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ICT Jihadi Monitoring Group **PERIODIC REVIEW**

Bimonthly Report

Summary of Information on Jihadist Websites The Second Half of May 2014

Highlights

This report summarizes notable events discussed on jihadist Web forums during the second half of May 2014. Following are the main points covered in the report:

- Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, leader of Al-Qaeda, again emphasizes that ISIS is an affiliate of Al-Qaeda in Iraq and that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the ISIS, previously swore allegiance to the leader of Al-Qaeda and is therefore obligated to honor his pledge. Al-Zawahiri also calls for an end to the bloodshed among the various jihadist factions in Syria, and for the different groups to focus instead on fighting against the enemies of Islam and on settling disputes by turning to special shari'a courts.
- Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, founder of the Salafi jihadist movement in Jordan, publishes a religious ruling criticizing the ISIS and calling it a deviant organization that fearlessly acts against the mujahideen and tarnishes the image of jihad. Therefore, al-Maqdisi calls [on the public] not to join the organization, to reject it and to show favor to the Al-Nusra Front, Al-Qaeda's affiliate in Syria.
- Abu 'Amir al-Naji, a member of Al-Qaeda, criticizes the reproach of the organization voiced by several former members as well as their praise of the ISIS.
- Ahrar al-Sham and other Islamic factions in Syria express support for, and commitment to, the "Syrian revolution's Covenant of Honor" according to which war against the Syrian regime and the ISIS must be sanctified. Various jihad fighters criticize this covenant, claiming that it is vague and seemingly tainted by the West.
- The ISIS publishes a propaganda video titled, "Clang of Swords", which elicits an extensive media response. The video documents various terrorist activities carried out by ISIS members, including the execution of soldiers in the Iraqi army, kidnappings, assassinations, raids on homes of "Awakening" movement members, and the destruction of military vehicles using explosives.
- The Al-Nusra Front, an affiliate of Al-Qaeda in Syria, announces the establishment of the "Ba's Institute for Military Production and Development", an organized body to be responsible for the production and development of weapons for jihad fighters in Syria.
- Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) calls on Muslims in Libya to defend their honor and the religion of Islam from the aggression of General Haftar, the ruler of Libya, who commenced

“Operation Karama” to eliminate terrorist hubs in the country. According to the organization, the operation constitutes a Zionist-Crusader conspiracy supported by Egypt and financed by the Gulf States, which must be immediately thwarted.

- Sheikh Abdul Karim Krymsky, the Deputy Emir of the Al-Muhajirun wal-Ansar Army, a Chechen Salafi-jihadist organization in Syria, calls on Muslims in the Crimean Peninsula to wage jihad against Russia as a result of its annexation of the land and to mark the 70th anniversary of the expulsion of the Muslim minority from the Crimean Peninsula.
- Ansar al-Tawhid fil-Hind, an Indian Salafi-jihadist organization with ties to Al-Qaeda, publishes a video in which it calls on global leaders around the world, especially in the Middle East and Southern Asia, to attack India and Indian targets around the world.

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New Publications

Ideology

- During the second half of May 2014, the Al-Sahab jihadist media institution published the following:
 - A re-publication of a video titled, “To the Emirs of the Mujahideen” by Sheikh Atiyyat Allah, a senior member of Al-Qaeda who was killed by the Americans in August 2011. The main points of the video included: maintaining unity among the ranks of the mujahideen, waging jihad against enemies of Islam and spreading a belief model that is loyal to Islam.¹
 - The transcription into English of a speech by Sheikh Khalid al-Husaynayn, a senior member of Al-Qaeda who was killed by an American drone in December 2012, about the virtues of the month of Ramadan.²
- The Al-Battar jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the ISIS, published an article titled, “Why Do We Fight?” by a writer known as Muwahhid al-Adnani. In the article, al-Adnani explained the reasons for the importance of carrying out the commandment to wage jihad, described the arenas of jihad in Afghanistan, Chechnya and Iraq, and discussed Muslim groups who sinned by cooperating with the enemies of Islam.³
- Visitors to the Hanein jihadist Web forum held a discussion regarding the legitimacy of collecting money from civilians by using threats or punishment in order to raise money for jihad activities. Some of the visitors mentioned that it was best not to discuss the issue on the Internet since such a discussion could reveal jihad sources of funding. Other visitors criticized the ISIS, which uses this method to finance its activities.⁴
- The dawah department of the Fursan al-Balagh jihadist media institution published a collection of poems titled, “The Golden Series about Acts of the Heart” by Sheikh Muhammad al-Adnani, spokesperson for the ISIS. The collection of poems was divided according to topic, all concerning

¹ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

² <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

³ https://twitter.com/AL_Bttaar

⁴ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

the importance of worshipping Allah and methods of worship.⁵

- Markaz Aisha, a jihadist media institution focused on Sunnis and the Salafi-jihadist movement in Lebanon, published a letter titled, “The Reform of the Innocent People” (61 pp.), which discussed the conditions and circumstances for imposing takfir (the practice of one Muslim declaring another Muslim an unbeliever), Islamic law’s opinion on democracy, how to treat the national coalition of Syrian revolutionary forces and opposition forces according to religious law, and other topics regarding religious legal issues concerning the Syrian arena.⁶
- The Al-Battar jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the ISIS, published a propaganda video regarding the importance of the struggle to free Muslim prisoners. In another video that was published by Al-Battar titled, “Our Sister in Prison is Calling [for Help]”, Muslim women call for the release of their husbands and of other Muslim women from prison.⁷

Since April 2013, tensions have risen between the ISIS, and the Al-Nusra Front and Al-Qaeda. At the basis of this rift was Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi’s refusal to obey the dictates of Ayman al-Zawahiri, leader of Al-Qaeda, his unwillingness to retract his announcement declaring himself the Emir of the Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham, and the expansion of ISIS operations from Iraq to Syria. Since then, jihad fighters have tried to find a compromise that is acceptable to both sides but so far those attempts have failed.

Against the backdrop of this internal crisis among jihad groups there has continued to be a wave of publications condoning the swearing of allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the ISIS, on the one hand, and those criticizing this process and declaring support for Ayman al-Zawahiri on the other hand. During the second half of May 2014, this rift was evident in the following essays and responses:

- The Al-Sahab jihadist media institution published the responses of Ayman al-Zawahiri, leader of Al-Qaeda, to questions posed by several senior Salafi-jihadist sheikhs regarding the position that they should take vis-à-vis the ISIS and regarding the efforts being made to reconcile the various

⁵ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁶ <https://twitter.com/MarkazAisha>

⁷ https://twitter.com/AL_Bttaar

jihadist factions. Questions were posed by Dr. Tariq Abd al-Halim, Dr. Hani al-Sibai, Dr. Iyad Qunaybi, Sheikh Muhammad al-Hasm and Dr. Sami al-Aridi.

Al-Zawahiri noted that he had discussed this issue in the past and again emphasized that the ISIS was an Al-Qaeda affiliate, and that its leader and fighters had previously sworn allegiance to then-leader of Al-Qaeda, Sheikh Osama bin Laden; an allegiance that they must honor even under the leadership of al-Zawahiri. Al-Zawahiri referred to the letter that he claimed to have received from Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the ISIS, in which he gave assurance that the ISIS is an integral part of Al-Qaeda. Al-Zawahiri also noted that all of the oaths of allegiance sworn to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi after he renounced Al-Qaeda were null and void and constituted a flagrant violation of al-Zawahiri's orders.

