

²⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

²¹ http://www.alsomod.com/index.php/all_issues/category/105-somod_issue_105 (Arabic).

²² <http://nawaiafghan.blogspot.co.il/2015/01/blog-post.html>



The banner pages of *Al-Somood* and *Nawai Afghan Jihad*

Reports from the Field

Afghanistan-Pakistan

The arena in Afghanistan was fraught with incidents. The Taliban tried to destabilize the country as American forces were leaving. On the other side, Pakistani and American security forces recorded several accomplishments against the Taliban.

On January 1, 2015 at least 26 people were killed at a wedding in Afghanistan that was hit by a rocket launched during an exchange of fire between the army and the Taliban. The rocket was fired in Helmand Province in southern Afghanistan where heavy battles have been taking place between the Taliban and the army for some time.²³ Less than a week later, at least three Afghan civilians were killed in another rocket strike on a house in southern Nawzad Province. Security forces hinted that the Taliban was responsible for the operation.²⁴

On January 3, 2015 at least 31 terrorists were killed in an attack by the Pakistani army on the border with Afghanistan. The terrorists were killed in an air strike next to the Kyber tribal region that targeted the Taliban and also destroyed their hideouts.²⁵ On January 15, 2015 an American drone strike in northeast Pakistan killed five terrorists. In this instance as well, intelligence sources stated that the attack targeted the Taliban.²⁶

²³ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/12/dozens-killed-as-afghan-wedding-hit-rocket-2014123123324221261.html>

²⁴ <http://www.skynews.com.au/news/world/mideast/2015/01/06/rocket-strike-kills-three-in-afghanistan.html> (English).

²⁵ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-2895564/31-militants-killed-Pakistan-airstrikes-officials.html> (English).

²⁶ <http://in.reuters.com/article/2015/01/15/pakistan-drones-idINKBN0KO1OL20150115> (English).

- The leadership of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan published a statement titled, “Guidelines on how to be careful to avoid civilian casualties during jihad”. According to the statement, life is a gift from Allah, and all humans and animals are his creation; therefore, when carrying out holy jihad, one must take every possible precaution in order to avoid harming innocent civilians. Permission to kill enemies of Islam is given under special circumstances in order to defend the religion, and under such circumstances it is even an important commandment – but innocents should not be killed. In addition, the killing of innocents distorts the image of the mujahideen and becomes a propaganda tool for the infidels. Therefore, guidelines are provided in order to reduce civilian casualties, such as cancelling attacks in which civilians are liable to be killed as a result of the explosions.²⁷

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

- The Jundallah jihadist media institution, which serves the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, published a video titled, “News from Faryab Province”, in which it reviewed operations carried out by members of the movement in Faryab Province, which is located in northern Afghanistan on the border with Turkmenistan.²⁸



The video banner

The Arabian Peninsula

Yemen continued to sink into a bloody civil war manifested in armed conflicts between Sunni tribes and AQAP militants, and the Houthis. During the first half of January 2015, intense battles were noted between Al-Qaeda militants and Houthis in Al-Bayda Province, especially in Rada’.²⁹ In a suicide attack that took place on January 1, 2015 approximately 33 Houthis were killed during a

²⁷ <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

²⁸ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

²⁹ <http://yafa-news.net/archives/133423>; <http://www.khabaragency.net/news20294.html>

religious ceremony at a mosque in the city of Ibb. On January 7, 2015 a car bomb attack took place at the entrance of a police academy in the city of Sana'a, in which over 40 people were killed.³⁰

The continued establishment of the Houthi presence in the areas that they captured, especially in the capital of Sana'a, and the manning of key positions by Houthis, has increased the sense of resentment among Sunni residents who view it as a move guided by Iran, which seeks to assert control over Yemen. Reports of the Houthis' intention to take control of Ma'rib Province due to the oil and gas fields located there has aroused great anger and fear among Sunni tribes, motivating them to prepare for a possible confrontation.³¹ This trend has contributed to a strengthening of Al-Qaeda's power due to the willingness of Sunni tribes to cooperate with the organization in order to defeat the Houthis.

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

- Al-Qaeda in the Arabia Peninsula (AQAP) reported the death of Sheikh Abu Anas al-Libi. According to the statement, the US was responsible for al-Libi's killing and would pay for his death as his blood was not spilled in vain.³²
- Al-Hussam jihadist media institution, which reviews jihad operations in Yemen, published two weekly reports regarding the military operations of Ansar al-Sharia, which is affiliated with AQAP, against security forces and especially against the Houthis in Yemen. The reports referred to the last week of December 2014 and the first week of January 2015.³³



The banner of the weekly report

Iraq

According to statistical data published by the Iraqi government, violence in Iraq claimed the lives of over 15,000 people in 2014, including civilians and soldiers.³⁴ The data collected by the

³⁰ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/08/world/middleeast/sana-yemen-car-bomb.html> (English).