Al-Zawahiri went on to emphasize that jihadist factions in Syria must end the fighting between them. He said that he appealed to Abu Muhammad al-Golani, leader of the Al-Nusra Front, and to the other factions to stop fighting and focus their efforts against the Syrian regime. In addition, he noted that the disagreements that arise between the factions should be resolved in special shari'a courts to be agreed upon by everyone.

Finally, al-Zawahiri called on Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and his supporters to focus on the arena of jihad in Iraq and put an end to the bloodshed of Muslims in Syria.⁸

- The Al-Sahab jihadist media institution published a statement by Abu 'Amir al-Naji, a member of Al-Qaeda. In the statement, al-Naji responded to an announcement that was published in the beginning of April by nine former Al-Qaeda members in which they criticized the organization and expressed support for the ISIS. Al-Naji addressed the following points:
 1. Regarding the accusation that Al-Qaeda recently changed its policies concerning Shi'ites and no longer labelled them as heretics, al-Naji responded that there had been no such policy change and that, since the beginning, Al-Qaeda has viewed Shi'ites as an ignorant people who have not been exposed to the truth, and not as heretics per say.
 2. Regarding the accusation that Al-Qaeda expels members for disagreeing with the organization's policies, al-Naji responded that over the course of the many years that he

⁸ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

spent in the ranks of Al-Qaeda he had never encountered a single threat to expel one of its members.

3. Regarding the accusation that “takfir” of a specific individual constitutes a red line for Al-Qaeda, al-Naji responded that imposing takfir on a specific individual is a complex issue reserved for the clerics and the mujahideen should not use this tool if they are not knowledgeable on the matter.
4. Regarding the accusation that Al-Qaeda praises those who rose to power through a democratic process, al-Naji responded that, in al-Zawahiri’s recorded speech from February 2014, he had expressed his hope that Allah would guide then-President of Egypt, Mohamed Morsi, towards the correct path and that such a wish is not in bad taste from a religious perspective.
5. Regarding the accusation that Al-Qaeda excessively praises the “Arab Spring” and encourages unarmed Muslim masses to confront regime forces that are armed to the teeth, al-Naji responded that he does not see anything wrong with persuading Muslim nations to fight against the regimes in order impose shari’a and that Al-Qaeda has a clear policy on this, which has been noted in previous speeches made by senior members of the organization.
6. Regarding the accusation that Al-Qaeda does not enforce the punishment of H’udud (a category of penalties for certain crimes specified in the Quran), al-Naji responded that there was disagreement among clerics regarding the enforcement of H’udud in the Dar al-Harb “Abode of War” (territory that is not governed by the assembly of Islam).

Al-Naji concluded his statement by stating that those who composed the announcement were not clerics and, therefore, they may not judge and decide on issues on which they are not proficient. Al-Naji called on the authors of the announcement to refer back to their statements in the hope that they will return to the straight path.

- Sheikh Abu Mohammed Al-Maqdisi, a senior member of the Salafi-jihadist movement in Jordan and a prominent writer on the Minbar al-Tawhid wal-Jihad Web site, published a letter regarding the ISIS. In the letter, al-Maqdisi stated that he had made great efforts to stop the fighting among jihadist groups in Syria and even spoke with Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the ISIS, and with al-Adnani, spokesman for the ISIS, but that these efforts were in vain. Al-Maqdisi

even discussed this with Ayman al-Zawahiri. He added that he warned members of the ISIS that their refusal to cooperate in reconciliation talks would have serious consequences. Al-Maqdisi even corresponded with ISIS clerics, who he said were exposed as traitors and conducted themselves in a manner unbefitting of the mujahideen. He accused the ISIS of killing innocent people for no reason and of continuing to carry out crimes that shame jihad and the idea of an Islamic State; in addition, the ISIS crossed the line in its treatment of jihad leaders, especially Ayman al-Zawahiri by refusing to obey him. Therefore, al-Maqdisi declared that the ISIS has deviated from the correct path, acts aggressively towards the mujahideen, spills innocent blood and tarnishes the image of jihad. Al-Maqdisi called on members of the ISIS to abandon the organization and join the Al-Nusra Front, and he called on all jihadist Web sites and forums to publish this announcement and to stop publishing announcements from the ISIS.⁹



The banner of al-Maqdisi's denouncement of the ISIS

- The son of Sheikh Abu Qatada al-Falastini, a senior member of Al-Qaeda imprisoned in a Jordanian jail, noted that he had spoken with his father about the discussion held between Sheikh Abu Azzam al-Shami, the official spokesman of the Al-Nusra Front, and a member of the ISIS regarding the worsening treatment shown to jihadist organization and to the Syrian people

⁹ <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic & English).

in light having been deemed heretics. Sheikh Abu Qatada al-Falastini criticized this phenomenon and claimed that members of the ISIS had deviated from the correct path of Islam.¹⁰

- The Al-Basirah jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the Al-Nusra Front, published a propaganda video titled, “This is Our Path – Path 2”. In the video, several members of the Al-Nusra Front criticized the path taken by the ISIS and admonished the organization for declaring other Muslims to be heretics solely because they do not follow the same path.¹¹
- During the second half of May 2014, the Al-Battar jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the ISIS, published the following:
 - A one-hour long video titled, “Why a State of Islam?” in which it reviewed the history of the ISIS since its founding and criticized the more moderate factions in the Muslim world. In addition, the video presented reasons for why the “Islamic State” is the solution for the situation in Syria and in the Muslim world in general.¹²
 - A propaganda video titled, “Why the Time has Come to Establish an Islamic State Led by the ISIS”.¹³

Strategy

- A writer on the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist media institution published correspondence regarding how to disable and disrupt drone operations.¹⁴

Guidebooks and Instruction Pamphlets

- The seventh edition of the “Jihadist Encyclopedia” was published. The edition included a security section, a military section and a technological section, the latter of which contained a basic course on electronics as well as a course on computer hacking.¹⁵
- The Al-Battar jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the ISIS, published on its Twitter account a guidebook titled, “War of Nerves” (49 pp).¹⁶

¹⁰ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic); https://twitter.com/abo_osama_n

¹¹ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹² <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹³ https://twitter.com/AL_Bttaar/status/469545436110286848

¹⁴ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

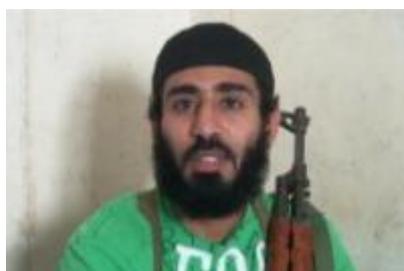
¹⁵ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb/> (Arabic).



The banner of “War of Nerves”

Promoting the Myth of the Martyr

- The jihadist media institution of AQAP, Al-Malahem, published a biography as part of a series of publications (part 15) titled, “The Martyrs of the Arabian Peninsula”. The biography covered the life of Ahmad Sayyid Ibrahim (aka Abu Musab al-Misri), a martyr and former member of AQAP.¹⁷



Abu Musab al-Misri

- Palestinian Salafi-jihadist fighters from the Gaza Strip who are fighting in Syria published on a Twitter account words of praise in memory of one of their fighters, Arafat Anwar al-Saidi aka Abu Khatab al-Maqdisi, who immigrated from the Gaza Strip to Syria and was killed on May 9, 2014.¹⁸

¹⁶ https://twitter.com/AL_Bttaar/status/468439511806930945

¹⁷ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁸ <https://twitter.com/gazainsham>



The banner produced in memory of Abu Khatab al-Maqdisi

- The ISIS in Nineveh Province in Iraq published a list of martyrs who were killed during the organization’s operations in the province. The list included the name and photo of each martyr along with details of the operation that he carried out and the number of people killed as a result of the operation.¹⁹



Memorial for martyrs from the ISIS in Nineveh Province, Iraq

Magazines

- The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan published a new issue (no. 97) of the Arabic-language magazine *Al-Somood*, for May 2014, which included: an article criticizing the elections in Afghanistan, an article regarding terrorist attacks that were carried out at hotels in Kabul against foreigners, and statistical data about operations that were carried out in April 2014.²⁰

¹⁹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

²⁰ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).



The banner of *Al-Somood* magazine

- The Al-Hayat jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the ISIS, published the first edition the English-language *Islamic State News (ISN)* (7 pp).²¹



The banner of the ISN

- A new edition (no. 7-8) of the jihadist periodical, *Hisad al-Jihad*, which describes events in Egypt, was published.²²

²¹ <https://twitter.com/wa3tasimu/>

²² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

Reports from the Field

Afghanistan-Pakistan

On May 23, 2014 the Indian Consulate in Afghanistan was attacked: three militants used guns and grenades to attack the consulate, located in the heart of the city of Herat, and were killed in an exchange of gunfire that lasted several hours. It is not yet clear who was responsible for the attack but indications point to the Haqqani network, which has ties to Al-Qaeda.²³ On May 26, 2014 a suicide terrorist blew himself up on a minibus that was transporting soldiers in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack in which at least two people were killed and nine others were injured.²⁴

On May 31, 2014 American soldier Bowe Berghdal was released after being held captive by the Taliban in Afghanistan for five years. Berghdal was released in exchange for five prisoners to be released by the United States who are members of the Taliban and are imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay. The deal took place through mediation by Qatar.²⁵

On May 21, 2014 the Pakistani Air Force attacked a tribal area near the border with Afghanistan. According to army officials, at least 60 militants were killed in the attack, including senior commanders.²⁶ Three days later, two explosions took place in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, killing a security guard and injuring two others. The explosions occurred shortly after one another in two different shopping areas in the city.²⁷

The Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan (Taliban in Afghanistan)

- The Taliban in Afghanistan published a statement regarding President Barack Obama's speech on May 25, 2014 in which he announced that approximately 10,000 American soldiers would remain in Afghanistan during 2015. Taliban spokesperson, Dhabihullah Mujahid, declared that as long as US soldiers remain in Afghanistan, jihad would be considered a binding order incumbent on each and every Muslim. The announcement concluded with a call on the United

²³ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-27533268> (English).

²⁴ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/26/us-afghanistan-blast-idUSBREA4P07820140526> (English).

²⁵ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-27651690> (English).

²⁶ <https://news.yahoo.com/pakistan-air-strikes-kill-32-militants-035947181.html> (English).

²⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/24/us-pakistan-blast-idUSBREA4M0RZ20140524> (English).

States to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan in order to enable the Afghan people to heal their wounds of war.²⁸

- The jihadist media institution of the Taliban in Afghanistan, Umar, published a video titled, “Crimes of the Pakistani Army”.²⁹
- The jihadist media institution of the Taliban in Pakistan’s Haqqani Network, Manba al-Jihad, published a propaganda video titled, “People of Truth”.³⁰

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

- The jihadist media institution of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jundallah, published a propaganda video that described the alleged “war crimes of the Pakistani army” against the civilian population in northern Waziristan. The video addressed the bombing by the Pakistani army of a religious school in which a student was killed.³¹

Other jihadist organizations

- Junud al-Fida, a Salafi-jihadist organization in Baluchistan published a video titled “Lions from the Land of Khurasan”.³²

The Arabian Peninsula

*The Yemeni army’s decisiveness in destroying Al-Qaeda strongholds in southern Yemen has won popular support due to the sense that the regime’s intention is truly to act in the interests of the homeland. Nevertheless, there are voices of opposition to the military operation, including former General Ali al-Ahmar who defected from the army during the presidency of Abdallah Salih and joined the rebel forces, and Muslim Brotherhood members in Yemen who maintain that it would be better to initiate a discourse with members of Al-Qaeda and convince them to lay down their weapons.*³³

²⁸ <http://shahamat-arabic.com/index.php/paighamoona/42457>

²⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

³⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

³¹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

³² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

³³ <http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/206703>

Meanwhile, there is increased fear that Amran Province in northern Yemen will fall into the hands of the Houthis, a Shi'ite minority in Yemen that is supported by Iran, as a result of the severe clashes that broke out between the Houthis and Yemeni army forces. Various analysts expressed concern that the Yemeni army's need to fight on two fronts – the Houthis in the north and Al-Qaeda forces in the south – depletes the army's strength and is liable to weaken it significantly.³⁴

On May 24, 2014 Al-Qaeda militants launched an integrated attack against the military leadership headquarters, government staff residences, a military camp of the Special Security Forces, the Central Bank, and the airport building in Seiyun, Hadhramaut Province. The attack began with a car bomb driven by a suicide terrorist, accompanied by RPG fire and followed by an exchange of gunfire. 32 people were killed in the attack.³⁵

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

- During the second half of May 2014, the jihadist media institution of AQAP, Al-Malahem, published the following:
 - An audio clip titled, “A Note about the Latest American Attack on Yemen” by Hamza al-Zinjibari, a senior AQAP commander. In the beginning of the clip, al-Zinjibari explained that the news circulating in the Yemeni media, according to which senior AQAP commanders were killed in an American air strike on Al-Baydha, Abyan and Shabwa Provinces, was false. According to him, America's fate in Yemen will be the same as that of Britain when it ruled over Yemen, namely, its withdrawal from the country. The collaboration between the US and Yemeni governments in the war against Al-Qaeda in the region is, in his opinion, a complete failure. Just as the United States abandoned its allies in Vietnam, so it is doing again in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula. Al-Zinjibari appealed to the Yemeni army to consider its future and consider whether it will continue to fight against the Sunnis or defend them from the Houthis, a Shi'ite minority in Yemen. Will the army continue to act according to the caprice of the United States? At

³⁴ <http://arabic.rt.com/news/707809-اليمن-القاعدة-حوثيون-معارك->

³⁵ <http://www.alaraby.co.uk/politics/c00a2cca-5d17-41bc-8b0a-43113d51e936;>

<http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/2014/05/24/اليمن-هجوم-للقاعدة-على-مقار-حكومية-في-حضر-موت.html>
(Arabic).

the end of the clip, he thanked the mujahideen for their patience and determination in the continued struggle against the Americans, and he stressed that the organization had no intention of laying down its arms.³⁶



Hamza al-Zinjibari

- A video titled, “Harvest of Spies”, which included an interview with a militant named Abu Islam al-Muhajir who was identified as “the security representative of the mujahideen in the Arabian Peninsula”. In the framework of the interview, al-Muhajir accused the Americans and the government of Yemen of carrying out drone strikes that harm civilians in order to complicate matters between members of the organization and tribal leaders in those areas. Later in the video, four men were presented as spies and confessed to implanting electronic chips in the vehicles of AQAP militants who were then killed in drone strikes in Shabwah Province in southern Yemen.³⁷