³¹ <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/reportsandinterviews/2015/1/10/قبائل-مأرب-استنفار-واستعداد-لمواجهة-الحوثيين>

³² <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

³³ https://twitter.com/al_husamchannel/status/551396401943289857; <http://justpaste.it/uao>

³⁴ <http://goo.gl/3n9Szd>

Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense showed that the number of casualties in 2014 came close to the number in 2007, the height of the Sunni-Shi'ite battle in the country. Among other things, the increase in the level of violence was attributed to the Iraqi authorities' loss of control over parts of Al-Anbar Province in the beginning of the year.³⁵

The Iraqi army, which was supposed to contain the violence and lower the casualty count, is still far from fully functional. In this context, the Iraqi Prime Minister, Haider al-Abadi, declared that the army's rehabilitation process could continue for three more years, especially in light of the fact that the country is in a state of war.³⁶ Meanwhile, Western countries continued to help Iraq militarily by providing training³⁷ and transferring military supplies, including 250 mine-resistant, armor-protected vehicles that the US provided to Iraq at the beginning of the month.³⁸

Meanwhile, Iranian involvement in Iraq continued with its establishment of a new Shi'ite militia supported by Iran called "Saraya al-Khorasani".³⁹ The Iranian support was praised by Hadi al-Ameri, a member of the Iraqi Parliament, who claimed that if not for Iran's involvement, Baghdad would fall into the hands of the IS.⁴⁰

The Islamic State

- During the first half of January 2015, Al-Hayat jihadist media institution, which serves as a platform for the Islamic State's official publications, published the following:
 - A video in English titled, "From Inside Mosul", which reviewed the lives of residents of Mosul under IS rule, with narration from captive correspondent, John Cantlie. The video showed a pastoral view of life, a stable economy and maintained public order. During the video, John Cantlie criticized Western media reports, such as those in the British Guardian, of the Islamic State's inability to control the areas under its authority.⁴¹

³⁵ <http://goo.gl/9w4yFF>

³⁶ <http://goo.gl/YmOIQQ>

³⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/05/us-mideast-crisis-usa-idUSKBN0KE1PE20150105> (English).

³⁸ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-2899089/US-gives-Iraq-army-250-resistant-armoured-vehicles.html> (English).

³⁹ <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/01/iran-iraq-saraya-al-khorasani.html>

⁴⁰ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-2898868/Iran-general-saved-Baghdad-falling-IS-Iraq-MP.html> (English).

⁴¹ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).



The video banner

- A video in Russian titled, “Uncovering an Enemy Within”, which documented the execution of two alleged Russian spies by an IS child soldier. The two “spies” spoke about their spy mission and how they arrived to the Islamic State’s area of operation. In the video, one of the “spies”, Mamayev Jambulat from Kazakhstan, confessed to gathering information about the organization. The second Russian spy, Ashimov Sergey Nikolayavich, a former member of the Russian intelligence, stated that he was sent to track down and kill the leader of the organization. Later in the video, the boy was seen standing next to an IS soldier with the two Russian “spies” kneeling before them moments before they were executed.⁴²



A clip from the video in which the child soldier prepares to execute two Russian “spies”

- The IS published the life story of the Emir of the Faithful, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. The document reviewed how al-Baghdadi grew up and how he was introduced to the jihadist ideology, and discussed the various figures from the jihad world who influenced him.⁴³
- The IS published a video in which it claimed to have downed an Iranian “Shahin” aircraft.⁴⁴

⁴² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁴³ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

The Islamic State – Nineveh Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Nineveh Province published the following:
 - A video titled, “The Tel Afar Training Camp” about the training of children and youth in martial arts and shari’a studies. Among other things, the video showed children who had immigrated to the Islamic State with their families from various countries, including Turkey.⁴⁵



Martial arts and shari’a studies training for youth in Nineveh Province

- A filmed review of a raid carried out on strongholds of the Kurdish Peshmerga militia in Al-Reem Al-Kuwair. The operation included the following stages: the firing of Grad rockets at the targets, the explosion of an armored vehicle by a suicide bomber, the entrance of ground forces and an exchange of fire, the setting of vehicles and the stations themselves on fire, and the taking of spoils.⁴⁶
- A statement regarding another attack that its members carried out against the Peshmerga on January 6, 2015 using the same operation parameters,⁴⁷ as well as a third attack against Peshmerga forces using a similar layout that was carried out on January 8, 2015.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁴⁵ <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1403> (Arabic).

⁴⁶ <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1064> (Arabic).

⁴⁷ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁴⁸ <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).



The destruction of Peshmerga positions in west Nineveh Province

- A video titled, “The Spread of Caliphate Soldiers in the City of Mosul”.⁴⁹



The video banner

The Islamic State – Al-Anbar Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Anbar Province published the following:
 - A filmed review of an attack against an Iraqi military post on the Iraq-Saudi Arabia border. The attack included machine gun fire and the launch of shoulder missiles towards the post before they invaded it.⁵⁰
 - A filmed review of the destruction of five Iraqi military tanks using explosives.⁵¹
 - A video titled, “The Last Will and Testament, and Suicide Attack of Abu Zubayr al-‘Iraqi” against Iraqi security forces in Al-Anbar Province.⁵²

⁴⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁰ <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1240> (Arabic).