The video banner

³⁶ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

³⁷ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

- The Ansar al-Sharia jihadist organization in Yemen published “An Announcement Regarding the Lies of the Yemeni Regime”, in which it stated that the government of Yemen, which is acting against Muslims with assistance from the United States and the Gulf States, is claiming big victories over the mujahideen but that such claims were lies intended solely to create an impression in the media. The territories that the government claims to have captured from the mujahideen have never been under mujahideen control, and the mujahideen that the government claims to have killed were never killed.³⁸
- The seventh video in a series of publications titled, “Thoughts on Cleansing and the Path” by Sheikh Harith bin Ghazi al-Nazari, a member of AQAP.³⁹
- A visitor to the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum posted photos of Hamza al-Zinjibari, a senior AQAP field commander, standing across from the Chief Presidential Palace in Say’un in the Hadhramaut. These photos were published as part of the organization’s propaganda campaign to demonstrate that it is able to reach enemy strongholds.⁴⁰



Hamza al-Zinjibari across from the Chief Presidential Palace

- A new jihadist media institution named Al-Haramayn was launched. According to the announcement, which was published on social networks on May 18, 2014, the goal of Al-Haramayn is to criticize the Saudi regime and present the injustices that the regime carries

³⁸ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

³⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁴⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

out against residents of the Saudi Kingdom. The Al-Haramayn Twitter account was closed a short while after it was launched.⁴¹



The logo of the Al-Haramayn jihadist media institution

Iraq

Upon completion of the vote count in Iraq, it was announced that the State of Law Coalition, led by Nouri al-Maliki, won 95 of 325 seats in the Iraqi Parliament.⁴² It seems that al-Maliki won support mainly from the Shi'ite lower and middle classes in light of his declared support for the disadvantaged population on the one hand, and for the violent struggle of Sunni terrorist organizations on the other hand.⁴³

The continued military operations in Al-Anbar Province demonstrated that al-Maliki remains determined in his struggle against the ISIS. On May 29, 2014 the Iraqi counter-terrorism agency announced the destruction of an ISIS military base in Fallujah and the death of 20 ISIS militants, including some of Algerian and Moroccan origin.⁴⁴ Also, in northern Baqubah, the Iraqi army killed 14 ISIS militants and destroyed a number of their vehicles.⁴⁵

Despite the army's limited success, the month of May also ended with several murderous terrorist attacks. According to reports by the Iraqi authorities, at least 74 people were killed in a series of attacks carried out on May 28 in various locations throughout Iraq. Most of the attacks

⁴¹ https://twitter.com/Al_hrmaen_media

⁴² http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140519_iraq_elections_results.shtml (Arabic).

⁴³ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140519_iraq_elections_malaki.shtml (Arabic).

⁴⁴ <http://www.almanar.com.lb/adetails.php?eid=854907&frid=21&seccatid=20&cid=21&fromval=1>

⁴⁵ <http://akhbar.alaan.tv/news/post/32337/iraq-forces-carried-out-the-process-of-proactive-against-isis-in-baquba>

were carried out using car bombs in the capital of Baghdad and in Mosul, north of the capital.⁴⁶ The previous week, dozens of people were killed and injured in three attacks that were carried out against Shi'ite pilgrims who were holding a religious ceremony in Baghdad.⁴⁷ Violent incidents also took place in Salah a-Din and Nineveh Provinces.⁴⁸

The Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham (ISIS)

- During the second half of May 2014, the jihadist media institution of the Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham (ISIS), Al-Furqan, published the following:
 - A one-hour long video titled, “Clang of Swords 4”,⁴⁹ which included high-quality footage documenting various terrorist activities and killings carried out by the ISIS, including: the execution of soldiers in the Iraqi army, kidnappings, raids on homes of “Awakening” movement members, the destruction of military vehicles using explosives, and the mass repentance of “deserters of Islam” who collaborated with the Shi'ite regime. Among other things, ISIS militants were shown dressed as Iraqi army soldiers, arresting “wanted persons” at fake checkpoints or forcing those suspected of collaborating with the US to dig their own graves. The video was widely discussed in jihadist Web forums and even received media coverage by CNN.⁵⁰



The video banner

⁴⁶ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140529_iraq_wave_of_attacks.shtml (Arabic).

⁴⁷ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140522_iraq_attack_pilgrims.shtml (Arabic).

⁴⁸ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140517_iraq_security_attacks.shtml (Arabic).

⁴⁹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

- A video titled, “Best of Nations” regarding the organization’s dawah activities, including: a reminder of Friday prayers for merchants in the market, the destruction of “pagan” structures, the confiscation of drugs and destruction of cigarettes, the arrest and punishment of those practicing witchcraft, and dawah activities for prisoners.⁵¹



The video banner

- The jihadist media institution of the Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham (ISIS), Al-Hayat, published the first chapter in a new video series titled, “Mujatweets Episode”, in which an ISIS member sang a short song in praise of the organization.⁵²
- The Ansar Al-Ummah Al-Islamiyya Battalion announced that it had sworn allegiance to the ISIS.⁵³
- A visitor to the Hanein jihadist Web forum recommended establishing a type of virtual Shura Council for the ISIS on the Hanein forum and other jihadist Web forums that would enable the organization to consult on issues for which there is no binding legal text. The visitor explained that membership in the council would only be granted to supporters of the ISIS and that the council’s decisions would be binding. In addition, the visitor recommended creating a list of members of the Hanein forum who could serve on such a council.⁵⁴
- A group of anonymous activists affiliated with the ISIS announced the establishment of a media institution called “The Media Front for Assistance for the Islamic State”. According to the

⁵¹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁵² <https://twitter.com/wa3tasimu/status/472806220169220096>

⁵³ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁴ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

announcement, the establishment of this body was based on the desire to fight the propaganda spread by the enemy media, which does not receive an adequate response from the ISIS and its media institutions. The group added that by establishing this institution, it sought to influence other Muslims to take a similar initiative and use the media to defend the mujahideen, especially the ISIS. Nevertheless, the group explained that it did not intend to neglect or ignore the other problems facing the Muslim Nation.⁵⁵



An announcement regarding the launch of “The Media Front for Assistance for the Islamic State”

ISIS – Nineveh Province

- The ISIS in Nineveh Province in Iraq published photos of a terrorist attack that its members carried out in the province in which it blew up an Iraqi army Hummer.⁵⁶



A photo showing an explosion targeting Iraqi army forces

ISIS – Baghdad

- During the second half of May 2014, the ISIS in Baghdad published the following:

⁵⁵ <https://twitter.com/almu77areb/status/472664310938746880/photo/1>

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

- An announcement regarding the third phase of a military campaign in Al-Fallujah. In the operation, which was carried out by ISIS fighter Abu Ayoub al-Jazrawi, he managed to sneak into a gathering of Iraqi police and army officers and detonate the explosive belt that he was wearing in their midst. The ISIS emphasized that no place is safe for infidels, and that its fighters will reach each and every location.⁵⁷
- An announcement describing military operations carried out by ISIS fighters in the province, including a car bomb explosion targeting an Iraqi army battalion headquarters and a car bomb explosion targeting soldiers.⁵⁸

ISIS – Diyala Province

- The ISIS in Diyala Province in Iraq published a list of military operations that its fighters carried out in the province, including the bombing of Iraqi police and army vehicles as well as damage to a home belonging to military personnel.⁵⁹

ISIS – Kirkuk Province

- The ISIS in Kirkuk Province in Iraq published photos of a terrorist attack that its fighters carried out in the province, in which 11 Iraqi soldiers were killed.⁶⁰

Ansar al-Islam

- Ansar al-Islam published a claim of responsibility for several operations, including an explosion targeting an army checkpoint in Mosul,⁶¹ the injury of a senior commander in Salah-a-Din Province,⁶² and an assassination attempt on Sabah al-Fatlawi, Commander of Samarra Operation Command.⁶³

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

⁵⁸ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁹ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁰ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶¹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁶² <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁶³ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

Al-Sham [The Levant]

The second half of May was marked by two painful losses to the Assad regime: the death of General Hussein Ishaq,⁶⁴ a senior commander in the Syrian army, in battles near the capital of Damascus, and the death of Abdullah Eskandari, the commander of the Revolutionary Guards in Syria.⁶⁵ Eskandari's death constituted not only a strategic blow but also an embarrassment for Iran, which denied any involvement in the Syrian war.