⁵¹ <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1286> (Arabic).

⁵² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).



The video banner

The Islamic State – Saladin Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Saladin Province published the following:
 - A filmed review of the execution of eight individuals who opposed the IS, some of whom had previously expressed regret and “repented”. The text that accompanied the photos explained that some of the people were police officers who provided information about the IS or who admitted to helping the Shi’ite army select targets for attacks.⁵³
 - A filmed review documenting the beheading of an Iraqi soldier who was captured in battles near the city of Baiji.⁵⁴



The execution of an Iraqi soldier in Saladin Province

- A collection of photos documenting the execution of two spies discovered in the organization’s ranks. It was written that the spies were collecting information for the infidel Iraqi government and were caught following in-depth intelligence work.⁵⁵

⁵³ <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1206>

⁵⁴ <http://goo.gl/CiZfGm>

⁵⁵ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

- A collection of photos documenting military attacks that members of the organization carried out in the province.⁵⁶



A photo from the collection

- A report about an invasion carried out by four of the organization’s fighters in the city of Samara. During the operation, the fighters invaded a military post and managed to take control of it using a combination of rockets and on-foot warfare.⁵⁷

The Islamic State – Kirkuk Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Kirkuk Province published the following:
 - A video documenting the bombings of two residential buildings belonging to collaborators in Kirkuk Province.⁵⁸
 - A video titled, “A Message from the Fortified Strongholds – Part 3” in which an IS member praised the steadfastness of IS fighters in facing their enemies.⁵⁹

The Islamic State – Diyala Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Diyala Province published the following:
 - A filmed review titled, “Photos from the Land of Jihad 5”, which documented the destruction of “polytheistic sites”, the bombing of a Shi’ite house of worship, and the burning of Iraqi army vehicles.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁷ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁸ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

- A filmed review of the distribution of dawah materials among residents of the province. Among the materials that were distributed: CD's of the organization's videos, propaganda booklets and the black flags used by the organization.⁶¹
- A video titled, "Messages from the Waiting Areas to Embark on Jihad – Part 1". The video showed several members of the organization sitting together on the lines of confrontation with their enemies, singing songs of praise for the fulfilment of jihad and vowing to strike their enemies.⁶²
- A prominent writer on the Al-Alami Al-Jihadi jihadist Web forum reported the death of another prominent writer on the forum, Seif al-Islam al-Ansari, who fought among the ranks of the IS in Diyala Province in Iraq. The announcement talked about al-Ansari's great courage and the large financial donations that he made to the IS.⁶³

The Islamic State - Baghdad

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Baghdad published the following:
 - A video documenting a raid on Iraqi army barriers and a suicide attack.⁶⁴

The Islamic State – Al-Janub Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Janub Province published the following:
 - A filmed review of a raid on Iraqi army posts in Zawba'. In addition to documentation of the operation itself, the review included photos of the weapons that were plundered in the operation as well as photos of the corpses of the soldiers who were killed and their personal documents.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1137> (Arabic).

⁶¹ <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1422> (Arabic).

⁶² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁶³ <https://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁴ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁵ <http://goo.gl/2c6kN9> (Arabic).



The materials plundered as a result of the operation

- A video documenting the shooting execution of the commander of one of the Awakening Movements in Al-Janub Province fighting against the organization.⁶⁶

Al-Sham [The Levant]

Due to heavy snowstorms, and for the first time since the outbreak of the conflict over three years ago, January 7, 2015 was a day without casualties in Syria.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, with the close of 2014, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights published distressing figures about the situation in the country. According to the organization, over 76,000 people have been killed in the civil war in Syria over the past year, including over 3,500 children. In total, 206,603 people have been killed since the beginning of the conflict.⁶⁸

The situation of survivors is also not encouraging. The United Nations Human Rights Council published an evaluation according to which the number of Syrian refugees – which today stands at approximately 3,000,000 – will reach 4,250,000 by the end of 2015.⁶⁹ According to UNICEF, approximately 7 million Syrian refugees and displaced children need assistance,⁷⁰ at a time when the Islamic State is preventing 670,000 students from going to school in Syria.⁷¹

On the military front, US attacks continued against IS targets, especially in the area of Kobane, near the Turkish border, and in eastern Deir Ezzor Province.⁷² The Lebanese and Jordanian armies

⁶⁶ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁷ <http://goo.gl/SKJF4J>

⁶⁸ http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/02/world/middleeast/syrian-civil-war-2014-deadliest-so-far.html?_r=0

⁶⁹ <http://www.alhurra.com/content/un-syria-refugees/264523.html>

⁷⁰ <http://goo.gl/KPb37c>

⁷¹ <http://goo.gl/A02o8w>

⁷² <http://www.elfagr.org/1624256> (Arabic).

also carried out artillery strikes with the goal of preventing the infiltration of militants from Syria into their territories.⁷³