Despite the losses, it seems that Bashar al-Assad remained insistent on holding presidential elections in Syria, which were set to take place on June 3, 2014. As expected, the fictitious elections have further increased tensions between the camps. For instance, on May 22 rebel forces in Dar'a fired mortars at a gathering of Assad supporters ahead of elections, killing 21 people and injuring over 30 others.⁶⁶

The upcoming elections earned major criticism not only from the West but also from the ISIS. In Al-Raqqah Province in northern Syria, which has served as an ISIS stronghold for the last few months, members of the organization imposed a curfew on residents in order to prevent them from participating in what they called "the elections farce".⁶⁷

Meanwhile, acts of violence by the ISIS against the Kurdish population in the country increased. According to a publication by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), the ISIS abducted approximately 200 Kurdish civilians from a small town in Aleppo Province for unknown reasons.⁶⁸ This announcement followed the news that 15 Kurdish civilians, including children, were killed by ISIS militants in northern Syria.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-27462255> (English).

⁶⁵ <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/pages/1dcf14c8-35d6-4ec1-9fa8-ec9284ad1cea>

⁶⁶ <http://www.libyaherald.com/2014/05/28/ansar-al-sharia-denounces-operation-dignity-as-a-crusade-against-islam/#axzz33NBxX6Dx>

⁶⁷ <http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&article=774002&issueno=12969#.U4s3dXKSx-E>

⁶⁸ <http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/syria/2014/05/30/-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D9%8A%D8%AE%D8%B7%D9%81-200-%D9%83%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%B4%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A7.html>

⁶⁹ <http://www.shafaaq.com/sh2/index.php/news/kurdistan-news/77766----15---.html>

Syria

The Al-Nusra Front in Syria

- During the second half of May 2014, the jihadist media institution of the Al-Nusra Front in Syria, Al-Manarah Al-Bayda, published the following:
 - An announcement regarding the establishment of the “Ba’s Institute for Military Production and Development”, an organized body to be responsible for the production and development of weapons for jihad fighters in Syria. According to the announcement, the new institute was established since previous attempts to manufacture weapons were carried out independently and not in an organized manner. At the end of the announcement, the Twitter account of the Ba’s Institute was published and an appeal was made to all experts with at least two years of experience to join the project: https://twitter.com/BaAs_JN.⁷⁰



The “Ba’s Institute for Military Production and Development”

- A video documenting several instances in which bombs were set off against various targets, including: a tank carrier in Aleppo Province, two soldiers in Dar’a, and vehicles belonging to the Syrian army and the Shabiha throughout Syria.⁷¹
- A claim of responsibility (announcement no. 489) for the liberation of the Al-Khazanat military camp near the town of Khan Shaykhun on May 15, 2014. According to the

⁷⁰ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁷¹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

announcement, the operation began with preliminary mortar and tank fire directed at the target, followed by a car bomb explosion and gunmen who laid siege to the camp.⁷²



From left to right: an aerial photograph of the Al-Khazanat military camp and nearby Syrian army checkpoints; the seizure of the camp by the Al-Nusra Front by means of a tank

- A claim of responsibility (announcement no. 490) for the re-capture of checkpoints in Tel Malah and Al-Jalameh in Rif Hamah. According to the announcement, the Al-Nusra Front, along with other organizations, managed to free the region from the Syrian army on May 18, 2014 after two hours of fighting in which approximately 10 Syrian soldiers were killed. During the seizure, members of the Al-Nusra Front managed to capture a T62 tank from the Syrian army.⁷³
- A claim of responsibility (announcement no. 491) for a terrorist attack using two car bombs that targeted Syrian security forces in Homs on May 25, 2014.⁷⁴
- A claim of responsibility (announcement no. 492) for a terrorist attack that was carried out by four suicide terrorists on May 25, 2014, which targeted Syrian army forces in Mount Al-Arbaeen, Idlib Province, in collaboration with the Suqoor al-Sham organization of the Islamic Front. The Al-Nusra Front announced that one of the suicide terrorists, a militant of American origin known as Abu Huraira al-Amriki, had carried out the explosion using a truck laden with 16 tons of explosive material.⁷⁵ After the attack, the Al-Nusra Front published a video documenting the operation.⁷⁶

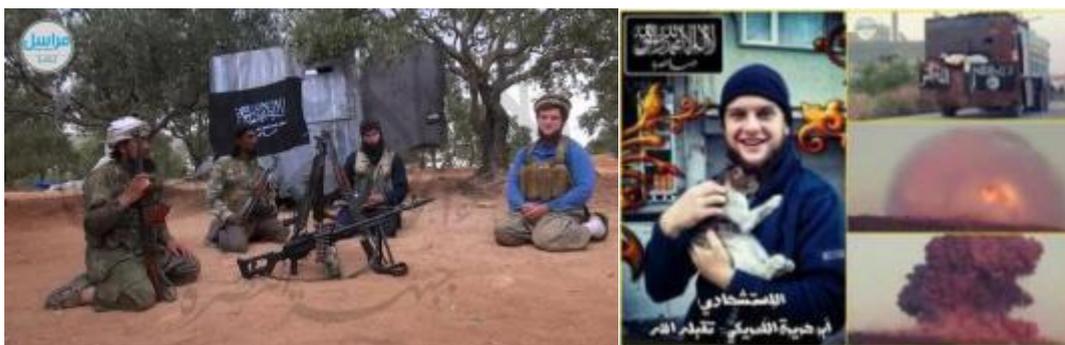
⁷² <https://twitter.com/JabhtAnNusrah/status/468474911884070912/photo/1>

⁷³ <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁷⁴ <http://www.arahmah.com/arabic/491-jbht-an-nsrt-asthdaf-tjmat-shbyht-an-nzam-an-nsyry-fy-hy-az-zhraa-bsyartyn-mfkhkhtyn-hms.html> (Arabic).

⁷⁵ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic); https://twitter.com/JN_edlib/status/470512650410287104/photo/1

⁷⁶ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26M7UGKFBVo>



Abu Huraira al-Amriki, a suicide terrorist of American origin among the ranks of the Al-Nusra Front

- A claim of responsibility (announcement no. 493) for the liberation of the town of Khan Shaykhun, Idlib Province, in northwest Syria. In the operation, which was carried out together with other rebel groups on May 25, 2014, the Al-Nusra Front sent a suicide terrorist in an explosives-ridden armored vehicle, shot dozens of soldiers to death and seized control of the last checkpoint under the army's control.⁷⁷
- A media activist for the Al-Nusra Front in Dar'a, in southwest Syria, published photos from a training camp for children called the "Ibn Taymiyyah Camp for Boys" in Dar'a, in which masked youth could be seen carrying wooden mock rifles, climbing ropes and jumping through flaming hoops.⁷⁸



The Al-Nusra Front's training camp for children in Dar'a

- The jihadist news agency, Hemm, which tracks developments in Syria in general, and members of the Al-Nusra Front in particular, published a video (no. 81) documenting a field tour by Al-

⁷⁷ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁷⁸ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

Nusra Front militants of points overlooking the Al-Khizanat checkpoint.⁷⁹

- A department administrator at the Al-Platform Media jihadist Web forum published a report regarding the establishment of the “Shura Council of the Mujahideen” in Dayr al-Zour. The council, composed of prominent organizations such as the Al-Nusra Front, Jaysh Al-Islam, Ahrar Al-Sham and nine others, was established in order to join in battle against Assad’s soldiers in Dayr al-Zour and lift the siege on the city. The writer of the announcement even claimed that the council was designed to fight against the ISIS.⁸⁰ According to other publications, the new council is also referred to as “the Shura Council of the Mujahideen in the Eastern Province” and sometimes even by its initials in Arabic.⁸¹

The Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham: Operations in Syria

- The ISIS in Homs Province in central Syria published photos from a night raid that its members carried out on Shi’ite villages in the eastern part of the province towards the end of May. According to the publication, many Shabiha militants supporting the Assad regime were killed in the raid and large amounts of weapons were plundered.⁸²
- The ISIS published photos from a meeting that was held with members of the Bu Banna clan near the city of Manbij in northern Syria. During the meeting, speeches were made and a joint meal was held, at the end of which the head of the clan declared allegiance to the ISIS.⁸³
- The ISIS’s Shari’a Authority published an announcement regarding the Islamic Front and its leaders. In a document numbering over 30 pages (including appendices, footnotes and quotations), the Islamic Front was accused of collaborating with the Free Syrian Army and other “abandoners of Islam”, causing it to be deemed an enemy of the ISIS.⁸⁴

Other Jihadist Organizations

- Hassan Aboud, the leader of Ahrar al-Sham, announced the “Syrian revolution’s Covenant of

⁷⁹ https://twitter.com/Hemm_Agency

⁸⁰ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁸¹ <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁸² https://twitter.com/w_homs1/status/472478639196741632; <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁸³ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁸⁴ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

Honor”, which called on the various factions operating in Syria to join forces to fight against the Syrian regime and the ISIS. In the announcement, Aboud emphasized that the revolution and its objectives were identified exclusively with Syria, and that military and political decisions should only be made by Syrian officials. To date, the covenant has been signed by the following organizations: Al-Ittihad al-Islami li-Ajnad al-Sham, Jaysh al-Mujahideen, Al-Furqan Brigades and The Islamic Front.⁸⁵

The covenant drew criticism from several figures in the world of jihad, including Iyad Qunaibi,⁸⁶ Akram Hijazi,⁸⁷ Hani al-Sibai,⁸⁸ and Husayn bin Mahmud,⁸⁹ who claimed that the charter was worded vaguely and hinted that Western officials were likely involved in its wording.

The Al-Nusra Front also published a reaction to the covenant (media announcement no. 9) and criticized it heavily. According to the organization, the principles mentioned in the document were unclear, as were the religious principles of those who wrote it. Moreover, no consultation had been sought regarding the document. Therefore, the Al-Nusra Front asked the signatories on the document to retract their signatures and amend the document to align itself with the spirit of jihad.⁹⁰



The Covenant of Honor and the factions that signed it

- Ansar al-Umma al-Islamiyya, a jihadist organization that operates in Rif Dimashq Province in southwest Syria published a pledge of allegiance to the leader of the ISIS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

⁸⁵ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁸⁶ <https://twitter.com/EYADQUNAIBI/status/468121609262202881/photo/1>

⁸⁷ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁸⁸ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁸⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁹⁰ <http://shabakataljahad.com/vb> (Arabic).

In the announcement, which was signed by the leader of Ansar al-Ummah al-Islamiyya, Abu Muhammad al-Shami, also listed the Facebook and Twitter account of the organization: <https://www.facebook.com/ansarummah>, <https://twitter.com/AnsarAlUmmah>⁹¹

- The Al-Nusra Front and Jaish al-Islam, together with ten more battalions operating in Dayr al-Zour Province, announced the establishment of a joint Shura Council to enable cooperation among the organizations. The announcement explained that the goals of the council were to topple the Assad regime, expel ISIS militants from Syria, and lift the siege on Dayr al-Zour.⁹²

Jordan

- The Salafi-jihadist Web portal, Minbar al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, which serves as an online jihadist library, published a video (no. 16) titled, “The Spreading of Dawah in the Courts” in the framework of a series of videos titled, “The Biography of Abu Mohammed al-Maqdisi”. Al-Maqdisi founded the portal and was considered a senior leader of the Salafi-jihadist movement in Jordan. He was the spiritual mentor of Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi, the head of Al-Qaeda’s branch in Iraq.⁹³

The Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip

The winds began to rage in the world of jihad in general, and in the Sinai Peninsula in particular, with the dramatic announcement by the Egyptian army of the death of Shadi Al-Menei, the leader of Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, a jihadist organization operating mainly in the Sinai Peninsula. On May 23, 2014 Egyptian army officers reported that al-Menei had been killed along with three other senior members of the organization while they were together in a car in central Sinai. According to military officials, the four men were on their way to attack a gas pipeline when they were shot.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, several days later, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis published an announcement in which it denied that al-Menei had been killed in the attack and also claimed that he was not the

⁹¹ <https://twitter.com/AnsarAlUmmah/status/470899094068936704>

⁹² <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁹³ <http://www.tawhed.ws/dl2?i=17051401>

⁹⁴ <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/05/23/Head-of-Egypt-s-militant-group-killed.html> (English).

head of the organization.⁹⁵

On May 21, 2014 a car bomb exploded and damaged a security vehicle in the Sinai Peninsula. One person was killed in the attack and six others were injured. To date, it is unknown who was responsible for the attack.⁹⁶

Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis

- Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, a jihadist organization operating in the Sinai Peninsula, published “a proclamation denying the rumor of the death of officers and senior members of the organization”, in which it stated that Egyptian security forces were spreading lies and claiming to have caused heavy losses to Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis when, in fact, the army itself was the one suffering constant losses. The army claimed to have killed Abu Abdallah and Shadi Al-Menei, and even claimed that the two were leaders of the organization; [however, the organization claimed that] the two men were not killed, and were not and never have been leaders of the organization. Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis declared that its leader and senior commanders were in good condition, safe and interacting with their fellow mujahideen.⁹⁷



Photos of members of Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis

Other jihadist organizations

⁹⁵ <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/05/25/Egypt-s-Ansar-Bayt-al-Maqdis-denies-leader-was-killed.html> (English).

⁹⁶ <http://www.albawaba.com/main-headlines/egypt-sinai-peninsula-578156>

⁹⁷ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

- Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis Ansar al-Sharia, a Salafi-jihadist organization in the Gaza Strip, distributed a hundred leaflets titled, “War against the Alawites is the individual obligation of all Muslims” by Sheikh Abu al-Mundhir al-Shinqiti, a cleric in support of the ISIS.⁹⁸



Leaflets for distribution regarding the commandment to fight against the Alawites

The Maghreb [North Africa]

In Libya, clashes escalated between the radical factions in the eastern part of the country and army forces. On May 16, 2014 Major General Khalifa Haftar, an army officer who announced a coup back in February 2014,⁹⁹ launched “Operation Dignity” (“Operation Karama” in Arabic) against armed militias in and around Benghazi.¹⁰⁰ In the operation, which included aerial attacks,¹⁰¹ at least 60 people were killed and over 150 more were injured.¹⁰² The Islamist Ansar al-Sharia jihadist organization in Libya was quick to respond, and described the operation as part of the crusade against Islam and claimed that the United States and its allies were behind the operation.¹⁰³

Meanwhile, on May 27, 2014 four police officers were killed in Tunisia in an attack on the house of the Minister of Interior, Lotfi Ben Jeddou. Analyst Alaya Allani claimed that the attack could not be separated from events taking place in Libya, pointing to the cooperation between terrorist

⁹⁸ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁹⁹ <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/libya-major-general-khalifa-haftar-declares-govt-suspended-in-apparent-coup-bid> (English).