On the political front, it seems that initiatives for the diplomatic resolution of the conflict in Syria have reached a dead end. Senior officials in the Syrian opposition refused to take part in talks in Moscow aimed at setting peace talks in motion, hosted by the Russians, and a ceasefire proposal by UN representative, Staffan de Mistura, in Aleppo went unanswered.⁷⁴

Al-Nusra Front

- During the first half of January 2015, the jihadist media institution of Al-Nusra Front in Syria, Al-Manarah al-Bayda, published the following:
 - A statement regarding two operations that it carried out against Lebanese Hezbollah in Al-Masroob and Jab Al-Yabes. According to the statement, the attacks against Hezbollah positions were carried out after more than 15 days of surveillance and information gathering, though other organizations tried to take the credit for the operations. The statement criticized any attempt by other organizations to appropriate the success of the operations for themselves.⁷⁵
 - A claim of responsibility for a double suicide attack that was carried out at a coffee shop in Jabal Mohsen in the city of Tripoli in Libya, which served as a stronghold for the National Democratic Party. According to the announcement, the second terrorist waited for security forces to arrive before he blew himself up.⁷⁶ According to media sources, at least nine people were killed in the attack and 37 others were injured.⁷⁷
 - A claim of responsibility for a suicide attack that was carried out near the Citadel of Damascus in the heart of the Syrian capital. According to the announcement, the suicide terrorist detonated his explosive belt, targeting a bus carrying Hezbollah operatives from Dahieh, south of the capital. At least six people were killed and dozens more were

⁷³ <http://goo.gl/b2xlGj>; <http://www.al-sharq.com/news/details/299586#.VQAOG3yUfq>

⁷⁴ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/14/world/middleeast/syria-peace-talk-hopes-fade.html> (English).

⁷⁵ <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁷⁶ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁷⁷ <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/23323>

injured in the attack.⁷⁸

- A video documenting the clearing of snow drifts that had piled up on the roads in order to make travel easier for the civilian population in Hama.⁷⁹
- Supporters of Al-Nusra Front published a video documenting members of the organization executing a woman accused of adultery and prostitution in the city of Ma'arrat Misrin in Idlib Province. The video showed the woman as she begged to see her children but the militants ignored her and then, after reading aloud her sentence, they shot her to death.⁸⁰



Members of Al-Nusra Front executing a woman accused of prostitution

The Islamic State – Al-Raqqah Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Raqqah Province published the following:
 - A filmed review of the distribution of propaganda CD's and booklets in the city of Taqba. Among the materials that were distributed: a pamphlet encouraging the use of IS coins in order to weaken the dollar and a booklet explaining why one who supports the "Crusader State" (i.e. the United States) is considered an infidel.⁸¹

⁷⁸ <http://goo.gl/KjSNV2> (Arabic).

⁷⁹ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

⁸⁰ <http://www.raqqa-sl.com/?p=569> (Arabic).

⁸¹ <http://goo.gl/zL1qUm> (Arabic).



The distribution of pamphlets and propaganda materials in Al-Raqqah Province

- A filmed review of the execution of a drug dealer and of a man who cursed the name of Allah. The two men were beheaded.⁸²
- The Health Department of the IS published an announcement regarding the opening of the Faculty of Medicine in Al-Raqqah. According to the publication, the course lasts three years and registration is open to men and women between 18-30 years of age.⁸³
- A video documenting the daily routine of Hisbah officials, an Islamic organization responsible for maintaining public morality in the province.⁸⁴
- A video titled, “The Return to Life in the City of Ayn al-‘Isa in Al-Raqqah Province”.⁸⁵

The Islamic State – Damascus

- The media wing of the IS in Damascus published the following:
 - A report about the achievement of a reconciliation agreement between Muslims in the Beir Qasab region.⁸⁶
 - The IS published reports about various military operations that its fighters carried out, the central one being the downing of two Syrian army aircraft.⁸⁷

The Islamic State – Homs Province

⁸² <http://goo.gl/BQbUlu> (Arabic).

⁸³ <http://goo.gl/p5G9zy> (Arabic).

⁸⁴ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁸⁵ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁸⁶ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁸⁷ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

- The media wing of the IS in Homs Province published the following:
 - A video about a suicide attack against a gas company in Furqlus, a town located in western Homs Province. The attack was carried out by two IS fighters of Moroccan origin - Abu Ali al-Maghribi and Abu Ayyub al-Maghribi – using an explosives-laden truck. The results of the attack were not reported in the video.⁸⁸
 - A filmed review about the commandment to perform “zakat” (a part of the wealth and property that Muslims must pay annually to help the poor of their community). According to the film, the Zakat Department in the province collected the amount of money and sheep determined by Islamic shari’a and distributed them among the poor.⁸⁹



The distribution of sheep among the poor in the framework of performing “zakat”

The Islamic State – Aleppo

- The media wing of the IS in Aleppo published the following:
 - A video titled, “An Expression of Remorse on the Part of Dozens of Al-Nusra Front and Ahrar al-Sham Members in Aleppo Province”, confessing their erroneous treatment of, and behavior towards, the IS.⁹⁰

The Islamic State – Al-Baraka Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Hasaka Province (referred to as Al-Baraka Province by the organization) published the following:

⁸⁸ <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1050>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ba8HaABeVRg> (both in Arabic).

⁸⁹ <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1542> (Arabic).

⁹⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

- A video titled, “The Generation of the Caliphate – Part I”. The propaganda video focused on the indoctrination of children from the Islamic State’s madrasa.⁹¹



The video banner

- A video titled, “For You, My People, a Message: Expel the Collaborators from the Arabian Peninsula – Part 2”. The video opened with a call on residents of the Arabian Peninsula to act to purge the region of non-Muslims, especially the “Crusaders”. According to IS fighters, this commandment is mentioned in the Islamic tradition and every Muslim is, therefore, obligated to implement it.⁹²



The video banner

- The execution of a man accused of cursing Allah’s name. The man was beheaded with a sword.⁹³

⁹¹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁹² http://minbar-alansar.blogspot.co.il/2015/01/blog-post_94.html (Arabic).

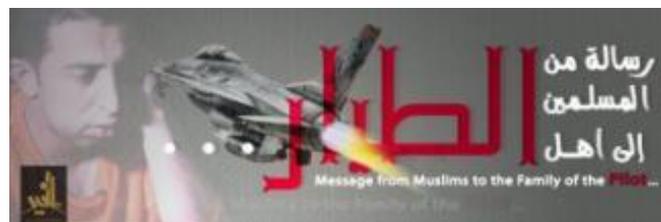
⁹³ <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1054> (Arabic).



An execution in Al-Baraka Province

The Islamic State – Al-Khayr (formerly Deir Ezzor) Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Khayr (formerly Deir Ezzor) Province published the following:
 - A video titled, “A Message from Muslims to the Pilot’s Family”. In the video, residents of Al-Khayr Province justified harming Muslim pilots who participate in air strikes against their fellow Muslims. Therefore, it was justified to attack the Jordanian pilot’s plane and to take him into captivity.⁹⁴



The video banner

- A video titled, “Except For Those Who Repent, Believe” in which several respected members of Al-Sheitaat tribe in Syria criticized all those who act against the IS and called on them to stop their acts of aggression and repent.

In August 2014, many members of Al-Sheitaat tribe were slaughtered by IS fighters for fighting against the organization and refusing to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. The current video was an attempt to demonstrate a change in the trend by

⁹⁴ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

documenting the repentance of many of the tribe's members in expressing allegiance to al-Baghdadi.⁹⁵



The video banner

The Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip

Terrorist organizations in the Sinai Peninsula continued to spread violence in the peninsula and did not allow for the return of peace. Meanwhile, security forces took aggressive action against them and even noted several achievements.

On January 5, 2015 four Egyptian police officers were injured when a bomb exploded at the entrance to a residential building in Al-Arish in northern Sinai. The bomb was planted at the entrance of the building as a trap, and to date no other details about the identities of the terrorists have been revealed.⁹⁶

On January 15, 2015 gunmen shot three people to death in Sinai. Their bodies were found in various parts of Rafah with gunshot wounds to the head, just one day after five bodies – three of them headless – were found throughout Sinai. On the same day, a woman was injured after being shot while walking in Sinai.⁹⁷

Meanwhile, Egyptian security forces killed five terrorists who were involved in the recent kidnapping and murder of a police officer.⁹⁸ In addition, security forces managed to locate, burn and destroy 68 terrorist strongholds in the Sinai Peninsula, and to destroy many transport vehicles used by terrorists.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

⁹⁶ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/reuters/article-2896919/Bomb-wounds-four-policemen-Egypt-Sinai.html> (English).

⁹⁷ <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/120346/Egypt/Politics-/Gunmen-kill-three-civilians,-wound-one-in-restive-.aspx> (English).

⁹⁸ <http://allafrica.com/stories/201501141497.html>

⁹⁹ <http://breakingnews.sy/en/article/51763.html> (English).

The Islamic State in Sinai Province (formerly Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis)

- The media wing of the IS in Sinai Province (formerly Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis) published the following:
 - A claim of responsibility for the kidnapping of an Egyptian police officer in Rafah named Ayman al-Dasuqi. According to media sources, the offer was killed in a failed rescue attempt by Egyptian security forces.¹⁰⁰
 - A filmed review of the distribution of financial compensation to residents in Rafah whose homes were destroyed by the Egyptian army. The film documented members of the organization giving residents envelopes on which were written, “The Islamic State – Sinai Province”.¹⁰¹



The IS distributing financial compensation to residents in Sinai

Other jihadist organizations

- Al-Nusra al-Maqdisiyya, a Palestinian group in the Gaza Strip that is involved in publicity for the IS, published a filmed review and video of the distribution of 5,000 computer discs titled, “The Honing of Swords for the People of Gaza”, which included a collection of IS publications.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ <http://goo.gl/0szA2z>; <http://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/639079>

¹⁰¹ <http://www.dawaalhaq.com/?p=22897> (Arabic).