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.alwasatnews.com/4269/news/read/886042/1.html>

¹⁰¹ <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/05/18/world/africa/libya-violence> (English).

¹⁰² <http://www.alwasat.ly/ar/news/libya/19961>

¹⁰³ <http://www.libyaherald.com/2014/05/28/ansar-al-sharia-denounces-operation-dignity-as-a-crusade-against-islam/#axzz33NBxX6Dx> (English).

organizations operating in Libya, Tunisia and Algeria.¹⁰⁴ It should be noted that the attack was carried out despite Tunisia's strong efforts to secure the border with Libya and prevent the spillover of violence and security chaos into the country.¹⁰⁵ Even Algeria began taking preventative steps in light of the situation in Libya: the return of the Algerian ambassador, the closure of the consulate in the capital of Tripoli, and the closure of all border crossings between the two countries.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, the subject of Libya took up most of the discussions at the 17th Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, which concluded on May 30 in Algier. As part of the conference, discussions were held between the Libyan Foreign Minister, Muhammad Abd al-Aziz, and representatives from Libya's bordering countries.¹⁰⁷

Northern Mali was another arena experiencing an increased level of violence. On May 21, Touareg rebels killed several soldiers in the Malian army, in the city of Kidal in northern Mali.¹⁰⁸ In addition, the organization headed by Algerian terrorist, Mokhtar Belmokhtar, suffered an additional blow with the death of Abu Bakr al-Nasr, a senior member of the organization responsible for arms procurement, in clashes with French army forces in northern Mali.¹⁰⁹

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)

- During the second half of May 2014, the jihadist media institution of the AQIM, Al-Andalus, published the following:
 - An article titled, "Messages from the Notebook of a Mujahid (1)" by an author who calls himself "The Immigrant to God", in which he shared with readers his experiences, impressions and daily agenda as a fighter alongside the mujahideen in the Maghreb.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ http://magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/05/30/feature-01 (English).

¹⁰⁵ http://magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/05/23/feature-01 (English).

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/north-africa/algeria/2014/05/30/%D8%A7%D8%AE%D8%AA%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%B1.html>

¹⁰⁷ <http://allafrica.com/stories/201405291353.html>

¹⁰⁸ http://magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/05/22/feature-03 (English).

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.alanba.com.kw/ar/arabic-international-news/465517/03-05-2014> (Arabic).

¹¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/AfricaMusIIma/status/470969654647599105>

- An announcement of support for, and solidarity with, the people of Libya in light of the military operation launched by General Haftar in the country. According to the organization, the operation was part of the Crusader-Zionist conspiracy supported by Egypt's General al-Sisi and the Gulf States, intended to torpedo the efforts to impose shari'a in Libya. Therefore, it is incumbent upon every Muslim citizen in Libya to protest in defense of shari'a and Muslim honor, prevent foreign intervention in the country's internal affairs – especially from France and the United States – and exercise caution from the Jewish-Christian conspiracy to re-conquer the region.¹¹¹
- The “Africa is Muslim” Twitter account, which is administered by AQIM, published an announcement in which it expressed condolences over the death of Maarouf Ould al-Heiba, a Mauritanian Salafi-jihadist sheikh who died while imprisoned in a Mauritanian jail. It accused the Mauritanian authorities of the unjust imprisonment that led to his death, claiming that it was an act intended to serve France.¹¹² In addition, the organization demanded that the Moroccan authorities free several Salafi-jihadist prisoners from Moroccan jails.¹¹³



Maarouf Ould al-Heiba

Libya

Ansar Al-Sharia

- The jihadist media institution of Ansar al-Sharia in Libya, Al Raya, published a several-part interview with Muhammad al-Zahawi, the general supervisor of the organization. In the interview, al-Zahawi addressed, among other things, “Operation Dignity” led by Major General

¹¹¹ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹² <https://twitter.com/AfricaMusIIma/status/472707012518637569>

¹¹³ <https://twitter.com/AfricaMusIIma/status/472599413656154113>

Haftar, whom he described as an “agent of the US”¹¹⁴ and even denied that the organization was responsible for the recent killings in Benghazi.¹¹⁵ In addition, al-Zahawi warned Haftar in a press announcement that fighters from all around the world would convene to fight against him and that he will meet the same fate as Muammar Gaddafi. He also warned the United States not to intervene in the situation in Libya.¹¹⁶

- On May 19, 2014 Ansar al-Sharia in Libya published a statement regarding the recent events that took place in Benghazi in eastern Libya. In the statement, the organization expressed solidarity with the people’s demand for security and stability on the condition of the enforcement of shari’a, and called on tribal leaders to support the enforcement of shari’a and oppose the Khalifa Haftar (the former Libya army general who announced a coup in the country on May 16).¹¹⁷
- Ansar al-Sharia in Libya published “An Important Announcement Regarding the Shelling on Benghazi”, which criticized the shooting of rockets into Benghazi and claimed that it was carried out by Al Sa’ika forces under the pretext of fighting terrorism. Ansar al-Sharia explained that they had nothing to do with the shelling, which was indiscriminate and caused great damage to Muslims in the city.¹¹⁸ The organization claimed that the fire came from a Special Forces military camp located in the suburbs of the city.¹¹⁹ Meanwhile, the organization published photos of militants armed with SA-7’s “in order to counter any aerial attack on Benghazi”.¹²⁰



¹¹⁴ https://twitter.com/AnsarShariaa_ly/status/472386208157691904

¹¹⁵ https://twitter.com/AnsarShariaa_ly/status/472528835146440704

¹¹⁶ <http://www.albawabhnews.com/603593>

¹¹⁷ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹⁸ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹⁹ https://twitter.com/AnsarShariaa_ly/status/471053116964884480/photo/1;

<http://www.alwasat.ly/ar/news/libya/19425> (Arabic).

¹²⁰ https://twitter.com/AnsarShariaa_ly/status/469273584456957952

Ansar al-Sharia militants preparing for aerial attacks

Other jihadist organizations

- A new jihadist organization called Afnad al-Khilafa, which is apparently affiliated with the ISIS, claimed responsibility for the bombing of the military command structure of the Eastern Province in Tubruq. The organization announced that it sanctifies war against Libyan regime forces under the leadership of Haftar and against anyone who collaborates with him.