¹⁰² . <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).



The video banner

The Maghreb [North Africa]

*In light of the security chaos in Libya, the head of the Libyan Parliament, Aguila Saleh, declared that the solution to the country's situation cannot only be military. Saleh emphasized that foreign military intervention will not solve the problem and that dialogue is needed in order to emerge from the crisis.*¹⁰³

Despite talk of dialogue, it seemed that various Libyan officials were not at all interested in conducting negotiations. The talks that took place in Geneva hosted by the UN were completely ignored by the Fajr Libya ("Libya Dawn") militias, which declared that they would not recognize the results of the talks.¹⁰⁴ In the international arena, Britain announced that it does not support any of the factions in Libya – just as it does not recognize the government of Omar al-Hasi or the International Council¹⁰⁵ - and France called for international intervention in Libya in order to combat terrorism in the country.¹⁰⁶ Similar declarations were published by the Arab League and the UN, which demanded a clear plan for combatting terrorism.¹⁰⁷

Counterterrorism efforts continued in Tunisia and Morocco. To mark the end of the 2014, the Tunisian Interior Ministry published a statistical summary on the issue of combating terrorism during that year. Among the published data: 1,808 terrorism cases were handled by the authorities and 3,017 arrests were made on suspicion of involvement in terrorism.¹⁰⁸ In Morocco, a terror cell

¹⁰³ <http://www.skynewsarabia.com/web/home#!/web/article/714583>

¹⁰⁴ <http://m.al-sharq.com/news/details/300722>

¹⁰⁵ <http://arabic.cnn.com/middleeast/2015/01/12/libya-crisis> (Arabic).

¹⁰⁶ <http://goo.gl/zXYQT1>

¹⁰⁷ <http://goo.gl/D70tJr>; <http://www.albayan.ae/one-world/arabs/2015-01-06-1.2281755>

¹⁰⁸ <http://goo.gl/xfw3JR>

composed of three operatives involved in recruiting fighters to the IS was dismantled.¹⁰⁹ In addition, through cooperation between Spain and Morocco, arrests of Al-Nusra Front and IS supporters were made in the Spanish enclave of Melilla.¹¹⁰

Libya

The Islamic State in Barqa Province

- The IS in Barqa Province published the following:
 - A filmed review of the execution of two Tunisian journalists, Sofiene Chourabi and Nadhir Ktarii, who worked for a satellite channel that “insulted God”, according the announcement.¹¹¹
 - A filmed review of the launch of Grad rockets against General Khalifa Haftar’s forces in Ayn Mara in eastern Libya.¹¹²



The launch of Grad rockets against Haftar’s forces in eastern Libya

The Islamic State in Tripoli

- The IS in Tripoli published the following:
 - A filmed review of a tour taken by Hisbah officials (an Islamic organization responsible for maintaining public morality) through the streets of Tripoli with the goal of “removing

¹⁰⁹ <http://goo.gl/ff9EqO>

¹¹⁰ <http://goo.gl/P10hij>

¹¹¹ <https://www.mnbr.info/vb> (Arabic); <http://www.france24.com/en/20150108-libya-branch-claims-execution-two-tunisian-journalists/> (English).

¹¹² <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1533>

offensive items” from the city’s markets. The photos showed masked members of the organization removing signs from stores and mannequins from display windows.¹¹³

- Photos of 21 “Christian Crusaders” that the IS captured in various parts of Tripoli, Libya.¹¹⁴ Media sources revealed that they were Egyptian citizens who had come to work in Libya.¹¹⁵



Egyptian Christian civilians taken captive by the IS in Libya

- For the first time, the media wing of the IS in Fazzan published a filmed review of an operation that it carried out in the province: the killing of a group of “apostates” near the city of Sawknah. According to media sources, 15 people were killed in the attack, including nine soldiers.¹¹⁶
- A prominent visitor to Al-Alami Al-Jihadi jihadist Web forum, which is identified with the IS, published an article in support of Ansar al-Sharia in Libya.¹¹⁷

Tunisia

- The Ifriqiya jihadist media institution published a video by Abu Bara al-Tunisi, the spokesman for ‘Uqba Ibn Nafi, a Salafi-jihadist organization. Al-Tunisi threatened that his organization intended to carry out revenge attacks against the Tunisian regime. In addition, he vowed to fight against Christians and Jews who he described as enemies of God.¹¹⁸

Egypt

¹¹³ <http://www.alwasat.ly/ar/news/libya/56077> (Arabic).

¹¹⁴ <http://www.alfarough.com/?p=1437> (Arabic).

¹¹⁵ <http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=278647> (Arabic).

¹¹⁶ <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:https://isdarat.org/2570;>

<http://www.alwasat.ly/ar/news/libya/54852/> (Arabic).

¹¹⁷ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹⁸ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

- Al-Kinana jihadist media institution published the text of a question and answer interview with Majd al-Din al-Misri, the General Manager of Ajnad Misr. In the framework of answering visitors' questions, al-Misri stated that his organization was an independent organization established a year-and-a-half ago with the goal of implementing shari'a in Egypt through the use of jihad. Al-Misri emphasized that his organization was currently focused on fighting against the Egyptian regime and not against minority groups, such as Christians, Sufis or Shi'ites. Regarding the attacks that were carried out against the regime, al-Misri explained that they were carried out using small explosive devices in order to avoid harming passer-by but that it would not rule out using suicide attacks in the future. In his answers to other questions, al-Misri referred to Ajnad Misr's relationship with other organizations and provided information on how help the organization or to join its ranks.¹¹⁹

Nigeria

Boko Haram continued to carry out widespread attacks in northeast Nigeria. During the first half of January 2015, it tried to seize control of the city of Damaturu, the capital of Yobe State. According to an announcement by Amnesty International, the number of victims climbed to 2,000 in what it described as "the deadliest massacre" carried out by the organization since the start of its offensive in 2009.

The largest attack took place in the city of Baga, near the Chad-Cameroon border, where Boko Haram had seized control of an army base several days earlier. The Defense Ministry headquarters in Yobe reported that the Nigerian army had re-taken control of Baga and was increasing its forces in the area. Boko Haram substantially increased its operations in the border region, enabling it to penetrate the remote provinces of northern Cameroon as well. In addition, it was reported that two girl suicide bombers blew themselves up at a market in the city of Potiskum in Yobe State.¹²⁰

Somalia

¹¹⁹ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹²⁰ <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/world/africa/.premium-1.2536016> (Hebrew).

Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen, Al-Qaeda's branch in Somalia, continued to try to carry out significant terrorist attacks to undermine Somalia's security. The organization seemed to focus on a few quality operations aimed at attacking government and security officials. Security forces' recent response to these operations was scant.

On January 4, 2015 four people were killed in a car bomb explosion next to the airport in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. Al-Shabab claimed responsibility for the attack and claimed that it targeted a military convoy that passed by. The Al-Shabab spokesman added that he regretted the civilian casualties.¹²¹

Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen

- The jihadist media institution of Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen, Al-Kataib, published A video titled, "Fight the Leaders of Heresy – Part 2". The 44-minute video documented and justified the attacks that Al-Shabab fighters had carried out against Somali courts in 2013-2014. One of the suicide terrorists who appeared in the video was Farhan Mahd Ali Duri from Canada, who took part in the attack on Somalia's central courts complex in 2013. In addition, Farhan called on Muslims in the West to leave their countries in order to fulfil the commandment to wage jihad. The video also showed the terrorists who took part in an attack against the Parliament in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, in 2014, including a terrorist of American origin named Ibrahim 'Abd Al Rahman Muhammad and a terrorist from Kenya named 'Abd al-Hakim, who read aloud their wills, encouraging the fulfilment of the commandment to wage jihad. The video also included data on the results of the attacks, including the number of those killed.¹²²



¹²¹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-30672660> (English).

¹²² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

From left to right: ‘Abd al-Hakim, Farhan Mahd Ali Duri

- Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen published a claim of responsibility for the killing of dozens of Kenyan soldiers and the destruction of three military vehicles in the Lamu region, which is within Kenyan territory. According to the announcement, Al-Shabab fighters crossed the border and carried out a widespread attack against a convoy of Kenyan forces, which included five vehicles.¹²³

The West

The Terrorist Attack in Paris

On January 7, 2015, two French Muslim brothers of North African origin, Said Kouachi and Sharif Kouachi, burst into the office building of the satirical magazine, Charlie Hebdo, in Paris and fired in all directions. The attack was in revenge for the publication of caricatures depicting the Prophet Muhammad. A third member of the terrorist cell, Amedy Coulibaly (aka Abu Basir ‘Abdallah al-Ifriqi), continued the attack on January 9, 2015 when he burst into a Jewish supermarket called “Hyper Cacher” in Paris’s 12th arrondissement. The terrorists took customers and employees of the supermarket hostage. Following a siege that lasted several hours, the terrorist was killed by police. Jewish hostages were killed in the attack.

On January 11, 2015 the IS published a video of Coulibaly on social networks and several jihadist Web forums titled, “Soldier of the Caliphate”. In the video, Coulibaly justified the attack on the Charlie Hebdo magazine offices, as well as the murders. In addition, he swore allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the IS.¹²⁴

¹²³ <http://www.vetogate.com/1429418>

¹²⁴ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).