Nigeria

The April abduction by Boko Haram of over 200 Christian schoolgirls from a Christian school in Nigeria sparked worldwide protests, including a summit that was held by representatives from West African countries - including Nigeria, Benin, Cameroon, Niger, Chad - and representatives from the UK, the United States and the EU regarding the organization's growing threat. Participants at the summit declared war on Boko Haram and agreed to share intelligence information in a manner that would enable them to better fight against the organization. Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan emphasized that the successful obliteration of the organization was dependent on cooperation among all West African nations.¹²¹ The Sultan of Sokoto, the supreme religious authority in Nigeria, also declared war on Boko Haram and called on all Muslims to unite against the terrorist organization.¹²²

Boko Haram

- The Al-Sawarim jihadist media institution published an interview with a militant named Abu Samiyya al-Nigiri in the terrorist group, Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jihad, also known as Boko Haram in Nigeria. The beginning of the interview stated that the interview took place as a result of the slander and smear campaign being waged by the media against Boko Haram. Al-Nigiri briefly recounted the history of the organization, its path, its faith, and its attitude towards democracy, the organization's founder and the subject of the abduction of the Christian schoolgirls.¹²³

¹²¹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/worldnews/2014/05/140517_boko_haram_african_leaders_wage_war.shtml (Arabic).

¹²² <http://www.france24.com/ar/20140525-مرجع-إسلامي-نيجيري-يا-حرب-بوكو-حرام-> (Arabic).

¹²³ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).



The interview banner

Somalia

Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen, a jihadist organization operating in Somalia, continued to focus on carrying out a small number of quality operations.

On May 24, 2014 Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen carried out an integrated terrorist attack at the Somali Parliament in Mogadishu. The attack included a car bomb, a suicide terrorist and another terrorist who used small-arms fire. At least seven people were killed in the attack: six attackers and one soldier who tried to stop them from entering the Parliament building. Many members of Parliament were in the building at the time of the attack. Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen claimed responsibility for the attack a short while after it occurred.¹²⁴

Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen

- Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen, which operates in Somalia, published a claim of responsibility for two terrorist attacks that were carried out at a Western restaurant in Djibouti on May 24, 2014 in which three people were killed and 15 others were injured. In the press release, the spokesman for the organization, Sheikh Ali Mohamud Rageh, explained that the restaurant was selected as the target of the attack because it was frequented by French army officers who it accused of

¹²⁴<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/24/somalia-militants-mogadishu-parliament-attack> (English).

killing Muslims in the Central African Republic and of training army officers from Djibouti in Somalia.¹²⁵

The Caucasus

- Sheikh Abdul Karim Krymsky, Deputy to the Emir of the Al-Muhajirun wal-Ansar Army, called on Muslims in Crimea to wage jihad against Russia to mark the 70th anniversary of the expulsion of the Tartar Muslim minority from Crimea by Russia. According to him, there was concern for the well-being of Muslims in Crimea at the hands of the Russians based on past experience and, therefore, jihad must be waged against the Russians in order to thwart such a plan. He emphasized that Russia does not understand any language other than the language of force and said that the new regime in Crimea cannot be trusted; one should not help the regime nor enter into negotiations with it. He said that the United States, and anyone else who helps Russia, should be considered an enemy.

The Al-Muhajirun wal-Ansar Army is composed of Chechen and Tartar fighters who took part in the battle against the Syrian regime on Syrian soil.¹²⁶



A video clip in which Sheikh Abdul Karim Krymsky appears

¹²⁵ <http://www.somalimemo.net/index.php/kiswahili/9182-al-shabab-wadai-kuhusika-na-shambulio-iliyofanyika-nchi-ya-djibuti>

¹²⁶ <https://twitter.com/RevOfIslam>

The Indian Subcontinent

- The Al-Isaba jihadist media institution of Ansar al-Tawhid fil-Hind, an Indian Salafi-jihadist organization with ties to Al-Qaeda, published a video in which it called on “jihad leaders around the world”, especially in the Middle East and South Asia, to attack India and Indian targets around the world.¹²⁷

The video was published the day after the BJP, led by Narendra Modi, who is known for taking a hard line towards the Muslim population in India, won the parliamentary elections in India. It seems that the video was released as a result of the strengthened power of the national Hindu party, which declared that it would fight against rising Islamic fundamentalism.



Video clip

- The jihadist media institution of the Mujahideen of Eastern Indonesia (Timur), MIT Press, published an announcement by Sheikh Abu Wardah al-Sharqi, a senior commander in the organization. In the announcement, al-Sharqi welcomed the efforts of Muslims to spread the religion of Allah in the various Indonesian islands and especially in Masamba, which is in the southern island of Sulawesi.¹²⁸

¹²⁷ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹²⁸ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).



Sheikh Abu Wardah al-Sharqi

The Philippines

- A group of militants in the Philippines declared their support for the ISIS. In the video, in which several masked militants appeared with the flag of the ISIS in the background, the spokesman declared that he and his followers pledge allegiance to the leader of the ISIS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and expressed hope that the Islamic State will expand. He called on believers among the Muslim Nation to join the organization. The video ended with a threat directed at the infidels and abandoners of Islam that the mujahideen will “come to slaughter them”.¹²⁹



Militants in the Philippines expressing support for the ISIS

The West

- Sheikh Anjem Choudary, a radical Islamic preacher in England, published on his Twitter account photos of a demonstration held by his followers in Southall, England, to criticize participation in democratic elections. The demonstrators waved flags and placards condemning democracy and

¹²⁹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic); <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cx85CFxbZ7Y>

elections, and claimed that Allah is the only source of legislation. In addition, Choudary called for demonstrations to protest the arrest of Sheikh Omar Bakri Muhammad by Lebanese security forces in front of the Lebanese Embassy in London.¹³⁰

Bakri, a radical Islamic preacher, established the Al-Muhajirun organization in England in 1996 after he retired from Hizb al-Tahrir. In 2005, he was expelled from England for incitement and found refuge in Lebanon. In May 2014, he was arrested by Lebanese security forces for fear that he would try to escape after he was sentenced to life imprisonment for providing assistance to Al-Qaeda.



The photo, which Anjem Choudary uploaded to his Twitter account, of the demonstration held by his followers against participation in the elections in England

Choudary founded the al-Muhajiroun extremist group with the militant leader Sheikh Omar Bakri Muhammad. That group was banned in 2004, but has re-emerged under different names and in various guises. He also established the radical Islamist group Islam4Uk, which was banned in 2010.

Miscellaneous

- The Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum congratulated several members of the forum for having the largest amount of correspondence published on the forum,¹³¹ in an attempt by forum administrators to increase the activity of forum members and stimulate lively discussion.

¹³⁰ <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary>

¹³¹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

- The administration of the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum announced that it would allow registered members to direct questions to the mujahideen fighting in Syria regarding the deep rift between Al-Qaeda and the Al-Nusra Front, and the ISIS.¹³²



The announcement banner

- The “Shumukh al-Islam Workshop”, a jihadist media group on jihadist Web forums and social media, announced the launch of an online PR campaign for the release of a female Salafi-jihadist activist named Umm Luqman being held in jail in Germany. The campaign included banners with calls for her release and the creation of hashtags for that purpose on social media.



A banner launched in the framework of the campaign for the release of Umm Luqman from jail in Germany

- The administrator of the Al-Platform Media jihadist Web forum published an announcement to everyone in the forum in which he welcomed the forum’s renewed activity on the network after it was inactive for several days. The forum administrator claimed that the enemies of Allah, especially the enemies of the ISIS, have repeatedly tried to breach the

¹³² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

forum and shut it down. Therefore, the administrator recommended that all members of the forum change their passwords at least once a week and only surf the forum using a secure program such as TOR.¹³³

- The Da'wat Al-Muqawama Al-Islamiyya Al-Alamiyya jihadist media institution announced that it was changing its name to the “Al-Minhaj” media institution, and that the organization was recruiting new members to its ranks.¹³⁴



The logo of the “Al-Minhaj” media institution

¹³³ <http://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹³⁴ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

ABOUT THE ICT

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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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