From left to right: the banner produced by jihadists in memory of the Kouachi brothers; Amedy Coulibaly

- Many jihadist activists, organizations and groups expressed support for the attack and encouraged a continuation of this trend. The following are several examples of these reactions:
 - A. Al-Malahim jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with **AQAP**, published an audio clip by Sheikh Harith bin Ghazi al-Nadhari, a senior member of the organization’s Shura Council, in which he praised the attack in Paris. He emphasized that it was an act of revenge aimed at all those who dare to insult the Prophet Muhammad. According to him, there is a limit to freedom of expression and that, in France, they had gone too far by insulting the Prophet. According to him, as long as this trend continues, the lives of French civilians will be in danger.¹²⁵



The banner of the audio clip

- B. Al-Malahim jihadist media institution also published a video in which it claimed responsibility for the attack on the Charlie Hebdo magazine offices. The video titled, “A Message about the Blessed Attack in Paris” by Nasser bin Ali al-Anisi, a senior member of

¹²⁵ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

the organization, stated that the target and action plan of the attack were guided by Ayman al-Zawahiri himself. It emphasized that the attacks were carried out in revenge for insulting the Prophet Muhammad. Al-Ansi emphasized France's high level of involvement in operations against Islam, such as fighting alongside the United States against the mujahideen in various parts of the Middle East.¹²⁶



The video banner

- C. **AQIM** published a statement expressing support for the Paris attack. The organization expressed overall support for attacks that harm Western interests, such as the attack on the US Embassy in Libya as well as the attack that was carried out in Paris. The announcement stated that the three brave fighters from Paris would be remembered in the pages of history and that, with their blood, they lit up the correct path for all Muslims. The organization threatened that more attacks would be carried out in France if the country does not stop its bombings in Syria and Iraq, as well as its military intervention in Mali and Central Africa. In addition, the statement encouraged young Muslims to imitate the attacks in Paris and follow their lead.¹²⁷
- D. **The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan** denounced the publication of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad and emphasized that it was an affront to the feelings of half a million Muslims around the world. Therefore, when such an incident takes place, it is hard to say what the implications will be. In light of this, the Emirate called on the countries of the world to avoid more incidents of insult to the Prophet since they are

¹²⁶ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹²⁷ <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

considered an insult to humanity, as the Prophet was not just the leader of Muslims but rather a leader to all of humanity.¹²⁸

- E. **The Dagestan Province of the Islamic Caucasus Emirate** blessed the attack and noted that it was the first attack of its kind on such a scale, which was carried out in revenge for insulting the Prophet Muhammad.¹²⁹
- F. **Al-Murabitun**, which operates in northern Mali, blessed the attack and justified it by claiming that France was collaborating with evil international forces against Muslims. In addition, the organization vowed to continue carrying out such attacks until France retreats from Muslim lands.¹³⁰
- G. On January 14, 2015 the **Islamic State** in Al-Raqqah Province in Syria published a video titled, “Meeting/Interviews about the Blessed Attacks in France”. The interviewees, members of the IS in Al-Raqqah Province, blessed the attacks against France and emphasized that they were in response to France’s attacks against Islam and Muslims. They vowed that more attacks of this type would flood France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany and the United States.¹³¹



The video banner

¹²⁸ <http://shahamat-english.com/index.php/paighamoonaa/52267-statement-of-islamic-emirate-regarding-the-blasphemous-action-against-the-prophet-of-islam-pbuh-in-france> (English).

¹²⁹ <http://vdagestan.com/ar/archives/17102>

¹³⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹³¹ https://archive.org/details/rqh_3mlyh; <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

H. **Al-Nusra al-Maqdisiyya** media group, which is composed of Palestinians who support the IS, published banners blessing the attack on the Jewish supermarket in Paris as well as photos from the funerals of the four Jewish victims.¹³²



From left to right: photos of the four Jewish victims; a banner with the words “The Jews are crying for their murdered brothers”

General

- Sheikh Anjem Choudary, a radical Islamic preacher in England, continued to publish controversial correspondence on his Twitter account. During the first half of January 2015, Choudary posted several tweets, including a clarification that Muslims cannot be considered Muslims if they believe in unacceptable ideas such as democracy, independence and secularism; Muslims do not need to feel uncomfortable when it comes to applying Islamic law of punishment like cutting off a thief’s hand; Muslims in Germany need to act to apply shari’a in Germany; Islam is the solution to the problems faced by France and other European countries; non-Muslims must understand Muslim sensitivity to the Prophet Muhammad’s honor and their love for him, in light of which it is possible to understand Muslims’ reactions to those who insult the Prophet’s honor.¹³³

¹³² <http://justpaste.it/iw62> (Arabic).

¹³³ <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary> (English).



Anjem Choudary
@anjemchoudary

⚙️ Follow

The solution for the problems in France is to bring back Shari'ah, under which Muslims, Christians & Jews lived peacefully for over 800 yrs!

↩️ ↻ ⭐ 🗑️ ⋮

RETWEETS	FAVORITES
244	59

11:49 AM - 9 Jan 2015

One of Anjem Choudary's tweets

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The Jihadi Websites Monitoring Group (JWMG) is a specialized research and analysis team at the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT). Composed of researchers fluent in Arabic, the JWMG monitors websites that support and serve the Global Jihad organizations. The unique characteristic of JWMG publications is the team's integration of diverse materials from a wide variety of Arabic sources. JWMG connects each source to larger trends, providing a complete understanding of events on both a local and a global scale.

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